



REDUCING SCHOOL-BASED VIOLENCE: AN ANTI-BULLYING INTERVENTION IN TWO SCHOOLS IN HARARE

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Declaration

Reducing school based violence in schools: An antibullying intervention in two schools in Harare

I, Priscilla Musariwa hereby declare that this dissertation herewith submitted for the Masters: Management Sciences: Public Management and Economics (Peace Building) has not been previously submitted for any other degree at any other institution. It is my original work.

Priscilla Musariwa

This ____ day of ____ 2017 at the Durban University of Technology

Dedication

I humbly dedicate this thesis to my beloved parents-

My humble and God-fearing mother, Rosemary Musariwa. This is the results of your hard work and commitment. I give it back to you.

Equally, I devote this effort to my father Isaac Musariwa who gave me the courage and chance to attend school and so to discover the scientific world. I salute you.

With gratitude, love and respect

Priscilla Musariwa

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To my Sheila Rumutsa, I salute you. You are such a lovely best friend.

Abstract

Since Zimbabwe's independence in 1980, the issue of achieving sustainable peace and development has remained a challenge due to a lack of comprehensive approaches to issues of human rights violations. With such a problem, it becomes easy for individuals and society to use violence as a means to an end and, thus, it has become culturally acceptable, not only in political spheres but also in the school sphere. Therefore, this study aims to promote positive attitudes among students to reduce levels of bullying and to enable to realise the prevention mechanisms that exist within themselves through an action research intervention. Action research with a group of ten students was used create awareness on the negative impact of bullying and also the importance of creating and maintaining peaceful schools. Research proved that violent behaviour among students appears to be a serious problem at Prince Edward School and at Cranborne High School. I worked together with students in two schools to design, implement and evaluate a programme designed to reduce bullying behaviour. It is recommended that students, academic staff, police and the Ministry of Education work together to design interventions that include students in reducing bullying in schools.

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ACRONYMS

CBHS	Cranborne Boys High School
KZN	Kwa-Zulu Natal
SACE	South African Centre of Education
SRSG	Special Representative of the Secretary-General
UNCRC	United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
USAID	United States Agency for International Development

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

This study is grounded upon a deep-seated desire to help foster peace and nonviolence as a culture among the students in Zimbabwean schools, particularly at Prince Edward School and Cranborne Boys High School (CBHS).

The problem of school violence is a growing concern not only in non-governmental circles but also from the perspective of many governments especially because of its escalation in the past few years. Zimbabwe, like many other developing countries, continues to deal with policy and programmatic challenges in successfully addressing the causes of school violence. A part of these challenges arises from interventions that fail to be locally appropriate, and which fall short of targeting the multiple contexts in which school violence develops.

Targeting and training students aim at understanding their behaviour, attitudes and determining the sources of influence among young people. The study seeks to work with a target group of junior students aged 14 – 15 who will be accessed in the school. However, it is pertinent to enquire into the causes and consequences of violence are that the students experience in their day-to-day lives? How do students themselves deal with the violence experienced? Will a training programme on nonviolence reduce levels of violence faced by students?

The study is based on an action research design using qualitative methodology to explore student-attitudes towards violence, which will inform future directions for violence prevention programmes in Zimbabwe. The study will engage students in an empowerment and transformative programme that will assist them in becoming actively involved in developing an environment free from violence for them, their peers and their community. This programme will rebuild relationships and ensure that

students are accountable for their own behaviour. Therefore, this study will contribute to the reduction of conflict and violence first at Prince Edward School and then at Cranborne High School then in the whole Zimbabwe in the long run.

Worldwide, children are raised in societies characterised by fragmented family structures, joblessness, increasing levels of substance abuse and increased levels of violence. As a result of these factors, violence has become a culture from at individual, family and societal level because children are exposed to violence on a daily basis. It becomes the norm in dealing with conflicts (Burton 2007: 2). Violence has also become a culture in schools as learners see it as the available way of solving conflicts. Research shows that school violence is escalating worldwide, despite the measures and interventions put in place to address the problem by different departments of education and schools themselves (Burton and Leoschurt 2012:11). I endeavour, together with the participants, to come up with practical ways of reducing conflict and violence in schools in a context best suited to the environment where it takes place.

1.2 Context of research

This study will be done at Prince Edward School and at Cranborne High School. Both high Schools are in the Harare province. These schools have developed a culture of violence to resolve conflicts.

Since Zimbabwe's independence in 1980, the issue of maintaining peace and growth has remained a challenge due to the absence of understandable methodologies in issues of human rights violations. This shows that its history is branded by sequences of problems which, at different pivotal moments, were manifested through conflicts that resulted in violence (Makachanja 2010: 1). Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2010: 190) supports this concept as he considers that the political history of Zimbabwe is preoccupied with patriotism and identifications with the freedom. The current violence among young people seems to owe much to its connection to the glorification of Zimbabwean history. With such a problem, it becomes easy for individuals and society to use violence as a

means to an end as it has become culturally acceptable, not only in political spheres, but in the school environment as well.

Due to the prevalence of conflict and violence in Zimbabwe and the negative consequences that result from this, primary interventions are needed to reduce this problem. Therefore, this study aims to reduce the destructive attitudes among learners that may aggravate violence and to enable them to realise the prevention mechanisms that exist within themselves.

Conflict and violence among students is becoming a serious problem in both urban and rural schools in Zimbabwe and students are the main culprits in causing this. (Burton and Leoschurt 2012:9) maintained that young people are at the centre of attention in discussions surrounding crime, and especially on issues relating to violence. For this reason, it is imperative to find measures that can be used to reduce violent behaviour among learners in secondary schools.

1.3 Restorative justice

The theoretical framework underpinning this study is the restorative justice theory. Restorative justice is a process that involves those parties involved in the exact wrongdoing and together, they identify and discuss the problem, expectations and requirements, in order to create and maintain relationships (Zehr 2002:37). The prime focus of restorative justice in schools is in putting things right between all those involved or affected by the wrongdoing in order to maintain their relationship and, therefore, build an environment conducive to learning in schools (Amstutz and Mullet 2005:32).

This theory has three basic principles which include repairing harm, reducing the risk of re offending and empowering the community by involving them in addressing the impact of conflict and violence. Students are empowered as active participants in the

restorative process (Pelveka 2013:15). This theory also stresses trust, respect for each other, leniency and empathy for other people's emotional states, needs and rights (Hopkins 2004:31). For this research, I will emphasise on the following restorative justice methods; peer mediation, restorative circles, and restorative conferences.

The quality and effectiveness of a restorative method depends on the extent of the devotion to the basic assumptions addressing the problem; the degree to which the given answer repairs the harm done to the victim, community, wrongdoers and their relatives, the degree to which each participant is involved in the conversations about the event and the extent to which community and government roles in the schooling system are re-shaped to allow communities an improved opportunity and a greater obligation to react to conflict (Schiff 2013:8). Therefore, this study will use the core principles of restorative justice when implementing the intervention.

1.4 Aims and objectives

This study aims at investigating the reasons for school violence at Prince Edward School and Cranborne High School and then design, implement and evaluate an intervention to reduce this violence. Objectives are listed below:

1. To investigate the nature, extent, causes and consequence of school violence experienced by at Prince Edward and at Cranborne Boys High School.
2. To identify current responses to violence and to assess its effectiveness
3. With assistance of an action team, to design and implement an anti-bullying intervention aimed at reducing school violence; and
4. To undertake a preliminary evaluation of the outcome.

1.5 Research Methodology

The research will be undertaken using exploratory enquiry to tackle specific objectives and, action research and evaluation. Action research is a methodical tactic that allows people to bargain for actual solutions to challenges they confront in their daily lives. This type of research design provides a way for individuals to engage in an organised reflective enquiry and exploration to design a suitable way of achieving an objective and to assess its efficiency (Stringer 2014: 6). The reflective nature of action research makes it possible for me as the researcher and participants to learn from an intervention that which needs to be done and redesign for the next action plan, thus developing a better model of intervention. Action research assumes that individuals who have previously been labelled as subject or participators have to be directly involved in the study. Having said this, it is likely that a regular twice a week meeting will be set up which will run for two months (September – October 2016). These sessions are likely to involve:

1. Training sessions on how to resolve conflicts using nonviolent methods
2. Planning and implementing of an intervention to reduce violence in schools

My plan is to design a programme together with learners, with the aim of instilling a culture of nonviolence.

Methodology

Action research with a component of explanation will be used to examine the operation and the outcome of the chosen intervention to reduce violence and to investigate the nature, causes, trends and the consequences of conflict as well as violence at Prince Edward School and Cranborne High School. Action research will be used as it goes beyond discovering the conflict and violence in schools and most importantly it allows the researcher, together within the school community, to design, implement and evaluate a campaign to reduce violence in schools.

The target population are all learners all learners from both High School and the target group will be learners between 14-15 years (form twos). Ten learners will constitute my sample population, a number which is consistent with the in-depth nature of qualitative enquiry.

Sampling methods

A purposive technique will be adopted for this study because of its relevance to the study. Purposive sampling techniques occurs when selection is made according to known characteristics (May 2011:100). The investigator chooses what is to be recognised and arranges to find individuals who are willing as well as able to participate on the bases of information and skill (Lewis and Shepherd 2006: 298). Likewise, the researcher knows what needs to be known and with the help of the class teacher choose learners who are willing and able to participate by virtue of knowledge and experience.

Measuring instrument

Focus group discussions will be used to understand the issues of violence which the participants experience and from which the researcher will be able to obtain the in-depth reflection of individual experience necessary to examine the complex nature, causes, extend and consequences of conflict and violence in schools. In-depth interviews will be used to probe further at an individual level as to how participants relate to and understand violence as seen in their school. It is not possible to provide these questions at this stage as they will depend on responses from the focus group. A third instrument to be used is the reflective diaries which will be updated by the participants from the time they take part in the study. These will help them and me as the researcher to measure any changes in attitudes and behaviour, along with before and after comparisons of restorative circle discussions and interview responses.

Data analysis

Qualitative data analysis will be used to examine the files collected from the interviews that were semi- structured, from focus groups and from observations. Use will be made of thematic analysis to interpret the open-ended questions. David and Sutton (2011: 365) assert that thematic analysis is an example of qualitative content analysis which stresses the importance of spending substantial time with data, figuring out which themes essentially develop from the information given by participants instead of the researcher imposing his/her own beliefs. Moreover, it provides a way of arranging and briefing the findings from a huge body of inquiry.

Pretesting

A pilot test of the focus group and interview guide will be carried out on a sample of three learners with the same characteristics as the actual research participants (Hennink *et al.* 2011: 120). The purpose is to deal with ambiguity of the data collection tools. These will form part of the final sample.

Delimitations

The scope of the study is limited to Prince Edward and Cranborne High School learners. It is understood that high schools might not have similar responses. This research also focuses on learners from 14-15 years who might have different responses from the responses of the seniors.

Validity and Reliability

Validity refers to the extent to which data in an investigation are precise and trustworthy (Gray 2014: 692). Therefore, it is fundamental to check the accuracy of the findings. It is important as it helps to determine whether or not the results are correct from the perspective of the investigator, contributor and those who will read the final research. With the permission of participants, I will tape record focus group discussions and interviews. I will check transcripts to ensure that there are no errors made during the recording. Thereafter, data will be triangulated from the different measuring instruments used to gather information. Lastly member checking will be used; that is, taking the ultimate findings to contribute or regulate whether or not the participants have a feeling that findings are correct (Creswell 2010: 201).

Babbie (2013: 188) views reliability as the stance of whether or not a certain method, used repetitively for similar purposes produce similar finding each time. Therefore, it shows the consistency of the results obtained from the study across different researchers. It ensures high consistency and accuracy of the results obtained from the data collected. Reliability will be ensured by an audit trail as it enables a platform for retroactive assessment in the conduct of the study. I will also take my findings to the group and check that I have made correct findings.

Anonymity and confidentiality

For the sake of protecting the participants' reputations and characters, the data collected throughout the investigation will be used by the researcher only and will be treated confidentially and stored securely. Fictitious name will be used in the place of their real names. Mouton (2001: 57) claim that that the guaranteeing of secrecy and privacy with members assists in establishing more content validity.

Ethical considerations

I have put in place measures to ensure that there is adequate guarding of the contributors' rights, by attaining informed permission and by abiding by the official review process. Participation in the research was entirely voluntary.

1.6 Organisation of the study

Chapter one

Research background and statement of the problem, aims and objectives and justification of the research are articulated in this chapter. Summary of study methodology, methods of collecting data, ethical consideration and restrictions of the research are also described in the same chapter.

Chapter two

This chapter reviews literature on the general definition, nature, trends and extent, sources and effects of conflict and violence in schools. It also reviews literature on current responses that have been put in place to curb this problem.

Chapter three

This chapter reviews literature on the traditional methods of discipline, definition of restorative justice and restorative justice methods that can be used in schools as an alternative to discipline.

Chapter four

This chapter details the methodology used in the study and how the research was designed to get the required data. This data was collected from focus groups, observations and interviews that were semi-structured.

Chapter five

Chapter five presents, analysis and interprets the data using thematic analysis. Direct quotations from the participants are presented and interpreted according to the different items of literature that revolves around it.

Chapter six

This chapter details the interventions that were designed, implemented and evaluated by the researcher, together with the students. Personal reflections and the intervention limitations were highlighted.

Chapter seven

Chapter seven concludes the study and then highlights important recommendations for future studies and future interventions. This chapter also personal reflection, limitations and immediate outcome of the study.

1.7 Research contributions

This research should contribute to the creation of peaceful schools with a culture of respect in Zimbabwe and in the whole world at large. This study will also help

Zimbabwean school communities to change their perspectives on conflict and violence in schools as they will then be equipped with the alternatives that can be used to resolve conflicts in a non-violent manner. This research will also add to the existing data sources which can be used in the library or on the internet as a source of reference for further studies.

1.8 Summary

This section presented the context as well as the layout of this research. It also described the overall contribution that the research may make to the society of South Africa and to the world at large. The following chapter will review the literature that revolves around the issues of conflict and violence in schools.

CHAPTER TWO – CONFLICT AND VIOLENCE IN SCHOOLS: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

The previous section (chapter one) presented the background of the research and layout of the dissertation. This chapter reviews literature around the issue of conflict and violence in schools. It specifically discusses the nature, extent, sources and effects of conflict and school violence. It also discusses the current responses that have been put in place to reduce conflict and violence in the school environment. The major studies available in South Africa that are mostly referred to are: *Dynamics of violence in South African schools* and *South African Council of Education*. In Zimbabwe, not much research has been done but there is the *Aetiology of student's violent behaviour: Case of Zimbabwean urban schools*. These are the major studies that I will refer to throughout the study.

This chapter draws special attention to literature that is relevant to the phenomenon of conflict and violence in the school context. Through the assessment of applicable information from different sources, the section is intended to contribute to a clear thought on the nature, extent, causes and consequences of school violence and measures that have been put in place to reduce violence in schools.

2.2 Conflict and Violence in Schools

Conflict refers to some form of resistance, dissimilarity, or dissonance arising within persons or a crowd when the opinions or activities of one or more affiliates of the group are either resisted by or found to be intolerable by one or more affiliates of another group. Conflict pertains to the opposing ideas and actions of different entities, thus resulting in an opposed state (Mohammad 2014:631). If conflict is not resolved appropriately, or if it is ignored, it may end up in violence.

According to Burton and Leoschurt (2012:2), victimisation is defined as the deliberate use of body-strength, perceived or genuine that is used against different individuals or group that can end up with a probability of physical or emotional damage or dispossession. In this regard, Burton (2008: xi), goes on to say that there is cumulative anxiety in African countries that schools are becoming areas of prevalent violence, especially secondary schools. This literature gives a clear picture of the need to deal with school violence in its early stages such that it will not eventually cost lives or impairment health.

SACE (South African Council for Educators) (2011:3) elucidates that schools have been created ideally as place in which young people come together to acquire knowledge in a safe and secured environment. He reflected that this is not the case in many African schools. According to Leoschurt (2008:17), it can be argued that this issue of conflict and violence in schools is not new. It started a long time ago but the school authorities did not give it the required attention. What is manifesting now is the increasing intensity of the violence and the deadly consequences resulting from it (Burton 2008:3). This study explores the phenomenon of school violence and then find ways to reduce to reduce it, thus creating safer schools of high academic achievements.

According to Burton (2008: 2), violence in schools amounts to the actions that create a disruption of an academic system which includes spoken and physical confrontations, intimidation through online means or bullying. With regard to this, UNICEF (2010:4) argued that school violence is a bodily or spoken confrontation, in the journey from school and on school premises which causes bodily or emotional damage to other people, the academic environment and the community at large. In this regard, De Wet (2007:673) highlighted that conflict and violence in schools is not an issue restricted to academic environments only, but to a complex multidimensional issues which require careful conflict-resolution processes that broadens the participants' world views. Schools are shared spaces within which the power connections, control and discriminatory practices of civic and society at large are

reflected (Burton 2008:2). It should be the responsibility of both the students and teachers to ensure safe schools and the maximum acquiring of knowledge and personal development.

UNICEF (2010) is of the view that violence among young people in a school setting is connected to socio-cultural traditions, administrative agendas, the faults of education systems, civic practices, and to global macro-economics. In light of this, De Wet (2007:673) goes on to say that conflict and violence in schools should be a critical problem that requires urgent attention as it may negatively impact on the economy in the long run. For this reason, this study explores the roots of conflict and violence in academic settings. Therefore, the form and causes of conflict and violence in the school context requires a design and an intervention to reduce conflict that leads to school violence and to reduce school violence in general.

2.3 Nature of conflict and violence in Southern African schools

This section explores the nature of violence in schools in terms of its different manifestations or presentations. Violence manifests itself in different forms as illustrated by the following diagram. More specifically this research investigates the different stakeholders involved and then describes which stakeholder is a victim or the perpetrator of the harm caused. For this research, the main manifestations discussed are learner-to-learner and teacher-to-learner.

Figure 2.1 Different forms of school violence



2.3.1 Learner to learner school based conflict and violence

Burton and Leoschurt (2012: 40) indicated that a considerable amount of violence encountered by students in schools is perpetrated by other students, who could be peers or other students. Complementing this, Burton (2008:8) highlighted that the frequently evidenced form of violence in an academic setting involves students intimidating other students, although other forms of violence should also be given equal attention. With this in mind, Jefthas and Artz (2007:46) indicated that, usually perpetrators are students being aggressive towards one another, using knives and other weapons. This study discusses the most common examples of learner-to-learner violence which are: bullying victimisation and gender-based violence.

Bullying victimisation

Isidiho (2009:5) is of the view that apart from the victims, educators and guardians are worried about the psychological, bodily and emotional consequence victims are subjected to from bullying. In addition to this, (Burton 2008:3) concluded that interventions against bullying would be more effective when the causes of bullying are understood because bullying sometimes results in greater and long-lasting violence in schools. Therefore, this study seeks to explore the causes of this violence and then work together with students to devise programmes that help to reduce this problem.

Isidiho (2009:20) found out that there is no balance of power established at the core of bullying. Thus, a student who is stronger, more hostile and self-assured than the average student usually bullies fellow students who are not as strong and are more nervous, who do not react, or who behave assertively (Chabangu 2014:19). Not only do students face bullying in schools, they also encounter it on their way to and from school. As far as this is concerned, Leoschurt (2008:12) points that bullying exhibits itself in various ways. For example in bodily attacks, terrorisation as well as fear, spoken aggression and gossiping. The tormenter possess control over the tormented. For example, they are bigger in size, have greater strength, are more self-confident, or through the force of numbers (Chabangu, 2014:8). If bullying is not controlled, it may lead to serious injuries or even deaths.

Burton and Leoschurt (2012:19) in their research found out that approximately 78, 7 per cent of students have experienced bullying. This is an indication that bullying as an element of violence that has serious implications for student safety. The increased number of bullying incidents in academic environments does not only include real victimisation or hostility, but persistent promises of victimisation as well. This make school halls and bathrooms extremely dangerous fear aggravating (Chabangu 2014: 17). These statistics reveal enough evidence to show that learners are not safe. So if this issue is not given enough attention by the responsible stakeholders, then academic achievement is not guaranteed.

Meyer and Brown (2009:2) defined bullying as an act which repetitively as well as in the long-run deliberately inflicts pain on another person. In this context, Mncube and Harber (2012:9) highlighted that harassment is also common among girls. Female-to-female student bullying is a growing problem and is likely to be spoken about, in relation to sexual abuse as well as issues about rivalries for boy-friends. According to Burton (2008:3), bullying encompass a number of crucial fundamentals namely: bodily, spoken, or emotional harm or victimisation usually planned to induce terror, pain or hurt to the offended. Inequity of control (mental and bodily) usually with stronger pupils dominating the weaker and recurring incidents among similar students in the long run may result in delaying a student's recuperation from the damages of the emotional harm resulting from the school's negligence. It is the obligation of the student, school authorities, parents and the community to create safe schools that are conducive to learning and personal development.

Gender violence in school context

Gender violence within an academic setting is a problem throughout the world creating serious consequences for the academic achievements, health, and security of girls and boys (USAID 2008: 1). In agreement with this, Leach *et al.* (2014:2) highlighted that gender violence affects the students' presence in school, their ability of retention and their capability to learn and achieve while there. Zimbabwe is predominantly patriarchal and feminist, though this fact is not well-received in Zimbabwean society. Chikwiri and Lemmer (2014:95) are of the view that a feminine discourse was deemed appropriate to the study of gender violence in Zimbabwean schools.

Gender violence in the academic environment cannot be separated from violence that occurs at home and in the community. Leach *et al.* (2014:1) maintain that, violence is rooted in the lack of a power balance that pre-dominates between boys and girls, in the gender ladder and expectation of responsibilities and generally agreed on norms of what comprises action to be taken towards masculine and feminine issues. Academic environments, in conjunction with the home environment, are setting for the

building of gender distinctiveness and gender relations constructed on socially endorsed disparities. Therefore, it is vital to reduce the violence in schools, and simultaneously reduce the violence in homes and in society at large.

Gender violence in schools is well-defined as the behavior or threats of sexual, bodily or emotional violence occurring there, encouraged by the masculinity and femininity-norms and stereotypes enforced by the imbalance of power dynamics (United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS) (UNAIDS 2008:1). Gender violence also refers to the variances between females' and males' experiences of and susceptibilities to violence (United States Agency for International Development) (USAID 2008:1). Having said this, Leach *et al.* (2014:6), added that gender violence in schools involves explicit threats or behaviour of physical violence, intimidation, verbal or sexual abuse, non-consensual conduct, sexual coercion, assault, and rape. These threats need to be dealt with and eliminated from schools to create an environment with equal balance between boys and girls where both boys and girls have equal opportunities and responsibilities in schools.

Dunne *et al.* (2006:6) observe that that the policies, as well as practices that fill the school time with rules, norms and attitudes, serve to lead and control actions. Consequently, academic environments that strengthens the imbalanced gender relations repeated at home maintains concepts of male dominance and superiority. From the researcher's experience in school, teachers could the norm of boys' in the classrooms over the girls' contribution when they teach thereby, celebrating celebrate the male competitiveness and 'superiority' by assigning more public and upper-status chores and responsibilities to male learners and educators and private home-related duties to girls and female teachers who, therefore, will accept intimidation and verbal violence as a way of life. Because of this, educators could take advantage of and use girls as free child labour, to do their domestic chores. This unequal power between boys and girls in schools need to be addressed urgently before it grows into domestic and societal violence.

These taken-for-granted, routine practices in schools more often than not instil in children the notion that masculinity is connected to hostility, while femaleness necessitates submission and compliance as well as making oneself 'look good' to boys (Dunne *et al.* 2006:33). In this way, Leach *et al.* (2014:4) concluded that violence by males become accepted in teenage interactions and that this behaviour, therefore, perseveres into adulthood. This prevailing version of masculinity relations cultivated by the school, is exclusively enclosed in terms of a required heterosexuality.

Boys who seek to reinforce their status over their fellow schoolmates may understand this as the necessity to demonstrate their supremacy over girls. Findings from the research done by Leach and Machakanja (2000:1) found out that strengthening status encourages students in the acts of sexual abuse. For example males cornering and probing girls or shouting demeaning vulgarities, and male educators making sexist or offensive remarks to girls or female teachers, or touch with girls during classes. Even though there is discipline used by authorities in developing countries, where domestic violence is seen as a normal way of life, gender violence often go unreported and is not being dealt with. This research focuses on violence in schools where very little has been said about school-related-gender-based violence.

Gender violence in Zimbabwean schools is basically a secret and socially acknowledged form of child violation. Acknowledging this, Chikwiri and Lemmer (2014:105) proposed that masculinity-scripting and the belief of tolerance towards gender violence in Zimbabwe adds to humanity added to the continued problem which is basically ignored by the society. Teachers sometimes consider such occurrences as not worthy of discipline (Leach *et al.* 2014:4).

In several parts of the globe, there are limited levels of accountability in the learning system and poor management and expert commitment. Ideally, parents, educators and girls condemn educators or older men having sexual inter-action with schoolgirls, whether for money or social reasons (Leach *et al.* 2003). Therefore all these actions by society indirectly encourage gender-based violence in schools, thereby, reducing

the safety, personal development and academic achievement of students in schools, especially for girls.

Both boys and girls are affected by conflict and violence in schools, but gender-based violence is commonly focused on girls and is of specific concern. Having said this, the United Nations (UN) (2011:4) highlighted the concern about the absence in all areas of dependable and comparable statistics of violence against female learners in academic environments. Violence on the basis of gender in academic settings is an inexcusable phenomenon that challenges attempts to deliver high quality teaching and to achieve education for all. In addition to this, (UNAID 2008:1) has pointed out the negative consequences of gender violence in attending classes, acquiring knowledge and achievement of all learners, and has this has broader negative effects on families and society. Because of its negative consequences, gender-based violence needs to be eliminated completely to ensure equal achievements between boys and girls in schools. This study investigates the nature and forms of conflict and violence then together with the students design an intervention.

2.3.2 Teacher-to-learner violence in schools

School violence can manifest itself in the in the infliction of violence by educators on students. Burton and Leoschurt (2012:29) discovered that educators are also identified as culprits in the violence against students. 28.1per cent of principals admitted that, at their schools there were teachers who had been orally abusive towards students and 14 per cent had cases of bodily violence against students by teachers brought to their responsiveness in the past year, and 2.5 per cent of heads also reported cases involving sexual harassment against students by teachers in 2011 in South Africa. From these statistics, it is clear that teachers are equally to blame as perpetrators of school violence although, most cases, students are afraid to report them because of the consequences of this.

Rape and sexual harassment

Currently, Zimbabwe is faced with a number of socially and economic challenges, with sexual harassment in schools a problem in both towns and in rural areas. With most of the abuse directed towards girls, there have been reports of abuse against boys, although they are limited (UNICEF 2008:41). According to Chikwiri and Lemmer (2014:98), the values in Zimbabwe and other countries accept abusive actions and violence towards young people.

According to Prinsloo (2011:306), sexual abuse is defined as an unwelcome sexual approach. According to (UNAIDS 2008:1), the unwelcome nature of sexual abuse differentiates it from actions that are wanted and reciprocally satisfactory. For instance, sexual action turns to sexual abuse if the action is persistent, or if the receiver has indicated that the action is unpleasant and the person committing the offense is aware that the action is considered as intolerable (Chabangu 2014:18). Sexual harassment affects the victims' physical and psychological health which results in poor academic achievement and the reduced confidence of the student.

Shumba (2009:19) posited that harassment of students by educators in the academic environment is a collective issue in Zimbabwe and in the whole world. 'Sexting' (a form of texting) is a form of sexual abuse that has developed into an alarming in most sections of Africa. According to Forde and Hardley (2011:57), the word 'sexting' is a result of texting as well as speaking between to the directing of sexually offensive information from current communication infrastructures either from teachers to students or between students or even from students to teachers. In light of this, Chabangu (2014:18) clarifies that even if 'sexting' is prevalent, it becomes increasingly impermissible and concern to society, particularly when the pictures go viral and the sender cannot control it. This is not really common in Zimbabwean rural schools as many students cannot afford cell phones but those who can afford them are strictly not allowed to bring them to school.

In a National School Violence Study in 2012, Burton and Leoschurt (2012:19) discovered that boys and girls are affected by violence. However, some kinds of violence tend to be strongly related with personal sex. These results also indicated that gender violence, sexual abuse, sexual assault and rape are practised at far higher levels by female learners and perpetrated by male teachers. The issue of male teachers abusing girls has been confirmed in Zimbabwe. According to Zimbabwean students, perpetrators of sexual violence in schools are mostly teachers, although there are some cases of classroom peers and students in the higher grades perpetrating sexual violence (Chikwiri and Lemmer 2014:101). This type of violence needs special attention. Teachers are expected to provide education and security to children, but, instead they are abusing students and this has now become a concern to society at large.

According to Wilson (2013:2), it is worth noting that if schooling for female students is unfair, teaching is negotiated as well as the mental enablement contained in teaching has to offer is highly compromised. He added that, if female students are to remain within educational environments they need to be continuously protected and sustained so as to finish their schooling. Meyer and Brown (2009:9) indicated that sexual abuse in an academic setting has been the subject of study and public discussion from the 1990s, but still, sexual harassment has continued to create unstable situations in schools, creating a hostile and unfriendly climate for most students, especially girls. In addition to this, SACE (2011:26) points out that, with reference specifically to the school setting, there is evidence of the increasing access to drugs and alcohol by students. The relationship between drugs or alcohol abuse and violence is that students under the effect of alcohol or drugs tend to be more violent within and outside the academic environment and they can also be weak and vulnerable to any violence, especially having sex with their teachers if they are under the influence. (Chabangu 2014:23). From this evidence, it is clear that the influence of drugs makes both boys and girls more vulnerable to sexual harassment. Therefore, schools should have strict rules that forbid all forms of drugs and alcohol on the school premises

According to Wilson (2013:2), harassment that is sexual usually transpires out of the academic setting when mature males are involved in sex in exchange for presents and money. To avoid this problem from escalating, she highlighted that there must be effective policies for programmes that assist educators to develop academic environments where those selective actions are substituted by ideas of respecting each other, fairness and understanding. This account gives rise to the question_ is the academic environment secure for our children? Are the Zimbabwean communities encouraging confidence and the establishment of harmony as well as constancy in the academic environments? The posed questions are complicated with reference to the increasing complication and instabilities found in academic settings. Having said all this, USAID (2008:5) argues that school violence contaminates the fabric of societies as well as the state at large. It jeopardises the well-being of young people as well as that of the grownups. School violence disturbs the delivery of physiological amenities in addition to destroying respect for the rights of human beings.

Prinsloo (2011:310) commented that, even though girls now have better access to schooling, they are faced with high levels of sexual abuse and sexual harassment in those schools which obstructs their smooth access to education on equal terms with boys. It is vital that the Ministry of Education works together with school executives to provide quality management in order to mobilise obligations to combat sexual harassment in schools.

Corporal punishment

In Zimbabwe has been proved that the most shared form of bodily violence faced by the students is corporal punishment (Chikwiri and Lemmer 2014:98), as a penalty for noise, absenteeism, failing in school work and sports or coming to school without the required stationery. This is supported by the old constitution of Zimbabwe which says corporal punishment is legal in academic settings. In this regard, article 241(2) (b) of the Criminal Law Act 2004 indicates that an educator “shall have authority to administer moderate corporal punishment for disciplinary purposes upon any minor

male pupil or student". According to this constitution, school is demarcated as involving "an educational institution of any kind" (art. 242(1)) and educators are not allowed to use corporal punishment on girl learners (art. 242(4)). Also the school guidelines on the use of corporal punishment must be adhered to (art. 242(5)), (Global Initiative to End All Corporal Punishment of Children 2016:3). Corporal punishment continues to be a common problem in Zimbabwe. It is the responsibility of guardians and educators to find alternative ways to discipline that do not violate the rights of children.

According to the United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) (2006: 4), corporal punishment is defined as any punishment in which physical force is used and anticipated to induce a certain degree of pain or discomfort, however light. UNCRC (2006:4) also added that common examples of corporal punishment include striking learners using hands or with a tool. However, it can also involve, kicking, shaking or scratching and pinching. Portela and Pells (2015:8), confirm that, if cherished by law, the CRC demands that State Parties 'take suitable procedures to guarantee that school-correction is applied in a manner consistent with children's human dignity. Corporal punishment persists and continues to be administered in many contexts, even if illegal.

In less privileged and downgraded societies, for example, Zimbabwe, young people are probably affected by violence and usually experience it in various forms and in different situations (Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General (SRSG) on Violence against Children 2012: 11). However, Parkes (2015: 199) clarifies that in the case of school, the relationship between the less privileged and violence is not automatically clear. Yet in resource-poor situations, especially poor countries where teaching systems have undergone speedy enlargement and teaching-space overcrowding is common, it is suggested that educators may feel disempowered and consequently use corporal punishment options to less privileged students (Office of the SRSG on Violence against Children 2013: 36).

Particularly in less privileged areas, schools are most likely to be poorly resourced. Consequently, they may be more overcrowded and have teachers with less training (Tshabalala 2015:236). In relation to this, (Singh and Sarkar 2012:31) highlighted that school violence is common in these areas. This calls for a partnership between the Department of Education and the state to build enough schools to avoid overcrowding and also to employ qualified teachers who knows how to deal with students' misbehaviour without using violence.

Qualitative studies by Marcus (2014: 11) shows that educators, guardians and often some young people themselves recommend that corporal punishment in academic setting increases academic achievements and amends unfavourable actions and attitudes. This has been confirmed by Morrow and Singh (2014: 14) who highlighted that it is very important to discipline children for them to adhere to rules and to ensure maximum achievement. However, qualitative research with students, (Beazley *et al.*, 2006: 183) has proved that many students do not feel that corporal punishment assists them to obey the rules. Instead, it makes them frightened, confused and depressed and may cause them to turn out to be violent due to the standardisation of violence (Rojas 2011: 11, Morrow and Singh 2014: 13). Much of the existing research has focused on the impact of corporal punishment administered by parents and other caregivers on children (Donnelly and Straus 2005:1). This study therefore cover the gap in literature by exploring corporal punishment administered by teachers to discipline students and the effects of using it.

Cross-sectional studies by Covell and Becker (2011: 14) have shown that male students, young people from cultural minorities, groups underprivileged on the basis of their ethnicity and learners with disabilities more commonly suffer corporal punishment than their fellow age mates from other groups. Although there is inadequate data on young people's experiences of corporal punishment on the basis of their social status (Marcus 2014: 67), after qualitative discussions with young people and families it is shown that less privileged children may be at more risk of being disciplined for inadequate school equipment or a uniform or absenteeism due to them having to do paid or cheap labour for the upkeep of their families (Morrow and Singh

2014: 13). It is the responsibility of both the teacher and the student to treat each other in a fair and respectful manner, to ensure their goals are achieved without compromising the safety and dignity of either party.

2.4 Extent and trends of school violence

The prevalence of conflict and violence in schools has escalated considerably in lately, with shocking statistics being stated throughout the world (UNICEF 2011:1). The signals of its increased occurrence have positioned it as one of the major issues in schooling contexts countrywide and globally, constituting it as a concern for teaching authorities, researchers, politicians and public organisations (Becerra 2015:1538). With this in mind, (UNAID 2008:1) revealed that both males and females can be victims or culprits of school violence. However, it differs on the extent and the nature. It was highlighted by USAID (2008:8) that female learners are very prone to gender violence, abuse and manipulation, while male learners are very prone to experiencing recurrent and severe physical violence for example corporal and physical punishment. Pinheiro (2006:91) is of the view that male students are most commonly agents of physical intimidation, while females are more likely to use spoken or emotional forms of violence. From the evidence given above, schools need to go an extra mile in ensuring safety for both boys and girls in schools and encourage them to build good relationships with their fellow students.

The urgency of the necessity to address conflict and violence in schools is grounded on evidence of its increasing prevalence, and the growing and consistent indication concerning the negative consequences that the dynamics of school violence have on school environments, and on learners who are victims, perpetrators and observers of violence in schools (Burton and Leoschurt 2012:44). From this, it is evident that the trend in school-violence is increasing and responsible authorities should treat this problem with urgency. Therefore, this research focuses on addressing different forms of violence, thus reducing the trend in schools so as to create safe schools, conducive to learning and to the personal development of students and staff.

2.5 Causes of conflict and violence in schools

Chabangu (2014:32) highlighted that when trying to comprehend the reasons for escalating rates of violence in schools, there is a great need to investigate the phenomenon from many different angles considering different dynamics that influence this cause. In support of this, Burton (2007:12) added that causes of violence are a series of interconnected elements that impact on students in various ways, an example of which would be the committing of violent actions against fellow students and the society at large. It is very complicated, or even impossible, to isolate one primary reason as a cause of high rates of violence. In this regard, UNAIDS (2008:3) agreed on the presence of various interconnected and compounding causes that are accelerating the high rates of conflict and misbehaviour among young people, specifically those taking place in settings such as the school, which is supposed to be safe for young people. This research explores the causes of school violence to better understand the phenomenon and then find ways to address these causes to reduce violence in schools and therefore, creating a safe environment conducive to learning and development.

Burton (2008:4) indicated that for the researcher to understand the causes of school violence there is need to scrutinise and put in an effort to understand the far-reaching context in which the school exists including the home and the community at large. This approach of looking at school violence reduces the likelihood of the issue being narrowed to the personal level in which the specific parties involved in the violence are seen as the only problem (SACE 2011:23). On the other hand, it is important that the researcher should remember when trying to establish what resulted in what, what is imperative as well as problematic is that violence of any type models violence for students as a result of them propagating the culture of violence (Ward 2007:9). With reference to these arguments, this study attempts to explore the different causes, which independently and jointly lay the basis for, as well as continue and increase the incidents of conflict and violence in Zimbabwean schools.

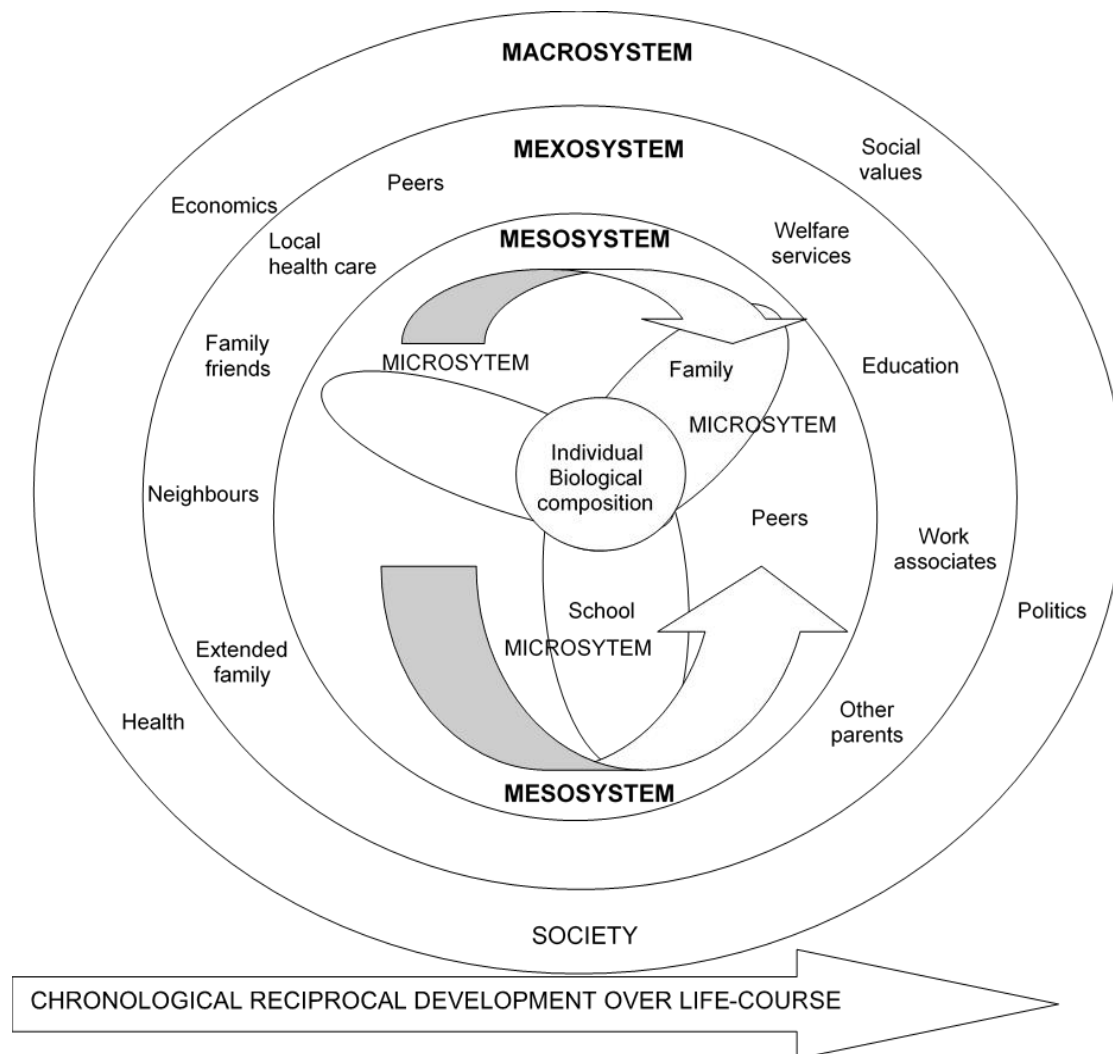
To fully explore the causes of conflict and violence in schools, this research uses the systems theory as it focuses on understanding an individual and the setting and the self-governing units that dynamically relate and affect each other (Stead and Watson 2006). System's theory is grounded on a constructivist view of the world, which stresses on the necessity to take a universal viewpoint and values individual sense, and subjectivity (Du Plessis 2008:21). Grounded on principles of the systems theory to understanding conflict and violence in schools, the following elements are explored:

- 1) Personal factors (Microsystem)
- 2) Relationship dynamics (Mesosystem)
- 3) Community dynamics (Mexo-system); and
- 4) Social dynamics (Macro system)

In terms of a child displaying violent behaviour at school, it is important to consider this comprehensive view of interrelated factors influencing both the perpetrator and the victim of violence. The bio-eco systemic environment of the specific student will also influence the experience of the student. The structural relations and the domains of the family, subculture and culture are accumulative, mutually reinforcing, and inversely related (DeKeseredy and Perry, 2006). The spheres mentioned in this theory relate to the spheres of the micro-, meso- and exo-system. It also includes the chronological influence and the fact that these spheres or systems function reciprocally. The Bio-Ecological Systems Theory is viewed to be a very comprehensive theory and therefore suitable to use as reference during this specific study, acting as a point of reference when the experiences of a high school student with regard to violence at school is explored.

The following chart by Du Plessis (2007:34) explains the link between microsystem, mesosystem, mexosystem and microsystem of the bio-ecological system.

Figure 2.2 Bio ecological System



2.5.1 Individual factors (Microsystem)

These factors abide within individuals. They are internal forces within children that makes them behave in ways that are unacceptable to the school and to the community. These include psychological setup, alcohol and drug-abuse.

Psychological setup

The psychological setup of the learner causes violence that usually manifests itself either in school or at home. A negative self-concept is a jeopardy element related to conflict and violence in schools. This has been confirmed by Gudyanga (2015:70) who shows a direct link between getting involved in violent actions and a diverse self-concept. Therefore, students who feel unimportant, sometimes use violence as a way to demonstrate their self-worth and learners act in this manner as a result of depression. Paterson (2002:98) added that absence of self-control abilities might result in one being violent. In this case students might lack the skill to identify their feelings and to act accordingly. This means that learners who lack self-control are likely to engage in violent activities at school. There is a great need for school officials to design and implement programmes and activities that build and cultivate students' self-confidence and self-control to allow for personal development and academic achievement, as well as reduce the violence that results from a negative self-concept and frustrations.

Alcohol and drug abuse

As with the crime in societies, conflict and violence in the school context is escalating in the intensity and occurrence because of accessibility and availability of different types of drugs and alcohol in school environments (Burton 2008:9). According to Fox and Burstein (2010:134), even though it is a benefit that senior students are mature and have the ability to take on larger personal tasks, senior students are susceptible to the lure of drugs and alcohol and they are in the most danger. Ingesting alcohol, for example and abusing substance has become more problematic in both secondary and high schools more than at primary schools. Regardless of the law that has been put into practice, drug dealers continue to see secondary and high schools as productive grounds for increasing their profits (Chabangu 2014:25). It is the duty of both students and school management to ensure the school is free from drugs and alcohol to ensure

students' behaviour is manageable thus reducing violence that is triggered by the influence of drugs.

The problem of drug and alcohol abuse in school environments is historically related to the era just after the independence of Zimbabwe (Chikoko 2013:1). The strategy employed by the Ministry of Education of Zimbabwe, in public schools, unlocked the school gates for every child even for those youths who had been abusing drugs for the duration of the Zimbabwean freedom fight as a means of survival (Tshabalala *et al.* 2015:232). As a result, from that time, keeping schools safe has continued to be a problem in primary and secondary schools. As Mpofu (2011:1) claims, Zimbabwean learners who sometimes get involved in various anti-social actions for example fighting, intimidation, stealing and destruction of school property are mostly under the influence of drugs.

Abuse of drugs and alcohol stops the young people from taking advantage of exceptional opportunities presented during their teen-age days such as the opportunity to acquire a decent education (Nderezima 2011:19). Therefore, by strictly forbidding drug abuse in schools, the committing of antisocial behaviour would also be reduced and the creation of safer schools, more conducive to academic achievement and personal development would be created. Complementing forbidding rules and regulations, schools should also consider creating awareness on the dangers and the negative consequences of drug and alcohol abuse so that students are clear as to the reasons why they should stop abusing drugs and alcohol.

Recently, gang affiliates were becoming more inventive in substance abuse, specifically medicine overdosing, at younger ages and during their teenage life (Chabangu 2014:25). In the same manner, alcohol abuse has the potential to initiate xenophobic attacks in academic settings. Links between substance usage, taking in alcohol, conflict and misbehaviour in schools requires a thorough investigation. Even though school children have been forbidden to drink beer, evidence shows that cases of students drinking beer is an increasing concern within academic environments

(SACE 2011:34). Regrettably, educators are as complicit when it comes to this issue as the students are, when students come with beer into the academic premises. Chabangu (2014:25) argues that teachers also send learners to go to buy beer from shebeens next to schools with most students niggling off to taverns to get beer for personal drinking. Teachers are there to monitor children in such a way as to reduce alcohol abuse but if they are facilitating the abuse then schools are in danger.

Violence in schools is exacerbated in terms of both concentration and occurrence by the availability and easy access to alcohol and drugs by students. According to Burton (2008:9), these are 'accessories' that are usually related to grown-ups rather than children: the law forbids young people and teenagers from buying alcohol and weapons, while all drugs are completely banned. Nevertheless, just as it is often challenging to apply legislation relating to alcohol and drugs among grownups, so too is it seemingly more difficult to apply it to students, with the indication of a growing accessibility and availability of drugs and alcohol at schools.

According to Bester and Du Plessis (2013:7), the corrective support devices on the part of school management requires an investigation to make clear of their efficiency as well as to monitor whether or not they really achieve their intended objectives which are for instance, to help teachers in the multifaceted responsibility of sustaining good behavior in the schools. There should be strict measures to discipline students and teachers who facilitate the availability of drugs and alcohol in schools.

2.5.2 Relationship factors (Mesosystem)

These factors are linked to children interacting with everyday life, including their friends in and outside school, their parents and siblings at home and the general public in the community.

Peer factors

Another source of school violence is peer pressure. Peer pressure is a fast growing cause of school violence (Gudyanga *et al.* 2015:70). Friends have a great mental influence on their fellow friends. Students are effortlessly influenced by their peers. In light of this, Benavente (2008:18) is of the view that youth who have violent friends are mostly at high risk of learning and accepting violent behaviour as a culture.

Commonly, learners have revealed that peer pressure is the fastest developing and most worrying reason for the performances of violence among learners in schools (Barbour 2011:13). According to Poipoi *et al.* (2011:7), it was discovered that some students would display violent action to satisfy their peers and fit into different peer groups. Consequently, 45.8 per cent of boys and 45.6 per cent of girls admitted that they get involved in violent actions because of fear of losing their friends (Gudyanga 2007:55). These statistics show that there is a need for teachers and parents to facilitate healthy relationships between their children so as to reduce the spread of violence in schools and in communities.

Ideally, these relationships escalate the risk of being negatively influenced and, in turn, get engaging in violent actions themselves as well as the probability of having violence perpetrated against them (SACE 2011:9). In the same manner, Burton (2008:5) supported this hypothesis, as he indicated that those students who had peers involved in misbehaviour were more likely to copy their involvement in violence than their fellows who spend more time with conservative individuals. It is the student's responsibility to work on their own behaviours so as to reduce violence in schools.

Family factors

The major source of school violence is family culture. According to SACE (2011:10), family is one of the most influential socialising settings in young children up to youth

and it is imperative to investigate family as an exterior determinant to understand how these elements contribute to anti-social actions among students. Guardians have an important role to play in modelling behaviour (Gudyanga 2015:69). If young people are subjected to antisocial behavior in the at home, it is likely that they will exhibit those actions in the academic settings (Barbour 2011:34; Paterson 2012:38). In the same way, Ward (2007:8) indicated that if children see constant hostility at home, they will see anti-social behaviour as the suitable and only way to resolve conflict and, therefore, they will be violent at school.

Frey *et al.* (2009:79) discovered that students who are exposed to violence, displayed increasing levels of violent behaviour and were more prepared to use physical violence than their non-exposed fellows. Homes in which guardians regularly have disputes have been related to stress in learners and this typically results in physical and psychological disorder. Morais and Meier (2011:13) reviewed that approximately 10 per cent of learners who acknowledged having often seen their parents verbally or physically fighting. From this discussion it can be concluded that if students are exposed to violence amongst parents at home, they will bring these experiences with them into the academic environment, thereby causing conflict and violence at school.

2.5.3 Community factors (Mexosystem)

Communities which the learners come are also a cause for concern. The community backgrounds from which learners originate somehow contribute to antisocial behaviour among students (Frey *et al.* 2009:38). Some students come from societies where the majority of students had hostile participations and where they had to hustle for survival. These learners are occupied with a feeling of denial and they do not have the confidence that they are not indebted to society for anything. Therefore, learners will opt to be violent as they see it as a favourable way of life.

Media from the community also triggers violence in learners. This media includes newspapers, cell-phones and television. The television media has also been a

prominent cause of anti-social behaviour among learners. Permitting learners to watch shows and television programmes that depict antisocial behavior and other unlawful actions, may cause learners to copy the reason of their fascination (Harris 2013: 13). Entertainment programmes like wrestling commonly drive children minds crazy. Hereafter they are easily susceptible to re-produce the moves they have seen on their peers. Research by Poipoi *et al.* (2011:57) discovered that 38.3 per cent of learners in rural schools and 44.6 per cent in city schools pointed out that exposure to violent movies and dramas contribute to antisocial behaviour among learners.

2.5.4 Social factors (Macro system)

Zimbabwe faced extraordinary socioeconomic and political problems from 2000 to 2008. Kapungu (2008:14) highlighted that these difficulties were characterised by high price increases, high joblessness levels, undersupply of food and medication, failing public services, and politically motivated antisocial behaviour, which resulted in significant migration of professionals to neighbouring kingdoms and overseas. During that time, a shocking upsurge of student violence in high schools was reported (Booyesen 2008:31, Manguvo 2008:5). Misbehaviour in the form of destruction, intimidation, substance abuse, and theft was rife. According to Bronfenbrenner (1979:167), financial and governmental conditions in a specific country powerfully influence young people's behavior. In most cases students do not just misbehave and these external forces equally cause violence. Therefore, the responsible authorities should make sure that the economy is stable so that children are not provoked into antisocial behaviour.

A study in Colombia according to Chaux (2009:41), discovered that socio-economic problems have an influence on bullying among high school learners. A research by (Manguwo 2011:155) has also shown that political violence negatively influences student behaviour. In addition, earlier studies done in Zimbabwe during the 2000-2008 unstable period, revealed the negative impact of economic collapse and political instability on students' academic achievement (Chiviru 2009:81, Kapungu 2009:11).

It is very important to investigate how these socioeconomic factors influence the nature, extent, causes and consequences of conflict and violence in schools so that efforts made to address the factors that can cause violence there, and, by so doing, to reduce it.

2.6 Consequences of violence in schools

Reducing school violence requires the responsible stakeholders to recognise the complexity, dynamics and multi-causes of this problem (Tijmes 2012:1). The negative effects of conflict and violence in schools are related to nervousness, despair, reduced self-concept and self-esteem, emotional and social distress, de-motivation, concentration issues, absenteeism and misbehaviour (Becerra 2015:1539). All these negative consequences of school violence cause students to be insecure in schools and that lowers their academic achievements. Therefore, this research focuses on reducing violence in schools and, thereby diminishing all these negative effects.

The nature of violence in schools, discussed in the previous section, shows through drop-out rates through school-dropout rates and absenteeism because of fear (Mncube and Herber 2012:17), and an augmented risk of adolescent pregnancy, the transmission of Human Immune Virus (HIV)/ Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS) between young people, community breakdown, and poor academic achievement (Bhana 2013:44). For instance, sexual abuse will result in the contraction of HIV and in some instances will result in premature pregnancy (Leach *et al.* 2014:12). These consequences divert the agenda of sending children to school. Instead of building the confidence of children, school violence introduces covers the children to fear and insecurity.

Exposure to conflict and violence in schools could result in severe bodily, emotional and psychological impact for both teachers and learners (UNAIDS 2008:7). Furthermore, violence in schools is a severe threat to the fragility of democracy, harmony, and economic constancy of the country. In this regard, Simuforosa and

Ngara (2013:1524) added that violence hampers the flow and coherence of expected behaviour in societies. Having said this, this research seeks to discover the nature, extent, causes and consequences of conflict and violence in an academic setting and then devise a programme that helps to reduce this problem.

The negative consequences of conflict and violence in schools may escalate and be lengthy if the violence turns out the abuse of power, when it is constant over time (Martinez and Babarro 2013). Thus when it implies inequality of power and when it signifies an experience of victimization. A study by Hinduja and Patchin (2010:6) has revealed that the psychosocial results of the experiences of violence or bullying may result in instant socio-affective, mental, behavioral and identity problems in victims. A study by Sourander *et al.* (2007:17) indicates that the humiliations suffered when young are often recalled later with anguish by adults and both perpetrators and victims could retain the dysfunctional experiences of youth. Therefore, it is very important to teach children about the rewards of good behaviour and the costs of violence so that they will continue with the spirit of eliminating violent behaviour from their lives.

According to Burton and Leoschurt (2012:106), learners experiencing bullying and committing aggression on their peers are mostly associated with challenges in relation to educational attainment and change. Therefore, the augmented danger of children being subjected to conflict and violence within the friendly zone for instance intimidation between young people who have incapacities and the related adverse effects, indicates the necessity of providing successful aid to young people facing this situation more especially to those who are less able to cope. If children are in fear, they spend most of their time thinking about how to defend themselves and if students do not have peace of mind, they lose focus on their school work.

According to Burton and Leoschurt (2012:98), adverse relationships resulting in serious bodily aggression encountered by both students and school authorities appears to show the joint consolidation of this misbehaviour among these social actors in the academic setting. Accordingly, the state programmes have to make an extra

effort to improve security infrastructures for learners as well as the workers through the enhancement of good behaviour and common monitoring of those guidelines, procedures in to discourage absenteeism.

Chikwiri and Lemmer (2014: 95) indicated that there is indication that young people experiencing despair, social isolation, loneliness, anxiety and worry. Penalties, directly associated to academic results include a noticeable decline in academic achievement, a lack of interest in school and its related activities, reduced participation, school drop-out and absenteeism (Leach *et al.* 2014: 5). The experience of violence has also been associated with a vulnerability to future anti-social and delinquent behaviours (Burton and Leoschurt 2012:51). These effects on education are critical because decline academic performance may mean the economy has less skilled labour therefore, leading to economic downfall at the expense of the state as a whole.

Wilson (2013:4) is of the view that, creating safer and equitable academic environments must aim at improving education for female-learners since it is a primary element to secure and support settings that build and promotes relationships as well as attachments. Flawless regulations, actions and positive interactions between affiliates in academic environments, are significant in the creation as well as the maintenance of peaceful schools. Healthy teachers can play a significant role in forming and preserving a positive and defensive school environment. It is important that teachers, parents, communities and the government co-operates to fight violence and abuse of children in academic settings.

2.7 School intervention approaches

Traditionally, school policies on school violence have been focusing on helping students (victims) to get help after violent behaviour from other students and then to punish or discipline the perpetrators of violence. Fields and McNamara (2003:66) termed this 'tertiary methods of preventing violence.' These researchers also postulated that given the inadequacies of tertiary-prevention approaches, primary and

secondary reducing attempts may seem to hold more potential for creating permanent changes in reducing violence in schools.

A weakness of tertiary interventions, as argued by Fields *et al.* (2003: 67), is that even though a huge volume of work has been prepared to address the issue of school violence, no typical typology of involvement policies is present. Therefore, my contribution to the already available intervention strategies will be action-oriented and practical in the context in which participants dwell. Bell (2007: 116) affirms this as he argues that an essential component of any partnership affecting the learners must be the learners themselves. Simply put, if an intervention is to be formulated it must be done with the participation of the students as it is done for them.

Academic settings use diversity strategies to decrease conflict and violence in schools and this may be conceptualised mostly as stressing on physical safety and security or emotional safety (Nickerson and Martens 2008:229). This research will focus mainly on peace clubs, good behavior game, security approaches and zero tolerance policies.

2.7.1 Peace clubs

An example of an intervention to reduce violence in schools is that some schools have established peace clubs for safer schools. The concept of clubs is an effective method of providing positive behaviour models for students. The overall goal of the programme is to create fun-filled opportunities for the youth to blossom into peaceable beings with solid character and sound morals (Adendaal 2006:8). According to Sojola *et al.* (2011:11), peace clubs are formal structures which provide extra-mural activities for members and give an identity as peace buddies with a purpose of significantly reducing the level of violence in schools. In this regard, Global Peace Building Centres (2015:1) highlighted that peace clubs also aim to cultivate leadership skills in young people for the continuation of peaceful approaches to conflict resolution.

The concept of clubs is an effective method of providing positive behaviour models for children. GM South African Foundation (2016: 1), added that membership of a club promotes a sense of safekeeping and belonging, and provides participants a substitute set of acknowledged standards and actions to emulate. This study designs, implements and evaluates an intervention that helps to reduce conflict and violence. Most importantly, the intervention is designed by both the researcher and the students.

Sojola (2011:11) highlighted that peace clubs provide a structure where students can learn how to take the role of the active bystander, provide a safe environment for discussions about feelings and fears about social justice issues to take place without fear of reproach and where students can debate about issues that affect their lives. This is very significant as it facilitates the creation of healthy relationships among students and also help students to be accountable for their own behavior.

The Global Peace Building Centre (2015:1) highlighted that a student peace club's approach is characterised by its stress on negotiation, promotion of mutual understanding, building of trust, positive and inclusive conflict-resolution strategies and combined action that encompasses all sides of the conflict and is aimed at reunion. Peace clubs have been adopted and tried in schools and communities in Zambia (Alty 2013: 4), but were not effective in reducing school violence because of limited student involvement and the designing and implementation of the programme. Therefore, this study will use an intervention with more student involvement so as to encourage their participation in the programme.

2.7.2 Good Behavior Game

Misbehaviour, including off-task activities, making a noise, and loitering, can have various negative effects on the academic advancement of individual learners and the classroom as whole (Higgins *et al.* 2001:14). Accumulating levels of misbehaviour result in a loss of instruction time for the class because the educator is forced to stop instructing the others in order to focus on the ongoing disturbances. Common

disturbing actions have been found to be important contributors to office punishment referrals and deferrals, resulting in various amounts of lost instructional time (Skiba *et al.* 1997:17). Learners must be motivated to behave in a way that reduces disruptions so as to maximise the opportunities for learning and development.

Although student behaviour is an important variable in this paradigm, Reinke *et al.* (2013:33) found that a teacher's classroom management procedures and abilities are strongly correlated with the level of disruptive behavior in the classroom. In the same manner, Mitchell (2015:192) agreed that promoting appropriate and successful classroom management procedures is critical to the success of the academic progress of all students. Students and teachers should work together to create peaceful classrooms where everyone is confident and motivated to work hard.

The Good Behaviour Game is an evidence-based behavioral classroom management strategy that helps children learn how to work together to create a positive learning environment (American Institute for Research 2016:1). In addition, Tingstrong (2006:1) highlighted that this game promotes each child's positive behaviour by rewarding student teams for complying with criteria set for appropriate behavior, such as working quietly, following directions, or being polite to each other. This researcher also added that the team-based approach uses peer encouragement to help children follow rules and learn how to be good students. It also enables teachers to build strong academic skills and positive behaviour among students. Higher authorities should encourage schools to use this game as a novel way to reduce violence in schools.

The Good Behavior Game is an approach to the management of classrooms behaviors that rewards children for displaying appropriate on-task behaviour during instructional times (American Institute for Research 2016:1). The class is divided into two teams and a point is given to a team for any inappropriate behavior displayed by one of its members. The team with the fewest number of points at the Game's conclusion each day wins a group reward. If both teams keep their points below a preset level, then both teams share in the reward. Rosario (2010:1046) discovered

that when the programme was first tested, several research articles have confirmed that the Game is an effective means of increasing the rate of positive on-task behaviour while reducing disruptions in the classroom. Disruptive behaviour is understood to be the children's attempting to harm, verbally negate, or not pay attention in the instruction of a task assigned by their parents, teacher, or another adult authority figure (Boelter *et al.* 2007). This game can only be a success when teachers and students have a good relationship. Therefore, important that healthy relationships are created in schools so that some strategies to reduce violence may be a success.

2.7.3 Security practices in schools

Common responses to school violence aimed at achieving desired quick results include a noticeable movement towards the use of stricter school security measures and a focus on 'get tough' approaches to dealing with misconduct (Phaneuf 2009:29). Many schools focus on increasing levels of formal social control over students and make use of numerous target-hardening strategies in order to reduce violence in schools. In agreement Hennink (2011:101) indicated that most responses to school violence are centred on increasing security with an emphasis on the use of visible security measures. In this regard, Muschert (2014:71) highlighted that these visible security measures including the presence of surveillance devices or control devices on entering school premises (such as metal detectors, and security cameras), the use of identification of students and staff (such as IDs and uniforms) and the employment of trained security personnel.

Previously, the use of metal detectors and security guards were initially limited to problematic schools, in more recent years, because the knowledge of what school violence entail has been an increase, in the number of schools opting to employ these security practices (Hischfield 2010). These activities are usually aimed at enhancing the physical security of the school such as locking exterior doors, installing of metal detectors etc. Schools have also created crises management plans which may include evacuation routes (Phaneuf 2009:29). All these efforts are treasured. However, there

is also need to consider interventions and programmes that involve the children themselves to increase their security in schools.

According to Phaneuf (2009:29), in the wake of school shootings, some schools changed their operational procedures, transitioning from the open-campus (most common where students are being able to leave campus at lunch time) to close-campus, not only for students to leave the building, but also for non-school persons to enter school premises. This strategy did not achieve much because students still need to be taught and trained on how to resolve their conflicts using non-violent methods.

There is increasing use of safety features that focus on the security of the schools such as installing better lighting around school buildings and grounds, surveillance of the school environment have been installed in schools (Johnson 2000:197). In addition, Hankin *et al.* (2010:100) also indicated that sign-in and sign-out procedures have been put in place to monitor student behaviour and to promote a safe environment for learning in schools. These security features are very important in schools as they make it easier to notice mischievous individuals around campus.

Phaneuf (2009:29), notes that other security strategies focus more on the security within school buildings which range from relatively non-invasive measures such as phone/intercoms in classrooms to the use of student and staff identification badges and the establishment of confidential ways to report abuse, misconduct and general problems (for example anonymous tip lines). In addition, Garcia and Kennedy (2016:274) highlighted that more invasive measures entailing the use of metal detectors, security cameras, entry control devices, searching student handbags and lockers have been installed in some countries. This has not been common in African schools because the cost of the installations and they lack of sufficient funds for school infrastructural development.

Violence control is very costly for both the students and the school. In addition to financial costs, the erosion of student rights is perhaps the most disconcerting cost of all. Phaneuf (2009:29) highlighted the increase of student fear of victimisation. If students' are fearful at school then where else will their security be guaranteed?

Schools have increasingly come to rely on security measures such as metal detectors and school security officers to help control disruptive students, and methods of disciplinary suppression have focused primarily on the accelerated enforcement of suspension and arrest (Schiff 2013:6). While in the short-term, this may help teachers and education administrators with classroom management and arguably, school safety, the longer-term outcome results in systematic impediments to keeping youth in school and off the street and, especially, out of court (Garcia and Kennedy 2016: 274). These security measures are very useful in reducing violence in schools, however, it can yield more results if it is blended with internal programmes that involve students' participation.

2.7.4 Zero Tolerance policies

Similar to punitive responses in the justice arena, such as sentencing guidelines, zero tolerance disciplinary codes attempt to structure theoretically rational and equitable consequences for serious misbehaviour such as drugs and weapons in schools proportionate to the harm caused (Green 2004:16). Zero tolerance as a disciplinary model has been defined as a policy that mandates the application of predetermined consequences, most often severe and punitive in nature, that are intended to be applied, regardless of the gravity of the behaviour, mitigating circumstances, or situational context (American Psychological Association 2008: 852).

Skiba and Rausch (2006:7) have highlighted that there are at least three inherent beliefs associated with a zero tolerance disciplinary philosophy:

1. Punishing all perceived misbehaviour severely, so that those who may witness or are made aware of the severe punishment will be deterred from committing future infractions, including minor misbehavior;
2. Removing students perceived to be troublemakers from the learning environment so that schools will be safer and more productive for the remaining students; and
3. Failing to severely punish students for any misbehaviour thereby sending a message to the student body, faculty, and staff that the school is not serious about safety and order.

While estimates of school violence remained low and stable during the 1980's and 1990's (American Psychological Association, 2008:854), schools adopted zero tolerance approaches, typically for fairly serious misbehaviour, during that era (Reusch 2014:20). Infractions such as alcohol-abuse and swearing were punished with the same consequences used for firearm possession and assault in some cases (American Psychological Association 2008:4).

On the other hand, zero tolerance policy has since expanded to include far more minor disciplinary violations that often result in juvenile-justice system consequences (Florida Blueprint Commission 2008). Moreover, zero tolerance practices have likewise resulted in the systematic exclusion of poorly-performing and behaviourally-challenged students from schools whose teachers must improve academic-achievement scores mandated to receiving state resources (Advancement Project 2010:1). A notable impact of zero tolerance is a marked lack of dignity for the offending students who are summarily dismissed from the classrooms of the school, with little or no say in what had happened, nor what the appropriate consequence should be, nor effective strategies for re-engagement once having been excluded from the school structure (Schiff 2013:4). Rausch (2014:20) warns that such students fall further and further behind as they lose the capacity and resources to make up lost work and re-enter the school environment.

According to Schiff (2013:5), zero-tolerance policies have been largely responsible for creating the school-to-prison pipeline. There a dramatic lack of scientific evidence that

zero-tolerance policies increase school safety and foster academic achievement (American Psychological Association 2008:2). In contrary to this, the Advancement Project (2010:2) argued that punishments associated with zero tolerance tend to put students at greater risk of decreased connectivity to school and increased illegal behaviour participation. Most importantly, Schiff (2013:5) added that zero tolerance leads to poor academic achievement and to dropouts. In Zimbabwe, Ngara and Magwa (2015:1) warns that schools to continue to adopt the zero-tolerance policies. However, this policy has been proven to have more problems than benefits.

There is consistent and increasing evidence of students being suspended and expelled for minor infractions and they are considerably more likely to be male students and those with disabilities (Losen and Skiba 2010:41). The cumulative result of such zero tolerance discipline is that punitive-justice system initiatives have become systematically welcomed and integrated within the education system context in the name of school safety and academic achievement, with the blessing of educational administrative leaders (Schiff 2013:5). School-disciplinary policy must move beyond the limited strategies traditional enforcement, surveillance and arrest, to empower justice specialists in delinquent behaviour to develop and use educational efforts, such as restorative justice, to keep students in schools (Rausch 2014:19).

2.8 Summary

This research has shown that, in order to reduce violence in schools, a number of factors like the nature, extent, trends, sources, consequences and limiting factors must also be investigated. After reviewing most the literature on school violence, the researcher has come to an understanding that it is very important to explore a phenomenon before taking any action to prevent or reduce it. It takes a cooperative community, willing parents and understanding learners to work together to reduce conflict and violence in schools.

The following section (chapter three) reviews literature on restorative justice as an alternative disciplinary methods.

CHAPTER THREE: ALTERNATIVE APPROACHES TO SCHOOL DISCIPLINE: LITERATURE REVIEW

3.1 Introduction

The preceding section (chapter two) discussed literature concerning the issues of conflict and violence; the nature, extent, causes, consequences and current responses put in place to reduce violence in schools. This chapter discusses the theoretical framework of restorative justice and its practices as an alternative to traditional discipline methods and a way of building health relationships in schools.

Amstutz and Mullet (2005:26) is of the view that this theory has shifted the focus from rule breaking to focusing on the harm in an effort to strengthen relationships and to build the community by encouraging a caring school-climate where students, teachers and staff are valued members of the school community and are mostly involved in the process of defining values and principles to live by within their school community. This study uses restorative-justice principles to design a programme that helps to reduce conflict and violence in schools and to provide a safe and conducive environment for productive learning.

3.2 Traditional methods of discipline in schools

In dealing with misbehaviour and in balancing the rights of different parties in schools, one can make use either of a traditional retributive or a restitutive approach. In the case of the former approach, retribution consists of the use of dominance, control and punishment to bring about behavioural change in learners (Reyneke 2015:134). Restitution sometimes takes place with the traditional approach, which is normally ordered and enforced by those in authority (Wearmouth *et al.* 2007:253). Aboluwodi (2015:135) describes the retributive justice approach when dealing with misbehaviour

in schools as follows; in terms of the retributive justice approach, misbehaviour is seen as a breach of school rules or as letting the school down.

This approach focuses on the past and the aim is to determine who should be blamed, what the person is guilty of and what justice is done when the penalty or punishment is administered (Thorsborne and Vinegrad 2008:15). An adversarial relationship and process characterises the retributive approach, with an authoritarian figure, such as the educator or principal, in charge of the process and having the power to decide on the wrongdoer's guilt and punishment (Schiff 2013:2). If the transgressor is found guilty, he or she should be punished in order to ensure deterrence and to prevent future misconduct (Smith 2015: 38). This is done by causing him or her pain by administering corporal punishment or making him/her suffer some other form of unpleasantness such as detention (Hendry 2009:11). However, the relationship between punishment and future misconduct needs to be investigated.

Retributive forms of punishment tend to result in the exclusion of the offender. Consequently, one social injury is replaced by another. The importance of sticking to due process, that is, of being persistent and paying attention to processes, is further stressed. The school community on the receiving end of the misconduct is uninvolved in the process and is mostly represented by an educator or the principal, who acts on behalf of the victims, resulting in the victims feeling powerless (Thorsborne and Vinegrad 2008:16). Here, accountability is defined in terms of the offender receiving punishment.

According to South African Human Rights Commission (2008:13), retributive discipline is the form of discipline mostly frequently exercised in South African schools, with more than 50 per cent of learners indicating that they are still subjected to corporal punishment despite its abolition. The majority of educators (58percent) are in favour of the reinstatement of retributive justice. Thorsborne and Vinegrad (2008:16) are of the view that, although some educators refrain from using corporal punishment, they generally revert to other retributive forms of discipline such as detention, additional

homework, sarcasm, humiliating practices, exclusion from the group, suspensions and expulsions. Research done by (Rossouw 2003:44) indicates that some schools employ punitive disciplinary measures only and do not find pro-active disciplinary measures being taken in any secondary schools. This is an indication of the line of thinking by most teachers, who prefer traditional ways of correcting behavior.

Despite the use of punitive measures, maintaining discipline is becoming increasingly more problematic in many schools. Rossouw (2003:42) articulated that school-based violence is increasing and more educators are claiming that disciplinary problems are reaching crisis proportions. It seems as though current punitive measures are largely ineffective. Resorting mostly to punishing the transgressor poses another question: does the punishment of the transgressor necessarily restore the confidence and dignity of the victim in the school and in the community at large? This question can be illustrated by the following example. A male learner sexually harasses a female educator and is suspended. The question is; does the suspension of the learner restore the educator's dignity? A serious violation of her right to freedom and the security of her personality has taken place, but does the expulsion or suspension of the transgressor restore this freedom and security? To what extent is it restored, if at all? How do the other learners see her, and how does she feel about teaching the transgressor again? Do the transgressor's values and perception of the rights of others change as a result of his being suspended or expelled? Does the suspension or expulsion create a sense of security in the school, that the victims' rights will be properly protected and promoted in future? In this case, it is important that educators sit with students together with the school authorities in order to understand the harm and to reconcile the harmer and the harmed into the school community, to encourage the liability and responsibility of the students through the personal reflection and to change the school co-ordination that encourages such misbehaviour.

The fact that the protection of our self-respect should inform our future was indicated to earlier, it closely relates to the provisions of section 7 of the *South African Constitution*, which provides that the state must respect, protect, promote and fulfil the rights in the *Bill of Rights*. To respect rights means to take positive steps to prevent

the infringement of these rights, to fulfil rights means to take steps to enable people to exercise their rights (Schiff 2013:10). This study therefore requires purposeful attempts be made to restore rights through restorative justice in instances where an infringement has taken place.

The following section will explain in detail some retributive justice methods including corporal punishment and its effects, suspension, exclusion and detention.

3.2.1 Corporal punishment

Globally, the administration of physical beating in academic settings is increasingly prohibited by the law, yet in many countries its use continues, even where outlawed (Fall 2008:22). Some researchers argue that it is an effective and non-harmful means of instilling discipline, respect and obedience in children, while others point to a series of detrimental effects, including physical harm, poor academic performance, low class participation, school dropout and declining psychosocial well-being (Portela and Pells 2016:1). It seems there are more negative consequences of corporal punishment than positive and it is important for the teachers to think twice before administering it to children.

According to UNICEF (2015:1) corporal punishment in the context of schools is defined as causing deliberate pain to a learner in response to the undesired behaviour and/or language, purposeful infliction of bodily pain or discomfort by an official in the educational system upon a student as a penalty for unacceptable behavior and intentional application of physical pain as a means of changing behaviour. Similarly, the UNCRC (2006: 4) defined corporal punishment as any penalty in which physical force is used and intended to cause some degree of pain or discomfort, which involves hitting smacking, slapping, spanking children with the hand or with an implement – whip, stick, belt, shoe, wooden spoon and can also involve, for example, kicking, shaking or throwing children, scratching, pinching, burning, scalding or forced ingestion. In the same manner, UNICEF (2015:7) argues that, if enshrined in law, the

CRC not only prohibits the use of corporal punishment in any setting, but requires and states that parties take all appropriate measures to ensure that school discipline is administered in a manner consistent with the child's human dignity.

Some researchers argue that moderate forms of corporal punishment such as spanking are an effective and non-detrimental means of instilling discipline and obedience into children (Baumrind *et al.* 2002). The use of corporal punishment in schools is often believed by both adults and children to be an effective disciplinary means of generating respect and enabling children to develop into responsible adults (UNICEF 2015:7). This is confirmed by the constitution of Zimbabwe legalising it. *Article 241(2) (b) of the Criminal Law (Codification and Reform) Act 2004* states that a school teacher (defined as the head or deputy head of a school) "shall have authority to administer moderate corporal punishment for disciplinary purposes upon any minor male pupil or student". No teacher may administer corporal punishment on a female pupil or student (*art. 242(4)*) and school rules on the administration of corporal punishment must be adhered to (*art. 242(5)*) (*Global Initiative to End All Corporal Punishment 2016:2*). However, this law has not been put into practice in many Africa countries.

Many studies oppose the notion of corporal punishment and they list a series of detrimental effects such as poor academic performance and low class participation, children avoiding school or dropping out for fear of getting beaten, declining self-worth or self-esteem and fear of teachers and school (Morrow and Singh 2014: 11).

Evidence from other studies found that teachers, parents and often children themselves suggest that corporal punishment in schools improves academic performance and corrects bad behaviour (Morrow and Singh 2014: 14). However, research with children has also highlighted that many children do not feel that it helps them learn or behave; instead it leaves them scared, confused and sad and may lead to them becoming violent due to the normalisation of violence (Rojas 2011: 11). Much of the existing research has focused on the impact of corporal punishment

administered by parents and other caregivers on children (UNICEF 2015:7). Some researchers have found that boys, children from ethnic minorities, or groups disadvantaged on account of their ethnicity and children with disabilities are more likely to experience corporal punishment than their peers (Covell and Becker 2011: 14).

While there is limited evidence on children's experiences of corporal punishment by socioeconomic status (Marcus 2014: 67), interviews with children and parents reveal how poor children may be at greater risk of being punished for being late for school, not having school equipment or a uniform or for being absent while undertaking paid or unpaid work to support their families (Morrow and Singh 2014: 13). Children often find punishment humiliating, especially if carried out in front of peers, as bad or worse than corporal punishment (Rojas, 2011: 16-17). This is another form of humiliating treatment which is one of the reasons why children dislike school and also account for the reasons why some students are violent in schools (Morrow and Singh 2014: 13). Therefore, by reducing corporal punishment in schools, student violence is also be reduced.

3.2.2 Suspension and expulsion

Suspensions and expulsions, are by far the most common disciplinary responses seen in schools, and it is often associated with zero-tolerance practices. Unfortunately, much of evidence collected over many years indicates that suspensions are not effective in their desired outcome of reducing undesirable behavior, nor are they effective in promoting pro-social expected behaviour (Bear 2008:31). Valuable instructional time is lost because, by definition, students are removed from the school setting (American Psychological Association Task Force on Zero Tolerance 2008). Quin and Hemphill (2014:53A) highlighted that a lack of clarity regarding the effectiveness of suspension at school level is in contrast to an increasing body of literature concerning the negative effects of suspension on the individual student suspended.

Expulsion refers to the more permanent removal of a student from the school by the superintendent, whereas suspension generally refers to the denial of school attendance for a specific amount of time that may be 10 days or less (Fanning *et al.*, 2012:106). This researcher also added that, although suspension most often refers to out-of-school suspension (OSS), there has also been an increasing trend toward in-school suspension (ISS). ISS often involves the student being removed to a separate classroom for at least a full day, where he or she must complete work and cannot participate in mainstream activities alongside peers (Noltemeyer *et al.* 2015:224).

According to Skiba *et al.* (2011:123), the use of suspension, in turn, is associated with even more serious societal problems, such as school dropout and the school-to-prison pipeline. Losen and Skiba (2010:11) indicated that the school-to-prison-pipeline terminology describes the strong association between exclusionary discipline practices, dropping out of school, and subsequent entry into the juvenile justice system. Amstutz and Mullet (2005:47) highlighted that higher rates of suspension are associated with lower rates of achievement in reading, maths and writing. This researcher also expressed his concern that the students most likely to have been suspended have, potentially, the most to be gained from a positive school environment. Quin and Hemphill (2014:53) indicated that academic suspension in turn provides yet another life stress that, when compounded with what is already occurring in their lives, may predispose them to even higher risks associated with misbehavior.

Evidence by Noltemeyer *et al.* (2015:225) also suggests that schools that use suspension often have shown lower mean scores on state achievement tests than schools that use suspension less. Fanning *et al.* (2012:105) highlights several possible explanatory mechanisms for the relationship between suspension and academic achievement. The links may be explained by missed instructional time, school disengagement resulting from the suspension, pre-existing student academic or behavioural difficulties that resulted in the suspension and concurrently influenced achievement (Arcia 2006:11), or additional opportunities to interact with delinquent peers when out of School. Establishing the degree to which the association between suspension and academic achievement exists across the literature is an important

step towards a better understanding of why repeatedly suspended students achieve less in school.

Despite, at times, larger media depictions of significant school violence necessitating school removal, most suspensions and expulsions are applied for relatively minor misbehaviour, such as lateness to school and absences. While long-standing findings related to the deleterious effects of suspension are not new, they are consistent across four decades of research (Skiba *et al.* 2011:19). Recent content analyses of discipline policies document the punitive nature of formal written school policies for student misbehavior (Fanning *et al.* 2008:6). This researcher also described the state and national education wellbeing policies as concentrating on the importance of social relationships, school inclusion, academic achievement, and safe school environments not only in creating a successful learning environment, but also protecting against diminished wellbeing and fostering the development of pro-social, health promoting behaviours. Quine and Hemphill (2014:54), argues that, despite policies such as these, students displaying problem behaviours are frequently excluded from the classroom via school suspension or exclusion.

Fanning (2011:106) warns that high levels of exclusion and expulsion and recent reports on violence in schools are a clear indication that schools are becoming increasingly unsafe places where the violation of one's right to safety is a real threat, despite punitive measures being in place. Furthermore, teachers and other authorities are often faced with the detrimental task of balancing the educational rights of an individual offender and the right to self-respect of the larger school environment. This negotiated safety may cause students to leave school.

The high school dropout rate is another variable commonly examined in relation to suspension (Noltemeyer *et al.* 2015:225). The dropout rate is the percentage of students who leave high school without a successful outcome such as passing the General Educational Development test or receiving a high school diploma (Chapman *et al* 2010), which was the case for 8.0 per cent of individuals in the United States

aged 16–24 years in 2008. These figures were higher than for male than female students (Chapman *et al.* 2010).

According to Quin and Hemphill (2014:53), school authorities with effective behaviour management and disciplinary strategies, engaging instructional techniques with high expectations of students and expectations of family involvement in the school appear to reduce the apparent need to apply suspension as a disciplinary consequence to students let alone those from disadvantaged backgrounds. Moreover, (Noltemeyer *et al.* 2015: 225) called for alternatives to suspension because suspension may result in counter-productive outcomes rather than students learning from their actions.

3.2.3 Detention

Detentions are one of the most common disciplinary actions utilized by secondary schools with varying ages of students (Fluke *et al.* 2014:1). Detention is a consequence in which students are required to remain in a presumably undesirable place for a specified amount of time outside of school hours. Typically, detentions are served after school. Instead of going home at the end of the day, the student reports to a designated classroom where he or she must sit in a desk for an amount of time generally ranging from 10 minutes to two hours, with an hour or less being most typical.

Detentions can also be served before school, or during recess. For example, the student stays in the classroom while his classmates go to recess, or during lunch for example the student is required to eat lunch at a particular table or room away from peers (Fluke *et al.* 2014:2). Some secondary schools have also experimented with holding detentions on Friday evenings when many school activities, social events and athletics events are occurring. This is in an effort to make the detention something students would avoid, and thus be a disincentive to inappropriate behaviour. In some detention situations, the student in detention is expected to bring materials and complete homework or assignments during the detention time (Fluke *et al.* 2014:2).

Other forms of detention do not necessarily expect completion of school work, but instead simply prevent students from talking or socializing, and from leaving the assigned area. The purpose of assigning detention is to punish misbehaviour. Therefore, the goal of detention is to reduce future re-occurrence of the behaviour being punished. The idea behind detention is the removal of the student from desirable activities. For example going home to spend time with friends, or in recess and replacing those activities with aversive boredom (Spaulding *et al.* 2010). Some evidence exists that detention does decrease future problem behavior for certain students. At the very least, many students perceive detention as aversive and as an effective discipline practice (Infantino and Little 2005).

Detention is one of the primary discipline strategies used by teachers and administrators across the country in both primary and high schools. Despite its popularity, very little research has been conducted on its effectiveness. What little research there is suggests that detention, particularly lunch detention, can be effective for some students especially those who are not likely to repeatedly break school rules. However, detention is unlikely to be effective for students who repeatedly receive office referrals. It is recommended that before issuing a detention, teachers and administrators review records for the student in question.

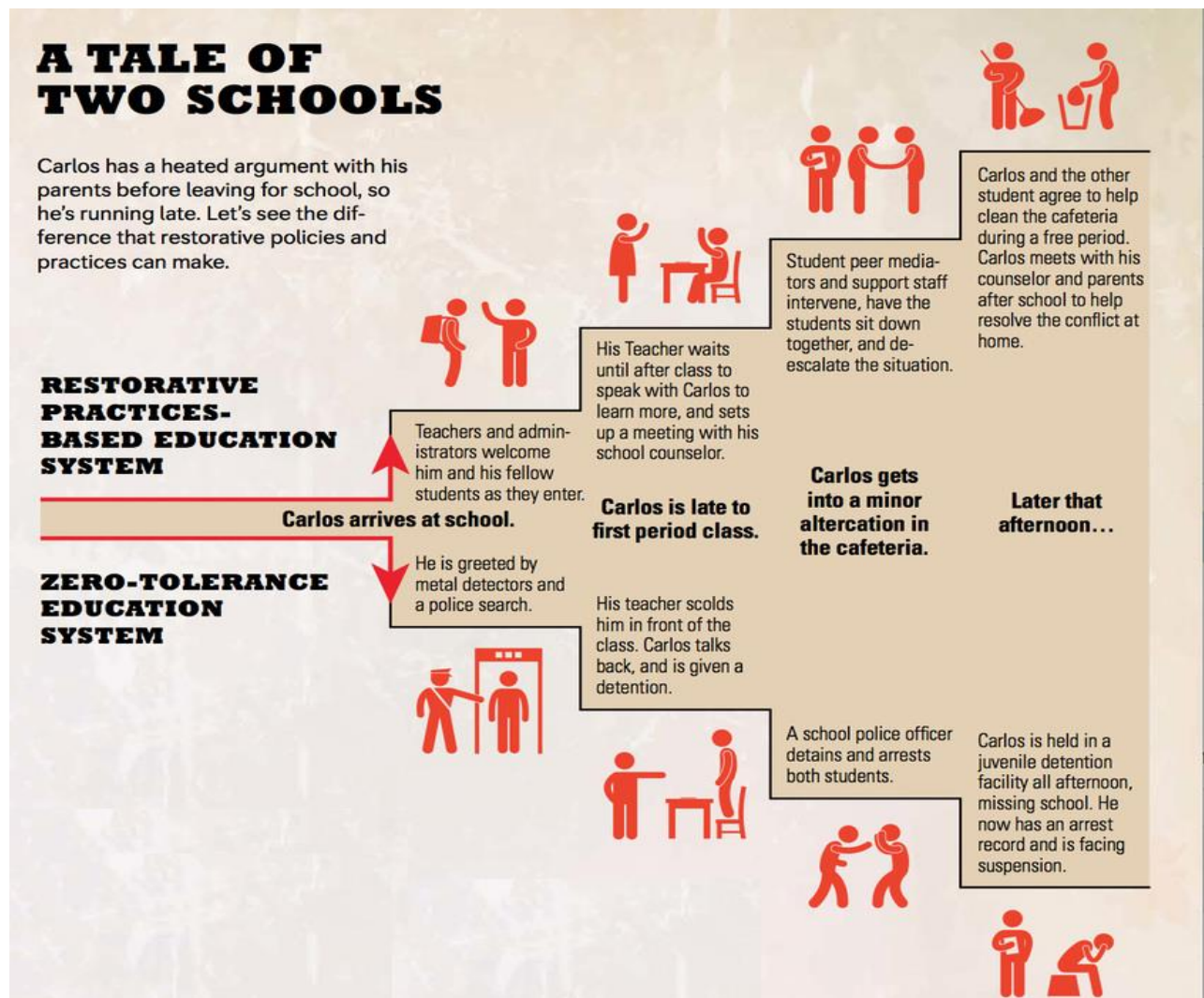
3.3 Effectiveness of restorative-justice responses to traditional methods of discipline

Restorative-justice approaches are increasingly being applied in schools to deal with student misbehaviour, rule violations and to improve the school climate, both as an individual programme in schools as well as an overall school-discipline policy (Lewis 2009:18). Restorative justice is an evidence-based practice effectively used as an alternative to the traditional discipline methods that are suspensions, expulsions and other disciplinary referrals to allow students to focus more on building relationships and being accountable of their own behaviour (Thorsborne and Vinegrad 2009:25).

Restorative responses to reduce conflict and violence can take diverse forms that are centred on several core principles. These include focusing on relationships first and rules second, give voice to the person harmed and the person who caused the harm, engaging in collaborative problem-solving, enhancing personal responsibility, empowering change and growth and including strategic plans for restoration (Amstutz and Mullet 2005:34).

The increasing effect of these restorative-justice strategies is to offer students, teachers and administrators the possibility of a dignified response to violence and a way to make amends and repair the harm caused to sustain relationships in the school community (Schiff 2013:9). Punishment, although effective in achieving compliance in the short term, is not effective in developing independent and creative thinkers; and resilient learners, nor in engendering thoughtfulness and awareness of the impact of their own behaviour in the school community (Thorsborne and Vinegrad 2009:24). Unlike zero tolerance policies, restorative justice focuses on building and maintaining relationships in schools as illustrated by the diagram below.

Figure 3.1 Illustration of restorative justice versus zero tolerance



This tale of schools by (Amstutz and Mullet 2005:51), presents a clear distinction between the restorative practices and zero tolerance policies in the school environment. It can be concluded from the tale that restorative justice as an alternative to zero tolerance policies yields better results in terms of keeping students in schools and creating a culture of respect between individuals in schools. Restorative justice has an arrow leading the steps up, which indicates its ability to develop students in terms of non-violent ways of conflict resolution. In contrast, zero tolerance policies has an arrow leading the steps down, this indicates its contribution in depressing students which may cause students to behave violently.

Restorative justice views violence in schools primarily as a violation of individuals, relationships and of communities that create obligations to make things right (Zehr 1990:181). The assumption underlying a restorative response is that justice is more than simply punishing, or treating rule-breakers, but rather is about repairing the harm caused to victims, offenders and community. Mostly, restorative processes seek to rebuild relationships damaged by crime and other conflicts or violence in schools.

Achieving justice and meaningful school discipline in a restorative way suggests that holding offenders or rule-breakers accountable is not about asking them to take the punishment but rather about ensuring that they take responsibility by making amends to their victims and the community harmed (Thorsborne and Vinegrad 2009:27). By empowering youth to be responsible for their own actions and their concomitant impacts, restorative justice offers students a means to rebuild their dignity through mature reparation of harm. This distinguishes restorative accountability from punishment and a dignified response as distinct from a belittling one (Schiff 2013:8).

The superiority of a restorative intervention is determined by the degree of adherence to three core principles addressing the extent to which the response repairs the harm directly to victim, community, offenders and their families, the extent to which each stakeholder is involved in the discussion of the incident and is given input into the plan for repair (Zehr 2002:27) and the extent to which community and government roles for example education system are transformed to allow communities a greater voice and increased responsibility for responding to conflict, while other enforcement systems for example schools assume a more facilitative role (Schiff 2013:8). Reistenberg (2007:10) maintains, a restorative philosophy emphasizes problem-solving approaches to discipline, attends to the social/emotional and also the physical/academic requirements of learners, recognizes the importance of the group to establish and practises agreed-upon norms and rules, and emphasizes prevention and early restorative intervention to create safe learning environments.

Restorative justice is an effective strategy for helping to keep youth in school by redefining school-disciplinary options and codes of conduct to minimize the use of exclusionary school discipline. While suggested elsewhere that slowing the school-to-prison pipeline will require more than a single disciplinary or educational strategy (Bazemore and Schiff 2010), it is clear that educational policy alone, no matter how well-grounded, is inadequate. Rather, it is essential to decrease the number and rate at which youth are being graduated into justice facilities by effectively mingling evidence-based education and youth justice interventions. Moreover, there must be a complementary relationship between well-trained education and restorative-justice groups working collaboratively in schools to hold students accountable for their behaviour while also keeping them engaged, productive and academically successful (Schiff 2013: 9).

The following table summarises the comparison of punitive and restorative justice responses in school. It is important to have a clear understanding on how these tabulated differences may enhance or hinder the creation of peaceful schools with a culture of respect.

Table 3.1 A comparison of punitive and restorative-justice responses in schools

Punitive	Restorative
Misbehavior defined as breaking school rules or letting the school down.	Misbehavior defined as harm (emotional/mental/physical) done to one person/group by another.
Focus is on what happened and establishing blame or guilt.	Focus on problem-solving by expressing feelings and needs and exploring how to address problems in the future.
Adversarial relationship and process. Includes an authority figure with the power to decide on penalty, in conflict with wrongdoer.	Dialogue and negotiation, with everyone involved in the communication and cooperation with each other.
Imposition of pain or unpleasantness to punish and deter/prevent.	Restitution as a means of restoring both parties, the goal being reconciliation and acknowledging responsibility for choices.

Attention to rules and adherence to due process.	Attention to relationships and achievement of a mutually desired outcome.
Conflict/wrongdoing represented as impersonal and abstract; individual versus school.	Conflict/wrongdoing recognized as interpersonal conflicts with opportunity for learning.
One social injury compounded by another.	Focus on repair of social injury/damage.
School community as spectators, represented by member of staff dealing with the situation; those directly affected uninvolved and powerless.	School community involved in facilitating restoration; those affected taken into consideration; empowerment.
Accountability defined in terms of receiving punishment.	Accountability defined as understanding impact of actions, taking responsibility for choices, and suggesting ways to repair harm.

For these detailed reasons, this research aims at reducing violence by using a restorative-justice approach to discipline rather than the traditional methods which have proved to be more detrimental to the whole school community. The following section explains restorative-justice methods that are used in schools and their effectiveness.

3.4 Restorative practices in schools

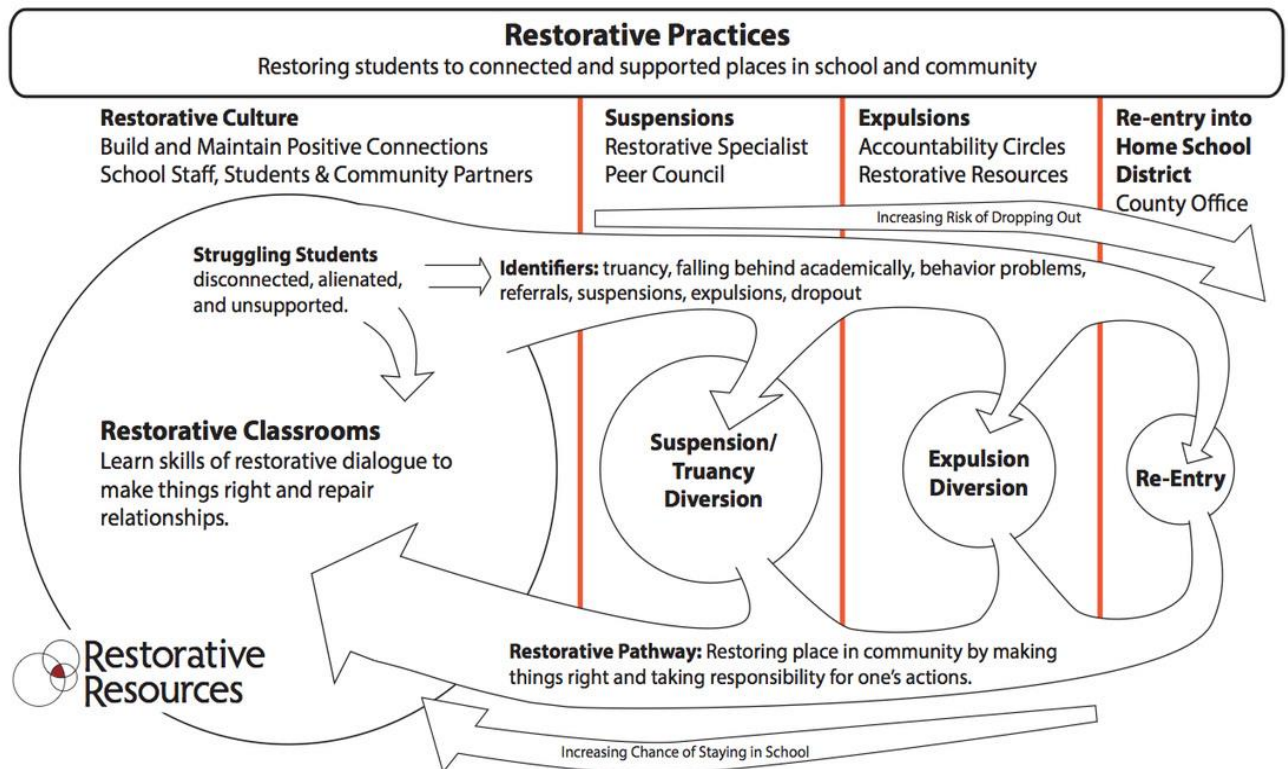
Restorative practices are processes that acknowledge the central importance and effectiveness of building healthy relationships in schools and of giving guidelines to schools in developing these relationships (Hendry 2010:6). Restorative practices are being applied increasingly in individual schools and school districts to address student behaviour, rule violations, and to improve the school climate and culture (Schiff 2013:19). Restorative practices can improve relationships between students, between students and educators, and even between educators, whose behaviour often serves as a role-model for students (Thorsborne and Vineyard 2009:23). This researcher also added that quality relationships are among the most important elements in creating a productive and safe classroom where individual needs are met and a sense of community is developed. This can also be done through engagement in learning

where the learner feels safe with the teacher and the fellow learners. This research will ensure student engagement in designing and implementing an intervention that ensures peaceful relationships in the school community thereby reducing conflict and violence in the schools.

Restorative practices allow individuals who may have committed harm to take full accountability for their behaviour by addressing both the individual(s) affected by the behaviour and the individual who has perpetrated the behaviour (Zehr 2002: 18). Taking responsibility requires understanding on how their behaviour affected others, acknowledging that the behavior was harmful to others, taking action to repair the harm, and making changes necessary to avoid such behavior in the future (Amstutz and Mullet 2005: 28).

Restorative practices also represent a mind-set that can help guide student behaviour and relationship management in schools (Pewelka 2013:15). Restorative practices are not intended to replace current initiatives and evidence-based programmes or social and emotional learning models that assist in building a foundation and a culture of caring (Thorsborne and Vinegrad 2008: 9). Restorative practices work when they are implemented widely in the school and integrated into the fabric of the school community (Zehr 2002:17). When the whole school is infused with restorative strategies, it becomes easier to address issues faster and respond in a thoughtful way because the caring and supportive culture is already present (Hendry 2010:33). Restorative methods of discipline in schools are based on restorative-justice principles instead of punishment (Thorsborne and Vineyard 2009: 10). These principles are very important in schools because students learn the importance of relationships there and they also learn to be accountable for of their own behaviour, therefore creating a safe environment for learning. Restorative practices increase the chances of students staying in after misbehavior so as to learn how to correct that behavior at present and in the future. This is illustrated by the following diagram.

Figure 3.1 Restorative practices framework in schools



This flow chart by Pelveka (2013:19) gives a clear picture that restorative justice resources increases the chances of a student staying in school to gain equal opportunity to learn like everyone else while traditional methods increases the chances of students dropping out of school.

Restorative practices aim first to build classroom communities that are supported by clear agreements, authentic communication and specific tools to bring issues and conflicts forward in a constructive way which benefits all parties involved (Amstutz and Mullet 2005:51). These practices provide specific pathways to repair harms by bringing together those who are affected by misbehaviour in a dialogue to address concerns, achieve understanding, and come to agreement about the solutions and ways to move forward (Pelveka 2013:15). In addition to serving the cause of fairness and justice, restorative approaches create safer schools and contribute to social and emotional learning (Thorsborne and Vineyard 2009: 40).

As schools adopt and gain experience with restorative methods, several shifts in perspective take place (Hendry 2010:31). These shifts don't typically happen all at once, nor do they typically happen perfectly. Clifford (2013:7) explained three of the most important shifts brought about by the use of restorative justice-methods in schools. The first shift acknowledges that troublesome behaviour is normal, and when students behave in troublesome ways they create opportunities to learn important social and emotional skills. What is important is not so much that they got into trouble in the first place, but what they learn along the way. Making things right is a powerful learning experience (Thorsborne and Vinegrad 2009: 7).

The second shift is a departure from the retributive model in which an authority, after taking testimony from the aggrieved party, decides guilt and assigns punishment. In restorative practices the authority figure acts more as a convener and facilitator (Hopkins 2004:127). The initial investigation is concerned with identifying who was significantly affected by the incident (Zehr 2002:25). The facilitator invites them into a circle-dialogue and, if they accept the invitation, helps prepare them. During the circle-dialogue the problem and its impacts are explored and the group comes up with ideas on how to make things right. Usually, this means the students who were the source of the trouble take specific actions that address the consequences of their choices. Consider the difference in outcomes between the authoritarian/punitive approach and the restorative approach: the first breeds resentment, alienation and shame and/or possibly an equally troublesome habit of fearing and submitting to authority; the second builds empathy, responsibility and helps restore relationships.

The third shift moves the locus of responsibility for the well-being of the community from the shoulders of the experts to the community itself. While counselling and similar strategies have their place and are often helpful by themselves, they are immeasurably strengthened when complemented by restorative practices that challenge those who are in the circle-dialogue to share information with each other and to come to agreement as a group.

3.4.1 Peer mediation

Conflict and violence in the school setting is a major problem for students, educators and administrators with destructive behavioural patterns in schools quite prevalent and common all over the world and it is getting more and more difficult to create a safe, progress-oriented and socially-oriented schools (Adiguzel 2015:826). Peer-mediation programmes are now extremely popular means of resolving conflict in schools, with literally thousands of an programmes in existence in many different countries which are grounded in different mediation models (Morrison 2011: 338). The introduction of peer-mediation programs in schools and community-serving organizations is based on a model of education that empowers individual students to prevent, resolve, and transform violent and nonviolent conflict by developing the values, attitudes, skills and knowledge to envision alternative options for action towards building a harmonious school environment (Amstutz and Mullet 2005:28).

According to Johnstone and Van Ness (2011: 338) peer mediation is defined as a structured method of conflict resolution in which the trained neutral fellow-student assists other students in the dispute by listening to their concerns and helping them negotiate. Johnson and Johnson (2015:828) defined peer mediation from another angle. These researchers defined peer mediation as a restorative manner of conflict resolution between persons where a neutral third party from one's peer group attends the persons in conflict while the persons in conflict negotiate a mutual agreement. As emphasized in the statement, students themselves are active in the conflict-resolution process which strengthens the student's internal locus of control and develops their individualization. This student involvement in conflict resolution helps students to be in a better position to understand conflict and how to constructively resolve it. Thereby, they will be in a better position way to solve or to avoid those conflicts that may result in violence.

Peer mediation seems to be a successful restorative-justice method to manage violence in elementary and secondary schools (Association for conflict resolution 2007:2). Peer mediation provides a unique opportunity for diverse students to use

communication, human relations and problem-solving skills in a real life setting (Stacy and Robinson 2008:10). Effective peer-mediation groups help to create a safe and welcoming school environment, improves interpersonal and inter-group relationships thereby reducing school conflict and violence especially when it is used as part of the school violence prevention plan.

(The Association for conflict resolution 2007: 2) suggested that effective peer-mediation programmes should include student empowerment, capable adult supervision, cultural competence, diversity, responsiveness to specific need of the population it serves, fair resolutions to mediated conflicts and measurable outcomes. (IREX 2013:2) argues that the introduction of peer-mediation programmes in schools and community-serving organizations is based on a model of education that empowers individuals to prevent, resolve, and transform violent and non-violent conflict by developing the values, attitudes, skills and knowledge to envision alternative options for action towards building peace. If all schools put in an extra effort to follow these guidelines, then school conflict and violence should decrease at an increasing rate.

Evidence shows that peer mediation fosters self-regulation, self-esteem and self-discipline in students (Turnuklu *et al.* 2010:16). Another positive outcome of peer mediation training is the ability of trained students to transfer mediation skills to a variety of settings including peers, family and neighbourhood conflicts, so this help students to become better problem-solvers and more responsible citizens (Turnuklu *et al.* 2010:16). From the researcher's experience, if conflict-resolution skills are given by peers, students are most likely to accept them just because they want to fit into the group or they just feel it's possible. If other students can do it, so they can.

Suspension or expulsion can push students further away from their learning communities whereas a school peer-mediation programme promotes critical thinking and builds decision-making skills, develops healthy standards of relationships within the school community and supports student self-determination (IREX 2013:8). Conflicts of different intensity levels are an everyday occurrence between people

everywhere. When parties to a conflict do not know how to communicate openly and honestly, the conflict tends to escalate and grow. Peer mediation programmes provide students and adults with the tools and skills to resolve conflicts non-violently. For these reasons, this study uses peer-mediation guidelines to reduce conflict and violence in schools.

Students who engage in aggressive behaviour appear to have limited knowledge and limited social skills on how to resolve conflicts in a constructive manner (Stomfay-Stitz 1994:391). (Whiteside *et al* 2006:19) claim that peer mediation programmes are based on the foundation of applied conflict-resolution and such programs have helped to empower students to share responsibility for creating a safe and secure school environment. Mayorga (2010:1) postulates that conflict resolution programs that include peer mediation have made significant inroads on the number of student disputes brought to teachers' and administrators' attention. This researcher also added that the review of the literature on the effectiveness of peer-mediation programmes reveals that these types of programmes are effective on student to student relationships and teacher-to-student relationships.

Through peer mediation, students learn that communication rather than some other types of behaviour, or physical retaliation can be used to deal with their problems (Smith-Sanders and Harter 2007). Extensive research on peer-mediation programmes has verified several aspects of these programmes including being successful in effectively resolving conflict between students, success in teaching peer-mediation skills, reducing suspensions and discipline referrals in schools, and improving the school climate (Harris 2005:11). Specifically, peer-mediation programmes are effective in teaching students how to control anger, develop appropriate assertiveness skills, and learn problem-solving skills, communication skills and other interpersonal skills. (Johnson and Johnson 2005:58). Once students know how to control anger then they are less likely to display aggressive behaviour to their peers and their teachers.

Peer-mediation programmes have also been noted to be effective in teaching student's integrative negotiation and mediation skills, nonviolence empathy, trust, tolerance, respect, and fairness which in turn has resulted in constructive outcomes and reduction of student to student conflict (Gauley 2006:7). This researcher also added that peer mediation seems to benefit students in the areas of building self-esteem, empowerment, and teaching new life-skills. Some authors believe that students should be involved in planning and implementing peer mediation programmes (Mayorga 2010:1). Creating a positive and safe school environment and addressing issues of social and emotional learning need to be incorporated into the school culture to create a safe school environment conducive for learning.

The selection of a mediator is also very important and student diversity is equally crucial. Peer mediation is regarded as an alternative to the criminal-justice system in certain circumstances (IREX 2013:8), with different authors describing various benefits of peer mediation, such as reducing school violence, freeing up teachers to teach more and discipline less, and increasing student morale (Johnson and Johnson 2015:828). Peer mediation further empowers students to command respect from their peers. However, criticism of peer mediation revolves around the lack of proper training, budgetary concerns, and failure to acknowledge cultural differences, poor organization, and a lack of buy-in and administrative support. Attention needs to be paid to these areas of concern for peer mediation to be effective.

Since peer-mediation training may help students develop the skills necessary to manage their interpersonal conflicts through non-violent strategies at an early age, they will also be inoculated against future, more serious conflicts in their adult lives. Since less energy and time will have to be allocated to resolving problem behaviour, academic success and school satisfaction may increase, teacher burn-out will decrease, and a safer school atmosphere may be achieved. Such programmes are certainly useful in sowing the seeds of a more student-centred behaviour management policy in schools.

It can be concluded that peer mediation training given to students not only decreases student aggression and violent behaviour, but may also lead them to use more constructive and peaceful conflict-resolution strategies (Sellman 2008:21). Therefore, interpersonal conflicts in schools will not be regarded as undesirable incidents that must be avoided, or must be resolved in a destructive manner but as opportunities for socialisation, as tools for developing or transforming interpersonal relationships, and as a natural part of school life.

3.4.2 Restorative conferencing

When serious harm has been inflicted, a restorative conference provides an opportunity for those harmed to talk together sharing what happened, how each feels about it, what needs to be done to make the matter right and how to avoid this situation in the future (Watchtel *et al.* 2013:7). Restorative conferencing is a process that seeks to repair harm done to relationships within a community by an incident involving antisocial behaviour by allowing everyone involved to meet and gain a better understanding from each other of the impact of the incident, the reasons for it and preferred outcomes (Amstutz and Mullet 2005:60). Watchtel (2013:6) defined a restorative conference as a structured meeting between offenders, victims and both parties' family and friends, in which they deal with the consequences of the crime or wrongdoing and decide how best to repair the harm. This research uses Watchtel's definition as it provides all the basic guidelines of a conference.

Participation in conferences is voluntary and allows participants to share their feelings and views with one another in a constructive way (Hopkins 2004: 116). After it is determined that a conference is appropriate and offenders and victims have agreed to attend, the conference facilitator invites others affected by the incident - the family and friends of victims and offenders (Watchtel 2013:6). It is important that the victims share their feelings freely as this which enables them to heal through sharing and empathy, or the feelings of the other and understanding the other side and thereby, part thereby

reducing the re-occurrence of the same incident in the future thus reducing violence in the school.

Conferencing can be employed by schools in response to truancy, disciplinary incidents, including violence, or as a prevention strategy and the benefit form of role-plays and conferences with primary and secondary school students (Watchtel 2013:7). These conferences are usually in response to assaults and victimisation and are also used to address incidents involving drug abuse, damaging the school's reputation, truanting, verbal abuse and persistent disruptions during learning time (Thorsborne and Vinegrad 2008:10). When adapted to schools, these conferences would focus on the expectations identified for the school environment, and the problems created by violations of those expectations. It might bring together teachers, administrators, psychologists or counsellors, representatives of the student body, parents, the victim student or students, and the offending student to discuss and teach appropriate behaviour and consider appropriate consequences (O' Connor 2014:1). This is intended as a way to repair the harm which occurred in the school as a result of the misbehaviour thus creating a safe environment for learning.

The process usually involves the person or people who have been adversely affected, their parents and/ supporters, the person or people who are responsible for causing the harm and their supporters (Hopkins 2004: 115). When a problem arises, the trained staff member invites those involved to attend a restorative conference (Amstutz and Mullet 2005:60). The participants then: discuss the incident in a calm manner, identify who was harmed and how they felt, as well as ways to amend the harm done, possibly including an apology, formulate a written agreement on the actions that will be taken, and provide support for the implementation of the plan (O' Connor *et al.* 2014:1). During the conference, the group may discuss the reasons why the inappropriate behaviour occurred, as well as alternatives more appropriate behavior and methods to avoid the same problems in the future (Watchtel 2013:7). In this discussion, the victim and the offender will gain understanding and healing which reduces the possibility of reoccurrence of the undesirable behavior.

Restorative conferences provide victims and others with an opportunity to confront the offender, express their feelings, ask questions and have a say in the outcome (Watchtel 2013:6). Each school involved should have a staff trained in restorative conferencing. It is essential that a conference be facilitated by a trained individual who understands the specific issues of victimisation and offender behaviour, who can also properly assess the appropriateness of bringing participants together and can provide a safe and conducive environment for discussion (Amstutz and Mullet 2005: 60). The participants then discuss the incident in a calm manner, identify who was harmed and how they felt, as well as ways to amend the harm done, possibly including an apology, formulate a written agreement on the actions that will be taken, and provide support for the implementation of the plan (O'Connor *et al.* 2013:3). The restorative conference relies on the presence of family members, friends, service providers, and others as the support system that will assist the students in actually implementing the restorative agreement reached at the meeting (O'Connor *et al.* 2014:3).

During the conference, the group may discuss the reasons why inappropriate behavior occurred, as well as suggest alternative or more appropriate behaviour and methods to avoid the same problems in the future (Connor and Peterson 2014:2). Offenders are given an opportunity to hear first-hand information on how their behaviour has adversely affected other learners and the community (Watchtel 2013:6). Offenders may choose to participate in a conference and begin to repair the harm they have caused by apologizing, making amends and agreeing to financial restitution or personal or community-service work (Thorsborne and Vinegrad 2008:30). Conferences hold offenders accountable while providing them with an opportunity to discard the offender-label and be re-integrated into their community, school or workplace (Morris and Maxwell 2001:138). In the conference the facilitator provides an opportunity to each participant to speak, beginning with asking open-ended and affective restorative questions of the offender. The facilitator then asks victims and their family members and friends questions that provide an opportunity to tell about the incident from their perspective and how it affected them (Watchtel 2013:7).

The effectiveness of restorative conferences has been proved in areas that were measured. Mc Morris *et al.* (2013:78) found that restorative conferencing effectively increases parent and student engagement in school. Students and parents participation in the conference is considered to bring a positive experience and, there is increased communication between the school and the parents and students decreases in problem-behaviour including fighting, and there were increases in attendance (Watchtel 2013:7). There are also increases in the students' perceived ability to succeed in school and to make better decisions and to communicate better with their parents (O' Connor *et al.* 2014:4). It can be concluded that conferencing appears to interrupt the dis-engagement and drop-out cases that may result from punitive and exclusionary disciplinary approaches (Mc Morris 2013:40). Although further research is needed, this study appears to provide strong support for the restorative conference to provide a non-exclusionary intervention for serious misbehaviour which otherwise could have resulted in expulsion.

3.4.3 Restorative Circles

Restorative circle is a versatile restorative-practice that can be used proactively, to develop relationships and build community, or re-actively, to respond to wrongdoing, conflicts, and problems (Restorative Practice 2014:3). Circles are commonly used in secondary schools as they provide an opportunity for students to come together in a safe, supportive and enjoyable way to learn more about one another, to grow together as a team, to develop communication skills, to share in the exploration of problems and to celebrate achievements (Hopkins 2004:134). Circles are not only used in cases of conflict or wrongdoing, but also as a way to dialogue on difficult issues, used as a tool to teach social skills such as listening, respect, and problem-solving (Amstutz and Mullet 2005:52). Circles provide people with an opportunity to speak and listen to one another in a safe atmosphere and allows educators and students to be heard and offer their own perspectives and they can also be used to celebrate the students, beginning and end of the day, and discuss difficult issues (Watchtel 2013:7).

Restorative justice brought in restorative circle processes, is a way to bring people together for the purpose of teaching, listening, and learning (Kitchen 2013:92). The circle process brings students together to increase communication, empathic listening, and to work with students reflecting on how their actions impact on others (Clifford 2013:13). The common circle process uses a small object that is passed from person to person, such as a stone, crystal, or feather, called a 'talking piece' that is significant to the circle-keeper (Watchtel 2013:8). Guidelines for circles specify that people speak with respect and from the heart since the circle is considered a safe space. Circles may be identified as community-building circles, support circles, healing circles (Kitchen 2013:96), and in the case of the current study, a bullying circle. Restorative circles emphasise that we need to be able to express what we are feeling and what we need in a way that is heard, without it being destructive and harmful (Hopkins 2004:137).

The restorative-circle programme aims to build a student's capacity for collective problem-solving through a process that addresses everyday concerns within a classroom and school (Johnston and Van Ness 2007: 337). Restorative circles have proactive and post-incident applications in schools and are a way to bring people together to explain themselves by telling stories (Pranis 2005:12). According to Watchtel (2013:8), facilitators regulate dialogue by allowing only the person holding a 'talking piece' to speak while participants follow ground rules such as listening. A facilitator does not control the circle but is there to help participants to uphold the circle's integrity and also helps to hold space that is clear, open, respectful and free (Amstutz and Mullet 2005:53).

Participants sit in a circle with no tables and often the facilitators place objects that have meaning to the group in the centre to remind participants of shared values and common ground (Pranis 2005: 11). Circles bring people together to talk about issues and resolve conflicts. A trained facilitator, often called the circle-keeper, encourages willing participants to share information, points of views and personal feelings (Hopkins 2004:134). The facilitator may use a talking pierce which is an object that allows a person in possession the opportunity to speak without interruption. Others in the circle

are encouraged to remain silent and listen to what is being shared (Amstutz and Mullet 2005:52).

By offering opportunity for safe and open communication, circles help to resolve conflict, strengthen the relationship between participants, emphasise respect and understanding and empower all parties involved (Cutrone 2009:14). Circle-participants, with the permission of school administrator, can invite parents and community members to participate. This is a way of building peace between students and strengthen their relationships and creating a safe environment conducive for learning.

There are two main types of circles; the pro-active and the check-in circles (Hendry 2009:59). Proactive circle approaches in schools include talking or checking-in, community building, celebration, or honouring circles. In a check-in circle, participants do not attempt to reach consensus and individuals explore a topic from many different perspectives. Classroom teachers can use checking-in circles to begin or complete a day or lesson, or help to set a positive tone and open communication (Amstutz and Mullet 2005:56). Community-building circles create bonds and relationships between individuals. Celebration and honouring circles bring people together to recognize the accomplishments of an individual or group. Post-incident circle applications in schools are understanding, healing, support, conflict circles, and reintegration circles.

Educators use circles of understanding to gain a more complete picture of the reason for a particular event or behaviour. In healing circles, participants share the pain of a person or persons who have experienced trauma or loss (Amstutz and Mullet 2005:56). Support circles bring people together to support a person through a difficulty or challenge they are experiencing. Participants may make agreements and plans in this process, but decision making is not likely to occur (Zehr 2002:51). Conflict circles or restorative peace-making circles bring together disputants to resolve their differences (Morrison 2007:6).

In restorative peace-making circles, people who have been involved in or who have been affected by conflict or incidents of harm meet together. Circles include key supporters for each conflict participant such as friends or family members (Zehr 2002:51). The main reason to hold such peace-making circles is so individuals can be heard and hear from others who have been affected by their behaviour, and find ways to restore and repair relationships and prevent future harm (Hendry 2009:98). Formal restorative circles, organized when there is a serious incident, may involve a highly structured, scripted process, in which people directly involved in an incident, along with their parents or other supporters and key school personnel, and engage in intensive dialogue.

Often, facilitators will plan in advance where everyone should sit in this formal circle and also, the circle-facilitator speaks to everyone involved prior to the meeting to prepare them for the process of answering questions and concerns (Hopkins 2004:116). Like all restorative-justice practices, the dialogue is voluntary. It is imperative that people who are present volunteer to be part of this process, feel as safe as possible, and take some level of responsibility. Participants may write a consensus agreement after a resolution occurs (Pranis 2005).

Time should be spent in developing safety and trust before starting the wide application of the circle, like conflict resolution or team building. When there is trust between students it creates a social environment in which students can safely risk self-disclosure, authenticity, confrontation, and expressing affection (Hopkins 2004:1340). Trust is not automatic however, and students have likely had many experiences of broken trust. Confidences betrayed by gossip are a near-universal experience (Clifford 2013:14). Restorative circles are always by invitation; students should not feel compelled to share when they do not feel emotionally safe with those who are in the circle.

3.5 Summary

It is evidenced from the literature that restorative justice provides a welcome alternative to a power-based authoritarian and retributive approach to discipline, with the additional benefit of providing an opportunity and an environment that protects not only the educational rights of offenders, but also the dignity of the victims of conflict and violence. In particular, restorative justice holds the key not only to protecting different rights, but also to the restoration of the relationships between the offender, the victim and the school community. However, it is not the solution to problems, but if implemented correctly, it will improve the school environment, enhance learning, encourage young people to become more responsible and reduce conflict and violence in schools.

CHAPTER FOUR: RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

4.1 Introduction

The previous section (chapter three) described the literature on the issues of conflict and violence in the school context. This section places the focus details more on the design of the study and the procedures that were employed to respond to the research questions. Building the basis of the understanding of how data-collection progression took place is very important in this case. The chapter details how the research was designed as well as the methods that were used to collect data. For instance, the techniques used, samples, and the proceedings of the study. With regards to this research, qualitative research was selected as the most appropriate methodology to employ in an action-research plan. Two focus-groups, in-depth interviews and observations were the techniques used to obtain data.

The chapter begins in an exploratory part with an effort to meet research objectives one and two, *objective one explores the nature, trend, causes and consequences of violence in schools* while *objective two is to identify current responses to school violence and assess their effectiveness*. The action part seeks to meet objective 3: *to design, implement and evaluate the interventions to reduce school based violence*. The study type, research approach, selection of interviewees, difficulties encountered are also discussed in this chapter. Since my research was mainly participatory-action research, ethical issues were also addressed in this chapter. Ethical issues are a vital component when conducting research and participants were supposed to voluntarily participate or freely withdraw without further questioning. Participating students in the research were purposefully chosen and moral consideration were noted since the research included human beings who have human-rights entitlement.

4.2 Research design

According to Durrheim (2007:34), research design describes a calculated outline for action which works as a bridge between research enquiries and the real implementation of the study. In this study, the researcher selected exploratory-research design and participatory action research design. Participatory-action research design was employed with the aim of creating a comfortable environment for contributors to disclose necessary information so as to comprehend their actions, beliefs, ideas as well as feelings from the standpoint of the research contributors themselves. According to Lichtman (2011:110), research design is made up of fluctuating emphasis on data collection by discussions, dialogues, and observations, in which triangulation of the data is sought so as to lower the probability of wrong interpretation.

4.2.1 Exploratory research

Davies (2006: 111) explains that exploratory research is a methodological approach that is concerned primarily with discovery and with generating or building of theory. William (2006:19) defines an exploratory design as an exposed, flexible as well as inductive method of research which addresses questions of all types and attempts to look for new insight into a phenomenon. It is applicable to my research in to reducing conflict and violence in schools because of the need to address different types of questions. Exploratory study is useful when establishing priorities between research questions and practical problems in the execution of the research (Krul 2013:5).

According to Aaker *et al.* (2007:79) exploratory study is mostly used when seeking insights about the form of a problem, possible alternatives that can be used and applicable variables that are supposed to be considered. In social sciences, exploratory research is wedded to the notion of exploration and the researcher as an

explorer (Davies 2006:111). In this context exploration is thought of in this perspective, 'a state of mind, personal orientation' (Stebbins 2001:30), towards the approaching and carrying out social enquiry.

DeForge (2010:1243) argues that exploratory research is usually undertaken when relatively little is known about a phenomenon or an event or a situation they want to examine but nevertheless have a reason to believe they contains elements are worth discovering. The goal of this research is to determine whether or not relationship exists between several variables under scrutiny. To explore the phenomenon of conflict and violence in schools, the researcher approached it with two special orientations: flexibility in looking for data and open-mindedness about how to get the data (Stebbins 2012:1). This helped the researcher not to narrow the research, but, rather to look at it from many different perspectives.

4.2.2 Participatory action research

This research design seeks to answer objective 3 thus *design, implement and evaluate an intervention to reduce conflict and violence in schools*. Given that this is participatory action research, the population, particularly students, from Prince Edward School and Cranborne High School formed the basis of this study and are the ones who determined the intervention to be implemented (Townsend 2013:7). Stringer (2014:1) highlighted that participatory action research design uses continuing cycles of investigation designed to reveal effective solutions to issues and problems experienced in specific situations and localised settings, therefore, providing the means by which students and staff in schools may increase the effectiveness and efficiency of their work.

Stringer (2014: 6) goes on to define action research as an organised method of investigation that permits researchers to get effective answers to challenges they experience in their daily lives. Action research affords people the opportunity to

engage in systematic reflective enquiry and investigation to design an appropriate way of accomplishing a desired goal and to evaluate its effectiveness (Baum and McDougall 2006:854). Hennink (2014:48) added that the reflective nature of action research makes it possible for me as the researcher together with the participants to learn from an intervention that which needs to be done and redesign for the next action plan, therefore developing a better model of intervention. Action research assumes that those who have previously been designated as subjects or participators should participate directly in the research.

Action research was used in this research as it goes beyond discovering the violence in schools, most importantly, it allows the researcher together within the school community to design, implement and evaluate an intervention to reduce conflict and violence in schools. This intervention is thought to be more effective as it practically involves both the victims and perpetrators of violence from the planning stage of an intervention, thus increasing the commitment of students as they feel that they are being part of the programme.

Action-research design emerged as an attempt to deal with real-life situations that demanded intervention in the form of transformative action and change. Therefore, action research bridges the gap between theory and practical problem-solving through humanising the research activity (Hennink 2011:49). Action research design can simply be described as a set of actions, which incorporates collaboration or partnership between the researcher and local stakeholders to address a particular problem with the researcher actively involved in the lives of the study community (Hennink 2014:48). In this case, action research was a collaboration between the researcher and the students to actively address the problem of conflict and violence at Prince Edward and Cranborne Boys High School.

According to Greenwood and Levin (2007:3), action research is a set of self-consciously collaborative and democratic strategies for generating knowledge and designing action in which experts in social and other forms of research work together

with local stakeholders to work out a practical solution to a problem. Kemmis (2010:421) alludes to what he termed the capacity of action research towards changing people's practices and the situations in which people practise – the conditions for their practice – as they change their understandings of their practices. Therefore, the thrust of participatory action research design focuses on doing with instead of doing for stakeholders (Greenwood and Levin 2007:3). The participation of stakeholders or the community, in all the stages of the research process differentiates action research design from other research designs (Hennink 2011:490). The concept of participation is also confirmed by Berg (2009:251) who indicated that the central purpose of participatory action research is to come to some resolve and use it to take action toward improving the lives of participants (stakeholders).

Action research is grounded on the claim that real world problems require real world solutions (Moriarty 2007:2). Such real solutions cannot be imposed from outside or assumed, but rather they should emerge from the people themselves. This cultivates a sense of ownership of the solutions that emerge and it focuses on what is actually feasible, actionable, and practical. In action research, this is very important because in the past research has concentrated more on theoretical aspects of research, which in many instances fail to change real-life problems.

The basic assumptions of participatory action research are based on the notion that action researchers view themselves as agents of change endeavouring to promote values based on the inter-relationship between the researcher and the environment (Stringer 2014:20). McNiff and Whitehead (2006:35) summed up this well by indicating that the central methodological assumptions are that action research is done by practitioners who perceive themselves as agents, regardless of their social and institutional contexts. Their methodologies are open-ended and developmental as they ask how they can learn to improve social practices (McNiff and Whitehead 2006:35). Therefore, this study does not claim to bring final or all of the answers to the issues of conflict and violence in schools. In its simple way, the study is one of very few and unique studies which have attempted to build friendships between students and teachers using action research.

Action research dovetails well with the thrust of this research, which is to reduce conflict and violence in schools and to create safe schools conducive to learning and personal development through training programmes, which anticipates producing not just practical action, but which can also lead to possible development of friendships among participants. Kemmis (2010:424) captures the relational dimension of action research very well when he highlighted that one may therefore say that the goal of action research is to create models of democratic dialogue and practical deliberation, and therefore offer people other ways of relating to one another.

The process of action research is intended to be a sequence of planning, acting, observing the consequences of the action and, finally, reflecting on those effects and on how they relate to aspired aims of that action research (Townsend 2013: 11). The primary purpose of action research is to provide the means for people to engage in systematic enquiry and investigation to design an appropriate way of accomplishing a desired goal and to evaluate its effectiveness (Stringer 2014:6). The desired outcome of the action-research approach are not just solutions to practical issues, but also an important learning from outcomes both intended and unintended, and a contribution to actionable knowledge: thus producing knowledge that is useful for practitioners and robust for scholars (Coughlan and Brannick 2014:6). Having said this, action research is qualified to be the best research-design to design, implement and evaluate an intervention to reduce conflict and violence in schools and therefore to create a platform for constructive conflict-resolution and creation of an environment conducive to academic achievement and working relationships.

4.3 Research Methodology

Qualitative-research methodology is any data-gathering technique that generates narrative data rather than numerical data (Monsen 1992:73). Quantitative study is not sufficient for comprehending the setting in which participants express themselves in words and tone. Research that is qualitative makes up for these weaknesses

(Creswell 2007:9). This study attempts to hear people speak their feelings and ideas for themselves and to see their reactions to the questions posed thus making qualitative research method appropriate for this research.

As the name implies, quantitative research often uses statistical manipulation of numbers to process data and summarize results (Locke *et al.* 1998:123). Basically when understanding ideas, beliefs and values, numbers will most likely not give the detailed information that qualitative data will do especially on the explanations and what people think on school conflict and violence (David and Sutton 2011:102). This clarifies the reason why in understanding the dynamics of conflict and violence in schools the researcher preferred a qualitative approach instead of a quantitative one.

Qualitative research was used so as to understand the nature, causes and consequences of school violence. It was also used to understand the current responses that have been put in place to reduce the problem of conflict and violence in schools. In addition, qualitative research also enabled face-to-face discussions on school violence with students and indirectly with staff from these schools. Open-ended questions and close ended questions were used so as to get a deeper insight into about conflict and violence in schools and ways that can be employed to reduce this problem. This study focused on reducing conflict and violence at Prince Edward Boys' School in Harare with a particular attention being given to students as both the perpetrators and as the victims of conflict and violence.

4.4 Prince Edward School

Prince Edward School, commonly referred to as PE or Old Harare Boys is a public boarding and day school for boys aged 13 – 19 in Harare, Zimbabwe. It is located 1.2 kilometres from Harare city centre. It provides an education facility for 1200+ boys from Forms 1 to V1. The school is served by a graduate staff of over 100 teachers. It could be said that Prince Edward School caters for the financially-privileged class as it costs close to USD 700 per boarding student and USD 550 for day students.

I chose to do my research at Prince Edward School and Cranborne High School because they have the highest level of violence and about four death incidents have been evidenced. With this in mind I saw it as an opportunity to help introduce my conflict resolution skills to my community. The other reason why I worked with this school is that, previous researches show the main perpetrators of violence in schools were boys at the expense of girls. However, I wanted to find out the nature and causes of conflict and violence in a boys-only environment.

I chose to work with students aged 14 – 15 (Form twos). This was because they are not really new enough to the school not to know the school's culture and they haven't spent enough time in school to see violence as a normal way of life. Usually junior students are victims of violence and they are willing to disclose everything so that they get help, rather than seniors who may be perpetrators and who might not disclose anything so as to protect themselves.

Cranborne Boys High School

Cranborne Boys High School is a secondary school located in suburb of Cranborne in Harare. It is an all-boys school established on a former British RAF. It is six kilometres from Harare Central Business District (CBD). It provides education to children from socially medium backgrounds. It has over 50 qualified teachers with more than one thousand students.

Cranborne Boys is one of the schools with highest levels of violence in Harare province. A number of instances have been heard concerning violence especially in form of bullying. I chose this school basing on this evidence and also the fact that it is very convenient to the researcher because it is in my local community and permission from gatekeepers is easy to get.

The researcher used purposive sampling to get the ten students (action team) with the help of the class teacher who has adequate knowledge about the students' experiences of violence. I also chose participants from 14 -15 years of age. These participants have had enough time in school to experience violence and at the same time, they still have time at school to learn and influence other students to use non-violent methods of resolving conflict.

4.5 Data collection methods

Data of qualitative nature was gathered through semi-structured, in-depth interviews with students at Prince Edward School and Cranborne High School. Ten students were interviewed and from those ten were involved in two focus group-discussions. Focus-group discussions were also used to gather general information on conflict and violence at the school, which also gave me the baseline to structure my interview guide. Observations were also used to collect qualitative data on displayed behaviour during interview times, focus group discussion time and also periods in between.

I had some time to interact with the students and familiarise with the place before the data collection. I started the collecting the actual data from the 6th of September 2016 to 14th of October 2016 and the intervention was from the 27th of February 2017 to the 10th of March 2017. I could meet the students twice a week. I had to take a break because the students were preparing for their end of year exams.

4.5.1 In-depth Interviews

According to Hennink (2011:109) an in-depth interviews is a one-to-one way of gathering data which includes an interviewer and an interviewee. This researcher added that an exhaustive interview is a partnership of making meaning between the person interviewing and the participants that specifies that an in-depth interview is a distinct type of a conversation that produces knowledge. With regard to this,

Christenson (2011:56) views the interview as a way of gathering information in which the person interviewing asks the respondent a chain of questions, usually probing for more information. In this research, to acquire in-depth data, the researcher entered into collaborative conversations which involved respondents aiming to create a comprehensive and relaxed environment during the time of asking and responding to questions (Yeo *et al.*, 2014:181).

Hennink (2011:124) is of the belief that, when meeting a person to interview for the first encounter, it is vital to take time so as to become acquainted with the respondent so as to become comfortable. The interviewer should continue to be a sensitive observer recording what happens as authentically as possible and, at the same time, having time pose more relevant questions (Krul 2013:19). The benefit of employing in-depth interviews is an appropriate way of collecting data as it permits the emergence and follow-up questions. It also supplies information on respondents' viewpoints and how they think (Yeo *et al.* 2014:194).

I asked the permission to work with these school from the Ministry of Education (see appendix 1). The permission was granted in writing (see appendix 2). However, initially it did not make sense to the informants both teachers and students until the researcher explained clearly that the information to be collected was to be used for research purposes only. We finally conducted the interviews successfully using the interview guide (see appendix 3) that the researcher had designed with the help of the advisory team. This was to guide the interviewer to pay attention to information that answers the research questions. Though they are time consuming, in-depth interviews enable participants to relate their own experiences, at the same time, allow the researcher to observe the non-verbal communication and emotions (Litosseliti 2003:21). Open-ended questions and closed-ended questions were used so as to gain a deeper insight into the problem under investigation (Hennink 2014:113). Although unstructured interviews are more flexible, their disadvantage is that a researcher gets different information from different people so, making it difficult to make comparisons or to draw common themes from them thus disqualifying them from this research (Leedy and Ormrod 2010:148). Instead, semi-structured interviews or focused

interviews involved a number of open-ended questions grounded on the thematic concerns. This study used semi structured in depth interviews that enabled the construction of themes on presentation and analysis of data.

I had planned that the interviews were to last 30 minutes per interview. However, due to the different personalities of the interviewees and some lasted 20 minutes and some 13 minutes because of differences in probing question from different answers. I had Shona and English printed versions of questions as people had to choose the language they were comfortable with but however the research assistants (responsible teachers) insisted that everything should be done in English to maintain their reputation of being 'white schools'. The students were very fluent in speaking English. The in-depth aspect of the interview is important as it reinforces the purpose of getting detailed insight into the research issues from the viewpoint of participants involved in the study (Hennink 2011:109). The researcher managed to get most information from the in-depth interviews.

4.5.2 Focus group discussion

According to Hennink (2011:136) focus-group discussion is a condition where a focus-group facilitator maintains a sizeable and uniform group (of about twelve people) focused on discussing the study topic or a certain issue. Discussions in the focus-groups usually lasted for about two hours and were documented either by audio or video tapes. However, in such cases where participants refuse either audio or video recording the researcher has to write the responses down manually. For this research, the researcher used two focus groups to discuss issues around the dynamics of violence at Prince Edward School in the Harare Region. Both discussions involved ten respondents (same participants). Respondents were purposefully chosen to form a focus group discussion. The significance of using this discussion is that it is a valuable instrument for finding ideas and gaining deeper information on what different people think about a certain subject, in this case (conflict and violence at Prince Edward

School). The focus group discussion was also significant in determining the attitudes and provoking other contents from participants involved in the research.

In order to manage the focus-group discussions effectively, we agreed on basic guidelines for the respondents to guide us throughout the focus group. For example listening carefully with no interruptions when others are speaking, speaking loudly and clearly for others to hear, all cellphones off in order avoid interruptions and to facilitate speaking honestly. What was different from the interviews, in this discussions respondents are allowed to hear other people's responses and to make comments based on their fellow participants' idea. Nevertheless, respondents were not forced to agree with one another or reach any kind of consensus.

The aim of a focus-group discussion was to encourage the group members to interact with each other in a process that could be harnessed to enrich data collection (Finch *et al.* 2014:212). The objective of this discussion is to acquire competitive data. For example, in a society where people value their personal views in relation to the viewpoints of others. Owing to this, Maree (2010:90) believes that group conversation produces better results by broadening the range of answers. Activating forgotten experiences as well as releasing inhibitions that may have discouraged respondents from airing relevant information. Participants are able to build on other people's ideas and viewpoints to provide a deeper view that cannot be achieved from personal interviews alone (Finch *et al.* 2014:213).

It is the group environment which not only brings out the variety of perspectives , but also the challenges to these group issues and which prompts rationalization and further discussion and thereby provides greater detail and uncovers various facets of the issues (Hennink 2014:136). With these focus groups, participants managed to raise many new issues which the researcher never thought of.

Progression of the focus group discussion

The self-introduction of the researcher was the initial stage of the discussion. The researcher then explained the purpose of the research to the respondents (Finch *et al.* 2014:218). She also indicated that the data collected would be used to write this dissertation and to decide on the suitable intervention that helps to reduce conflict and violence in schools. Participants were also told about ethical considerations such as confidentiality of the interview and anonymity of the data. Respondents were alerted to the fact that the research was voluntary and that participants could withdraw their participation when they felt like with no repercussions.

Authorisation was requested for recording and the use of the recorded information explained. It is very unfortunate that students refused any form of recording despite all the explanations on the confidentiality of data. I feel that the students feared their teachers who were loitering around the discussion venue trying to eavesdrop on what we were discussing. Initially the students did not like to disclose information as they thought it was a trap set by their teachers but after the explanation of specifics of the study and processes, respondents were willing to participate in the discussion and interviews.

Focus-group discussion guide (appendix nine) was designed. It consisted of questions that were designed to guide the discussions and make sure the objectives are achieved. During the discussion, the non-verbal communication of respondents was ascertained and the social background of the respondents was considered and written down. Questions were posed in a way that did not direct or lead respondents. The necessity of a discussion guide is, to begin with, to recognise people's own views of life, moods and emotions and also the connotation attached to their involvements, and then, to obtain deeper knowledge of the sensitivities to school violence.

4.5.3 Observation

Observation is defined by Hennink (2011:170) as a method of research that allows the researcher to see and note how participants behave during interviews or discussions, note their actions and how they interact with each other systematically. Nicholls *et al.* (2014:244) views observation as a central research method throughout the history of qualitative enquiry. The approach enables the researcher to acquire full-report of events so as to locate participants' behaviours according to their expected behaviour. Buchanan and Bryman (2011:478) indicate that techniques used to observe are usually based on the idea of the organised process of observing, paying attention to what you observed and then classifying the observed activities. The basic principle of observing lies in the record of words, actions or events with no judgement attached. Observation was one of the approaches used to gather information where I observed respondents participating in different activities.

Advantage of observing participants

Observing participants seeks to:

1. See directly what people are doing without having to rely on what they say or do.
2. See things that escape the awareness of participants in the setting.
3. Provide information on things people would otherwise be unwilling to talk about.

Transcription during observation

Transcription is a practical typing process of representing articulated discourse in writing. It is undertaken between the research stages of data collection and analysis. Transcription is a vital step in producing of scientific acquaintance as it captures and freezes in time the vocal discourse that interests the researcher (Bloor and Wood 2011:167). Notes were recorded on the record sheet when I entered the classroom

that we were supposed to use for interviews and focus-group discussions to get data that was worth noting for data analysis. For example, there were swear words written on the wall with a pencil at Cranborne High school. This was not the same with Prince Edward School and this confirms the notion that the level of violence differs from one school to another. According to Hennink (2011:194), observations need skill in recording what you see. Notes were taken down during observation which became significant data for analysis. Therefore, it is significant to take down clear and detailed notes in order to accomplish the objectives of the study.

To meet this objective, I did the following;

- Wrote notes continuously while observing.
- Wrote notes about people's behaviour, attitude and the physical environment itself and
- Counted the number of people and described their characteristics (e.g. appropriate age, gender and ethnicity).

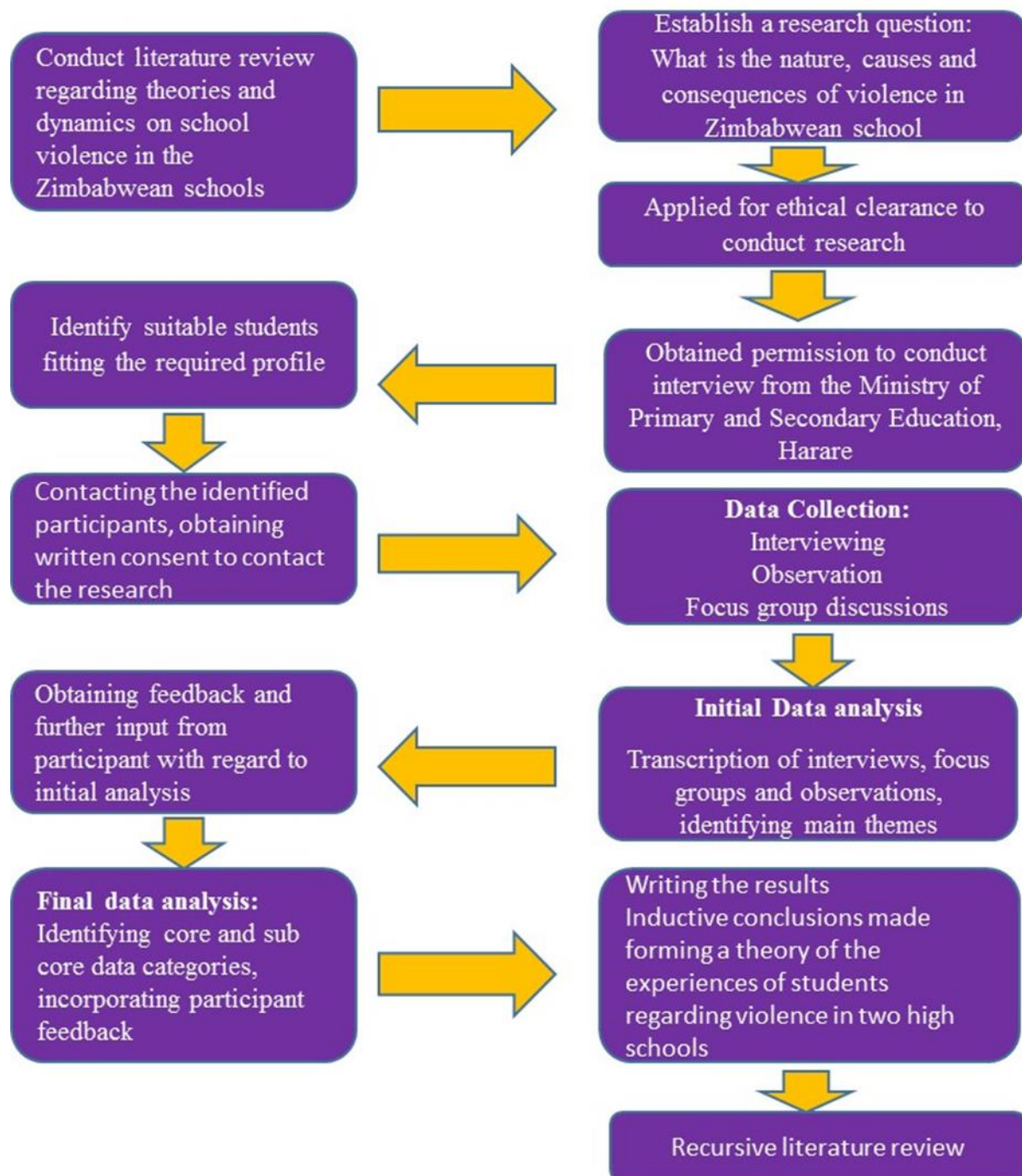
4.6 Sampling procedure

A group of individuals who are participating in the study is called a sample. It was highlighted by TerreBlanche and Durrheim (2007:49) that sampling is a process of selecting research participants from an entire population. It also includes decisions about who should participate, in which venue, what is to be done, behaviour, and what non-verbal communication to observe. This is done to select a sample that is representative of the population about which the researcher intends to draw conclusions.

Research is done in a series of interlocking phases from the gathering of literature, research design and methodology, research methods, selection of participants, analysis of collected data, through to the writing of the final script. Meaning, these phases go phase by phase. The diagram below details these phases and how they

relate to each other. It should be noted that the research process goes in sequence which should be observed all the time to minimise the collection of false and irrelevant data.

Figure 4.1 Concurrence of phases in the research process.



The diagram above shows the progression from the initial stages of formulating questions to the time of analysing the results and writing up of the thesis. These stages are interrelated and they build up concurrently, one leading to the other. I used this as my guideline of research to avoid omission of important stages as well as focusing on elements not important in the study.

For this research, two high schools were chosen from 89 High schools in the Harare Province for interviews, focus-group discussions and observation. The standards used to select the schools were based on the existing evidence of violent incidents and information was obtained from informal discussions with students and staff from schools around Harare. These academic institutions were selected with the insight that these schools are more violent, based with informal conversations mentioned above. In addition, chosen schools were convenient to the researcher considering access and closeness in space. These were schools where violent actions and misbehavior was escalating and information was published. However no interventions have been designed to counter these problems.

According to Maree (2010:79) purposive sampling refers to a situation where respondents are chosen on the basis of defining qualities that make them the holders of the information needed for the research. Decision on the samples are made solely for reasons of acquiring the richest possible fountain of data to respond to the research questions and often progresses until no new themes arise from the information-gathering process.

The researcher asked the authority in the school to nominate students who had been involved in violence at school either as perpetrators or victims to constitute the respondents in the project. The researcher made it clear that in the letter to the Ministry of Education that participation in the study will be voluntary. When I first met with the respondents, I also made it clear that the participation was voluntary and then I explained the purpose of the reasons to them. The researcher assured the participants that their names and the name of the school would not be disclosed. The reason

behind using teachers in this selection is that they know their students better and have had enough experience with them to tell who was involved in violence and who was not.

This study paid a great deal of attention to experiences and perceptions of the respondents, which was the main reason why the researcher used the qualitative research method. In this research, focus-group members were purposefully chosen. The justification of choosing this sample was not only because they had been victims or perpetrators, but also they were knowledgeable and informative participants from whom it would be easier to obtain open-ended data.

4.7 Pilot study

According to Treece and Treece (1986:25) pre-testing is envisioned to measure the usefulness and relevance of the instruments used in the study. For example, its length, phrasing and validity, whereas the pilot study involves Interview guides and focus group-discussion guides that were thoroughly examined and analysed by peace-building PhD students. These teachers were qualified to measure its logical consistencies, and whether or not they were easy to understand. They also determined the order of items and their relevance to the study. I got an opportunity to interact with the 14-15 year-old students who were picked at random from the Form two class. This was to test the questions whether or not the students understood the language, and also to check all types of errors.

4.8 Data analysis

Lichtman (2011:62) maintains that data analysis is a procedure that encompasses linear and circular examination that permits a logistical organised analysis as well as permitting self-examination and reflection. Data analysis of a qualitative nature attempts to establish how contributors make sense of a specific occurrence by

examining their contribution, attitudes, understanding, information, values, and feelings in the light of their previous involvement in trying to evaluate the subject under study. Examining the meaning and symbolic content of the data is the main aim of data analysis. In this research, the researcher wanted to get an insight into the nature, causes, extent, and consequences of conflict and violence in schools. To accomplish this, it is best to employ the process called thematic-analysis of qualitative data. For this study, six concurrent steps of data analysis were observed.

Thematic analysis includes a search for subjects that grows in relation to the exploration and account of the subject under study (Miles and Huberman 1994:50). Themes linking to variables of social capital, reasoned action and tacit knowledge-sharing behaviour were identified and coded in the interview scripts (Thomas and Harden 2007: 45).

The researcher allowed findings of the research to develop from the noteworthy themes inherent in unprocessed data, without the restrictions imposed by a more structured theoretical alignment. Emerging themes included the following: nature and causes, consequences and current responses to conflicts and violence at this school. The analysis of data was done using a continuous and exploratory design as this study seeks to discover common themes (factors) from students' experiences so as to help recommend future research and school programmes. Data collected from students was analysed as described in the next section.

The following table illustrates the progression of data analysing from the initial stage of organising it to the final stage of writing the report.

Table 4.1 Thematic analysis concurrence

Stage	Description	Facilitators Contributed	Time spend
Step 1	Organising the data	2	One day

Step 2	Generating categories	2	1 days
Step 3	Coding data	2	1 day
Step 4	Testing emergent Understanding	-	7 days
Step 5	Searching for alternative explanation	-	7 days
Step 6	Writing the report	-	21 days

4.8.1 Step one: Organising the data

Patterns that emerged from data that I transcribed during interviews and from observation were ordered and later arranged into groups and themes identified. Answers from different respondents in schools were arranged separately using labelled folders. Homogeneous information, for example, on bullying was kept together and later compared. The observed data was written down and analysed according to themes and categories that were directed by the observations during communication and interaction.

4.8.2 Step two: Generating categories, themes and patterns

At this stage, interpretation was made easier. Related materials in the same batch of data, for example, drug and alcohol related information gathered was categorised and divided to show similarities and differences for easy identification. After identification of the patterns, sub-categories were established in the groups that already existed.

4.8.3 Step three: Coding data

At this stage, data was put into codes for easy interpretation. At this stage, correspondences and dissimilarities in the data provided by respondents were acknowledged. These two aspects were marked clearly in different colours and then used for interpretation.

4.8.4 Step four: Testing emergent understandings

At this stage it is significant to test the comprehension of the interpretation of the data. In this phase, it was more significant to conclude whether the respondents really comprehended and asked questions as well as to conclude whether or not respondents had recognised different words and attached the accurate interpretation of those words. It was also critical to check if respondents gave out-of-context responses to questions and then make an effort to understand their answers. For the purpose of the study, the interviews revealed the main factors linked to the dynamics of conflict and violence at Prince Edward and Cranborne High School in Harare Province.

4.8.5 Step five: Searching for alternative explanations

In this phase, it was important to recruit other relevant methods of interpreting and comprehending answers because other lyrics or answers might not have been easy to comprehend since it is possible that respondents use unfamiliar words depending on their backgrounds. It was necessary to make sure that other relevant ways were employed to clarify and reflect accurately what the respondents wanted to say. This was accomplished by questioning and by seeking clarification from participants.

4.8.6 Step 6: Writing the report

The more difficult work to interpret the recorded information was done and then the information was compiled into the report of the composite findings of the research.. It was significant to take the six steps of data-analysis through accurate interpretation of the answers from respondents. The final report was supposed to represent the participants' views and opinions concerning the key aspects of the study. In the next chapter (Chapter 5) there will be a detailed report on the data collected from interviews, focus-group discussions and observations and other contributions to the findings of the research.

4.9 Ethical issues and considerations

Since this research worked with people who are entitled to human rights, it is very important to observe ethical issues and considerations.

4.9.1 Ethical issues

According to Atkins and Wallace (2012:30), ethical issues is a section that should inform all aspects of the research from the initial stages of planning, through the gathering of data and analysis to the final presentation. Wirth regard to this research, all confidential information was kept with the researcher so as to avoid situations where respondents feel bad and compromise their relationships. Confidentiality was maintained throughout the research and it was ensured that all aspects were consistent with the law, since human rights are involved. The following ethical issues were observed:

Informed consent

All participants were informed about all aspects of the study before the procedures of gathering data began. These included the guiding procedures or risks involved and if there were any and benefits as incentives for participation. This was to enable respondents to make informed decisions as to whether to continue participating or to decline the opportunity. Consent forms were sent to parents and the parent/guardian's signature was also requested. (see Annexure B) this was required to ensure that minors who, by law are still under the custody of their parents/guardians, could participate legally Respondents were assured that involvement in the study was voluntary and that they could decline involvement at any time should they feel it undesirable for them to continue with their participation.

Confidentiality

Confidentiality is an ethical principle and a researcher keeps a level of secrecy concerning the information provided by a participant in order to protect the participant from any possible confrontations (Christenson 2011:124). For this study, the researcher assured respondents that the data gathered, despite its research group, would never be disclosed to anybody and would be used solely for research purposes. Confidentiality and anonymity was ensured throughout the processes of the study because any behaviour otherwise would mean violation of respondents' right to privacy.

Anonymity

It was very important to give assurance to the respondents that the aim of asking them questions was to gather their ideas and opinions concerning the forms of violence they have experienced, record their perceptions, their feelings and emotions and how those cases of violence were dealt with in their schools. Participants were also assured that

the information obtained was to be used solely for study reasons and neither the names of participants nor the school nor any identifying information concerning the schools was to be disclosed to the media or any other party. (Hennink *et al.*, 2011: 70).

No harm to participants

There have been a few cases of physical harm to participants in qualitative research, and in other cases there was humiliation and loss of trust between participants (Hennink *et al.*, 2011:73). In this case, however, no physical harm to participants was encountered because no one was requested to do physical exercise.

4.9.2 Ethical considerations

Identifying and negotiating access to the site and individuals is an important procedure of the qualitative research design. Written permission was obtained from the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Schools in Harare Province. Permission was also obtained from the parents through the signing of the consent forms for their children to participate in the research. The purpose of the study and the procedure to be followed during interviews, was detailed in the consent forms. Parents were requested to sign consent forms (see Annexure) as a token of granting permission to their children to participate in the research. Through the co-operation of both parents and learners, the signed consent forms were returned to the schools for verification. There has been a welcome and quite widespread acceptance of learners as persons who have similar rights to those of adults (parents) with regard to giving informed consent to research access.

Ethical considerations such as informed consent, confidentiality and anonymity of the participants were taken into consideration during the data-collection process, which included interviews and observations. Once the permission to conduct research was

granted by the headmaster, it was essential to start identifying the sites and the participants. Access to the research sites was negotiated with the principals in order to conduct the interviews. The purpose of conducting interviews was to obtain open-ended data. However, before interviews could take place informed consent had to be obtained from individuals at the research site in order to obtain authorisation to take pictures, and to record and/or interview the learners for the purpose of the study.

Permission was requested from the participants to record the interviews. This was, however, declined by them. Therefore, a brief proposal was written, which included an honest reflection of the primary-research purpose in order to gain access to the school. The dates of the interviews were negotiated with the participants. Throughout the study, I kept the notes of the observation periods, and contacts with participants.

4.10 Validity and reliability

Luttrell (2010:279) states that validity is a goal rather than a product. It has to be assessed in relation to the purpose and circumstances of the research, rather than being a context-independent property of methods or circumstances. It seeks to establish whether or not the research measures what it is in fact intended to measure. In this research, I ensured validity by using multiple methods of data collection (Chabangu 2014:47), which included semi-structured, in-depth interviews with eight learners, two focus group discussions and participant observation. An interview-guide schedule was designed and pre-tested to ensure questions were clear to the respondents and that it yielded results relevant to the research objectives.

The study managed to measure construct validity because the interview schedule consisted of different sets of violence-related items that are relevant to the research topic. Because I had a face-to-face interview with interviewees, I managed to ask follow-up questions until I was satisfied with the responses from the participants. The study, therefore, gathered rich first-hand information about the perceptions, behaviour,

feelings and the emotions of the learners with the aim of having a better understanding of the phenomenon under study. To strengthen validity, I also avoided asking leading questions and using unrepresentative data. Furthermore, I used the participants' - verbatim language and used simple English language that everyone could understand. The emerging data were noted down for analysis. However, every study has some threats to validity such as the reliability of the instruments, social desirability, and item bias.

Maree (2010:215) states that reliability refers the extent to which a measuring instrument is repeatable and consistent. Saunders et al., (2003: 11) define reliability as the degree to which data collection methods yield consistent findings, similar observations would be made or conclusions reached by another researcher, or there is transparency in how sense was made from raw data. In a qualitative research-paradigm, however, reliability is interpreted as trustworthiness and the degree of transferability of findings and the ability of a measurement to produce consistent results (Rudenstam 1992:67). To ensure reliability (trustworthiness) of this research, I conducted peer briefings before starting with the interviews to determine the neutrality and clarity of the interview schedules. The noteworthy points and original transcripts of the in-depth focus-group interviews were stored and thematically coded. The study also kept an accurate record of the dates, times and persons involved in the research.

4.10.1 Triangulation of data

Triangulation of data is the systematic comparison of findings on the same research topic generated by different research methods. Such comparisons are often portrayed as a procedure of validation by replication, but the portrayal is misleading (Bloor and Wood 2011:170). Triangulation strengthens a study by combining methods thereby ensuring the validity of the research. In this study I used multiple methods of data-collection to come up with answers to the problem of conflict and violence in schools.

4.10.2 Member check

After recording the results, I had to take them back to the participants to check on the accuracy, thereby, improving their validity.

4.11 Limitation and difficulties encountered

Any study based on self-reporting of involvement in conflict and violence in schools is necessarily dependant on the willingness of participants to talk about their experiences. Many of these were, perhaps both personal and painful. With only two schools in the whole province being part of the study, the results cannot be generalised to the province or to the whole country. The study also had several limitations that are common to qualitative research. Since this was an exploratory research, a purposive sampling method with a small number of participants was used. Some teachers were restless during interviews and discussions. This influenced my research to a significant extent because participants refused to disclose anything because of their teachers who were loitering around. However, I managed to talk to the teachers and then assured the students of the confidentiality of information, but still they disclosed the information on condition that there were no audio or visual recordings. Consequently, I had to write down notes throughout the focus group discussions and the interviews. The study had the following further limitations:

1. Firstly, a case study of one school does not allow for a generalisation of the findings as the sample is not representative of all Boys' high schools in Harare Province;
2. Secondly, there was a limitation in the geographical area chosen; the conditions in Harare Province may not be representative of other areas. Violence varies from school to school;
3. Thirdly, the time factor was negotiated with the principals of the purposively-selected High school to avoid disruption to school activities. The information or data was collected after school hours; and

4. Fourthly, I arranged with some teachers in the school to offer transport to the participants after the interviews. This was so because some learners use transport to and from school. I did not give any incentives to learners for participating in this research as this could jeopardise the validity of the study.

4.12 Summary

This chapter focused on the research design and methodology employed in the empirical investigation. It explains the qualitative research-procedure and justifies its choice as the best method to find answers to the research questions. An explorative-research design was used which included in-depth interviews, focus-group discussions and participant observation. The primary purpose of choosing these instruments was to obtain open-ended data. The role of the researcher and the ways in which raw data was analysed has been explained as well. This chapter has also given an outline of how ethical standards of research were followed during the data collection process. Related aspects such as validity and reliability-strategies for the study have been clearly explained to produce a strong rather than a weak or flawed qualitative study.

This chapter discussed the research design and research methodology of the study. The following chapter (chapter 5) of this dissertation will focus on an analysis and interpretation of the data collected from the participants.

CHAPTER FIVE: DATA ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS OF EMPIRICAL INVESTIGATION

5.1 Introduction

Chapter four (previous chapter) focussed on the research design and methodology that was used to find answers to research questions. This chapter will focus on the presentation and analysis of data collected. This chapter also provided the interpretation of the findings of the empirical investigation. It is worth noting that there is an increasing concern about the fact that conflict and violence within Zimbabwean schools is intensifying, particularly at Prince Edward Boys.

Until now, there has been no provincial data on the exact extent of the conflict and violence in Zimbabwean schools. There is also little understanding of the nature or the cause of this problem. This chapter discusses the data collected from the participants. The data will be presented and typed in italics to quote what the participants said regarding different identified themes (factors) in the study and at the end of each quote is the pseudonym of the participant who gave that response. It is important to remember that the primary aim of the study was to do an exploratory investigation into the nature, causes, trend and the consequences of violence at Prince Edward Boys School. The data collected for this study which addressed the research questions is presented below.

The main research questions were:

- ❖ What is the nature, extent, causes and consequence of conflict and violence at Prince Edward Boy's School?
- ❖ What are the current responses to violence and how effective are they in managing conflict and violence at Prince Edward School?
- ❖ How can restorative justice help to reduce school violence?

5.2 Profile of participants

The age of the participants ranged from 14 to 15. I chose this age group because these lower level students still have more time in school before they leave for university thus they can still apply whatever they have learnt from this study. All participants were black and from the same class to avoid clash of timetables; there were no white students from these age groups in the school. I conducted the investigation between half past two and half past three in the afternoon so that I did not interfere with normal school hours.

To ensure the confidentiality and safety of students, I gave them pseudonyms. Participant 1 was identified as P1, participant 2 was identified as P2 and so forth.

5.3 Nature and extent of conflict and violence at Prince Edward School

The problem of conflict and violence in schools is a very serious issue that is at an increasing worldwide. It is very important to dig deep into the roots of this problem so as to have a clear understanding of its nature, causes and consequences. This will greatly assist in devising programmes and interventions to minimise and to prevent it from occurring.

5.3.1 Ease of access to the school premises

Participants were asked to talk about their safety at school. The majority of them responded that they did not feel safe at school, because the schools did not have proper entry searching system to ensure no weapons or alcohol is brought in the school premises. This was evidenced by participants who explained that:

"I do not feel safe at all here at school because the gate is left wide open during school hours and everybody from outside can enter the school without identification at the

gate. People from outside have free access to our school and even our classroom. One day my brother visited me straight to my classroom without being asked by the security. This experience justifies me when questioning the security of this school (P4).

This was confirmed by literature review in chapter 2.6 which (SACE 2011:15) highlighted the presence within schools of informal groups of people who terrorised and victimised other learners. It is important that access to school premises be restricted to ensure the safety of both students/teachers and the school property.

Participants also reported that these informal groups would often bully, or threaten and beat learners for no reason if they were not given what they wanted. In some instances, these members would force younger school children to go and buy alcohol and drugs for them. The issue of poor security was evident from the observations made on the first day of the researcher's visit to the schools. The security guards were there at the gate but you could enter and leave the gate without identification or without their names being written down for reference. Situations like these in schools create threatening environments for both teachers and students.

The literature review, section 2.2, highlighted that the most common form of violence in schools involved learners acting violently towards other learners (Burton and Leoschurt 2012:100). This has been described by participants as

“Senior students from this school are so heartless, they can do anything just to make sure we suffer as juniors. I do not know the reason why they do that because sometimes they can beat us for no apparent reason. One day I was seated on a chair in the sports yard, one of the senior student just came and took the chair, I fell down and that was so embarrassing. We cannot do anything to them but it really pains (P5).

This is almost the same scenario with South African schools as shown by SACE (2011:15) who found out that in more than nine out of ten cases of school-based violence the perpetrator was a fellow student. Therefore, it is important that learners

are monitored all the time from the time they get into the school premises since they are the primary perpetrators of conflict and violence in schools.

Participants voiced their concern that the school authorities were reluctant to prevent the sneaking in of dangerous weapons into the school premises because of fear of victimisation. This has increased the prevalence of violence since criminals and bullies were free to enter in the school environment with 'weapons'. A report by participants reads:

Our teachers do not really care about our safety my English teacher came into the classroom one day and there was a knife on the table but to my surprise he did not even ask who it belonged to. This is a clear evidence that we are not safe at this school. How can a caring teacher not concerned about safety of students (P7).

This situation is recognised by both learners and teachers as a cause for serious concern and relates to inadequate security infrastructure as well as to free access and entrance control. Owing to this challenge, participants probed that:

"If teachers and security are failing to root out bullies and gangsters in schools who bring weapons in schools and abuse other children, who else can guarantee our safety?"(P7).

The security guards are there to ensure security to all individuals but if they are failing to provide security to students then the future of the nation is in danger.

5.3.2 The availability of dangerous substances and alcohol in school

The relationship between alcohol and drugs and school violence also needs to be investigated. While high school students are not entitled to drink alcohol, there is an indication that alcohol and drugs are becoming an increasing problem in schools as reported in literature review section 2.4 (SACE 2011:37). Unfortunately, the school authorities can be as complicit in this problem as the students and, learners bring alcohol on to the school property. Burton and Leoschurt (2012:66) in the literature review section 2.4, also added that the use of illegal drugs and alcohol continues to

be a common feature of adolescents in school experiences. Often both alcohol and drugs are used to generate the courage needed to commit a crime. This concurred with what was described by participants as:

If you want to beat someone you should be under the influence of drugs or alcohol otherwise when you are sober you won't do that because you can either feel sorry for the person or you will fear punishment" I remember this day when I wanted to beat the class monitor who wrote my name down for making noise. I had to drink beer on lunch time so that I deal with him after school. Sometimes we drink alcohol to gain brevity (P3).

It is the duty of both teachers and parents to teach children to love one another so as to avoid unnecessary misbehaviour caused by hatred or other reasons. While the aggression associated with excessive alcohol consumption and the use of some drugs may increase the level of confidence to commit crime, it also increases the likelihood of the actual crime such as assault and fighting (Chabangu 2014:61). Considering this, it is important that teachers and students work together to devise programmes that help to eliminate the use of alcohol and drugs in and out of school premises.

Participants also pointed out that the perpetrators of violence are not only assaulting their fellow learners, but also bring along dangerous substances such as drugs and alcohol to give their fellows and friends in the school. When participants were asked about whether using drugs would make them more mature, their response was:

Drugs/alcohol will really give me power and confidence to fight my enemies when I am attacked. Drugs and alcohol is good even during the when we write tests, you pass with high marks if you study under the influence of drugs especially mbanje (marijuana). Sometimes parents and teachers must just understand that it is a lifestyle for young people (P5).

This means that some students abuse drugs and alcohol to gain power and confidence to protect themselves from being attacked by their peers. It is the responsibility of school security and staff to protect students and to make sure they are safe so as to avoid such minor reasons for drug abuse. This question was designed to elicit

responses to instances where at times an individual had or had not been pressured into an anti-social act of some kind, such as bullying, or assaulting someone or into consumption of alcohol against his or her will.

Observations conducted during the data-collection process revealed that underage drinking plays a major role in contributing towards violent behaviour in schools. A tavern is operating proximity to the school and the participants suggested that the Ministry of Education should work together with school authorities and the community to put in place interventions that will effectively address this problem.

Participants reported that they witnessed violence-related cases resulting from alcohol abuse in the classroom. This was described by participants as follows:

Students can do anything when they are under the influence of alcohol. Last week one boy from our class came drunk after the lunch break, he was singing in class, pushing desks all over the place, which was very funny, we laughed our lungs out that day. Students even fight in classrooms especially when the teacher is not in especially when they are drunk (P8).

This indicates that there are loopholes in the supervision of classrooms, if all this violence occurs within the very environment where a teacher should be present at all times. In some instances, it is possible that the young people make use of the substances at home or elsewhere and arrive at school drunk or high –and this is a problem for the other learners and school authorities. One of the students confessed that,

When we go out for lunch we drink and smoke then we buy just a little for our friends who are not allowed to go out because they are boarders” (P1).

Other learners reported in a focus-group discussion that they knew students who smoked dagga while at school. It is very important that students are also trained about the negative consequences of abusing drugs both to themselves and the community at large because sometimes students do not know the implications of drug abuse. The

Bible supports this in {Hosea 4:6, (NKJV)}, *“my people perish because they lack knowledge”*

Areas behind both classrooms and toilets were identified as dangerous places, especially because youngsters collected in these spots to smoke dagga and drink beer. When learners were asked about the knowledge and the prevalence of other drug substances, they reported that dagga was predominantly available, even at home, whereas with other substances such as cocaine, mandrax or ecstasy, they knew less about them. Participants expressed this as

We smoke marijuana, cigarettes because we cannot afford cocaine and the other ones we don't know them. Marijuana and cigarettes are very cheap at our nearby tavern. Its only three minutes to walk to the tavern. They even offer us a smocking place and a light so that our teachers and parents from the community will not see us smocking (P1).

The issue of drug abuse is a major cause of conflict and violence which demands all stakeholders to put their heads together and work towards its elimination. However, even though toilets tend to be the most feared places in the school they are not the most common sites of violence. The classrooms in boys' schools appeared to be the places where most incidents of violence occur. For instance, in selling dagga to classmates in the absence of the teacher. It was concluded by participants that:

We have some friends here at school selling cigarettes and dagga. We will always support them because they make our life easier during lessons time when snicking out is most difficult. It will not be easy for the school to stop abuse of dagga, because dagga is easily accessible from boys in the streets” (P6).

It is the responsibility of the police and municipality to lead communities into eliminating the selling of drugs in the streets and anywhere else so as to reduce misbehaviour resulting from the influence of drugs.

In the literature review section 2.4, it was highlighted that teachers tend to leave classes unsupervised for the majority of the lesson time, thus creating a significant

opportunity for violence to take place (SACE 2011:11). It was discovered that drugs and alcohol are reasonably accessible to learners of all ages. Asked about the availability of these substances, participants reported that it was easy to get dagga, alcohol and knives at school. This was described by participants as follows:

It is easy to get dagga even in school because we know who sells at a lower price and we can also get it on credit (P1).

Participants indicated that they could easily get a knife through friends, although not many instances of usage were reported. With such easy access to substances and weapons, it is not surprising that boys' schools in Harare exhibit such high levels of violence. This gives rise to the question: If drugs and alcohol are so readily available in and around schools, what is being done by the Ministry of Education to curb this problem?

Where the perpetrators of violence are known, this knowledge clearly enables some action to be taken against the offending individual, should the learner report the incident. However, in too many instances the act goes unreported. The Bureau of Market Research (2012:4) points out that the absence of action following the reporting perpetuates violence can be a contributory factor to learners feeling a sense of helplessness and despair. This leaves many students with little will to attend school. Often, cases come to the attention of the authorities simply because of the seriousness of the damage, or the seriousness of the injuries incurred and this encourages the concealment (intentionally or otherwise) of the acts that are deemed to be not so serious..

5.3.3 Peer relationships

Negative peer relationships were also cited as making a contribution towards ill-disciplined behaviour among students. A report in the literature review section 2.4 supports this finding as it explains that those students who had friends involved in antisocial behaviour (drug-related or criminal) were more likely to report the

experience of violence against them than their peers who spent time with more conventional friends (Burton 2008:5). Participants also reported that,

There is a group of form four students called the “big five” who is known for their unique characteristic of exercise their power over other student. Some form three students are bullying juniors and their peers so that they can qualify to be members of the “big five.” Sometimes we engage ourselves in unwanted behavior so as to feel being part of our friends who does that otherwise we will be seen as cowards or we will lose our friends” (P5).

On the other hand, learners said they felt unsafe, and were often abused by people to whom they attached honour and integrity. Of great concern is that most incidences of violence went unreported; thus creating an atmosphere of uncertainty and lack of confidence in both students and staff. Teachers’ failure to promote healthy and friendly relationships between peers and to create a safe learning environment contributed significantly towards rising levels of violence in schools. For example failure to report serious crime to the police (Magasia and Sugut 2014:61). This calls for the Ministry of Education and parents to put stricter measures in place to ensure that teachers do what they what they are being paid for.

In the absence of a teacher, many things happen. Participants indicated that

Teachers are rarely in class especially this term probably because of strike and other personal businesses. Sometimes students will be on top of desks sings beating tables like drums and sometimes if you go to the toilet, you may find your bag stolen or even books” (P1).

Theft was one of the forms of violence common at Prince Edward School. In the literature review section 2.2, (Chabangu 2014:61) cited examples of perceived characteristics of safe schools such as the physical characteristics and safety features that are tangible and visible (e.g. security cameras) located in or around schools and designed to increase physical safety. It is the duty of students to make sure their belongings are safe and it is also the teachers’ duty to make sure students and their belongings are safe. This can be done by holding thieves accountable for their own behaviour and by installing security features that could keep the belongings safe.

The rate at which learners were repeatedly victimised was more pronounced in the case of threats of violence and assaults as indicated in the literature review section 2.4 (Burton and Leoschurt 2012:8). The emerging pattern from the data collected shows that urban boys' school students experience bullying threats.

This school should just be called bullying academy because we are being bullied every day and the bullies take advantage of the fact that they are seniors. Senior students force us to carry their bags and to help them with their punishments. I remember when I was in form one, there was a senior student who was pruning school shrubs as a punishment, he saw me walking pass by, he called me and said what are you doing outside when others are learning, it means you don't like school, so come and join me in this work, I had to go because he was wearing a very serious face (P1).

Although this is a serious concern, the greater source of fear and insecurity among learners is mostly related to poor security and lack of staff monitoring around the school environment thus the absence of the lack of active security guards in the schools. The issue of security in schools should be included in the constitution so then teachers and other staff will take that issue as a serious matter.

The conclusion that schools are increasingly seen as dangerous environments for teachers and students is apparent from the fact that the morale of the learners has been reported to be extremely low and learners have little hope about school violence prevention. Participants described their lack of safety as they reported that:

On my way to school one day, I was attacked by two boys with knives when I was alleged suspected of using an expensive cell phone and some cash. We are not safe in class, we are not safe in school, and we are also not safe on our way to school. Up to when are we going to stay unsafe like this (P1)?

Situations in schools need to be treated with urgency otherwise there will be loss of lives and property.

The majority of participants expressed a slightly more pessimistic view that urban boys' schools should receive effective violence-preventive measures in Harare. Participants expressed their fear and worry as follows:

It is extremely difficult to live your dream at school, because drugs and alcohol are also sold in the classrooms by our very own friends, there is a lot of drinking in classrooms, students abuse each other on daily basis. Something really has to be done before it is too late (P4).

This learner and many others are exposed to illegal and dangerous drugs that are harmful and may perpetuate violence in schools. This situation should be bad enough to capture the attention of both the parents and the Ministry of Education to treat it as an emergency, otherwise the future of our society is in danger.

In the literature review section 2.4, SACE (2011:11) indicated that when examining the actual physical context of the school, reports indicated that there were certain areas in and around schools that increased learners' likelihood of being victims of violence. Travelling to and from school also manifests itself as a high-risk activity. Respondents confirmed this as they highlighted that,

We are also victimised on our way to and from school by street kids and other learners. Sports fields is another place where seniors take advantage of us in the name of seniority and also because there is no staff supervision during sports time (P3).

School management should always make sure that there is at least one teacher/instructor on the sports field during sports time to avoid misbehaviour that threatens other children.

Ideally, teachers, parents and students should work together to create peer relationships that work at school to ensure that interactions are courteous and kind, at the same time should focus on learning and building academic skills. People should say what they really mean and listen openly to others' perspectives and students should provide constructive criticism and be receptive to feedback. With such an environment, the classroom is welcoming, focused on academics, filled with laughter,

challenging tasks, hard work, and mutual satisfaction and respect (Furrer *et al.*, 2014:101). Having acquired this, peaceful classroom, high academic achievement is almost guaranteed.

5.3.4 Lack of parental guidance

The premise presented throughout the study is that schools reflect what is happening within the home and community. To improve the situation in schools, it is necessary that parents and school management teams co-operate with governing bodies to design programmes that reduce all the major forms of violence. Such an attempt should involve for example equipping the learners with the necessary skills to be able to assert themselves in cases of emotional harassment, victimisation, hate speech and intimidation, as indicated in the literature review section 2.2 (Prinsloo 2011:18).

Parents should take their time to mentor their children into becoming socially-responsible people. In view of the above, participants expressed their feelings as follows:

Families should not be seen as jungle of wars, but should be seen as places of character building to the children. Some of us we expect to be at peace in schools because at home parents are always fighting and arguing but however, we are as well being bullied in this school (P8).

It is very important that families display socially acceptable behaviour knowing that children are imitating them as their role models.

Looking at the extent of support from parents, participants responded that:

The role our parents are playing is clearly showing lack of love, affection, appropriate support and guidance. Sometimes we forgive them because they will be under the influence of drugs. From my experience at home, the way my step father treats my mother is very bad. After school I want to be an activist who represent women but

sometimes I feel like beating that man to death because he beats my mother like a baby (P3).

This response reveals that parents are not yet ready to embrace the vision to build an ethical and moral community and a mission to promote positive values. Data suggested that parents should always be there for their children, to give them necessary support, because in times of difficulties students really do not know where to go and from whom they should ask for help. What is sad about violent attitudes is that instead of studying at school, children are learning things that are extremely bad for them as well as for the whole society.

Mtsweni (2008:27) has shown that the development of the necessary personal controls serves a number of particular functions in the growth process of learners on their way towards responsible adulthood. In order to understand what occurs within the school environment, one needs to have a clear picture of what occurs within each of the other spheres.

Family is the first point of departure for such analysis. Participants highlighted that:

It is easy for boys to carry along dangerous weapons to the school premises, because of lack of parental supervision. Some students go beyond to the extent of selling drugs and bring beer to school, parents should try at least to do regular check of their children's bags and uniform pockets (P7).

Participants are aware of the important role played by parents in the discipline of their children. It should, however, be noted that violence at school was often not a one-off encounter. The duty to care is comparable to the degree of care that a diligent father would show towards his family. Some participants suggested that fathers should fulfil their crucial role of a positive father figure, providing good rather than a bad example.

Findings suggest that parents should avoid the use of illegal drugs publicly and encourage children to practise abstinence from alcohol abuse and premarital sexual relationships. Participants indicated that,

Whenever my dad is high (under the influence of drugs) he is so confident that he can even walk naked. He can do anything and we are always happy at home when he is drunk. For me I take drugs especially when I am presenting in front of the class to gain more confidence. (P4).

Because children (such as teenagers) grow up by imitating what their parents are practising, it is important to guide them in the right direction. These findings have profound implications for the development of pro-social attitudes and behaviour in teenagers who are at Prince Edward School. It is from their parents –followed by siblings and peers – that young people growing up are most likely to learn acceptable behaviour.

In the Literature review (section 2.4), Burton and Leoschurt (2012:4) point out that a trusting relationship between peers and adults can serve as a strong protective or resilient factor for young people against violence, particularly those growing up in adverse circumstances. Parental involvement should be one of the critical issues to be interrogated when it comes to considering the cause of many of the violent incidents occurring in schools. In this regard, participants indicated that,

I am always late to school because my father orders me to water the lawn before I leave for school. He claims that it is because he wants me to be a responsible somebody when I grow up. However, this act is causing me to get tired before I even start classes and sometimes I sleep in classroom because I will be tired (P1).

The investigation unambiguously established that some parents were operating outside the parameters of their custodianships at the expense of their children.

School management has the power to modify the social order. Knowledge of rights constitutes a guarantee of doing right. This implies that through their possession of financial power, parents see the opportunity from which they can benefit at the expense of their desperate children.

According to Van Brenda (2010:260), up to 11 per cent of families in African countries are child headed. Participants confirmed that notion as they indicated that some of the learners come from child-headed families:

My parents passed on in 2012 and my aunt in United States of America is now our new official guardian so I stay with my little siblings at home. My aunt sends money and everything that we may need. It is good because we are free to do whatever we want, however, sometimes the situation becomes unbearable for me especially when one of my sibling gets sick. Of course the maid is there but sometimes it is not enough (P1).

This leads children to a breakdown in moral standards. Many learners are likely to display antisocial behaviour that eventually leads them into violence because of stress and the burden of responsibility, or even because of the lack of parental figures in their lives.

Regarding the question of how they would respond, for instance, if a friend or a parent advised them to sell drugs within the school premises, one participant responded:

If my friend ask me to sell drugs, I can agree to the advice, because sometimes my father doesn't give me any pocket money, he feels giving me is spoiling me but everyone at school brings money for lunch that's why sometimes I steal from his wallet when he is bathing (P3).

It is the responsibility of parents to provide for their children to avoid them from indulging in antisocial activities such as selling drugs.

It was mentioned in the literature review section 2.4 (Burton and Leoschurt 2012:55) that parents are key role players in the success of every learner and cannot be left out in the fight against school violence. It was mentioned by participants that it is sad that parents are sending children to school for studies, but their children are becoming part of school violence. However, no parent wants to believe that the child he or she raises would be capable of inflicting harm on another human being.

Sometimes we feel that parents are becoming active catalysts of misbehaviour to children as they are continuously adopting laissez-faire parenting method where they think children are old enough to make the correct decisions if they are 16 years and above.

It's the duty of parents to mould their children to be dignified people so that they will not cause chaos in schools, disturbing others who come there to study and to become better people in the future.

5.3.5 Teacher behavior

In the literature review section 2.4, Magasia and Sugut (2014:125) say that it is common knowledge that the role of teachers in schools is to teach. It is worth noting that the kind of teaching and behaviour that teachers demonstrate can either generate or hinder violence in the same schools. In the same section, Mncube and Harber (2013:24) added that for better or for worse, teachers are role models, thus male teachers act as role models for male learners. Therefore, by being involved in violence, male teachers are actively encouraging their male learners to behave in a similar manner.

It was clearly mentioned by participants that teachers and other academic staff were more negative as role models who did not care or support the students,

Sometimes we become more violent at school because instead of giving us guidance and support, teachers and prefects are busy beating and physically punishing us during the school time. Every day we live in fear, instead of respecting our teachers and prefects, we fear them P10.

This statement is also evidence of the existence of corporal punishment at Prince Edward School. In this regard, during my time at Prince Edward, I witnessed students being beaten for behaviour as silly as arguing with the prefect. I had to ask the teacher indirectly and he confidently responded,

The only way to ensure boys behave is through thorough beating, otherwise they will become wild animals. You do not really understand how these boys behave, if you do not beat them then you are destroying their future, they need to be moulded into accountable citizens only through beating them (P5).

In future, teachers should also be taught about the negative effects of physical and corporal punishment on children.

Teachers as well are conducting themselves irresponsibly. Their actions suggest that learners' time for effective teaching and learning is being compromised by teachers doing some other personal businesses. Section 2.4 discusses how ineffective and inconsistent measures to discipline learners are a contributing element to overt aggressive behaviour, sometimes contributing to higher alcohol consumption, which eventually leads to loss of respect from both learners and teachers. Participants commented that,

It's so embarrassing that the teacher is not in class but when he comes back he just beats students for no apparent reason that's why sometimes we misbehave because if you behave you are beaten and if you misbehave you are also beaten (P1).

Adding to that, participants also highlighted that,

Some students are friends with teachers and they do whatever they want, they are not beaten and they are never on punishment" (P4).

Regarding these scenarios, it is clear that teachers are not living up to their code of conduct and this creates more loopholes for the misbehaviour of students. Therefore, it is very important that teachers review their reasons and consistency of discipline so that students will not be disadvantaged.

In section 2.5, research shows that school leadership and a positive school climate can influence feelings of safety for both students and teachers regardless of academic success and neighbourhood characteristics (Bosworth, Ford and Hernandez 2011:198). It is the duty of the school authority to curb the problem of alcohol

consumption on the school premises. Participants also showed their concern in the following statement:

Alcohol and drug abuse is one of our major concerns in our school, in some cases teachers are sending learners to buy liquor for them and then drink together. This is even common with security guards who share cigarettes with students. Sometimes students do this because they do not want to be reported to the management” (P4).

With intent to generate more money, tavern owners sell liquor to children younger than 18, regardless of gender. It is clear that liquor traders do not follow the liquor laws. Participants also claimed that,

When we are on trips, we use to drink alcohol with the teachers, because they buy for us” (P6).

From all this information, it can be concluded that teachers are on the frontline in perpetuating school violence. Therefore it is the responsibility of the Ministry of Education to examine the behavior of teachers before they hire them and to closely monitor them when they are in schools.

It is evidenced from the findings that there are many causes of conflict and violence at Prince Edward School. The most common causes included the drug and alcohol abuse where drugs and alcohol are easily accessible to students from the streets and even from their friends. Peer pressure was also identified as a major cause for violence where student become violent so as to identify with their friends who are violent.

Parental behavior is another cause of concern. Students are abusing alcohol and are involved in fights because they imitate the behaviour that is modelled by their parents at home. Teacher behaviour was also mentioned as one of the most serious cause of violence. Teachers drink alcohol with students and they also beat and punish children in some cases without any tangible reason which also contribute to violence at Prince Edward School. Lastly, poor security was also a cause of violence inside the school from external individuals.

5.4 Effects of conflict and violence at Prince Edward and Cranborne School

The end results of school-based violence manifests itself through school-dropout rates and in a reluctance to attend school because of fear and academic underperformance (Bhana 2013:44). Participants sadly complained that,

I never enjoyed learning in this school because I am always in fear of what's next. The first day I came to this school a student was slapped on the face by another student, after some weeks my bag was stolen on the sports field and I had no one to report to because there were no teachers or instructors in the fields"

This alone gives evidence that our children are very insecure in schools and can lead to them not concentrating on their school work but rather on their personal security.

In the literature review (section 2.5), Burton and Leoschurt (2012:106) noted that in South Africa, students are experiencing victimisation and perpetrating aggression (e.g. relational, verbal, or physical) in peer contexts are positively linked to difficulties relating to academic achievement and adjustment.

Sometimes teachers complain that we are failing but they are the ones who waste our learning time with punishments both corporal and physical in most cases for silly reasons" complained participants.

Instead of students spending their time in classes doing their school work, students are given physical punishments. Sometimes students spend half of their school time outside doing punishment, therefore, losing some important lesson-time leading to poor academic achievement (Miller 2010:7). Participants furiously said,

Our parents are paying a lot of money for us to go to school to learn and build confidence but because of one silly teacher we waist that time as we do unending punishments. The punishments are just too much, I wish some teachers could be transferred from our school (P3).

This participant almost cried and suddenly left the room. That caused an emotional and it brought about a very tense atmosphere in the discussion room. It actually shows that students are being emotionally affected by conflict and violence in schools.

In 2012, one of the students at Prince Edward was found floating in the swimming pool dead. News reporter Matambanadzo (2012:1) argued that bullying need to be eradicated and the Ministry of Education should be at the forefront in ensuring complete eradication. Participants commented on that this as he said

In previous years, there were several records of deaths as a result of school violence here at Prince Edward, there was one resulted from bullying where the head boy was found in the swimming dead in the swimming pool. This worries us a lot because after all the incidences, nothing has been done, our main fear is that, who is the next one to be attacked (P8).

Doctors who did the post-mortem confirmed that death could have been as a result of attacks by other students, following previous cases reported. This shows that violence in Zimbabwean schools still needs more attention. This was one of the extreme cases of bullying that happened at Prince Edward School but what worries the researcher most is that nothing was really done about it, at least to reduce future occurrences.

Few participants supported the use of corporal punishment. One participant argued that,

If done for good reasons corporal punishment yield best results because we will always obey in fear of being beaten but however teachers must beat us with caution and where necessary” (P7).

This was supported by another participant who said,

We have seen people improving their behaviours and attitudes and adhering to school rules and regulations because of corporal and physical punishment” (P1).

Students believe that conflict and violence have a negative impact on students' personal developments and academic achievement. The participants were not really participating in this issue. This could mean the effects were too emotional or they did not know them. It is the duty of the parents, the Ministry of Education, teachers and the students to work together to fight this problem and to eradicate its negative consequences.

5.5 Existing and proposed measures to reduce conflict and violence in schools

It is the principal's responsibility to ensure that the learners' rights to a safe school environment are realised. The findings suggest that it is perhaps in the family sphere that the key solution lies and that, in order to address efficiently the issue of young people engaging in violence within the school environment, this is where much of the intervention work should be targeted rather than at schools themselves. However, the school sphere must not be left out in an endeavour to reduce conflict and violence in schools.

It is the responsibility of the school to use school funds to install security measures to ensure learner safety. The empirical investigation revealed that schools without access to control systems pose a serious threat to the safety of learners and teachers. It follows that learner safety should be a priority to schools in the Harare Province. The high percentage of participants who reported an increase of access to drugs at school suggests the need for comprehensive action by both the school authorities and the Ministry of Education.

While situational prevention or target-hardening (that is, increasing security around a school including security fencing, security gates alarm system, security guarding and metal detectors) do not at any level address the causes of violence within the school, they do make it more difficult, however, for the learners who bring drugs and weapons to school, by not having these security measures in place, they could be aggravating the intensity of the violence that occurs within the school environment.

It was indicated that, in order to intensify security and prevent free access to the school premises, security gates should always be kept closed. Respondents echoed their concern this way,

At least gates should be closed or the security should stand on the gate rather than seating and doing WhatsApp" (P8).

The interviews revealed that some school lights were not functional and this provided enough opportunity for naughty boys to break into school property and steal valuable assets such as computers and textbooks.

Some classrooms do not have bulbs so students use those when they smoke or misbehave (P6).

In this regard, alarm systems around sensitive areas of the school should be installed to reduce breaking school property. Burton and Leoschurt (2012:106) recommend that school-based interventions should place additional emphasis on generating awareness that violence and bullying is not the norm but that it is unacceptable, and will not be tolerated.

It is evident from the participants' responses and from the observations conducted, that schools are operating with lazy and idle security guards. One student pointed out that,

Security guards are there by the gates but they are very busy on their cellphones, sometimes cars that wants to enter the gates hoot for them to open, what about pedestrians, worse."

The safety of learners is compromised and the school authorities do not treat safety as a priority. Not only the safety of learners is a significant concern to the communities, but also the safety of the school properties is at stake because criminals have free access to the school premises.

The school-management team has a responsibility for hiring a security man who will accept accountability for access control into the school. Participants highlighted that:

I expect that searches for dangerous weapons and drug substances be conducted at the gate and in the classrooms to avoid violent behaviour stimulated by the influence of drugs" (P1).

This can be the first step in preventing violence in schools. Therefore, if there are no drugs and alcohol violence reduction is almost guaranteed. The well-being of learners

and teachers in schools depends on the availability and effectiveness of access control systems.

One of the interventions suggested was a discipline handbook. Participants explained that,

We need the school rules and regulations written down to avoid unfair and inconsistent discipline” (P4).

In this research, I found that the discipline handbook was never used for infractions and the administration was reluctant to take strict actions for fear of victimisation. This was not consistent across the research sites. At Cranborne schools, I found that learners who committed serious violent acts were already suspended. Regarding this scenario, however, the study had no interest in knowing who was responsible, for suspending learners from the school. However, participants raised the concern that school authorities were constantly shifting their problems from one school to another without dealing with the root cause of the problem.

The main form of violence that was highlighted by participants at Prince Edward High School was corporal punishment and bullying, with bullying experienced by most students on a daily basis. There was a need to design and implement a programme to reduce bullying at this school. We agreed with participants that we have to design an anti-bullying intervention. However, school authorities did not permit us to have the campaign.

The school argued that the campaign would destroy the culture of respect between seniors and junior students. The management also added that bullying is part of growing up and their students are comfortable with it so there is no need to have a campaign at their school. With my knowledge of the Zimbabwean culture, if the authorities say no and you keep persisting, everything turns political and this can possibly cause more problems and, possibly more violence.

I had to look for a best possible alternative. I went to another boys' school next to Prince Edward with the hope that students share the same backgrounds since they come from the same community. I had an informal discussion about violence in schools with students before I approached the management. Students also highlighted that bullying was the main form of violence at Cranborne High School. Fortunately, after presenting my consent forms, the authorities gave me permission to do the antibullying campaign.

5.6 Summary

The most common form of violence in this school is bullying, which is mostly caused by the influence of drugs and alcohol, and corporal punishment. Teachers, Ministry of Education, communities, students and parents have a duty to fulfil in the process of reducing conflict and violence in schools. It is very important that these stakeholders value the importance of safety in school so as to create safe environments conducive to academic achievement and personal growth. The main findings of the study were

- Bullying and corporal punishment are the main forms of violence at this school;
- Common causes of conflict and violence at Prince Edward are drug and alcohol abuse and peer-pressure
- Conflict and violence has resulted in fear and poor academic achievement among student; and
- Little has been done in response to conflict and violence at this school

This chapter discussed the findings of the exploration component of the study. The following chapter (chapter six) will describe the intervention that was put in place by both the researcher and the participant to curb the problem of conflict and violence at Prince Edward School.

CHAPTER SIX: ANTI-BULLYING CAMPAIGN WITH CRANBORNE BOYS

6.1 Introduction

The previous chapter discussed and analysed findings from the focus-group discussions, interviews and observations held. This chapter describes the anti-bullying campaign that was put in place to encourage students not to be bullies and also to create the culture of respect in schools.

6.2 Selection of participants

The campaign was designed and implemented at Cranborne School. A sample of ten students was selected as the action team for the anti-bullying campaign. The participants were purposively selected according to their known experiences of bullying. I was helped by their teacher who knew them better. However, students were asked if they wanted to participate, so no one was forced. They willingly participated.

The selected participants were students with ages ranging from 14-15 who had been involved in bullying, either as perpetrators or as victims of bullying at Cranborne High School. This age group was suitable for the campaign because they had had enough time in the school to understand and experience bullying, at the same time, they were old enough to influence others to practise non-violence in the journey of creating a peaceful school.

The action team only included boys because Cranborne is an all-boys school. The management assigned one teacher to assist us throughout the programme, the sports master, who also acted as a director of student affairs. He selected the ten students for me, according to the characteristics that I had described to him.

6.3 The campaign

The anti-bullying campaign lasted for five days and each day was two-hours long. It started on the 27th of February, 2017, to the 10th of March, 2017. We did not do it on consecutive days because of some programmes at school and the weekend. We had our meetings from 14h00 – 16h00 every meeting day. We agreed on this time because we did not want to deprive participants' learning, therefore, we met after classes. The meetings took place in one of the classrooms that was not in use at those times. The details and topics covered are given below:

1. Focus-group discussion on the nature, causes and consequences of bullying and the current measures that have been put in place to reduce bullying at Cranborne High School;
2. Participants telling stories of their experiences with bullying at this school'
3. Discussions of those experiences and then deciding on what could be done to deal with this problem.
4. Plan- action.
5. Implementation of the campaign.

The following table presents the concurrence of events during the anti-bullying campaign from the initial stage of discussion which was done to get the insight to the last stage of implementation of the campaign on the 10th of March 2017.

Table 1: Concurrence of events

Date	Event	Description
24 Feb 2017	Focus group discussion	Discussion on the general nature, causes, consequences of conflict and violence at Cranborne High School and also the mechanisms that have been put in place to reduce that conflict.

27 Feb 2017	Telling the stories of bullying	Participants were given a chance to write down their experiences of bullying, what happened, who was involved and how they felt.
28 Feb 2017	Discussion of those stories.	After reading each article aloud, participants were given a chance to say what they thought was the cause and/or consequence of each scenario. This was done to deepen the participants' understanding of bullying. Participants and the researcher also discussed the ways and means that could be used to reduce cases of bullying and to create peaceful schools.
06 March 2017	Planning and preparation of the campaign	Participants agreed to design catchy messages to create awareness of the negative effects of bullying and the importance of respecting each other at school. Participants presented their messages and pictures on paper and then exchanged these with each other for editing purposes and then the messages were presented on posters to increase visibility on the day of campaign.
10 March 2017	Actual campaign (Anti-bullying walk)	Participants walked around with their posters before classes started, at breaks and at lunch time to create awareness of the negative effects of bullying and the importance of the culture of respect at school. Thereafter students were allowed to stick their posters up in the library where everyone could see them.

6.3.1 Session one: Focus-group discussion

I started with a focus group discussion on the nature, causes and consequences of conflict and violence at Cranborne High School and the current mechanisms that have been put in place to reduce this problem. We opened the session with acknowledging God as the author of peace through prayer (1 Corinthians, 14:33). After prayer, I explained the objectives of the campaign and how we were going to achieve these objectives that the group would discuss. Participants were given the opportunity to ask questions concerning the campaign. I allowed participants to establish campaign rules. The rules included confidentiality, truthfulness and honesty, and that no answer is wrong, no pictures, no laughing at others. The meaning of critical words like bullying, anti-bullying, culture of respect and peaceful classrooms were explained.

I frequently reminded the participants that the overall aim of the campaign was to create a peaceful school with a culture of respect by encouraging students not to be bullies. Participants were eager to know how they were going to benefit from my research. I explained that there were no monetary rewards for participating, but that they were going to learn how to create a peaceful school with a culture of respect. This would be their way of giving back to the community. After the explanation, participants were relaxed and ready to participate.

Participants mentioned that the common nature of violence they experienced was corporal punishment and bullying. There were no cases of gender or sexual violence mentioned by participants perhaps because it's an all-boys school. Bullying was mentioned as an escalating form of violence at this school. Students, especially seniors, and the energetic ones have a tendency to exercise power over other students who are younger and/weaker and unable to defend themselves. This notion has been supported by Isidiho (2009:20) who highlighted that a power imbalance is the main cause of bullying dynamics. Participants indicated that boys have a tendency to misbehave and to bullying one another. That's why corporal and physical punishment were the most prevalent.

On asking them what they think were the causes of violence, participants indicated that corporal and physical punishment was administered in various situation. For example, when students fail a test, when they are late for school, for not doing homework or even for making a noise in class. Bullying was said to be experienced because of seniority and different masculine traits in students. Participants also mentioned that children who are exposed to bullying by parents are more likely to bully other students at school. Drug and alcohol-abuse was also mentioned as causes of bullying because students under the influence of drugs tend to bully others.

A lot was said by participants about the effects of violence in schools, including compromised academic achievements, low self-esteem, and injury, hospitalisation, lack of confidence, fear and disliking of school.

Currently, there is close monitoring of classes by both teachers and prefects. There are also class monitors to ensure students behave in the absence of prefects and teachers. There are also rules and regulations that govern behaviour at this school.

Creswell (2014:202) is of the opinion that, when researchers provide detailed descriptions of the setting for example, or offer many perspectives about a theme, the results become more realistic and richer. In this study, the responses from the participants are given in their own words and what transpired during the course of the programme is highlighted and the different exercises which were done are stated.

Direct quotes from the participants were also included in my dissertation (italicised). Seeing the emotions and expressions of the participants, the possibility that they were lying is very limited as we encouraged honesty with them and they were able to share their experiences voluntarily. However, the way participants described their relationship with their peers, there could also be a possibility that they could exaggerate. The activities list and discussions are to be found in the appendix.

6.3.2 Session Two: Participants tell their stories of bullying

We sat in a circle in the classroom to show that everyone had an equal contribution to make to the discussion. We opened the session with a prayer. Students were given a chance to choose either to present or to write their bullying experiences on a piece of paper. However, students did not agree to tell their stories. Instead they agreed to write down their experiences of bullying at school, even though we had agreed on a hundred per cent confidentiality. This was an advantage to me because, on paper, we can read and re-read as the need arises for discussion purposes.

I gave all the participants pieces of papers and a pen to write down their experiences of bullying. During the time they were writing their stories, I observed that some students actually expressed negative emotions on their faces which could suggest that the experience was very bad and they were deeply hurt. The room was very quiet and everyone was trying to express their experience in a way that is understood. In about 45 minutes, everyone was done and the researcher collected the papers. I collected the papers myself because I did not want any participant to look at other people's experiences.

We ended the session with the toothpaste activity to ease up the situation. I asked for a volunteer participant to come to the centre of the circle and place a strip of masking tape on the length of the table. With a tube of toothpaste, I have the volunteer to run a bead of toothpaste on the length of the masking tape. Now I asked another volunteer-participant to put the toothpaste back in the tube. Obviously, it could not be done. This is an example of how hurtful words/behaviour once spoken/displayed cannot be taken back. Bullies say hurtful words frequently and they need to know the impact that their words have on their victims.

6.3.3 Session Three: Discussion of the experiences

This session lasted for about two hours. Students liked these sessions when I told them that I was doing a Masters' degree because they really wanted to know what it takes to get to Masters. We opened the session with a prayer again. I gave a recap of what we did the previous day and that we are continuing from where we left off. I reminded participants on the objective of the campaign and how they will benefit from it. The researcher read aloud each story separately. I read the stories. After each story, participants and the researcher discussed the nature, causes and the consequences of different experiences in different scenarios given.

One of the participants indicated that he was forced to pay fifty cents to get into the toilet by a form four student. We agreed that this was bullying and that it was the result of the issue of seniority where lower level students are forced to take orders from their seniors as a sign of respect. This was said to cause students to dislike school and live in fear during their time at school.

Because of limited length of the chapter, I could not present all the stories that we discussed throughout the session. I chose two stories that basically covers the common issues of bullying. Below are the two stories that were written by two participants. The following scenarios are presented to show how we discussed the experiences of different participants:

I am huge and I have a very big stomach. When I first came to the school, no one wanted to be friends with me. They gave me the name "dumbuzenene" meaning a young termite with a big tummy and a small head. I took it like that because it's true I am huge. During sports time, sport captains could call me to their different disciplines, just to laugh at me when I fail to be active like others. Honestly I did not like this name but because even teachers could call me like that, I had no way out. I felt out of place every time I am called with that name. I even thought of lying to my parents so that they change my school but as time goes, I came to terms with that. Its three years

now, I care no more, I have begin to live a happy life at school despite the name (Participant 2017).

Participants agreed that this boy was bullied because of his size. As he mentioned, this bullying caused him to dislike school, to live in fear and to be psychologically traumatised. Some participants thought that the person who said that was under the influence of drugs. It was highlighted that this incident may cause the boy to fail in class because he is not happy. The student did not have anyone to report to because even the teachers were part of the bullying. I feel teachers are there to protect children from bullying by not using nicknames to refer to children at school.

The other story that really caught my attention was presented by one participant. It should be known that children have no control over when to start school but parents do. The story was presented as follows:

My first month at school was horrible. We were give a class teacher who started with taking down our personal details. That's when the problem started. I was 2 years older than my classmates but I almost the smallest in size. One day, one of my loud classmates stood in front of the class to give an announcement that " please guys behave well, we have a senior citizen here," he came to where I was seated and knelt down to say can you kindly go to form threes and join your classmate. I was so embarrassed in the presence of everyone. There after people could push me out of the class, laugh at me, gossip about me and even take my food saying adults don't carry lunchboxes to school. Up to today I have no friend from my class, I became a very quiet person in class (Participant 2017).

Participants agreed this one was bullied because of his age and size as well. The result of this was that the boy became lonely. This also caused the boy not have friends in class. This indirectly contributed to his poor performance in class and also to dislike that class and school. Participants agree that this issue is too minor to report to the police or to the teacher.

This issue sounds minor, but it has caused major negative effects on the psychological being and academic achievement of children in schools. Participants also suggested that the perpetrators of this bullying must be punished for such behaviour and it should be made compulsory that students are made aware of the impact of their behaviour on other students. At last we agreed that, in most cases, students don't really understand the impact of their behaviour and actions on their peers or their juniors. It is very important that children are made aware of these negative effects of their words and action and they should be constantly reminded of them.

After all the stories have been discussed, the group agreed that all those papers be destroyed and put in a bin as a sign to show that such scenarios should never happen in the future. They argue that this would relieve them and it would guarantee confidentiality. I squashed the papers into the bin as per our agreement.

On asking them about the sessions that we had, they highlighted that they have been enlightened and they are ready to stand up against bullying and victimisation from students at Cranborne High School. This statement was actually to my advantage as a researcher. From this I had an opportunity of asking them on how best they think they will achieve that. We agreed that we can inform other students as to the negative impact of bullying and the importance of creating and maintaining peace in classrooms.

6.3.4 Planning an action

The researcher and the action team agreed that it is important to create awareness among students of the negative effects of bullying and the importance of respecting one another at school. I asked the participants exactly how they wanted to create the awareness or to inform others. Some wanted to present poems, some to act a drama, some were thinking of displaying posters and messages.

Because we had no time to prepare drama and poems, we agreed that we could draw posters and messages for the school. The other reason why we turned down the idea of drama and poems was that we had no capacity to gather all the students at once to act out the drama, so with the posters, participants would walk around the school with their messages displayed during break and lunch time so that most students get exposed to the messages.

We agreed that each student should draw a picture that communicates information about bullying, the negative impact of bullying or the importance of respecting one another at school. I provided them with pencils and A4 plain sheets for all their draft presentations. I allowed them to help each other with ideas so everyone was free to walk around seeing other participants' ideas. This was the funniest part of the campaign. You could tell that students have messages at heart but drawing was not their area of specialisation. After the drafts they had to transfer the drawings to A3 posters for distant viewing by the public. They asked for permission to get help from their friends who were better at drawing and I granted it. Some of the drawings showed that the participants were really against bullying.

To reinforce the picture, each student had to create a catchy message about bullying that he wanted to communicate whether it's the negative effects of bullying or the importance of respecting one another at school depending on their personal experiences. Some of the messages included: stop bullying, we say no to bullying, bullying is a crime, let us love one another, let's respect one another, bullying is abuse, bullying can cause death and much more.

After writing down the messages, students exchanged their papers for editing, views and comments. I told them to ask about anything that they were not sure of. We also had an opportunity to discuss what we were going to do on the day. After that, I collected all the posters from the participants and kept them in the assigned teacher's office.

6.3.5 Implementation of action

On Friday the 10th of March, 2017 we had our campaign. Participants came a little bit earlier to school and collected their posters from the office. They divided themselves into two groups and stood at the two main entrances with their posters informing their peers, their teachers and all the staff about the negative effects of bullying and the importance of creating a culture of respect in schools. Participants stood at the entrance for about 30 minutes before classes officially began. Unfortunately, we were not allowed to wear our printed t-shirts because the principal argued that we could only wear t-shirts on sports days not on any other day, so participants were in their school uniforms.

At break time, some participants stood by the exit of the schoolyard and others went to the school tuckshop displaying their posters. This was done to create awareness to the students who were late and those who had not been exposed to the message before classes. For the students who had first been exposed to the messages, getting exposed for the second time meant reinforcement of the message.

At lunch time, we repeated the same action, some participants on the main exits and some at the tuckshop and some just walking around the schoolyard with their posters. This time, students could come closer to the participants to read the posters. This shows that students were gaining interest in knowing more about bullying. To the action team, students seeking information about bullying was the first step towards the creation of a peaceful school with a culture of respect. Students were actually asking the participants questions about bullying.

Fortunately enough we previously had had an in-depth discussion about bullying, its nature, causes and consequences. Thus students were able to answer the questions according to their personal understanding of bullying. This made the campaign more interesting because you could see participants crowded by students discussing

bullying. I was interested in the way the participants were confident in the discussion on bullying with their peers.

After school we did not have a chance to walk around school because all students were supposed to leave school a little bit earlier. Therefore, I could not hold the participants longer since they had done a brilliant job. The students just displayed their posters going to the library where we were given the opportunity to stick our posters up so that students will be reminded about the importance of creating a culture of respect at school.

Creating awareness about bullying, its negative effects and the ways that can be used to reduce it so as to create a culture of respect in schools was a major step up the ladder of creating a peaceful school. This campaign benefited the participants and all the students at large. Now students might decide not to bully, but respect others, thus ensuring a peaceful school. I accept that older students are harder to teach, but since it appears that bullying is the main form of violence and that senior students are the main perpetrators, we considered it as another option to expose anti-bullying messages to both senior and junior students. Senior students were not part of the action team. By exposing the message to senior students, the aim was to encourage them to respect one another and mainly to stop them from bullying and victimising others. By exposing the message to the juniors, the aim was to encourage them to respect one another and to encourage them to decide not to bully others now and when they become seniors. These aims gave us an opportunity to expose all students to the message of bullying.

6.4 Limitation

No formal evaluation of the outcome was carried out so we don't know if their action would result in other students and staff reconsidering their involvement in bullying and their tolerance of it. Its greatest impact may have been on the ten students themselves. The other limitation of this campaign is that the long-term impact of my programme is

not known since it was a one-day programme. However, the action team may be impacted because they had more than 10 hours of discussion about bullying.

It is very difficult to conclude that after the programme the participants changed their behaviour and attitude as people do not change in such a short time. Change is not an event, but rather a process that can take years. This is in line with Salomon (2013,:4), who asserts that short-term interventions usually yield only short term effects and that a researcher should never be satisfied with measures taken only in a short period. In order to evaluate the impact of the programme to society, more time is needed with the participants.

6.5 Reflection

As a researcher, I learnt a lot of things about conflict and violence in schools. I also learnt a lot of things about myself throughout the study. I learnt the importance of being patient. Throughout my working and association with children, I realised that sometimes you have to stretch your patience because children, in some cases, behave immaturely therefore, if you are not patient enough, you will end up beating them up or punishing or even assaulting them, thus causing violence.

By listening to the participants and by listening to their stories, I learnt that it's a milestone towards their healing and forgiveness. It is always good to listen to both parties so that when you advise them, they will also listen to you.

When doing research, it is always important to empathise with the participants and to be able to put yourself in their shoes so that you work together with them and advise them according to the different situations that they find themselves in. I also learnt that there is a very good feeling attached to helping communities. After completing my action research with these children, I felt so good that I have helped my community that I have become responsible in my own society.

All said and done, I learnt a lot of things about action research. There are two major determinants of action research. These include the willingness of participants and also the willingness of the authorities to co-operate. For example, in my case, participants were willing to participate, but the authorities were not so willing. This made my life so difficult in my implementation of action research. As long as the idea benefits all the involved stakeholders, that is, the researcher, the participants and the targeted public, there is no option other than to revert to the idea.

My idea after the data collection was to train participants in non-violent ways of resolving conflict and then design and implement an anti-bullying campaign with the trained participants. However, I had to be flexible enough to do the training and stop there because the responsible staff did not welcome the idea of the anti-bullying campaign.

From my experience with participants throughout the process, I felt there was need for an anti-bullying campaign. After the denial of the idea of anti-bullying campaign idea by the principal, I still felt that I could not leave without emancipating the students from bullying.

Failure to implement an anti-bullying campaign at Prince Edward Boys School did not mean that I was a complete failure as a researcher. I had to be open-minded enough to at least look for a school with similar characteristics as Prince Edward in terms of the nature, causes and consequences of violence. Cranborne Boys, a neighbouring school to Prince Edward, became my second option. Students from both schools are from the same community and are likely to face the same form of violence. At Cranborne I could see a bit of light at the end of the tunnel because the staff there really welcomed the initiative. This experience became my food for the journey. I learnt the importance of being open-minded and to accept different situations as they are, although some can be very expensive to the extent of resulting in me failing my masters like this one.

It is important that children are informed about the importance of loving and respecting one another in schools to avoid issues such as bullying. It is also crucial that those who experienced conflict and violence and are in charge of school programmes take it seriously because some students are seriously abused by their peers in schools. This could result in students disliking school and result in the escalation of failure in schools.

Bullying in schools is like a cancer. It should be treated at a young age otherwise, if it is ignored, it will breed a society of criminals and uneducated people. I came across students who have been bullied to the extent that they were forced to pay for the school toilet. This did not go well with me. I feel indebted and, given the chance, I would go back to Prince Edward School for my PHD to at least design a curriculum-module on how to create peaceful schools in Zimbabwe.

Research gave me an insight into the fact that bullying is rampant in single-sex schools, especially boys' schools and more still needs to be done to protect children from bullying and to create a culture of respect in schools. What I realised from the anti-bullying campaign is that bullies are those boys who have been abused at home and then take revenge on juniors and that those who are more confident than others attempt to inflate their confidence by dominating weaker students.

CHAPTER SEVEN: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1 Introduction

The previous chapter (chapter six) described the anti-bullying intervention that was designed and implemented by both the participants and the researcher. This chapter concludes the dissertation and then recommends the way forward to ameliorating the phenomenon. This includes summaries of chapters, aims and objectives in relation to the findings of the study and the self-reflection of the researcher and recommendations for further investigation.

7.2 Summary

Chapter one outlines the background of the study, aims and objectives and organisation of the research. This chapter also reveals that the problem of conflict and violence in schools is increasing, despite the efforts being made by different stakeholders. Violence in schools is on the increase in Zimbabwean schools, especially in urban boys' schools, where no one wants to be labelled a 'coward.' This study focused on students in the belief that students are the most common perpetrators and victims of conflict and violence in schools. Working with students is believed to yield better results in reducing this problem. The chapter also contains the justification for the study. A brief introduction to research methodology, ethical considerations and the contribution of the research to the academic arena was also outlined.

Chapter two reviews the literature that revolves around issues of conflict and violence in schools. This chapter defines the concept of conflict and violence in the school setting. It also discussed the nature, trends, causes, consequences and the current responses to conflict and violence in schools. Corporal punishment and bullying are the main forms of violence in boys' schools. The main causes of conflict and violence

in schools are the lack of professionalism by both teachers and parents, and drug and alcohol abuse.

Conflict and violence in schools have more negative consequences, including death, failure and low self-esteem. Programmes like peace clubs and security guards have been introduced to schools so as to reduce conflict and violence. However, they yielded minimum results because they lack the practical involvement of students who needed to feel part of the programme.

Chapter Three reviewed the literature on restorative justice as an alternative to traditional discipline methods. Restorative justice is defined. Restorative practices including peer mediation, restorative circles and restorative conferences are also discussed. It is important to note that, if parents and teachers use physical or corporal punishment to reduce violence, it should be noted that they are to some extent training their children to be rebellious as violence cannot be reduced by more violence.

It is important that children are taught to build and maintain relationships with their teachers and parents so as to create an environment conducive for high academic achievements. Children must also be taught to love one another and to be accountable for their own behaviour and learn to be able to apologise when necessary.

Chapter four focuses on the research design, methods used to collect data and the selection of interviewees. Interviews, focus-group discussions and observations were conducted in order to understand the views and attitude of students towards conflict and violence in schools. Exploratory and action research were employed in the study. Exploratory design was used to meet objectives one and two and to explore the nature, extent, causes, consequences and the current responses that have been put in place to reduce conflict and violence in schools.

Action-research design was used to meet objective three therefore, to design, implement and evaluate an intervention that helps to reduce conflict and violence in school. Semi-structured interviews, observations and focus group discussions were used to obtain this information. Data was collected from participants aged 13-14 who attended classes at Prince Edward and at Cranborne High School. This chapter also discusses how participants were selected. This research took about two months to complete and then the researcher had to excuse the students for examination preparation. Limitations were also discussed and ethics were also outlined in detail.

Chapter 5 presents and analyses the actual findings from the participants. Conflict and violence is very common in Zimbabwean schools, especially all-boys' schools, but little has been done to address this problem. According to students at Prince Edward and at Cranborne High School, drugs and alcohol are easily accessed in the streets and at school. In some cases students abused alcohol so as to gain more confidence as a result of peer pressure. It was found that drug and alcohol abuse was the common cause of peer violence at this school. It was also highlighted from the results that the common form of violence at this school was bullying and corporal punishment.

Bullying is mostly perpetrated by senior students on juniors in the name of seniority. Participants also expressed the view that they felt unsafe in school and this was disturbing their academic life. Although the students might be protected from external forces, not enough has been done to reduce bullying. Participants recommended that bullying campaigns should also be introduced to reduce bullying in schools. It is important that teachers and students work together to create school environments that are safe for both.

Chapter six reports on the result of putting the actual action into practice. The researcher, together with the participants, designed and implemented an anti-bullying campaign that aimed to reduce the case of bullying and to create a culture of respect in schools. This was done to create awareness in both students and staff about the negative effects of bullying and the importance of loving and respecting one another

in school. Participants were given an opportunity to share their experiences of bullying and then we had a discussion on the nature, causes and consequences of bullying with reference to those scenarios. Participants displayed their ideas concerning bullying on posters and displayed them around the school to create awareness as to the negative effects of bullying and the importance of respecting each other at school. The limitations and validity of the interventions were also highlighted.

Chapter seven concludes the dissertation and presents the recommendations for further study and action. It also gives the summary of the study. This chapter also reflects on the objectives in relation to the findings of the study.

7.3 Objectives and findings

It is very significant to reflect on the research aims and objectives of the study. The aim of this study was to explore the causes of school violence at Prince Edward School and then design, implement and evaluate a restorative-justice intervention to reduce this violence. This was achieved through the following objectives:

Objective 1: Nature, extent, causes and consequences of conflict and violence in schools

From the research, it was evidenced that conflict and violence in boys' schools was a serious issue that intensifies every day. From the research findings, it can be concluded that no single factor can be identified as a cause of conflict and violence in schools as all factors that contribute are interlinked. Drug and alcohol-abuse was mentioned as the main cause of this problem as students can easily access these substances in the streets and even at school. Peer-pressure was also mentioned as a cause of violence where students engage in violence so as to keep up with friends and to avoid being labelled cowards by peers. Inconsistent discipline methods were also mentioned as a cause of conflict and violence as students tend to build grudges

against those who are favoured by teachers therefore, sparking violence in some cases.

According to the participants, the common nature of violence at Prince Edward School is bullying and corporal punishment. Students bully each other at school mostly in the name of seniority where senior students take advantage of juniors. Teachers use corporal punishment even for a slight misbehaviour that could be corrected by word of mouth. Because of fear, this has created an unhealthy relationship between students and their teachers.

It also emerged that religion is taken at face value by parents, especially when it comes to disciplining their children. This religious belief supports the use of corporal punishment of children as a way of reducing misbehaviour, therefore, violating the rights of children.

Objective 2: Current responses to conflict and violence in schools

Very little has been done at Prince Edward and at Cranborne High School to reduce conflict and violence. The schools are fenced. However, school gates are always open during daylight hours, with the security guards who are busy on their cell-phones instead of monitoring those gates. In addition, guidance and counselling was included as a subject. However, it only addresses the theoretical side of reducing violence while practically nothing is being done to reduce violence in the school.

Internally, the school has prefects who are appointed to maintain order and to identify misbehaving students. However, these prefects were mentioned as causing violence by ill-treating other students so that they could get more credit from the authorities.

Objective 3: Designing, implementing and evaluating an intervention to reduce conflict and violence in schools.

From the interviews and focus-group discussions, a number of suggestions were given as possible solutions to the issues of conflict and violence in schools. Most participants were keen on the idea of conferences so as to reach out to more students. Although many suggested conferences, the idea was overridden by the idea of an anti-bullying campaign. I could not implement this at Prince Edward School because the school authorities did not welcome the idea. I then implemented the campaign at Cranborne High School which has similar characteristics to Prince Edward School. There was a great need of an anti-bullying campaign.

We, together with the participants from Cranborne High School, designed an anti-bullying programme where we created awareness about bullying to both students and staff. This was done to increase knowledge for the participants and also to test their understanding during the process. This training programme raised some important issues that were not mentioned in the interviews of focus-group discussions.

7.4 Recommendations

There has been relatively no data on the nature, extent, causes and consequences of conflict and violence in boys' schools in Harare province. This study will serve as a basis from which follow-up studies and further examinations of the phenomenon could be developed in order to lobby government to engage in appropriate, targeted intervention. I therefore, suggest that the Ministry of Education should streamline the activities and interventions within schools.

The theoretical framework of this study is restorative justice. However, from my data collection, it was evidenced that there is more bullying (peer to peer violence) than punishments (teacher to pupil violence). Regarding this, I recommend future

researchers to use restorative-justice interventions to reduce different forms of violence in High schools in Harare.

A scan of all interventions targeting students' safety in schools should be undertaken through which a concise, coherent and holistic picture of all interventions can be established. Since students are precluded from the decision-making processes on matters that affect them directly, the Provincial Head of the Ministry of Education should, in pursuit of democracy, motivate students' representatives by letting them realise that their inputs are valued and needed for the development of sound, secure and violent-free institutions.

The roles of the Ministry of Education, parents and other important role players in alleviating school violence were not part of the empirical investigation of this study and thus require further research through the consolidation and refining of intervention procedures. The Ministry of Education will be able to consolidate the resources and expertise available to it and maximise the impact of a few targeted interventions on a local, provincial and national level, thus leading to the ultimate objective, namely schools that are comparatively violence-free, healthy and safe environments for students and teachers. The following stakeholders have a role to play in the process of reducing conflict and violence.

School authorities

Conflict and violence should be included in all the curricula in all schools so that as soon as students get to their secondary level, they are given knowledge about violence and ways that can be used to resolve conflict non-violently and, consequently, reducing it. Anti-bullying campaigns must also be introduced in schools to prevent the bullying that is currently increasing. School authorities should also promote harmonious interactions and relationships between learners and teachers.

Ministry of Education

The Ministry of Education does not interact directly with students, however, they should be informed about the violence that occurs in schools. Then they should provide training for educators in effective-classroom management to enable them to recognise and identify violent-related behavioural patterns. They should also implement accountability mechanisms holding principals, students and educators responsible for levels of violence within schools. They should help in developing and implementing appropriate substance prevention and addiction interventions targeted specifically at learners (pilot projects). They should identify early warning signs and hotspots in all schools and then set it as a priority to roll out security infrastructure at all schools.

Police

Police should design and implement interventions that raise awareness of the impact of violence in the homes and communities. They should also reduce the availability of weapons within school communities and homes. In addition, they should introduce coherent crime-reduction programmes (e.g. psychological and social guidance, values and ethics and therapy sessions).

It is important that all interventions be seen as, and form part of, an integrated, coherent and cross-cutting programme of school safety, led by the school, the Ministry of Education and involving other stakeholders such as teacher unions, the Zimbabwe Republic Police (ZRP), the Department of Health and Social Services and the community. These recommendations are offered here as a set of integrated actions that are intended to deal with the issue of violence in a holistic manner.

7.5 Conclusion

In conclusion, conflict and violence in schools is a complex phenomenon that needs to be addressed from the roots in order to have an in-depth understanding of it before thinking of the ways that can be employed to reduce it. It is the responsibility of students, teachers, parents, police and the Ministry of Education to ensure the creation of safe schools conducive to learning and personal development. In an attempt to achieve this, alternatives to discipline methods and non-violent ways of resolving conflict should also be considered. If all stakeholders join hands and work towards the creation of peaceful schools, violence-free future generations will be promoted.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Letter to the Ministry of Education



The Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education

Harare Provincial Office

13 August 2016

REF: REQUEST TO DO A MASTERS DEGREE RESEARCH PROJECT IN ONE OF SCHOOLS IN YOUR PROVINCE

My name is Priscilla Musariwa. I am currently registered for a Master's degree in Peace Building at the Durban University of Technology. I would like to interact with students at one of your schools in a study that I am conducting.

The title of my study is **“Reducing school based violence. An action intervention in two schools in Harare”**

School violence is a major concern internationally, nationally and within our communities. I want to find out the causes and consequences of violence in your school and together with the students develop, implement and evaluate a programme to reduce violence in your school. For this study, I am guided by the code of ethics of Durban University of Technology to ensure confidentiality of information provided to me by the participant. I do hope that I will be granted access to work with the students

at your school. Should you have any problems or queries then please contact my supervisor Professor G.T. Harris (+2731 201 4027).

Sincerely,

Priscilla Musariwa

*All communications should be addressed to
"The Secretary for Primary and Secondary
Education
Telephone: 732006
Telegraphic address : "EDUCATION"
Fax:794505*



Reference: C/426/3 Harare
Ministry of Primary and
Secondary Education
P.O Box CY 121
Causeway
HARARE

12 May 2017

Priscila Musarirwa
Durban University Technology
South Africa

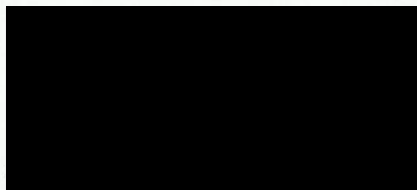
Re: **PERMISSION TO CARRY OUT RESEARCH IN HARARE METROPOLITAN
PROVINCE: NORTHERN CENTRAL DISTRICT: CRANBORNE HIGH
AND PRINCE EDWARD SCHOOL.**

Reference is made to your application to carry out research at the above mentioned schools in Harare Metropolitan Province on the research title:

"REDUCING SCHOOL BASED VIOLENCE"

Permission is hereby granted. However, you are required to liaise with the Provincial Education Director, Harare Metropolitan Province, who is responsible for the school which you want to involve in your research. You should ensure that your research work does not disrupt the normal operations of the school. You are required to seek consent of the parents /guardians of all the learners who will be involved in the research

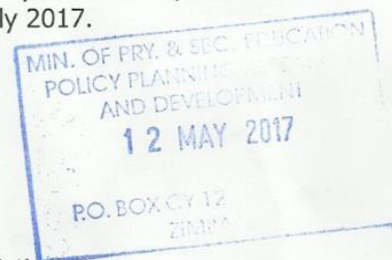
You are also required to provide a copy of your final report to the Secretary for Primary and Secondary Education by 31ST July 2017.



L. Chimyowa
Acting Director: Planning, Research and Statistics

For: **SECRETARY FOR PRIMARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION**

cc: PED – Harare Metropolitan



Appendix Three: Letter of Information



Dear Participant

Thank you for taking an interest in my research. My name is Priscilla Musariwa. I am registered for a Masters in Peacebuilding at the Durban University of Technology. I wish to provide this information for you to have a clear understanding of what it is about.

The title of my study is **“Reducing school based violence: An anti-bullying intervention in two schools in Harare.”**

If you choose to be part of the study you will:

- You may be part of a group of 10 participants.
- Be requested to take part in individual interviews.
- As a group, help in developing and implementing violence prevention programme.

Your participation is voluntary and you can withdraw at any time. You will not be paid for participating in the study and you will not be expected to pay anything to take part in the study.

I will not use your name when reporting on the focus group or individual interviews. Your answers will be seen by me. Should you have any problems or queries, contact my supervisor Professor G.T. Harris (+2731 201 4027).

Sincerely,

Priscilla Musariwa

Appendix Four: Letter to Prince School



Prince Edward School

Harare

13 August 2016

REF: REQUEST TO DO A MASTERS DEGREE RESEARCH PROJECT AT YOUR SCHOOL

My name is Priscilla Musariwa. I am currently registered for a Master's degree in Peace Building at the Durban University of Technology. I would like to interact with students at your school in a study that I am conducting.

The title of my study is **“Reducing school based violence. An anti-bullying intervention in two schools in Harare.”**

School violence is a major concern internationally, nationally and within our communities. I want to find out the causes and consequences of violence in your school and together with the students develop, implement and evaluate a programme to reduce violence in your school. For this study, I am guided by the code of ethics of Durban University of Technology to ensure confidentiality of information provided to me by the participant. I do hope that I will be granted access to work with the students at your school. Should you have any problems or queries then please contact my supervisor Professor G.T. Harris (+2731 201 4027).

Sincerely,

Priscilla Musariwa



FOUNDED
1898

PRINCE EDWARD SCHOOL

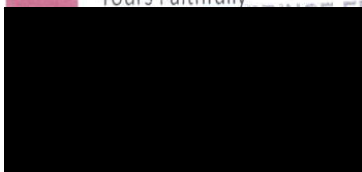
P.O. Box CY 418
Causeway, Harare
Tel: 792240/734112/734115
792344/792237/790335/793044
Fax: 792241/797849
e-mail: headpe@africaonline.co.zw

9 September 2016

RE PERMISSION TO DO RESEARCH PROJECT AT PRINCE EDWARD SCHOOL

This is to confirm that Miss Priscila Musariwa has been granted permission to carry out research titled "Reducing conflict and violence in schools: An action research among students at Prince Edward School in Zimbabwe" at the above mentioned school.

Yours Faithfully



Dr A. G Sora

Headmaster

PRINCE EDWARD SCHOOL
OFFICE
SEP 2016
P.O. BOX CY418
CAUSEWAY

Appendix Five: Letter to Cranborne High School



Cranborne Boys High School

Cranborne

Harare

13 August 2016

REF: REQUEST TO DO A MASTERS DEGREE RESEARCH PROJECT AT YOUR SCHOOL

My name is Priscilla Musariwa. I am currently registered for a Master's degree in Peace Building at the Durban University of Technology. I would like to interact with students at your school in a study that I am conducting.

The title of my study is **“Reducing school based violence. An action intervention in two schools in Harare”**

School violence is a major concern internationally, nationally and within our communities. I want to find out the causes and consequences of violence in your school and together with the students develop, implement and evaluate a programme to reduce violence in your school. For this study, I am guided by the code of ethics of Durban University of Technology to ensure confidentiality of information provided to me by the participant. I do hope that I will be granted access to work with the students

at your school. Should you have any problems or queries then please contact my supervisor Professor G.T. Harris (+2731 201 4027) or myself at +263772937920.

Sincerely,

Priscilla Musariwa

Appendix Six: Parent Consent



CONSENT

Statement of Agreement to Participate in the Research Study:

- I hereby confirm that I have been informed by the researcher, _____ (name of researcher), about the nature, conduct, benefits and risks of this study - Research Ethics Clearance Number: _____,
- I have also received, read and understood the above written information (Participant Letter of Information) regarding the study.
- I am aware that the results of the study, including personal details regarding my sex, age, date of birth, initials and diagnosis will be anonymously processed into a study report.
- In view of the requirements of research, I agree that the data collected during this study can be processed in a computerised system by the researcher.
- I may, at any stage, without prejudice, withdraw my consent and participation in the study.
- I have had sufficient opportunity to ask questions and (of my own free will) declare myself prepared to participate in the study.
- I understand that significant new findings developed during the course of this research which may relate to my participation will be made available to me.

_____	_____	_____	_____
Full name of participant	Date	Time	Signature

I, _____ (name of researcher) herewith confirm that the above participant has been fully informed about the nature, conduct and risks of the above study.

_____	_____	_____
Full name of researcher	Date	Signature
_____	_____	_____
Full name of witness	Date	Signature
_____	_____	_____
Full name of guardian	Date	Signature

Appendix Seven: Interview guide

Topic: Reducing school based violence in schools: An intervention with two schools in Harare.

I will start by introducing myself and my research team, and explain the objective of the interview, welcome the participants and thank them for attending. I will emphasize on confidentiality and seek their consent to tape record the session assuring them that the tapes will only be used for the study purpose after which; they will be discarded. We will jointly set boundaries or guiding rules.

1. What do you understand by the term violence?

2. Have you ever heard of someone who has experienced violence?

Probe: If yes, how many people have you heard of and what exactly happen?

3. Have you ever been punished for doing something wrong by a teacher, prefect or any other staff member?

Probe: If Yes, how were you punished?

Probe: Who decided on the type punishment?

4. What do you think are the main causes of violence in schools?

Probe: How are they handled at your school?

5. What are the effects of this violence?

6. Are there any programs put in place to reduce violence?

Probe: If yes, what are they and how effective are they?

7. What would you propose as an alternative (Answer from 7)?

8. Have you ever heard of restorative justice?

Probe: If yes above, please tell me more about it

Probe: Do you think it is effective in managing violence in school.

Appendix Eight: focus group discussion guide

Facilitator's welcome, introduction and instructions to participants

Welcome and thank you for volunteering to take part in this focus group discussion. You have been asked to participate as your point of view is important. I realize you are busy and I appreciate your time.

Introduction: This focus group discussion is designed to assess the nature, causes, consequences and the attempts that have been made to reduce conflicts and violence in schools. The focus group discussion will not take more than two hours. May I tape the discussion to facilitate its recollection? (If yes, I will switch on the recorder after the participants have signed the consent form on audio recording).

Anonymity: Despite being taped; I would like to assure you that the discussion will be anonymous. The tapes will be kept safely in a locked facility until they are transcribed word for word, then they will be destroyed as explained on the consent form. The information that I am gathering is for academic purposes only and any responses you give will be totally confidential. It will only be used as part of my study. No names will appear in the report. The transcribed notes of the focus group will contain no information that would allow individual subjects to be linked to specific statements. You should try to answer and comment as accurately and truthfully as possible. I and the other focus group participants would appreciate it if you would refrain from discussing the comments of other group members outside the focus group. If there are any questions or discussions that you do not wish to answer or participate in, you do not have to do so; however please try to answer and be as involved as possible.

Ground rules

- The most important rule is that only one person speaks at a time. There may be a temptation to jump in when someone is talking but please wait until they have finished.

- There are no right or wrong answers
- You do not have to speak in any particular order
- When you do have something to say, please do so. There are many of you in the group and it is important that I obtain the views of each of you
- You do not have to agree with the views of other people in the group
- Does anyone have any questions or additional rules? (Answers).
- OK, let's begin

Warm up

- First, I'd like everyone to introduce themselves. Can you tell us your name? After telling us your name, kindly choose a pseudonym that you feel comfortable with so that I can use it for reporting processes.

Introductory question

I am just going to give you a couple of minutes to think about your experience with violence or conflict at school and the ways that you used to resolve that conflict or to deal with that violence. Is anyone happy to share her experience?

1. What do you understand by the term violence?
2. Have you ever heard of someone who has experienced violence?

Probe: If yes, how many people have you heard of and what exactly happen?

3. Have you ever been punished for doing something wrong by a teacher, prefect or any other staff member?

Probe: If yes, how were you punished?

Probe: Who decided on the type punishment?

4. What do you think are the main causes of violence in schools?

Probe: How are they handled at your school?

5. What are the effects of this violence?

6. Are there any programs put in place to reduce violence?

Probe: If yes, what are they and how effective are they?

7. What would you propose as an alternative (Answer from 7)?

8. Have you ever heard of restorative justice?

Probe: If yes above, please tell me more about it

Probe: Do you think it is effective in managing violence in schools?