

**EXPLORING SCHOOL SAFETY MODELS ADOPTED BY SELECTED HIGH
SCHOOLS IN BEREA DISTRICT, LESOTHO**

By

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DECLARATION

I, **Mamphula Nyapisi**, declare that the thesis, **Exploring school safety models adopted by five high schools in Berea, Lesotho**, submitted for the qualification of **Master of Education** at the University of the Free State is my own independent work.

All the references that I have used have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.

I further declare that this work has not previously been submitted by me at another university or faculty for the purpose of obtaining a qualification.



.....

SIGNED

August 2022

DATE

ABSTRACT

Cases of violence in schools suggest that schools are not safe enough to promote effective teaching and learning, though schools need to be conducive and free from any form of violence. In line with the Constitution, documents such as the Child and Welfare Act and Education Act documents that govern schools, advocate for safety in schools (Kingdom of Lesotho, 2010). This study is a qualitative case study conducted within the interpretivism paradigm. The aim was to explore safety models in specific high schools in the Berea district of Lesotho. To achieve this aim, literature on models of school safety, school safety policies, measures for ensuring school safety and violence in schools were reviewed. Data was generated using document analysis, focus group and individual interviews. Five principals from five selected high schools and three teachers from each of the five high schools took part in this study. To analyse the data, invitational theory which emphasises the importance of creating friendly and inviting environment was used as a lens. This theory asserts that in the creation of a friendly environment, principles such as trust, respect, optimism, as well as intentionality play a vital role.

Findings revealed that there are still cases of violence prevalent in schools some of which are perpetrated by teachers and learners. It was also observed that teachers still use corporal punishment as a way of disciplining learners and there are learners who still bully others in schools. The study recommends cooperation between teachers and police to try and improve safety in schools as well as abolishing corporal punishment which is prevalent in schools to protect learners from any form of harm. The role played by the Ministry of Education and Training to ensure safety in schools should be clarified and all documents with directives that ensure safety in schools be put into practice.

Keywords: School safety, violence, corporal punishment, gender-based violence, bullying.

DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to my son and daughter.

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The accomplishment of this study is dependent on Almighty God who gave me life, strength and courage to continue when I thought I could not. Again, I highly appreciate the support from my supervisor, Professor Isaac Ntshoe whose patience, guidance and words of encouragement kept me going when I felt like quitting. Thank you Prof, you are one of a kind! Thank you for helping me make my study comprehensible. I further extend my acknowledgements to schools where interviews were undertaken. Thank you dear principals for opening doors at your schools for me to make use of your time. To respectful teachers, without your patience and support, the study would have not been completed.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

DECLARATION.....	i
ABSTRACT	ii
DEDICATION	iii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	iv
TABLE OF CONTENTS	v
LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS	ix
CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION AND STATEMENT OF THE RESEARCH PROBLEM	1
1.1 INTRODUCTION	1
1.2 BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT	1
1.3 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM	3
1.4 LITERATURE REVIEW.....	4
1.4.1 Theoretical Framework.....	6
1.5 RESEARCH QUESTIONS	7
1.6 RESEARCH AIM.....	8
1.6.1 Research Objectives	8
1.7 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY	8
1.7.1 Research Paradigm.....	8
1.7.2 Qualitative Approach	9
1.7.3 Research Methods	9
1.7.3.1 Document Analysis.....	10
1.7.3.2 Semi-structured Interviews	10
1.7.3.3 Focus group Interviews	11
1.7.4 Participant Selection.....	12
1.7.5 Data Analysis	12
1.7.6 Strategies and procedure of dealing with data.....	13
1.7.6.1 Trustworthiness of the study.....	13
1.7.7 Ethical considerations.....	15
1.8 VALUE OF THE STUDY	15
1.9 LAYOUT OF CHAPTERS.....	16
1.10 CONCLUSION.....	16
CHAPTER 2 LITERATURE REVIEW.....	17
2.1 INTRODUCTION	17

2.2	SAFETY MEASURES IN SCHOOLS.....	17
2.3	SAFETY IN SCHOOLS	18
2.4	VIOLENCE IN SCHOOLS	19
2.4.1	International trends on school violence.....	19
2.4.2	Trends on school violence in some African countries	21
2.4.3	Trends of school violence in Lesotho.....	23
2.5	BULLYING IN SCHOOLS.....	24
2.6	GENDER- BASED VIOLENCE.....	27
2.7	WAYS OF DISCIPLINING LEARNERS	31
2.7.1	Legal status on corporal punishment in Lesotho schools.....	35
2.7.2	Legal status on corporal punishment in South African schools	36
2.8	THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK.....	38
2.9	CONCLUSION.....	40
CHAPTER 3 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY		42
3.1	INTRODUCTION	42
3.2	RESEARCH PARADIGM	42
3.3	RESEARCH APPROACH	43
3.4	RESEARCH DESIGN	43
3.5	SAMPLING PROCEDURE.....	44
3.6	DATA COLLECTION METHODS	45
3.6.1	Focus group interview	45
3.6.2	Semi-structured interviews	46
3.6.3	Document analysis	47
3.7	PARTICIPANT SELECTION	48
3.8	DATA ANALYSIS METHOD.....	48
3.8.1	Data Editing.....	49
3.8.2	Coding.....	49
3.8.3	Assignment of themes	50
3.9	ETHICAL CONSIDERATION	51
3.9.1	Informed consent.....	51
3.9.2	Confidentiality.....	52
3.10	TRUSTWORTHINESS OF THE STUDY	52
3.10.1	Credibility.....	53
3.10.2	Transferability	54

3.10.3	Confirmability	54
3.10.4	Dependability	54
3.11	CONCLUSION	55
CHAPTER 4	FINDINGS OF THE STUDY	56
4.1	INTRODUCTION	56
4.2	MODEL OF SCHOOL SAFETY	57
4.2.1	School safety development plans	58
4.3	INITIATIVES OF ENSURING SCHOOL SAFETY	59
4.3.1	Teachers' views on measures of ensuring school safety	60
4.4	SCHOOL SAFETY POLICIES	61
4.4.1	School safety policy formulation and implementation	63
4.4.2	Roles of MoET in ensuring school safety	64
4.5	CASES OF FIGHTING IN SCHOOLS	66
4.5.1	Cases of learners fighting at school	66
4.5.2	Cases of teachers fighting	69
4.6	FORMS OF PUNISHMENT IN SCHOOLS	70
4.6.1	Effects of corporal punishment on learners	72
4.7	CONCLUSION	74
CHAPTER 5	DISCUSSION, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS	76
5.1	INTRODUCTION	76
5.2	RE-STATEMENT OF RESEARCH QUESTIONS	77
5.3	THEMES AND DISCUSSIONS	78
5.3.1	School safety initiatives	79
5.3.2	School punishment measures	80
5.3.3	School safety policy development and implementation	82
5.4	METHODOLOGICAL PROCEDURES AND APPROACHES	83
5.4.1	Strengths and weaknesses of the theoretical framework	84
5.5	RECOMMENDATIONS	85
5.5.1	Recommendations on introduction of day and night shift of security persons	85
5.5.2	Cooperation between teachers and police in improving school safety	85
5.5.3	Clear roles of school safety policies by school governing bodies (SGBs)	86
5.5.4	Recommendations for policy development on school safety	86
5.6	LIMITATIONS	87
5.7	CONCLUSION	87

REFERENCE LIST89

APPENDICES105

 APPENDIX A: PERMISSION MINISTRY OF EDUCATION105

 APPENDIX B: INFORMED WRITTEN CONSENT FORMS.....106

 APPENDIX C: INTERVIEW SCHEDULES110

 APPENDIX D: ETHICS STATEMENT111

 APPENDIX E: LANGUAGE EDITOR’S LETTERS112

 APPENDIX F: TURN IT IN REPORT113

LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

AIDS	Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome
CAT	Convention Against Torture
CFSS	Child Friendly School Standards
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
MoET	Ministry of Education and Training
RSA	Republic of South Africa
UNESCO	United Nations Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNICEF	United Nations International Children's' Emergency Fund
UNRC	United Nations Convention on the Rights of a Child
USA	United States of America
WHO	World Health Organisation

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION AND STATEMENT OF THE RESEARCH PROBLEM

1.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter gives the overview of the study, describes the background and explains the problem that the current study sets out to investigate. The chapter also outlines the research aim, the objectives and research questions used to investigate the problem of the study. The theoretical framework of the study and the layout of chapters of this study are outlined in this chapter.

1.2 BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

School safety is a worldwide concern and no school is immune from this issue (Fenin, 2010:21). School safety refers to school and school-related activities where learners and teachers are safe from violence, bullying, harassment and the influence of substance abuse (Burton & Leoschut, 2017). Safe schools promote the protection of all learners from violence, exposure to weapons and threats, theft, bullying and harassment. Section 8(1) of the Lesotho Constitution indicates that “no person shall be subjected to torture or inhuman or degrading punishment or other treatment.” Schools as institutions that are governed by the Constitution need to create an atmosphere that does not expose human beings to any form of pain or torment, through ensuring that the environment is safe and protective for the teachers and learners.

The Kingdom of Lesotho (2010) also abolishes corporal punishment in schools in accordance with Section 8 of the Constitution. This is done as a protective measure for learners to avoid inflicting pain on them. *Child Friendly School Standards* advocates for ensuring a safe and inclusive environment at school and that provision of knowledge and skills has to be in a situation where safety and protection are maximised (Kingdom of Lesotho, 2012).

Schools are ideally safe spaces for learners and teachers since their safety is of vital importance to ensure smooth continuity in the different duties they need to carry out at school (Wag, 2009). However, despite the advocacy of protection against any harm by the Constitution, abolishing corporal punishment and promoting safe learning environment in schools, there are still cases of violence and assault and use of corporal punishment in Lesotho schools (Matheolane, 2014). These cases of assault, violence and bullying affect the learning and teaching at school as unsafe environment affects both teacher and learner performance hence the attainment of quality education is affected.

Violence and assault in schools are a global phenomenon. Each year around the world, 246 million children are affected by school violence (UNESCO, 2017). School violence refers to violence that occurs on school property, on the way to or from school sponsored events. School violence is not a new concept. According to Center for Disease Control (2016), from the 1992-1993 school year to the 2017-2018 school year, there were 193 violent deaths in which fatal injury occurred on a school campus in United States of America. School violence include both verbal and physical altercations that can occur in any academic setting. A survey conducted by the Human Sciences Research Council with the Department of Education in 2017 stipulates that more than 20000 teachers at 1380 schools across South Africa considered schools as violent places and suspected that learners and teachers were mostly armed at school (Lamb & Warton, 2017).

Additionally, a previous study reported that teachers believed that fights involving weapons at schools indicate that gangs operate in schools (De Vos, 2017). The prevailing issue of violence in schools violates the learners' right to freedom and right to education as learners and teachers do not feel safe. The unsafe environment in schools hinders the performance of both the teachers and learners. Burton and Leoschut (2017) indicate that schools in the United States of America saw 279 cases of violence during the 2017-2018 school year. This is up from 131 and mostly incidents included finding guns on school campus followed by shootings. Lesotho is no exception to issues of school safety. According to Isidiho (2021), bullying is prevalent in most schools in Lesotho and in most cases learners bully one another.

1.3 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

A report by United Nation's Committee on the Rights of the Child (2013) voiced concern at the lack of measures and tools in Lesotho to combat the ill-treatment, violence and abuse of children. The committee further raised the lack of awareness and information including, statistical data on issues of ill-treatment, violence as well as abuse of children. Lack of awareness on violence and child abuse might result in many violence or abuse cases that are unreported hence making it difficult to curb the problem of violence and abuse. A school as a place where people need to be protected also has to be safe so that the learners' and teachers' right to be safe and free from any form of harm is not violated.

However, recent cases of assault and violence in schools suggest that schools have become too unsafe and dangerous to promote effective teaching and learning as learners and teachers are exposed to ill-treatment, abuse, and violence. Despite the efforts of the Lesotho Ministry of Education which include the assurance of the importance that children learn in a safe environment, there has been cases of violence and assault in schools and specifically an incident in Berea, where a learner acted violently and assaulted one another, resulting in injury and the death of the other learner (Maama, 2010). In particular, girls in schools seem to experience forms of gender-based violence where in most cases the perpetrators were teachers or sometimes male schoolmates (Kruger, 2014). This reflects that schools are not safe as learners still sustain injuries or sometimes lose lives or are exposed to forms of gender-based violence.

School safety affects both teachers and learners negatively if not dealt with. Offering quality education is enshrined in the Constitution of Lesotho and if safety is not ensured the learners' right to quality education is violated. Teachers also need to work in a friendly environment that is safe and welcoming to enable them to perform their duties freely. An unsafe environment hinders the smooth running of school activities hence poor results might be the outcome. Fixing the problem of safety in schools motivates and creates a conducive environment for both teachers and learners to perform their schoolwork better since they are safe.

1.4 LITERATURE REVIEW

One way of gaining knowledge about a topic is to do a literature review which according to Du Plooy (2014) involves searching for, reading, evaluating, and summarising available information relating to the research topic. A literature review is a systematic process of reading and critically evaluating studies that are related to a researcher's study (Van Wyk & Okeke, 2015; Mertens, 2014). Literature review also helps to reveal the gaps in the existing body of knowledge and encouraging the need for additional research (Kaniki, 2006). As noted by McNiff (2014), the reviewing of literature also ensures that a study fits into another researcher's world by acknowledging what has been done on a particular topic. The review also assists the current researcher to relate the information with the current research problem.

However, Mertens (2014) cautions that the purpose of a literature review is to assist the researcher to arrive at a creative idea that draws on the review of literature in order to explain the research topic and build justification for the problem under study. Van Wyk and Okeke (2015) stipulate that there are several advantages associated with reviewing literature as it enables researchers to learn how studies can support or oppose their points of view, hence allowing them to engage critically in an argument.

Additionally, literature review helps the researcher to find out differences and similarities between the existing literature and what is being studied. In contrast, disadvantages associated with the review of literature according to Van Wyk and Okeke (2015), include that review of literature as time consuming since the researcher has to read several sources in order to relate the work of the scholars to the topic under study. The internet is often used as part of the literature review but researchers have to be careful in evaluating such sources as there is often no quality control on the information posted on the internet (Galletta, 2013; Rakotsoane, 2012).

The aim of reviewing literature in this study has been to fully develop an understanding of what school safety entails. Berkowitz (2014) indicated that many schools are putting measures in place to keep learners and educators safe by appointing security guards where some of their duties include making sure that weapons are not brought at school by conducting random searches of learners and limiting exit and entry points at school.

Weapons brought to school invade the safety of the school community as they may sometimes be used to harm others.

The issue of security guards is only beneficial in schools with proper fencing in terms of controlling all exit and entry points. In an attempt to improve safety, most schools have a written policy that outlines consistent behaviour that learners and teachers need to keep the school environment safe (Stout & Suvilaako, 2013). The school's policy needs to be aligned to the education policy and the proper implementation is required to help in keeping the environment safe. The Constitution of Lesotho is the supreme law in the country (Kingdom of Lesotho, 1998). Everything enshrined in the Constitution must be put into practice. In order to promote safety of human beings, Chapter II, Section 8 of the Constitution provides for a freedom from inhuman treatment. All human beings need to be free from any inhuman treatment which includes torture or degrading behaviour.

Learners and teachers in schools, like all other human beings, need to be safe. This safety of teachers is enhanced by putting into consideration the measures that keep the school environment safe. In line with Chapter II of Lesotho's Constitution, Section 16 (1) emphasises that "a child has a right to be protected from torture or other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment, or punishment, including any culture practice which degrades or is injurious to the physical, psychological, emotional and mental well-being of the child." Teachers as mentors at school need to create a conducive environment at school which does not make the learners to feel degraded or use form of punishment that tortures or ill-treats the learners. Furthermore, the conduct of learners and teachers is regulated under the Education Act No. 3 of 2010. Section 4(4) provides that; "a learner shall not be subjected to cruel, inhuman and degrading punishment" even though teachers need to correct and stimulate participation of learners in schools for better results, they need to be aware that whatever measures they use on learners are in a manner that, no learner is tortured, ill-treated or exposed to injurious situation. Bullying as one of the threats in schools can be controlled by development and implementation of anti-bullying policies (Patchin & Hinduja, 2016:56).

Departments such as Health and Police can join the school to ensure that safety is attained at school (Klonsky, 2009). A school can build a relationship with police and ask

them to visit schools regularly and assist the school management and learners regarding the school safety issues. Police can help by clarifying to the school community what is classified as a weapon and what measures are taken when people are found in possession of weapons at school and advise on how safety can be improved.

1.4.1 Theoretical Framework

The invitational theory is used as a framework to guide this study. This theory emphasises concrete practices, safety and successful democratic solutions for problems that routinely harm organisations and the people in it (Purkey & Novak, 2015). The relevance of invitational theory to this study is based on the advocacy for creation of learning and teaching environment that is inviting, socially appealing and safe. This theory further argues that learning is enhanced when learners and teachers are positively encouraged or invited into the educational experience (Haigh, 2011).

Pedagogy of invitational theory is constructed on four principles which are respect for people, trust, optimism and intentionality. Trust as a principle of invitational theory is based on the understanding that human existence is a collaborative activity and that all humans are interdependent (Purkey & Novak, 2015). To create relationships that are inviting, both time and effort are prerequisite to create a trustworthy pattern of interactions between teachers and learners. It is through trust between learners and teachers that a conducive and safe environment for teaching and learning can be created. Respect as another principle of invitational theory is based on the assumption that people are valuable and responsible and ought to be treated accordingly (Purkey & Novak, 2015). Treating people with respect at school makes teachers and learners to feel accommodated and safe to be at school. The success of the school is therefore determined by mutual respect from teachers and learners.

Additionally according to Purkey and Novak (2015) optimism as another principle of invitational theory suggests that people possess untapped potential and the learning environment requires more than just an invitational teacher. It is therefore essential for the principals, teachers, learners and support staff to be optimistic and create a friendly

school environment. Intentionality gives experiences, purposes and allows teachers to create environments that have direction and purpose (Purkey & Novak, 2015). In an attempt to create an inviting school environment, teachers and learners value the potential of one another. People and policies can be helpful in promotion of safe environments. When implemented in schools, invitational theory provides people with principles of practising good behaviour that can strengthen integration to build an inviting climate for everyone. Therefore in order for invitational education to have meaningful effects, it needs to be implemented with principles of social, behavioural and cognitive approaches (Lynch, 2012).

The relevance of invitation theory for the study is derived from its advocacy for creation of an inviting environment and its contribution to encouraging teachers and learners to be at school since the environment is safe and conducive. The focus of this study was schools where there are teachers and learners who need to work in a friendly environment that enables them to progress. The study therefore proceeded with the assumption that schools need to ensure that the environment at school is friendly and there is freedom from fear and any forms of threat. This theory encourages creation of conducive teaching and learning environment that is friendly and inviting for both teachers and learners. A safe environment makes learners and teachers to feel that the time is right, the place is right, the people are supportive and learning and teaching are enjoyable (Foote, 2010). Any environment that is not welcoming and poses threats at school does not enable teachers and learners to perform to the best of their ability.

1.5 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Primary research question of this study was:

What school safety models are adopted by five high schools in Berea district Lesotho?

Subsidiary questions developed out of the main research questions were:

- What initiatives do schools take to ensure safe learning and teaching environment in schools?

- How do schools implement national and school policies on school safety?
- What means do schools have in place to discipline learners?

1.6 RESEARCH AIM

The research aim was to explore the safety models that are adopted by selected high schools in Berea district.

1.6.1 Research Objectives

The objectives of the study were to:

- Examine safety initiatives schools take to ensure safe learning environment.
- Investigate how schools implement national and school policies on safety.
- Examine ways in which learners are disciplined in schools.

1.7 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This section explains research paradigm, approach, design and methods of data collection and analysis as well as ethical issues addressed by the study.

1.7.1 Research Paradigm

The study has been carried out following the interpretive paradigm. Interpretive inquiry contends on the self-understanding of an individual as a basis for all social interpretation and transparent human perception (Cohen, 2007). Motsamai, Jacobs and De Wet (2011) indicate that understanding other people is dependent on understanding the interpretations they give of what they do. For this study, understanding of how teachers and principals perceive the safety measures to be taken into consideration in schools has made it possible to realise whether there are measures taken to keep schools safe.

1.7.2 Qualitative Approach

In line with the chosen paradigm, the qualitative research design has been used in the study. For qualitative approach, emphasis is on exploring and understanding the meaning that individuals give to a social or human problem (Creswell, 2014:4). The meaning, thoughts and understanding of taking different measures to keep the school safe will be explored in this study. According to Denzin and Lincoln (2005) qualitative design gains perspectives of issues from investigating in their own specific context and the meaning that individuals bring to them. In this study the perceptions and views of teachers about ways of ensuring safety in schools have been examined.

The research is a case study which is an in-depth investigation of a specific person, group event or community (Beckman, 2016). The focus is on exploration of the safety of specific schools that are found in Berea district. According to Kumar (2011), a case study is defined as decisions regarding what, where, when, and how much concerning an inquiry and case study the focus of the study is on specifically exploring and understanding. This study seeks to explore and understand the models that the five high schools have in place in order to ensure the safety of teachers and learners. The case study has enabled exploration and enhanced a broad understanding of the situation of safety at the selected schools.

1.7.3 Research Methods

Research methods are activities or tools that are designed to gather information during the conducting of research (Langkos, 2014). According to Creswell (2014), research methods involve the forms of data collection, analysis and interpretation that are useful in research. For the objectives of the study to be achieved, the researcher opted for document analysis, semi-structured interviews as well as focus group interviews. As the aim of the research was to examine the model schools have in place to ensure a safe learning environment in schools, the researcher opted for research methods that would help in achieving the objectives which are document analysis, semi-structured interviews and focus group interviews.

1.7.3.1 Document Analysis

Document analysis is a form of qualitative research which involves interpretation of documents by the researcher to give voice to the issue being discussed (Owen, 2013; Bowen, 2009). Similarly, Kutsyuruba, Christou, Heggie, Murray, and Deluca (2015) define document analysis as an effective way for evaluating and reviewing documents for use in research. Document analysis can provide extra information to the existing knowledge of researcher (Bowen, 2009). However, document analysis can be problematic if documents are not well written since it becomes problematic for the researcher to extract relevant information (Creswell, 2013).

The reason for analysing documents in this study is to help achieve the objectives of the study which include examining initiatives and policies used in schools to promote safety for effective teaching and learning. The researcher opted for analysis of several policies and acts of Lesotho which include the *Constitution of Lesotho*, *Lesotho Education Act*, *Children and Protection Welfare Act* as well as the *Child Friendly School Standards*. These documents were selected because they shed light on safety of human beings as well safety in schools.

1.7.3.2 Semi-structured Interviews

In line with the chosen paradigm, interviews have been used in the collection of data. An interview is a verbal dialogue between people with the aim of collecting information (Gibson, 2012). According to Cohen (2007), the interview is an interchange of views between two or more people on a topic of mutual interest seeing the centrality of human interaction for knowledge production and emphasises the social situatedness of research data. An interview is further perceived as a session where the interviewer asks questions to the interviewee(s) where answers are either written down during the interview process or audio recorded and transcribed later (Van Wyk & Okeke, 2015). The semi-structured interviews were used whereby teachers and principals from the selected schools participated. The interview schedule was drawn in a manner that participants would not miss any of their classes at school so that teaching and learning was not interrupted

This type of interviews are said to be flexible since they create room for follow up questions or examples, to provide evidence or reflect back to check understanding. Semi-structured interviews are interviews where the researcher prepares a list of topics to explore and formulate questions in this regard (Galletta, 2013). Although semi-structured interviews provide room for flexibility, they might invite unexpected behaviour regarding the mood of the interviewees in interpretation of the reality (Dixon & Singleton, 2013). Additionally, semi-structured interviews allow researchers to develop explanations of experiences and perceptions of interviewees (Oakley, 2005). The different opinions from the teachers will give the idea of what schools are doing in relation to safety issues.

1.7.3.3 Focus group Interviews

Focus group interview involves a process where data is generated through interviewing a group of people (Creswell, 2013). These kinds of interviews are conducted to gather data from people depending on their understanding as well as views on a particular concept. According to Krueger and Casey (2015), focus group interviews explore perceptions, experiences as well as understandings of a group of people who have the common experiences and understanding in a certain situation. Krueger and Casey (2015) further indicate that, focus group interviews provide a more natural environment than individual interviews since participants influence one another as though they are in a real-life situation.

Subsequently it becomes highly possible that data of high quality may be generated from the participants. The researcher chose focus group interviews because they create room for the participants to discuss understanding on ensuring safety in schools and what measures can keep the school environment safe and conducive for teaching and learning. Individual interviews were conducted with principals while focus group interviews were conducted with some teachers who are members of the school disciplinary committee, members of the school's sports committee as well as heads of subject department.

1.7.4 Participant Selection

Purposive selection applicable in the interpretive paradigm was used in this study. Purposive selection is based on the characteristics of the population (Plays, 2008). The principals of the five high schools in Berea district were selected. These principals were selected because of the experience they have in school management activities which include ensuring safety in schools. Additionally, three teachers from each school were also selected since they work with principals to develop ways of keeping the school safe and because of the experiences of violence or assaults at their workplaces. Selection of individuals or groups that are well-informed or skilled in a phenomenon of interest is worth considering in participants' selection (Creswell & Clark, 2011). The high schools were selected based on their geographical location where one school in the urban area had reported a case of violence. A student from one of these schools was stabbed and killed by a fellow student in the school's toilets (Maama, 2010). The four other schools are still in the urban area of Berea and have not had any cases of learners and teacher violence or assault.

1.7.5 Data Analysis

Qualitative data analysis is described as a process of making sense from the participants' views and opinions, themes, and similarities (Cohen, 2007). According to Scott and Usher (2011), qualitative analytic approach includes coding or classifying field notes or interview transcriptions by inferring from the words being examined. Data has been analysed by describing several features of the study and the ideas of the participants. Constant content or comparison strategy has been used to develop themes and issues that emerged from data collected at different sites, data collected from interviews, from documents including school policies and other regulations (Glaser & Strauss, 1952). Following Braun and Clarke (2013), thematic analysis was used in this study to identify themes, issues and patterns emerging from data. This has been done by interviewing teachers in selected schools and looking at the responses that are similar and classifying them into codes and develop themes.

The purpose of the interviews was to identify themes and issues relating to school safety in the district of Berea. According to Creswell (2013) qualitative data analysis is based on assumptions and the use of explanatory frameworks to ensure that voices of participants, description and interpretation of the stated problem are reported. Morrison (2012) indicates that in the stage of data analysis, the researcher unfolds phases of the study which include purpose of the activities examined, viewpoints of participants and effects of activities on participants. Data analysis is the process where the researcher moves from the data collected into explanation and understanding of the people and situations investigated. Data has been analysed in terms of themes and issues that emerged from data collection. According to Anderson (2013) when reporting data, one needs to interpret and analyse by stating what it means particularly in relation to the research question or interest.

1.7.6 Strategies and procedure of dealing with data

Yin (2011) argues that research truthfulness carries vital importance in qualitative research as people want to know that the researcher has gone a certain length to conduct the research accurately. In line with the interpretive paradigm and qualitative inquiry, the researcher made use of terms relevant to the chosen paradigm including trustworthiness, credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability. During the interviews, the researcher gave participants an opportunity to request clarification where needed and crosschecked the transcriptions with the participants so that they can verify them as correct presentations of their comments. Different steps were taken in this study to ensure trustworthiness.

1.7.6.1 *Trustworthiness of the study*

Trustworthiness in this study was ensured by taking steps in ensuring credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability. Participants were therefore given an opportunity to decline to participate in the research to ensure that data collection sessions involve only those who are in all conscience willing to take part and offer data freely.

Participants were encouraged to be honest from the onset of the session with the researcher aiming to establish understanding at the beginning and indicating that there are no right answers to the questions to be asked. Research trustworthiness proposes that the researcher's words can be trusted as representing truthful statement (Samuel, 2017). In this study, trustworthiness was enhanced by comparing data from document analyses and interviews and also ensured by comparing and contrasting the views of teachers from selected schools.

Credibility in this study was ensured by involving the participants in individual interviews and focus group interviews. During the interviews, participants were given the opportunity to request clarification where needed and the researcher also crosschecked the transcriptions with the participants to allow them to verify them as correct presentation of their comments. According to Moon (2012), credibility is ensured when the researcher asks a colleague to examine the field notes and asks questions to determine whether the aim of the research will be achieved.

Transferability refers to the degree to which the phenomenon or findings described in one study can be applicable or useful in practice, theory or another research (Moon, 2012). To ensure transferability in this study, sufficient information from data generation process through interviews to enable the use of information in similar contexts has been stated. Anney (2014) postulates that confirmability deals with the question of whether the research findings could be repeated with the same participants so as to confirm neutrality and avoid biasness. A study is confirmable if it is possible to find conclusion on grounded data. Dawson (2016) attests that in order to ensure confirmability, questions should be asked like, "can all results be confirmed? Have the methods been well described? Can they be followed by other researchers?" If the answers to these questions are positive, then there will be confirmability in the study. In this study, attention has been given to coherence in terms of information gathered and interpretation of data.

1.7.7 Ethical considerations

Cohen (2007) states that ethics are a set of moral principles that drive a researcher's behaviour. In the research process, data collection techniques are developed, and the researcher considers whether the research procedures are likely to cause any physical or emotional harm to the participants (Rakotsoane, 2012). Permission from the University of Free State General/Human Research Ethics Committee was sought and when granted, the Education Department of Berea district would be informed and the school principals of all the concerned schools. An explanation of the aim of the study was communicated to those who participated in the interviews as well as assurance of anonymity.

At the beginning of the interviews, permission was sought from the participants to record the interviews with a pledge that tapes will be destroyed at the end of the research study. Additionally, participants were made aware that they could withdraw from the interview anytime and they should not feel bound to participate in the interviews. Again, the interviewees were informed that information from the participants will be kept confidential. In conducting the study, the researcher therefore adhered to the following principles: informed consent and confidentiality. The researcher treated all documents and people engaged with during the study with respect by honestly reporting what is conveyed by the participants and their reports.

1.8 VALUE OF THE STUDY

The value of this study lies that it raises awareness to relevant stakeholders on ensuring safety in schools. In an attempt to improve safety, most schools have a written policy that outlines consistent behaviour learners and teachers need to keep the school environment safe (Berkowitz, 2014). The study also encourages a review of school safety policies or development of such policies if none exist. Through the review of policies, the relevant stakeholders will get a picture of what has to be improved or done differently to improve safety in schools.

1.9 LAYOUT OF CHAPTERS

Chapter one of the study is an overview of the study outlining the background of the study, research questions and how they were developed, research paradigm and related methodologies including instruments that will be used to collect data.

Chapter two of the study reviews the literature concerning the study. The chapter has thus reviewed literature on what initiatives schools take to ensure a safe learning and teaching environment. The analysis of documents on national and school safety policies such as the Constitution of Lesotho, The Education Act and the school policies will be dealt with.

Chapter three of the study is devoted to the research methodology including the paradigm that will guide the study, instruments, data sources from which information is collected, sampling population and how data has been analysed. Credibility and trustworthiness of the study will be ensured.

Chapter four reports the findings involving reporting data collected from interviews, and document analysis. Again, it reports views on school safety from principals and teachers from different schools.

Chapter five is discussions, conclusions and recommendations. This chapter also discusses strengths and weaknesses of the theoretical framework that guides the study as well as limitations of the study.

1.10 CONCLUSION

This chapter outlined the background of the study which explains safety in schools and how it affects teaching and learning and contextualises the research title. Additionally, the research paradigm that underpins the study has been explained and further explicated the approach within which the research will be situated. In the next chapter, the researcher focused on literature review to help me achieve the objective of examining safety measures in schools.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter provides literature review and theoretical framework guiding the study. The discussions in the chapter are organised in terms of themes and issues on school safety measures, safety in schools, violence internationally, nationally and locally, ways of disciplining learners developed from the literature and theoretical framework.

2.2 SAFETY MEASURES IN SCHOOLS

Hardly a day goes by when news about an incident that has happened in schools is heard. These incidents may range from a school bus accident to a student committed suicide or from a sexual assault to a death in connection with a hazing. Due to prevalence of bullying and violence in schools, school safety measures are key elements in schools. Schools therefore have no choice but to create and maintain safe schools or to return their institutions to safe, secure and effective places of learning (Clark, 2013). Physical security is that part that one is able to see which includes cameras, locking doors at school as well as fencing. It is implemented as a security measure in order to ensure safety of teachers, learners and school property. When physical security measures are implemented in the correct way and effective manner, they will ensure maximum protection. However, it is important to bear in mind that physical security only forms a part of a total integrated security system and should not be used on its own. According to Lombard and Kobe (2008), the purposes of physical security measures are to deter an intruder from entering the premises, to detect the attempted entry or presence if an intruder succeeds in getting through the security barrier.

Again, physical security limits the harm that can be done if an intruder manages to gain entry without being detected and to detain the intruder by using alarm or alerting security patrol. Physical security is therefore important in schools as it promotes a safe

environment. When school safety measures are put into practise, safety in schools will be improved. Along with other measures of safety, the policies need to be in place at a school. Policies clearly state what the authority of the various people are and what the limitations or restrictions of those individuals are at schools (Mathe, 2008). Safety policies are inexpensive measures that can be used to assist with solving and reducing crime and violence on the school premises.

2.3 SAFETY IN SCHOOLS

Safety is one of the most important elements in schools. Safe schools promote the protection of learners and teachers from violence, exposure to weapons and threats, bullying and harassment. Educational environments must be safe and secure spaces for learners, teachers, non-teaching staff and the local community. It is therefore necessary to manage school safety and security in order to prevent accidents and creating an environment in which physical, emotional and social well-being is promoted. There are a variety of definitions of what constitutes a safe school. For example, Hernandez, Dolden and Bosworth (2010) in their study demonstrated that a safe school is a place free from violence and represented by an environment where there is no perceived fear with respect to the school or its disciplinary procedures.

This tells that in safe schools learners, teachers, staff and visitors are free to interact without fear or threats and in a supportive way, to improve teaching and learning. Hull (2010) claims that school safety includes the schools' culture and appropriate training and resources to respond to threats and hazards. School safety also means creating the safe environment for learners and teachers which include safety from any kind of abuse, violence, psycho-social issue, disaster: natural and manmade, fire and transportation. However, there are cases of violence, use of corporal punishment and bullying prevalent in schools as discussed below.

2.4 VIOLENCE IN SCHOOLS

Global trends suggest that violence in schools is worldwide problem and schools are not safe to promote any form of effective teaching and learning (Daluxolo & Moletsane, 2015). The World Health Organisation defines violence as the intentional use of physical force or power, threatened or actual against oneself, another person or against a group or community that results in injury, death or psychological harm (Clark, 2013). The root causes include gender and social norms and wider structural and contextual factors such as income, inequality, deprivation, marginalisation and conflict (Finlay, 2015).

2.4.1 International trends on school violence

From an international perspective, school violence has been experienced in countries like United Kingdom (James, 2010), United States of America (Roman & Murillo, 2012), Australia (Butler, 2014) and Ireland (Liversey, 2014). For example, in a study carried out in 2012 for Department of Education in Northern Ireland (DENI), the findings revealed that 40% of primary pupils and 30% of post primary pupils had been assaulted in schools (Ndebele & Msiza, 2014). The UNESCO (2014) Report confirms that school violence is a problem worldwide and globally about 720 million school age children are not fully protected in schools. Violence in these cases not only affects schools but it is also perpetuated at school (Mncube & Harber, 2014). Schools are not as safe as they should because of the prevailing violence that is in most cases caused by learners as well as teachers.

Furthermore, being a teacher has never been easy and in many parts of the world it is becoming increasingly difficult due to cases of violence (Pogge, 2013). This would seem to be true in Sweden where local education authority has just announced that it will ask the guardians of learners to sign a contract requiring them and their children to adopt a positive attitude towards teachers and the main reason being reports of violent incidents against teachers and pupils (Gross, 2015). Similarly, due to pervasiveness of violence in schools, a school is no longer a place to study and grow in peace but filled with confrontation and danger (Chelala, 2013).

A plea for positive attitude towards teachers is done to protect them from any form of violence at school and make the working conditions for them favourable and safe. A similar case of unsafe school environment is observable in the US where teachers in schools are likely to be threatened by learners and learners also threaten one another hence making the school an unsafe area (O'Callaghan, 2013). Reports on school violence include a case where a 14-year-old learner attending school in Ohio, USA, shot and killed two learners and two teachers a day before he had been suspended because of a fight with another learner at the same school (Young, 2015). Additionally, there is an alarming number of approximately 2.7 million victims of bullying which is a form of violence in American schools (Badri, 2014).

The issue of violence in schools where victims sometimes lose their lives or are injured reflects that schools are no more safe places at all. Violence at school often involves the use of weapons where pain is imposed on the victim through their usage (Mncube & Harber, 2014:12). Traditionally weapons prohibited on school grounds include firearms, explosives; knives and metal knuckles (Gareikitse & Plattner, 2016:12). Violence can take the form of physical injury as in assault. The utterance by the president of United States of America regarding arming the teachers following a Florida shooting incident had people questioning whether such a step would actually do any good (Letamo, Bowelo & Majelantle, 2016). Letamo et al., (2016) further indicate that, the Florida shooting was the deadliest school shooting since 2012 when 26 people were killed in Sandy Hook. Additionally, the BBC reported that hours after, two learners had died at school and 14 more were injured after a classmate opened fire outside a Kentucky school, Republican State Senator rushed to file a bill that would allow Kentucky schools to have armed marshals patrol the site in an attempt to improve safety (Holstead, King & Miller, 2015). The different issues of violence in schools reflect that safety in schools is a serious concern. Both teachers and learners are at risk of being affected by violence in schools and the situation in some cases gets serious that lives are sometimes lost. Moreover, in Argentina, a study revealed that almost a third of secondary learners report their belongings taken from them and the owners physically assaulted (Roman & Murillo, 2012).

Most of the learners, particularly violent ones take weapons to school (Ludick & Amone P' Olak, 2016). This puts the lives of teachers and learners in danger because injuries or death might be caused by the weapons learners take to school. The prevalence of violence in schools since media regularly informs the public about incidences of school violence, such as learners being assaulted and killed and learners using weapons like scissors, knives and firearms to injure each other has been common (Diraditsile, 2017). Educators and learners are portrayed as both victims and perpetrators in that the violent relationships include learners to learners, learners against teachers and teachers against learners (Jacobs, 2014).

Based on the statistics above, it can be seen that bullying is a form of violence that tampers with safety is prevalent in schools in international countries. Violence in schools does not only leave other learners as victims but also teachers. This is a result of learners who bring weapons at school and injure or kill teachers or other learners at school. Young (2015) further indicates that violence in different European countries comes in different forms which include bullying, corporal punishment in some countries as well as sexual violence. Forms of violence differ in schools and in some cases either teachers or learners are victims.

2.4.2 Trends on school violence in some African countries

Schools are uniquely positioned to deliver the quality education that is the right of every child and they offer children the opportunity to cultivate their talents, critical thinking, life skills and all children enjoy to be taught in a safe and stimulating environment (Beninger, 2013). For all children to enjoy while at school, the learning environment has to be safe and free from any danger or threat. However, trends on school violence suggest that schools do not guarantee the safe environment as learners are exposed to bullying, gender-based violence, corporal punishment and other forms of violence with or without approval of education authorities (Bhana, 2013). These forms of violence in schools demotivate teachers and learners hence affect their freedom. Recent media reports of violence in schools suggest that schools are not safe at all (Jele, 2018). This affects the teaching and learning in schools.

Africa is no exception to incidents of school violence. Bullying which is a form of violence prevalent in schools, has been reported in countries like Nigeria (Brown, 2015), South Africa (Altinyelken & Le Mat, 2018)) and Lesotho (Ngakane, Muthikrishna & Ngcobo, 2012; Mosia, 2015). Furthermore, Brown (2015) indicates that findings in a study carried out in a secondary school in Nigeria revealed that 62.4% of the respondents have been victims of school violence while 29.6% have been perpetrators of school violence.

Furthermore, in Nigeria, hardly does a day pass without an officially or unofficially report of one form of violence witnessed in schools and manifesting in different form such as bullying, shooting, sexual harassment and kidnapping among other (Idowu, 2014). Moreover, the state of school violence in South Africa has not improved in the last fifteen years (Health of Educators in Public Schools in South Africa, 2016). Additionally, the Health of Educators in Public Schools in South Africa (2016) stipulates that 20% of the teachers surveyed at 1380 schools feel that schools are violent and unsafe places. The high prevalence of violence in schools affects education negatively as teaching and learning has to stop. In South Africa, young people are the central focus in deliberations around crime and specifically violence related issues (Burton & Leoschut, 2017:23).

Research indicates that youth in South Africa is likely to engage in violent behaviour at schools and such aggressive behaviour often results in incidents of violence which seem to be aided by substance abuse, delinquency and gang involvement (Ntuli, 2015:55). According to Nconsta and Shumba (2013:2), the kind of violence that South African learners encounter at schools ranges from bullying, sexual assault, to being threatened with violence and robbery.

The increase of violence in South Africa proved to researchers that learning institutions are rapidly turning into places rife with violent behaviour not just among learners and educators but also learners from other schools and associated gang conflict. Moreover, violence in South African schools is considered to be very high and according to Grobler (2019), at one high school a student was stabbed to death by a fellow pupil. Additionally, on a different case, in one school, a learner apparently assaulted a teacher and made off with a cell phone (Mathews, 2013). As a result of extreme occurrences of violence in

schools, the schools are no longer safe and secure places where learners can learn, experience and feel protected.

The situation in schools shows that not only learners but also teachers are affected by the unsafe environment in schools. In Ntuli's (2015) view, new forms of violence affecting learners such as cyber bullying, are now emerging as a cause for concern. According to Harper and Clench (2015), cyber bullying is referred to as the use of digital technologies with intent to offend, humiliate, threaten, harass or abuse somebody. This form of violence impacts negatively to learners as well as teachers.

School violence does not only affect those who are directly victimised but also those who witness it. Matheolane (2014) demonstrates that violence creates an atmosphere of fear and insecurity at school which interferes with learning, stunts academic performance and impacts negatively on the long-term development of young people. The unfavourable environment at school makes those who are not directly affected by violence fear that they might be the next victims and they do not feel safe to be at school. According to Park and Cheong (2014:65), in a survey of teachers and learners in four Southern African countries (Swaziland, Namibia, Botswana and Lesotho) between 70% and 96% of respondents in Swaziland and Botswana respectively said that violence occurs in their schools. Some countries therefore in Africa seem to be experiencing the problem of school violence.

2.4.3 Trends of school violence in Lesotho

Lesotho is no different when it comes to incidents of school violence. The cases of violence in Lesotho schools reflect in different forms all of which tamper with safety of victims as well as witnesses of violence (Ngakane et al., 2012). For instance in one of the high schools, a learner stabbed and killed a fellow student in the school toilets during break (Maama, 2010). Furthermore, studies conducted in some of the schools in Lesotho acknowledge the existence of bullying in schools (Ngakane et al., 2012). Similarly, Mosia (2015) emphasises that bullying occurs in Lesotho schools and 41% of the victims are learners that have been bullied by other learners. Additionally, violence in Lesotho

schools is prevalent in different ways which include among others the use of corporal punishment where on one occasion, a learner in one of the schools in Lesotho was severely beaten by the principal using a belt at school. De Wet and Jacobs (2014) regards use of corporal punishment as normal as nothing is said or done when it is inflicted on learners in schools and ignore the fact that it inflicts pain on its victims.

Moreover, Pokothane (2011) argues that teachers abuse learners and demonstrate that corporal punishment in Lesotho is used to create unequal power relations between the teacher and learners. Teachers blame learners for actions of misconduct and underachieving and then decide that such offences are worthy of corporal punishment. Similarly, learners in Lesotho are beaten using sticks or belts and sometimes they are slapped on the face or pinched under the arm pits (Ngakane et al., 2012). In a study conducted by Isidiho (2009) in Lesotho high schools, the findings showed that more than one third of the learners who participated in the study were of the opinion that violence occurred at their school frequently and in most cases it was not reported.

School violence is a problem in schools worldwide that can make learners feel excluded in the schooling environment. It also violates the right to education in a safe and secure environment which is free from fear and humiliation. Similarly, fearful and unsafe teachers do not perform their duties well hence teaching at such schools is affected negatively. Lack of freedom and secure environment creates a learning barrier which might prevent teachers and learners from portraying their full potential violence in schools also occurs in different forms which include bullying, use of corporal punishment as well as sexual and gender-based violence which will be discussed below.

2.5 BULLYING IN SCHOOLS

Bullying in schools has become a worldwide problem (Centre for Disease Control, 2016); this has therefore led to the academic problem. Bullying is regarded as a form of low-level violence that can escalate and become physical or even lethal (Brewer, 2017). According to Mosia (2015:23), bullying can be aggressive behaviour displayed in an overt manner in physical and verbal attack. Bullying can also take a covert form that includes socially

excluding others and sending harmful messages about the victims. The negative impact bullying has on learners affects their courage and drive to perform well at school.

United Nation Charter (2016) asserts that children have a right to safe and secure environment: free of fear, harm and humiliation. Bullying therefore violates children's right to freedom and security. In this regard, Modeck, Harbough, Guerra, and Runions (2014) have observed that bullying deprives children of their rightful entitlement to go to school in a safe, just and caring environment as mandated by the United Nations Charter. If bullying occurs in schools the learner's right to safe environment is tampered with hence education is negatively affected. If bullying occurs in schools, it creates negative impact for the atmosphere at school since it threatens the victims as well as those who see it. Almost one in three learners has been bullied by their peers at school in one or more days (UNESCO, 2018). The high number of learners being bullied at school leaves a question on whether safety in schools is ensured.

Moreover, the high prevalence of bullying in schools affects the performance and school attendance of the victims. Bullying in schools has been a long standing concern for educationalists since it has been linked with a variety of negative child well-being outcomes which include anxiety, suicide, depression and violent behaviour (Graham, 2016). Bullying does not only affect the perpetrators but also the victims since the bullies might also be doing it due to some issues beyond their control or factors that need to be sorted out such as gangsterism and violence at home. Additionally, bullying has a negative impact on learners since it prevents them from learning in an environment that is harmonious and the issue of bullying affects the learner's interest and performance in schools (Reily, 2014).

Furthermore, the victim also is affected negatively and might consider the school environment as problematic and not a safe place hence the love for learning drops. Makafane and Khalanyane (2018) indicate that bullying prevents learners to learn in a harmonious way or sometimes it can lead learners particularly those who bully to engage in antisocial or delinquent behaviour such as vandalism or drug abuse as a way of proving their roughness or toughness. According to Radjev (2012), the results of bullying on perpetrators are negative since when caught they might resort to drug abuse which is

hazardous and can also result into school dropout. The problem of bullying therefore does not only lead to school dropout of victims who do not feel safe at school but also the bullies. Absence of bullying in schools can promote a learner friendly and safe school environment conducive to promote teaching and learning.

Bullying prevents learners from learning in a conducive environment since victims of bullying typically are very sad learners who suffer from fear, anxiety and low self-esteem because of bullying (Bauman & Yoon, 2014). This may result in school failure or poor attendance or avoidance of social interaction with peers. Some victims become so distressed that they commit or attempt to commit suicide. According to Mosia (2015), a few studies on bullying conducted in Lesotho indicate that the maltreatment of learners exists in schools. In Mosia's view when bullying goes unchecked, it is likely to result in learning being perceived as an unpleasant experience for learners who are victims. Again, it makes witnesses of bullying to be unsafe hence affects their learning at school.

The unfavourable school condition for victims of bullying hinders the smooth progress of learners at school. This can further result in lack of interest in school and high rate of learner dropout or poor academic performance. If the problem of bullying is not addressed or attended to, it may sometimes result in injuries or death. This is because bullies may use objects that are harmful to their victims. South Africa is no exception to the issue of bullying as a study in Republic of South Africa (RSA) by Ndebele and Msiza (2014) revealed that bullying manifests itself in screaming at others, kicking and beating, calling names, hurting and forcing others to do what they do not like. In some African countries which include Uganda, bullying takes different forms ranging from beating, forcing the victim to sing or dance, eating the victim's food stuff and teasing. Bullying causes both physical and emotional pain to the victim (Swearer & Hymel, 2015). Learners who are bullied at school in most cases feel depressed, anxious when bullying is physical victims are hurt or injured.

The most obvious way to stop bullying in schools is for parents to change the ways they parent their children at home for sometimes bullies come from homes where physical punishment is used and this teaches children that physical violence is the way to handle problems (WHO, 2014). This makes it difficult for teachers alone to solve if the root of

bullying originates at home. Research has shown that bullying usually comes from home where the parents fight excessively, so violence has been modelled for the children (Arshad & Aslam, 2017). As a result, it is the parents that need to help in controlling bullying in such instances. For schools to be able to fight and stop bullying in school there has to be a contribution from the parents, teachers and the community.

Besides, there are strict anti-bullying policies which are some of the effective ways to help stop bullying and violence in schools (Patchin & Hinduja, 2016). With school legislation, bullies would stop their bad practices of bullying at school in fear of facing charges of misconduct. The school's policy has to be aligned to the national policy or the school might help in the implementation of what the national policy says in relation to school safety if there is no policy at school. According to Jones and Augustine (2015:73), most schools have a written policy that outlines the expected behaviour of learners to keep the school environment safe. There are different factors that contribute in bullying and if not dealt with, learners might lose their lives at school, be injured as well as developing fear to continue with school. Section 8(1) of the Constitution of Lesotho states that "no person shall be subjected to torture or inhuman or degrading punishment or other treatment" (Kingdom of Lesotho, 1998). Bullying as one of the forms of violence in schools violates what is enshrined in the Constitution of Lesotho as it exposes people to torture or harm.

2.6 GENDER- BASED VIOLENCE

Sexual abuse includes any kind of sexual activity inflicted on an individual particularly by someone who is responsible for them or has power or control over them (Duncan, 2014). School gender based violence is defined as acts or threats of sexual, physical or psychological violence occurring in and around schools perpetrated as a result of gender norms (Handley, 2014). Education is critical in empowering and transforming the lives of young people yet widespread gender based violence in and around schools seriously undermines the achievement of quality, inclusive and equitable education for all children (Bhatla, 2014). Due to cases of sexual violence in schools, the desired purpose of providing education in a safe environment is not met. The unsafe working environment at

school affects the teachers and learners since it hinders smooth performance of the involved parties.

UNICEF (2014) reveals that sexual violence is common in the lives of many girls and data from 40 low and middle income countries shows that up to 10% of adolescent girls aged 15-19 reported incidences of forced sexual intercourse or other sexual acts. Gender based violence is considered predominantly as sexual violence and it is possible for gender based violence to occur anywhere in school both during class and after classes (Leach, Dunne & Salv, 2014). Mostly girls are victims who are harassed by their schoolmates or sometimes their teachers. According to Heslop and Parkes (2016) girls are sexually harassed by boys through physical contact and by making sexual advances as well as teachers' use of derogatory language with regard to the physical appearance and intellectual ability of female learners.

Sexual violence varies from school to school but the teacher's behaviour and traditional gender stereotypes are key factors (Gadin, 2012). The reluctance of teachers and school authorities in reporting or responding seriously to complaints of sexual abuse, teachers and school authorities convey the message that sexual abuse will be tolerated (Bekele, 2011). Consequently there will be hesitancy in reporting sexual abuse of learners as they realise that it is not considered as a serious issue or not much attention is drawn from cases of sexual abuse. Moreover, victims are often reluctant to report sexual violence and abuse because of concerns about stigmatisation, lack of confidence that the school will take action, and limited willingness to confide in teachers for fear of retaliation (Espelage, 2012). Additionally, other factors which contribute to increased sexual violence in African countries include a belief that AIDS can be cured by having sex with a virgin (Jele, 2018). In such cases adolescents who are considered virgins become the major victims. Male teachers therefore get tempted to sexually abuse young girls they regard to be virgins with the belief that AIDS will be cured.

According to Stout and Suvilako (2013), evidence from Southern African Federation of the Disabled suggests that this practice has extended to include sexual abuse of learners in schools for the deaf people. School related gender based violence and its negative consequences are receiving increased attention globally and Uganda is no exception to

this as research studies report that in Uganda, 8% of 16 and 17 year old girls had sex with their teachers and boys at their school (Naker, 2015). Approximately 30% of sexual violence experienced by school girls has been committed by male learners while some of the teachers are perpetrators of sexual abuse and exploitation often acting with impunity (Dever, 2015). It is common for teachers to promise female learners higher grades in exchange for sex.

Learners therefore feel tempted to agree to sexual abuse with the teacher regarding it as an advantage to secure more marks from the subject taught by the teacher. Additionally, teachers sometimes threaten girls with bad grades when forcing them to have sex with them (Leach et al., 2014:12) Girls feel obliged to engage in sex with their teachers for fear of being victimised at school. Mullis (2012:23), claims that sexual violence undermines the victim's self-esteem, contributes to poor performance at school, encourages drop out and increases the likelihood of engaging in risky sexual behaviour at an early age.

Sometimes learners fear to report and opt to change schools. Again a victim of sexual harassment is exposed to sexually transmitted infections which include HIV/AIDS, especially if no protection is used during sexual intercourse. Unreported, sexual harassment may result in unwanted pregnancy. This further results in poverty as sometimes it might be difficult for the parents to support their daughter and the baby.

According to Brock (2014), sexual violence forms a major barrier to girls' and young women's access to education and their ability to benefit from it. Additionally, in Africa, a number of studies stress that fear or experience of sexual violence is a major reason why some girls underperform at school or drop out and this is reflected in their lower enrolment rates at secondary level (Brock, 2014). Most of the girls drop out from school due to pregnancy which is sometimes a result sexual violence and this reduces the number of girls at school. They drop out because of the fear of being discriminated against by their peers due to pregnancy or sometimes being victimised by the teachers who have been sexually abusing them now that they are pregnant. In addition, girls drop out because of many cases of sexual violence at their school so they might fear to become victims.

Most of the learners that are sexually harassed are miserable at school and very secretive. In cases where learners feel unable to report sexual violence because of guilt

or fear of negative repercussions, they often turn to alcohol or drug abuse in an effort to cope with their experience (Brock, 2014). This therefore affects their school performance as sometimes due to high consumption of alcohol, they might miss school hence affecting their academic performance. According to UNESCO (2013) studies from different regions reveal the extent of sexual violence in schools and it seems to be very high. A study in Netherlands found 27% of learners had been sexually harassed by school personnel (Mncube & Harber, 2014). There are various cases of sexual assault in South African schools which include the case against a former Bryanston High School sports coach who is accused of harassing four pupils at school (Masilela, 2019). These incidents of sexual abuse in schools prove that learners are sexually assaulted and this interferes with their safety in schools.

It becomes difficult to curb the problem of school based sexual violence when those who are there to protect learners become perpetrators of sexual violence. Law and policy tend to take account of the fact that sexual violence in schools affects learners and some of the practices to address this issue include: development and enforcement of gender sensitive anti-violence regulations including systematic reporting of offences and holding perpetrators accountable, training police officers to deal with crimes of sexual violence and court intermediaries to support child victims and training youth leaders to tackle school violence especially empowering young people to stand up to and report violence (Moitlakgola & Amone P'Olak, 2016).

The problem of school based sexual violence needs a contribution of different people in order to control and stop it. In schools, teachers, parents, learners, as well as school board members have to work together to fight school sexual violence. The role that has to be played by teachers is to encourage and empower learners to report any form of sexual violence they encounter irrespective of who the perpetrator is. Again teachers and school managers need to listen and take action to the reports of learners on sexual violence at school in order to show them that sexual violence is worth reporting for if no action is taken victims will not see a reason to report.

2.7 WAYS OF DISCIPLINING LEARNERS

In teaching and learning both the teacher and the learner perform different duties and sometimes learners are forced to perform their duties or to behave in a particular manner. This is where different measures are employed in order to drive learners in doing their roles or behaving in an acceptable manner. According to Moyo, Khewu and Bayaga (2014:12), schools face a number of challenges related to disruptive and antisocial learners since their behaviour interferes with learning, diverts administrative time and contributes to teacher burnout. Consequently, most of the time that could be used for teaching and learning in school is scheduled to try and discipline learners. Afifi and Macmillan (2013:23) argue that schools typically respond to disruptive learners with external discipline which consists of sanctions and punishment such as office referrals, corporal punishment, suspensions and expulsions.

Nevertheless, these forms of discipline present a short term fix to what might be a long term problem and in such cases the disciplinary measure used does not serve the desired purpose as learners will only change temporarily after being punished (Tafa, 2002). The common means that has been used by teachers to discipline learners is corporal punishment. There is consensus in literature as corporal punishment is defined as a physical force used by someone in the position of authority against someone in his or her care with the intention of causing pain or discomfort so as to correct the misbehaviour (Dodge, 2015; Hyland, Alkhaf & Whalley, 2013).

As school administrators and teachers use corporal punishment in schools, to deal with deviance, some pupils find themselves pulling out of school due to non-conformity or non-tolerance to the measure applied to them (Gudyanga, Mbengo & Wadesango, 2014). Instead of serving the desired purpose of instilling acceptable behaviour in learners, corporal punishment yields into drop out. Gudyanga et al. (2014) further questions whether when corporal punishment is administered is the unacceptable behaviour of learners is fixed or whether the pain on the flesh rehabilitates one's behaviour. There seems to be no clear link on how inflicting pain on learners results into compliance or encouraging acceptable behaviour of learners.

In Cameroon, corporal punishment in schools is illegal but teachers make no secret of using corporal punishment and 97% of learners reported they had been physically punished (Mackenzie, Nicklas & Waldfogel, 2013). This is a clear reflection that many teachers still consider corporal punishment as the most appropriate means of disciplining learners. Research carried out in Benin found out that 41% of teachers and 79% of school children reported that corporal punishment is used in their schools (Gershoff, 2017). Despite the impacts of corporal punishment on learner's development; teachers still use it as a means of disciplining learners. In some countries where corporal punishment is illegal, parents explicitly authorise teachers to beat their children if they misbehave as they do at home (Holden, Brown & Carderao, 2014). In such instances teachers feel free to corporally punish learners as they have been permitted by their parents.

Parents in some countries allow teachers to use corporal punishment on their children because they also consider it to be the best disciplinary method (Schumba, Mpofo, Chireshe & Mafumo, 2009; Makwanya, Moyo & Nyenya, 2012), South Africa (Crocker & Pete, 2009), Botswana (Tafa, 2002), Kenya (Mweru, 2010) and Tanzania (Fiestein & Mwahombela, 2009). The issue of corporal punishment is defended in the name of tradition since it has been used earlier and for some parents it does not seem easy to see its harmful effects.

Corporal punishment is still prevalent in schools and it disrupts the safety of learners. United States of America is no exception in use of corporal punishment since corporal punishment is currently legal in schools in 19 states and over 160000 children in these states are subject to corporal punishment each year (Dupper, 2014). Children have been corporally punished in schools for being late to class, failing to turn in homework, violating dress codes talking back to teachers and receiving bad grades (Xu, 2014). According to Yaghambe and Tshabangu (2013), in North Carolina, 63% of the cases of corporal punishment in 2013- 2014 school year were for disruptive behaviour, fighting, aggression and bullying

In contrast some countries banned corporal punishment on the basis that it is more likely to cause children to act violently than to improve the behaviour and there is no evidence that corporal punishment improves the children's' academic achievement (Agbenyega,

2013). Additionally, Agbenyega (2013) stipulates that any form of physical punishment which includes corporal punishment predisposes to physical illnesses such as cardiovascular disease and decreased volume of cerebral grey matter. Instead of correcting unacceptable behaviour, corporal punishment seems to be bringing many health problems to its victims. In terms of psychological health, corporal punishment predisposes to aggression, delinquency, and conjugal violence later in life and personality disorder (Schneider, Mackenzie & Waldfoegel, 2015). Some of the results of corporal punishment affect the future of the victims since they determine the social being of one in future. According to Greshoff (2017), there is a link between a slow regression of cognitive development as well as negative effects on academic pathway

Nonetheless, corporal punishment is likely to have an opposite and undesired effect. Rather than reducing inappropriate behaviour among learners, the use of corporal punishment teaches children that the use of physical aggression is normative and is an appropriate method to solve conflicts. Corporal punishment seems to negatively affect the learners and some of its effects might be long term and it does not seem to be helping the learners but instead very harmful. However, the fact that corporal punishment can easily escalate to physical abuse is not a valid reason to brand corporal punishment as physical abuse and further attribute all the negative consequences and experiences from physical abuse to corporal punishment (Lanford, Sharma & Malone, 2014).

Smith (2012) states that to make schools safe means cracking down violence which is committed by some principals and teachers who continue to illegally use corporal punishment. Discipline means teaching acceptable behaviour and unlearning maladaptive behaviour with support, guidance and direction in managing behaviour (Arcus, 2012). Most of the teachers consider corporal punishment as the most appropriate form of discipline unaware that it does not discipline but exposes learners to violence and turn the school environment into an unsafe area. Disciplining of learners and children may be in various ways which entail setting limits, clarifying roles, responsibilities, and expectations (Basher, 2012). In this way teachers and parents may opt for other disciplinary measures besides corporal punishment. Corporal punishment intends grievous bodily harm and violates the basic rights of the child. In an attempt to protect

learners and prohibit teachers from using corporal punishment, which is harmful to learners, most schools have a written policy which outlines that teachers need not use any form of corporal punishment to learners (Nwafor, 2015).

According to Basher (2012), most countries banned the use of corporal punishment in schools and introduced alternatives to corporal punishment. Naong (2012) suggests that teachers link the growing problem of indiscipline in schools to the banning of corporal punishment in schools. Teachers believe that corporal punishment has been useful in disciplining learners and claim that other forms of punishment do not seem effective. Some of the measures that may be used to discipline learners include verbal warnings, detention, effective communication between the teachers and learners and small menial physical tasks (Moyo, Khewu & Bayaga, 2014). Most of the teachers felt that forms of punishment besides corporal punishment are not appropriate and not helpful in disciplining learners.

Effective prohibition of corporal punishment requires clear, unambiguous statement in legislation (Durant & Enson, 2012). If the idea that the use of corporal punishment is banned is not precise and clear, it persists that inflicting pain on the child in the name of discipline is acceptable, normal or even in their best interest. In cases where there is a school or national policy that discourages use of corporal punishment, teachers simply help in putting the policy into practice by using other disciplinary measures that do not expose learners to any harm. This will help in promoting the safety of learners at school hence make the school environment conducive for learning. Teachers need to be made aware of all the effects of corporal punishment. Mostly, it is used to solicit a positive response from the learners, but the long term effects of corporal punishment can result in development of a future generation that is violent.

In some countries, means of stimulating the desired behaviour from the learners is believed to be by use of physical punishment. Such countries argue that the use of corporal punishment or hitting a child is considered the right of parents and teachers (Gershoff, 2017). In countries where corporal punishment in schools is not considered an offence or where laws against beating children are not strictly enforced, the use of corporal punishment is affected by the teacher's feelings on the use of punishment. A

positive outcome of corporal punishment is a benefit of immediate compliance (Silbert, 2013). Learners, who are punished corporally, observe the teachers' instruction and immediately respond accordingly with the desired behaviour.

Corporal punishment therefore acts as disciplinary measure that helps teachers to enforce learners to comply and obey the instruction with immediate effect. Corporal punishment in schools continues a cycle of similar punishment that may have already occurred in the home that led to increased aggressiveness in the child. Children who are spanked or are subjected to other corporal punishment means in the home may arrive already programmed to be aggressive and corporal punishment in schools in this case only perpetuates the cycle of violence (Shongwe, 2013). In Lesotho, teachers continue to use corporal punishment to instil discipline and to discourage poor performance (Ngakane et al., 2012:12) and they do not view it as a violation of learners' human rights.

2.7.1 Legal status on corporal punishment in Lesotho schools

In Lesotho, the Constitution is the supreme law of the county. The protection of fundamental human rights and freedom are enshrined under Chapter II and unlike the South African Constitution, it does not have exclusive Bill of Rights for children Section 8 (1):

No person shall be subjected to torture or to inhuman or degrading punishment or other treatment. (2): nothing contained in or done under the authority of any law shall be held to be inconsistent with or in contravention of this Section to the extent that the law in question authorises the infliction of any description of punishment that was lawful in Lesotho immediately before the coming into operation of this Constitution.

Moreover, in 2011 the Children's Protection and Welfare Act was passed and its objectives are contained in Section 2 thereof. Section 2(1) states that the objects of this Act are to extend, promote and protect rights of children as defined in the 1989 United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, the 1990 African Charter on the Rights

and Welfare of the Child and other international instruments, protocols, standards and rules on the protection and welfare of children to which Lesotho is a signatory.

Section 16 (1) a child has a right to be protected from torture or other cruel, inhumane, or degrading treatment, or punishment, including any culture practice which degrades or is injurious to the physical, psychological, emotional and mental well-being of the child. Conduct of learners and teachers is regulated under Education Act No.3 of 2010. Section 4(4) of the Education Act provides that a learner shall not be subjected to cruel, inhuman and degrading punishment (Kingdom of Lesotho, 2010). Although, the Education Act in line with the Constitution of Lesotho which fully protects learners from any form of punishment and torture, corporal punishment is still prevalent in Lesotho schools as well as other forms of violence which on several occasions are perpetrated by male learners (Matheolane, 2014). Most violence in schools is perpetrated by boys (De Wet, 2007) and this type of violence in the view of Bhana (2013) may be seen as a violent expression of masculinity.

2.7.2 Legal status on corporal punishment in South African schools

In schools, children have been corporally punished for being late to class, failing to turn in homework, violating dress code and receiving bad grades (Yousif & Mohammed, 2015). Corporal punishment has been abolished in South African schools since 1996 (Agbenyega, 2013). However, despite the legal provisions, there is evidence of continued use of physical punishment within South African schools as a means of effecting discipline. Many South African learners are harmed in the exercise of discipline at home and at school. In most cases corporal punishment as a form of violence is used and claimed to be a disciplinary measure at home and at school. Research indicates that 49% of the learners claim to have been caned or spanked by an educator or principal as punishment for wrongdoing (Brown, 2015).

The use of corporal punishment in schools is against the law South Africa even though some teachers still use it in school. The Constitution is the supreme law of the Republic of South Africa; it sets out the fundamental rights of children under the Bill of Rights as

contained under Section 28. Not only is the Constitution important in that it contains Bill of Rights, but it also recognises international law when interpreting Bill of Rights under Section 39(1) (b). Section 2 thereof declares that any law or conduct that is inconsistent with the Constitution is invalid as it is the supreme law.

The Constitution also entails Bill of Rights and Section 7(1) and (2) indicate that the state is obliged to respect, protect, promote and fulfil the rights set out in the Bill of Rights. Children as human beings have entitlements to rights as provided in the Constitution. Such rights and entitlements are entrenched in Section 12(1) (c), being the right to be protected against violence. Aside from these general entitlements, the Constitution affords children exclusive protection under Section 28 of the Bill of Rights. Section 28(1) (d) provides that every child has a right to be protected from maltreatment, neglect, abuse or degradation. Teachers in schools therefore need to stop using corporal punishment since it violates learners' rights to freedom from any form of violence.

Additionally, Section 28(2) provides that a child's best interests are of paramount interests in every matter concerning. Before the new constitutional order and new legislative proposals, the legal position regarding chastisement of children by their parents was regulated by South African common law, whereby a parent or a person in loco parentis could in the course of maintaining authority and discipline over a child and in pursuance of the interests of a child's education chastise such a child with moderate and reasonable corporal punishment.

However, this changed and the Constitutional Court declared corporal punishment of juvenile offenders to be in violation of their rights to dignity and to protection against cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment, acknowledging the potential of corporal punishment to erode children's regard for a culture of decency and respect for the rights of others. Corporal punishment is violent and a degrading assault and is not compatible with human dignity. Furthermore, South African's international obligations under Conventions such as the CAT and UNCRC dictate the abolition of corporal punishment in schools since children are subjected to degrading punishment and violence. As if the law is silent about corporal punishment, Gina (2014) argues that abolishment of corporal punishment seems to be ignored by some schools in Kwazulu-Natal despite the bitter consequences

legislated by administering it. This further questions the safety at school since through corporal punishment; it is the teachers and principals who are considered to help in safety enhancement who promote school based violence in the form of corporal punishment.

2.8 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This section discusses invitational theory and explains the principles and pillars of the theory where emphasis is on creation of an inviting and friendly environment. Dimensions of the invitational theory are based on four main principles which give the theory its aim and direction. These principles are trust, respect, optimism and intentionality. This theory also outlines five domains that exist in almost every environment that contribute to the success or failure of human endeavour (Venketsamy, Sing & Smart, 2020). The domains referred to are people, places, policies, process and programmes. According to Purkey and Novak (2015) people as the first domain refers to teachers and other staff members at school who need to contribute to the establishment of an inviting environment. Additionally, places as another domain refers to the physical attribute of the classroom and the school which also need to contribute to creation of a friendly environment (Purkey & Novak, 2015). The classroom and the school setting have to be in a manner that does not leave either teachers or learners threatened, hence ensuring safety. Policies refer to written or unwritten rules regarding procedures that govern the school which include policies on discipline that need to be in a manner that contribute to an inviting environment that makes teachers and learners to safe (Venketsamy et al., 2020).

The development of policies in schools need to have directives that promote creation of inviting environment. Programmes refer to the curriculum and content for learners at school and process as another domain examines how the other four domains are conducted. All the domains of invitational theory link to one another to ensure creation of an inviting environment. People in a school setting refer to learners and teachers who have to work together to create a friendly school environment. The school being a place where teaching and learning take place has to be conducive and safe to encourage both teachers and learners to be at school. In order to create a friendly and inviting environment at school, there has to be policies that are formulated and implemented to

ensure safety in schools. Invitational theory claims that these five domains make schools more socially appealing and safe (Hattie, 2015). In the case of school, people refer to teachers and learners who need to help in creation of a friendly environment and policies that can help to create an inviting environment through directives. Safe schools therefore motivate teachers and learners and enable them to reach their potential.

Steyn (2010) indicate that invitational theory has a significant impact on the quality of learning and teaching as the school environment contributes in making learners and teachers to feel welcome and safe to be at school. An inviting school environment encourages teachers and learners to be at school hence enable them to perform to the best of their ability. Through this theory it becomes easy to create a friendly and inviting environment based on trust, respect, policies as domains and principles of the theory. Teachers and learners like all people need to work in an environment that is friendly and welcoming.

The focus of the study is on the schools where there are teachers and learners who need to work in a friendly environment in order to motivate them to carry out their different duties. The study proceeds with the assumption that schools need to ensure that the environment is friendly and inviting to enable teachers and learners to perform their duties hence enhance the performance of both teachers and learners. Creation of an inviting environment may be attained in different ways in schools which include use of policies, respect between teachers and learners as well as trustworthiness. According to Van Deventer and Kruger (2003) teachers and learners play key role in the development of the tone and ethos that are conducive to teaching and learning and in the process of building a safe friendly and inviting school environment.

Based on respect as a principle of invitational theory, if teachers and learners in schools respect one another, it becomes easy to work together in the creation of a friendly environment that will encourage and invite them to be at that place (Riner, 2003). Teachers and learners can therefore be able to perform to the best of their ability in an environment that is free from any harm. A safe and inviting school environment is best realised by creating and maintaining welcoming places, policies, processes and programmes (Curwin, 2012). Schools therefore need to create environments that are

friendly and safe. As schools seek to improve the academic performance, there is a need to create physically and emotionally safe environments for everyone at school. Invitational theory, advocates for a learning environment that is inviting and friendly to encourage teachers and learners to be at school. Hernandez et al. (2010) support invitational theory that a safe school is a place free from violence and represented by an environment where there is no fear and teachers and learners treat one another with respect.

The relevance of this theory to this study is based on its advocacy to create learning and teaching environment that is friendly, safe and inviting to promote effective teaching and learning. This theory provides a framework for making schools a more exciting, satisfying and enriching experience for all members of the school community through creation of an inviting and safe environment (Steyn, 2010). The theory further asserts that everybody in and around the school has the potential to add to school safety. In a school setting therefore, teachers and learners have the potential to add to or improve safety at their respective schools. Safety in schools allows learners and staff to look forward to being in an encouraging environment, promoting social and creative learning (Applebury & Mubita, 2021). If by any chance the environment at school is not friendly and inviting, learners might perform worse academically and teachers might not carry out their duties freely at school (Concordia University, 2016).

2.9 CONCLUSION

Learners and teachers need to work in an environment that attracts and invites them. Learners need to feel safe and free to learn, parents need it to track the educational progress of their sons and daughters, teachers need it to become better teachers and school administrators need it to ensure every facet of the schools they manage continues to improve. Safe schools are best realised by creating and maintaining inviting places, policies, programmes and process by people who are inviting with themselves and others. Rather than relying on one programme, one policy and one process, invitational education addresses the mood and spirit within the school. Invitational education also has a wider focus of application than traditional efforts to make school safe. Motivation that is enhanced by a friendly environment is helpful to all people who are members of the school

community as well as parents who have influence on their children who are learners at school. Although teachers cannot control all aspects of motivation, they can do a lot to help the learners and motivate them by creation of an environment that is violence free.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter describes the methodology used in undertaking this study. The chapter first describes the interpretive paradigm adopted by this study including research approach designs associated with the chosen paradigm, sampling procedures, data collection instruments, data sources data analysis procedures followed in the study. An aspect of data analysis described in the chapter also relates to how credibility and trustworthiness of the study were ensured.

3.2 RESEARCH PARADIGM

The study adopted interpretive paradigm. According to Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2007), a researcher in interpretivism seeks to understand the world in its natural context. Additionally, Chowdhury (2014) defines interpretivism as an approach which focuses on meaningful nature of people's character and participation in both social and cultural life, stating that people's knowledge is reality and is created by them. In interpretive paradigm, the interpretations, meaning and understanding of the participants on what they do is considered. In interpretivism, meaning is derived from the interpretation participants give of what they are doing.

Furthermore, interpretive paradigm is underpinned by interpretation; as a researcher, there is influence on how people view the phenomenon under study, once participants have expressed their experiences. Moreover, Canon (2014) states that in interpretivism, researchers address the process of interaction among people and note that as their own backgrounds shape their interpretation; they must acknowledge how their interpretation moves from their personal, cultural and historical experiences. In this study, teachers were allowed to express their views on the challenges they face at school which interrupt their safety and what safety measures are taken in their schools. Through interpretive

paradigm, the researcher gained understanding of the views and experiences teachers have and interpretations they give in relation to school safety issues. Additionally, the study followed this paradigm as it enabled the researcher to get the interpretations of school safety and violent activities that occur in schools.

3.3 RESEARCH APPROACH

In line with the interpretive paradigm, a qualitative approach was adopted in which participants were afforded the opportunity to articulate their judgements, feelings of comfort, emotions, ideas and beliefs in words (Tinyiko, 2014).

Denzin and Lincoln (2005) describe qualitative research as involving an interpretive naturalistic approach to the world. This means that qualitative researchers study things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of or interpreting the phenomena in terms of meanings people bring to them. Through the responses from the participants, the researcher was able to get the understanding teachers have in relation to ensuring safety in schools. The approach enabled the study to capture opinions and understanding from teachers on what measures are put into place in schools to ensure a safe learning environment. This study has enabled the researcher to explore in a detailed manner in which safety is ensured in schools.

3.4 RESEARCH DESIGN

Research design describes the procedure for conducting the study, including when, from whom and under what conditions data was obtained (Macmillan & Schumacher, 2010: 346). The study adopted a case study which looks at a single unit as a point of interest. Case study is referred to as a development of detailed, intensive knowledge about a case or small number of related cases (Robson, 2012).

A case study is distinguished from other types of qualitative research in that, it is an intensive description and analysis of a single unit or bounded system (Henning, 2008). This is one of the ways of doing research in order to understand human beings by

interpreting their actions as a group, community or event. Through case study, the researcher explored school safety models adopted by the selected schools to ensure safety in their area as well as what instances learners consider to be threatening and unsafe for them in schools. This study used the case of five high schools in Berea district.

3.5 SAMPLING PROCEDURE

According to Kumar (2011), the major consideration in purposive selection of participants is the judgement as to who can supply the needed information so that the objectives of the study are achieved. This involves identifying and selecting individuals or groups of individuals that were specifically knowledgeable about or experienced with a phenomenon of interest. Purposive selection helps identify information- rich cases (Patton, 2002).

Purposive selection in this study enabled the researcher to obtain information from the right population. Creswell (2014) states that the idea behind qualitative is to purposefully select participants who will best help the researcher understand the question. For this study five principals and a group of three teachers from each school were selected through purposeful sampling as they were likely to provide the relevant information based on experience and responsibility they have of safety issues in schools. Male teachers were selected as participants because in most cases according to literature males are perpetrators of sexual abuse in schools.

Principals form part of the school management team and normally engage in many activities in schools which include ensuring safety. Their experience in what their schools are doing or have encountered in relation to safety issues benefit to the study. Teachers from different departments were selected to form focus groups because from their departments there are issues related to safety that they deal with where teachers and learners are involved. The five high schools selected have similar committee which are sports committee, disciplinary committee as well as heads of different subjects at school. Selection of the five high schools was purposive and they were selected based on their geographical location where one of the selected schools in the urban area had cases of

violence where one learner was stabbed by another at school. The other four schools in the same district and urban area had no reported cases of violence.

3.6 DATA COLLECTION METHODS

In line with the chosen paradigm and research design, interviews as well as document analysis were used to collect data for this study. Semi-structured interviews schedule for five principals were developed. Principals were interviewed due to their experience in carrying out managerial duties for the school. Semi-structured interviews were relevant in this study since they gave the researcher room for follow-up questions during interviews to find out and understand views of teachers and principals in relation to school safety. The follow-up questions during interviews gave the researcher a clear understanding of the responses from teachers and principals on safety issues in schools. Focus group interviews were conducted with three teachers from each school grouped together. Teachers and principals were asked different questions because of the different roles they play at school.

3.6.1 Focus group interview

Focus group interviews were conducted with participants in all the five schools. The focus group interviews were conducted with teachers from different departments and committee at the selected schools. Focus group interview according to Nachmais (2008) is advantageous since it is a socially oriented procedure, relatively of low cost and has high face of validity.

Again, focus group interviews yield a more realistic picture of the phenomenon with some participants debating the issues discussed (Bryman, 2012). Participants in focus group interviews expressed their views on the subject under discussion, reflect upon it, clarify on it and may even contest one another's attributions. Participants for focus group interviews were members from different school committee which include school disciplinary committee, sports committee, and head of one of the subjects. These

members of the different committee were selected because they deal with issues where safety of learners has been compromised. For instance, during sporting activities learners sometimes fight, members of the disciplinary committee deal with many issues related to behaviour of learners or discipline while heads of subject departments deal with the well-being of teachers and learners in terms different subjects. Their experience in dealing with different issues at school that include school safety enabled them to give out what happens in schools in relation to safety of learners and teachers.

3.6.2 Semi-structured interviews

According to William (2011), interviews are suitable for questions probing so that adequate information is obtained. Semi-structured interviews were meant to be conducted with five teachers from each school and lasted for approximately 20-25 minutes. However, only three teachers from each school were interviewed since it was not easy to find five teachers from each school as school were closed and some had a fear of travelling during the lockdown. Semi-structured interviews were also conducted with principals of all the selected schools at different times. The meeting with the each principal was easy to convene since it was only the researcher and the principal. This instrument was used because it encourages two-way communication between the interviewer and interviewee and provide an opportunity so that the interviewer can learn answers to questions and the reasons behind the answers (Dixon & Singleton, 2013). Similarly, semi-structured interviews provide room for follow-up questions and this makes it easy for both the interviewer and interviewee to understand each other. Furthermore, semi-structured interviews allow both the interviewer and the person being interviewed the flexibility to go into details when needed and can provide a reliable comparable qualitative data.

Likewise, semi-structured interviews are most appropriate in generating rich data since the researcher would be able to probe for deep reflection and explore measures schools have in place to ensure school safety. Additionally, semi-structured interviews grant the opportunity for the interviewee to elaborate and add more questions, all of which feeds into the generation of more rich data. The researcher used semi-structured interviews for

this study and where need arose provided room for follow up questions so that both the interviewer and interviewee had a common understanding on the questions asked and the responses provided that relate to school safety.

3.6.3 Document analysis

Different documents were analysed in this study including, The Constitution of Lesotho (1998), Child Friendly School Standards (2012), Child and Welfare Protection Act (2011), and the Education Act (2010). These documents were considered for analysis because they have directives that deal with protection of human beings inclusive of teachers and learners in schools. The Constitution is not only the supreme law of Lesotho and has different rights and freedoms of human beings but also stipulates different freedoms which include freedom from any form of torture or degrading punishment. Teachers and learners like any other human beings need to be free from any torture as indicated in the Constitution. School community has different members including children who need to be protected regardless of their location.

The Child and Welfare Act supports protection of children from harm and avoidance of their right to education. Schools therefore need to promote protection of children. The Education Act governs schools directly and some of the directives in it have to address the issue of safety in schools. The Education Act in line with the Constitution advocates for safety of learners since it stipulates that no learner shall be subjected to any form of degrading punishment. Learners need to feel free at school and whatever form of punishment is used at school need not expose them to any form of torture or be a degrading punishment. This study considered analysis of documents in schools that help in promoting school safety. Teachers and learners need to help in ensuring that the developed school safety documents are put into practice. Schools need to have policies that promote safety in schools to protect learners and teachers from any harm while at school.

3.7 PARTICIPANT SELECTION

Participants were purposely selected. This is because purposive sampling allows the researcher to gather qualitative responses which leads to better insights and more precise research results. Information is collected from the most suited participants, hence giving results that are relevant to the research (Long, 2014). According to Malterud, Siersma, and Guassora (2015), and Dworkin (2012), a qualitative study focuses on maintaining a close relationship between the researcher and participants which allows more in-depth data to be generated. The choice of the five high schools was based on their geographical location as well as the cases of violence reported in those schools.

One school in the urban area had a case of a learner who was stabbed to death by another learner from the same school while the four other schools had no reported cases of assault or violence. Teachers were selected in terms of the positions they hold at school. The focus groups were formed by a teacher from the disciplinary committee, sports committee as well as one teacher from the head of the subject department. One member from the three committee; sports committee, disciplinary committee as well as head of subject department were selected to form the groups. The groups were represented by those teachers because of their roles in monitoring sports activities, disciplining learners and monitoring teaching and learning in different subjects. All the duties of the different committee therefore have to take place in a safe environment and the committee needs to help in ensuring safety. Principals and teachers were selected based on the different roles they play to ensure safety in schools. Focus groups were formed by two male teachers and one female. The purpose for selecting male teachers is in most cases they are perpetrators of sexual abuse which affects safety in schools as indicated by literature.

3.8 DATA ANALYSIS METHOD

Data analysis is an important stage of the research process as Creswell (2014) states that data analysis involves making meaning out of text and image and representing the data and making an interpretation of the larger meaning of the data. The study adopted

content analysis approach. According to Kothari (2012) content analysis consists of analysing the contents of all verbal or printed data and mostly qualitative analysis involving deriving message from existing documents. Several steps are involved in content analysis and the following were observed in analysing data for this study. The document analysis undertaken in this study has the advantage of corroborating the information obtained via the interviews and assist in highlighting how safety can be ensured in schools. The researcher compared the responses from the participants with the chosen documents and got a picture of whether there is a relationship between the documents and responses.

3.8.1 Data Editing

In the analysis of data, condensation was applied according to the prescript of Erlingson and Brysiewicz, (2017), it is a process of shortening the text but still maintaining the meaning. From the data collected, the responses of the participants were shortened and in doing that, the researcher made sure not to distort the main message communicated by the participants. The researcher shortened the responses from the participants without tampering with their meaning. The responses from the principals were shortened yet still conveyed the same meaning and the responses from teachers who were selected for focus groups were also shortened. The researcher went through all the responses from the participants and shortened too long responses and made sure that the meaning is not changed.

3.8.2 Coding

The second step taken in data analysis was to code the condensed information. Coding is a label that mostly describes what the condensed meaning is about (Erlingson & Brysiewicz, 2017). According to William (2011) coding is necessary for efficient analysis and through it several replies may be reduced to a small number of classes which contain critical information required for analysis. In this study, the researcher assigned codes for answers which carry similar meaning to reduce the size of the data. Teachers whose

responses were the same or had the same meaning were grouped together under the same code. The responses on school safety initiatives that had a similar meaning were coded. This applied to responses from both teachers and principals. The responses from teachers and principals of different schools were grouped together. Again, responses from teachers who were grouped were also considered and were not taken to be responses from individual teachers.

3.8.3 Assignment of themes

The third step was assignment of themes which according to Erlingson and Brysiewicz (2017) is grouping together codes that are related to each other through their context. Kumar (2011) states that in identifying the main themes one needs to go carefully through descriptive responses given by the respondents to each question in order to understand the meaning they communicate. In this step, the researcher grouped codes together that made up the theme, that is, forms of school safety measures as well as practices were grouped together to make one theme.

After themes were identified, data was analysed and presented. Kothari (2012) argues that the term analysis refers to the computation of certain measures along with searching for patterns and relationship that exist among data groups. On the same matter, Kumar (2011), pointed out that the way collected data is analysed depend largely on the type of information as well as the way one wants to communicate the findings. The researchers used different themes in this study which are models of school safety, cases of learner-to-learner fighting, safety policies in schools and disciplinary measures used in school. The themes were formulated in line with the research questions. Document analysis was also considered and incorporated in the appropriate themes. The different directives from the documents analysed were merged with the themes used in this study.

3.9 ETHICAL CONSIDERATION

Working with people calls for consideration of certain factors so that at the end participants are not negatively affected by the research. Working with human participants in research always raises ethical issues about how participants are treated as there is a need to treat them with respect before, during and after the research is completed. (William, 2011). Ethical issues are present in any kind of research and sometimes the research process can display harm, in order to prevent tension, ethics pertain to doing well and avoiding harm that can be prevented or reduced through the application of appropriate ethical issues (Orb, Eisenhauner & Wynaden, 2012). The research took certain steps to ensure that the rights of the participants were respected.

The participants for the study were selected based on the request to work with teachers who are members of the school disciplinary committee as well as members of the school sports committee. However, before the interviews, it was explained to the participants that their participation is voluntary. Again, participants were asked if they were comfortable with the interviews being audio recorded for focus group interviews as well as individual interviews. Furthermore, permission to undertake this study was sought and received from the General/Human Research Ethics Committee of the University of the Free State Faculty of Education and the Ethical Clearance number is UFS-HDS2020/0232/130. Permission was also granted to conduct the study by the Ministry of Education and Training as well as by the principals of the selected schools.

3.9.1 Informed consent

There is a need for a researcher to explain to the participants all about the study to be conducted in order to put them in a position where they decide whether to take part or not. Informed consent is a voluntary agreement to participation in research and not merely a form that is signed in research but a process in which the subject has an understanding of the research and its risks (Rose, 2013). On the same point, Macmillan and Schumacher (2010) indicates that, in gaining permission, most researchers give participants assurance of confidentiality and anonymity and describe the intended use of data. In conducting this

study, permission was sought from the participants and made them aware of the objective of the study.

Participants were allowed to read the informed consent and had an opportunity to ask questions before giving consent in writing. After reading the informed consent form, one participant enquired how the study would benefit them as participants. The researcher explained that the study is aimed at helping MoET to consider school safety measures and how best the Ministry can ensure it. The participant then seemed satisfied and signed the informed consent form. The participants' dignity was respected during the individual interviews as well as focus group interviews. The participants felt more comfortable with the interviews knowing that their identities and that of their schools would not be revealed. Anonymity in the research report was maintained. The teachers also felt free to give their views since their names would be kept confidential.

3.9.2 Confidentiality

Confidentiality is observed when one has no access to individual's data or the name of the participants except the researcher (Macmillan and Schumacher, 2010). Sharing information about a respondent with others is unethical and the researcher has to make sure that the information provided by the participants is kept confidential (Kumar, 2011). In this study, confidentiality was kept by using codes such as SP (school principal) to refer to the principal interviewed and PT (Participating teachers) for teachers who participated in the interview. Again, names of the schools were also not mentioned in order to protect the principals and teachers. The participants were assured that they would remain anonymous to protect their identity.

3.10 TRUSTWORTHINESS OF THE STUDY

Trustworthiness of the study is significant in research as it is the degree of consistency in measurement and the transparency which the researcher shows in the analysis of data (Shaw, 2010). Additionally, research trustworthiness proposes that the researcher's voice

can be trusted as representing truthful statements (Samuel, 2017). On the same note, Yin (2011) asserts that research truthfulness is of vital importance in qualitative research as people want to know that the researcher has gone to great lengths to conduct the research with precision. Credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability as strategies used to establish the trustworthiness of the study have been used in this study to ensure credibility (Schwandt, Lincoln & Guba, 2007). According to Creswell (2013) trustworthiness in qualitative studies is based on determining whether the findings are accurate. This study therefore followed the strategies mentioned below to enhance its trustworthiness where participants assured the researcher that they are available for contact anytime even after the interviews, there was also access to the transcriptions for confirmation of the from the participants. The researcher gave participants access to the transcriptions for confirmation on whether they represent what they said during the interviews.

3.10.1 Credibility

The extent to which empirical measure adequately reflects the real meaning of the concept under consideration (Rubin & Babbie, 2007). To ensure credibility in this study, participants were involved in semi-structured and focus group interviews. The participants were audio recorded and their responses were later transcribed. The face-to-face sessions enabled the researcher to gain understanding of their responses. In order to ensure credibility, there was assurance from participants that if the researcher needed to contact them later for more clarification, they would be glad to assist. Additionally, the researcher requested the participants to recheck the transcriptions of the focus group interviews for accuracy, verification and confirmation. Data analysis emerged from different sources which include teachers, principals, document analysis and interviews. There is divergence in document analysis and what teachers seem to practise in schools.

3.10.2 Transferability

Transferability demonstrates that the research could be applied to other contexts (Kumar, 2011). This strategy refers to the extent to which the findings of the study can be applied in another concept or theory and still give the same results (Shenton, 2012). The researcher ensured transferability through process of generating data through document analysis, semi-structured and focus group interviews. The researcher then provided a detailed description that involves clarifying all processes from data collection, context of the study so that any future research can follow the same procedure. It was the researcher's understanding that data generated through these qualitative methods could form the basis for other researchers in the field of teaching and learning to use in similar situations.

3.10.3 Confirmability

Confirmability refers to the degree to which the results of an inquiry could be corroborated by other researchers (Bowen, 2009). Confirmability deals with the question of whether the research findings could be repeated with the same participants to confirm neutrality and avoid bias. In order to achieve confirmability, the researcher ensured that the participants had access to interview and transcriptions, and it was important to get confirmation from the participants that the transcriptions were a true reflection of the information they provided. This demonstrates that the results are clearly linked to the conclusion in a way that can be followed.

3.10.4 Dependability

Dependability refers to a strategy about reliability of the results which the researcher employs to show that if the study were to be repeated, similar results would be obtained (Shenton, 2012). Detailed information on research design, data generation methods and particulars on criteria for selection of participants, which will make it easy for another researcher to follow was provided.

3.11 CONCLUSION

This chapter has adopted methods which provide a chance for teachers and principals to express their opinions or thoughts on their attitudes towards safety in Lesotho high schools. Qualitative approach was engaged in this study while case study was used to give in-depth assessment of live experiences of teachers in relation to ensuring school safety. The study also adopted interpretive paradigm in association with small sample of participants selected purposefully to get the interpretation teachers and principals give to measures taken to promote safety in schools. Focus group and semi-structured interviews were used to gather data on teachers' experiences on school safety. Again, semi-structured interviews provided room for follow up questions and it became easy for both the interviewer and interviewee to understand one another. The researcher observed ethical considerations when collecting data and analysis was also done.

CHAPTER 4 FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

4.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the findings derived from the analysis of data generated by means of semi-structured interviews where there were individual and focus group interviews as well as document analysis. The purpose of the study was to investigate the model schools have to ensure that schools are safe to provide a conducive and friendly environment for teaching and learning in five high schools in Berea district.

The findings below reflect the views of 20 participants, namely principals from five schools as well as a group of three teachers from each school. The number of teachers decreased from five to three due to the problem of COVID where teachers were not at school and some found it risky to be grouped and declined the invitation for interviews.

Five themes emerged from the thematic analysis of model of school safety, cases of fighting at school, initiatives of ensuring school safety, school safety policies and the forms of punishment used in schools. The themes were developed from interviews with participants while some were developed from the document analysis which include *Constitution of Lesotho*, *Child and Welfare Act of 2011*, *Education Act of 2010* as well as *Child Friendly School Standards* relating to the topic. Document analysis entailed the interpretation of documents to give voice and meaning to the issue under research (Owen, 2013:67). A document analysis differs from literature review in that document analysis is perceived as a method of data generation.

Data presentation is organised according to themes generated from individual interviews with principals from the selected schools, focus group interviews with teachers from the same schools as well as from document analysis. In conforming to anonymity, the study used the following descriptors in the analysis for participants; the principals are referred to as PR and TR for teachers.

4.2 MODEL OF SCHOOL SAFETY

From the findings, the intention with this theme was to gain insight into the participants' understanding of safety models in schools and how they affect daily activities taking place at school. Safety plays a major role in teaching and learning, and has to be maintained since its consequences hinder teaching and learning. The majority of the principals understood school safety as a way of protecting the school community and property from any form of harm or destruction and believed that it is important for schools to be safe. Similarly, teachers also consider safety as a means of protection from harm or damage, which they consider a requirement at school to enhance smooth teaching and learning. Principals from different schools indicated how their schools contribute to ensuring school safety and some of the features in their schools that help in promoting safety in schools.

The participants provided diverse responses on initiatives schools take to ensure safe learning and teaching environment. PR1 indicated that *"we have one security guard who is mainly responsible for boarding learners and comes after school to start duty and there are no cameras at school."* Another participant responded this way to the same question: PR2: *We only have a night watchman who is only on duty at night. There are metal detectors as well as doors that lock properly and there is controlled building access.* The third participant with the same view to others had to say this; PR3 *We have a night watchman only.* Another participant responded as follows: PR4: *There are no cameras. We only have a night watchman.* The last participant had to say this: PR5: *We have security guards only to make sure that no intruders trespass into the school campus.*

The findings revealed that the most common way of protection in schools is through security guards who in most cases are on duty at night, while there are no security guards during the day. In some schools, security guards are mainly there to help in the prevention of destruction of school property or theft at night when there is nobody at school. There are no cameras or any other security features at the five selected five schools to ensure safety however, some schools have controlled access to the school building, doors that lock properly as well as metal detectors as a means of ensuring safety. Nonetheless, there is still a security guard like at other schools whose duty is to protect school property from being destroyed at night.

4.2.1 School safety development plans

There are different ways through which schools ensure safety some of which might be what the school is planning in an attempt to provide a safe and conducive environment in the school. Therefore, principals were asked what plans they have in place to ensure school safety besides what they are already doing. Principals provided varying responses in relation to their school safety development plans as follows; PR1: *We are planning to control free movement and trespassing of villagers by surrounding the school campus with a fence which the school has already bought and waiting to buy the gates.*

The other principal indicates that there are plans for dealing with school safety through:

PR2: There are plans of putting into practice school counsellors to help with bullying prevention action plans with the understanding that counsellors will help learners to open up and report any form of bullying they are victims of or witnessed at school.

Similarly, PR3 indicates that *“proper fencing of the school campus is already in the pipeline and soon all learners, teachers as well as school visitors will use one entrance into the school.”* Another participant had a different response from the preceding ones as indicated; PR5 indicates that *“due to financial constraints nothing is planned towards any security developments and we are not expecting anything anytime soon.”*

From the findings, it seems fencing around the school campus is one of the plans that many schools have in place to promote safety. However, there are still some schools that are unable to plan for any school safety measures due to financial constraints. Again, more schools do not seem to have any plans on safety developments and they consider fencing as the main effort of ensuring school safety. However, there are schools that consider counselling as a way of ensuring safety of learners and teachers since it might help them to open up and discuss any bullying related issues that occur at school. Safety, according to most schools, is ensured by fencing and other methods do not seem to be considered.

4.3 INITIATIVES OF ENSURING SCHOOL SAFETY

School safety plays a vital role in teaching and learning and promotes a conducive environment where both teachers and learners are free. Schools need to take various measures to ensure safety of learners and teachers. Different schools seem to be taking different initiatives to promote a safe learning environment. Among others, principals from various schools indicated that,

PR1: We have a disciplinary committee which is given the duty to protect the rights of the learners. The school administration which includes principal, deputy principal as well as heads of different department at school deal with different matters that tamper with safety of learners and teachers. However, if things get out of hand, the school board members are called to iron out issues on both cases of learners and teachers. Additionally, we also have learning task committee which is a mediator between the school administration and the teachers as well as learners. They help in implementing issues related to safety and discipline of teachers and learners.

The school management teams (SMTs) in collaboration with the teachers help to implement different measures the school considers to be helpful in ensuring school safety. Another principal indicated that in order to ensure a safe learning environment they use the school management to help in that: *PR2: The school management always reminds learners that there is no place for violence, drug abuse and more emphasis is put on codes of conduct for learners at school.*

Some principals believe that a drug free school environment is safe and therefore discourages learners from using them in the school campus. Similarly, the use of weapons and drugs is strictly prohibited in some schools. This is done to promote safety of learners in schools as stipulated by one of the participants: *PR4: Learners are not allowed to bring any weapons at school.*

From the findings, most schools consider not allowing weapons at school as the most effective measure to improve safety in schools. This is so because they believe these weapons can be used to injure one another whenever a conflict arises at school.

4.3.1 Teachers' views on measures of ensuring school safety

With the understanding that, it is the responsibility of the school management to ensure safety in schools, teachers had different views on measures taken at their respective schools to ensure safety. All participants, with the exception of one seemed to acknowledge that their schools are trying to put into place some measures to ensure a safe learning environment. However, they stated that the efforts made at their schools do not seem to be enough. The following responses by participants illustrate this point.

TR1: The school is not doing enough to ensure safety of learners and teachers since a security guard is only there for school property while for learners and teachers there is no security person. There is free movement in and out of the school campus without any monitoring and this can pose a threat to learners and teachers.

Another participant responded in this way to the same question emphasising the same point: *TR2: The school is trying to ensure safety through policies and some of the safety policies we have are implemented by us. For instance, making sure that learners are randomly searched on the given dates, teachers always do accordingly.*

The third respondent with the same views as others had this to say: *TR3: The school is taking initiatives and doing all it can because no intruder has attacked a teacher or learner at school. Again, movement out of the school campus during school hours is monitored though we still seem to have much to do on safety*

In relation to teachers' v views of how schools ensure safety, the fifth response was;

TR5: The school is trying to protect learners and teachers since learners are reminded not to bring weapons at school in an attempt to limit cases of injuring one another at school. However, the school seems not to be doing enough to ensure safety because learners still bring weapons to school which they use when fighting, again learners are made aware of what is in the school rules and not much is done to make sure that they do as stipulated by the regulations.

The other participant had a different view from the rest of the participants and indicated:

TR4: *There seem to be no initiatives taken at school.*

There was consensus in teachers' responses that schools are not doing enough to ensure safety in schools. However, one teacher felt that the school is not doing anything to promote safety in schools. Thus, initiatives taken by schools do not seem to be enough to ensure safety in schools. This is proven by cases of fighting and loss of life by some of the learners at school that not much is done to ensure a safe learning environment at school. It is the responsibility of the school to ensure safety of teachers and learners and the measures taken by schools have to be satisfactory to teachers and learners so that they can feel safe. However, there are still some schools that have policies which guide them in ensuring safety where learners are not allowed to bring weapons though they sneak them onto the school campus. In addition, there seem to be monitored movement in and out of the school campus in some schools. This is done as an effort to ensure safety in schools.

4.4 SCHOOL SAFETY POLICIES

Schools develop different measures to ensure safety which include formulating school policies that promote a safe learning environment. There are strict anti-bullying policies in schools and effective ways to help stop bullying and violence include the enforcement of the law (Patchin & Hinduja, 2016:56). The safety policies are developed to give direction to the expected behaviour of learners and teachers. The school safety policies are some of the documents schools use to protect teachers and learners and they are formulated in line with national policies that are related to safety promotion.

Within the school context, official documents provide guidance for the smooth running of the organisation and collaboration of various parts to accomplish the set goals of the school. As the research problem of this study centres on issues of safety measures in schools, it was important to analyse certain documents in order to foreground the measures considered by education sectors for ensuring school safety. Although, there are various types of documents that can be used for document analysis, the statement of

the problem compelled use of official documents related to education in Lesotho. For this study there is analysis of the *Lesotho Constitution of 1998*, *The Education Act 2010*, *Child Protection and Welfare Act 2011* as well as *Child Friendly School Standards*. With school legislation, bullies would stop their bad practices of bullying at school in fear of facing charges of misconduct. According to Jones and Augustine (2015:73), most schools have a written policy that outlines the expected behaviour of learners to keep the school environment safe and enables schools to enforce the acceptable behaviour from learners and teachers.

Participants had various responses in relation to safety policies that exist at their school as indicated below: PR1: *I am not aware of any but at school we have a school prospectus that has school regulations which stipulate how learners need to conduct themselves at school.*

Similarly, another participant had this to say about their school safety policies; PR2:

The school has set rules and limits for learners on violence. Besides, learners are advised to keep classrooms organised and there are resources developed for depressed and stressed learners such as games and being encouraged to confide in teachers whenever need arises.

The other participant had a different way on how policies are used to ensure safety as indicated; PR3: *Learners are not allowed to fight at school and bring any weapons to school as well as use of drugs at school is prohibited.* The fourth participant had this as a means of ensuring safety through school policies; PR4: *No weapons or drugs are allowed at school.* The last participant stipulated that; PR5: *There are school rules and regulations which stipulate how learners have to conduct themselves at school. Some of what is included in the school regulations is that learners are not expected to bring any weapons to school.*

Findings revealed that schools have different safety policies, which include prohibition of drugs and weapons in school campus and a code of conduct. In addition, there are also regulations that govern the school and learners are expected to abide by their school rules and regulations. This is done to provide a directive of how learners and teachers

need to conduct themselves at school with an attempt to ensure safety. Weapons when used at school can injure or sometimes lead to death so their prohibition at school minimises use hence promoting safety. The understanding is that when learners take weapons to school, they can use them anytime they fight and injure or kill one another. There are also national policies that help promote safety in schools with which school safety policies need to be aligned. These policies are the Constitution, the Education Act, the Child and Welfare Act as well as the Child Friendly School Standards. All these documents have directives that encourage promotion of safety of human beings.

4.4.1 School safety policy formulation and implementation

Schools use different policies to ensure safety and it is also the responsibility of the school to ensure that those policies are implemented. Principals from different schools responded as follows: PR1:

Each year, parents are called at the beginning of the year to familiarise them with the rules of the school which are put in practice on their children. Then school rules are also read for learners at the beginning of the year.

Again, there seemed to be different ways of implementing school safety policies from participants as stipulated that; PR2:

Upon admission, learners are made to read and sign the school's code of conduct and rules in the presence of their parents. Every morning learners are reminded the code of conduct at the assembly point.

The third participant stipulated the following in relation to school safety policies' implementation.

PR3: Learners are randomly searched at school and if weapons are found, learners in possession of such are brought to the disciplinary committee. Again, when taking school trips, learners are searched before boarding the bus to ensure that they are not carrying any drugs or weapons.

Likewise, there seemed to be prevalence of safety policies' formulation in school as the fourth participant stipulated that; PR4: *Teachers search learners' bags once every quarter to see if there are no weapons.* Similarly, the fifth participant also mentioned how the implement safety policies at their school and indicated that; PR5: *Randomly searching learners once or twice every session. When learners have games at school. We use professional referees to avoid their claims of the referee being unfair.*

The findings reveal that schools use different methods to ensure that their safety policies are implemented. These methods include searching learners to ensure that there are no weapons with them. The understanding is that if they have weapons with them, they will easily injure one another when a conflict arises. The random searching of learners also makes learners fear carrying them since they are not sure of when their teachers will search them. Parents are also involved in school safety policies, and this helps teachers since parents' awareness of the policies enable them to help their children do as is expected at school.

4.4.2 Roles of MoET in ensuring school safety

Schools in Lesotho are governed by the Ministry of Education and Training in Lesotho (MoET). As the school governor, the MoET must ensure that the environment in schools is safe and therefore it has to play various roles to ensure a safe learning environment at school. Principals when asked about the roles played by MoET responded as follows: PR1: *Not much is done by MoET to ensure safety.* The second participant indicated that; PR2: *Nothing.* But the third response was different as the participant stipulated that; PR3: *The Ministry encourages principals to work hand in hand with teachers to try all means possible to prevent learners from bringing any weapons to school.* For the fourth and fifth participants there seemed to be efforts made by MoET indicated below; PR4: *It encourages no use of drugs and weapons at school.* The last participant had the following to say.

PR5: *Meetings are held where MoET explains how our learners and teachers should conduct themselves as well as making us aware that weapons are not allowed at school.*

The findings suggest that not much is done by MoET to ensure safety in schools. One participant does not see any efforts taken by MoET to ensure safety while other principals encouraged prevention of learners from bringing weapons at school. MoET does not seem to be doing enough to help schools in ensuring safety. It only seems to consider the prohibition of weapons as the only method of ensuring safety in schools and does not explore any other different ways that can promote safety of learners and teachers in schools.

In order to ensure safety in schools MoET rely on the *Lesotho Education Act* of 2010 to give directives of what is expected of the teachers and learners at school. As indicated earlier, the Constitution is the supreme law that contains the vision for Lesotho, protects basic human rights and lays down the principles for state policy. As noted, the Constitution aims for freedom from inhuman treatment that “No person shall be subjected to torture or to inhuman or degrading punishment or other treatment” (Kingdom of Lesotho, 2010). In order to give legislative power to this mandate approved by the Constitution, the Education Act 2010 was passed by parliament in 2010 to inter alia govern activities and conduct at school and stipulates that “A learner shall not be subjected to cruel, inhuman and degrading punishment” (Kingdom of Lesotho, 2010:s4).

This has been done in alignment with the Constitution to try and protect learners from any harm or threat hence improves safety of learners at school. Additionally, in the Section 57(1) of the Education Act 2010 it stipulates that “The Minister may from time to time and after consultation with persons or bodies which, in the Minister’s opinion are representative of the interest concerned advocates that: a teacher shall not abuse a teacher and learner relationship by, (i) committing illegal acts of a learner.” The protection of learners and teaching from any illegal acts enhances school safety hence smooth teaching and learning

Additionally, *Child Protection and Welfare Act* (CPWA) (2011) reiterates: the right of every child to education, adequate diet, shelter, clothing, protection, medical attention, social services, and any other service required for the child’s development (s,11(1)). This calls for protection of a child wherever they are including at school so as to avoid violation of their right to learn in a safe environment. When asked about the legal instruments

prescribed by MoET to ensure safety, two participants had similar responses that; PR1: *I am not aware of any.* In the same way, the second participant indicated that; PR: *None.* However, the last three participants stipulated that MoET is doing something to promote safety in schools in that; PR3: *The MoET encourages schools to run their activities based on what the Education Act indicates* and PR4: *The school runs activities aligned to the Education Act of 2010 though not much is said on how safety of learners and teachers has to be ensured in schools* as well as PR5: *Education Act of 2010 is used by MoET to govern schools.*

Findings revealed that most of the principals are not aware of any legal measures used by MoET to ensure safety in schools while few consider the Education Act as an instrument, they can use to enforce legal measures in their schools to ensure that the environment is friendly and safe enough for every member of the school community. All activities that occur at school need to be aligned to the Constitution since it has directives of the appropriate manner of conduct at school. Education Act is the legal tool that directs how teachers and learners need to be protected in schools.

4.5 CASES OF FIGHTING IN SCHOOLS

There are different factors that tamper with safety at school. Some of those include fighting which negatively impacts the victim as well as those who witness it. A lot is affected when learners fight at school since property can also be damaged as a result of fighting. Cases of fighting at school is split into two subheadings being cases of learners fighting as well as cases of teachers fighting at school discussed below.

4.5.1 Cases of learners fighting at school

Cases of fighting in schools are not only among learners but also teachers When asked if there have been any cases of fighting at school, principals as well as teachers articulated different views as indicated below.

PR1: *There are quite a number of them. They fight most of the time though some cases don't get to be dealt with formally. We also have cases of learners being bullied others at school and in most cases do not report to their teacher.*

The other principal also had the cases of fighting in schools and indicated that;

PR5: *More often our learners fight at school and in most cases it is boys from initiation school who always argue that one has revealed the secret of what happens at the initiation schools. This in most cases leads to fighting of learners, when such cases arise, those involved quarrel and fight. We had a case where a learner was stabbed to death by another one at school during lunch hour. The cause of the conflict that resulted into death is alleged to be boys from different gang groups who quarrelled about whose group had more members than the other. Again, learners fight while attending sporting activities where they claim the referee was unfair when their teams have lost.*

There seem to be cases of learners fighting at school for different reasons and in some cases the fight unfortunately results in loss of life by a learner. These cases of learners fighting at school where there are other learners and teachers who witness are still prevalent in schools. Bullying seems to be prevalent in school as some learners are bullied and sometimes injured or hurt by others and do not report to the teacher since they fear they might be victimised again or threatened. Similarly, according to Mosia (2015:23), a few studies on bullying conducted in Lesotho indicate that the maltreatment of learners exists in schools. Bullying therefore still seems to be a problem in schools and poses a threat to learners. This might affect the witnesses and victims negatively hence interrupting teaching and learning. In most schools, boys seem to be the ones involved in

There seem to be cases of learners fighting at school and sometimes teachers just overlook it and some cases learners do not report. Another participant had a similar issue of common fights at school: PR2: *Learners fight in class as a result of being provoked by different factors which include disagreements in games played at school, dominance disputes, discrimination as well as peer pressure.*

Different factors lead to learners fighting at school. The cause of the fight for the third participant seemed different from the previous ones; PR3: *We have had many cases of learners fighting mainly boys where those who have gone to initiation school undermine those who have not been there and this results in a conflict and they ultimately fight.* Similarly, learners' fighting seems to be very common as the fourth and fifth participant also have experienced case of learners fighting at school; PR4: *There are gangster groups at school that fight most of the time having conflicts on petty issues such as which group is better off than the other.* The fifth participant reported that there are cases of learners fighting as stipulated below,

PR5: *More often our learners fight at school and in most cases it is boys from initiation school who always argue that one has revealed the secret of what happens at the initiation schools. This in most cases leads to fighting of learners, when such cases arise, those involved quarrel and fight. We had a case where a learner was stabbed to death by another one at school during lunch hour. The cause of the conflict that resulted into death is alleged to be boys from different gang groups who quarrelled about whose group had more members than the other. Again, learners fight while attending sporting activities where they claim the referee was unfair when their teams have lost.*

In schools, there seem to be cases of learners fighting for different reasons and in some cases the fight unfortunately results in loss of life by a learner. These cases of learners fighting at school where there are other learners and teachers who witness are still prevalent in schools. Bullying seems to be prevalent in school as some learners are bullied and sometimes injured or hurt by others and do not report to the teacher since they fear they might be victimised again or threatened. Similarly, according to Mosia (2015:23), a few studies on bullying conducted in Lesotho indicate that the maltreatment of learners exists in schools. Bullying therefore still seems to be a problem in schools and poses a threat to learners. This might affect the witnesses and victims negatively hence interrupting teaching and learning. In most schools, boys seem to be the ones involved in school fights. They fight for issues such as having gone to initiation school and considering oneself better off than those who have not been there.

Again, cases of gangsterism in many schools are common and mostly boys are involved and fight over issues of which group one is a member and conflicts emerge, fights then arise as to whose group is the best. This happened when learners were having their lunch break and a learner was stabbed to death by another one at school. A conflict arose and they fought unfortunately one learner lost his life. In this case, it is still boys who were involved, and this reflects that for most cases of fighting at school, boys are involved. These issues of learners fighting question the safety measures taken at school.

4.5.2 Cases of teachers fighting

Findings revealed that in schools, it is not only learners who fight or who are victims, but teachers are also affected. This is so because there are some cases of teachers being assaulted at school. Participants had several responses in relation to cases of fighting in schools as indicated below:

PR1: We have had cases of teachers being assaulted by learners and on one occasion a teacher was rescued by other learners when the learner was attacking the teacher. In that case nobody was injured because learners were able to help but the learner who was in conflict with the teacher had a knife with him though he was unable to use it.

The second participant stipulated that *PR2: verbal attacks by learners and we have had cases of use of dangerous objects such as knives, pens as well as molamu (stick).* Whereas there seemed to be cases of fighting in school, the third and fourth responses were different from the previous ones; *PR3: We have never had any case of a teacher being assaulted at school* and *PR4: We haven't had any cases of teachers being assaulted at school.*

Findings revealed that assaults of teachers in schools are not common and, in an instance, where it occurred, learners were able to come to the teacher's rescue. Reported assaults are those of learners assaulting teachers and not teachers assaulting one another. Some of the reasons for teachers being assaulted include learners being resistant to punishment and want to fight the teacher or they feel it is unfair to be punished.

4.6 FORMS OF PUNISHMENT IN SCHOOLS

Learners at school are expected to behave in an acceptable manner and do their schoolwork as expected by their teachers. There are therefore disciplinary measures that schools have in place to deal with when a learner misbehaves or disobey the school rules and regulations. When asked about the disciplinary measures existing at their schools, principals and teachers expressed different views shown below; PR1: *Suspension and physical punishment where learners do manual work in the school yard as well as corporal punishment.* Schools use different forms of punishment as indicated by the second participant; PR2:

Picking up papers, squatting during school hours, manual work for a week, standing against the wall, corporal punishment, suspension from school or expulsion depending on the offence committed.

Moreover, teachers seem to be engaging learners in different activities that serve as a punishment; PR3:

Manual work of digging a hole in the school yard, public apology and corporal punishment.

However, the forms of punishment used by the fourth and fifth participants are similar; PR4:

We use corporal punishment and if a learner continues after being corporally punished, the principal will be involved where there will be a disciplinary hearing and the parents of the learner will be informed. Outcome from the disciplinary hearing might be suspension or expulsion depending on the offence.

The fifth participant also had a similar response to the fourth one:

PR5: *Learners are mainly corporally punished.*

There seem to be similarities in the use of corporal punishment in several schools as different participants from the five schools indicate that; TR1: *corporal punishment is the main form of punishment used at school. Occasionally, we suspend and sometimes give learners manual work as a form of punishment.* The use of corporal punishment was a

response from another participant. TR2: *The most common method used is corporal punishment. Learners are sometimes forced to draw water from the spring as a form of punishment.*

The following participants expressed the same response of use of corporal punishment in schools since they indicated that; TR3: *Suspension, manual work, corporal punishment. Learners are sometimes asked to pick papers in the school premises as a form of punishment* and TR4: *Corporal punishment* as well as TR5: *We use corporal punishment and other disciplinary measures such as digging holes in the school garden and filling them up with soil again.*

From the findings, corporal punishment is the common discipline method used in schools by both teachers and principals. However there are other disciplinary measures which include suspension, picking up papers in the school campus, digging holes at school as well as fetching water from the wells far from schools to be used at school. Afifi & Macmillan (2013:23) share the same sentiments with what the findings reveal that schools typically respond to disruptive learners with external discipline which consists of sanctions and punishment such as office referrals, corporal punishment, suspensions, and expulsions. The use of corporal punishment in schools corroborates findings in Lesotho where learners were reportedly beaten (Ngakane et al., 2012; De Wet, 2007). Studies from Zimbabwe (Schumba, Mpofu, Chireshe & Mafumo 2009; Makwanya, Moyo & Nyenya, 2012), South Africa (Crocker & Pete, 2009), Botswana (Tafa, 2002), Kenya (Mweru, 2010) and Tanzania (Fiestein & Mwahombela, 2010) also substantiate the use of corporal punishment to learners as indicated in literature review.

Teachers use corporal punishment to discourage learners from misbehaving at school. Gudyanga, Mbengo and Wadesango (2014:67) however question whether when corporal punishment is administered is the unacceptable behaviour of learners fixed or whether the pain on the flesh rehabilitates one's behaviour as teachers use it with the aim of reinforcing a positive behaviour from learners remains unanswered. Teachers however still believe that corporal punishment and other forms they use are ideal for disciplining their learners regardless of how they negatively affect learners.

4.6.1 Effects of corporal punishment on learners

Findings indicate that punishment in schools is used to correct what learners have not done well or when they misbehave. The intention of the punishment is to correct or help learners stop behaving in an unacceptable manner. Principals consider corporal punishment as a method of disciplining learners and findings reveal that it is very effective in instilling obedience in learners though it sometimes exposes learners to injuries as indicated by principals below:

PR5: Corporal punishment is most effective measure since it results in immediate change of behaviour by the learners since they want to avoid the pain they feel when punished. Corporal punishment does not deny learners a right to learn since they are punished and remain in class while suspension affects learning since learners take some time out of school.

Similarly, the second participant indicated that learners might sustain injuries due to corporal punishment. *PR2 Corporal punishment in particular exposes learners to injuries because some learners at school have sustained injuries as a result of corporal punishment.* Corporal punishment does not seem to be only disciplinary method used at school since in some school parents are called at school when their child misbehaves as indicated below by the third participant:

PR1: They are very effective because learners depending on the offence bring parents to school to be present in the hearing before they serve the punishment. I have learned that learners do not like having their parents called to school especially on account of misbehaviour. Some measures we use really work.

Some schools do not only use corporal punishment as the only means of disciplining learners and opt for measures such as calling learners to discuss the problem together and with this method learner who are called to discuss the issue with the teacher might threaten one another after the meeting with the teacher. This happens particularly in a case where one learner feels betrayed by the other. This is stipulated below by the fourth participant:

PR 1: *Some learners threaten others whom we can say played witness in the case. For instance, there is this instance where a student witnessed another stealing a cell phone. Then after the thief was expelled from school, we were made aware that the thief posed all forms of threats to the witness.*

Teachers seem to view effects of corporal punishment being to their advantage as one participant indicated that; PR2: *To a larger extend the disciplinary measures we use are helpful in a sense that there is a behaviour change from the learners. Once corporal punishment has been inflicted on them, most of the learners become obedient and very cooperative*

Additionally, more teachers consider corporal punishment helpful though to a certain extent can be problematic;

PR3: *Since learners fear the pain of the forms of punishment we use many avoid doing what will put them in trouble or those who were once punished repent though we still have cases of resistant learners who repeat the same offence several times and sometimes opt to drop out to avoid being punished again.*

Both teachers and principals view corporal punishment very helpful and enhances learning in school as indicated that; PR4: *It is very effective because most learners find it painful so they manner up most of the time to avoid it.* The other principal had a different view on effectiveness of corporal punishment and indicated that; PR5: *Most of the learners are threatened by this form of punishment as when exposed to it they might sustain injuries and some even opt to drop out of school for fear of corporal punishment.*

From the findings, corporal punishment seems to be valued by most teachers and they believe that its use is helpful in school. According to the teachers and principals the pain learners feel when receiving corporally punishment acts to their advantage because they manner up immediately or sometimes avoid doing what is wrong so that they may not be punished. Corporal punishment might result in injuries to learners though teachers claim they do not use it to injure them. On the contrary Gudyanga, Mbengo, and Wadesango (2014:45) argue that school administrators and teachers use corporal punishment in schools to deal with deviance and some pupils find themselves pulling out of school due

to non-conformity or non-tolerance to the measure applied to them. For some learners when they realise that they are in trouble at school they simply decide to drop out of school for fear of receiving corporal punishment.

While teachers view positive results of corporal punishment on learners, it does not seem positive to learners it is used on, and they might opt for other measures such as leaving school to avoid corporal punishment. Additionally, teachers are aware of the pain or injuries caused by corporal punishment and still consider it the most effective method of disciplining learners since they believe the desired behaviour can be reinforced by causing pain. Additionally, Agbenyega (2013:75) argues that any form of physical punishment which includes corporal punishment predisposes to physical illnesses such as cardiovascular disease and decreased volume of cerebral grey matter.

Contrary to advocacy of protection against any harm by the Constitution and other documents that govern schools, the abolishment of corporal punishment and promoting safe learning environment in schools, there are still cases of violence and assault and use of corporal punishment by teachers in Lesotho schools (Matheolane, 2014:89). Although corporal punishment is used in schools, it is against what is enshrined in the Constitution, Child and Welfare Protection Act as well as Education Act. Use of corporal punishment in schools is prevalent and it exposes learners to degrading torture which is discouraged by national policies that govern the school.

4.7 CONCLUSION

This chapter presented and discussed the findings pertaining to the participants' perception on safety measures in schools. Embedded in qualitative research method, data was generated by means of individual interviews with principals from five high schools and by focus group interviews conducted with three teachers from each school. Stemming from data analysis, findings were presented and discussed in relation to themes namely, model of school safety, school safety policies, safety initiative in schools, cases of fighting in schools, forms of punishment in schools and document analysis. From the findings, it can be concluded that participating schools have different safety methods

in place different models that are geared towards ensuring safety of teachers and learners in school. Again, there are school policies in some schools that are formulated to give directives on how learners and teachers need to conduct themselves in order to promote a safe learning environment. Additionally, teachers consider corporal punishment as one of the most effective measures that helps in making learners conduct and respond to orders given to them accordingly. Furthermore, the safety of learners and teachers is questionable as since there are cases of learner-teacher fighting in schools. Despite the safety measures in place at the schools, there are still cases where safety seems to be compromised and lives of both teachers and learners are at risk.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents a discussion of the findings, conclusions, recommendations and limitations of this study. It further provides a summary of the preceding chapters the findings have been discussed using the research questions and conclusions for the study drawn to make judgement about the findings. This chapter also provides comments on findings and recommendations then addressing the limitations of the study.

The aim of this study was to explore school safety models that are adopted by five high schools in Berea district. In order to realise this aim, the research was structured in accordance with sub-questions which constituted different chapters of the dissertation. The sub-questions were developed in order to guide this study towards this last chapter where there is a comment on the study and suggestions made regarding measures that ensure school safety. This study provided conceptualisation of the study in terms of the research paradigm, methodology and research methods. In order to explore school safety models, there is review of literature which provides conceptual understanding of what is perceived as safety measures in schools as well as what transpires in schools that might jeopardise safety of learners and teachers and the theoretical framework. Additionally, practices exist in schools which might interfere with the safety of learners and teachers. Practices referred to by literature are those that teachers do to learners or teachers amongst themselves as well as learners to other learners. According to literature, learners and teachers as members of the school community seem to contribute in different ways to interfere with safety of one another. Issues like corporal punishment, sexual abuse as well as bullying seem prevalent in schools as reflected in literature.

There are several instances where teachers are granted permission by parents to use corporal punishment to correct unacceptable behaviour of learners (Schneider, Mackenzie & Waldfogel, 2015). The use of corporal punishment by teachers in schools was not only identified in literature but also in all the five focus group interviews. Principals

and teachers agreed that the use of corporal punishment as a means of disciplining learners in schools is common. In the same chapter, the study reviewed the theoretical framework in relation to promotion of safety of human beings. The study used invitational theory which underscores the importance of creating an inviting, friendly and safe environment. A friendly and safe environment enables individuals to perform to the best of their ability. Teachers and learners need an opportunity to be where they are self-motivated and free from any threats. This theory advocates for learning environments where learners and teachers feel safe, supported and encouraged hence allow them to perform better.

In addition, the research methodology in this study provided how methods used to collect data unfolded. Participants were selected and the purpose for their selection as well as the paradigm guiding the study was indicated and trustworthiness of the study has been reflected. Furthermore, the study presented the findings of the data generated through individual interviews, focus group interviews and literature. For the interpretation of the findings of the study, data was read from the interpretive perspective which served as the research paradigm, the understanding of safety in schools and what happens in schools that interrupts safety as stipulated in literature and policy framework for safety enforcement in schools.

The discussion of the chapters included in this study provides a path that led to the final chapter where there are comments on findings made by making suggestions, recommendations and stating limitations. The suggestions made are derived from the findings of the study. The study also highlights the challenges met while undertaking the research. This chapter is concluded with a summary of the study with specific reference to the main research question that functioned as the focus of the study.

5.2 RE-STATEMENT OF RESEARCH QUESTIONS

This section shares comments on the findings in relation to the research questions; what practices and measures are necessary to ensure safety of learners and teachers in schools? What initiatives do schools take to ensure safe learning and teaching

environment in school? To what extent do schools implement national and school policies on school safety? What means do schools have in place to discipline learners? In drawing on the findings of this study, there are comments on suggestions and measures of ensuring school safety in order to promote smooth teaching and learning. In this regard, comments and suggestions are made on school safety initiatives, school punishment measures and school safety policy development and implementation.

5.3 THEMES AND DISCUSSIONS

RESEARCH QUESTIONS	THEMES	FINDINGS
What initiatives do schools take to ensure safe learning and teaching environment?	Models of school safety Future plans to improve safety	The five principals indicated that the schools have employed security personnel. Proper fencing, employment of school counsellors, installation of security cameras, having security guards on duty for 24 hours at school.
How do schools implement national and school safety policies.	National and school safety policies Implementation of safety policies	School prospectus aligned to the Education Act with rules and regulations. School policies read to learners upon admission Random searches
What means do schools have in place to discipline learners?	Forms of punishment	Squatting, picking up papers around school

		campus, suspension, corporal punishment
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5.3.1 School safety initiatives

This theme discusses findings of the research question pertaining to the initiatives schools take to ensure school safety. It also includes the suggestions on how schools put into place efforts to keep learners and teachers safe. Findings reveal that schools employ security guards who are in most instances on duty at night to keep watch on the schools' property. Some schools resort to fencing the school premises as a resort to monitor entry and exit of every person at the campus with the security personnel on guard as well. From the theoretical point of view, schools seem to consider that safety is vital and has to be ensured and is in line with the invitational theory which advocates for an environment that is friendly, inviting and free from any form of harm.

Despite those efforts, there are still cases of violence and bullying in schools. The security personnel only report for night duty, and during the day there is no guard, and this does not seem to promote safety at school campus. However, fencing alone is not enough to promote safety, aspects such as use of cameras can be helpful but none of the schools seem to be planning for that. The digital cameras are important to capture and store data of movements around the school compound. Schools, therefore, do not seem to be doing enough to promote safe learning environment. It is recommended that initiatives such as installation of cameras, proper fencing as well as limited movement of learners into the school campus during school hours need to be considered. Fencing around the school campus can be helpful since it makes it easy to monitor the entry and exit points at school as findings reveal. This is so because when there is no proper fencing, teachers, learners and school visitors use any place as an entry and exit point at school. It therefore becomes difficult to control movement in and out of the school campus.

The issue of proper fencing as an initiative of ensuring school safety is supported by findings which reveal that most schools have proper fencing around the school for the reason that it controls movement and does not give room for anybody trespassing hence promoting school safety. Additionally, some of the schools do not have proper fencing but

have it as a development plan for ensuring school safety and will fix it as soon as they receive funding for that.

Moreover, proper fencing makes it easy for security personnel and school management to control and see who enters or leaves the school campus. From the theoretical framework point of view, schools seem to consider the fact that safety is vital in schools and has to be ensured. This is so because in schools there are measures that are taken by schools to promote a safe learning environment. According to the advocates of invitational theory, there are factors that affect the appeal of schools, people, policies, and programmes. This theory claims that the factors are make schools more socially appealing and safe (Purkey & Novak, 2015). A good impression may be made on school members and the environment by developing school programmes that address human needs such as safety and health.

Despite those efforts, there are still cases of violence and bullying in schools. The security personnel only report for night duty, and during the day there is no guard, and this does not seem to promote safety at school campus. However, fencing alone is not enough to promote safety, aspects such as use of cameras can be helpful but none of the schools seem to be planning for that. The digital cameras are important to capture and store data of movements in and around the school compound. Schools therefore do not seem to be doing enough to promote safe learning environment. It is recommended that initiatives such as installation of cameras, proper fencing as well as limited movement of learners into the school campus during school hours need to be considered.

5.3.2 School punishment measures

This theme discusses ways in which learners are punished in schools. Again, this is in line with responses of the research question; what means do schools have in place to discipline learners. Learners in schools are there to be guided and helped to conduct themselves in an acceptable manner. Teachers, therefore, use different measures to instil the desired behaviour from learners which include, suspension, disciplinary hearing where sometimes parents are involved and corporal punishment.

Corporal punishment imposed on learners by teachers results in immediate positive and corrective behaviour as learners would want to avoid the pain inflicted due to the punishment. For instance, when corporal punishment is used because learners have not done schoolwork, they do not repeat the same mistake. In such instances teachers claim the punishment has been to their advantage and helped them in achieving their objectives. Again, literature supports the issue of corporal punishment since parents seem to feel more comfortable when their children are corporally punished and claim that they use it at home and encourage teachers to use it (Gershoff, 2017). In such instances teachers feel free to corporally punish learners as they have been permitted by their parents. Parents seem to take corporal punishment as one of the most reliable methods of disciplining learners for poor conduct or any misbehaviour at school.

Although corporal punishment seems to yield best results for teachers as revealed in the findings, literature contradicts that any form of physical punishment which includes corporal punishment as it predisposes learners to physical illnesses such as cardiovascular disease and decreased volume of cerebral grey matter. Instead of correcting unacceptable behaviour, corporal punishment seems to be bringing many health problems to its victims (Agbenyega, 2013). Corporal punishment, therefore, is a health hazard though its use is still prevalent in schools and considered a means that teachers use to curb misbehaviour in learners and in some cases advocated for by parents.

Nevertheless, corporal punishment results in high learner drop out school. Some learners fear the pain they feel when corporally punished so once they have done something wrong at school, they decide to drop out for fear of being corporally punished. In such cases corporal punishment acts as a threat to learners and they do not feel safe at school and opt sometimes to drop out. The issue of corporal punishment at school exposes learners to inhuman and degrading treatment which is prohibited by both the *Constitution* and the *Education Act of 2010*. It follows therefore that corporal punishment on learners in Lesotho schools violates the learners' human rights and freedoms. The learners' right to dignity and the right to education is compromised since the environment is not safe

and conducive to promote any form of effective learning since in whatever they do, learners fear that should they miss any concept, corporal punishment will be used.

5.3.3 School safety policy development and implementation.

This theme discusses and tries to respond to mechanisms in place by the schools to implement national and school policies on safety. The policies should address and talk to a safe, free and conducive environment proper for teaching and learning. The findings of this research note that there are directives which prohibit weapons in the school, random searches of learners to help keep away any weapons that they might bring to schools contrary to the school policies.

Despite efforts made by schools to stop learners from bringing weapons in school, cases of learners using them to injure others do not seem to stop as findings from data generated reveal that a learner was stabbed to death by another one at school. The weapon that was used is the one schools are trying hard to encourage learners not to take to school. There are national policies that school safety policies need to be aligned to. These school safety policies should be in line with the *Constitution* which is supreme law of Lesotho, the *Education Act* and the *Child and Welfare Act*. The *Education Act* directly governs school and need to be in line with the Constitution.

Some principals are not aware of any national school safety policies or what the policies say in relation to ensuring safety in schools. This questions the issue of whether there are any directives from the national policies which promote school safety. On the contrary literature reveals that schools often develop their own safety policies that are in line with national policies and direct the manner in which learners need to conduct themselves in schools. If principals are therefore not aware of any national policies, it is surprising how schools were able to develop safety policies yet they are not aware of any national policies.

Questions like; what their school policies are in line with and what their formulation is guided by leaves much to be desired. If principals are not aware of any national policies, the school safety policies they might formulate might violate safety since they might not

be in line with the national safety policies and in this case fail to address the problem of school safety and instead promote an unsafe environment. Principals therefore need to familiarise themselves with national policies. There are some national policies that exist in relation to ensuring school safety, but schools seem not to consider them or put them into practise.

5.4 METHODOLOGICAL PROCEDURES AND APPROACHES

In undertaking this study, some challenges were encountered. Meetings with teachers were not easy to convene since they were not at their workplace where it would be easy to find all of them due to lockdown. This made it difficult to contact both principals and teachers and it took time to finally get hold of them. After getting hold of them, scheduling a meeting did not seem easy as the plan was to meet two principals from different schools on one day, but it did not seem viable to meet them on one day due to different commitments they had. All the five principals were then met on different days.

Again, for focus group interviews, it was not very easy to organise meetings for five teachers from the same school as initially proposed and had to reduce the number from five teachers per school to three for convenience. Participants for focus group interviews were selected in a manner that members from three departments were represented. The member of the sports committee, disciplinary committee and member of the head of the subject formed the focus groups. Although the number of teachers reduced due to the circumstances, credibility was still ensured since the groups were still formed by the different committee of the schools. For some schools, meetings had to be cancelled with their teachers because only two teachers had turned up for the meeting and had to reschedule to accommodate the other teachers who would not make it on the date set. Again, for one school the meeting had to be held telephonically since it was not possible to meet the members all at the same time.

5.4.1 Strengths and weaknesses of the theoretical framework

Invitational theory assumes that in order for the school to create an inviting environment, there should be awareness that people are valuable, responsible and be treated accordingly. Additionally, approaches for this theory recognize individual's uniqueness by highlighting the importance of self-concept. Through self-concept, individuals are able to invite themselves, nurture their personal growth and they need to be constantly reflecting, analyzing their actions and words to see if they are guilty of unintentionally suppressing leadership in others. Once individuals reflect on and analyse their actions, they will be able to see whether they are treating one another with respect and whether they are trustworthy hence this will enable them to create a friendly environment. There is a need for teachers and learners to reflect and consider their actions to see if they do not pose any harm or threat to those around them.

However, this theory provides a structure that is too focused on human beings in creation of a friendly and inviting environment rather than the system that runs the school as an institution. In schools, there are many factors besides human factors that contribute to the creation of a friendly and safe environment and the theory does not seem to consider those factors. Schools need to consider other factors besides human beings in order to create safe environments. In addition, at school there are people with different backgrounds and different economic statuses, and one cannot understand how the classroom can be humanised when there is existence of social and economic inequality. It is not easy to humanize classroom settings while dealing with peoples that have different social and economic backgrounds. Difference in social and economic background of many people at school, might complicate the creation of a safe and friendly environment as disagreements brought by the difference in social and economic orientation of people might arise.

5.5 RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings, discussions and conclusions; several issues need to be addressed in order to improve safety of learners and teachers in schools. The following recommendations can help improve school safety.

5.5.1 Recommendations on introduction of day and night shift of security persons

In most schools, security persons are only on duty at night when teachers and learners are not at school. It becomes clear that they are only there to protect the school property from being stolen or damaged, while during the day there is no security person teachers and learners are on their own. Security persons should be on the school campus day and night, their duties could include among others ensuring weapons are not taken onto school ground and control movement of visitors, teachers and learners in and out of the school campus. The presence of security all the time at school might limit the chances of weapons being brought at school, learners fighting since they will be there all the time to patrol around the school campus and put to order any behaviour that is not acceptable in schools.

5.5.2 Cooperation between teachers and police in improving school safety

Schools on their own might not find it easy to promote safety, there are other relevant bodies that need to be engaged to help in curbing any form of violence in schools and promote a safe learning and teaching environment. MoET, school governing body, principals and teachers need to work together and involve other stakeholders. to deal with school safety.

It is recommended that police as law enforcing officers could help teachers in holding workshops where learners and teachers are educated on what objects are considered weapons, what sexual harassment is and what is considered as violence. This will be helpful to teachers and learners since it will be clear as to what object is a weapon and any form of violence that might arise. Girls on the other hand who are mostly victims of

sexual harassment in schools will understand better what sexual harassment is, when and how to report it when they encounter such problems in schools. When all these aspects are addressed, school safety will be improved. Therefore, police in collaboration with teachers can help improve school safety.

5.5.3 Clear roles of school safety policies by school governing bodies (SGBs)

The school governing body has a vital role to play in schools which include all administrative activities and ensuring school safety is one of them. SGBs can ensure school safety by suggesting what teachers and learners are expected to do while at school. SGBs therefore need to help teachers to be familiar with national safety policies so that they could guide schools on formulation of their own safety policies. Once policies are formulated, SGBs once again help in monitoring their dissemination. Additionally, in a case where MoET does not seem to be doing enough to help schools in ensuring safety, SGBs might contact MoET to discuss and suggest how best safety can be ensured in school. SGBs, therefore act as a mediator between schools and MoET. It will be easy for SGBs to support MoET on what transpires in schools in relation to safety since SGBs work directly with school and teachers will also know what is expected of them by MoET in relation to school safety policies.

5.5.4 Recommendations for policy development on school safety

Policies on school safety are not clear as issues on corporal punishment, drug abuse and gender-based violence are not addressed. The Ministry of Education and Training should therefore develop a clear policy on school safety. The policy should have directives on what has to be done in order to ensure school safety and the issue of corporal punishment has to be included in the policy. MoET, therefore has to rescue learners from corporal punishment by developing policies that clearly address the issue of corporal punishment and its use in schools.

Once MoET clarifies its views on use of corporal punishment and makes them known to teachers, they will stop using it and consider that illegal. It becomes difficult to take legal action against teachers who still use corporal punishment in schools as nothing is documented to indicate that it is not legal. After developing the policy, MoET has to help principals and teachers implement the policy and regular monitoring on whether schools are really putting what the policy advocates for into practice. Once teachers are made aware on what national policies say in relation to school safety, it becomes easy for them to help in their implementation and what they need to avoid as teachers that violates learners' safety. Schools will also be in a position to develop their own school safety policies that are aligned to the national policies.

5.6 LIMITATIONS

The issue of COVID-19 affected the plan of meeting all the teachers for the interviews. This resulted in one meeting being done telephonically as the teachers to be interviewed had a problem of meeting with other people. In this case, the researcher had no opportunity to observe physical expressions on certain issues during the interview since with that group the interviews were done telephonically.

5.7 CONCLUSION

The aim of this study was to explore school safety models that are adopted by the five high schools and to make suggestions based on findings. By reading the generated data through the lens of invitational theory, understanding was gained that school safety is important as it could affect education and its effects on learners and teachers are negative since safety contributes much in better performance of teachers and learners. Safety in school environments is critical to enable teachers to discharge their responsibilities and obligations and for learners to learn effectively. Creation of an inviting environment motivates teachers and learners and encourages them carry out their duties freely. Literature review indicated different aspects that are prevalent in schools and tamper with safety of teachers and learners. Some of the aspects reflected in literature indicate that

teachers, learners and parents contribute in tampering with safety in schools through the use of corporal punishment. Additionally, findings show that schools have some safety models which include random searches of weapons, security guards as well as safety policies to ensure safety in schools. There is also a need to further research on how schools can be assisted to improve safety by relevant stakeholders.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: PERMISSION MINISTRY OF EDUCATION



LESOTHO

MINISTRY OF EDUCATION & TRAINING

P.O.BOX 561, Teyateyaneng 200 Berea

03/03/2020 Tel: 22500235

Ethics Committee

University of the Free State

Bloemfontein

The communique serves to confirm that Ms Mamphula Nyapisi 2010081921 has been granted permission by the Ministry of Education and Training to undertake research in the selected schools in the Berea District. The understanding is that her findings will inform the Ministry of Education on how best to ensure learner safety in and around the school.

PROJECT TITLE: DEVELOPING A MODEL OF ENSURING SCHOOL SAFETY

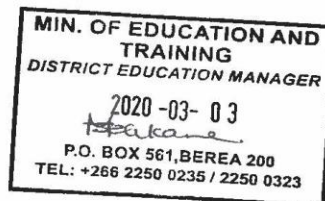
Please accord her the necessary support

Thanking you

Mopei Selikane

District Education Manager

DEM-BEREA - 58855708



APPENDIX B: INFORMED WRITTEN CONSENT FORMS

Informed Consent form: School principal

Title of the research: Developing a model of ensuring school safety, case of five high schools in Berea Lesotho.

Supervisor: Prof Isaac Ntshoe

Student: Ms Mamphula Nyapisi

Contacts particulars: +266 58922557 and nyapisimr@gmail.com

Declaration by the participant

I, _____ the _____ participant _____ and _____ undersigned

.....,

address.....

hereby confirm that I got invited by Mamphula Nyapisi, a Masters student at the University of Free-State, to participate in a research study titled ***Developing a model of ensuring school safety in high schools in Berea Lesotho***. The researcher explained to me that the study is aimed at gaining an understanding of what measures are put into practice to keep the school environment safe. It was also indicated that my contribution to this study has the potential to assist schools on what measures are helpful in keeping the school environment safe for effective teaching and learning.

My participation in the study will involve a semi-structured interview which could last for approximately 30 to 45 minutes. The interview will take place after school hours as arranged at my convenience. It is anticipated that the interview will be conducted, at prior arrangement, any time from April to September 2020. I understand that my participation is voluntary and I am free to withdraw at any stage without disclosing reasons. My participation or withdrawal will not have any present or future effects on my job as a

principal and there are no financial costs or benefits to be accrued to me due to my participation in or withdrawal from this research.

My identity and that of my school will remain confidential in the proceedings of the semi-structured interview. I am free to raise questions and views without any intimidation during the semi-structured interview. My humanity will be respected throughout my participation. I understand that recordings and transcripts will be made during semi-structured interview and my identity will not be revealed at any point. The researcher explained to me all the information concerning the study is in the language best understood to me and no pressure was exerted to me by the researcher to participate in this study.

I hereby voluntarily consent to participate in the semi-structured interview for the purpose of this study.

Signed at on the
.....2020

Signature of participant

Declaration by the researcher

I, Mamphula Nyapisi declare that I explained the information above to the participant in the language best understood to him or her. He or she was given enough time to ask questions and freely decided whether or not to participate.

.....

M. Nyapisi

.....

Date

Informed Consent form: Teachers

Title of the research: Developing a model of ensuring school safety, case of five high schools in Berea Lesotho

Supervisor: Prof Isaac Ntshoe

Student: Mamphula Nyapisi

Contacts particulars: +26658922557 nyapisimr@gmail.com

Declaration by the participant

I, _____ the _____ participant _____ and _____ undersigned

.....,

Address

.....

hereby confirm that I got invited by Mamphula Nyapisi, a Masters student at the University of Free-State, to participate in a focus group discussion as part of my study titled ***Developing a model of ensuring school safety, case of five high schools in Berea Lesotho..*** The researcher explained to me that the study is aimed at gaining an understanding of what schools are doing to ensure safety of teachers and learners. It was also indicated that my contribution to this study has potential to raise awareness on what measures are helpful in keeping the school environment safe for effective teaching and learning..

My participation in the study will involve a focus group discussion which could last for approximately 60 minutes. The focus group discussion will take place after school hours as arranged at the convenience of all the participants. It is anticipated that the focus group discussion will be conducted, at prior arrangement, any time from April to September 2020. I understand that my participation is voluntary and I am free to withdraw at any stage without disclosing any reasons. My participation or withdrawal will not have any present or future effects on my job as a teacher and there are no financial costs or benefits to be accrued to me due to my participation in or withdrawal from this study.

My identity and that of my school will remain confidential in the proceedings of the focus group discussion. I am free to raise questions and views without any intimidation during the focus group discussion. My humanity will be respected throughout my participation. I understand that recordings and transcripts will be made during the focus group interviews and my identity will not be revealed at any point. The researcher explained to me all the information concerning the study and no pressure was exerted by the researcher to participate in this study.

I hereby voluntarily consent to participate in the focus group discussion of this study.

Signed at on the
..... 2020

Signature of participant.....

Declaration by the researcher

I, Mamphula R Nyapisi declare that I explained the information above to the participant in the language best understood to him or her. He or she was given enough time to ask questions and freely decided whether or not to participate.

.....

.....

M. Nyapisi

Date

APPENDIX C: INTERVIEW SCHEDULES

Semi-structured interview questions for principals

- What safety features such as security cameras, and school security persons exist at your school?
- What security details and developments to safety plans exist at your school?
- What cases of learners fighting are you aware of in schools?
- What are your views on initiatives taken by the school to ensure safety of learners and teachers?
- What safety policies exist at your school?
- What efforts are made to put into practice school safety policies?

Focus group interview questions for teachers

- What are the disciplinary measures existing and used at school?
- How effective are disciplinary measures used?
- To what extent do disciplinary measures pose any threat/ harm to learners?
- What school policies does the school have ensure safety?
- To what extent are the school safety policies formulated in collaboration with the learners?

APPENDIX D: ETHICS STATEMENT



GENERAL/HUMAN RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE (GHREC)

13-Jul-2020

Dear Ms Mamphula Nyapisi

Application Approved

Research Project Title:

Developing a model of ensuring school safety case of five high schools in Berea Lesotho

Ethical Clearance number:

UFS-HSD2020/0232/1307

We are pleased to inform you that your application for ethical clearance has been approved. Your ethical clearance is valid for twelve (12) months from the date of issue. We request that any changes that may take place during the course of your study/research project be submitted to the ethics office to ensure ethical transparency. Furthermore, you are requested to submit the final report of your study/research project to the ethics office. Should you require more time to complete this research, please apply for an extension. Thank you for submitting your proposal for ethical clearance; we wish you the best of luck and success with your research.

Yours sincerely

Dr Adri Du Plessis

Chairperson: General/Human Research Ethics Committee

Adri Plessis

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2020.07.16
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APPENDIX E: LANGUAGE EDITOR'S LETTERS

Lingua Language Practice Services
Marisia Roberts
lingualps@gmail.com
0828189160
28 November 2022

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

I, Marisia Roberts, hereby confirm that I have copy-edited the MEd Dissertion titled *EXPLORING SCHOOL SAFETY MODELS ADOPTED BY SELECTED HIGH SCHOOLS IN BEREA DISTRICT* for Ms M Napisi (2010081921).

Please note that I always strive to consistently maintain the highest quality in respect of document editing and translation. However, as I have no way of ensuring that source documents are indeed replaced with my edited version, and also have no control over changes subsequently made to documents, the final responsibility for documents always rests with the commissioning author.

I am a qualified language practitioner with many years' experience in editing in the academic and higher education sector.

Yours sincerely,

Marisia Roberts
BA Hons (Language Practice)

APPENDIX F: TURN IT IN REPORT

MAMPHULA NYAPISI

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