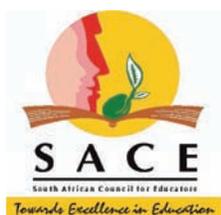


SCHOOL-BASED VIOLENCE REPORT



an overview of School-based Violence in South Africa

November 2011



School-Based Violence Report

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in

South Africa

November 2011



**South African Council of Educators
(SACE)**

Contents

- 1. Introduction.....3
 - 1.1 Aims.....5
- 2. School-Based Violence.....6
 - 2.1 Defining School-Based Violence.....6
 - 2.2 Contextual Risk Factors.....7

- 3. The picture of School-Based Violence in South Africa.....12
 - 3.1 Findings from Local Studies.....12
 - 3.2 A brief outline of International Studies14
 - 3.3 Manifestations of School-Based Violence.....15
 - 3.4 Corporal Punishment.....21

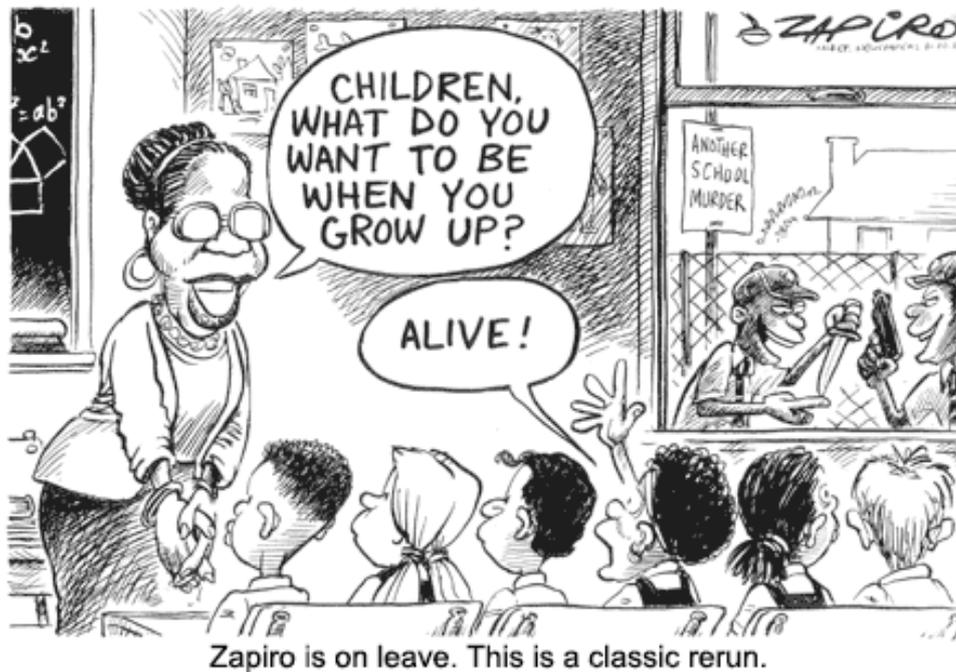
- 4. The Causes of School-Based Violence in South Africa.....23
 - 4.1 Individual factors/Micosystem.....24
 - 4.2 Relationship factors/Mesosystem.....25
 - 4.3 Community factors/Mexosystem.....27
 - 4.4 Social factors/Macrosystem.....27

- 5. The Impact of School-Based Violence on teachers.....30

- 7. Recommendations.....32

- 7. Reference list.....36

INTRODUCTION



(Zapiro, July 2007, <http://mg.co.za/zapiro/fullcartoon/263>)

This comic strip by Zapiro highlights the serious problem of ongoing violence within schools in South Africa. This problem is one that is of major concern to the government, the teaching profession, as well as civil society. According to Burton (2008: xi), "there is increasing concern within South Africa that primary and secondary schools are the sites of widespread violence." Where the school has been constructed as a space in which children can come and learn in a safe and protected environment, it appears that this is unfortunately not the case in the majority of schools within South African society. According to Leoschut (2008) the problem of school-based violence is not a new phenomenon. However, what is becoming evident is the increasingly serious nature of the violence, taking place within this context. For example, types of violence have shifted from cases of bullying to more serious forms of victimisation that involve violence. This is evident in the case of the random killing of 16 year-old Jacques Pretorius by Morne Harmse with a samurai sword at a Technical High School on the West Rand in Gauteng in 2008. Other examples of the extreme consequences of school violence include:

- the stabbing to death of a grade nine learner with a pair of scissors;
- the axe killing of an eight-year old boy by two school peers;
- the stabbing to death of Mfundo Ntshangase, a grade 11 student, at a house party; and
- the repeated violence in the form of shootings, drug deals, assaults and rapes on the grounds of schools on the Cape Flats.

According to Burton (2008), “[S]chools are generally seen as mechanisms to develop and reinforce positive citizens with pro-social attitudes and as sites where individuals are prepared for the role they are to play in society at large” (p. 17). However, studies, media reports and the like suggest that despite popular discourse schools are in fact the sites of violence (Jeffthas & Artz, 2007). What is becoming evident in South African society is that violence is a serious worry in both primary and secondary schools¹, across age, gender, race and school categories. Importantly, not only are children, but also teachers, being affected by the high rates of violence in schools. What research is finding is that in many cases children are the perpetrators of the violence, with teachers also becoming the victims (Burton, 2007).

Due to children spending approximately half of their hours at school, schools can serve as the second most important socialising mechanism after the home. From a holistic perspective, Burton (2008*) contends that schools are important environments in which children not only gain knowledge but also learn about themselves, how to behave as well as how to interact with other children. In such a way, children who are exposed to violence in this context will tend to model this behaviour. Schools therefore have the potential of being a negative or positive reinforcing agent (Burton, 2008). For example, Ward (2007) argues that children who perform poorly, who drop out, who have low standards in terms of educational achievement and who change schools frequently are more likely to take part in violent behaviour. On the other hand, attachment to the school and the valuing of education acts as a protective factor against school-based violence. It can therefore be argued that the high levels of violence and crime taking place within South African schools is robbing children/learners of the opportunity of being able to reach their optimal academic and educational potential. Secondly, as stressed in international studies there is a strong correlation between the amount of education as well as academic success a learner achieves and their decision to choose crime or not. This therefore implies that, “a lack of safety at schools may serve to perpetuate crime and violence in society at large” (Jeffthas & Artz, 2007:46). One can therefore argue that schools, teachers, the Department of Education and other government bodies have the potential of playing a vital role in influencing or preventing the rates of violence in South African society.

1 Primary School – Grades 1-7; Secondary School – Grades 8-12

Aims:

This report therefore has the following aims:

1. To provide a comprehensive summary of the extent of the problem of school-based violence in South Africa
2. To provide a holistic understanding of the nature and causes of school-based violence in South Africa
3. To explore the impact of school-based violence on learners and teachers, as well as learning and teaching
4. To offer the South African Council for Educators (SACE) a comprehensive range of recommendations to assist in addressing the problem of school-based violence.

SCHOOL-BASED VIOLENCE

2.1 Defining School-Based Violence

The World Health Organisation (WHO, 2002) 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 either results in or has a high likelihood of resulting in injury, death, psychological harm, maldevelopment or deprivation.

Looking specifically at the issue of school violence, popular discourse encapsulates all forms of, “intentional harm or discomfort inflicted on learners, including incidents such as schoolyard fights, bullying and drugs abuse” (Burton, 2008:19).

The problem with this definition as argued by Burton (2008) is that it fails to capture the complexity of the problem as well as less overt forms of violence that are silenced such as violence against women and girls.

Violence in the school context can range from mental/psychological to physical forms of violence (Burton, 2008; Jeffthas & Artz, 2007):

- Hazing or initiation
- Assault – physical or sexual
- Robberies
- Rape
- Murder
- Sexual harassment
- Intimidation
- Bullying
- Shootings
- Stabbings
- Gangsterism
- Drug trafficking and related violence
- Theft of property and vandalism
- Racially motivated violence
- Student protests that turn violent

Importantly, it appears that the type of violence is influenced by both social and gender dynamics. According to Burton (2008) less obvious forms of violence, such as hazing and initiation, are evident in private schools, where more obvious forms of violence tend to be present in township schools. In terms of the gender dynamics of violence, Jeffthas and Artz (2007) contend that the type of violence girls and boys tend to be exposed to is different. For example, girls tend to be the victims of rape, harassment and sexual assault. A Human Rights Watch study on sexual violence within South African schools found that girl learners were often the victims of sexual violence, abuse, rape, harassment and assault by teachers and male learners (Human Rights Watch, 2001). Boys on the other hand, tend to experience violence in the form of assault and bullying (Jeffthas & Artz, 2007). Importantly, even though these are the norms in terms of what boys and girls experience this does not mean that there are not cases in which boys are for example sexually abused or girls are bullied.

2.2 Contextual Risk Factors

Importantly, school-based violence does not take place in a vacuum but is rather influenced and shaped by contextual factors. Secondly, as argued by Leoschut (2008) what transpires in the context of schools is usually a reflection of what is taking place in the broader social contexts in which schools are found. This section is therefore going to provide a synopsis of contextual factors that put learners/ children at risk of violence within the school environment.

1.1.1 Gender-Based Inequality or Violence

With the commencement of democracy in 1994, there has been an aim on the part of the government to promote gender equality, equity in education and equal opportunities for all learners. Legislation in the form of the South African Constitution, South African Schools Act, the Promotion of Equality and Prevention of Unfair Discrimination Act, as well as the Employment Equity Act were developed with these aims in mind (Prinsloo, 2006). However, it seems that the increase in reports of the sexual harassment of female learners in newspapers indicates that in many cases the notion of gender equality is not being practiced on the ground. For example, it is reported that more than 30% of girls are raped at school. A study conducted with schoolgirls in Gauteng by the Centre for the Study of Violence and Reconciliation (CSVR) showed that the way in which girls deal with the issue of violence in schools is greatly influenced by the way in which gender violence is managed in their home communities. It seems communities that normalise gender-based violence produce casual narratives in which this issue is talked about in a matter of fact way (Haffejee, 2006). Jeffthas and Artz (2007) contend that the gendered nature of school-based violence speaks to the unequal relationship of power in male-female relationships in which boys tend to hold more power.

A major problem according to Nqeno (2004) is that many female learners who do not have guardians to confide in stop coming to school as teachers communicate the message that if they talk about

what happened at school they will get into trouble. Besides, the physical implications of abuse and harassment, the Human Rights Watch Study (2001) argues for the serious psychological and emotional damage as girls are often plagued by the worry of unwanted pregnancy as well as being deprived of their self respect. The seriousness of the gendered dimension of school-based violence is evident in the following statement made by the former Minister of National Education, Kader Asmal,

There must be an end to the practice of male educators demanding sex with schoolgirls or female educators. It shows selfish disrespect for the rights and dignity of women and young girls. Having sex with learners betrays the trust of the community. It is also against the law. It is a disciplinary offence. Tragically, nowadays, it is spreading HIV/AIDS and bringing misery and grief to these precious young people and their families (Department of Education, 2000:3).

1.1.2 Social Constructions of Masculinity

Witt (1997) contends that boys and girls earliest exposure to gender-role expectations stems from their caregivers. The family is the most significant institution in shaping the beliefs, attitudes and values of children, attitude and values, which tend to feed into socially based sex role stereotypes. Girls are required to be caring and sensitive, whereas boys are expected to be strong, brave and unemotional. Boys are therefore socialised into isolated and independent ways of being in which they are encouraged to not cry, to be strong, and successful. Boys tend to replicate the aggressive and power-seeking nature of adult males (Corey, 2005; Holland, Ramazanoglu & Sharpe, 1994). It can be argued that these constructions of masculinity and what is expected of boys increases the risk of boys engaging in school-based violence. Langa (2009) asks the following questions, “why is boy-to-boy conflict so violent? In many cases, it leads to death. Why do boys use weapons in their fights? Is a knife or gun a symbol of power?” Working from the view of multiple voices of masculinity, Langa (2009) contends that violence in the context of a male peer group plays a functional role in the sense that it is used to determine the bravest or strongest boy in the group. For example, the boy who is able to fight is constructed as the hero. Importantly, this heroic masculinity does not exist in isolation but requires victims or villains of violence. This hero-villain dynamic tends to lead to school-based violence, which is used as a means of asserting boys’ masculinity.

1.1.3 Community Disempowerment and Disorganisation

A disorganised community is one consisting of high levels of violence, easy access to drugs, alcohol and firearms, as well as high levels of crimes. According to Leoschut (2008) these are all factors, which increase children’s vulnerability and chances of becoming victims of violence.

a) The normalisation of violence

Within disorganised communities there tends to be high exposure to violence. Research conducted by the National Schools Violence Study in 2007 (which will be discussed in more detail in the next section of the report) found that learners who had been exposed to high rates of violence and crime in their communities were significantly more likely to have been the victim of any type of school-based violence than those children who had not been exposed to such high rates of violence (see table 1 below). Exposure to high levels of violence and being brought up in violent contexts has been found to negatively affect children's understandings of how the world works. For example, children's sense of safety in the world is reduced causing feelings of anxiety and fear to be experienced. Children may also battle to sleep which in turn will negatively impact their ability to concentrate at school.

In order to cope with these feelings and also as a result of exposure to violent behaviour, children may come to learn that acting violently is the normal or legitimate way of handling conflict and keeping safe (Schwartz & Hopmeyer Gorman, 2003). The problem and difficulty is that with increased exposure and reinforcement acting aggressively becomes a normal way of relating, in turn contributing to the rates of violence in schools as well as the pervasive problem of violence in South African society (Leoschut, 2008). Another manner in which children as well as South African society are able to deal with such high exposure to crime is through its normalisation. For example, many children may report that they feel safe at school besides having to often come face-to-face with violence. According to Burton cited in Serrao (2008) the answer to the question why children feel safe in spite of all this violence is, "the normalisation of crime in South Africa. This is a way of life for our children" (p. 1).

| | Have ever experienced violence at school (n=2,556) | Have never experienced violence at school (n=10, 238) |
|---|--|---|
| Lots of fights in the neighbourhood | 55.7 | 39.1 |
| Lots of crime in the neighbourhood | 53.3 | 38.1 |
| Have ever witnessed community members intentionally hurting one another | 50.5 | 33.8 |
| Easy access to beer, wine or hard liquor in the neighbourhood | 60.8 | 45.7 |
| Easy access to drugs in the neighbourhood | 31.9 | 17.1 |
| Easy access to firearms in the neighbourhood | 23.7 | 12.6 |

Table 1: Community Disorganisation and Violence in Schools (%)

b) Access to Violent Artillery – Drugs, Alcohol and Weapons

Another characteristic of communities in which there are high levels of violence is the accessibility of alcohol, drugs (illegal or addictive substances) and weapons (Leoschut, 2008). Besides, high levels of exposure to violence in disorganised communities what also became evident in the Schools Violence study. According to Burton (2008) those children whose family members used illegal drugs or had been

incarcerated were twice as likely than other children to experience school-based violence. Research also indicates that there is a strong connection between substance abuse and crime. For example, high levels of alcohol consumption and the use of drugs increase the levels of aggression and therefore the levels of violence used in the committing of the crime.

With specific reference to the school context, what is becoming evident is the increasing availability of drugs and alcohol amongst school learners. It seems that not only learners are the ones bringing these substances onto the school premises, but that some teachers are using children to get alcohol from the shebeens or missing classes to go and drink. The National Schools Violence Study found that 34.5% of secondary school children and 3.1% of primary school children knew learners who had come to school drunk, and a similar percentage knew of fellow learners who had come to school high on drugs (Burton, 2008). Not only is alcohol and drugs readily available, but weapons as well. According to Burton (2008) weapons, drugs and alcohol are available in many schools across the country. For example: 3 in 10 learners at secondary school know fellow students/learners who have brought weapons to schools; 3 in 10 report that it is easy to organise a knife, and 1 in 10 report that it is easy to organise a gun. With such easy access to substances and weapons, it is not unanticipated that levels of violence in South African schools would be so high. Many studies show that the age at which learners start drinking is getting younger and younger. Now, it is very common for school learners to bunk classes or to be seen drinking alcohol on their way to school.

1.1.4 Negative Peer Relationships

Another factor, which increases the risk of experiencing school-based violence, is learners' relationships with peers who influence them negatively. According to Nofziger and Kurtz (2008), children and youth who are brought up in violent communities tend to interact and spend time with delinquent, criminal or antisocial peers. Importantly, these friendships both increase their risk of being negatively influenced in turn engaging in violent activities themselves as well as their chance of having violence committed against them. The School Violence study was able to support this hypothesis, as those children who had friends involved in antisocial behaviour (drug-related or criminal) were significantly more likely to report the experience of violence against them than their peers who spent time with more conventional friends (Burton, 2008; Leoschut, 2008). Problematically, the high rates of crime and violence within South African society means that there is a very high possibility that children and youth will be exposed to criminal and violent individuals/peers.

1.1.5 Family Crime and Violence

Exposure to crime and violence within the family context also increases the risk of exposure to school-based violence. For example, those children who had been exposed to some form of interpersonal violence between family members (beating, punching, hitting, attacking with a weapon or intentionally

hurting) were 2.4 times more likely than other children to be victimised within the school context. Besides, the experience of violence having family members who were involved in criminal activities or who had been incarcerated also increased the risk of exposure to school-based violence. Studies show that there is a strong link between family violence and school-based violence. This shows the importance of including parents/caregivers in some of the school-violence prevention initiatives. Teachers alone will not be able to deal with this problem.

1.1.6 High Risk Zones

When examining the actual physical context or grounds of the school reports indicate that there are certain areas in schools that increase learners' vulnerability of being victims of violence. The findings of the National Schools Violence Study indicated the following high-risk zones –

- Travelling to and from school
- The location of toilets. Burton (2008) contends that in many schools boys and girls' toilets are located next to each other making it easy for boys to enter girls' toilets or harass girls going to or leaving the toilet.

However, even though toilets tend to be the most feared place in the school they are not the most common sites of violence. The classroom has been found, in the case of both primary and secondary schools, to be the place where the most incidents of violence transpire. According to learners, teachers tend to leave classes unsupervised for the majority of the lesson time in turn creating a large opportunity for violence to transpire. Types of violence that tend to occur in the classroom include assaults and theft, whereas the violence in school toilets tend to consist of sexual violence and assault. Open grounds and playing fields were also found to be high-risk zones (Burton, 2008).

THE PICTURE OF SCHOOL-BASED VIOLENCE IN SOUTH AFRICA

The exact prevalence of school-based violence in South Africa is unknown. Many incidents of school-based violence go unreported. It seems that the problem of reporting may be as a result of the normalisation of the problem in which the victim may feel that the case was not severe enough to be reported; a sense of shame, guilt or secrecy in relation to the violent act; fear of revenge attacks, ineffective reporting procedures and systems; as well as the possible unavailability of caregivers to confide in (Burton, 2008). In the case of incidents that have been reported, the educator or principal may feel that it is in their best interests not to report the incident, they may wish to prevent the particular school in question from developing a bad name; or may fear others viewing him/her as being unable to adequately manage their school, teachers and learners. Ngeno (2004) contends, with specific reference to the case of school-based violence against female learners, School Governing Bodies (SGBs) tend to not deal with these problems and often complaints that are referred to the department of education's district office disappear. Importantly, the problem surrounding the lack of accurate data pertaining to levels of school-based violence is a global one as highlighted by the United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (Burton, 2008).

3.1. Findings from Local Studies

The problem according to Burton (2008) is that despite the government prioritising the issue of violence in schools, the Department of Education has little or no data on the levels of violence. In order to gather data in relation to the problem of school-based violence the **National Schools Violence Study (NSVS)** was carried out by the Centre for Justice and Crime Prevention (CJCP) in 2007. It should be noted that this was the first national study of this nature. This study was conducted with 12 794 learners in both primary and secondary schools; 264 principals; 521 educators and 245 schools nationally. The main aim of the study was to collect data that was representative of schools across the country and could provide a picture of the extent of violence in South African schools. Types of violence that were focused on in this study included – threats of violence, physical assaults, sexual assaults and robbery

The following figures emerged from the study:

- 15.3% of primary and secondary school learners have experienced some form of violence while at school
- 1.8 million children have experienced some form of school-based violence
- The % types of violence differed across primary and secondary school (see table below)

| Types of Violence | Primary School | Secondary School | General School |
|------------------------------------|----------------|------------------|----------------|
| Threatened with violence | 10.8 | 14.5 | 12.8 |
| Assaulted | 7.5 | 4.3 | 5.8 |
| Robbed | 3.1 | 5.9 | 4.6 |
| Sexual violence | 1.4 | 3.1 | 2.3 |
| Shouted at or made to feel ashamed | 12 | | |

Table 1: % Types of Violence in Primary and Secondary Schools

- The violence experienced by male and female learners tends to be different. For example where girls tend to be the victims of sexual harassment, rape and sexual assault; boys tend to be physically assaulted and bullied. What also emerged was that male learners who were expected of having homosexual tendencies would be abused and beaten by male learners.
- In most cases the violence is not a once off event but rather in the vast majority of threats, assaults and violence the learners know the person who is perpetrating the violence. However, there was an exception in the case of sexual violence (Burton, 2008). What this therefore means is that children are subject to repeated victimisation at the hands of aggressors at school.

| | Once | | Twice | | Three Times | |
|-----------------------|---------|-----------|---------|-----------|-------------|-----------|
| | Primary | Secondary | Primary | Secondary | Primary | Secondary |
| Theft | 35.0 | 38.7 | 26.2 | 19.7 | 38.7 | 41.6 |
| Verbal abuse | 29.9 | - | 27.9 | - | 42.3 | - |
| Threatened | 35.5 | 50.8 | 29.5 | 23.9 | 35.0 | 25.1 |
| Assault | 26.6 | 59.7 | 14.2 | 18.8 | 59.2 | 21.5 |
| Robbery | 29.2 | 48.0 | 44.3 | 22.1 | 25.9 | 29.9 |
| Sexual Assault | 52.9 | 47.6 | 24.7 | 18.6 | 22.4 | 33.8 |

Table 2 – Frequency of victimisation at school (%)

The National Youth Victimisation Study of 2005 reported that:

- 20.9% of children have been threatened or hurt while at school (Leoschut & Burton, 2006).

The South African Human Rights Commission studies (Kollapan, 2006) showed that:

- Children are a greater risk of being victimised at school
- The number of deaths on school premises is on the increase

The South African Council for Educators (SACE) reported that (Sunday Times, 2003):

- Between 1999 and 2002, 32 educators had been struck from the teaching roll with the majority having engaged in sexual relations with learners
- In most cases sexual relationships were with learners from Grade 10 to 12

- Even though in many cases the sexual relationship was consensual the SACE does not approve of this behaviour arguing that educators are in positions of power and therefore the exploitation of learners will not be tolerated
- Table 3 provides statistics of the incidents of sexually related misconduct by teachers reported by the SACE between 1999 and 2002. The increase in the rates of reported sexual misconduct over the years is quite worrying.

Importantly, this increase highlights two possibilities:

- 1) There has been an increase in the number of incidents of sexual violence in Schools
- 2) With increasing awareness around the area of sexual violence and the rights of learners there have been a greater openness to report cases to the applicable authority

| Type of Misconduct | 1999 | 2000 | 2001 | 2002 |
|---|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Verbal abuse, victimisation, harassment | 19 | 19 | 25 | 27 |
| Sexual misconduct | 2 | 6 | 12 | 72 |
| Total | 21 | 25 | 37 | 99 |

Table 3: Types of misconduct dealt with by the SACE (adapted from Prinsloo, 2006:313)

Study of the perceptions of teachers in region of Pretoria on school violence (van der Westhuizen & Maree, 2009) suggests that:

- The study involved 365 student teachers as well as teachers from four secondary schools in Pretoria, Gauteng
- The extent of violence in some inner schools is greater than in schools located in suburban areas
- Violence in inner city schools tends to be more prevalent in girls often involving the use of weapons, such as scissors.

3.2. A brief outline of International Studies

In Switzerland, more than one in ten boys and a third of adolescent girls were found to be victims of and the perpetrators of physical violence (Kuntshce & Klingeman, 2004). Research in Italy found that approximately 42% of primary and 28% of secondary school children had been victims of school-based violence (Gini, 2004). De Wet's (2007) research on school-based violence in Lesotho provided evidence of learner-on-learner and teacher-on-learner verbal and physical abuse. In the case of Nigerian schools what became evident in research conducted by Olaogyn, Ayandrian and Oyeleye (2005) were forms of school-based violence ranging from verbal abuse to female genital mutilation.

These examples of international research provide evidence of the extent and problem of school-based violence on a global scale.

3.3. Manifestations of School-Based Violence

This section of the report is going to examine the different manifestations or presentations of school-based violence. More specifically it is going to explore the different parties involved and which party plays the role of the victim or the perpetrator of the violent act.

3.3.1 Learner-to-Learner School-Based Violence

According to Burton (2008) the most common form of violence in schools involves learners acting violently towards other learners. Similarly, Jefthas and Artz (2007) contend that often the perpetrators are other children who tend to use weapons such as knives and guns when engaging in violent acts. The findings of the National Schools Violence Study showed that in more than 9 out of 10 cases of school-based violence the perpetrator is a fellow student/learner. Burton (2008) contends that fellow peers or classmates are often the primary perpetrators of school-based violence. Similarly, The National Youth Victimization Study found that most victims of school-based violence reported that the perpetrators were either other learners or youth from outside the school (Ward, 2007). Research also highlights the presence of informal gangs within schools who terrorise and victimise learners. Gangs will often use stones, threaten and beat learners for no reason or if they are not given what they want. It should be noted that there are also cases of formal gangs, which infiltrate schools, recruiting new members with the aim of increasing their power and control. According to Jefthas and Artz (2007) in some instances gang members may force younger school children to sell drugs to their peers on their behalf.

High school stabbing suspect in court today

The 14-year-old boy suspected of stabbing to death a 18-year-old learner at the Forest High School, south of Johannesburg, is to appear in the city's Magistrates Court today. The accused allegedly stabbed Simon Nkosana Mbhele to death last week. His throat had been slit and he had several stab wounds on his body. It is alleged that Mbhele ran a loan scheme. He allegedly lent money to the suspect and when he wanted it back, he was stabbed. The accused, facing charges of murder, was released into the custody of his mother.

(News Article – 17 October 2006 – www.sabcnews.com)

3.3.2 Teacher-to-Learner School-Based Violence

Another manifestation of school-based violence involves the infliction of violence by teachers on learners. The reports of principals from the Drawing on the National Schools Violence Study highlight incidents in which educators inflict violence on learners (Burton, 2008, 2008*) –

- 1) 2 in 5 school principals reported at least one case in which an educator/teacher verbally abused children
- 2) 1 in 4 principals received reports in which teachers physically abused learners at school

What also emerged in the study were reports of 'Love relationships' by learners. By 'Love relationships' it is meant sexual relationships between educators and learners. According to Burton (2008) these relationships ranged from being secretive to the common knowledge of other learners. It appears that many learners fear disclosure of these relationships will result in negative consequences such as being failed (at the end or during the year) or kicked out of class. For example, in one case a learner reported how a teacher would openly select a learner from class that he wanted to sleep with and would do it in a way that all the other students knew what was happening. Importantly, many learners may therefore choose not to disclose these cases of violence against them out of fear of stigmatisation or further violent attacks.

Growing scourge of the lover-boy teacher sweethearts



In 2009 Oliver James, a columnist for The Guardian newspaper, posed this question to readers: "How would you react if your 16- or 17-year-old daughter had an affair with her male teacher?"

Some years back a female friend at secondary school confessed to me that she was having a sexual relationship with her male teacher.

Her confession was not an isolated incident but a drop in the ocean.

The South African Council of Educators' Code of Professional Ethics (section 3.9) states: "(An educator) refrains from any form of sexual relationship (physical or otherwise) with learners at a school." Unfortunately the Department of Education has been turning a blind eye to evidential reports on the prevalence of sexual relationships between teachers and pupils. The media has long been reporting on male teachers who propose love to female pupils in exchange for exceptionally high marks in tests and assignments.

In 2003 UK-based academics Fiona Leach and Pamela Machakanja conducted a collaborative study titled Sexual violence in schools: breaking the silence. Their study uncovered that male teachers who sexually exploit learners are rarely expelled from the teaching profession - even if they get a schoolgirl pregnant.

Teachers are supposed to be the custodians of exemplary leadership in schools.

These sexual relationships usually lead to teenage pregnancies and contribute to the spread of sexually transmitted diseases in schools. Teachers who impregnate pupils usually deny paternity for fear of being charged with sexual misconduct by the South African Council for Educators.

This entire practice diminishes the value of education and teaching among pupils and the youth in general.

According to their study, "Other teachers often choose to ignore what is going on, principals are reluctant to report the matter [to education authorities] because of a bureaucratic investigation, and pupils and parents are either intimidated or lack information about how to make a complaint."

(Passages taken from a news article written by Elvis Masoga - political analyst and researcher at the Institute for Dialogue and Policy Analysis). (www.sowetanlive.co.za)

Hit back, Cosas tells schoolchildren

The Congress of SA Students (Cosas) today called on school children to hit back when they are being hit.

"We call on all students to fight fire with fire, when teachers hit you, you must hit back," provincial chairman Ntsako Mogobe told reporters in Pretoria. He defended his statement, saying teachers were failing in their duty to teach.

"They take this thing that we are girlfriends and boyfriends of them and they *moer* (hit) us."

SA Democratic Teachers' Union regional chairman Moss Senye, also the principal of Soweto's Meadowlands High School, appeared in court on Monday for allegedly assaulting a 17-year-old pupil last month. Soweto teachers missed school to attend Senye's hearing. The ANC called for the teachers to be fired. Mogobe called the teachers' behaviour "childish" and insisted they be fired as the "no work, no pay" rule was "too soft".

"We call on the [Gauteng education] MEC to fire all the teachers who hold meetings during school hours [and] all those who bunked classes to support... Moss Senye." He charged that Sadtu in Johannesburg was led by teachers more interested in collecting their pay checks than learning and teaching.

(News Article – 16 March 2011 – Mail & Guardian Online – www.mg.co.za)

Senye in court over pupil assault

Johannesburg - Members of SA Democratic Teachers Union's Gauteng region blocked the Meadowlands Magistrate's Court entrance on Monday ahead of their chairperson Moss Senye's appearance for allegedly assaulting a pupil. Doors to the court were shut to control the crowd entering the building. Senye, a Meadowlands school principal, and teacher Ofentse Phehle, are accused of assaulting a 17-year-old-pupil. Senye was suspended in February pending the outcome of the case.

Scores of Sadtu members braved the wet weather and sang struggle songs that contained offensive lyrics, in support of their leader. The case was postponed to May 11. At the last appearance, more than 100 teachers protested outside the court demanding he be reinstated.

Danger allowance

At a mass rally on Thursday, the union proposed security allowances for its members saying teachers, like police officers, deserved a danger allowance. It said the safety of teachers was a concern because some children came to school with weapons.

On Friday, Senye was caught up in a row over comments suggesting that Gauteng education MEC Barbara Creecy hated black people, but remained optimistic ahead of his appearance. Creecy has warned there would be consequences for teachers staying away from school to attend the court appearance.

Senye called on Creecy to step down, labelled her a "Satanist" and urged members not to align themselves with white people as they would be tainted with Satanist. His comments were condemned by the ANC in Gauteng who labeled them "irresponsible" and "reckless." The secretary of his union body also distanced the union from his comments. "If such a statement was made, it is indeed, highly regrettable," Mugwena Maluleke said.

(News Article – 14 March 2011 – News24 – www.news24.com)

3.3.3 Learner-to-Teacher School-Based Violence

An extremely important finding in the National Schools Violence Study was the increase in reports of learners violently attacking teachers (Burton, 2008). Within this study principals and teachers reported the following:

- 1) Up to three in five secondary schools have received reports of learner-to-teacher verbal abuse
- 2) One in four secondary schools have reported cases of physical violence against teachers
- 3) 2.4% of reports included learners sexually assaulting educators

Educators and principals understand this increase as a result of students' access to alcohol and drugs. According to educators and principals this access is leading to more blatant forms of violence directed at authority figures. This research also indicates that only 57.7 % of educators at primary schools and 58.1% at secondary schools report feeling unsafe at their schools when teaching (Burton, 2008).

These findings highlight the vulnerability of teachers in South African schools as well as the problem of reports of school-based violence, which construct teachers as the sole perpetrators. This construction also fails to take into account teachers' experiences and how they are coping. For example, Hoadley (2007) argues that most South African schools are chaotic and challenging placing a great deal of pressure on teachers. In most cases teachers are torn between their duty to teach and other roles they are expected to perform. According to Van Leeuwen (2008), the EI General Secretary in his address to the first congress of the South African teachers union NAPTOSA, there is no denial of the problem of violence in schools in which children are often targeted but blanketing all teachers as perpetrators is unwarranted and irresponsible. Van Leeuwen (2008) contends that teachers are also at risk of school violence and constructions of teachers as perpetrators may even increase the rates of violence targeted at teachers. The incident below is an example of how teachers are at risk of violence at school:

Soweto boy allegedly stabs teacher

A 14-year-old boy allegedly stabbed a female teacher at the PJ Simelane High School in Soweto on Thursday, police said.

Warrant Officer Kay Makhubele said the boy allegedly stabbed the woman in the stomach and ran away.

The motive was not yet known.

Police were investigating a case of assault with intent to do grievous bodily harm.

(News Article – 17 March 2011 – Isolewe – www.isolezwe.co.za)

Teen in court for stabbing teacher

Johannesburg - A 17-year-old boy who allegedly stabbed a teacher at a Soweto high school was expected to appear in Roodepoort Magistrate's Court on Friday, Gauteng police said.

The teenager was facing a charge of assault with intent to cause grievous bodily harm, said Warrant Officer Kay Makhubele.

He allegedly stabbed a teacher in the stomach on Thursday and ran off. Hours later, he was arrested in Dobsonville.

Makhubele said the female teacher remained in a stable condition in the Tshepo-Themba Private hospital and there was a possibility she could be discharged later in the day.

Pupils and teachers at the school received counselling after the incident, said Makhubele.

The incident came a day after the Congress of SA Students (Cosas) called on schoolchildren to retaliate when hit by teachers.

"We call on all students to fight fire with fire, when teachers hit you, you must hit back," said Cosas provincial chairperson Ntsako Mogobe at a press briefing on Wednesday.

(News Article – 18 March 2011 – New24 – www.news24.com)

3.4. Corporal punishment – a model of violence for learners and teachers

Many educators come from a background in which violence was often used as a means of conflict resolution. Corporal punishment was a legitimate form of punishment in schools until 1996 (Morrell, 2001). Even though corporal punishment is illegal what became evident in Burton's (2008) study was that educators battle to utilise other forms of discipline and therefore tend to lean on more violent forms of punishment. For example, the National Youth Victimization study of 2005 showed that 51.4% of the participants reported having been caned or spanked at school (Kipperberg, 2007, Ward, 2007). What this finding highlights is that most children who are at school are constantly at risk of being the victims of violence even from teachers and the school principals (Kipperberg, 2007). Despite many parents arguing against the use of corporal punishment, it appears that this form of conflict management and discipline is quite thoroughly entrenched in South African society. For example, a national survey found that 57% of parents smack and 33% beat their children. Even though these rates are lower than international rates they are still problematically high (63). The National Schools Violence Study found a strong correlation to corporal punishment at home and at school. For example, significantly more learners who reported corporal punishment at home reported cases of violence at home (20.5%) and at school (21.2%). In the case of learners who did not report cases of corporal punishment at home, 13% reported violence at home while 19.3% reported violence at school.

From these findings what becomes evident is that despite corporal punishment being illegal, it is still a practice method of discipline in South African schools. According to Burton (2008) for many teachers the problem lies in the lack of alternative forms of discipline. Furthermore, this form of discipline is problematic in that it reinforces and models violent behaviour in and to children, respectively (Burton, 2008*). Moving beyond the level of the individual, "corporal punishment in any form constitutes an assault on learners and serves to perpetuate the many forms of violence to which South African learners are exposed" (Burton, 2008:29)

Teachers 'in no-win situation'

Malose Langa, a psychologist and lecturer at Wits University, said the incident showed some of the frustrations teachers face in the classroom.

But Langa summed up the incident with his favourite statement: "It clearly demonstrates what I always say, that violence breeds violence."

Langa said from his interactions with teachers in general, they felt a sense of helplessness and paralysis because of the illegalisation of corporal punishment.

Role Models

"Because of this some of the teachers have been gradually introducing **corporal punishment** (to instil discipline)."

He said there had been too many changes in the education system that teachers have been forced to adapt to over recent years.

"If a person comes late it will not help to deal with him violently. Talk to the child you could find out that there are many issues behind his or her behaviour."

Langa said he did not believe that the pupil had stabbed the teacher because of the Cosas statements in the papers yesterday.

(News Article – 18 March 2011 – Sowetan Live – www.sowetanlive.co.za)

THE CAUSES OF SCHOOL-BASED VIOLENCE IN SOUTH AFRICA

When attempting to understand the reason for such high rates of school-based violence in South Africa, one needs to explore the problem from multiple perspectives taking into account the many different dynamics that have influenced this phenomenon. According to Burton (2007) there is no single cause of violence, but rather, “a series of interrelated factors impact on young people in different ways, one of which will be in the perpetrating of violent acts against other young people and society in general” (Burton, 2007:12). In other words, it is extremely difficult, or impossible, to pinpoint one primary reason for the high rates of violence. Rather, there are a variety of interlinking and compounding factors that are contributing to the high rates of violence amongst South African children, especially transpiring in contexts such as the school, which should be safe for children. Burton (2008) argues that for one to gain a sense of the causes of violence in schools one needs to examine and attempt to understand the *broader context* in which the school is found – the *home and the larger community*. This way of understanding school-based violence will minimise the possibility of this problem being reduced to the level of the individual in which the particular parties involved in the violence are viewed as the sole problem. However and importantly, one must not forget when attempting to establish what caused what, that what is fundamentally imperative as well as problematic is that violence of any form models violence for learners in turn perpetuating the culture of violence (Ward, 2007).

In light of these arguments, this part of the report is going to attempt to unpack the different causes or factors, which individually and collectively lay the foundation for as well as perpetuate and increase the incidents of school-based violence in South Africa. Drawing on tenets of a systems approach to understanding school-based violence the following factors are going to be explored:

- 1) Individual factors (Micosystem)
- 2) Relationship factors (Mesosystem)
- 3) Community factors (Mexosystem)
- 4) Social factors (Macrosystem)

Importantly, this theory is one that understands a person and environment to be independent units that dynamically interact and influence one another (Stead & Watson, 2006). System’s theory draws on a constructivist worldview, which emphasises the need to take a holistic perspective and values personal meaning, and subjectivity (Du Plessis, 2008).

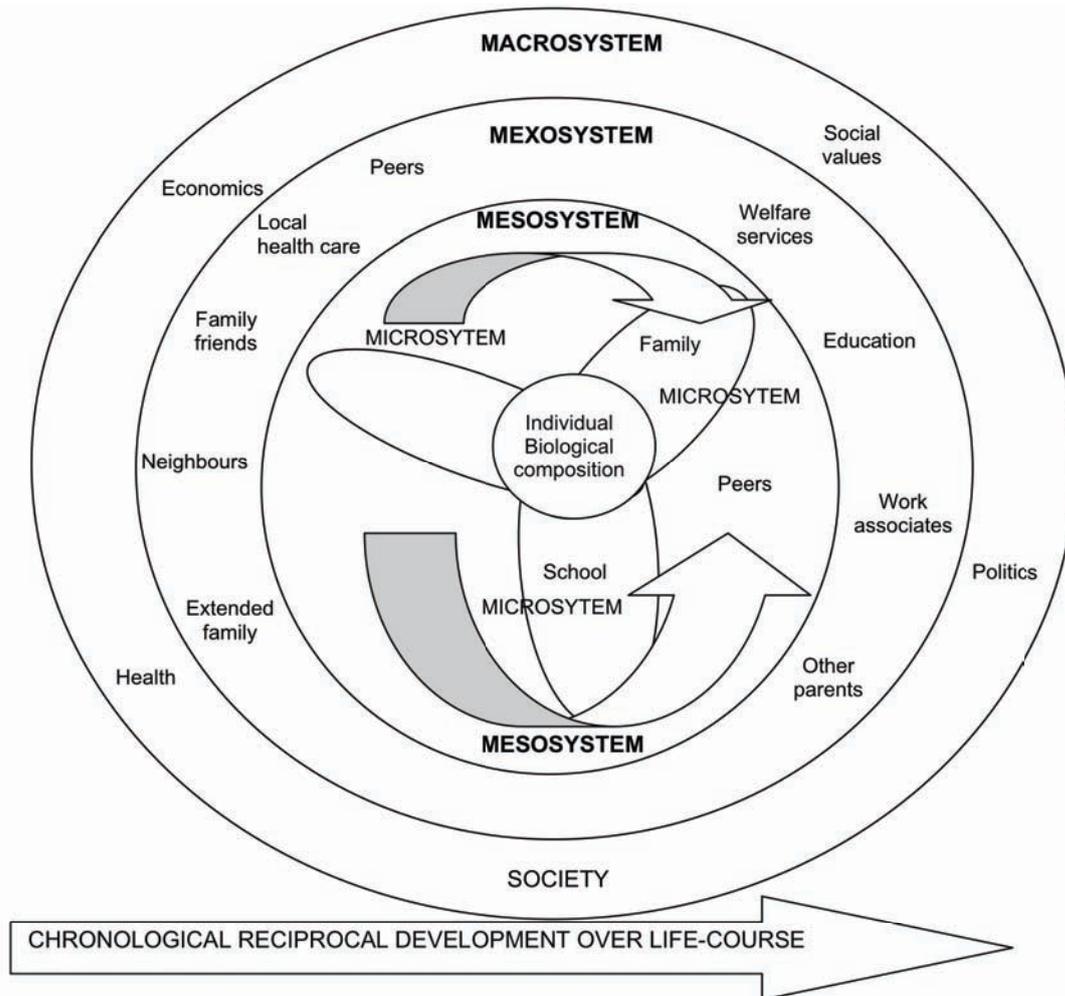


Figure 1 – Bio-Eco Systemic Model (Du Plessis, 2008)

4.1 Individual Factors/Micosystem

The Micosystem is the most basic unit of the different systems. This system, “consists of the patterns of activities, roles and internal relationships of the home, school and peer settings experienced by the developing person” (Du Plessis, 2008:19).

According to Ward (2007:17), “Violent behaviour in young people results from a complex interaction of risk and protective factors in different environments and over time, which influence how children learn behaviours.” Based on this argument, the higher the risk factors a child is exposed to the greater the chance the child will engage in aggressive and violent behaviour. Ward (2007) contends that the acquisition of complex social behaviour takes place through the process of social learning. This theory is based on the premise that individuals obtain information from a variety of sources (for example exposure to others’ behaviours, discipline from parents and other people in authority), which form mental representations of behaviours, how they work as well as the expected outcome if the behaviour is performed. The development of moral standards through the process of direct teaching, their own

evaluation of their behaviours and exposure to how others evaluate themselves, guides, deters or promotes certain types of behaviour. In other words, people will tend to behave in ways that make them feel good, give them a sense of self-esteem and pleasure, as opposed to acting in ways that make them feel bad, guilty and worthless in relation to their moral standards (Ward, 2007). However, when attempting to understand why children develop violent and aggressive behaviour, one needs to briefly examine the concept of reciprocal determinism (Grusec, 1992). Reciprocal determinism argues that children's behaviours elicit reactions from the environment, which in turn modifies their behaviours. For example, a child's aggressive behaviour may be rejected by a group of peers and therefore he/she may look to a more aggressive group to find acceptance in turn modeling aggression and rewarding violent behaviour (Ward, 2007). Based on this theory one can therefore argue that the high rate of violence in schools in SA will act as a risk factor putting pressure on children to act violently (Burton, 2008*)

4.2 Relationship factors/Mesosystem

4.2.1 The Family

The family has been argued to be one of the most, if not the most, influential socialising contexts in childhood and throughout adolescence. Importantly, parents play an essential role in modeling behaviour as well as mediating other factors such as poverty, school truancy, peer pressure which may increase the risk of school-based violence. In light of this premise one could therefore argue that it is highly problematic when parents are not good role model and are engaging in violent and/or criminal activities (Ward, 2007). For example, in families in which violence is the norm children learn to judge violent behaviour favourably and tend to view violence as the appropriate manner of dealing with conflict. Research shows that it is more problematic for a child to have a violent parent or a parent involved in criminal activity than to have lost a parent (Ward, 2007).

According to Ward (2007), with specific reference to South African society, too many, "children are being exposed to violence in the home, to caregiver criminality and quite possibly, to poor family management practices" (p. 29). A study conducted in the Western Cape found that in 2005, 0.3% (or 4358) of the province's children were seriously abused or neglected (Ward, 2007). It should be noted that this information was obtained from cases brought to Children's Court and therefore one could estimate that this figure is much higher in reality. A recent national survey found that even though the majority of South African parents are against corporal punishment, 57% smack and 33% beat their children. The same study found that 20% of the participants had experienced physical abuse in their relationships (Ward, 2007). The National Youth Victimization Study found that 21.8% of young people reported witnessing violent and aggressive arguments between family members. 10.5% of the young people reported that their parents had engaged in behaviour that could potentially get them into trouble with the law (Ward, 2007). South African society is also made up of many broken homes

in which children are only living with one parent or are living with extended family. A study conducted in the Western Cape in 2001 found that 11.25% of black households had single-parent households, with the lowest percentage in white households at 5.75% (Amoteng & Makiwane, 2005). The National Youth Victimization Study discovered that nationally only 43.3% of the participants live with both their parents; 27.8 % live with only their mothers and 22.4% live with extended family members (Leoschut & Burton, 2006)

Looking specifically at the relationship between violence in the home and the school context, the National Schools Violence study found that:

- 10% - 15% of learners have family members who have used illegal drugs in the past year
- 1 in 10 and 13% of caregivers have been to jail
- 1 in 5 learners' siblings have been to or are currently in jail
- More than a 3rd of learners in primary and secondary school who experienced violence at home have been victims of violence in school context

Risk factors located in the family (Burton, 2008; Ward, 2007):

- Family conflict and violence
- Criminality on the part of caregivers
- Antisocial siblings
- Large family size
- Low maternal age and education
- Violence in the home – intimate partner violence, child abuse
- Poor family management practices
- Harsh and/or unpredictable discipline
- Poor monitoring and supervision of children's activities
- Permissive parenting
- Low levels of family bonding

4.2.2 Peer Relationships

One cause or factor, which may contribute to violence among youth, is that of peer pressure (Jeffthas & Artz, 2007). According to Mathews, Griggs and Caine (1999) the need for status and power among peer groups can be understood to be one of the causes of violence amongst youth. With specific reference to male learners, it can be argued that there exists great pressure to be seen as brave, to be accepted in the peer group as well as to have a girlfriend. Girls on the other hand, are more easily reported as victims due to constructions of femininity and gendered dynamics. For example, girls may experience the pressure to be sexually active due to the wish to be accepted in a peer group. Research conducted in Khayelitsha, Cape Town, with pregnant Xhosa-speaking adolescent girls found that most of the girls viewed sex as a mechanism to avoid peer exclusion (Wood, Mafroah & Jewkes, 1996).

4.3 Community factors/Mexosystem

“South Africa’s young people live in an environment where they learn violent behaviour, where they learn that it is rewarded, and where they feel that violence is likely to solve their problems and make them feel powerful and worthy” (Ward, 2007:36).

When attempting to understand the problem of school-based violence it is imperative the one looks looking beyond the school to the community and the neighbourhoods in which the school is located. Ward (2007) contends that the everyday social contexts in which children learn and grow play a critical role in the socialisation of children. One could argue that violent communities plague South African society. Research shows that the experience of violence in communities is across class areas. That is violence does not only exist in poor and impoverished communities. Problematically, the experience of violence has become normalised within in South African society. Burton (2008) reports, drawing on the National School Violence Study, half of the secondary school learners report feeling safe and liking their neighbourhood despite high levels of crime (Burton, 2008). Other community factors, which increase the risk of school-based violence, include the high rates of weapons and drugs in schools. This implies that these goods are easily available outside of schools in the home or community context.

4.4 Social factors/Macrosystem

The final factor that needs to be taken into account when attempting to understand the reason for such high rates of school-based violence in South African schools is the greater social, cultural and political context. South African society has been argued to have a culture of violence (Ward, 2007). The country is currently having to manage the after effects of the Apartheid regime in which discriminatory policies entrenched structural forms of inequality and promoted high levels of poverty (Jeffthas & Artz, 2007; Ward, 2007; Burton, 2008). During this era the youth, specifically black youth, were brought up in a context in which violence was a part of everyday life and was constructed as a means of overthrowing the apartheid regime. Thousands of youth and children engaged in the struggle with the aim of liberation and freedom from the oppressive apartheid system (Kipperberg, 2007). It can be argued that the “heightened politicisation of adolescents during the period 1970-1990 in South Africa offered a temporary reprieve for certain black adolescents from the extremely negative impact of the South African society” (Stevens & Lockhat, 2003, p.130). The structural inequalities entrenched in this regime also resulted in townships becoming places of severe poverty and overcrowding. With the end of apartheid and the commencement of democracy in 1994 there came a need to redefine the role of youth. That is the youth were no longer expected to be ‘young lions’ but rather functioning members of the new dispensation (Jeffthas & Artz, 2007). According to Kipperberg (2007) this shift in role meant that the youth no longer played a central role but rather a peripheral one. It can be argued that this shift was not easy as many of the heroes pre-1994 had to battle against the levels of poverty and inequalities cemented during apartheid. Continued inferiority and a lack of power lead the youth to turn

to criminal and violent activities (Jeffthas & Artz, 2007). It can therefore be argued that the apartheid regime developed an alienated generation for whom violence was the only means of making change. Apartheid also resulted in the development of a generation of parents who were products of abnormal society and broken family structure, therefore tending to lack vital parenting skills needed to raise healthy children (Kipperberg, 2007).

When attempting to understand the consequences of Apartheid on school-based violence, Jeffthas and Artz (2007) contend that the experiences of white children are often ignored. A central reason for, “neglecting white youth is that as beneficiaries of the apartheid government’s legislation and policies they were not victims of the oppression, and their experiences of the structural violence it produced are vastly different from those of the black youth” (Jeffthas & Artz, 2007:41). However, the threatened loss of the privileges this race group enjoyed during Apartheid and the associated fears can be argued to have manifested in the increasing tension and violence in white homes. According to Hirschowitz, Milner and Everatt (1994) the increasing reports of family murders within this group is only a small reflection of the possible high levels of assaults, excessive drinking, intimate partner violence and child abuse that are often unreported.

RISK FACTORS FOR DELINQUENCY AND VIOLENT OFFENDING

Individual factors

- Pregnancy and delivery complications
- Low resting heart rate
- Internalising disorders
- Hyperactivity, attention deficit, risk taking
- Aggressiveness
- Early initiation of violent behaviour
- Involvement in other forms of antisocial behaviour
- Poor cognitive development
- Low intelligence

School factors

- Academic failure
- Low bonding to school
- Truancy and dropping out of school
- Frequent school transitions

Community and neighbourhood factors

- Poverty
- Community disorganisation
- Availability of drugs and firearms
- Neighbourhood adults involved in crime
- Exposure to violence and racial prejudice

Family factors

- Parental criminality
- Child maltreatment
- Poor family management practices
- Low levels of parental involvement
- Poor family bonding and family conflict
- Parental attitudes favourable to substance use and violence
- Parent–child separation
- Teenage parenthood
- Divorce
- Familial antisocial behaviour

Peer-related factors

- Delinquent peers
- Gang membership
- Peer rejection

Figure 2: Risk factors for Violent Offending (Leoschut and Benora, 2007: 111).

THE IMPACT OF SCHOOL-BASED VIOLENCE ON TEACHERS

The negative impact of school-based violence on learners/children is well documented. According to Leoschut (2008) and Du Plessis (2008) violence and crime in the school environment has serious implications for children's physical, social and emotional development. Besides, the trauma of the violent experience, the profound effect of these experiences on the socialisation and shaping of children is also as a result of the reality that children spend a large percentage of their time in this context.

Studies conducted in the United States and British provide evidence of the impact of a violent school environment. Farrington and Welsh (2003) bring to light some of the characteristics of violent schools, which include:

- low levels of trust between educators and learners
- high rates of truancy
- low commitment to school by learners
- unclear and inconsistent forms of discipline

They further established that high levels of physical punishment and low levels of praise (positive reinforcement) are key drivers in systemic school violence. According to Rutter (1983) where good classroom management, appropriate use of praise and punishment, and student participation tend to be characteristics of non-violent schools; weak school bonds and high levels of conflict between learners (and learners and teachers) increase the rates of learners engaging in violent behaviour. On a similar note, Ward (2007) contends that young people or children who are exposed to violence at such a young age are more likely to become caught up in cycles of violence, repeatedly being victims and/or perpetrators of violence.

According to Jeffthas and Artz (2007) the effects of exposure to high levels of violence include: Depression, Post traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and trauma, withdrawal, disengagement, terror, rage, brutalisation, Anger as well as the hardening of attitudes.

According to Du Plessis (2008) there is a lack of focus on the impact of high levels of violence on educators and how they are able to cope. As argued by Du Plessis (2008) there exists a clear gap in literature on the issue of school violence pertaining to teacher's experiences. In Du Plessis' (2008) of a coloured teacher experiences what emerged were instances in which violence was directed at teachers in the form of physical force. The research found that teachers tend to experience a range of emotional reactions in response to learners' violent actions. These reactions ranged from a sense of

guilt that the participant's actions were contributing to violence to negative feelings towards learners. Other possible outcomes include a decrease in the number of people being interested in becoming teachers, high levels of burnout as well as the decision to resign from the profession. Some teachers also presented with high levels of stress and depression. It seems that educators may be feeling quite alone in the education system and unsupported by the Department of Education as well as School Management. According to Du Plessis (2008) what became evident in this study was a construction of teachers as "suffering, disabled victims of violence, within an unsupportive system" (p. 71).

RECOMMENDATIONS AND THE ROLE THAT SACE CAN PLAY IN ADDRESSING SCHOOL-BASED VIOLENCE

“A safe school may be defined as one that is free of danger and where there is an absence of possible harm; a place in which non-educators, educators and all learners may work, teach and learn without fear of ridicule, intimidation, humiliation or violence” (Prinsloo, 2006:308).

The aim would therefore be to work towards the creation of safe schools, which uphold the values of South Africa’s constitution. According to Prinsloo (2006) a human rights culture can only be established once a school is safe enough for effective learning and teaching to take place. A human rights culture in a school context would be one that upholds the constitutional rights of every learner and teacher to dignity, equality and freedom. Squelch (2001) contends that other characteristics of a safe school environment would be:

- Good discipline
- A culture that facilitates learning and teaching
- The professional conduct of teachers/educators
- Good management practices
- An absence (or low level) of violence and crime

Importantly, schools that display these characteristics will act as mitigating powers in the case of children who come from violent homes or communities. For example, by focusing on the development of relationships, academic achievement and appropriate forms of discipline schools can model a different way of being for these children, and in turn improve our South African society (Burton, 2008).

Burton (2008) argues for a ‘Whole school approach’ to dealing with violence, which moves away from examining individual aspects of the school or context to understanding the school as an entity consisting of, “several ‘components’, all of which are interdependent – learners, educators, principals, school management teams, SGBs, and parents or caregivers” (Burton, 2008:77). All these components interrelate and are found within a wider context – the home, community and greater South African society.

Based on the above perspective the following recommendations have been made:

- 1) **Further research on school-based violence:** there is a need for further research in the area of school-based violence. Specifically, there is a need for research, which explores

the experiences of teachers. In so doing, this will provide teachers with support, which will hopefully counteract violent attacks and minimize the negative effects of being exposed to violence at school. SACE should commission larger research studies to explore teachers' perceptions of school-based violence and ways in which this problem can be prevented. This is the major gap in the existing literature that few studies have been conducted on teachers. Such studies hopefully will provide a new perspective on this problem.

- 2) **Providing support and assistance to educators:** there is a need to provide teachers with emotional and counselling services to deal with work stressors. It was evident in this literature review that many teachers are suffering from PTSD-related problems and depression due to their exposure to high levels of school-based violence. Employee Assistance Programmes (EAP) should be explored and sourced to provide teachers with such service. Currently, various provincial departments of education provide EAP services to teachers although they are operating at different levels. Debriefing of teachers following some of these violent incidents is important to help teachers ventilate and deal with possible PTSD-related difficulties.
- 3) **Formal reporting mechanisms:** the need to develop formal mechanism/procedures for the recording or reporting of school-based violence cases as well as for the feeding back of this information to the district and provisional authorities.
- 4) **Greater openness and information regarding school-based violence:** According to Burton (2008) learners tend not to report incidents of violence due to fear; embarrassment; the belief that school authorities cannot be trusted to follow up the report; as well as the belief that the incident was not important enough to report. Another problem is that many learners who do report violent incidents are often threatened which discourages other learners to report. Based on this, schools need to put in place systems that will protect learners who report incidents and ensure that the issue is dealt with. Types of information that can be communicated in schools include (Burton, 2008):
 - a) How to protect yourself from violence
 - b) What to do if you become a victim of violence
 - c) Where to go for help

In relation to the above recommendation, it is essential as argued by Du Plessis (2008) to work towards the transformation of the belief that the perpetrators of violence in schools are untouchable. One way of working towards this goal is the need to ensure that teachers as well as educational management are aware of both their rights and responsibilities.

- 5) **High Risk Zones in Schools:** in relation to High Risk Zones in schools (Burton, 2008) steps need to be taken to minimize risk in these areas. For example, there needs to be greater supervision of class rooms, and possibly boys and girls toilets need to be separated. To minimize the chances of drugs and weapons being brought into schools security checks could be initiated at the beginning and end of every school day. This will also act as a way of protecting children who are at school from negative peer influences who are found within the surrounding communities.
- 6) **School codes of Conduct:** Codes of conduct as suggested by Burton (2008) should be clearly explained to both learners and teachers. In this literature review, it was evident many learners and some teachers do not know what is acceptable or unacceptable behaviour in schools. SACE should regularly arrange outreach sessions to raise awareness about the Code of professional ethics in line with the Department of Basic Education's related policies and legislation. This will again help SACE to achieve its mandate in enhancing the status of the teaching profession.
- 7) **School Management:** some schools are also characterized by power dynamics or leadership squabbles, which negatively affect the management of the school. It is important that teachers, SGBs, LRCs and school principals work together for effective school management.
- 8) **Training Services and the Provision of Alternatives to Corporal Punishment:** conflict resolution skills; more pro-social ways of dealing with conflict Possible training topics include classroom conflict management, effective disciplinary strategies, practices which can prevent violence as well as steps which can be taken to protect both learners and teachers from becoming victims of school-based violence. SACE should work collaboratively with employers and professional development providers in ensuring that there are adequate programmes to address various arrears of needs around school-based violence.
- 9) **Counselling services for learners:** It is important that counselling services are made available for learners in dealing with causes and effects of school-based violence. SACE should use its position as teachers' council to advocate and lobby the Department of Basic Education to make such services available in schools. This will help in reducing teachers' workload as currently teachers are expected to occupy multiple roles of being counsellors and teachers at the same time.
- 10) **The need to work with community structures such as faith based organisations, churches and social services:** As argued schools exist within social contexts and therefore support from surrounding community organisation will be extremely effective (Burton, 2007). SACE should use its position as teachers' council to galvanize and mobilize all the above

community structures to address the problem of violence in our communities. It is important that contributing factors such as poverty, a sense of marginalization, and family disintegration are taken into account in implementing such initiatives. This should be done in collaboration with other government departments. In conclusion, it is wrong to see violence in schools as the responsibility of teachers and school principals only. Everyone should play a role and be involved in promoting non-violent attitudes amongst school-going pupils and the youth in general.

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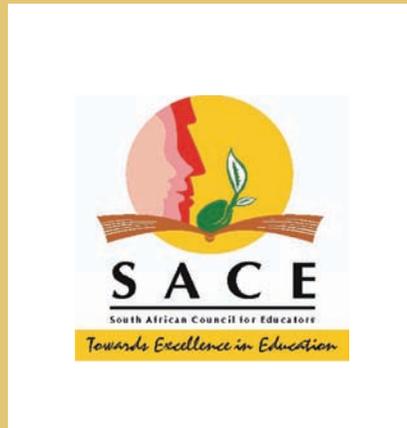
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