

DURBAN UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY

**CONFLICT TRANSFORMATION EDUCATION: A STRATEGY TO RESOLVE
SCHOOLS AND COMMUNITY VIOLENCE IN THE FACTRETON AREA,
WESTERN CAPE**

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**CONFLICT TRANSFORMATION EDUCATION: A STRATEGY TO RESOLVE SCHOOLS
AND COMMUNITY VIOLENCE IN THE FACTRETON AREA, WESTERN CAPE**

Submitted in fulfilment of the requirements of the degree of Doctor of Philosophy:
Management Sciences Specialising in Peace Studies

in the Faculty of Public Management,
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NOVEMBER 2024

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ABSTRACT

This study critically examined the subtle impact of slow violence on learners' development in the Facticeon community, Western Cape, South Africa, proposing an innovative generosity-based educational framework as a conflict transformation strategy. Slow violence, characterised by its cumulative, invisible, and intergenerational effects, perpetuates structural inequalities that undermine educational equity and human development. This study examined how a pedagogy of generosity can position education as a vehicle for social transformation, equipping learners with the agency to navigate and counteract adverse conditions.

Through a transformative participatory action research (TPAR) approach this study engaged a purposive sample of primary school learners in qualitative inquiry that included narrative writing, conversational interviews, and participant observation. The study reveals that slow violence is associated with food insecurity, limited educational resources, and psychosocial distress, which affect learner apathy and motivation, disruptive classroom climate, self-perception, and overall well-being. The findings verify that these conditions perpetuate intergenerational cycles of marginalisation.

In response, the study proposed a generosity-based educational framework that emphasises relational support, critical dialogue, agency and humanitarian engagement within the school environment. By centring generosity as a guiding principle, the framework challenges traditional deficit-based interventions and offers a critically reflexive, agentic, and contextually relevant approach to mitigating the effects of slow violence.

The study's findings contribute to broader discussions on education's role in conflict transformation and social justice, highlighting the need for pedagogical models that address structural violence through relational and transformative means.

Keywords: slow violence; generosity-based education; conflict transformation education; transformative participatory action research (TPAR); educational equity and resilience.

DECLARATION

I declare that the thesis herewith submitted for the PhD: Public Management Specialising in Peace Studies at the Durban University of Technology has not been previously submitted for a degree at any other University worldwide.

Student (Kevin Thompson): _____

November 2024

DEDICATION

This thesis has taken many years (too many years) and I must thank my wife for her unwavering support and belief in me, that all things are possible.

This thesis is dedicated to her.

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I am not always a good communicator and I have not always consulted my supervisor, Dr Kaye, regularly. Yet, she and Professor Harris have always intrinsically been a part of this thesis journey. I am particularly indebted to Dr Kaye for her availability and support throughout this process. A long journey, which I believe, she did not always know if I was still on. Thank you, Dr Kaye.

I have a great set of friends. I must thank my fellow PhD student, Tahirih Matthee, for her ongoing support and encouragement throughout this whole process. She has kept in touch and called me at the right time when things were just not going according to plan. Thank you, T.

I also wish to thank my longstanding friend Dr Zoran Mitrovic for being a great inspiration and personal mentor. I am strengthened many times when we have had stimulating conversations over a good cup of coffee.

I am a godly person, and believe that God takes an interest in all of our affairs. I believe that no one is too bad to encounter the blessedness that life and this planet have to offer us. God's desire, I believe, is for us to live to have an abundant mindset, not necessarily in material wealth, but also to smell the fragrances of nature, to appreciate the complexities and intricacies of human nature – put simply, to appreciate life on earth. I thank God, that I can experience Him in this way.

ACRONYMS

AP	Appreciative enquiry
CT	Conflict transformation
GBE	Gender-based Education
IPA	Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis
LO	Life orientation
PAR	Participatory Action Research
PB	Peacebuilding
WPH	Women and Peace Hypothesis
TPAR	Transformative Participatory Action Research
TSC	Transformative Social Capital
TSVM	Transformative Slow Violence Model
UCT	University of Cape Town

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PROLOGUE

I write this prologue in memory of those who lost their lives during COVID-19, but I write it also as a testimony of how COVID-19 caused me to write this thesis differently. I must confess that the period during which I did this study was the most trying of my life thus far. As a family, we experienced financial hardship, namely losing jobs, having drastic salary cuts, and moving in with family to alleviate monthly costs. Araújo et al. (2021; Coker *et al.* 2023: 17) highlighted that the societal impacts of Covid-19 included reduced parental productivity, illness and death; school closures; social isolation; financial hardships; food insecurity; deleterious mental health effects, educational setbacks, adverse effects on child well-being, particularly among disadvantaged students, and nutritional issues for children dependent on free school meals.

Through COVID-19, my awareness sharpened that many suffer and face death through different types of conflicts and violence, and even if our peacebuilding efforts seem futile, we must continue helping others. Like Mah (2019), my journey of transformation and hope formed the backdrop of this study, which remains a work in progress with good and bad days. When I began this study in 2017, I saw the world dichotomized into order and chaos, favouring order. I intended my thesis to follow academic conventions, presenting a neatly packaged product. However, in peacebuilding, there is no formula to fully understand what people endure or to offer solutions that minimise the effects of pandemics like COVID-19 or violent conditions.

This study will let the children's stories speak for themselves, fostering an emotional discourse and creating a thesis based on storytelling and catharsis.

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

In her tribute to Galtung, Kraemer (2024) writes that peace should be studied in the same way as medicine - by diagnosing a problem, figuring out the prognosis and desiring therapies or treatments to produce more desirable outcomes. I employ this method to structure the background of this study. The fundamental concept driving this study is to recognise slow violence as the diagnosis, attributing it to the outcomes of violent conditions, which subsequently serves as the prognosis. The therapy or treatment, in the context of this study, is to discover ways through which learners can minimise the effects of such violent conditions. In this respect, I introduce the concept of transcendence to the study.

This study was designed to explore the impact of slow violence on the life of the primary school learner. According to Nixon (2011: 2) "violence is customarily conceived as an event or action that is immediate in time, explosive and spectacular in space, and as erupting into instant sensational visibility." Examples include "falling bodies, burning towers, exploding heads, avalanches, volcanoes, and tsunamis" that possess a visceral and captivating spectacle. What is needed is to perceive:

A different kind of violence, a violence that is neither spectacular nor instantaneous, but rather incremental and accretive, its calamitous repercussions playing out across a range of temporal scales.

This study adopted the "child as method" perspective that promotes the child as the main protagonist through which this thesis narrative can be viewed (Burman 2018; James 2013). Child as method is an approach that examines how childhood is portrayed and the qualities linked to it, as well as the way children are represented, to gain a better understanding of the socio-political aspects (Burman 2018: 4; Young-Bruehl 2012). According to Freeman (1998 cited in Panelli et al. 2002) childhood must be understood in conjunction with factors such as class, gender, ethnicity, and culture, all of which shape the varied spatial experiences and cultural understandings of children and young people. The child-as-method perspective underscores the importance of looking through the lens of children as they narrate their experiences on how social conditions impact their lives. And in my experience, this lens does not go beyond the everyday life of the learner. I, therefore, like Chawla (2021: 125), want to reiterate the following, that is, it is important to convey these emotions because that is what was conveyed to me as the researcher. According to Faldet and Nes (2021), it is also essential to build a relationship with child learners that is transparent, safe, secure and confidential.

1.2 Background

This study was located in Cape Town, South Africa, in a suburb called Factreton. It is an impoverished area, described in detail in Chapter Two. The negative effects of poverty are multi-faceted. This study examined how children are affected by the conditions of an area such as Factreton. According to Short et al. (2019), children who come from poor and violent social environments are more likely to have communication difficulties at school. Language difficulties can lead to negative effects such as poor literacy and social participation, increased academic failure, disengagement from school, instances of juvenile incarceration, a variety of mental health difficulties, generally poorer health, reduced opportunity for employment and/ or increased relationship breakdown in adulthood. Studies conducted by McKean et al. (2017) and Eadie et al. (2021), indicate that low language skills at the age of seven are associated with difficulties in literacy, social-emotional functioning, and behavioural adjustment. These learners, when compared with their peers with typical language skills, face higher levels of psychosocial challenges within the school environment.

Factors that contribute to low language proficiency in a learner's early stage include prematurity at birth, birth weight/order, twin birth, socioeconomic status, non-English speaking background, and family history of speech/language difficulties. The outcomes of low language skills at the age of seven include co-occurring difficulties such as autism, literacy issues, social and emotional challenges, behavioural adjustment problems, and compromised health-related quality of life. Early life risk factors, including the child's biological predisposition and the home learning environment, are important predictors of language outcomes at four years of age and continue to be significant predictors across six years of formal schooling, indicating their role in building the foundations for later language skills. In addition, Le et al. (2021) state that children with low language abilities have been associated with significant adverse long-term outcomes, including lower health-related quality of life than children with typical language skills from four to thirteen years of age.

The real-life experiences of the learners correspond to their inter-generational legacies and social patterns of conduct and behaviour, while they also sharpen their everyday knowledge and skills to navigate through the demands and expectations of harsh living conditions. These learners inhabit the impoverished and marginalised spheres generated through historic passages of slow violence. Gutierrez and Rogoff (2003 cited in Psyher and Lozenski 2014) contend that children cultivate repertoires through their historical, personal, and communal exchanges within their sociocultural contexts. These repertoires enable them to extract

cultural meaning. To understand a child's cultural practices, it is essential to comprehend their personal and community narratives.

1.2.1 Violent conditions and slow violence

For immediacy and the everyday lived experience of individuals, this study aligns violent conditions as an intrinsic aspect of slow violence. Slow violence permeates through everyday conditions and impacts communities in various ways. Slow violence contributes to the development of violent conditions by perpetuating harm over time, creating conditions such as injustice, insecurity, poverty, economic exploitation, people displacement, and discriminatory and prejudicial laws. Nixon (2011) defines slow violence as the harm that unfolds gradually and is often imperceptible in the short term, yet it accumulates over time, disproportionately affecting marginalised communities. In contrast, violent conditions refer to immediate and observable manifestations of violence, such as gang-related crime, direct physical abuse, or political unrest. According to Laurie and Shaw (2018), violent conditions burn in the background of daily life. Violent conditions restrict the potential for life to flourish and actualise, “poisoning, irradiating, and wounding the neighbourhoods of everyday being” (Laurie and Shaw 2018: 8). The authors cite Galtung (1990), who asserts that violence is always bound by, and produced by conditions of a truncated life, restricted life potential, encumbered by a permanent, unwanted state of misery.

While Nixon’s analysis highlights critical issues of environmental decay and global injustices, this study broadens the scope to include education, arguing that schools are not only sites of slow violence but also potential instruments for its mitigation. While Nixon contends that slow violence often goes unnoticed, learners’ lived experiences in Factreton reveal a deep awareness of systemic injustices, even if they struggle to articulate them in academic language. In the context of this study, slow violence is evident in systemic educational neglect, inter-generational poverty, and chronic food insecurity, factors that erode learners’ potential over time. This study extends Nixon’s framework by demonstrating that education, when approached through a generosity-based framework, can serve both as a diagnostic tool for recognising slow violence and a mechanism for its transformation. Violent conditions, on the other hand, manifest in the everyday realities of schools in high-risk areas, where learners contend with immediate threats such as physical fights, gang recruitment, and domestic violence. This study highlights the layered nature of adversity experienced by learners in Factreton, arguing that addressing immediate violence without tackling its slow structural underpinnings limits the effectiveness of intervention efforts.

In terms of the treatment or therapy drawing from the diagnosis-prognosis-treatment method, this study introduced the concept of transcendence as a means to minimise the impact and the outcomes of violent conditions. The study incorporates self-transcendence and context transcendence as a process of transformation. Self-transcendence as understood in this study is critiquing violent conditions and negative impacts of context specificity, introducing context transcendence through writing poems with messages illuminating care and empathy, as well as project planning to help the learners' peers who need help. Context transference, in our context, is an imaginary way of writing or doing things that temporarily takes the learning out of the local context by creating space to believe and imagine alternative realities.

1.3 Context

According to Higham (2022), scholars of education and schooling have, since the 1960s and 1970s, asked questions about power relations, inequalities and injustices in schools. She (Higham 2022) asserts that structural violence has informed past education research, but slow violence has not been widely taken up. Higham (2024) argues that research into violence in schools has tended towards more conventional understandings, such as gun violence and mass shootings, bullying and harassment. As such educators are often faced with narrow definitions of violence, failing to acknowledge that teachers, schools and schooling practices can also be complicit in enacting violence (Higham 2024).

Sutoris (2022) brings attention to an instance of slow violence in education. Critics argue that this curriculum reinforces existing power dynamics, undermines educators, and limits students' potential (Kunjee and Sayed 2013 cited by Sutoris 2022). Literature indicates that education around the world is a determinant of crime (Bhorat et al. 2017; Bickmore et al. 2017). According to Bickmore et al. (2017), education exacerbates violence social-structurally through the unequal distribution of resources or the reinforcement of segregation practices. It can also do culturally by legitimizing certain beliefs and narratives of ethnic or gender-based chauvinism, and social inequality or normalising violence and militarism. Lamb and Snodgrass (2013) assert that schools are sites of socialised acceptance of violence. Patel (2019) states that curriculum has invariably been constructed to maintain certain knowledge hierarchies. According to Brown (2013 cited in Patel 2019: 19) "the structuring power of knowledge was implicated as a force arbitrarily negotiating and sponsoring a cultural authority while underwriting a given social, cultural, and economic order." The South African government, as mentioned by Sutoris (2022), allocated 18.73% of its budget and 6.1% of its GDP to education in 2017. However, funding inequality persists in the political economy of post-apartheid South

Africa, resulting in an unequal education system. The former Model-C schools, historically catering to the white population, still receive a significant portion of resources. Despite various education reforms such as Curriculum 2005 and the current Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement of 2011, the quality of education remains poor.

The government's inability to provide high-quality education has been masked by artificially inflated pass rates that do not lead to employment opportunities. The high unemployment rate of 55.2% among 15-24-year-olds, according to STATSSA (2019) emphasises the shortcomings of the schooling system. South Africa's education system perpetuates inequality by offering minimal advantages to underprivileged students while still favouring the privileged (Sutoris 2022). Furthermore, many townships, including Fectreton, particularly "die gat", the area of my focus, are notorious for crime, gang violence, drug abuse, teenage pregnancies, prostitution, alcoholism, domestic and gender-based violence and breakdown of family structures (Sutoris 2019).

Despite these characteristic outcomes of slow violence in both places and individuals, the primary preoccupation of educators at my focus school was the lack of motivation displayed by learners towards their education. Initially, I also viewed examinations and assessments as key indicators of success and expected learners to be motivated by these outcomes. The impact of COVID-19 on me changed my perspective. In this respect, I came to realise that context matters, and working on this: their everyday lived experiences, dignify and contribute to learner motivation.

I agree with Walby (2012 cited in Barnwell 2019: 1115) that our understanding of the "transmission of less obvious processes, processes that may not be immediately recognised as acts of violence," remains limited. Barnwell (2019) argues that it is crucial to pay attention to these forms of violence because, as Duncan Bell (2009 cited by Barnwell 2019) reminds us, "the fugitive traces of memory long outlast the sound of the guns." So too do histories of discrimination continue to reverberate along familial lines, manifesting as trauma or emotional distress and also causing structural damage. Scheper-Hughes and Bourgois (2004 cited in Higham 2024) assert that violence extends beyond direct aggression, shaping and being shaped by cultures, social structures, ideas, and ideologies. For example, norms and traditions, as constructs of violence, influence behaviour. Butler (1990, 2006 cited in Higham 2024) suggests that norms can inflict violence by limiting individuals' potential and enforcing conformity to dominant norms. Normative violence involves the interplay with norms, conventions, and institutional power, violently policing deviations and enforcing constrained

subjectivities. According to Higham (2024), norms enforce normative violence. Building on Nixon (2011), Higham (2024) notes that the concept of slow violence is underutilised in education. Higham (2024: 903) states, “While schools might be empowering for some, the same practices can constitute slow violence for others over time. Slow violence, conceptually, is valuable, addressing both macro and micro scales of life by attending to everyday violence and considering its accumulation into larger structural violence.”

The enduring living histories of place, such as *die gat*, the place from which the learners come, contribute to area stigma. According to several studies (Moser and McIlwaine 2002; Butler-Warke 2021; Dernikos 2020; Fischer 2015), area stigma or prejudice has an important psychosocial constraint on people, limiting employment opportunities for example. Moser and McIlwaine (2002) highlighted that living in areas with negative reputations can impact how individuals view themselves and their opportunities. Expanding on this, Butler-Warke (2021) illustrated that the stigma associated with a location can become internalised, affecting residents' self-assurance and their motivation to seek opportunities. Furthermore, Dernikos (2020) asserts that sound and music serve as mediums that reflect and embody the historical legacies of colonialism and resistance, as it relates to space. Dernikos (2020) suggests analysing the interplay between soundscapes and their emotional and sensory frequencies to demonstrate their impact on social and educational contexts. According to Fischer (2015), learners growing up in areas with negative reputations often internalise societal stigma, resulting in a self-fulfilling cycle where low expectations and social exclusion obstruct literacy development. However, Fischer (2015) states that schools can help counteract the negative impacts of spatial inequality and stigma. People from these areas are associated with delinquency, drug consumption and robbery, poor housing, poverty unemployment, and many forms of abuse. The long history of slow violence turns against people, categorising them as delinquent, unemployable and superfluous. The learners invariably feel the impact of these contexts on their lives. One such impact, which this study focuses on is food insecurity (Foini 2023). I prefer to call it hunger, since learners daily come to school hungry, not having had anything to eat at home. And yet, this study is not centred on food insecurity but on reimagining the self and context of the learners. This is done through self-transcendence, and what I call context-transcendence. In this regard, this study posits that education, as it relates to relevant place histories, should understand the impact of slow violence on learners, and educate learners to wrestle with appropriate interventions.

Food insecurity: According to Stevenson et al. (2023: 3) “hunger has been defined as (i) the meaning of certain bodily sensations such as a rumbling stomach (ii) a mental state of positive

anticipation that food will be good to eat, and (iii) an organising principle, which serves to prioritise feeding.” According to Barrett and Lentz (2010), food security is commonly conceptualised as resting on three pillars: availability, access, and utilisation. Availability reflects sufficient supply signifying food security. Access is associated with individual or household well-being reflecting the range of food choices open to people. Utilisation reflects how individuals access food either making nutritional or low nutritional choices. Stability is the fourth dimension of food security. Stability captures the susceptibility of individuals to food security due to interruptions in access, availability or utilisation. Certain individuals within communities or households may be more vulnerable to instability and are at greater risk of food insecurity (Barrett and Lentz 2010; Morales et al. 2021).

Barrett and Lentz (2010) differentiate between covariate and idiosyncratic threats that impact food security. The former may occur for example, as a result of price hikes, civil wars, climate, and natural disasters. In terms of idiosyncratic threats impacting food security is relative poverty. Relative poverty is commonly associated with individual characteristics that are associated with social exclusion that likewise causes individual-level food insecurity (Barrett and Lentz 2010: 22). Chambers (1989 cited in Barrett and Lentz 2010: 22) states “whether under discrimination or marginalisation, those with less voice and power within communities are typically more vulnerable to suffering hunger and food insecurity.”

COVID-19: The worldwide effects of COVID-19 have significantly disrupted lives across all sectors of society. The principal of the school shared that upon returning to formal classes in 2022, students’ behaviours had noticeably changed since before the pandemic. Learners displayed increased unruliness and reluctance to engage in structured classroom environments, with a greater tendency to spend time outside classrooms. Incidents of violence and bullying escalated, making school playgrounds more hazardous. Many learners, having spent extended periods in lockdown, were more exposed to influences such as gang lifestyles. COVID-19 also had a profound impact on family life. Many students were displaced, as their families could no longer afford rent for backyard dwellings, leading them to set up makeshift accommodations, often in areas such as the large, carved-out bush along 18th Avenue, Facticeon.

Poverty trap: Children from impoverished, socially excluded families face a high risk of falling into a poverty trap, characterized by limited access to quality education in under-resourced schools, which reduces their employment prospects due to few opportunities for unskilled labour (South African Human Rights Commission and UNICEF 2014). Low wages and minimal

job security typify the work they find, perpetuating the cycle of poverty into adulthood, particularly for predominantly black or coloured children in historically disadvantaged schools. Azariadis and Tachurski (2005: 33) define a poverty trap as "any self-reinforcing mechanism which causes poverty to persist." In 2022, the World Bank described South Africa's inequality of opportunity as "exceptional," indicating that most citizens are born into a poverty trap that persists across generations due to the enduring legacy of apartheid and limited post-apartheid transformation (Oppelt 2024). The Department of Health reported that annually over 15,000 children are diagnosed with severe acute malnutrition, with approximately 1,000 dying as a direct result. Malnutrition was identified as the underlying cause of one-third of child deaths in South Africa, totalling around 10,000 deaths each year, while 27% of children under five suffer from stunting due to chronic malnutrition (Oppelt 2024).

Transformative curriculum: In engaging with the learners in this study, I began to recognise the potential of a curriculum based on humanitarian agency, particularly as a critique against slow violence embedded in their social contexts. However, as Omwami (2012: 9) notes, while humanitarian interventions in education aim to build human capital, evidence of substantial change remains limited. He argues that humanitarianism itself acknowledges the failure of national, social, political, and economic systems to provide security to the population. By initiating discussions on humanitarianism within schools, students and educators can collaboratively develop projects that foster mutual support and resilience-building practices. Humanitarian agencies can foster a transformative mindset, equipping learners not only with specific skills but also with a resilience and outlook that extend beyond their schooling years. Schools currently lack a focus on humanitarian curriculum, yet integrating it could help students develop incremental strategies for creating more favourable conditions in their lives.

In the early 2000s, the South African Department of Education developed a Life Orientation (LO) program¹, which was defined as follows: (Department of Education 2003 cited in Prinsloo 2017: 156):

Life Orientation is the study of the self in relation to others and to society. It applies a holistic approach. It is concerned with the personal, social,

¹ <https://www.education.gov.za/Portals/0/CD/SUBSTATEMENTS/Life%20Orientation.pdf?ver=2006-08-31-121627-000#:~:text=Life%20Orientation%20equips%20learners%20to,the%20most%20of%20life's%20opportunities.>

intellectual, emotional, spiritual, motor and physical growth and development of learners and the way in which these dimensions are interrelated and expressed in life.

It was intended to be values-based, to empower learners. However, it often remains a static instructional process rather than a tool for fostering transformative agency within the school environment. Prinsloo (2017) notes the challenges that arose in implementing the LO curriculum. Thus, also well-intended, the focus on the humanitarian curriculum was not successful through the LO program. During my study at the primary school, where I taught LO to Grades 5 and 6, I observed that while the curriculum is developmentally appropriate, it is also nonspecific and conceptually limited. Learners are not encouraged to engage in self-exploration or to seek ways to support themselves and others in overcoming challenges related to poverty and hunger. This gap in their education led me to identify what I term a "humanitarian gap" within the curriculum. This is not intended as a critique of the LO curriculum itself, but rather an observation from my experience in economically disadvantaged schools, where many learners fail to see schooling as an integral part of their personal growth. One educator commented that in such environments, there is too much focus on passive learning and little emphasis on play or creativity. Coates (2015) similarly argues that schools prioritise compliance over curiosity, leaving children to learn survival on the streets instead of through education. Schools, ideally spaces for truth and discovery, often end up obscuring these aims.

For many learners, the future they envision is shaped by familiar figures in their communities, such as adults engaging in harmful behaviours. Coates remarks that before he could imagine escape or change, he first had to learn to survive in his environment. He and others in similar circumstances question their purpose in the classroom—a question that too often goes unanswered.

1.4 Statement of the problem

Ghosal (2021) describes chronic disadvantage as multidimensional processes that trap individuals in prolonged cycles of deprivation and marginalisation. The long-term effects of socio-economic deprivation in Facticeon are evident in persistently low educational attainment, high unemployment, and rising domestic violence. The 1996 census recorded a population of 12,277 in Facticeon, with only 911 individuals having completed matric, while 1,076 had no formal schooling. The 2001 and 2011 censuses, which combined Facticeon with the neighbouring area of Kensington, reported populations of 25,538 and 26,516, respectively. Despite this growth, structural challenges remain deeply entrenched. By 2014, 71% of

residents in Kensington and Factreton were unemployed (Joubert 2014) indicating that barriers to education contribute to economic marginalisation. The link between low educational attainment and social instability is further reflected in the 254 domestic violence complaints recorded in just the first half of that year. These statistics highlight a cycle of poverty, unemployment, and violence, where limited access to quality education exacerbates broader social vulnerabilities. Children from impoverished areas often develop an external locus of control, meaning they see external forces, rather than their efforts, as the primary determinants of their circumstances. This mindset can lead them to undervalue their ability to change their futures, which in turn impacts their confidence in academic and cognitive abilities and lowers their academic aspirations (Ghosal 2021).

Ndlovu and Masuku (2024) assert that in South Africa, the core issue is not food scarcity but limited household-level access to food. Rising food inflation, from 3.7% to 6.0% between January and December 2020, forced low-income families to reduce their food spending. The R350 social grant was inadequate, given that a household food basket cost R4,051 per month. This situation contributes to persistent food insecurity, impacting 11% of the population, or approximately 6.5 million people (ibid).

Kevin Watkins (2022) notes that in 2021, 179 million school-age children were experiencing hunger globally—a figure 35 million higher than before COVID-19. In South Africa, Katherine Hall (2024) reports that by 2022, 12% of children, approximately 2.6 million, lived in households affected by child hunger. The prevalence varies widely by region, with child hunger rates in the Northern Cape at 24%, Northwest at 19%, KwaZulu-Natal at 18%, and the Western Cape at 16%. Notably, the Western Cape is the only province where child hunger rates have not declined over the past two decades. Due to population growth, the estimated number of children experiencing hunger in that province has risen from 275,000 in 2002 to 340,000 in 2022. Ghosal (2021), Conradie and Robeyns (2013), and McCleod (2009) argue that individuals from these disadvantaged areas face inherent psycho-social barriers, including a lack of self-confidence and aspirational failure. Robert Walker (cited by Ghosal 2021: 5) argues:

When poverty predominantly occurs in long spells [...] the poor have virtually no chance of escaping from poverty and, therefore, little allegiance to the wider community...In such a scenario the experience of poverty comes very close to that of social exclusion.

Mookherjee (2003 cited by Ghosal 2021: 5) adds that “Long-run poverty is fundamentally self-perpetuating [and] the entrapment goes hand in hand with [...] lack of hope.” Al-Amin and

Islam (2024; Conradie and Robeyns 2013) confirm that aspiration failure is rooted in structural constraints—particularly those contributing to aspiration failure or low motivation to learn—linked to food insecurity, especially the everyday experience of hunger among learners. Gareth Haysom (cited in May, Witten, and Lake, 2020) highlights the impact of COVID-19 on persistent hunger in South African urban areas and challenges society to recognise that hunger and food insecurity are forms of slow violence.

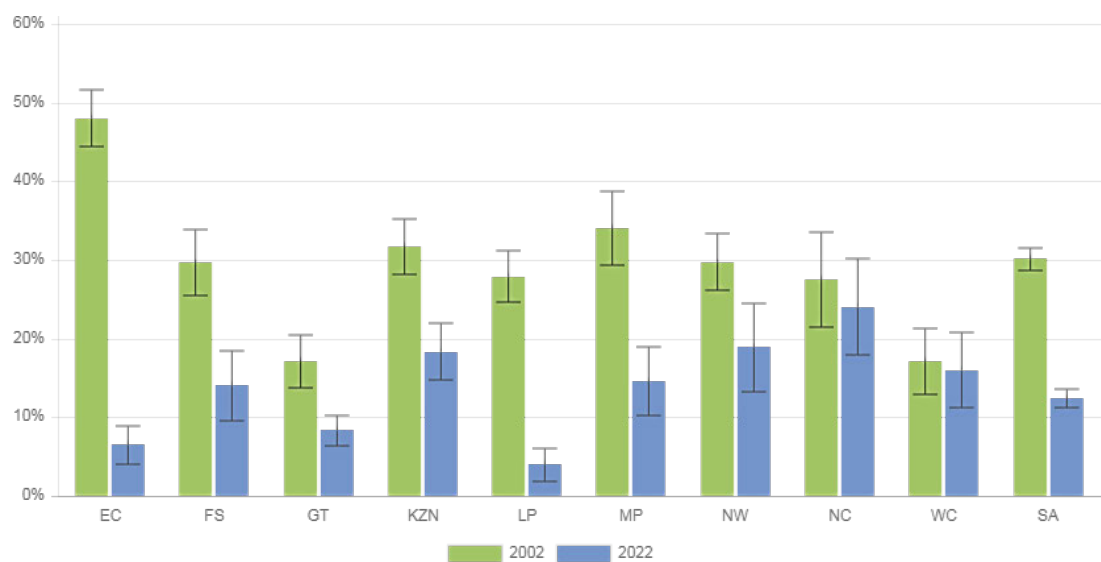


Figure 1.1: Child Hunger (Source: Hall, 2024)

These statistics underscore the urgency of embedding humanitarian awareness in educational settings to address persistent challenges like child hunger as part of a broader humanitarian practice. This study suggests that a more defined humanitarian practice within education could enhance learners' motivation through actionable support, particularly in addressing issues like child hunger.

Humanitarian-oriented education addresses the profound psychological and social harm children endure in contexts of poverty, hunger, and violence by offering a transformative framework rooted in human rights and equity. Children who are exposed to basic needs deprivation and violence often suffer from chronic stress, anxiety, and depression, which impair cognitive, emotional, and social development (Shohel 2012). These effects can manifest in behaviours such as difficulty concentrating, mistrust, withdrawal, or aggression, creating significant barriers to learning and thriving. Moreover, gendered vulnerabilities—such as boys facing physical violence and girls being at heightened risk of sexual violence—further

exacerbate inequalities, underscoring the need for context-specific and sensitive interventions (Stark and Landis 2016).

The cumulative psychological harm of poverty and violence has intergenerational impacts, as cycles of deprivation perpetuate emotional and developmental deficits. These conditions are further exacerbated by systemic neglect and slow violence—forms of harm that are gradual, often invisible, and embedded within social and economic inequities (White 2018).

The legacy of apartheid has entrenched structural disparities, and the long-lasting effects pose considerable challenges for the education system, which is ill-equipped to address slow violence. Chisholm (2020) notes that colonial social dynamics shaped both physical and symbolic realms, reinforced by curriculum emphasising expected roles of teachers based on racial, ethnic and gender identities. Slow violence unfolds gradually, and its effects on educational systems often go unnoticed. Grieshaber and Krieg (2024) argue that gendered language and practices perpetuate structural inequalities in early childhood education. At the secondary level, Higham (2024) observes that LGBTQ+ student organisations initially focus on becoming more visible and gaining recognition. Over time they challenge ethical and systemic issues advocating for structural change and justice. Cairns (2021) highlights how environmental education grapples with slow violence, balancing immediate protective measures with historical perspectives on injustice to foster transformation. Reimers (2020) asserts that participatory climate education provides a model for problem-solving and improved learning outcomes.

Nevertheless, South African education continues to struggle with apartheid consequences and persistent violence. Throughout apartheid, schools served as a foundation for the anti-apartheid movement, with student demonstrations leading to an alternative "People's Education" model (Ntshoe and Campus 1999). However, post-apartheid education policies are driven by academic performance and punitive actions, which are complicated by inadequate teacher performance, low levels of accountability and high levels of learner ill-discipline (Mouton et al. 2012; Weissberg and Cascarino 2013). Gender-based violence remains a major issue in educational institutions (Pietersen and Langeveldt 2024). Every year student protests at tertiary institutions and schools underline the ongoing problems of overcrowded classrooms, insufficient infrastructure and racial tensions (Muswede 2017). These obstacles reveal the slow progress in addressing the legacy of apartheid and minimal progress in implementing comprehensive reforms. The current curriculum (CAPS) often proves unsuitable for learners who lack adequate school preparedness, while teachers feel

constrained in adapting their teaching approaches to meet varied student needs (Bruwer et al. 2014). This policy is inadequate to confront the challenges students face, including trauma, violence and substance abuse (Zins et al. 2003). The prevailing climate of violence in South African schools, including weapons and gang involvement, underscores the necessity for a more comprehensive educational strategy (Baruth and Mokoena 2016). Tackling these issues requires a transformative educational framework incorporating just and generative practices, in line with Cairns' (2022) assertion that a pedagogy of slow violence should empower students not only to comprehend harmful environmental and social practices but also to emotionally engage and take transformative action against them. Some studies suggest that feminist pedagogy and critical methodologies could create safer, more equitable educational environments and foster social transformation (Pietersen and Langeveldt 2024; Ntshoe and Campus 1999).

This study proposes that humanitarian-oriented education directly addresses these challenges by providing spaces of safety, inclusion, and healing. By embedding emotional well-being, social cohesion, and academic knowledge into its practices, this approach seeks to mitigate the effects of slow violence and foster resilience among learners (Jackson 2014). For instance, safe spaces within schools help children process trauma, build trusting relationships, and regain a sense of normalcy despite external hardships. The incorporation of generosity-based educational frameworks emphasizes care, mutual respect, and shared responsibility, empowering learners to feel valued and capable, even within adverse conditions.

Critically, humanitarian education does not only aim to mitigate immediate symptoms of psychological harm but also works to address the structural conditions perpetuating poverty and inequity. By combining peacebuilding principles with innovative solutions, such as improving access to essential resources, humanitarian education tackles the root causes of exclusion and marginalisation (White 2018). Intersectoral approaches that integrate education with health, social services, and community engagement provide a comprehensive response to these multifaceted challenges, fostering both immediate relief and long-term empowerment (Shohel 2012).

Importantly, this approach does not suggest that humanitarian education alone can resolve material poverty or systemic violence. Instead, it emphasizes equipping learners with the skills, confidence, and resilience necessary to navigate and challenge their environments. As children develop a stronger sense of agency, they are better positioned to advocate for systemic changes that address the root causes of their struggles (Stark and Landis 2016).

Moreover, by fostering emotional resilience and social cohesion, humanitarian education builds a foundation for collective healing and community transformation. Ultimately, humanitarian-oriented education provides pathways for children to thrive despite enduring challenges. By aligning academic, emotional, and social development within a framework of equity and care, it offers an avenue to transform attitudes, foster resilience, and create the conditions for a more equitable and just future—even in the face of unchanging material hardships.

Humanitarian practice, though not yet clearly defined, could help bridge the gap between education and real-world challenges by incorporating humanitarian principles into curricula. African universities lag in offering humanitarian studies programs (Sahawel 2022). I have observed a similar absence of humanitarian education in school curricula, despite the pressing global issue of child hunger.

Given the pervasiveness of slow violence in school and social environments such as Facticeon, there is an urgent need for education policies that integrate trauma-informed pedagogy and holistic learner support systems. This study underscores the importance of policy initiatives that go beyond conventional discipline-based approaches to embrace just and morally generative practices that address both immediate and long-term learner well-being and positive social adjustment. These policies must be reformed in the training of educators as well as in curriculum development. Addressing these challenges necessitates a transformative approach to education—one that not only improves academic outcomes but also cultivates social resilience. Without targeted interventions, Facticeon faces the continued entrenchment of intergenerational poverty and violence, reinforcing the urgent need for educational reform as a pathway to community stability and empowerment.

1.5 Research aim, objectives and questions

This thesis examines the infiltration of slow violence on the education processes of learners but also explores education as the means to instil a transcendent and thus a transformative perspective in learners. I agree with Meurs' (2012) perspective on education as "educrere" ("to lead out" or "to reach out") which is not solely about attaining a liberated or critical perspective, but rather about liberating or displacing an existing perspective. Meurs (2012: 364) asserts that the essence of education is not in its formal or instrumental scope, but rather in its dynamic flow and not restricted by "objective or ideal." Education transcends form or goal. It "unfolds, displaces or impels ourselves", it is not a fixed phenomenon.

Similarly, this study was about cultivating a sense of self-transcendence, enabling learners to peel back the layers of their veiled perceptual screens, and to uncover potential possibilities to transcend the limitations imposed by their lived contexts. To acquire this state, learners were able to tap into their inner awareness of self for strength and compassion, thus enabling themselves to help their peers through acts of kindness and empathy. Self-transcendence, then, according to this study involves critiquing violent conditions and challenging the negative impacts of contextual constraints. It is about fostering context transcendence through creative acts such as writing poetry, and narratives infused with messages of care, and empathy, as well as engaging in projects to support peers in need. Context transference within the framework of this study, involves the imaginative exploration of alternative realities through writing or other forms of creative expression, temporarily detaching learning from its immediate context.

1.5.1 Primary Aim:

The primary aim of this study was to examine the impact of show violence on the development of children and to develop a model that would be transformative. The model that was developed as a result of this study is discussed in Chapter 8.

1.5.2 Research Objectives:

The specific objectives of this study were:

1. To analyse slow violence and its diverse manifestations within societal and educational contexts.
2. To investigate how generosity, transcendence, and transformation shape primary school learners' development, informing a peacebuilding-oriented educational framework.
3. To design a pedagogical model that integrates humanitarian service within a generosity-based educational approach.
4. To assess the impact of generosity-based education on learner agency, motivation, and well-being, particularly in mitigating the effects of slow violence.
5. To propose a transformative generosity-based educational framework for addressing slow violence across diverse educational settings.

Following the stated objectives, the following research questions were established:

1. What factors contribute to slow violence and its various manifestations within societal and educational contexts?
2. How do principles of generosity, transcendence, and transformation in primary school learners inform a coherent educational framework anchored in peacebuilding?
3. What are the key components of a model that integrates humanitarian service as a pedagogical approach within a generosity-based framework?
4. How does generosity-based education influence learner agency, motivation, and well-being, particularly in mitigating the effects of slow violence?
5. How can a generosity-based educational framework be adopted as a transformative model to address the impact of slow violence in diverse educational settings?

1.6 Research design and methodology

Mouton (1996:107) provides the following explanation of research design:

...as a set of guidelines and instructions to be followed in addressing the research problem. The main function of a research design is to enable the researcher to anticipate what the research decisions should be to maximise the validity of the eventual results.

In qualitative research, Bhattacharjee (2012) identifies two main types of validity: face validity and content validity. Face validity looks at whether a measure appears, at first glance, to represent what it is intended to measure. For example, using how often people attend religious services as an indicator of religiosity demonstrates face validity because it seems like a reasonable measure. However, using the number of books borrowed from an office library to gauge employee morale lacks face validity since it does not logically fit the concept. Content validity, on the other hand, assesses how well a set of questions or items represents the full scope of the concept being measured. For instance, when evaluating satisfaction with restaurant service, the questions must cover relevant aspects such as food quality, staff behaviour, wait time, and ambience. If these areas are not included, the measure lacks sufficient content validity.

This study approached the research problem by examining the relevant literature and conducting the investigation in a primary school's empirical setting. The learners' experiences and input were recorded as accurately as possible to ensure the validity of the outcome. Efforts were made to achieve both face validity, by ensuring that the methods used appeared to measure the learners' experiences appropriately, and content validity, by ensuring that the collected data addressed all relevant aspects of the research focus.

The research methodological paradigm for this study was established on qualitative inquiry. My qualitative research is characterised by adopting abductive reasoning (Brinkmann 2014) to examine one's social world and, in that process, to develop a theory consistent with one's observations (Esterberg 2002). Bhattacharjee (2012) asserts that observations in social science can be unreliable because of the observer's subjectivity, imprecise or ambiguous questions, and inquiring about issues unfamiliar to or unimportant to respondents. To enhance reliability, the observer should also make use of added techniques such as asking questions. Ask questions that respondents can accurately answer or care about. These strategies can improve reliability, though they do not guarantee complete reliability. I applied qualitative research as described by Cassell and Symon (1994 cited in Kohlbacher 2006:2) which is:

A focus on interpretation rather than quantification; an emphasis on subjectivity rather than objectivity; flexibility in the process of conducting research; an orientation towards process rather than outcome; a concern with context – regarding behaviour and situation as inextricably linked in forming experience; and finally, an explicit recognition of the impact of the research process on the research situation.

The research methodology used in this study included:

- I conducted a literature review of my focus area of study that included slow violence, violent conditions, theories of PB, transformational and transcendence studies, education as well as related literature on research methodologies.
- This study was a case study, particularly with learners at a primary school.
- The study embraced Participatory Action Research (PAR), as well as engaged with auto-ethnographic research to provide a richer text to the study.
- The case study was an idiographic case study, which as a result of COVID-19, required that I make use of a small sample of twelve learners for the study. This method is presented in Chapter 5.
- I focused mainly on focused group sessions, narrative writing, conversations and questions of an open-ended nature; this I found was more suitable to the type of learner I engaged with.
- I made use of Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) to analyse and describe the results of this study.
- A conclusion and recommendations provide the last sections of the study.

1.7 Sampling

The purpose of any research project is to establish connections through the sample. The sample is chosen based on specific variables to support a theory or hypothesis and inform the research findings. In qualitative research, the sample is derived from various social data

categories, which are recorded as subjective statements rather than objective statements. Sampling, as defined by Bless and Higson-Smith (1995: 85) is the selection of "objects, persons, events... from which information will be drawn."

Purposive sampling was the preferred technique in this case, as it allowed me to discover, understand, and gain insight into the learners' everyday lives. It also facilitated a closer connection between myself and the participants, rather than me solely being a researcher. Adapting to the new school environment post-COVID-19 was a challenge, as many of the learners I had initially started with had either left school or moved on to high school which occurred during the pandemic.

The school principal assisted in selecting a sample of twelve learners from grades 5 and 6. They were chosen based on their academic potential and character traits. The majority of the learners were girls, with only one male learner.

1.8 Data collection and data analysis

According to Patton (in Merriam 1991: 67-68), qualitative data consist of

detailed descriptions of situations, events, people, interactions, and observed behaviours, direct quotations from people about their experiences, attitudes, beliefs and thoughts, and excerpts or entire passages from documents, correspondence, records and case history.

This description fits my study as I engage with primary school learners and most of them would rather converse respond to interrogation. When collecting data, careful attention was given to authenticity, accuracy, suitable methods, integrity and cognizance of other studies done that share common grounds. Data collection was done affording the participants the freedom in determining the process of inquiry. This is acceptable in IPA as the collection process must be used flexibly, and even "when it is preferable to abandon structure and to follow the concerns of the participant" (Smith et al. 2009: 64). This is similar to what is expressed by Jarratt, (1996: 9) that data collection can follow an open structure to enable the exploration of "unexpected facts or attitudes" that may emerge.

The data gathering framework included:

- A literature review,
- The study made use of narrative writing, conversation and observations to obtain data,
- The analysis of the data (content analysis) was done by applying interpretative phenomenological analysis,

- The data gathered using IPA was done independently of any user satisfaction models and instruments.

There are several steps to follow when implementing IPA. Typically, an analysis is described as an iterative and inductive cycle (Smith 2007, cited in Smith et al. 2009). This cyclical process might involve various strategies (Smith et al. 2009). Firstly, exploring each participant's experiential claims, concerns, and understanding of a phenomenon is conducted. Next, emergent themes are identified. The data is then categorised through dialogue between the researcher and participant, or through the reading of personal scripts or narratives, aiming to capture the meaning of the emerging aspects during the process.

A framework is constructed to illustrate the relationships between the themes. A format is developed to depict the entire process of theme development, from initial comments to a final list of identified themes. Collaboration with others is sought to establish coherence and plausibility of interpretation. Finally, a narrative of the themes is created to describe the interpretive meanings of the data.

The results of the data analysis explored linkages between factors such as learner behaviour, motivation and incentives such as food security, well-being and dignity in the broad multifaceted sense.

1.9 Ethical considerations

This study followed the guidelines required for all research ethics. The Durban University of Technology's Ethics Committee approved the study to be undertaken. I had the privilege to participate with primary school learners with the consent of the learners themselves, their parents, the school principal and staff. It is essential that when working with young learners permission must be granted. This was supplied to me by the Western Cape Department of Education and the School Governing Body. This study remains committed to upholding the ethic of confidentiality and integrity and that also exists with the supervisor and anyone connected with reviewing this thesis (Ellis 2007).

1.10 Validity and reliability

Validity and reliability are key aspects of all research. According to Brink (1993), qualitative researchers are more concerned with people's beliefs, experiences, and systems of meaning, rather than causal laws. The methods used in qualitative research are subjective and do not involve statistical analysis or empirical calculations. Instead, phenomena are viewed in their entirety and within their social context. Brink (1993) states that qualitative researchers should

refrain from using terms such as validity and reliability. Instead, they utilise terms such as credibility, trustworthiness, truth, value, applicability, consistency, and confirmability when discussing the criteria for evaluating the scientific merit of qualitative research. This viewpoint is supported by Noble and Smith (2015) who outline the elements associated with viability and reliability as follows: truth value (validity), consistency (reliability), and applicability.

The truth value (validity) acknowledges the existence of multiple realities. The researchers acknowledge that their personal experiences and viewpoints may have influenced their methodology. The participants' perspectives are presented clearly and accurately.

Consistency (reliability) refers to the reliability of the methods used, which relies on the researcher keeping a clear and transparent record of their decisions. Ultimately, an independent researcher should be able to reach similar or comparable findings. Neutrality, or confirmability, is achieved when the truth value, consistency, and applicability have been addressed. It is important to recognise the complexity of engaging with participants over a long period, and that the methods used and findings obtained are inherently linked to the researcher's philosophical stance, experiences, and perspectives. These factors should be taken into account and distinguished from the participants' accounts.

Applicability refers to whether findings can be applied to other contexts, settings or groups. According to Punch (1998 cited in Roberts and Priest 2006) applicability in case studies can occur in two ways: by conceptualising or developing propositions. Conceptualisation is the creation of concepts or themes as a means to define complex issues emanating from qualitative studies of an in-depth nature. In the second instance, a researcher develops propositions around a hypothesis that seeks to link factors or themes within a particular case. This study adopts the first approach in developing themes or concepts and generalises the results concerning its aims and objectives.

1.11 Limitations of this study

The limitation of this study was primarily impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. I lost all of the learners who had been participants in this study before the pandemic. These had partially been involved in certain projects, but when the pandemic broke out contact was lost, and any further studies with these learners were not possible.

After the pandemic, when we could return to school, many of these learners were at high school, and some fell along the wayside. I then, with the help of the principal worked with a

new set of learners. They were not part of the original group, and I had to adjust my strategy due to my timeframe, working only with twelve learners, and only on a Thursday.

Our focus was then mainly on developing a humanitarian service perspective among these learners with the intent to develop a sense of self-transcendence and consequent context transcendence sensitivity.

This thesis is a subsequent development out of this second group of learners.

1.12 Rationale of the study

The significance of this study was to highlight that violent conditions are pervasive in the everyday lives of learners. Furthermore, it emphasises that through education, employing appropriate fields of enquiry and intervention, learners can develop personal autonomy, well-being and a strong sense of social accountability and responsibility. In addition, education of this nature can lead to diminishing personal traumas and dangers that can be associated with food insecurities and hunger.

The study aimed to identify specific aspects or policies that could be integrated into education, curriculum design, and support systems to contribute to the effectiveness of the context transcendence framework. One of the objectives of the study was to develop and test a model that would be part of the framework. The details of the model are presented in Chapter 7. The model is called the “Transformative Slow Violence Model” (Figure 7.3, Chapter 7) to empower learners to overcome the pervasive impacts of structural violence, particularly those arising from poverty, hunger, and related complex social conflicts. This model is rooted in a generous-based educational framework aligned with peacebuilding (PB) principles, incorporating both transcendent and transformational elements. Anchored in Freire’s (1970) concept of ‘true generosity,’ this framework provides a strategic approach to mitigate the infiltration of slow violence into learners’ daily lives. The generous-based educational framework functions as a process model that integrates moral imperatives to address the effects of slow violence, guiding learners along a pathway toward personal and social transcendence.

Generosity plays a central role in this study’s aim by serving as a foundational principle within an educational framework that counters the effects of slow violence on learners. Unlike charity-based models, which focus on alleviating immediate needs and risks perpetuating dependency, the transformative paradigm encourages examining the structural policies and conditions that create inequities (Verjee 2010). This aligns with Freire’s (1970, 1999) concept of “true generosity,” which involves dismantling the structures that perpetuate disadvantage.

Generous-based education adopts a Freirean approach, embracing the concept of 'true generosity' as a transformative, justice-oriented pedagogy rooted in critical service learning. True generosity addresses both symptoms and root causes of oppression and requires collaborative actions for social transformation. Freire (1970) distinguishes between two types of generosity: false generosity and true generosity, discussed below.

1.12.1 False Generosity

According to Freire (1970: 44), any attempt to “soften” the power of the oppressor in deference to the weakness of the oppressed almost always manifests itself in the form of false generosity; indeed, the attempt never goes beyond this. To have the continued opportunity to express their “generosity”, the oppressors must perpetuate injustice as well. An unjust social order is the permanent fount of this “generosity,” which is nourished by death, despair, and poverty. That is why the dispensers of false generosity become desperate at the slightest threat to its source.

Tolbert et al. (2023: 165) posit that the concept described by Freire, that of false generosity, conceals oppression by providing opportunities that seem to promote fairness but allow injustices to persist. False generosity is characterised as charity rather than systemic transformation. False generosity is driven by capitalist concepts of freedom and individual rights. In other words, generosity within a capitalist framework is supported by the belief that individuals are “free” to allocate their resources as they wish. In a capitalist system, making a social impact is tied to the accumulation of wealth. Darder and Torres (2004 cited in Tolbert et al. 2023: 166) argue that false generosity can also be seen in “the process of unequal privilege and entitlement ... camouflage[d] under the guise of ‘fair and equal’ opportunity for all students.” Tolbert et al. (2023) highlight several examples attributed to false generosity. One of those forms we often observe is in education where discourses which serve to position social justice work at the margins.

1.12.2 True generosity

True generosity involves destabilising and reimagining systems rather than maintaining the status quo. According to Freire, true generosity entails actively fighting against the root causes that perpetuate false generosity. This can be achieved by denouncing oppressive conditions and advocating for new liberatory alternatives. Tolbert et al. (2023: 171-174) argue that true generosity encompasses several aspects, including having political clarity, reclaiming our autonomy to define ourselves and our actions, and building solidarities across diverse communities in the pursuit of justice. Instead of replicating the dominant ideology, educators

can challenge it and take risks in doing so. The practice of true generosity necessitates political clarity, where educators must understand whom and what they are advocating for and also identify the forces they are opposing. Furthermore, true generosity involves reclaiming autonomy, which Freire believes is the ultimate goal and prerequisite for liberatory education. According to Freire, autonomy, not individual freedom, should be the focus. This means that true freedom cannot be achieved if others are still oppressed, especially in a neoliberal capitalist society that prioritises individual choice over collective well-being. Until his death, Paulo Freire firmly believed that radical change in power structures was crucial to transforming society. He recognised that such change requires solidarity and a personal transformation that leads to identification, solidarity, and shared struggle with the oppressed (Tolbert et al. 2023).

As an educational approach, generosity underscores the integration of moral awareness with acts of kindness, empathy, and compassion, fostering a transformative environment where learners are encouraged to support one another and develop collective resilience. Transformative or social justice paradigms in education emphasise a service ethic that promotes active engagement with communities to address both the symptoms and root causes of inequity (Verjee 2010; Kugonza et al. 2015). Ogden (2001 cited in Verjee 2010) asserts that service learning should extend beyond personal growth to address broader social contexts, investigating root causes of issues such as hunger, reflecting continuously on purpose, and striving for meaningful social action. Through this lens, service-learning serves as both a method of inquiry and a form of political action aimed at systemic social change. Grounded in critical pedagogy, this approach encourages students to examine community-defined concerns critically and collaboratively.

This focus on generosity enables learners to transcend their immediate challenges and fosters a mindset of constructive engagement to bring about change. In essence, generosity equips learners with the tools to create a positive impact, transforming their perspective from one that is constrained by adversity to one that sees potential for growth and mutual care. Thus, generosity is not only a value but a transformative method within the framework, helping to counter slow violence by promoting a supportive, empathetic approach to education and well-being.

1.13 Structure of thesis:

Chapter 1: Introduction. This chapter provides the overall scope, objectives and methodological approach of the study.

Chapter 2: An auto-ethnographic discourse: This chapter delved deeper into the context and background of this study. The study is located within an area referred to as “die gat” which rests on the outskirts of the Cape Flats suburb of Factreton.

Chapter 3: Theoretical Framework: This chapter explores the theories of Lederach and Galtung to form the basis for a study on context transference.

Chapter 4: Literature Review: The literature review chapter is divided into subcategories to reflect literature that breathes as well as literature that adheres to conventional academic standards.

Chapter 5: Research Design: this study is based on the qualitative research approach. It makes use of IPA, which is known as an idiographic case study (Smith et al. 2009). This method is useful when a small number of candidates are interviewed, which enables me to either write up a single case or explore themes shared between different cases.

Chapter 6: Findings: This study has highlighted the context-specific nature impacted through slow violence that confronts learners daily. Theirs is a life of poverty and unemployment.

Chapter 7: Data analysis: This study promotes the view that children do matter, and they become the main focus of this aspect in the analysis of data. The analysis aims to find the voice of the learner, no matter if the voice is disjointed or not. The study uses the lens of “child as method” to make sense of the analysis concerning the central value children or “child learners” hold within this study.

Chapter 8: Discussion: This study focused on exploring how deliberately applying a context transcendence framework, taking into account social, cultural psychological and educational factors, can significantly enhance learner transformation compared to traditional CT methods.

Chapter 9: Conclusion: This study has highlighted the severe problems children experience with food insecurity and malnutrition. Food insecurity is a situation brought on by violent conditions, and as such this.

1.14 Conclusion

This study sheds light on the pervasive effects of slow violence on the lives of primary school learners, especially those living in marginalized communities such as Factreton, Cape Town. By conceptualizing slow violence as a form of sustained harm that impacts learners' educational and personal development, the study sought to understand how conditions of

poverty, hunger, and social conflict create significant barriers to learning and well-being. The study's primary aim was to develop a Transformative Slow Violence Model rooted in a Generous-Based Education (GBE) framework. This model was designed to empower learners to transcend their difficult circumstances by fostering resilience, agency, and humanitarian awareness.

Drawing on concepts of "poor pedagogy" (Masschelein 2010), serendipitous learning (Lederach, 2005), and Freire's problem-posing education (1970), the study adapted an open-ended, exploratory approach that views the "child as a method." This approach foregrounded learners' experiences, using their perspectives to understand the impacts of structural violence on their daily lives. By incorporating humanitarian service as a pedagogical approach, the GBE framework encouraged learners to engage in acts of kindness, empathy, and critical reflection, allowing them to develop a transformative mindset that goes beyond the classroom.

Despite limitations, particularly the disruption caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, the study achieved its objectives. It demonstrated that a generosity-based framework can mitigate the effects of slow violence by cultivating self-transcendence and social consciousness among learners. This study highlights the potential for educational reforms that prioritize humanitarian engagement and well-being over conventional metrics of academic success, advocating for policy changes that address the needs of learners from impoverished backgrounds. Through this model, the study offers a path toward a more inclusive and transformative education that empowers learners to envision and work toward a more just and equitable future.

CHAPTER 2: BACKGROUND: AN AUTO-ETHNOGRAPHIC DISCOURSE

2.1 Introduction

This chapter explores the multifaceted realities affecting individuals and communities in socio-geographic contexts, especially those facing systemic social and economic disadvantages. Using an auto-ethnographic approach, it examines how place profoundly impacts identity, stigma, and social dynamics. Focusing on Facticeon and *die gat*, the chapter investigates how stigmatization, structural racism, and environmental hardship shape residents' experiences. The analysis utilises theoretical frameworks and first-hand observations to highlight the enduring effects of place-based stigma, historical injustices, and the intergenerational transmission of trauma and disadvantage.

2.2 Sense of place and identity

No matter where we come from, we develop a sense of place. Some places provide us a sense of emotional attachment, others we have dislodged from our mind as either harmful and violent and best forgotten. Place inscribes a deeply ingrained personal and social story in our experiential landscape. This experience may either be temporal, as passing through a town, or more permanent, as somewhere we stay. According to Tuan (1975) and Cele (2006), the place is a centre of meaning which is constructed by experience and which is not easily forgotten.

2.2.1 Stigma

All places have identities, but some places also have reputations (Kearns et al. 2013: 1). Places also have “area stigma”. Kearns et al. (2002: 4) make a distinction between reputation and stigma:

- Reputation is a transmission process that can result in negative or positive beliefs,
- Stigma is a social interactive process with wholly negative effects.

Stigma can have several consequences, one of which is a form of symbolic violence and hegemony, as a result, those who are thus stigmatised and discriminated against “often and even accept the stigma that they are subjected to”, and because of this, “the ability to resist the forces that discriminate against them is limited’ (Kearns et al. 2013: 4). According to Moser and McIlwaine (2002: 69) area stigma, or prejudice, is an important constraint on people. Such

prejudice can, for example, limit employment opportunities, as those people living in the area, are associated with delinquency, drug consumption and robbery.

There are several ways that area stigma impact upon people, based on the study on a community in Colombia. People articulated some of these as being viewed as squatters; they fight with the authorities to be recognised; they are grouped with thieves, criminals, and crime syndicates; the authorities don't protect the population; they are made to feel responsible for the many deaths of inhabitants; families don't come to visit; they are looked at unfairly and are excluded; they are ignored adequate service delivery; they won't be given employment if they reveal where they come from (Moser and McIlwaine 2002: 69). Odoms-Young (2018: 2) writes that studies refer to structural racism as "the totality of ways, in which societies foster racial discrimination, via mutually reinforcing inequitable systems (such as housing, employment, earnings, benefits, credit, media, health care and criminal justice)...structural racism acknowledges the influence of historic and contemporary policies and practices that are deeply rooted within systems." Based on Moser and McIlwaine's (2002) understanding and impact, the area stigma perspective is oppressive, soul-destroying, dehumanising and engenders violence and conflict. This is a perspective not only borne by people who are living in this area but also propagated by outsiders who are fed such information through the media, politicians and businesses (Kearns: 2013: 4). In a study by Matthews (2015: 25), the stories shared by the participants describe both the stigma of some neighbourhoods and conversely, the "elective belonging of the middle-classes and also the sense of home of working-class families in their neighbourhoods".

A place can be described as either welcoming and pleasant, or hostile and aggressive (Trell and van Hoven 2010). According to Trell and van Hoven (2010) inquiry about the place has usually looked at representational aspects and indirect ways of understanding a specific locality. However, what usually was missing, for example, were people's encounters that went beyond the visual perception or communication of place. According to Thrift (2008 cited in Trell and van Hoven 2010: 92) when we use all of our senses what we become capable of is observing the "event-ness of the world" as well as the "intricate details that constitute the everyday lives and experiences of our research participants in a specific place."

2.2.2 Die gat

Die gat, which rests on the outskirts of the Cape Flats suburb of Factreton, is a place upon which heavy fatigue rests. It cannot be otherwise as the surroundings are splattered with dreary and uninspiring images as far as the eye can see. Featureless is the landscape and

sparse greenery hardly excites aesthetic appeal in this area. What is there to say about this area but only the truth: the place is lacklustre. Those who live here create rhythms of life to match this monotony. The unemployed sleepwalk into the day, and loiter with friends on street corners, or will be playing cards or dominoes on crowded pavements, or just sitting on wobbly mineral crates idly talking about habitual stuff. Pain (2021: 974-5) provocatively makes use of the word clasp to evoke the image of individuals being held or forcefully gripped to a place where negative experiences linger and have no way of easy escape:

As a noun, clasp indicates the mutuality of the grip of place and trauma as an interlocking mechanism, while as a verb, clasping implies that this grip is ongoing and continually remade.

Every home squeals with dilapidation, mouldy walls, drafts and ample amounts of dust and dirt. The rusty corrugated iron or shoddy wooden structures have appeal, mainly as artistic impressions, but for these people, they reflect stigma and ridicule.



Figure 2.1: “Treintjies” (Source: Bernice Cunningham)

The local inhabitants have at one stage called their tightly packed rows of houses “treintjies” which colloquially translates to “little trains.” These structures are adjoined end to end which offer as much space as a railway carriage (Mail and Guardian 1997). As I meandered about the area I saw the corrugated iron sheets held down with cement blocks or old tyres to prevent gusts of winds from blowing them away. During winter months, rotten and musty smells linger

in the air of these homes as raindrops leak through roofs and walls either settling onto cold floors or being caught in buckets.

Even, at the cradle of their birth, as children are starting in life, the void of warmth and comfort is palpable. The detached expression of a young mother as she looks down at her newborn child is like her staring at a painting but has no clue what the painting reflects. The mother, like most in her area, has no hopeful vision to conjure up a “human faith in the near future” that will turn out better (Camus 1960: 63). They live for today, for the now, not in the way of motivational books such as *The Power of Now* (Tolle 2004), but as ones who constantly have to ‘reinvent’ themselves to survive. They live lives where individualist pleasures of leisure are not a given but share lives of agony with neighbours, all inescapably constricted by their circumstances (Tolle 2004: 64).



Figure 2.2: Backyard dwelling (Bernice Cunningham)

The joy they have is in talking and cavorting. But their talk is not conversation. They talk at each other and more likely than not they talk past each other, and this invariably may misfire, leading to arguments, suspicions or fights. What saves them in coping with these inhospitable conditions is having cultivated habits to endure such glumness. They do not panic, just take it as it comes, and when it comes it is “almost always without having time to realise it” (Tolle 2004: 72). Often one hears of desires to want to break free, but as soon as these desires stir, individuals withdraw within themselves, like a tortoise draws back into its shell. Children are sent to school hopefully to be schooled in courage, willpower and endurance, to help in the

endeavours to break free. And yet history has not moved on and repeats itself from generation to generation. Those who live in the area have what can be described as bleak lives.

2.2.3 Shared experiences and risk

Yehuda and Lehrner (2018) provide growing evidence that parental trauma can influence offspring, even before their birth or conception. Intergenerational trauma suggests that exposure to profoundly negative events affects individuals so deeply that their children also struggle with the resulting post-traumatic conditions. Furthermore, Butler (2004) asserts that a relation exists between our conditions and acts. Our actions are not self-generated, but conditioned. It is our responsible task to manage these two entities in our lives. Whether these are necessarily well understood, or even apparent to us, requires compassion, especially with children, whose lived legacies have always struggled to balance these entities.

For instance, according to the University of Cape Town (UCT) online site ‘ChildenCount’², multiple factors explain why some children may be exposed to violence. To prevent violence against children we need to understand both the scale of the problem as well as the risk and protective factors driving it (See Table 2.1). Amanda and Kathleen (2004) assert that the term “at risk” refers to a “set of presumed cause-and-effect dynamics that place the child or adolescent in danger of negative future events”. This means that a young person “at risk” of developing any particular behaviour or attitude may not necessarily have adopted that behaviour or attitude yet. However, his/her social and environmental circumstances and present coping behaviours suggest the potential for him/her to adopt that particular behaviour.

Table 2.1: Risk and Protective Factors (Source: UCT, 2024)

Risk and Protective Factors		
Setting	Risk Factors	Protective Factors
In Society	Income inequality and social exclusion Social norms supporting violence Inadequate criminal justice response Inadequate prevention services Gender inequality	Positive role models, gender equality, and alternatives to violence in media Quality education and employment opportunities Social protection programs (e.g. grants) Access to prevention, early intervention, and protection services Strong legislative framework Weapon and alcohol controls

² University of Cape Town (UCT), <https://ci.uct.ac.za/children-count>

In the Community	Crime, gang, and interpersonal violence Access to alcohol, drugs, and weapons Poverty and unemployment Low community cohesion Limited support services Limited access to services	Strong, accountable community leadership Social support and cohesion Access to health and social support services Positive activities for children and youth Age-appropriate childcare facilities Gun control and improved safety measures Improving the built environment
In Schools	Poor school management Limited reporting mechanisms Access to drugs and weapons Involvement with delinquent peers Failure to hold perpetrators accountable	Safe places to play after school Supportive school environment Inclusive teaching approach Constructive conflict resolution Strong management and educator training Zero tolerance for violence and bullying Effective implementation of safety policies
In the Home	Caregiver stress Family violence Alcohol, drug abuse, or involvement in crime Poor supervision of children Approval and use of physical punishment Children's developmental capacity Inadequate support from family and friends - Overcrowding of sleeping quarters	Healthy communication Non-violent discipline Family cohesion and support Sensitive, affectionate, and positive parenting Understanding children's needs and development Close relationship between caregiver and child

The difficulties the people in the area face have no fancy definition, they know it only as hardship. They can manifest 'common human feelings', a term coined by Camus (Camus: 1960: 82) in his novel *The Plague*, however, hardship may stunt their capacity to show respect, appreciation, gratitude, charity and so forth.

What brings comfort to these people is that within the daily tabloids they read, they encounter stories of people in similar circumstances to theirs, mostly about poverty, violence and crime. These are stories they relate to and widely share, as these provide a sense of interconnectedness that softens their own stories. Sadly, these people do not feel alarmed when they hear about the shame and silence young girls carry about with them, as some of them are constantly also exposed to harsh and violent masculinities.

2.2.4 Anger

Morrison (2007: 48) posits that anger is better than shame; shame recedes into self-pity and resignation, whilst “there is a sense of being in anger; a reality and presence, an awareness of worth”. But anger also has a downside, as it may lead to hatred and other forms of human hurt, and can contribute a great deal to ill health throughout communities. For example, sons threaten mothers, or parents with guns or weapons; the young adapt to gang violence; they hide and watch and when the fighting is over continue to play their games as if a slight temporary nuisance just entered their space. They are used to being bystanders.

Their lives are threatened by anger every day, bystander is not something to be frowned upon as noncommittal; this is an elitist view. Poverty has taught them resignation (Camus and Gilbert 1960: 238). And this resignation, I believe, has provided the poor with voices that are endlessly angry, filled with verbal abuse and vulgarity, and actions to harm, steal and fight. Berry (2012: 82) writes that

we must recognise that a dishonest or wasteful or violent life is a great danger to the world as a weapon of war, and the violence of neighbours is the model for the violence of nations, and the hope for order in the world fails in a disorderly household.

Poverty cannot be blamed, but poverty with miserableness, endless monotony and social ridicule set the stage for self-inflicted pain. These characteristics hardly can permit room for a feeling of empathy. Moreover, as everyone believes themselves to be in the same boat and given the pervasive sadness of their situation, they feel capable of shouldering empathy to only a certain degree.

Here, I attempt to describe the depth of feelings associated with being a resident of the community. In addition to the sounds of armed conflict and gang-related violence, the inhabitants living here are also tortured mostly by the sound they hear raging within them. Murray Schafer (cited in Butler and Nooter 2018: 2) writes that “the sense of hearing cannot be closed off at will. There are no earlids. When we go to sleep, our perception of sound is the last door to close and it is also the first to open when we awaken...The eye points outward; the ear draws inward. It soaks up information”. Stollery (2021) writes how sounds that are normally ‘hidden’ to us, were revealed during the COVID pandemic. People were asked to send sound recordings about what they heard during the lockdown period. As sounds of planes and traffic became rare, people began to hear more natural sounds, even in cities. Stollery suggests that listening to places is fundamentally important to us as human beings, emphasizing how, by preserving these sound memories, we deepen our understanding of our

relationship with places and our own identities. However, sounds that spring from people's hearts can encompass frustration, hastiness, and deep-seated screams that emanate from the depths of their souls, having an effect beyond sleep and visiting them as they dream (Gallagher 2016). Rarely do they hear the same deep screams originating from others, including their offspring. Everybody remains preoccupied with trying to suppress these inner sounds, to fulfil their daily obligations. Unfortunately, as much as they try, the magnitude of the onslaught is too great to attain this measure of silence. Although the people do not lead secluded lives, for they all share the same prevailing hollowed pains of their surroundings, one gets the sense they are isolated within themselves. And it may be within these internal confines they find space to pray or release their deepest sighs.

However, according to Tuck and McKenzie (2014: 19), critical place inquiry understands place among other considerations "as themselves mobile, shifting over time and through interactions with flows of people, other species, social practices." Furthermore, "it is the specificity, the rootedness of place, that makes it so important in social science and human imagination" (Tuck and McKenzie 2014: 21). As I wrote this, I wondered about what forms human imagination reveals in such rootedness of place, especially a place like "die gat." Is it that these people are condemned to suffer and then to die? This should be hated.

2.3 Factreton: Place of violent conditions

Burton (2008) argues that youth in violent environments whether in schools, communities, or families, acquire negative social capital (NSC), shaped by distorted perceptions of identity, self, and worth. A key example of NSC in this study is the concept of 'violent pedagogy,' where violence becomes a method for problem-solving. This study aligns with Nanetti's (2016: 132) assertion that conflict transformation requires more than nonviolent campaigns; it also demands structural change. Boeck (2011: 2) emphasizes that understanding individuals requires an analysis of the ties that bind them, and how they navigate these relationships. Social capital, which has both structural and cultural dimensions (Coleman, Putnam, Bourdieu, cited in Boeck, 2011: 21) is viewed by Van Deth (2008: 151, cited in Boeck, 2011: 21) as "accumulated wealth"—a fund that requires investment for future benefits. While research on social capital has primarily focused on adults, Boeck (2011: 1) notes a significant gap in studies involving young people. Disillusioned by a lack of prospects, young people often seek status and belonging by joining extremist, violent groups like gangs or adopting extreme social and political beliefs (Morrow et al. 2016).

Shaw and Skywater (2017: 1) describe Cape Town as a place of violence with 60 homicides per 100,000 residents for 2015/2016, most of these are confined to marginalised so-called coloured or mixed-race areas. Most of the violence in these areas is closely linked to the city's drug economy and the proliferation of firearms (Shaw and Skywater 2017:1). Although the murder rate has declined, South Africa continues to face a high number of homicides. According to SA Police Service reports between April 2022 and March 2023, around 27,500 people were murdered, averaging 75 deaths per day. Experts link this persistently high rate to a combination of complex factors, including worsening economic conditions, decreased police presence, increased access to firearms, and a rise in organized crime (The Outlier 2023).

According to Benninger and Savahl (2017; Field 1990; Bowers Du Toit, 2014), the roots of systemic violence and oppression in South Africa can be traced back to the colonial era of the 1600s, which was characterized by expansion, conquest, and enslavement. This period laid the foundation for institutionalized structural racism, which has perpetuated 'White' advantage through the exploitation of 'Black' populations. In the post-apartheid era, South Africa faces growing disparities in social, health, and economic domains, with poverty affecting more than half of the country's children. Cape Town is recognised as South Africa's most violent and socially unequal city (Savahl et al. 2013; Brown-Luthango 2020; Lambrechts, 2024).

Criminal economies flourish in the city's marginalized areas (Lambrechts 2024). The 2018/2019 State of Urban Safety in South Africa report³ attributes high crime and violence rates to the availability of alcohol, drugs, and firearms. Gangs and their drug trade significantly contribute to this violence. The South African Police Services estimate gang membership in Cape Town exceeds 100,000, rooted in the city's historical and social context. Prominent gangs include the Americans, Hard Livings, Clever Kids, Junky Funky Kids, Terrible Josters, Mongrels, and Fancy Boys, alongside prison gangs like the Number Gangs, comprising the 26s, 27s, and 28s.

³ <https://www.sacities.net/publication/the-state-of-urban-safety-in-south-african-cities-report-2018-19/>

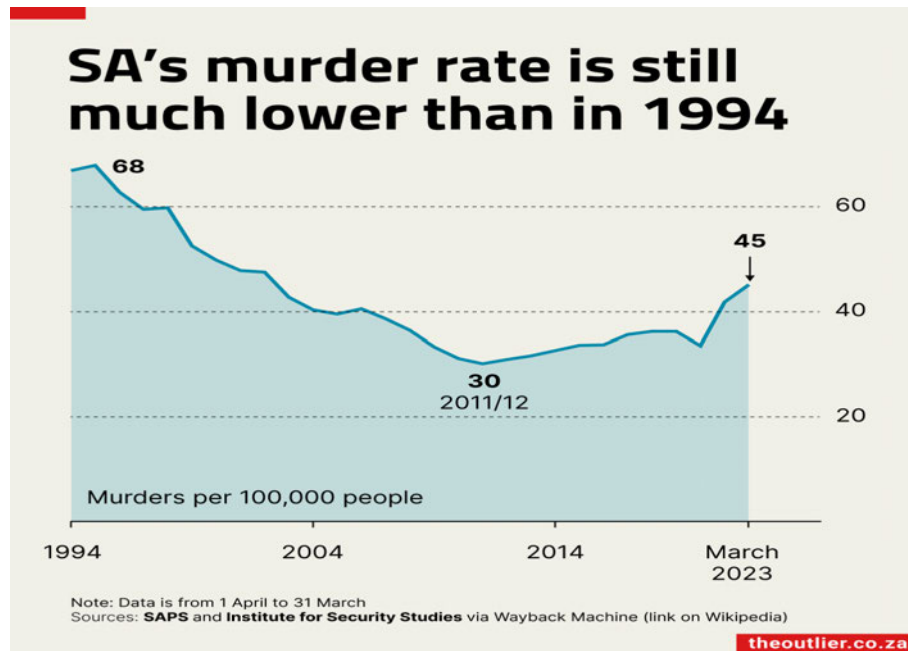


Figure 2.3: South Africa's murder rate (Source: <https://charts.theoutlier.co.za/>)

Gangs control public transport routes, drug manufacturing and distribution, and engage in daily territorial shootings (Lambrechts 2024). The Western Cape Police report that one-third of all attempted murders in the province are gang-related. Goga et al. (2014 cited in Brown-Luthango, 2020) note that many youths join gangs for protection, opportunities, and belonging due to unemployment and lack of social support networks.

Johnson (2023) stated that townships created during the era of Apartheid reflected three main features: (i) their positioning on the outskirts of the city emphasised White dominance over the urban core; (ii) townships were bounded by vast expanses of land to separate them from neighbouring areas and serve as military posts during uprisings; and (iii), having just a single main road entrance and a complex network of interconnecting streets, townships were deliberately constructed to trap residents and compel the formation of a community based on racial lines. A perfect example of this is the Voortrekker Road Corridor (Figure 2.4) where communities like Kensington and Facreton can easily be closed off in times of protests and violent uprisings. These communities are even cut off from the more affluent Canal Walk shopping centre, and travelling by car they need to take a roundabout route to get to the mall.

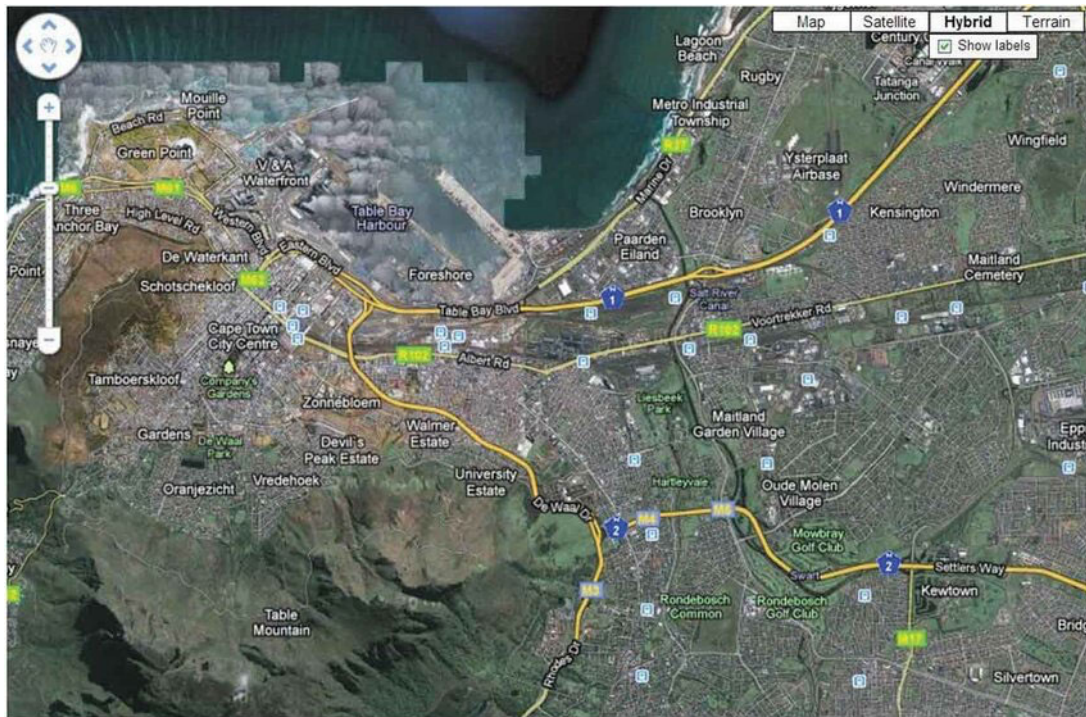


Figure 2.4: Map of Cape Town with Voortrekker Road Corridor and Study Sites: Maitland, Kensington and Fackreton/Windermere (Source: Brown-Luthango, M., 2020)

The implementation of the Group Areas Act subjected Coloureds to a permanent settlement policy in exchange for providing cheap labour, ultimately resulting in curtailed urban growth marked by poverty, limited prospects, and unequal and insufficient social welfare services. Fataar (2007 cited by Johnson 2023) describes the Cape Flats as characterised by overcrowded housing, lack of motivation, high fertility rates, substance abuse, criminal behaviour, and a sense of powerlessness.

This study identified a fractured community and explored how a school within the area can be transformed to become a PB asset. Based on census statistics of 1996 Fackreton had a population of 12, 277 of which the level of education indicated that those with matric were 911 and those who had no schooling added to 1, 076. The census of 2001 and 2011 combined the two adjacent areas of Kensington and Fackreton which recorded the population respectively as 25 538 and 26 516. The Sunday Times (2014) reports that 71% of the people living in Kensington and Fackreton are unemployed, and within the first half of that same year 254 domestic violence complaints have been laid in the area. The identified community for this study is Fackreton, a northern suburb situated about 9 kilometres from Cape Town. Fackreton has a history of struggling with gang violence, and police have confirmed that it has

once again resurfaced in the area. The Cape Times (2017) report that in Kensington and Factreton the ratio of police officers per person was around one to 11000.

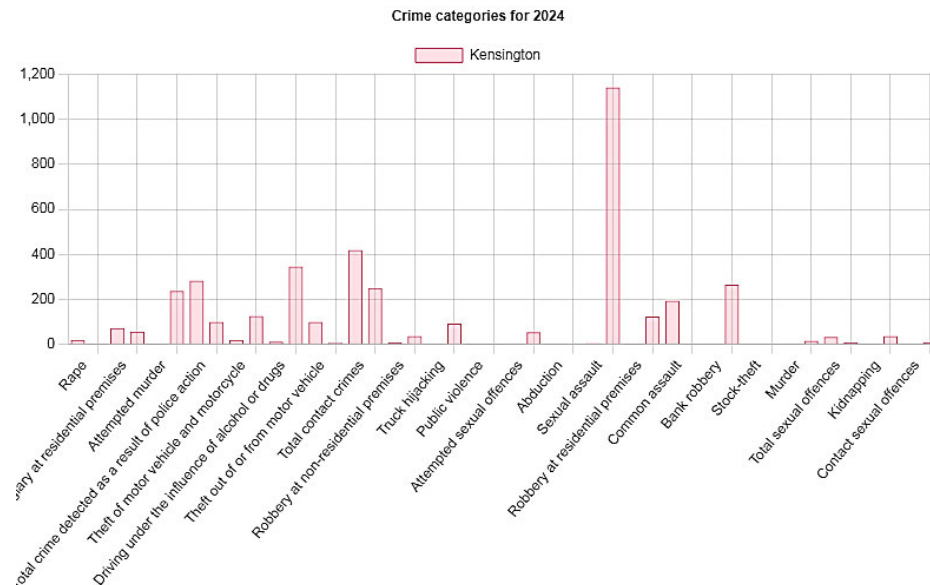


Figure 2.5: Crime statistics for Kensington police precinct 2024 (Source: <https://crimehub.org/wizard#quarterly=true>)

The chart in Figure 2.5 indicates crime statistics for Kensington police precinct 2024. However, upon follow-up to verify this data was afterwards not available online. However, the following information was available as of the 8th of September 2024.

According to Wyngaard (2013), many of the children growing up in this area are either orphaned or live in single-parent dwellings. They are orphaned as a result of divorce, gang-related violence, long prison terms and tuberculosis because of unhygienic living spaces. Many children, some as young as ten years old, are reported to have dropped out of school and become substance abusers. Wyngaard (2013) asserts that the streets within the community are designated to rival gangs and gang warfare is often over turf to control community spots for selling drugs and related crimes.

People from Factreton are recorded in a YouTube video *Real Cape Town: The Dorp-40 days of our lives* (2009) sharing their views about living in the area. According to educators who teach in the area, the dropout of learners starts at the age of 8 years, but it is around the age of 15 and 16 years that learners are at their most vulnerable to leaving school. One educator mentions that in a certain part of Factreton, people “have the same mentality, where history

repeats itself from one generation to the next. One youth mentions that “you must smoke weed till the eyes bleed...when guys grow up, they start smoking ganja, from there they go to crack and that’s how they end up in gangsterism and jail.” Another young man says: “I’m not afraid to die, why should I fear death if this is your destiny...you put in everything and get nothing out of it, it’s like your path has been set out for you.” A learner at one of the schools in the area makes the following statement:

They say it's actually good to die because you live another life if you die, so if you are poor now, you're going to be rich one day in your afterlife. You go to heaven and in heaven there's no angry, cross people, they don't like to fight everything is just beautiful. Like here, if you go to a place and you see this place, it is ugly but one day if you die nothing will be ugly no one will be ugly; one day when you die you will know the real thing; they don't need to walk to get something, everything is right by them, all the food and everything. They don't need to go to shopping malls and they just put out their hand and they take the food the drinks things like that; not like here where everything is a lot of money, expensive; people don't need to buy in heaven there's no money in heaven like here you have to buy everything nothing's almost for free, but in heaven everything's for free that's why most of the people they know when they're going to die and they actually happy about that they're going to die because they know it's much better in heaven than you're on Earth. (Anon).

As mentioned earlier, these conditions spill over to the schools and, as such, the prevailing violent atmosphere in the schools is a representation of the broader society (Vally et al. 1999; Le Roux and Mokhele 2011; Mncube and Harber 2013: 1). According to Bhana and Mayeza (2016) community and family level violence and violence depicted through the media emerge as primary sources of school violence. This is supported by Gardner et al. (2015) that experience of community violence exacerbates the likelihood of the development of high levels of antisocial behaviour. Cooley-Strickland et al. (2009: 5-6) defines community violence as deliberate acts to cause physical harm against a person or person in the community. The National Child Traumatic Stress Network (n.d.) states that common types of community violence that affect youth include individual and group conflicts such as bullying, fights among gangs and other groups, and shootings in public areas such as schools and communities.

According to Mohamed (2017: 12-14) exposure to poverty and violence can often lead to aggressive and disruptive behaviour at school. Young people who grow up with community violence, high levels of poverty and overcrowding suffer from symptoms such as anxiety, depression, academic and school disengagement. Cooley-Strickland et al. (2009: 6) suggest that ongoing studies and more school-based treatment and preventative interventions are needed that put children at elevated risk for exposure to community violence.

We are defined as living within conditioned typologies of structures. Not the structures that stir up the imaginative or the creative but structures that perpetuate an existence that lacks nuances and mystery. We cannot imagine or create beyond what we experience, and that is hunger, violence, depravity, bad education and many such impediments. Galtung (2000) alludes that these all form part of structural violence.

According to Bauman (2005 cited in Bliss 2018: 2) we all invariably live in such times:

Unpleasant and uncomfortable events abound: things and people keep causing worries we would not expect and certainly not wish them to cause. But what makes such discomforts particularly irksome is that they tend to come unannounced. They hit us, as we say, 'as bolts out of the blue'; no one expects a thunderbolt from a cloudless sky, and no one can take precautions against and avert a catastrophe from that which is unexpected. The blows come suddenly, with irregularity; and their nasty ability to appear from anywhere and at any moment makes them unpredictable, and renders us defenceless. Insofar as the dangers are eminently free-floating, freakish, and frivolous, we are their sitting targets—we can do little, if anything at all, to prevent their arrival. Such hopelessness of ours is frightening. Uncertainty breeds fear.

I believe this same perception of uncertainty and suddenness of calamity is what the school learners of “die gat” in Factreton experience daily. But thankfully, to echo the sentiments of critical place inquiry (Tuck and McKenzie 2014), the fortunate aspect of the place is that it is not static. A place can recreate itself, and this requires human imagination that transcends context.

2.3.1 WD Hendricks Primary School, Factreton: Exposition on Schooling

WD Hendricks Primary School, which mainly receives learners from “die gat”, overlooks an open field which connects it with the community. Apart from the field and a school playground sparsely covered with grass, there is not much else going for the young people of Factreton. The school has on average a student population of 400 per year. It is a grade 1-7 school with a staff contingent of around 14. The class size varies and ranges from around 47 in the lower grades to around 32 in the higher grades. The school used to charge an annual fee of R100, and based upon estimate, about 80% of parents fail to pay these fees. Most of the parents are unable to support the school financially, as they survive on the government's monthly social grants ranging from R500 for child support and an old age pension of about R2090. Subsequently, the school is a no-fee school, subsidised by the government around R340.00 per learner each year. During the periods (2019; 2020; 2022) that I spent at the school, there was a discernible effort among educators to provide education professionally and

sympathetically. Rowdiness and class chaos, especially in the intermediate and senior phases are constant obstacles to quality education. In the voices of educators, they choose to be bystanders, “look the other way so as not to see too much”; “why stop these attacks of violence, and get hurt or threatened in the process.”

In areas like Facticeon, where adverse environmental conditions prevail, schools are frequently marked by violence and crime. These schools face severe shortages in educational resources, further hindering efforts to create a positive learning environment (Mampane 2010). Historically, South African teachers managed problematic students through harsh disciplinary methods. However, since the banning of corporal punishment in the late 1990s, educators have struggled with a discipline crisis. Many complain that they lack the necessary support from education officials and parents to effectively handle violent incidents in schools (Davids and Waghid 2016: 35). This lack of support, compounded by broader societal challenges, creates a fertile ground for disillusioned learners to damage and disrupt the school environment.

Educators do care, but only barely have the authority to impose discipline in the classroom. They speak of the inaction even apathy from the local authorities and the Department of Education to efficiently intervene in resolving problems of violence and abuse at the school. The appropriate lack of support put them at risk as most cases reported are not readily and immediately addressed which increases their vulnerability and thus they opt to endure in silence. One of the teachers expressed appreciation that my talking about the situation at school helped her to ‘exhale’ which afforded some kind of therapy. The educators I spoke to all referred to the need to ‘break this cycle’ of repeating hostilities and burdens of trauma and despair. In addition, they feel dismayed that most times, very little learning and teaching occur in the classroom. Educators also voiced despair about norm complexities. By this, I mean that schooling and community compete for influence over the child.

Conditions: Conditions in Facticeon illustrate how the surrounding socio-economic landscape profoundly impacts the effectiveness of education. Although the South African Schools Act (48 of 1996) stipulates that schools must provide safe environments, Facticeon's community grapples with challenges such as poverty, crime, gangsterism, and violence, which frequently encroach upon school premises. These issues can render the school environment perilous, perpetuating a cycle of dysfunction that impedes educational delivery.

Basic safety and security protocols, designed to shield against external threats, often prove inadequate in Facticeon. In practice, these measures alone cannot establish the stable

conditions necessary for meaningful education. The prevalence of violence and crime poses challenges for both educators and students, occasionally causing significant disruptions to classroom activities and deterring students from attending school consistently. Such interruptions can result in disengagement, diminished academic performance, learner aspiration failure, and a normalisation of violence within the school environment, making the ideal of "safe and secure" educational spaces feel far removed from reality.

2.3.2 Integrative approach

For schools in Facticeon, an integrative approach to educational policy that acknowledges community violence is essential. By aligning safety measures with broader community support structures, policies could become more contextually grounded, bridging the divide between ideal safety standards and the harsh realities that learners encounter. Initiatives focused on community engagement, combined with tailored school policies, may contribute to establishing a more supportive educational framework. This requires a collaborative effort among schools, local authorities, and community leaders, to mitigate the effects of violence and foster a safer learning environment where students and educators can thrive despite external pressures. This study attempted to address this problem by suggesting a model for transformative education that equips child learners with the tools to transcend their violent circumstances and contribute positively to their communities. This model is entitled: Transformative Slow violence model: A generous-based education framework.

Although the Minister of Education approved the National School Safety Framework in 2015 (Leoschut and Makota, 2016) violence remains endemic in South African schools (Le Roux and Mokhele, 2011). Morrow et al. (2016: 34; Blank and Shavit 2016; Buyse et al. 2008; Hagenauer et al. 2015; Sun and Shek 2012) highlight that schools often struggle to manage violent children, leading them to disengage and disinvest in these learners. According to Morrow et al. (2016), school violence must be understood within the broader context of political violence and societal instability. The authors argue that exposure to political violence increases young people's risk of engaging in violent behaviour, which can spill over into schools. They assert that school violence is often rooted in wider social, economic, and political factors, not merely limited to an individual or disciplinary issue. Blank and Shavit, (2016) state that disruptive classroom behaviour lowers student achievement across the entire class, regardless of the conduct of any particular learner. Sun and Shek (2012) found that teachers perceived student problem behaviours as those involving rulebreaking, violating norms or expectations, being inappropriate in classroom settings and upsetting teaching and

learning, which mainly required teacher intervention. Hagenauer et al. (2015) highlighted the emotional toll on teachers managing violent students, often leading to exhaustion and withdrawal. The authors revealed that teacher-student interpersonal relationships were the strongest predictor for teachers' joy and anxiety, whereas lack of discipline best predicted teachers' anger experiences. This is supported by Buyse et al. (2008) stating that in kindergarten, problematic classroom compositions can exacerbate the risk of conflictual teacher-child relationships, while emotionally supportive teachers can protect children with behavioural issues.

Research has consistently shown that exposure to violence negatively impacts educational outcomes (Ravi and Ahluwalie 2017; Mncube and Harber 2013). This underscores the urgent need for schools to function not only as educational institutions but as engines of peacebuilding. By addressing poor educational outcomes and reducing children's exposure to violence, schools can help mitigate the risk of students being drawn into violent behaviours.

In this context, Harris (2004) argues that the focus should shift from merely creating safe schools to fostering peaceful societies. While many studies explore school violence, few examine the role of schools in peacebuilding, an essential responsibility of education (Lauritzen 2013; John 2018). Galtung (1990) stresses that peace must be embraced as a holistic paradigm, requiring engagement at all levels of society.

2.3.3 Violence, poverty and learning

At school, the child is in a regulated environment intending to learn. Conversely, as soon as the child steps outside of the school grounds the community life of violence, hunger and threat awaits and once again the child embraces the known habits of the community as a means of coping. The norms represented by formal education are not parallel with those represented by the everyday community life of the learner. And according to Muller (2018: 22), the education system expects 'dysfunctional' schools to operate at the levels of 'functional' schools. But such narrow ambition fails to recognise the existing structure of the system would still "fundamentally disadvantage poor, black, non-Anglophone and rural learners." The reality is that learners return to homes where they sleep in cramped bedrooms with adults and other siblings. These learners are daily exposed to adult abuse, general disrespect, rudeness, vulgarity, drug and alcohol abuse, gang violence and crime, peer-to-peer abuse, and sexual harassment as well as living in an environment that is filthy and at health risk. An educator argued that parents view schools not as institutions of learning, but as nurseries to guard over learners for a few hours. Thus, the child fails to understand the role of school as an institution

of learning and development since parents mostly fail to communicate these values to the child.

Another educator commented that to break a cycle one must get to understand the type of child they are dealing with. Learners come to school suffering from various maladies and issues. One educator stated that in several cases children go to sleep hungry and the only meal they do get is what the school provides. So educators have to contend with the problems of a hungry child who is lethargic, sleepy or irritable. Violence, bullying, threats, substance abuse, loitering outside of the classroom and even peer-to-peer molestation are issues educators are consistently having to deal with. For example, a newspaper report relates a story in 1997 of learners who assaulted and killed a pupil of the school (Mail and Guardian 1997). The station commander, when escorting the youth to a holding cell was alarmed when the youngsters entered the cell and enquired about why there was no television. Veenstra et al. (2007: 1844) argue that from the bully's point of view, there is a need, on the one hand, for domination and, on the other hand, a need for social approval and popularity. Violence, such as bullying, is not limited only to a school phenomenon but is pervasive in the learner's household and community environment. An educator described that learners who display such types of violent orientations as a dysfunctional child, living and coming from a dysfunctional community, and everything else becomes validated as an outcome natural to adopting such a 'dysfunctional worldview.

Another example happened while I was at the school. Three children in grade 7 boasted about how they apprehended someone with a toy gun and robbed that person of some money. They gave the money to their mothers and told them not to enquire about how they got the money. It later surfaced what the children had done and these same mothers came to the school, not knowing how to deal with the problem. In another incident a day after the incident described above, a grade R learner had a knife and wanted to stab the educator. The school suggested these incidences be reported to the police so that the learner can receive professional help.

An educator mentioned that what saddens her most is that these children have lost the ability to dream. Instead of enjoying childhood playfulness, imagination and safe comfort, the educator remarked that children come across as insensitive, hurtful and cold-hearted, hardly able to receive emotional warmth from educators. One educator said that learners believed that solutions to problems are through violence. At the time of writing this report, nothing much has changed, adding to my dismay as a student in peacebuilding.

2.3.4 In-school violence

Netshitangani (2014) asserts that while there may be many causes for in-school violence, the most influential of these is the extent to which the child will see violence as normal because of the extent of the violent acts the child is exposed to. To reduce violence at schools, educators will implement methods such as metal detectors, security guards, closed circuit television and lock their doors. Research indicates that youth who are exposed to violence decline in academic performance, lack interest in school and school-related activities and have a higher drop-out rate and truancy (Burton 2012 cited in Netshitangani 2014). According to Smith et al. (2016), an effective educational system plays close attention to aspects of redistribution, representation, recognition and reconciliation. Ravi and Ahluwalie (2017) assert that childhood violence has negative effects on an individual's well-being which can persist in adulthood. This is supported by Gardner et al. (2015) that experience of community violence exacerbates the likelihood of the development of high levels of antisocial behaviour. In a study done in South Africa and Malawi, research indicates that exposure to violence predicts poor educational outcomes in young children (Ravi and Ahluwalie 2017; Mncube and Harber 2013).

According to Souverein et al. (2016), school violence must be identified as an independent or stand-alone risk factor. The authors (ibid) report that youth who have experienced violence and abuse at school displayed behaviour that was more violent and severe and were more likely to fall into the serious, violent offending group. Cluver et al. (2014) found that abuse of primary school-going children is not caused by a single risk factor. There are close associations between family AIDS, extreme poverty, stigmatisation and exposure to community violence, domestic violence, poor parental mental health etc., and these increase the chances of a child being abused. Furthermore, international studies have shown that perpetrators target children who are least protected, for example where parents are deceased, caregivers are unavailable, and families are isolated (Cluver et al. 2014). Cooley-Strickland et al. (2009: 5-6) define community violence as deliberate acts to cause physical harm against a person or person in the community. The National Child Traumatic Stress Network (n.d) states that common types of community violence that affect youth include individual and group conflicts such as bullying, fights among gangs and other groups, shootings in public areas such as schools and communities etc.

South African education is pivotal to societal change. According to Enu (2016), basic education must equip children with virtues of tolerance, respect for human rights, equality of people and the elimination of discrimination and violence. Education must empower the development of people's potential to learn how to make peace with themselves and with

others. Enu (2016) claims that the success of educating for peace and security is more effective and meaningful when based on the social and cultural context of the locality and the community's needs and aspirations.

According to Danesh (2006), a learning environment that espouses competition and survival of the fittest as the path to success is a contributory element fostering a conflict-based worldview among children. Danesh (2006) claims that for children to be educated about peace it can be done only by creating a culture of peace. Thus the three prerequisites for peace education must include (i) cultivating a unity-based instead of conflict-based worldview, (ii) a culture championing a peace orientation and, (iii) a culture committed to the healing of each other (Danesh 2006: 59). The goal of peace education is not to just stop violence, but rather to create in the minds of children a nonviolent way of thinking and living (Harris 1995). Education, such as social education, active in environments of violence must be brave and wise. It must create spaces where the cultivation of responsibility and humanity is central to its pedagogy (Davids and Waghid 2017). Hemson (2012) asserts that a pedagogy of nonviolence must take cognisance of the constraining impact of violence on the lives of students, and it must envision a society based on equity instead of domination and subordination. Education will need to agitate as it works toward undoing and transforming conflict situations. Education that is transformative works against crises brought about by, for example, the social past and its 'spillover' effects. Literature indicates that teachers, though they focus learners on morality and behaviour and how to get along with each other, do not consider that the role of education is to shape social structures, nor that they can foster structural change (Cappy 2016). On the other hand, research has shown that schools with stronger social capital can call upon the community to assist with the smooth running of schools (Tintswalo 2014). The reverse is to suggest that where a lack of social capital or the presence of predominantly negative social capital persists community participation may be lacking in support of the smooth running of schools.

2.4 Violent conditions

Violent conditions define the background spelt out in the sections above. The child learners, whom I encountered at the focused school, come from living environments defined by violent conditions. Laurie and Shaw (2018) assert that violent conditions burn in the background of daily life. One such example of the impact of violent conditions on the child learner is hunger. Nevertheless, this study is founded on Rob Nixon's "Slow violence and the Environmentalism of the poor" (2011) intended to explore the phenomenon of precarity, with a specific focus on

the widespread nature of hunger as a daily reality for child learners. According to Nixon (2011), violence is commonly perceived as an abrupt and sensational event in both temporal and spatial dimensions, with immediate and visible consequences. However, Nixon advocates a different form of violence which is called “slow violence”. This form of violence is not instant or remarkable, but rather accumulative and enduring, causing widespread devastation across various time frames. Nixon (2011)’s arguments are discussed in detail in Chapter 4.

2.4.1 Food insecurity

Hunger and malnutrition often arise as outcomes of slow violence perpetuated through subtle social determinants. According to the World Health Organisation (cited in Buggs et al. 2022), social determinants are defined as “the conditions in which people are born, grow, work, live, and age and the wider set of [socioeconomic and political] forces and systems [of power and privilege] shaping the conditions of daily life.” These ‘forces and systems’ are what Mbembe (2003: 14) refers to as “figures of sovereignty.” According to Mbembe (2003), these powerful sovereign entities are not determined to attain autonomy, but to exploit their powers to control, harm and cause “material destruction of human bodies and populations.”

According to Folaranmia (2013 cited in Hlongwane and Vyas-Doorgapersad 2023: 38), malnutrition is referred to as a “general deficiency, which is caused by a lack of nutrients like vitamins and iron [and] people’s calorie and protein intakes are restricted.” Hoddinot (2012 cited in Hlogwane and Vyas-Doorgapersad 2023: 38) states that hunger is defined as an “unpleasant or agonising feeling caused by a shortage of food or the involuntary and repetitive absence of food access.” The latest studies have shown that South Africa has persistently high rates of hunger and malnutrition among mothers and children. More than 27% of children under five are stunted and 61% are iron-deficient (Ertze and Tugenhaft 2023). Learners are hungry. According to Shankar et al. (2017) and Weinreb et al. (2002), studies found that in school-aged children (6-13 years), an association is found between food insecurity and absenteeism, atypical or borderline emotional symptoms, even if the exposure to food insecurity was intermittent; food insecurity affects non-cognitive skill development, including interpersonal relations, self-control, and approaches to learning; problems such as aggression and anxiety were more prevalent among children with “hunger.”; hyperactivity, absenteeism, and tardiness among “hungry” children than children reported as “not hungry; even intermittent experiences of household food insufficiency and child “hunger” were associated with less optimal behavioural and academic functioning in low-income children.

Children also expressed their worries about not having enough food; they worried about their parents' well-being; felt anger, as well as sad at the lack of food; and they also expressed their embarrassment about their family's food situation (Leung et al. 2020) no bedrock in their community can stem the tide of the learners' hunger; they go to sleep and wake up hungry. And mothers, unfortunately in most instances must endure the unbearable rebukes of hungry children [that] can be thought of evoking a kind of 'madness' in low-income mothers (Kruger and Lourens 2016). The school is generally the only source where a learner will be able to get a meal. These meals are standard across all provinces and are sufficiently nutritious. These ordinarily consist of soya, lentils, rice, carrots, butternut, corn or maize, beans and pilchards.

However, what is evident is that the Department of Education determines what foods to provide for the learners. This is normally determined by budgetary allocations which are indicative of the power dynamics alluded to by Laurie and Shaw (2018) and Cockburn (cited in Leonardsson 2021). The violent conditions are perpetuated through the choice of foods available. The learners are not educated in food awareness and choice as means of transformation and emancipation. Instead, they are educated about food in a manner that perpetuates the prevailing stereotypes and prejudices associated with under-resourced communities. Pino (2022: 9) asserts that

"Food brings to the surface who we are as human beings; it is a pervasive cultural force that can both unite and reveal differences between people."

In this respect, the education system fails to fulfil its implicit duty to educate, but also explicitly contributes to the continuation of injustices against its learners. Learners are fed once a day at school and beyond that hunger resurfaces soon after, inevitably compromising the role of education and limiting its significance. This is because attending school is a means to a meal and nothing more. In this respect, education underscores and advances an ethos of psycho-social dependence and compliance rather than an ethos of liberation and transformation.

The 'sounds' of hunger: Therefore, for me, it signifies that a child learner's exposure to food should be arranged according to the low socio-economic state which prevails in the learner's life. Child learners have options to buy a range of foods of low nutritional value that are made available at their school kiosks. The vibrations and intense 'sounds' of hunger are documented in poems, novels, academic research, movies, and especially in policies and practices of ideology and politics. The sounds of hunger originate from structural and prohibitive genres.

These genres manifest through discriminatory and biased education systems, territorial stigmas, class and caste systems, and movies, such as portraying whiteness as heroes and

blackness as understudies. Bentley (2012 cited by Paravano 2015: 121) says that ‘actually what we eat, but also how and why we eat, reveal our personality and our background, and “tell us much about society, history, cultural change, and humans’ view of themselves.” The multifaceted concept of hunger (real and metaphorical appetites) plays a fundamental role in forging identities since it affects the characters’ choices and guides their actions (Paravano 2015: 133). This view is supported by Pino (2022: 9) asserting that

“food brings to the surface who we are as human beings; it is a pervasive cultural force that can both unite and reveal differences between people.”

Abarca and Colby (2016: 4) write that food is central to defining how people’s emotional, psychological, social, economic, political, historical, and cultural realities are embodied as a lived and living history. For example, hunger can come in many forms and some of these are self-inflicted hunger strikes. Ellmann (1993: 3) writes that irrespective of the reason why the hunger striker Armagh destroyed herself,

“...her hunger was a form of speech, and speech is necessarily a dialogue whose meaning does not end with the intentions of the speaker but depends upon the understanding of the interlocutor.”

Thus, food, whether bad or good quality food, creates memories, and “although their sensory and emotional implications function within the individual, they are always socially and culturally grounded” (Ellman 1993: 6). Physical places, especially where we live, are filled with either food plenty of memories food-scarce memories, or memories that are being created as daily life experiences. Memory, according to Vygotsky (cited by Pino 2022: 45) is “mediated through external instruments and communication, which can ultimately construct new forms of behaviour. The memories built up over the years, compromised by hunger, may resurface, bringing to mind deep scars and hurt that leave individuals deeply affected.

According to Crush et al. (2018, Kroll and Adelle, 2022) Cape Town’s population experiences high levels of food insecurity, estimated at 54% of households experiencing food insecurity, with up to 89 % in poor areas. The primary factor contributing to food insecurity is the quality of the diet since families are compelled to eat foods they do not desire; they cannot eat food they prefer and are unable to enjoy a wider variety of foods (ibid). Kroll and Adelle (2022, citing the National Department of Health and ICF, 2017 reports) state that 22.9% of children under five in the Western Cape were stunted while 43.7% of men and 73.7% of women were overweight or obese. Poor areas of Cape Town offer limited access to healthy food, and widespread access to staples and ultra-processed food promotes obesity and non-communicable diseases.

2.5 Demographics and maps

According to the City of Cape Town Table Bay District Plan (2023), the Table Bay Planning District's population reached 236,010 by the end of 2016, accounting for only 5.7% of Cape Town's total population despite including major metropolitan nodes such as the Cape Town CBD. The district, (which includes Factreton) experienced an annual growth rate of over 2.8% from 2011 to 2016. Population distribution is fairly even, although areas like Langa, Kensington, and Sea Point have higher concentrations. Langa has a population density of nearly 170 persons per hectare, making it the densest in the district, with Sea Point and Windermere also exceeding 80 people per hectare.

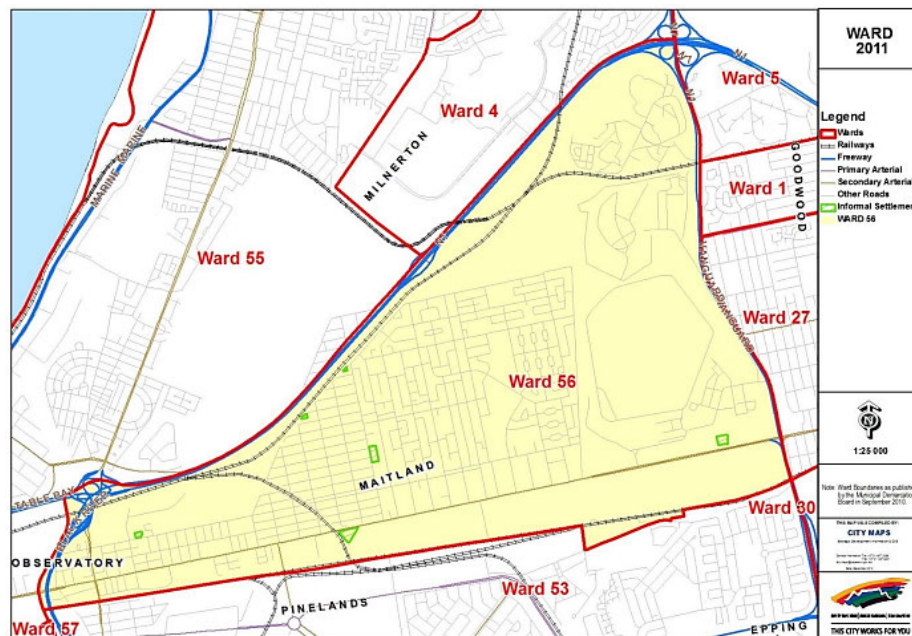


Figure 2.6: Ward 056 includes the areas of Acacia Park, Factreton, Kensington, Maitland, Windermere and Wingfield (Source: City of Cape Town – 2011 Census)

Key demographics for Ward 056 include:

- The population is predominantly Coloured (78%).
- 48% of those aged 20 years and older have completed Grade 12 or higher.
- 87% of the labour force (aged 15 to 64) is employed.
- 32% of households have a monthly income of R3 200 or less.
- 93% of households live in formal dwellings.
- 96% of households have access to piped water in their dwelling or inside their yard.
- 95% of households have access to a flush toilet connected to the public sewer system.
- 99% of households have their refuse removed at least once a week.

- 99% of households use electricity for lighting in their dwelling.

In contrast, Pinelands has a much lower density at 24 people per hectare. Economic profiles vary significantly, with Sea Point characterized by high incomes and luxury housing, while Langa has lower incomes and a mix of affordable housing, including subsidized or informal housing.

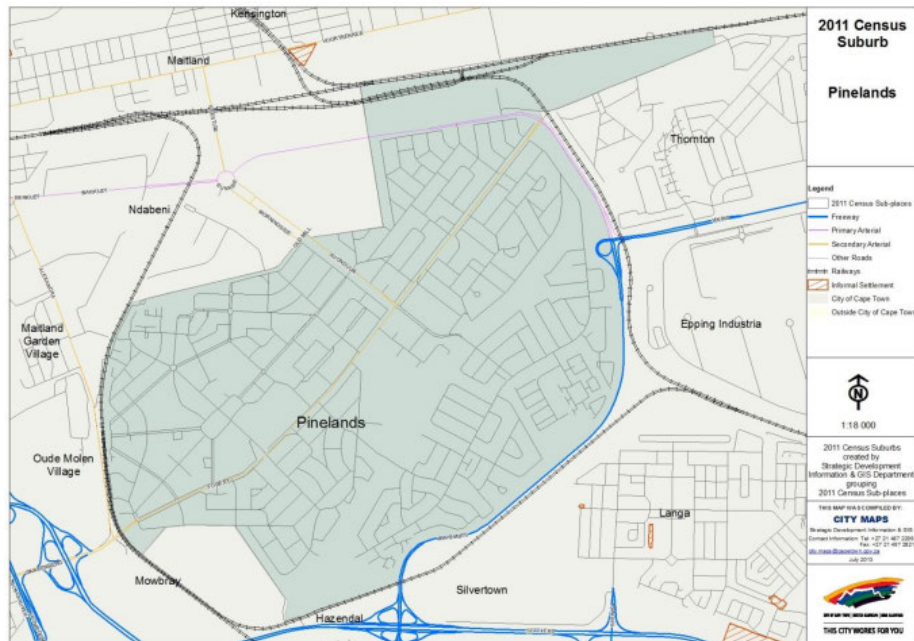


Figure 2.7: 2011 Census suburb Pinelands includes the following sub-places: Pinelands
(Source: City of Cape Town – 2011 Census)

Key demographics for 2011 Census Suburb Pinelands include:

- The population is predominantly White (62%).
- 88% of those aged 20 years and older have completed Grade 12 or higher.
- 96% of the labour force (aged 15 to 64) is employed.
- 10% of households have a monthly income of R3 200 or less.
- 99.5% of households live in formal dwellings.
- 99.8% of households have access to piped water in their dwelling or inside their yard.
- 99.9% of households have access to a flush toilet connected to the public sewer system.
- 99.7% of households have their refuse removed at least once a week.
- 99.6% of households use electricity for lighting in their dwelling.

According to Census 2011, Langa's unemployment rate exceeds 40%, more than double the district average. Maitland Garden Village follows with approximately 22%, and Windermere

and Bo Kaap each have 21%. Around 34.9% of households, or roughly 25,000, earned less than R3200 per month, indicating impoverished conditions. Although this is lower than the city's 47% in 2011, it still reflects relatively low incomes. In Cape Town, 14% of households had a monthly income of R25,601 or more in 2011, compared to 23% in the district, indicating relative prosperity in some district areas (City of Cape Town, 2023).

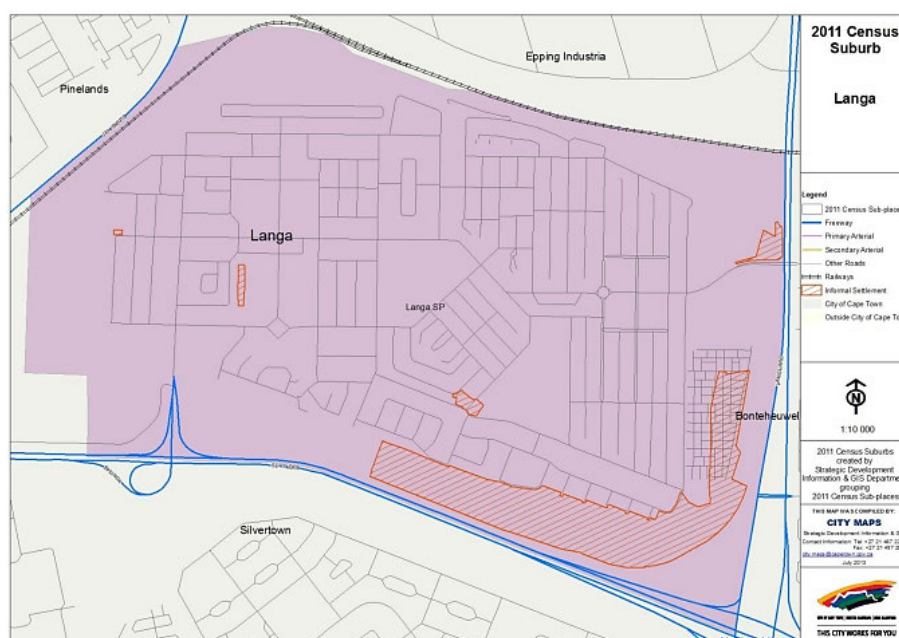


Figure 2.8: 2011 Census suburb Langa includes the following sub-places: Langa SP
(Source: City of Cape Town – 2011 Census)

Key demographics for 2011 Census Suburb Langa include:

- The population is predominantly Black African (99%).
- 40% of those aged 20 years and older have completed Grade 12 or higher.
- 60% of the labour force (aged 15 to 64) is employed.
- 72% of households have a monthly income of R3 200 or less.
- 58% of households live in formal dwellings.
- 67% of households have access to piped water in their dwelling or inside their yard.
- 72% of households have access to a flush toilet connected to the public sewer system.
- 94% of households have their refuse removed at least once a week.
- 98% of households use electricity for lighting in their dwelling.

According to the State of Cape Town report (2022) by the City of Cape Town, in 2021, there were 1.46 million people employed in Cape Town, while 544,832 were unemployed but actively seeking work (the narrow or strict unemployment rate), and an additional 26,831 individuals were classified as discouraged job seekers.

2.6 Conclusion

The chapter highlights the significance of place in shaping social realities, often perpetuating marginalisation and disadvantage. It also points out how education and community engagement can build resilience, agency, and transformation. The findings indicate that despite pervasive structural challenges, targeted interventions, especially in education, can help break cycles of violence and deprivation. The study encourages broader reflections on how social policies and educational reforms can create more equitable and supportive environments for future generations.

The next chapter that follows this one presents a theoretical framework underpinning the approaches of this study.

CHAPTER 3: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

3.1 Introduction

Understanding the pervasive impact of slow violence on child learners requires a theoretical and methodological approach beyond traditional conflict transformation paradigms. This chapter explores context transcendence as a means of addressing the entrenched structural violence shaping learners' experiences in Factreton. Drawing on Lederach's (2003) conflict transformation theory, Galtung's (2017) Transcend Method, and Kolb's (2014) experiential learning model, this study adapts conflict transformation for young learners by incorporating self-transcendence and transformative generosity. It argues that conventional peacebuilding frameworks overlook the developmental realities of child learners, whose engagement with conflict transformation is shaped more by immediate lived experiences than by broader structural considerations.

Building on Freire (1970, 1999) and Deleuze (1988), this chapter frames education as a transformative process of imagination, critical inquiry, empathy, and humanitarian responsibility. Within a Transformative Participatory Action Research (TPAR) framework (see Chapter 5), these aspects are further explored, illustrating how learners' lived realities inform the co-creation of educational interventions to address slow violence. By integrating self-transcendence (Frankl, 1985) and experiential learning (Kolb, 2014), it conceptualises learning as an iterative, reflective process that fosters resilience and agency in response to challenging socio-political contexts.

3.2 Considering approach

To feel the everyday pulse of slow violence in this study, especially those impacting the child learner, I considered using Lederach's (2003) conflict transformation (CT) theory as my central framework. For instance, Lederach (cited in Smith and Elison, 2012: 10) states that CT can be defined as an "ongoing process of change from negative to positive relations, behaviour, attitudes and structures." Transformation is central to the peacebuilding process, which means, according to Lederach (2003: 4),

"...we are not merely interested in ending something that is not desired. We are oriented toward the building of relationships that in their totality form new patterns, processes, and structures."

Although this description of CT offers explicit direction in addressing conflict scenarios that necessitate a distinct set of methodologies specific to the processes of peacebuilding (PB), the contextual circumstances of the child learners do not fully align with this conflict paradigm.

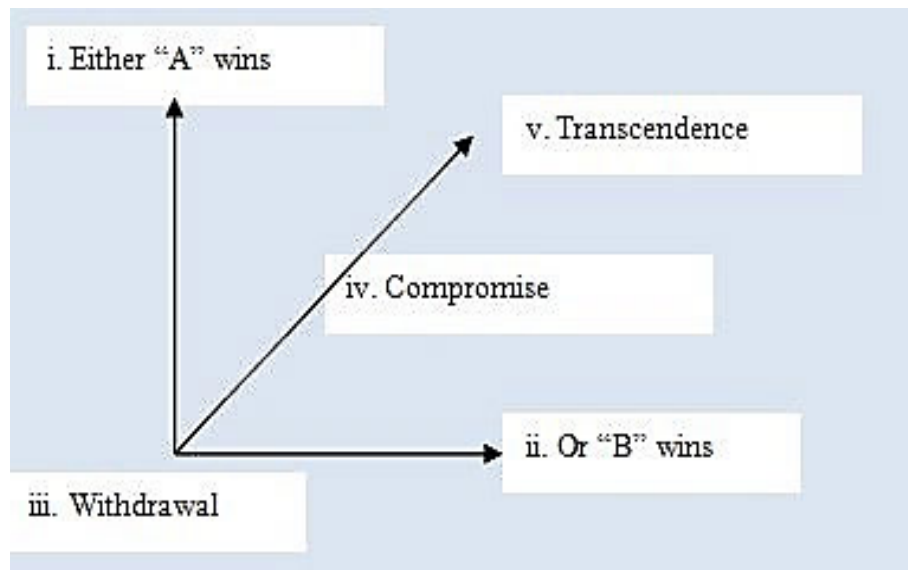


Figure 3.1: Five types of outcomes in a conflict between two parties (Source: Galtung, 2017)

The context of the child learner pertains to violent conditions that require alternative approaches to problem-solving, which may be distinct from that associated with peacebuilding, though still grounded in the values and principles of PB. Galtung's (2017) Transcend Method, shown in Figure 3.1, comes close to what I view as transcendence, but from my understanding of engaging with primary school learners, their perspectives on conceptualising and resolving conflict are located at a very basic level. Galtung (2017) proposes a more extensive approach in which the task is to transform conflicts, through a focus on cultures, structures and actors.

The child learner focuses more on the immediate experiential notion of context transcendence, such as planning an activity around being fed or helping in feeding their peers than to extricate and deliberate on complex issues and antecedents that cause conflicts. However, Galtung (2017) raises essential elements that concur with context transcendence posited by this study. His diagram (Figure 3.1) illustrates where transcendence is positioned in resolving and attaining conflict outcomes.

For Galtung, the Transcend Method exhibits a preference for 'transcendence', which is trying to go beyond removing the conflict from its current location that feeds its volatility, and relocating it elsewhere. For instance, one might defuse a situation where one child, who has

been bullied out of an ice cream by another, is paid back by purchasing a larger one for the afflicted child. This implies that a more significant reward is forthcoming if the conflict is resolved through peaceful means. Transcendence means redefining the situation so that what looked incompatible and blocked, is unlocked and a new landscape, a new type of reality that was potentially always there, opens up (Galtung, 2017: 14).

Transcendence in learning aligns with Kolb's experiential learning theory, which emphasizes the value of active engagement in education. The experiential approach to research is also emphasized by several authors, who highlight active engagement: experience-taking and simulating the feelings of others (Kaufman and Libbry, 2012; Carpiano, 2009), 'come take a walk with, 'go along'; Springgay & Truman (2018: 2) "walking-to-think-with". De Certeau and Mayol (1998) described the research as an experiential exercise without expecting fixed outcomes, which in turn produces knowledge. Kolb's (2014) experiential learning model (expanded by Bergsteiner and Avery, 2014) outlines a four-stage learning cycle:

- 1 Concrete experience, where learners engage in a direct experience;
- 2 Reflective observation, where they analyse and interpret this experience;
- 3 Abstract conceptualization, where they develop broader insights or concepts from the experience; and
- 4 Active experimentation, where they apply these insights in new contexts.

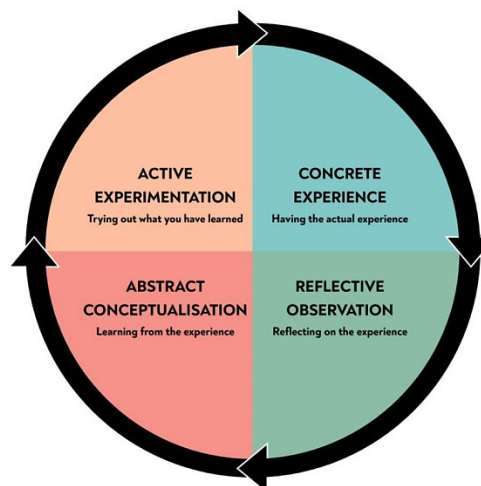


Figure 3.2: Kolb's experiential learning cycle model (Source: McLeod, 2024)

This iterative process enables learners to evolve beyond prior knowledge and behaviours, fostering deeper understanding and personal growth. Through continuous cycles of active participation and reflection, learners "transcend" earlier levels of comprehension, which supports meaningful and transformative learning. Kolb (ibid) asserts that learning should be conceived as a process instead of relying on assessments and outcomes. Outcomes-based learning can be described as 'nonlearning' (Kolb, 2014: 26) as it does not make space for modification of ideas and habits acquired through experience.

An important aspect of human learning is maintaining a focus on human purpose throughout its ongoing cycles. Meehan (1988: 8) states that "human purpose...is always and everywhere to maintain and improve the conditions of life of some human population". Richard Niebuhr (1932: 2) states "Human nature is not wanting in certain endowments for the solution of the problems of human society...Man is endowed by nature with organic relations to his fellow men, and natural impulse prompts him to consider the needs of others when they compete with his own". This is the ideal of learning and knowledge. This view of knowledge is supported by Bion (1970, cited in Twemlow and Sacco 1999) who argues that knowledge is not a possession but a process, not an individual property but a function of a relationship and cultural context. Knowledge is dynamic and changes constantly in a process of continuous reflection and transformation. Mescher (2013: 225) states that the core question of pedagogy poses "To whom am I near?" This expression is a learning that according to Jack Mezirow (cited in Mescher 2013: 225) occurs in one of four ways: "elaborating existing frames of reference, by learning new frames reference, by transforming points of view, or by transforming habits of mind". Mescher (2013) integrates these four ways of learning into a *pedagogy of nearing* which is:

- (i) expanding one's frame of reference to include that of those who are poor; (ii) learning a new frame of reference from a disadvantaged perspective; (iii) transforming points of view through accompaniment with poor and vulnerable peoples; and (iv) to transform habits of mind that work against categories of "us" and "them" toward a more solidaristic horizon and lens.

The role of education then becomes a focus area in PB as related to human purpose and concerning the other dimensions identified in the PB framework. The human purpose of education concerning PB is similar to Maphosa et al. (2014: 6) who write: "an emerging common understanding is that the path to sustained peace leads through CT and social

change; and finally, a set of building blocks needs to be in place when positive peace is achieved...this process calls for new attitudes and practices: ones that are flexible, consultative and collaborative and that operate from a contextual understanding of the root causes of conflict. The process is therefore transformative". According to Nelson and Prilleltensky (2010: 297), the values of transformative research include (i) self-determination and participation; (ii) community and inclusion; (iii) social justice and accountability and (iv) reflexivity.

Through continuous cycles of learning and reflection learners develop transformative capabilities to bring about change in their context and within themselves.

3.3 Conceptualising context transcendence

According to Haavelsrud (2015: 67) "contextual conditions are not only external to the human mind but contribute, through socialisation, to knowledge, attitudes and will to act." Experiential learning is learning with important and extensive content which has emerged out of and is highly influenced by contextual conditions (Haavelsrud 2015). Experiential learning should be understood, analysed, and described within the framework of context specificity. For example, context-specific challenges to learners relate both to their place and school environments. The Minister of Basic Education in South Africa asserts that:

There is a correlation between high levels of criminality in the community which is transported into schools. Guns come from communities; the knifing and anger come from communities (Daniel 2018, np).

According to Basil Manuel, president of the National Professional Teachers' Organisation of South Africa, incidents of school violence whether against educators or learners "are symptoms of society. All over South Africa, the society is violent. We can't expect that our children will be different" (Dlamini 2018). For this study the contextual conditions for the child learners are represented through their stories, highlighting how experiential learning has shaped their thinking and outlook on life and themselves.

Freire (2000: 85) provides a good example in which to position a description of context transcendence:

Since people do not exist apart from the world, apart from reality, the movement [i.e., the process of educational development] must begin with the human-world relationship. Accordingly, the point of departure must always be with men and women in the "here and now," which constitutes the situation within which they are submerged, from which they emerge, and in which they intervene. Only by starting from this situation—which determines

their perception of it—can they begin to move. To do this authentically they must perceive their state not as fated and unalterable, but merely as limiting—and therefore challenging.

Fettes (2013: 7) intimates that Freire introduced "the situation" as a stagnant and restrictive state in which the majority of people live, constraining the process of personal growth that he associated with authentic education. As a result, he believed that the ordinary range of experience that characterises "the situation" is not truly educational; due to individuals being 'submerged' in it, it can be considered counter-educational as it normalises oppression, regardless of whether one is the oppressor or the oppressed. Educators should strive to provide an experience that "engages people as sentient beings who are aware of their incompleteness" and teaches them to perceive their circumstances as a historical reality capable of transformation. Furthermore, McLaren and Lissovoy (2002 cited in Fettes 2013: 8) state that:

The transformation of social conditions involves a rethinking of the world as a particular world, capable of being changed. But the reframing proposed here depends upon the power of the imagination to see outside, beyond, and against what is. More than a cognitive or emotional potential, the human imagination, in Freire's view, is capable of a radical and productive envisioning that exceeds the limits of the given. It is in this capacity that everyone's humanity consists, and for this reason, it can never be the gift of the teacher to the student. Rather, educator-student and student-educator work together to mobilise the imagination in the service of creating a vision of a new society.

The idea of context transcendence, as explored in this research, refers to the introduction of an imaginative state of being where the child learner is given the ability to imagine and experience a different range of situations, thus undergoing a transformative process as an individual. Mahoney (2013) claims that a fictional world does not offer an escape from reality, but instead offers students an imaginative perspective through which they can analyse their reality and envision and depict an alternative lived experience. According to Armitage (2011), the concept of imagination involves a dynamic and interactive process. This process entails the exploration of transcending the boundaries of personal experience, as well as engaging in a meaningful dialogue with oneself and others. Ultimately, this process culminates in the construction of an alternative reality. This study seeks to enable the child learner to think beyond context specificity as the only way from which to 'solve problems'. However, this means the child learner must experience awareness about self-transcendence as a first step toward an intrinsic meaningfulness about himself or herself.

Traditional concepts of conflict transformation are often abstract or distant from the experiences of young learners, as they are generally framed in advanced peacebuilding discussions, centred on international conflicts, or theoretical contexts. This study redefines conflict transformation for primary school students as a journey towards self-transcendence—guiding them in reflecting and understanding their emotions, relationships, and challenges within their peer groups. On a personal level, this starts with developing self-awareness, allowing learners to identify and articulate emotions like anger, frustration, or sadness in constructive ways. It also encompasses empathy, encouraging them to appreciate others' viewpoints, and providing them with the vocabulary and confidence to express themselves without resorting to aggression or withdrawing into silence.

Nevertheless, conflict transformation and self-transcendence extend beyond personal development; they take shape within peer relationships through participatory problem-solving, fairness, and shared accountability. Learners begin to understand that conflicts and difficulties are not insurmountable but can be resolved through teamwork and understanding one another with the intent of finding solutions. This perspective aligns with Freire's (1970) concept of generosity as justice, which denounces superficial charitable gestures in favour of confronting unjust circumstances at their source. An education framework rooted in generosity brings this to life by integrating kindness, fairness, and mutual care into everyday interactions—not as acts of pity, but as a dedication to justice. When children encounter generosity in this manner, they progress from passive involvement in education to actively contributing to a more equitable and inclusive peer environment.

Self-transcendence as a concept originated from Viktor E. Frankl's experience in a concentration camp in Auschwitz (Frankl 1985). The two foundational concepts often used in satisfying basic human needs are self-actualisation (Maslow) and self-transcendence (Frankl). Maslow, according to Wong (2021; Wong et al. 2021) argued that self-actualisation could be realised by having to attain self-transcendence. Frankl, however, due to his more difficult circumstances advocated the need that we begin with self-transcendence as our life goal and that self-actualisation and happiness will ensue as a result (Wong 2021). This understanding starting with self-transcendence corresponds with the difficult circumstances the child learner endures in his or her life experiences.

Context transcendence becomes the process by which a social imagination and personal transformation of a child can happen. This can be done by storytelling, writing narratives, conversations, and dialogue and then creating meaning and understanding through

purposeful action. For example, thinking about “what peaceful societies look like” (Banfield 2014: 14 cited in de León and Tager 2016) provides a key element toward the design of PB and conflict prevention in situations of social violence. This technique inspires participants to visualise particular contributing elements fuelling conflict and violence, to eliminate violence and for change to occur. Lederach (2015: 5) makes the point that “transcending violence is forged by the capacity to generate, mobilise, and build the moral imagination... Stated simply, moral imagination requires the capacity to imagine ourselves in a web of relationships that includes our enemies; the ability to sustain a paradoxical curiosity that embraces complexity without reliance on dualistic polarity; the fundamental belief in and pursuit of the creative act; and the acceptance of the inherent risk of stepping into the mystery of the unknown that lies beyond the far too familiar landscape of violence”. To get people to imagine is a transformative creative capability.

A child learner must learn how to make a contextual transcendental leap into an imaginary but also capable world. The imaginary must have capability attached to it: that a world of difference can be attained through imagination. This belief and capability in the imaginary is fixed in the appeal to help another. In this study, context transference is aimed at visualising and actively engaging in addressing hunger, thus building skills in humanitarian practice. As such, context transcendence provides such experiences through projects in which the child can experience and imagine living in a context outside of his or her current circumstance. Context transcendence becomes the vantage point by which a social imagination and personal transformation of a child can happen. This can be done by utilising storytelling, writing narratives, “trying to go beyond” (Galtung 2017) and the realisation that the child is transferring from earlier notions of violent context-specific experiential learnings to more emancipatory and “authentic educational” experiences (Freire 2000: 85).

Contextual transcendence revolves around a learner developing a fresh understanding of existence through the power of imagination. This can be achieved by either physically moving to different environments or by experiencing various contexts through stories and field trips. Transformation does indeed occur, but it can manifest in different ways and hold different meanings. The learner's interpretation of their context may change, even if the actual lived context remains the same. As a result, the child now resides in a transcendent world that is potentially being created, leading to social and personal growth.

The child learner must possess the capacity to undergo an encounter with what Deleuze (as cited in Wolf 2022: 2) refers to as transcendental sensibility. This notion of transcendental

sensibility is perceived as an existential inclination towards transformation. The sensibility entails an "affective conceptualisation of cognition" and enables students to transcend the predefined identities that are imposed upon them, allowing them to contemplate the "new and unrepresentable", the ineffable. Deleuze defines 'affect' as an inwardly embodied movement that encompasses both the mind and body and possesses such potency that it engenders the perception of existence beyond the confines of the self (Manley 2020: 11; Wolf 2022).

3.4 Self-transcendence

Self-transcendence theory presents a framework for enhancing well-being during challenging life circumstances. (Reed, 2017). The philosophical foundation of this theory is grounded in Martha Rogers's ideas about human nature and transformation, which encompass concepts such as pan-dimensionality and healing potential. This theory explores the stages of individual development, with an emphasis on the intricacies of living, ageing, and the process of dying (Reed, 2017). Reed argues that the theory relies on two fundamental assumptions: humans are inherently interconnected with their surroundings; and self-transcendence plays a vital role in development, comparable to significant milestones such as a toddler's initial steps or the reasoning skills of adolescents. Self-transcendence expands self-boundaries:

- Intra-personally (increasing self-awareness),
- inter-personally (enhancing relationships),
- temporally (linking past, present, and future), and
- trans-personally (interacting with broader dimensions), which aligns with developmental maturity.

The second essential concept, well-being, represents a feeling of wholeness and health, which varies from person to person. Self-transcendence promotes well-being, with factors such as life satisfaction, hope, and a sense of purpose surfacing as both correlates and results of this developmental journey (Reed 2017).

Self-transcendence aligns with Freire's concept of human 'unfinishedness,' which reflects our continuous potential for growth and transformation. Freire envisioned human beings as inherently open to development, constantly evolving through critical reflection and action. In this sense, self-transcendence embodies the spirit of ongoing personal and social transformation that Freire championed. Freire (1994: 65 cited in Glass 2001: 22) states the "defining ontological feature of being human is that people produce history and culture, even as history and culture produce them, and this both the theory and application of education as

a practice of freedom 'takes the people's historicity as their starting point'". Freire often called to mind the significance of unfinishedness as a necessary radical variable in diminishing fatalism and inspiring hope in new possibilities for collective change among the oppressed. At the heart of this concept of our humanity is also the recognition that oppression is never a permanent condition; and it is, indeed, because no human condition is ever absolute or finished that struggle remains viable and hope fertile. Freire (1983:147) explains:

If this world were a created finished world, it would no longer be susceptible to transformation. Human beings exist as such, and the world is a historical-cultural one because the two come together as unfinished products of a permanent relationship, in which human beings transform the world and undergo the effects of their transformation. In this dynamic, historical-cultural process one generation encounters the objective reality marked out by another generation and receives through it the imprints of reality.

For example, Perez-Sales et al. (2005) state that testimonies of survivors of concentration camps have shown that holding on to personal dignity was key to avoiding psychological vulnerability, and as stated by Bettelheim (1986: 73-74) "any good luck he should regain liberty, he would be approximately the same person he was when deprived of liberty."

We all possess our views on self-transcendence. Koltko-Rivera (2006) claims that self-transcendence serves as a motivational concept that we utilise to validate our behaviour. Instances of this can be seen in religious zealotry, where individuals engage in actions with the belief that these will enhance their spiritual devotion.

Garcia-Romeu et al. (2015:14) illustrate how individuals interpret self-transcendence. One participant in their study stated,

"Self-transcendence signifies a journey that moves beyond the confines of the self towards a larger whole of which the self is an essential component,"

a definition that resonates closely with those documented in theoretical literature. (Garcia-Romeu et al. 2015: 14). Another participant remarked,

I believe that self-transcendence offers societal advantages... It should be encouraged, and the educational system ought to be designed around it."
(Garcia-Romeu et al. 2015: 15).

According to the American Psychological Association, cited in Wong et al. (2021: 3) self-transference (first described by Viktor E. Frankl) is "the state in which an individual can look beyond himself or herself and adopt a larger perspective that includes concern for others." Self-transcendence, in its literal sense, entails going beyond our limitations and challenges in

life, to serve or connect with something larger than ourselves. Self-transcendence occurs when we realise that we are merely a small part of a greater whole, and consequently, act accordingly. This humanness of feeling being limited by various restrictions can only be freed through the realm of transcendence (Wong 2021). Self-transcendence is generally related to religious experiences.

Similarly, Frey and Volger (2019) as cited in Wong et al. (2021: 3) confirmed through humanities and social research findings that individuals who can situate themselves within a wider context, be it within their family, community, or religious and spiritual communities, often experienced greater levels of happiness, meaning and moral virtues. And, in the context of this particular study, self-transcendence is linked to education grounded in a generous philosophy. Wong et al. (2021: 3) state that self-transcendent emotions encompass a range of feelings that include awe, love, elevation, and appreciation, among others, and which foster closer social connections among people.

Awe is a natural emotional response to something spectacular or sacred, such as a glorious sunset or an ancient temple, which may be considered as a deep existential-spiritual response” (Wong et al. 2021: 3).

The authors (ibid) propose at least seven ways that invite the emotions of awe:

1. The power of life forces us to grow and bear fruits against all odds.
2. The wisdom of the human mind to probe into the mystery of life.
3. The virtue of love is sacrificing the self for others.
4. The magic of gratitude fills our hearts with happiness.
5. The invincible courage to stand up against evil.
6. The unwavering faith in creating a better future.
7. The unspeakable joy of losing oneself to become a part of something greater (such as the nature of the Creator).

According to Viktor E. Frankl as cited in Wong (2021: 10):

...only to the extent that someone is living out this self-transcendence of human existence, is he truly human or does he become his true self. He becomes so, not by concerning himself with his self’s actualisation, but by forgetting himself and giving himself, overlooking himself and focusing outward.

Frankl’s model of self-transcendence (cited in Wong 2016: 5) is closely tied to meaningfulness, and the “will to meaning” is the motivation through the process of self-transcendence.

However, this may also assume negative characteristics, such as Hitler's grand design of an Aryan-ruled Third Reich, or a drug lord's ambition to build a drug trafficking empire (Wong 2016: 6). A genuine or authentic self-transcendence framework must, therefore, be defined by four supporting characteristics (Wong 2016: 6):

- A shift in focus from self to others: This entails a shift away from self-centred concerns or selfishness towards something greater or someone more esteemed than oneself. This shift can occur at three different levels: the transpersonal level, encompassing a perceived connection with God, nature, or all living beings; the level of life as a whole, involving an awareness of one's meaningful life purpose or the unconditional acceptance and affirmation of one's inherent value, regardless of possessions or achievements; and the situational level, where practising meaning mindset and attentively observing life as it unfolds allows us to uncover hidden significance and meaning in everyday situations, thereby surprising us with joy and a profound sense of awe.
- A shift in values: This entails a shift in focus from external motivation to internal motivation. Internal motivation pertains to doing something for its own sake, like participating in play, performing acts of kindness, or tending to the needs of friends and loved ones.
- An increase in moral concern: This emanates from the religiously - or theologically-based moral law and some culturally-based normative vision of moral values and virtues.
- Emotions of elevation: All the above three characteristics may trigger emotions of elevation. These emotions include awe, ecstasy, or amazement because of something extraordinary in its vastness (God or nature), ability (exceptional accomplishment), or goodness (special kindness of one person towards another). This feeling of awe is part of life-transforming experiences because it moves people towards worship or becoming a better and more responsible person.

For practical reasons, context transcendence focuses on education as place (local schooling as context specificity), emphasising the importance of educating humanitarian practice as "leading out, reaching out", meaning an education approach that is transformative and outward-reaching. When a child learner witnesses the radiant joy on the face of a classmate while partaking in a shared meal, it evokes profound feelings of self-transcendence, awe and wonder in the learner. The impact of self-transcendence experiences on education goes beyond mere memorisation. It also includes cooperation and exchanges that teach about the transformation of violent circumstances.

3.5 Poor pedagogy

A poor pedagogy which inspires awe wonder and transformation is suitably related to the emotional, authentic and moral concept of self-transcendence. My epistemological perspective is shaped by the concept of research being understood as a dynamic and ongoing

process. For this purpose, I use the poor pedagogy approach proposed by Masschelein (2010). Poor pedagogy is derived from the notion of “e-ducating the gaze” Masschelein (2010: 44). He understands e-ducating the gaze “not in the sense of educate (teaching) but of e-ducere as leading out, reaching out. What Masschelein suggests is that e-ducere refers to the process of drawing out the inner self-awareness and knowledge that already exists within the individual rather than cramming knowledge into their minds. The focus is not on achieving a liberated or critical perspective, but rather on liberating and changing our viewpoint. It promotes the importance of critical educational research elaborating on educating as a matter of *becoming attentive*. Masschelein (2010: 49) refers to critical educational research as poor pedagogy:

Poor pedagogy reflects “a poor art: the art of waiting, mobilising, presenting. Such a poor art is in a certain sense blind (has no destination, no end, is not going anywhere, is not concerned with the beyond, has no vision of a promised land), it is deaf (hears no interpellation, is not obeying ‘laws’) and speechless (has no teachings to give). It offers no possibility of identification (the subject position – the position of the teacher or the student – is, so to say, empty), no comfort.”

Critical educational research is not about making conscious or *being conscious*, but about attention and *being attentive*. A critical research approach brings about practical changes within ourselves and in the current context we exist in, rather than escaping from it in pursuit of a better state where we can pass judgment on the present. This critical research approach is not dependent on a specific method but relies on discipline. It does not require a complex methodology but instead encourages a poor pedagogy, one that allows us to expose ourselves and take to the streets, displacing ourselves from our comfort zones (Masschelein 2010: 48). The author (Masschelein 2010: 48) elaborates on this idea of being attentive:

To be attentive is to open oneself to the world. Attention is precisely to be present in the present, to be there – in the present – in such a way that the present can present itself to me (that it becomes visible, that it can come to me and I can come to see) and that I am exposed to it in such a way that I can be changed or ‘cut’ or contaminated, that my gaze can be liberated (through the ‘command’ of what is present). As such, attention makes experience possible.

According to Masschelein (2010: 49), poor pedagogy invites us to explore the world beyond our immediate comfort zone, placing ourselves “in an uncomfortable, weak position” further offering the means and support to enable such encounters...” it offers means for experience (instead of explanations, interpretations, justifications, representations, stories or criteria) means to become attentive”, fostering mindfulness.

Masschelein (2010: 44) provides an extract from Benjamin's book "*One-way Street*" to illustrate the manner a poor pedagogy intersects with lived experience. I quote from the full extract. In the book, Benjamin (1979: 51) writes:

The power of a country road is different when one is walking along it from when one is flying over it by aeroplane. In the same way, the power of a text is different when it is read from when it is copied out. The airplane passenger sees only how the road pushes through the landscape, and how it unfolds according to the same laws as the terrain surrounding it. Only he who walks the road on foot learns the power it commands, and how, from the very scenery that for the flier is only the unfurled plain, it calls forth distances, belvederes, clearings, prospects at each of its turns like a commander deploying soldiers at the front. Only the copied text thus commands the soul of him who is occupied with it, whereas, the mere reader never discovers the new aspects of his inner self that are opened by the text, that road cut through the interior jungle forever closing behind it: because the reader follows the movement of his mind in the free flight of daydreaming, whereas, the copier submits it to command.

Masschelein (2010: 44) argues that this passage serves as a clear indication of what critical educational research practice could be about. It also highlights the reason why revolution is not reliant on the promised land it allows us to enter, but rather lies in the act of walking. The point of walking is not to offer a "better" or more accurate perspective or understanding. Instead, it empowers us to transcend the limitations of our viewpoints and provides a glimpse into a realm that surpasses any specific standpoint. This transformative perspective not only shapes our experiences but also compels us to acknowledge its undeniable evidence. Benjamin suggests that walking allows us to perceive beyond any subjective position, as perspectives are inherently linked to a subjective stance concerning an object. Consequently, walking challenges this position and urges us to embrace an alternative standpoint, ultimately leading to a state of being out-of-position or ex-position.

I can relate to such openness, a meandering, that came to me not by seeking, but serendipitously. I experienced my poor pedagogy moment of awe when sounds penetrated my awareness of the violent conditions surrounding the lives of the learners. My poor pedagogy epiphany moment of sound is similar to what Naumer et al. (2008) explain about sense-making. According to Naumer et al. (2008: 3):

The sense-making moment is the point in time-space when a person experiences a gap while moving through time-space. The situation and outcome, as experienced, are informed by the nature of the situation, its history, its constraints, its relevant external power structures and other situational, contextual, and personal factors. The person bridges this gap by experiencing questions and muddles that lead them to construct bridges

consisting of ideas, thoughts, emotions, feelings, hunches, and memories. Sometimes these 'bridges' are repetitions from the past; sometimes they are entirely new; sometimes they are deliberate and planned; sometimes capricious; sometimes unconscious at the time of action but brought to consciousness in interviewing talk; sometimes tactic and unarticulated but alluded to in examples and stories.

For the first time I realised there was a gap in my study approach, as I was more interested in entering the 'promised land', and failing to be awake and alert to the daily life experiences of the learners. I was being absent, rather than being attentive (Masschelein 2010).

3.6 Theoretical influence on research methodology

This study is grounded in the theoretical constructs of slow violence (Nixon, 2011), transformative generosity, and self-transcendence (Frankl, 1959), each of which shaped the research design, methodology, and interpretation of findings.

3.6.1.1 Slow Violence and the need for a transformative approach

Slow violence, as defined by Nixon (2011), involves harm that occurs gradually and often goes unnoticed, resulting in long-lasting and severe consequences. In contrast to immediate physical violence, slow violence is rooted in structural inequalities, appearing in forms such as poverty, food insecurity, and community violence—all of which influence the realities of learners in Facticeon. This research applies Nixon's framework to illustrate how educational neglect, social marginalisation, and intergenerational trauma accumulate over time, constraining children's agency and opportunities.

Given the pervasive nature of slow violence in contexts that impact schools and education, it was crucial to employ a methodology that can address and affect long-term, hidden struggles rather than just focusing on immediate crises. Transformative Participatory Action Research (TPAR) was selected as the guiding methodology. Lundy et al. (2006) promote participatory research, which is particularly beneficial in contexts that require collaborative transformation, emphasising shared responsibility and cycles of reflection and action. TPAR is aligned with this approach by prioritising the voices and experiences of learners, ensuring that the study serves to empower them.

3.6.1.2 Transformative generosity, self-transcendence, and Freire's pedagogy of liberation

Freire posits that education should not merely be a passive one-directional transmission of knowledge (the 'banking model'), but rather a relational and dialogical process that cultivates critical consciousness (*conscientização*). This study embraces Freire's (1970) notion of true generosity as a foundational principle for reforming education into a pedagogy of transformation. Transformative generosity disrupts conventional educational hierarchies by reconceptualising schools as environments where care, reciprocity, and shared responsibility are fundamental to the learning experience.

Linked to this notion is the idea of self-transcendence, derived from Frankl's (1959, 1988) exploration of meaning-making. Frankl asserts that individuals discover meaning not solely through self-actualisation but also by transcending their own limits—engaging with others and contributing to something greater than themselves. The concept of transcendence in learning aligns with Kolb's (2014) experiential learning theory, which highlights the importance of active participation in education. Within the educational context, self-transcendence acts as a counter to slow violence: whereas slow violence diminishes hope and agency, self-transcendence paves the way for reclaiming meaning, resilience and action.

In this study, transformative generosity and self-transcendence serve not only as theoretical ideas but also as methodological foundations. Rather than relying on rigid interview formats, I involved learners in open, conversational dialogues, echoing Freire's (1970, 1994) focus on dialogue as a transformative tool. This method facilitated a deeper, more genuine investigation into how slow violence influences learners' everyday realities, from persistent hunger to the emotional turbulences of community violence. Most significantly, it framed the study as participatory encounters, ensuring that learners were not merely subjects of study but also active co-creators of knowledge and solutions.

3.6.1.3 Theoretical influence on methodology and findings

The findings of this study reflect these theoretical foundations. Nixon's (2011) concept of slow violence offered a perspective through which the enduring effects of educational neglect, poverty, and systemic exclusion could be comprehended. Simultaneously, Freire's (1970) advocacy for education as a tool for liberation, Frankl's (1959) focus on self-transcendence, Kolb's (2014) model of experiential learning, and Lundy et al.'s (2006) support for participatory

action research informed the study's dedication to transformative generosity. This framework illustrated that by nurturing trust, providing relational support, and fostering a more engaged and compassionate school culture, it is feasible to alleviate some consequences of slow violence and create environments of resilience.

In conclusion, this study posits that education should function not solely as a means of knowledge transmission, but rather should serve as a platform for cultivating empathic relationships, ending cycles of harm and changing adverse environments. By integrating these ideas into both the research methodology and the findings, this study emphasises the necessity for educational strategies that positively impact learners to proactively address crises in their immediate context and community. This approach must intentionally foster conditions for enduring, sustainable change through generosity, dignity, and a sense of shared humanity.

3.7 Conclusion

This chapter explored the intersection of conflict transformation, self-transcendence, and experiential learning as a framework for addressing the effects of slow violence on child learners. By positioning education as a means to cultivate agency and relational responsibility, the study emphasised how transformative generosity can mitigate the structural inequalities that shape learners' experiences in Factreton. By integrating Lederach's (2003) and Galtung's (2017) theories with Kolb's (2014) experiential learning cycle, this study demonstrated how educational interventions grounded in active participation and moral imagination can facilitate both personal and social transformation.

By promoting dialogue, reflection, and engagement, education can serve as a platform for resisting slow violence, empowering learners to imagine alternative futures. This approach highlights the importance of transcending traditional pedagogies in favour of models that emphasise relational learning, ethical engagement, and collective empowerment. The chapter reinforces the imperative of reimagining education as a space for cultivating resilience, fostering social change, and breaking cycles of structural violence.

CHAPTER 4: LITERATURE REVIEW

4.1 Introduction

Wolcott (n.d cited in Chawla 2021: 118) in writing about literature review, states:

“I expect my students to know the relevant literature, but I do not want them to lump [dump?] it all into a chapter that remains unconnected to the rest of the study. I want them to draw upon the literature selectively and appropriately as needed in the telling of their story.”

Wolcott (n.d) continues explaining that it is neither the literature nor the structure but the telling of the story that takes precedence. This study’s approach to literature and writing approach underlines the raw and messiness of human society (Weatherall, 2018; Weatherall 2019; Chawla 2021; Hales and Galbally 2022; Dickson 2015; Clark et al. 2007; Gilmore, et al. 2019; Grey and Sinclair 2006; Van Eck et al. 2021) where ‘differentness’ shapes a world in which peace and harmony remain elusive and burdened by constraints of structural violence. This chapter should be viewed through the lens of concern over the role of peace in a world where hostilities continue to escalate. Gleditsch et al. (2014) argue that within the realm of peace and conflict studies, the examination of peace has garnered significantly less academic focus compared to the study of war and violence. However, Azcona (2010: 4) asserts that we are meant to foster a new acculturation for global citizens: the acculturation for peace.

In tackling the deep-rooted violence prevalent across the globe conflict transformation offers a comprehensive approach that transcends merely handling or settling particular disagreements. Conflict transformation, as defined by Lederach (1995, 1997; Galtung 1969, 1990; Tom 2015), encompasses the restructuring of relationships, societal structures, and attitudes to facilitate positive peace and constructive social change, in contrast to conflict resolution, which addresses specific disputes without confronting underlying power dynamics or structural inequities.

Thus, this study draws on Galtung’s (1969, 1990) concept of positive peace which emphasizes the establishment of social systems that support justice, cooperation, and collective flourishing. Positive peace requires addressing the root causes of structural violence which include factors like limited economic opportunities, insufficient educational resources, and the persistent social and economic impact such as those experienced under a system like Apartheid. Unlike negative peace, defined merely as the absence of direct violence, positive peace involves creating the necessary conditions for justice, well-being, and harmony,

especially within educational settings (Galtung 1969). This approach is critical in Facticeon, where schools reflect broader community inequalities and tensions (Patel 2019). By fostering positive peace, the study aims to cultivate environments that empower learners, helping them to confront and transform the conditions perpetuating structural and slow violence (Nixon 2011) in their lives. The concept of "slow violence," as theorized by Nixon (2011), is relevant to this study. According to Nixon (2011), slow violence occurs gradually and out of sight, primarily affecting marginalized communities and unfolding over extended periods.

This study's approach aligns with Reardon's call for "authentic peace," which is rooted in global justice and the dismantling of structural violence (Snauwaert 2012). Reardon argues that peace cannot be sustained without addressing social inequities, as these are the foundations upon which slow violence is built. Peace is practical, it is a "moving target" (Adler 1998: 165). The Freirian (1970) concept of peace is viewed as an *unfinished* process and practice, not static but dynamic. Fisher et al. (2000 cited in Sakade 2009: 26) state that "peace is a process: a many-sided, never-ending struggle to transform violence." Conflict transformation is an example of peace as a process and scholars like Lederach (1995) and Galtung (2007) have done a lot of work in this field (van Iterson Scholten 2014). Furthermore, The Women in Peace Hypothesis (WPH, cited by Brounéus 2014; Boulding 2002) posits that women's involvement in peacebuilding introduces nurturing and cooperative traits beneficial to conflict resolution and transformation. Bell Hooks (2021) and Addams (cited in Câmpian 2008) assert that maternal perspectives, marked by empathy and care, are crucial for sustainable peace. Thus, in educational settings, promoting positive peace involves cultivating environments where learners learn to identify, critique, and counteract the structures that perpetuate slow violence in their lives, transforming schools into pillars of nurturance, cooperation, resilience and change (Lederach 1997; Galtung 1990; Freire 1970).

This chapter examined literature on slow violence and structural violence, focusing on how these forms of violence manifest in educational contexts. The review explores the impact of these pervasive, often hidden forces on learners' development, well-being, and educational outcomes, while also acknowledging the resilience and capacity of learners to overcome these challenges, thus creating environments promoting positive peace.

4.2 Understanding violence in the context of this study

In this section, the background and role of slow violence are highlighted across South Africa's historical and Post-Apartheid context, especially as it relates to explaining the objectives of this study: to examine slow violence's impact on learners, explore generosity-driven

educational principles, develop and assess a humanitarian-centred model for enhancing learner motivation and well-being, and propose this framework as a transformative approach in settings affected by structural violence.

4.2.1 Violence is not the same as conflict

There is a distinctive difference between violence and conflict. While conflicts may have constructive outcomes flowing from new reflections and ideas, violence, on the other hand, inflicts more detrimental and negative experiences. Vanhaesebrouck and Van der Haven (2022: 6) assert that "violence engages audiences in complex ways: it can fascinate or repel, provide intense embodied experiences, exploit the curiosity and desires of the consumer public, create a disjunction from daily life, or transform reality into a performative space. Furthermore, violence is not a static concept; its nature, definition, and performative impact are profoundly contextual and historical (ibid). The essence of conflict, according to Galtung (cited in Rodrigues 2016: 24) is an "incompatibility, a contradiction, between goals". The intention to inflict violence "is to harm and hurt the body, mind and/or spirit of some, including Self; by verbal and /or physical means, including body language" (Rodrigues 2016: 25). Demmers (2016: 7) concurs that conflict is any situation in which conflicting parties have incompatible goals, and as such conflict as a situation infers the "possibility for inaction".

Galtung (2017) asserts that conflict has its life cycle. In the case of dominance of incompatible goals, differentiations are prone to emerge, what Galtung (2017) calls contradictions, and these incompatibles can feed attitudes of hatred and violent behaviour that generate conflict. Any conflict is made up of a tripartite alliance: incompatibility, attitude and behaviour. According to this perception, conflict is produced in the presence of an unjust and dominant element (structure) when the violent actor and the violated environment (violent culture) reach a point of outburst and are ready for confrontation. But thereafter there is also a possibility of reconsideration: finding peace. In general terms conflict can be identified as emerging from a situation of triumphalism and dominance; confiscation and unjust-based differentiation; and contestation. Furthermore, Lederach (2015a: 546) asserts people fight not just around the demands for land, political recognition, or economic inclusion but for their very survival by which the 'enemy' rarely lives far off but rather next door, also by creating defining boundaries of identities of 'in' and 'out' groups.

Based on observations by Lewis Coser (Lederach 2015a: 548), conflict serves several social functions. What he observed is that in the face of outside threats, there is an increase in internal cohesion and agreement. Furthermore, in situations of protracted conflict people

withdraw themselves from the other community, rather than eliminate them, thus, ensuring survival and safety for themselves. They find it useful to live with this unhealthy tension of deep suspicion toward the other “as a method of survival in a context of a great deal of unpredictability” (Lederach 2015a: 548). It might seem irrational to look over one’s shoulder to survive makes sense, yet though conflict reigns for a time, a remnant is at work to ensure generational longevity. Interestingly, the histories of conflicts from “their emergence to their successful transformation” can be illustrated by a “wave-like timeline” (Lederach 2005: 43), or a “smoothly curving bell” (Lund 1996: 40) as they rise and fall in intensity over time (Figure 4.1).

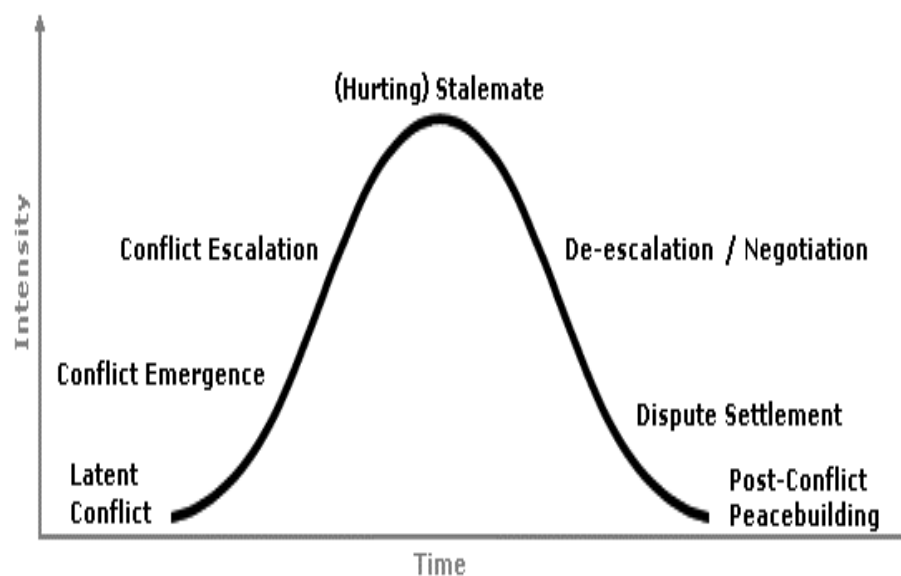


Figure 4.1: The conflict “wave” (Brahm 2003; Dudouet 2006: 6)

However, looking closely at the latent conflict and post-conflict PB gap, the road between the two can be very arduous and long (de Coning 2019). And arguably lots of compromising agreements may be reached, leading simply to compromised PB solutions. The elasticity of compromised solutions is firm initially, but weakens over time as newer generations of conflict situations arise, rendering previous compromises outdated and disposable.

However, Ackerman and Du Vall (cited in Kuul 2014: 13) argue that “The greatest misconception about conflict in our century is that violence is always the ultimate form of power, that no other method of advancing a just cause or defeating injustice can surpass it.” Mahatma Gandhi and Gene Sharp prove otherwise asserting that civil unrest is a form of nonviolent warfare. In this respect, Sharp argues, “this special type of asymmetrical conflict, the opponent’s violent action is always confronted indirectly, that is, not by the same type of

action in confrontation but by nonviolent resistance and intervention” (Kuul 2014: 7). Chenoweth (2015: 3) asserts that the data provided by the Nonviolent and Violent Campaigns and Outcomes set more than 50% of the nonviolent campaigns as successful, whereas about 26% of the violent ones were not.

Violence, unlike the transformative potential of conflict, is much more volatile and unstructured. Lee (2015: 202) views violence from a public health perspective shifting the blame away from the individual and as a disease that needs to be studied, treated and prevented. He defines violence as “the intentional reduction of life or thriving of life in human beings through physical, structural, or other means of force that either results in or has a high likelihood of resulting in deprivation, maldevelopment, psychological harm, injury, death, or extinction of the species.” According to the World Health Organisation’s Violence Prevention Alliance (VPA), there is no single factor why some people or groups are at higher risk of interpersonal violence, while others are protected from it. An ecological framework has been designed to indicate the risk factors at the various levels (Figure 4.2).

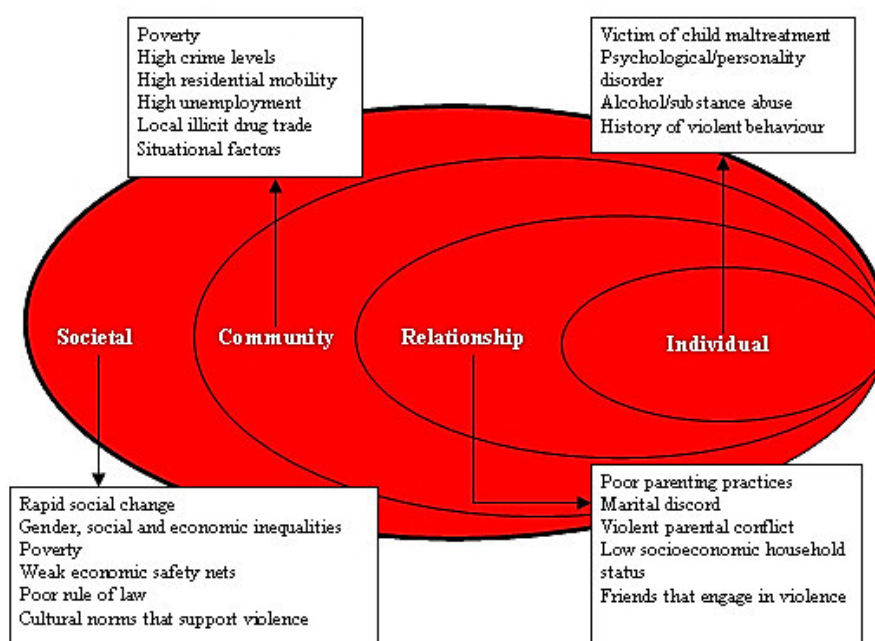


Figure 4.2: Ecological framework indicating the risk factors at the various levels (Source: World Health Organisation: Violence Prevention Alliance)

According to the Seville Statement on Violence (Gat 2019) neither violence nor war is rooted in human nature but is merely a cultural artefact. According to Gat (2019, 2010) humans are embedded with the potential for both peace and war and the propensity for conflict and fighting

is usually fuelled by exerting competition. Gat (2017) argues that when it is to the benefit of humans to do so, they would rather sacrifice peace and resort to violence or organised war as the means to that end. According to Pitman (2011), the common denominator for war and violence is the presence of aggression in all animal species.

Scholars posit that aggression follows an evolutionary path and is most likely for “animals to acquire high-protein, energy-rich food; to acquire and defend sexual partners; to acquire and defend territory...and to defend against predators” (Pitman 2011: 9). According to Clark and Winegard (2020), studies show that deadly tribal rivalry has influenced human evolution. Throughout history, human groups have competed for resources, with defeated groups often losing valuable territories or being annihilated. Archaeological evidence reveals numerous fossilised signs of violent deaths, supporting this view of a violent past. However, Gat (2017) argues that archaeological findings make it hard to reach a clear conclusion about whether humans caused violent deaths throughout most of their history on earth. According to Wanis-St. John (2011: 564) human practices of peacemaking (PM) are not of recent origin, and must have emerged over hundreds of millennia, since the “techniques and norms for PM around the globe, bear the marks of deeply shared universal human history.” Douglas Fry (cited in Wanis-St. John 2011: 565) and supported by (Komter 2010) states that anthropological evidence demonstrates that “the image of humanity as instinctively inclined to warfare is the result of biases and assumptions that colour how we have conducted research into aggression and violence. Fry describes the existing “non-warring societies” among contemporary foraging groups and links this to archaeology to demolish the myth of ‘man the warrior’.” Thus, for Rodrigues (2016) peace is about choice, whereas Gandhi and Clément (1973: 37) assert that the way of peace is the way of truth. The truth must be sought in Fry’s description that instead of deifying the god of war, it should be treated as a myth.

Church (2015: 25) asserts that the origins of violence are rooted in socially driven norms and values like patriarchy, racism, homophobia, misogyny and xenophobia, and these flourish where there is fear, mistrust of others and fatalism that those in power will always be in power. These as Lederach (1995: 8) posits, point to the “social construction of human experience, interaction, and social realities.” Added to this, research indicates that the root causes conducive to hate, radicalisation and extremism range from, prejudice, distortion of religious beliefs, political ideologies, social networks, structural marginalisation, breakdown of family and community structures, the proliferation of criminal gangs, youth unemployment, corruption, human rights abuses, and individual and collective trauma (Villa-Vicencio 2017; Shannahan and Payne 2016). This is affirmed by Morten Storm et al. (2014) that extremist

militants often come from similar backgrounds: with difficult or violent childhoods, little education and few prospects, unemployed, unmarried and seething with resentment.

Violence comes in many forms such as on a grand scale that includes wars, genocide or state-sanctioned oppression, or as everyday violence such as infant mortality, slow starvation, disease, despair and humiliation (Berents 2014: 107). Violence creates an atmosphere of fear and insecurity, which silences people to speak out against atrocities (Berents 2014: 107). Hansen-Nord et al. (2014 cited in Lee et al. 2016: 611) assert that violence erodes human and social capital and limits trust among people. Violent conditions have an impact on the lives of people.

4.2.2 Violent conditions

Laurie and Shaw (2018: 14) write that violent conditions are pervasive and articulate “what can be sensed, felt, thought, and performed in the world.” According to Laurie and Shaw (2018), violent conditions burn in the background of daily life. Violent conditions forcefully constrain, traumatise, and poison, the very resources of our becoming focusing on the complex conditions and discontents of capitalism. To put it simply: to exist is to be affected by conditions. Violent conditions restrict the potential for life to flourish and actualise, “poisoning, irradiating, and wounding the neighbourhoods of everyday being” (Laurie and Shaw 2018: 8). The authors assert (citing Galtung 1990) that violence is always bound by, and produced by conditions of shortened and restricted life potential, and also of a permanent, unwanted state of misery. Violent conditions can come in many forms. One such example is epistemic violence. Wemheuer-Vogelaar et al. (2020: 19 citing Spivak 1994) define epistemic violence as “imposing a particular (in this case Western-centric) knowledge on other parts of the world”. This process dictates what should be known and how it should be transmitted, creating hierarchies of knowledge, and marginalising non-Western knowledge types. Davies (2022) asserts that slow violence persists not because there is a lack of stories, but that it disregards the stories about issues of pollution and social injustices. Kane (2023: 5) writing about austerity violence views the presence of mould as spatial violence that causes the housing to deteriorate, erode and even crumble. Mould, Kane (2023: 5) writes is this non-human Other that “shares the spaces we claim as our own. It ‘moves’ in and invade spaces where water runs “down the living-room wall, strips of black-speckled mould forms around a burst pipe in the kitchen, to brown water marks eroding the liminal spaces of the ceiling.”

According to Nancy Scheper-Hughes and Philippe Bourgois (2004: 1 cited in Kilby 2013: 266) violence cannot be understood “solely in terms of its physicality – force, assault, or the infliction

of pain – alone. Violence also includes assaults on the personhood, dignity, sense of worth or value of the victim. The social and cultural dimensions of violence are what give violence its power and meaning.” According to Laurie and Shaw (2018), our lives are affected by conditions. Conditions shape and define us. And these can be identified as our socio-economic status, cultural background, gender, race, and various other intersecting identities. Violence is seen as integral to these conditions shaping the ways we experience existence.

Lukes (cited in Pincock et al. 2022: 872) indicates why ordinary people unwittingly get to comply willingly with those who dominate over them. The powerful skilfully manipulate the social norms that are deeply ingrained in structures and respected by the populace thereby wielding dominance and protecting their interests. This stealth manoeuvring by the powerful is referred to as the “first face of power” highlighting structural violence as “pervasive and invisible”. Structural violence is a useful reference according to Galtung (1990: 875) that “shows up as lack of power.”

This is evidenced by studies done in Bangladesh and Ethiopia on service delivery in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. In their research, the researchers (Pincock et al. 2022: 872) reported how structural violence was perpetrated by governments and even humanitarian agencies. The authors (Pincock et al. 875-876) identified evidence of three clusters of structural violence in response to the pandemic:

- (i) inadequate protection against exposure to violence in the home and community; (ii) inadequate delivery of essential services, including education, health and psychological support; and (iii) failure to ensure adequate livelihood opportunities in the context of deteriorating employment and to provide timely social protection support

McGibbon (2021) asserts that structural violence, similar to slow violence (Nixon 2011) reveals the oppressive mechanisms at work in society, producing unrelenting cycles of diseases, illnesses and social injustices. Bauman in his book *Wasted Lives* (2004: 5) writes that modernity inevitably results in the production of “wasted humans.” Humans become increasingly expendable and deemed undeserving of dignified existence; “superfluous people are in a no-win situation” (Bauman 2004: 41).

4.2.3 Conceptualizing slow violence

Nixon (2011: 2) describes violence as typically perceived as immediate in time, explosive and spectacular in space, citing examples like “falling bodies, burning towers, exploding heads, avalanches, volcanoes, and tsunamis.” However, he urges recognition of a “different kind of violence... neither spectacular nor instantaneous, but rather incremental and accretive,”

unfolding over time with often unnoticed but devastating consequences (Nixon 2011: 3). Expanding on this, Nixon (2011) introduces the concept of slow violence, which refers to harm that develops gradually, accumulating over time in ways that often go unnoticed or overlooked. Strong (2020) similarly observes that while violence is often associated with the immediate and physical, it can also manifest insidiously, much like ocean acidification, which Nixon warns progresses “just slowly enough that it can hinder our ability to mobilise and act decisively” (Nixon 2011: 10). It aligns with Galtung’s (1969) concept of structural violence. Graf et al. (2006: 74) expand on this, defining structural violence as “the difference between the potential and the actual,” where entrenched inequalities hinder individual and collective development, often invisibly. Slow violence exists within structural violence and manifests itself through gradual environmental deterioration, intergenerational poverty, and educational disparities. Schools situated in marginalised areas, like those in Facticeon, illustrate the repercussions of structural and slow violence, where insufficient resources, overcrowding, and a lack of educational assistance exacerbate systemic disparities (Patel 2019). In these contexts, promoting positive peace through education becomes a crucial transformative goal, ensuring that students are not only protected from violence but are also equipped to address its underlying causes. The distinction between negative peace (the absence of direct violence) and positive peace (systems that promote justice, equality, and human thriving) is essential in understanding educational reform (Galtung 1969).

Furthermore, social ignorance plays a sinister role in perpetuating structural violence, shaping divergent interpretations of the same realities. Warrington et al. (2023: 41-42) illustrate this through a 1970 interview with Ghassan Kanafani, a Palestinian author and revolutionary assassinated by Mossad. The interviewer fails to grasp why the Palestinian Liberation Organisation resorts to violence rather than negotiations, highlighting how structural violence shapes perceptions of conflict.

- The interviewer: “Why not engage in dialogue...To stop the fighting, pain and death?”
- Ghassan Kanafani: “That kind of conversation between the sword and the neck, you mean? ...People usually fight for something, and they stop fighting for something ...Talk about stop fighting, why? ... [For] the misery and the destruction and the pain and the death of whom? - Of the Palestinian people who are uprooted, thrown in the camps, living in starvation, killed for 20 years, and forbidden to use even the name Palestinians? “
- Interviewer: “Would it not be preferable to be alive rather than dead?”
- Ghassan Kanafani: “Perhaps that is your perspective, but it is not ours. For us, the liberation of our homeland, the attainment of dignity, the receipt of respect, and the realisation of our basic human rights are as vital as life itself”

According to Warmington (2023), the interviewer reveals his ignorance speaking from a privileged perspective, and theorises violence as a continuum, existing beyond its physical form. In other words, we have perceptual filters that can obscure the realities of others, so what we perceive often stems from a narrow, one-dimensional perspective.

4.2.4 Conditioned by structuration

We are defined as living within conditioned typologies of structures. Not structures that stir up the imaginative or the creative but structures that perpetuate isolation and differences. We cannot imagine or create beyond what we experience, and that is hunger, violence, depravity, bad education and many such impediments. Galtung (2000) alludes that these all form part of structural violence. Hall and Pilisuk (2012) elucidate Galtung's concept of structural violence, which is responsible for more fatalities than wars and other forms of direct violence (Galtung 1969). According to the World Health Organization (2009 cited in Hall and Pilisuk 2012) direct violence, including war, results in 1.5 million deaths annually. Structural violence, however, leads to 14 to 18 million fatalities yearly due to malnutrition, contaminated water, insufficient medical care, and relative poverty (Hall and Pilisuk 2012: 137). Considering all of these in the light of studying PB what moral standing can I proclaim to transform the world? I can be socialised to hold the same illusions as others that I am superior to my sibling or my neighbour. I may be brought up to believe in my distinctiveness and uniqueness and differentially side with those who equal my status or views. How can I shake it off that I, like many others, are subliminally educated to perpetuate a myth? Toni Morrison (*The Bluest Eyes*, nd: 8) for example, writes about violent conditions in the form of language and culture: "hearing 'civilised' languages debase humans, watching cultural exorcisms debase literature." Violent conditions are under our skin, overshadowing our minds, rendering us humans expendable and inauthentic (Figure 4.3).



Figure 4.3: Crowds gather near the body of a looter in Johannesburg after some of the worst unrest in South Africa since the end of apartheid (Source: Kim Ludbrook. Image courtesy of Aljazeera 2021)

4.2.5 Theoretical Foundations of Slow Violence and Structural Violence

The environmentalism of the poor signifies those lacking in resources as the principal casualties of slow violence. They live in unseen poverty which is further compounded by the invisibility of the slow violence that permeates so many of their lives. According to human needs theories when peoples' fundamental human needs are frustrated violence and conflict are inevitable as these are non-negotiable needs (Danesh 2011). For example, Burton (1989: 6) asserts that "...there is little or perhaps no malleability regarding basic human needs, especially such as recognition, autonomy, dignity, and bonding. It follows that policies, no matter how coercive, that neglect human needs must generate protest and conflict." O'Lear (2023) remarks that it is not resource scarcity that leads to conflict, but the way humans relate to the resource that should be addressed. However, Mills and Pring (2024) assert that the key to slowing violence pertains to the temporal scale, which manifests as the delay between policy implementation and its violent consequences. This delay exploits time as a means to disconnect effects from their underlying causes (Tofighian and Boochani 2021 cited in Mills and Pring 2024). The temporal progression of slow violence signifies the presence of a gap, which may often, if not always, exist between policy enactment and the resulting harm caused. I adopt the nuances of slow violence (Nixon, 2011) to steer my writing so that it remains critical of unwarily falling into the trap whereby I may be guilty of perpetuating violent conditions. *The*

Story of Keisha, a fictional character created by Kiara lee-Heart (2018) is an example of shame, prejudice and ridicule, covert products of slow violence, and authentic in its characterisation of the impact of violent conditions:

She listens to old Jesse Jackson speeches with her mother, and she totes around her daddy's copy of the Malcolm X autobiography. Although she doesn't understand everything in the book, its mere presence makes her feel special. Sometimes, her mom tells her stories about "Lil' JoJo and them" and how they used to run together back in the day when they were Keisha's age. She hears about how this one "won't no good" and how that one "sho 'nuff told it" and how she didn't fool with so and so "like talkin' about... When Keisha enters the school, discomfort pervades her body. All of a sudden, her woolly hair weighs down her head. It's a burden. It means non-black classmates asking, "Why isn't yours straight like mine?" and "Why is it so oily?" Her Malcolm X book makes her hands sweat. The embarrassment burns. The stares do too. School and black pride just don't mesh. She can't relate to Shakespeare or Mark Twain forced down her throat in English class, but she still throws Malcolm X in her locker in exchange for Mark Twain. There is no room for both. But some days, walking around with Mark is even more embarrassing than walking around with Malcolm. At least she sees herself in Malcolm.

Thus, to adoption of structural violence as an analytical tool is limited, Nixon states the following:

Slow violence, by contrast, might well include forms of structural violence but has a wider descriptive range in calling attention, not simply to questions of agency, but to broader, more complex descriptive categories of violence enacted slowly over time. (2011: 11).

Cahill and Pain (2019: 1059) write that instead of invisibility, slow violence might perhaps be "hidden in plain sight". The authors cite feminist, antiracist and Indigenous scholars who argue that "knowledge is informed by one's location while calling attention to how dominant perspectives assume a stable and omniscient vantage point. I think Ibram Kendi (2016: 15) has it right when he writes "racist ideas have done their job on us". So whatever ideology or dogma one follows, it has a sole purpose to do its job on us. Viola Davis in her book (*Finding Me*: 11) writes that "memories are immortal. They're deathless and precise. They have the power to give you joy and perspective in hard times. Or, they can strangle you. Define yourself in a way that's based more in people's tucked-up perceptions than truth"

According to Farmer (2004 cited in Berents 2014: 107; Freire 1970: 55) violence is not only deliberate and conscious, but it also arises from systems of oppression that are maintained and condoned through the maintenance of particular social orders. Although violence is negative and detrimental it does not always kill (Galtung 1970 cited in Church 2015: 53). Freire

(1970: 55) puts it as follows: 'with the establishment of a relationship of oppression, violence has already begun'. According to Lee (2016b: 156) through symbolism or iconography, religion and art have frequently been used to promote ideologies of violence, subjugation and oppression. The ecological perspective views violence as the outcome of an interaction that proceeds across the individual, the relational, the community and the societal (Lee et al. 2016; Neville et al. 2015). The ecology of violence viewed from the perspective of structural violence is based on the 'deliberate impairment of fundamental needs by actors of power (Lee et al. 2016: 111). It is a process that works through general misery, eroding and ultimately killing human beings, sometimes without even an awareness of doing so (Lee et al. 2016).

Conflict is a contestation of myths, historical myths that persist in the ideologies beliefs and customs of people. Graf et al. (2006: 75) relate to these as myths "created and passed on from one generation to the next. In this way, collective traumas can endure for centuries. They are stored within the deep culture and are often reactivated in situations of crisis, once again influencing the actions and goals of the individual or group." The authors (Graf et al. 2006) intimate that similar dynamics can be examined concerning the structures. The experience of collective trauma caused by conflict and violence, and the inability to resolve the contradiction(s), lead to the emergence of structures that are focused solely on meeting the basic needs of one's people, while disregarding the needs of others. This perception of others as barriers to achieving one's goals consequently gives rise to discrimination, exploitation, and in extreme cases, attempts to obliterate others, even if it leads to self-destruction.

The concepts of structural and slow violence offer a powerful theoretical framework for comprehending the intricate and long-lasting effects of systemic inequalities or marginalized communities, particularly within the context of post-Apartheid South Africa. The concept of structural violence, first articulated by Galtung (1969) sheds light on the web of social frameworks and systemic inequalities that inflict harm on individuals by denying them crucial resources, rights, and opportunities. Johan Galtung (1969) identifies three forms of violence: structural, cultural, and direct. Direct violence encompasses overt acts such as physical altercations, domestic abuse, terrorism, armed conflict, civil unrest, and corporeal aggression. Structural violence refers to unequal power dynamics within societal frameworks that generate disparities in resources and opportunities, manifesting as racial, gender, and socioeconomic inequalities, as well as oppression (Galtung 1969). Cultural violence legitimizes direct and structural violence through societal norms, biases, or practices (Galtung 1969). While these forms are not exhaustive, they provide a foundation for comprehending the complexities of violence.

Galtung's (1969) idea on structural violence is especially pertinent in the context of post-apartheid South Africa, revealing how deeply rooted systems of inequality result in daily deprivation, rendering this form of violence often invisible yet profoundly detrimental to children's psychological and physical health. In a parallel manner, Nixon (2011) builds upon this notion through the idea of "slow violence," underlining that the gradual and cumulative nature of such harm frequently conceals its impact on public awareness.

South Africa has a significant violence problem. The formation of the democratic South African state has always been an arduous path, fraught with conflict. The nation cannot be decontextualised from its Apartheid past which was one of violence, illicit businesses, widespread smuggling, co-opting of vigilante groups, and state security forces having criminal ties with gang leaders: such are the examples of our past (Bruce 2006; Lamb and Snodgrass 2013: 5; Chauke 2023)). Within the nation's structures, environments and communities, there are remaining strands of Apartheid that have not been expunged. Bruce (2006: 31) asserted by Burnett (1998) refers to this as the 'spilling over' effect of Apartheid's political culture into post-apartheid social and domestic arenas. South African society lives in such compromising tension. The political parties, especially the African National Congress and Nationalist Party, reached a political agreement in the 1990s for a peaceful transition to a new democratic era for the country. However, the embers of a smouldering discontent lay beneath this compromised agreement, and flare up again, as the tenets of slow violence over many generations of Apartheid and post-Apartheid life are hard to uproot (Soyapi and Kotzé 2016). Conflict is restless, an edgy colossus spread across the whole globe.

This view resonates with Nixon's (2011) characterization of slow violence as a long-term, cumulative harm that becomes "naturalized" within marginalized communities, influencing not only individual growth but also the trajectories of entire generations. Research supports this view, indicating that ongoing exposure to poverty, insecurity, and subpar education can result in emotional dysregulation, academic disengagement, and a reduced sense of agency (Naicker 2022).

Moreover, the interplay between structural violence and slow violence creates a complex feedback loop. According to Springer and Le Billon (2016), various relational connections exist between different expressions of violence, which moves us toward a more integrative understanding, meaning that violence is mediated through and integrated within a wider assemblage of space. In this way, violence is considered as a processual and unfolding (slow) moment, rather than as an 'act' or 'outcome'. For example, the violence of current teacher lay-

offs due to state budget cuts is a case in point. The following is an excerpt (Venna, 2024) represented here in full to explain the underlying violence and how this is experienced by teachers:

The Education Crisis Movement, composed of teachers, unions, and community members, began protesting after MEC David Maynier announced the cut of 2,407 teaching posts in the Western Cape by 2025 due to an R3.8-billion budget shortfall. Other provinces face similar issues: KwaZulu-Natal struggles to fund 11,092 educator posts, Mpumalanga faces an R876-million shortfall, and Gauteng will scale back learner transport and halt Early Childhood Development expansion due to budget constraints. Simone Cupido highlighted the dire consequences of the cuts, stating: "This is taking bread off the table... teachers on contracts will lose their jobs in January." She noted that protests have occurred without disrupting schools because "the budget cuts disrupt education enough." Event organiser Abeedah Adams echoed these concerns, emphasizing that 2,407 lost jobs will affect thousands of people, extending to families and communities reliant on teachers' income.

Protests like the one organized by the Education Crisis Movement call for the introduction of a 'slow policy'. I link this to Ulmer's (2017) idea of slow ontology. According to Ulmer (2017), slow ontology offers modes of writing scholarly research that is *not unproductive* but are *differently productive*. In this respect, my understanding of slow policy is to picket, and protest against greed and corruption, instead of rushing to develop policies that render people superfluous. A technocratic approach to policy leads to harm and large-scale redundancy of human potential. We should seek to move beyond human-only interpretative models and recognise that non-human elements are present as well (Ulmer, 2017b) enabling us to seek more creative ways to resolve our problems.

The systemic barriers inherent in structural violence limit access to quality education, healthcare and economic opportunities. Over time, these limitations manifest as slow violence, gradually eroding the potential of individuals and communities. This erosion, in turn, reinforces structural inequalities, making them more entrenched and difficult to overcome.

Conflict transformation theory generally focuses on direct, structural, and cultural violence (Galtung 1990), but it often overlooks the long-term nature of slow violence. Slow violence reveals itself in ways that do not provoke immediate crises but gradually erode well-being. This occurs through educational deprivation, food insecurity, and socio-economic exclusion. The persistence of slow violence in marginalised communities necessitates a paradigm shift. However, this study contends that conflict transformation must also deepen its focus on issues related to generational poverty, educational inequalities, and structural deprivation, which are

perpetual cycles of harm. This study offers an educational framework aimed at addressing these prolonged injustices by engaging learners in developing agency and overcoming the daily challenges they encounter. This aligns with Lederach's (2005) vision of sustainable peacebuilding, reimagining schools not as sites of short-term intervention but as spaces for lasting transformation.

The theoretical foundations provided by the concepts of structural and slow violence offer a nuanced lens through which to examine the interplay of historical, social and economic factors that contribute to ongoing challenges in South African society. They highlight the need for comprehensive, long-term strategies to address deeply rooted issues, moving beyond short-term intervention to tackle the underlying structures that perpetuate inequality and disadvantage.

4.2.6 Slow Violence impact on the well-being of children

In South Africa, where economic inequalities are glaring, the effects of slow violence on educational experiences are particularly severe. As noted by Van Niekerk et al. (2015) South African children face various forms of violence—including domestic, community, and school-related violence—which interweave to create a widespread sense of insecurity. According to Van Niekerk et al. (2015), South Africa has a mortality rate of 65 per 100 000 which is five times the global average. The male homicide rate is eight times the global average and the highest rate (184 per 100 000) is reported for the 15-29 year olds. Sexual violence toward boys and men is also prevalent as it is reported that 3-4% of young men are victims of rape. Violence is marked by multiple social drivers that include “widespread and racialised poverty, persistent unemployment, and extreme income inequality; patriarchal notions of masculinity that celebrate toughness and risk-taking; extensive exposure to abuse in childhood; access to firearms; excessive alcohol misuse; and weakness in law enforcement” (Van Niekerk et al. 2015: 2).

According to Matthews and Benvenuti (2014: 27) a national study on violence against children in South Africa shows that physical and sexual violence are the most common forms of violence perpetrated against children. The study shows that children between 0-4 years old are subject to infanticide, abandonment, neglect and physical abuse. Children between the ages of 5 and 12 who attend schools commonly experience corporal punishment, sexual violence and bullying. Children 15 years and older, especially teenage boys, are more likely to be victims of homicide and violence in community settings, due to the common use of weapons and violent masculinities. Conversely, teenage girls are subject to intimate partner

violence in dating relationships. According to Twemlow and Sacco (1999), a violent community is particularly harsh concerning the place of the poor (I assume this includes the frail, weak, and the “other”).

According to the University of Cape Town (UCT) online data website ‘ChildrenCount’ children experience wide forms of violence daily. These violent forms range from grievous bodily harm (GBH) to common assault, sexual assault, child rape, as well neglect. Grievous bodily harm refers to severe physical violence that leads to significant injury. In 2016/17, the rate of GBH assault among children reached 45 per 100,000. The Northern Cape recorded the highest rate, with 132 incidents per 100,000 children, followed by the Western Cape at 95 per 100,000. Boys and adolescents faced the brunt of these assaults, highlighting the vulnerability of this group.

Common assault involves the intentional application of force or threats of violence. The Western Cape led the country with 207 cases of common assault per 100,000 children, a significantly higher rate than in other provinces. The Northern Cape followed with 107 incidents, and the Free State reported 97. Boys experienced slightly more common assaults, particularly during adolescence, where the incidents tended to peak.

Sexual assault, which involves unwanted sexual contact excluding penetration, remains grossly under-reported due to the sensitive nature of the crime and mistrust in the child protection system. In 2016/17, the Western Cape had the highest rate of sexual assault against children, at 47 incidents per 100,000, followed by the Free State with 26 and the Northern Cape with 24. The rates were notably lower in Limpopo (7 per 100,000) and Mpumalanga (8 per 100,000). Girls were more likely than boys to experience sexual assault, and the likelihood of such assaults increased as children grew older.

Rape, defined as non-consensual sexual penetration, was widely under-reported in 2016/17, with a recorded rate of 83 incidents per 100,000 children. Boys were particularly unlikely to report such crimes. The Free State registered the highest child rape rate at 114 per 100,000, followed by North West with 98, and Eastern Cape with 94. Even provinces with lower rates, such as Limpopo (68) and Gauteng (69), still presented alarming figures. The data also showed that older children, especially adolescents aged 13 to 17, faced a much higher risk, with 173 rapes per 100,000 adolescents reported in that age group.

It is widely acknowledged that a crucial element of neglect is not merely the inability to satisfy a child's needs, but that this inability happens even when the parent or caregiver can fulfil these needs (Children Count 2018).

4.2.7 Slow Violence in Educational Contexts: Manifestations and Impact

Scholarly discussions on slow violence often examine its material and psychological impacts within educational settings. In South Africa, structural violence in schools is visible through overcrowded classrooms, underqualified teachers, and limited resources, which restrict students' personal and academic growth. Research by Bruce (2006), Sutoris (2022) and Lamb and Snodgrass (2013) suggest that these deficits not only hinder learning outcomes but also foster a sense of learned helplessness, diminishing students' ability to envision positive futures. Literature indicates that education around the world is another determinant of crime (Bhorat et al. 2017; Bickmore et al. 2017). According to Bickmore et al. (2017), education exacerbates violence social-structurally through the unequal distribution of resources, or the reinforcement of segregation practices, legitimizing beliefs tied to ethnic or gender-based superiority and social inequality or normalising violence and militarism. Lamb and Snodgrass (2013) assert that schools are sites of socialised acceptance of violence. Brown (2013, cited in Patel 2019) notes that curricula maintain hierarchical knowledge structures, reinforcing cultural authority and existing social orders.

Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs), as documented by Naicker (2022) further intensify these impacts by exposing learners to cumulative traumas such as domestic violence, caregiver loss, and community crime. Studies show that children facing multiple ACEs are at higher risk for mental health challenges, emotional instability, and behavioural issues (Van Niekerk et al. 2015). The ongoing exposure to adversity creates toxic stress, which can impair brain development, cognitive function, and physical health, ultimately affecting learners' attention, memory, and executive functioning—skills crucial for academic success and personal development.

ACEs encompass direct adversities within a child's life as well as adverse community environments that contribute to stress in the home, school, or community. These experiences perpetuate cycles of deprivation, limiting children's capacity for resilience and self-empowerment. ACEs have two parts – adverse childhood experiences that directly impact a child's life and adverse community environments (See Figure 4.4). An adverse community environment recognises factors outside of the family's control that combine to create an environment in which a child's home, school or community become a source of stress. ACEs

are considered a non-exhaustive list of childhood adversities that can impact the health or well-being of children, in the present and well into their future.

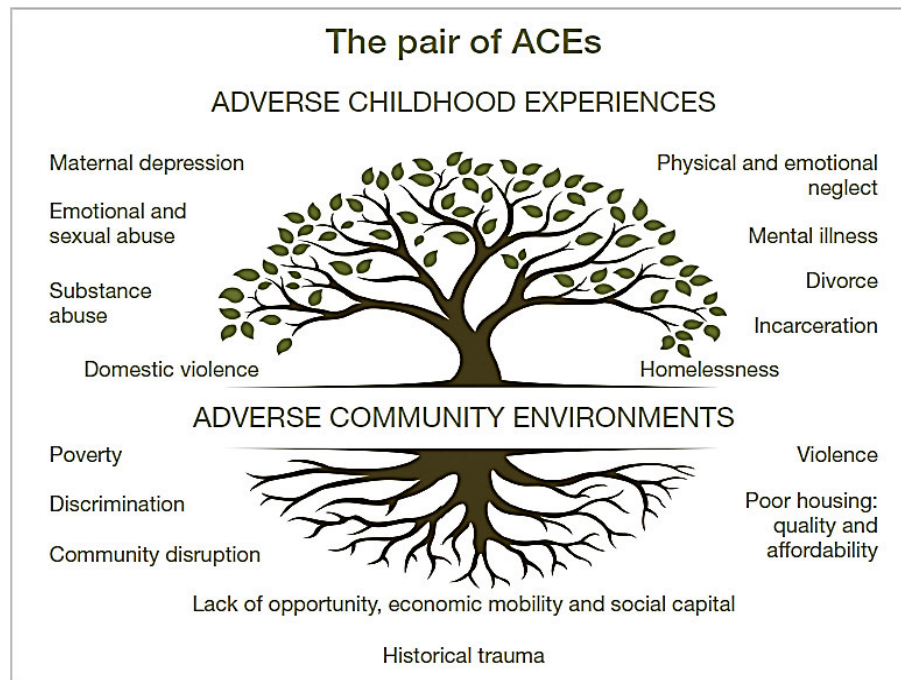


Figure 4.4: Adverse childhood experiences and adverse community environments (Source: Naicker 2022)

The perpetuation of violence is linked to the social acceptance of various forms of violence and such social norms (for example patriarchy) are carried over from one generation to the next.

Research also shows that in high-violence communities, children may internalize social norms that accept violence, as well as develop behaviours reflecting aggression and fear (Vestal, 2007; Osofsky 1993). For instance, children in these contexts may struggle with concentration due to sleep disruptions, display aggressive play imitating violent behaviours, or show restricted exploration out of trauma-related fear. Additionally, restrictive parenting styles in violent neighbourhoods may further hinder normal development, as parents impose strict boundaries to protect their children from dangers like community violence (Garbarino et al. 1992). Matthews and Benvenuti (2014) suggest that violence as a learned behaviour is reinforced through social and cultural norms, though interventions through education are still debated (Banlaoi, 2009). Studies confirm that South African school violence has deep societal roots (Vally et al. 1999: 81; Leoschut and Makota 2016; Van der Merwe 2013; Bickmore et al. 2017; Le Roux and Mokhele 2011).

Jones (2022: 47) asserts that the location of a school has some impact on the academic achievement of learners, asserting that “educational injustices like school-specific slow violence acts are almost as historic as schooling itself”. Furthermore, I posit that the policy of ‘no-fee’ schools enhances the impact of slow violence. According to ‘The Outlier’ ‘no-fee’ schools have the lowest proportion of Bachelor’s passes (See Figure 4.5). Bachelor pass refers to learners eligible to enter tertiary education.

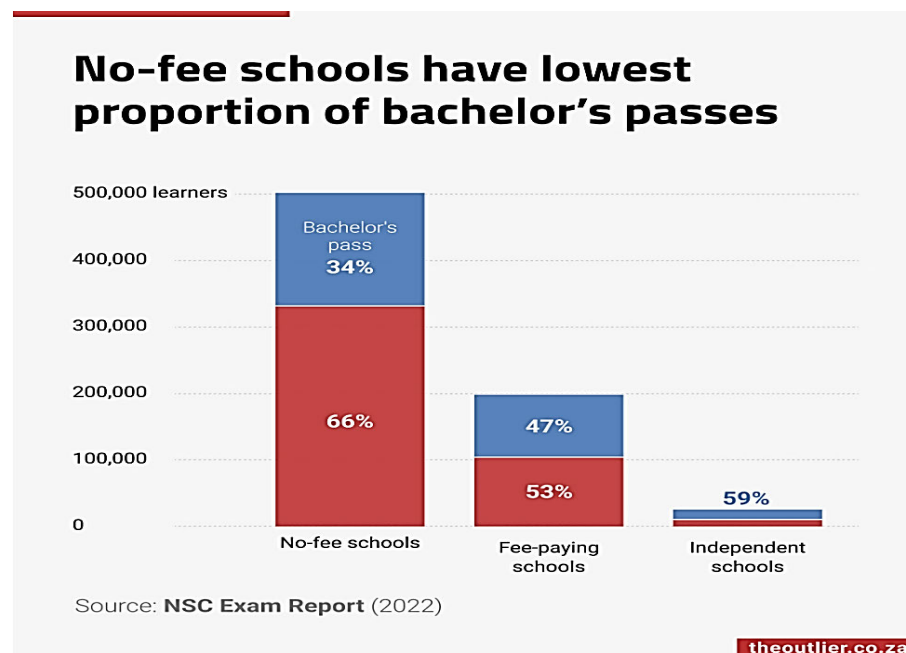


Figure 4.5: No-fee school and bachelor passes (Source: <https://charts.theoutlier.co.za/>)

Ultimately, this accumulation of adversities can lead learners to internalize negative beliefs about their potential, lowering their aspirations and motivation to pursue further education.

4.2.8 Conceptualizing resilience and agency overcoming hunger within slow violence

Afroze (2020: 64) writes that across the world an estimated one billion children experience physical, emotional or sexual violence every year that comes in many forms such as armed conflict, trafficking and prostitution, harmful work and child mutilation among many others. Certain kinds of violence such as beatings and physical assaults are overt and visible. While others such as emotional violence perpetrated by insults and bullying, or violence stemming from structural inequalities and power dynamics are rooted in everyday lives in ways that are often “camouflaged as established social practices.” Children’s experiences of violence are

viewed as commonplace and “habitually normalised and naturalised to such an extent that such experiences are often not recognised as violence.”

But what do mothers go through when they, who love their children with so much heart and intensity, witness the pain and suffering their children have to endure? Scheper-Hughes (1992: 15) and Ruddick (1980) write poignantly from a ‘maternal thinking’ perspective:

“What, I wondered, were the effects of chronic hunger, sickness, death, and loss on the ability to love, trust, have faith, and keep it in the broadest senses of these terms? If mother love is, as some bio-evolutionary and developmental psychologists as well as some cultural feminists believe, a “natural,” or at least an expectable, womanly script, what does it mean for women for whom scarcity and death have made that love frantic?”

Paulo Freire (2016: 150) writes about his childhood growing up hungry in his letters to Cristina. He writes:

The security of my family helped me to confront the real problem. And that was the problem of hunger. It was a real and concrete hunger that had no specific date of departure. Even though it never reached the rigour of the hunger experienced by some people I know, it was not the hunger experienced by those who undergo a tonsil operation or are dieting. On the contrary, our hunger was of the type that arrives unannounced and unauthorised, making itself at home without an end in sight. A hunger that, if it was not softened as ours was, would take over our bodies, moulding them into angular shapes. Legs, arms, and fingers become skinny. Eye sockets become deeper, making the eyes almost disappear. Many of our classmates experienced this hunger and today it continues to afflict millions of Brazilians who die of its violence every year...many times with no means to resist, I felt defeated by hunger while doing my homework.

Many of the learners I encountered at WD Hendricks Primary School experience this hunger. When I started out doing this study at the school in 2019, it did not dawn upon me that the learners suffer through hunger. I was insulated against such awareness since I took it as a norm that these learners would be hungry given their socioeconomic status. I would read and quote statistics as a matter of fact to substantiate I have covered the required literature. For example, according to an article written by Agnes Ertze and Aviva Tugendhaft in *The Conversation* (2023), South Africa persistently exhibits high levels of hunger and malnutrition among mothers and children. The authors state that...

“....more than a quarter 27% of children under five are stunted and 61% of children are iron-deficient. Sixty-nine per cent of women of productive age are overweight or obese, and 31% are iron-deficient.”

According to the article, the malnourished and stunted children in South Africa will likely not reach their full growth and developmental potential, and

even face death because of the irreversible physical and cognitive damage caused by persistent lack of nutritional foods.

Studies (Kamau, 2017; Otieno 2016; Hartnack 2017), indicate that School dropout is due to lack of school fees, unemployment, negligence, poor retention, sexual abuse and insecurity and many other socioeconomic factors contribute to dropout. Other factors (Hartnack 2017) include teenage pregnancy, negative peer pressure, negative attitudes toward schooling, drug abuse, gangsterism, levels of education of parents, diseases such as HIV/AIDS and tuberculosis impact on families, and lack of supportive family structures. According to Spaul (2013 cited in Runhare et al. 2021: 3) most students who drop out of school in South Africa do so between grades 10 and 11, resulting in almost 50% of learners in any given cohort dropping out before grade 12. Runhare et al. (2021) assert that dropping out of school is associated with social ills such as poverty, unemployment, criminal activity, single-parent households and prostitution, as well as psychological problems such as emotional instability, low confidence and self-esteem, and lack of values on a personal, social and occupational level. In addition, Spaul (2015: 34) states that the current “poor quality of education that learners receive helps drive an intergenerational cycle of poverty where children inherit the social standing of their parents or caregivers, irrespective of their abilities or effort.

Absenteeism from school is also associated with food insecurity and hunger, or the worry about where to get food (Bernal et al. 2014). How shall we understand hunger if we have not been there? In this study the learners and I walk this road to address their hunger, encouraged by Freire's phrase “we make the road by walking” (cited in Bell et al. 1990: 5). According to the Western Cape Education Department (2022-2023) the National School Nutrition Programme fed 511 777 learners at 1 029 schools, including an increase of nine additional schools. In addition, R85 075 million was paid to support fee exemptions for 94 099 learners in 550 schools, which is an increase from the 90 797 learners of the previous year. Despite these efforts, many children still experience hunger on a societal level emphasizing the potential risks to which they are exposed. Furthermore, social grants are important for learners for them to finish school. For example, of the total of 881 219 matric classes of 2023, 712 934 South African learners are beneficiaries of social grants (Oliphant 2024). The following excerpt gives a brief description of the “madness of hunger”.

Scheper-Hughes (2023: 136, citing from de Castro 1969) illustrated the harshness of hunger:

Jean de Lery's *Histoire d'une Voyage Fait en la Terre du Bresil*, written in 1558 by a French Huguenot shoemaker who made the voyage to Brazil in the 1540s, recalled, "The food ran out completely at the beginning of May and two sailors died of hunger madness During such outright starvation

the body becomes exhausted, nature swoons and the senses are alienated, the spirit fades away, and this not only makes people ferocious but provokes a kind of madness, justifying the common saying that someone is “going mad from hunger.”

According to Kiliç (2022: 64) “...hunger has been one of the greatest concerns of humanity. Therefore, along with misery, poverty, and death, the problem of hunger has also been referred to as ‘one of the four horsemen of the apocalypse.’” According to Moolman et al. (2020: 1) globally, schools are becoming the sites of choice for peer education concerning youth health and well-being issues. This is because youth health issues, including sexual health and HIV infection, substance abuse, and mental health problems, are issues that schools increasingly need to confront.

However, this does not include humanitarian peer-oriented practice as a vital component, and this gap generous-based education proposes to fill. Studies (Hrechaniuk 2021; Kozol 2000; Oriol et al. 2023) affirm that children are capable of being sensitive to the anxieties and needs of other children. And with these sensitivities, children can reduce aggressive behaviour among their peers (Malti, 2020). According to Freire (cited in Allsup 2003: 164) “educational practice is gnoseology by nature,”- it is praxis connected to the moral, the spiritual, to hope. Similarly, according to Makiguchi (cited in Nagashima 2016: 25) the purpose of education is to prepare students to learn how to interact, participate, and contribute to society. Furthermore Høgh-Olesen (2010: 1) asserts that data from a broad range of sciences indicate that humans are “ultra-social”.

According to Bajaj (2015; Mohan 2002; Kurian 2020), the ongoing debate about whether schooling or education can eradicate all types of violence at every level remains a persistent conversation. While acknowledging these critical needs, this study emphasized that learners, even when affected by such challenges, will and can display autonomy and agency, challenging views of children as passive (Wyman, 2003; Harber, 2010). Recent theories (Cavazzoni et al. 2023; Stornaiuolo et al. 2017; Schafer et al. 2009; Frankham et al. 2020) affirm children’s capacity as change agents. Guided projects revealed learners’ excitement and potential to impact their communities meaningfully, fostering early agency through awareness and positive influence. Agency, a critical component for overcoming structural oppression, aligns with Freire’s (1970) concept of critical consciousness, which posits that marginalized individuals must recognise and challenge the systemic forces that limit their potential. Freirean theory has influenced educational models that encourage learners to engage in reflective and active learning, seeing themselves as agents of change. Critical

consciousness helps learners to understand and empathise with the world around them and can empower them to make positive changes. As such learners become advocates for social justice. Harris and Morrison (2012) assert that education rooted in peace narratives of justice, sustainability, pacifism, and transformation can build agency, helping to counteract the effects of slow violence in educational frameworks.

4.2.9 Generosity-Based Education: Mitigating against the impact of slow violence.

While conflict transformation and peace education provide a strong foundation for addressing slow violence in schools, additional educational frameworks, such as trauma-informed pedagogy, community-based participatory research (CBPR), and wider applications to peace education offer valuable contributions to understanding generosity-based education and ultimately creating fundamental change.

Trauma-informed pedagogy offers a vital approach to education, especially in environments shaped by adversity and systemic violence. Essentially, this approach seeks to create classrooms where students feel safe, trusted, and empowered, fostering a sense of belonging through collaboration and choice (Perry & Daniels 2016; Brunzell et al. 2019). It also considers the broader social and emotional factors that shape how students engage with learning (Thomas et al. 2019). Research by Blodgett and Lanigan (2018) demonstrates that trauma-informed approaches lead to improved academic performance, a decrease in disciplinary issues, and a better school atmosphere. Berger (2019) asserts that this approach is deeply connected to social justice, as it works to address the unequal burden of trauma on marginalised communities, offering a path towards healing and resilience in education.

In addition, community-based participatory research (CBPR) closely aligns with this study's Transformative Participatory Action Research (TPAR) approach, as both prioritise collaboration and shared ownership of research. CBPR challenges traditional power dynamics by recognising communities as equal partners rather than passive subjects (Israel et al., 2017). It values the lived experiences of those directly affected, emphasising that meaningful and lasting educational change must be co-created with learners, educators, and families (Minkler and Wallerstein, 2003). In practice, CBPR allows teachers, learners, families, and other stakeholders to work together in identifying key issues, gathering data, and developing solutions that are culturally and contextually relevant (Bang et al. 2016). Cammarota and Fine (2008) highlight how this approach can actively resist structural violence by amplifying marginalised voices and challenging dominant narratives in education. When implemented

authentically, CBPR not only leads to fairer research outcomes but also strengthens community empowerment and long-term educational transformation (Jagosh et al. 2015). By centring learners as active participants critiquing and challenging adverse conditions within their school community, disrupts the passive, top-down reforms that often overlook the realities of slow violence in schools.

Finally, peace education provides a powerful framework for embedding principles of justice, cooperation, and social transformation into the fabric of schooling (Bajaj 2015; Harris and Morrison, 2013). More than just a tool for conflict resolution, it nurtures critical awareness, helping learners recognise and challenge structural injustices while fostering dialogue, empathy, and nonviolent approaches to problem-solving. Reardon and Snauwaert (2015) highlight that peace education is most effective when it embraces both negative peace (the absence of violence) and positive peace (the presence of justice), enabling children to imagine and actively build fairer, more inclusive futures. Brantmeier and Bajaj (2013) further argue that peace education serves as a vital counterforce to slow violence by encouraging young learners to question harmful social norms while cultivating compassion and collective action.

When introduced into an early learning environment, these principles extend beyond the classroom, equipping children with the tools to challenge the deep-rooted inequalities that sustain slow violence across generations (Bickmore 2017). Integrating these frameworks within a generosity-based education model enhances its capacity to address the long-term impact of slow violence, reinforcing the role of education as a catalyst for positive systemic change.

The generosity-based educational model offers a holistic approach that addresses both the relational and emotional needs of learners while equipping them to navigate and transform the pervasive effects of slow violence. Generosity-based education is a study of transformation conceptualising itself within a conflict transformation education paradigm (Ngidi and Moletsane 2015). It stresses a curriculum or ‘code’ that reinforces collaborative, action-based learning, rather than the traditional “banking model” of teaching. This model aligns with Freire’s (1970, 1999) concept of “true generosity,” which is not merely an act of giving but a commitment to dismantling the structures that sustain inequality and oppression. Freirean “true generosity” underpins Generosity-Based Education by positioning it as a justice-oriented, transformative pedagogy grounded in critical service learning. This model confronts both the immediate impacts and the systemic roots of slow violence, fostering collaborative, student-driven initiatives for societal change. Drawing from peacebuilding scholarship—particularly the

foundational work of Freire (1970), Lederach (1997), and Galtung (1990)—Generosity-Based Education emphasizes the principle of positive peace, defined as the creation of systems that advance justice, equity, and cooperative relationships rather than simply achieving the absence of conflict. In educational settings, as evidenced by this study, positive peace is actively promoted through humanitarian service and empathy-centred curricula, which encourage learners to interact with their peers in ways that are constructive, compassionate, and socially transformative.

The integration of humanitarian agencies within educational frameworks is a central element of this study, serving to foster empathy, social responsibility, and learner agency. Scholars such as Woodrow and Chigas (2009), Lederach (1997), Freire (1970) and Galtung (1990) argue that peacebuilding programs, including transformative education, enable participants to identify and address local needs. In school settings, these principles are embodied through service-learning initiatives, which not only provide students with opportunities to contribute meaningfully to their communities but also cultivate essential life skills. Within this study, peacebuilding is conceptualized as an integral component of conflict transformation, emphasizing action-oriented interventions as foundational steps toward building schools rooted in positive peace. This approach is further supported by peacebuilding literature that emphasizes context-specific applications of peace (Accord 2015; Issifu 2016; Galtung, 2000; Lederach, 1995, 1997, 2015).

4.3 Developing a transformative model to address slow violence: insights from literature

The literature reviewed in this chapter directly informs the study's methodological approach. It underscores the need for a qualitative, participatory, and transformative research design. Structural and slow violence, as conceptualised by Galtung (1969) and Nixon (2011), are often hidden, normalised, or misinterpreted by those who do not experience them firsthand. This makes it essential to adopt in-depth, contextually grounded methodologies capable of capturing the nuanced realities of affected learners.

This study proposed Transformative Participatory Action Research (TPAR) as the methodological framework because it critically aligns with conflict transformation, peace education, and learner participation approaches (Freire, 1970; Lederach 1995; Minkler and Wallerstein 2011). TPAR fosters a collaborative process in which knowledge is co-constructed with participants, ensuring that learners are not passive subjects of research but active agents

in shaping solutions. The qualitative nature of this study: incorporating conversational interviews, reflective discussions, and learner-driven activities, corresponds with the methodological insights drawn from the literature. Scholars of slow violence emphasise the significance of stories and lived experiences in understanding the harm that unfolds gradually over generations (Cahill and Pain 2019). By centring learners' voices, this study actively resists the epistemic violence that marginalised groups so often encounter in research. Furthermore, the integration of humanitarian service within the generosity-based education model builds on diverse methodological perspectives (Mitchell 2008), highlighting engagement, reflection, and action as key pedagogical tools.

Ultimately, this methodological approach asserts that education must go beyond passive knowledge transmission and embrace participatory, context-sensitive, and action-oriented strategies. The theoretical and empirical literature reviewed affirms this study's methodological direction, reinforcing the need for research that not only examines slow violence in educational settings but also contributes to meaningful social transformation.

This approach aligns with Research Question 3, aiming to develop a generosity-based pedagogical model that integrates humanitarian service, as informed by the literature review. The analysis of the literature review led to the construction of a model that helped understand the transformation of slow violence (Figure 4.6).

Main model categories	Sub-categories
Foundational Aspects of Slow Violence	• Colonial legacy • System of apartheid • No-fee school system • Lowering of educational standards • Poverty-induced policy legacy
Outcomes of Slow Violence	• Environmental degradation • Health impacts • Economic hardship • Psychosocial stress • Social inequality • Low educational achievements
Transformational Mediation: Generosity-Based Education (GBE)	• Problem-posing pedagogy • Holistic development • Outcomes of Generosity-Based Education (GBE) • Educational equity • Community upliftment • Critical consciousness

Generosity-Based Education as a response to Slow Violence	• Low motivation disruption of class • Learning through action • Collaborative problem-solving
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Figure 4.6: A literature-derived transformative slow violence model.

The reviewed literature assisted in integrating conflict transformation principles and positive peace within the framework of Generosity-Based Education. A model was developed based on this review, structured around four key categories. First, the foundational aspects of slow violence are explored through the works of Galtung (1969), Nixon (2011), Lederach (1995), Soyapi and Kotzé (2016), and Bickmore et al. (2017), providing a theoretical basis for understanding its underlying mechanisms. Second, the outcomes of slow violence are examined, drawing on studies by Naicker (2022), Van Niekerk et al. (2015), Bruce (2006), Sutoris (2022), Lamb and Snodgrass (2013), Vestal (2002), and Osofsky et al. (1993) to highlight its long-term social and psychological effects. Third, transformational mediation, as conceptualised by Lederach (1995), Galtung (1969, 1999), and Green (2002), is discussed with a particular emphasis on Freire's (1970, 1999) notion of 'true generosity' in fostering meaningful change. Finally, the model considers Generosity-Based Education (GBE) as a response to slow violence, drawing on Wyman (2006), Cavazzoni et al. (2023), and Stornaiuolo et al. (2017) to illustrate how education rooted in generosity can counteract the impacts of slow violence.

The next chapter presents the research design.

CHAPTER 5: RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

5.1 Introduction

This chapter outlines the research design and methodology applied to understand the educational experiences of primary school learners within a socioeconomically challenged context. Given the sensitive nature of this study, the methodology is carefully structured to ensure an authentic representation of participants' lived experiences through a participatory and collaborative approach. The chapter describes the study's aim, objectives, and research approach and explains the research design, data collection, and analysis methods. Grounded in qualitative principles the methodology centres on capturing learners' experiences while fostering a participatory process that reflects their voices and insights.

This study ventures close to the borders of post-qualitative inquiry, but I could not entirely eliminate conventional inquiry. There are competing versions of qualitative research that coexist in one person (Monforte and Smith 2021). The post-qualitative inquiry has its reaches throughout this study highlighting the concept of “research assemblage” that conceptualises “the entangled webs of connection that make up the research processes” (Wilson 2022: 80). Wilson (2022: 80) asserts that the “notion of assemblage unsettles assumptions that method is purely a product of human agency and points to the ways that research is co-composed through collective more-than-human relations.” In this study, sound became a notion of assemblage and a relational ontology to inform inquiry. A question asked by post-qualitative inquiry is: “If we give up ‘human’ as separate from nonhuman, how do we exist?” (St. Pierre 2013 cited in Wilson 2022: 80).

In light of this, I must highlight that in 2019, I approached this study following conventional academic protocols, employing appreciative Inquiry with formal interviews and surveys as outlined in the original proposal form. However, early conversations revealed that the learners had difficulty engaging with the academic nature of the questions due to their limited reading and comprehension abilities, and they showed disinterest in formal questioning. Despite recognizing their lack of attention, I initially continued, hoping they would eventually cooperate.

Nevertheless, while observing classroom activities, playground interactions, and exploring the neighbourhood, I serendipitously uncovered a deeper reality one particular day. This study was transformed by such a serendipitous moment. During a visit to the school playground, I became keenly aware of what I later termed the ‘visibility of sound’: the surrounding soundscape seemed to reflect hidden violence in the students' lives. This insight led me to re-

evaluate my methodology when I came to recognise the 'structural violence' embedded within these sounds. Gilsing (2020: 129) states that "sound is a technology of power". Sound is produced by the powerful to differentiate between groups along the lines of race and gender. Sound can be used to manipulate assimilation, adding a sinister dimension to its usefulness. This serendipitous moment led to a reflection on methodological inquiry, inspired by authors such as Elizabeth St. Pierre's (2015 cited in Denzin and Giardina 2016: 6; Law 2004 cited in Banerjee and Blaise, 2013). St. Pierre (ibid) critiques the method for imposing rigid structures that stifle the experimental spirit of transcendental empiricism. Traditional qualitative methods, with their set processes for data collection and analysis, fall short of supporting new forms of empirical inquiry. New empiricists thus advocate for inventing methods during the inquiry itself, allowing for genuine innovation rather than reiterating established knowledge. My serendipitous moment can be described as a "happy accident" (Weiss 2019: 2; Copeland 2019). It has an 'ebb and flow' that avoids strictures to the formula for doing research. Kunz (2015 cited in Perold-Bull and Costandius 2019: 44) captures a researcher's mood in this regard "research has become proceduralised and this often leads to investigative efforts having a restricted set of possible interpretive outcomes." Consequently, this study walked alongside learners adopting a conversational style to elicit responses which proved to be more suitable and meaningful to the learners. This methodological style is similar to those of Kaufman and Libby (2012) who explore 'experience-taking', simulating the feelings of others; Carpiano (2009), who adopts a 'come to take a walk with, 'go along' approach and Springgay and Truman (2018) using a "walking-to-think-with, approach. These approaches are performed as experiential research exercises enunciating what (De Certeau and Mayol 1998) describe as doing research without set rules or fixed outcomes.

Furthermore, the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic caused further disruptions, resulting in a loss of contact with my original participants. Upon resuming the study post-pandemic, with the principal's backing, I adapted to a shorter timeframe and focused on a new group of twelve students. These adjustments support the understanding that research often follows a non-linear path and requires adaptability. Researchers may need to alter their paradigms during a study, continually reassessing relevance and coherence (Merz 2002; McDaniel and Gibson 2012). Action research, in particular, emphasizes cyclical processes of action and reflection to develop meaningful insights, policies, and practices that are sensitive to context (Pettit 2010; Burns and McPherson 2017).

Importantly, while the method shifted, these adaptations preserved the study's validity and reliability, enabling a more authentic understanding of learners' experiences in violent

conditions and their willingness to change their circumstances. This is, after all, the aspiration of qualitative research: 'to become the change one wants to make' (Perold-Bull and Costandius 2019: 46).

5.2 Aim and objectives of the study

This study aimed to develop an educational framework rooted in generosity and peacebuilding (PB) principles to counter the pervasive effects of slow violence in learners' lives. Unlike charity-based models that address immediate needs, this generosity-based framework emphasizes systemic change, aligning with Freire's (1970, 1999) concept of "true generosity," which challenges the structures that perpetuate inequality. By fostering acts of kindness, empathy, and compassion, this approach encourages individuals to build collective resilience and supports transformative educational practices that focus on community and social justice (Verjee 2010; Ogden 2021).

The generosity-centred approach encourages students to transcend immediate challenges and engage in meaningful acts that benefit both their personal growth and the broader community. Through creative self-expression, peer support, and humanitarian projects, students develop a mindset focused on constructive change, transforming adversity into opportunities for growth and mutual care. This framework makes generosity a transformative practice that promotes a supportive, empathetic educational environment, helping students move beyond individual challenges and cultivate a culture of shared resilience and positive impact.

In line with the study, the following aims and research objectives were established:

Primary Aim:

The primary aim of this study was to examine the impact of slow violence on the development of children and to develop a model that would be transformative. The model that was developed as a result of this study is discussed in Chapter 7.

Research Objectives:

The specific objectives of this study were:

- 1 To analyse slow violence and its diverse manifestations within societal and educational contexts.

- 2 To investigate how generosity, transcendence, and transformation shape primary school learners' development, informing a peacebuilding-oriented educational framework.
- 3 To design a pedagogical model that integrates humanitarian service within a generosity-based educational approach.
- 4 To assess the impact of generosity-based education on learner agency, motivation, and well-being, particularly in mitigating the effects of slow violence.
- 5 To propose a transformative generosity-based educational framework for addressing slow violence across diverse educational settings.

Following the stated objectives, the following research questions were established:

- 1 What factors contribute to slow violence and its various manifestations within societal and educational contexts?
- 2 How do principles of generosity, transcendence, and transformation in primary school learners inform a coherent educational framework anchored in peacebuilding?
- 3 What are the key components of a model that integrates humanitarian service as a pedagogical approach within a generosity-based framework?
- 4 How does generosity-based education influence learner agency, motivation, and well-being, particularly in mitigating the effects of slow violence?
- 5 How can a generosity-based educational framework be adopted as a transformative model to address the impact of slow violence in diverse educational settings?

5.3 Research approach: Participatory Action Research (PAR)

Bless and Higson-Smith (1995), research usually is derived from some need, to have some purpose to fulfil. Natural sciences research, on the one spectrum, is determined by the needs of production, commerce and industry, while social sciences research, on the other, is rooted in the need for enquiry about general management and control of social affairs. Singleton et al. (1988) view research as undertaken broadly to (i) explore a phenomenon; (ii) describe a

particular community; and (iii) examine and formally test relationships among variables. Qualitative research provides a rich scope of enquiry because of its multi-disciplinary and trans-disciplinary nature (Pather and Remenyi 2005). Creswell (1994 cited in Marzanah 2009) defines qualitative study as an inquiry process of understanding a social or human problem, based on a complex, holistic picture, formed with words and reporting in a natural setting. Denzin and Lincoln (2008: 3 cited in Kohlbacher 2005) define qualitative research as: “a situated activity that locates the observer in the world. It consists of a set of interpretive, material practices that make the world visible. Priest et al. (2010: 151) asserts that “qualitative research is a means of exploring an area of human experience, to understand how humans make sense of their world. It allows us to identify and describe topics or phenomena about which little is known, and explore and explain the scope and meaning of such phenomena”. The principle underlying this study is that “felt life” (McCarthy and Wright 2005) is placed at the centre of the research. Related to this is the subjective awareness and potential of child learner agency (Velardo et al. 2021; Fram et al. 2011; Fram et al. 2015) in responding to violent conditions, and that form part of the analytical framework and toward formulating relevant themes in contributing to the study's objectives. This perspective on qualitative research underlines the thrust of this study. This study is an enquiry into the lived experience of learners related to violent conditions of place and school.

This study employed Participatory Action Research (PAR), a method that promotes active collaboration between the researcher and participants, enabling participants to contribute meaningfully to both the investigation and its outcomes. Lundy et al. (2006) highlight that PAR is particularly valuable in settings where collaborative transformation is essential, as it involves shared responsibility and iterative cycles of reflection and action. According to Lundy et al. (2006), PAR has four core characteristics: it is grounded in collective research, emphasizes the critical recovery or scrutiny of history, values the use of folk or local culture, and promotes the production and sharing of knowledge, in the case of this research knowledge that is transformative and promotes transformation. The defining characteristics of PAR, according to Lundy et al. (2006), are context-specific. Furthermore, Dancis, Coleman and Ellison (2023: 7) assert that social science researchers should concentrate on the aspirations of marginalized communities they work with, rather than objectifying their hardships.

Here, Participatory Action Research (PAR) is approached as a transformative methodology and is referred to as Transformative Participatory Action Research (TPAR), underscoring its focus on addressing the social impacts of slow violence. Gaventa and Cornwall (2008) suggest that meaningful and transformative participation relates directly to navigating societal power

dynamics, a concept that this study will adopt and expand. Unlike traditional PAR, TPAR emphasizes transformative changes targeting the personal, relational, structural, and cultural dimensions of child learners' experiences. This study introduces Transformative Participatory Action Research (TPAR) as an extension of conventional PAR, specifically designed to address slow violence (Nixon 2011) and drive meaningful transformation. Cammarota and Fine (2010: 6) assert that “participatory action research as a pedagogy exists to plan, challenge, act and ultimately transform those injustices.” However, TPAR places transformation at its core, aligning with Gaventa and Cornwall's (2008) argument that meaningful participation must actively reshape power dynamics.

For the learners in this study, this means recognising their inherent power, authority, and agency to effect change. TPAR facilitates transformation across four key dimensions: personal, by shaping children's self-perception and sense of agency (James and Prout, 2015; Tisdall and Cuevas-Parra 2022); relational, by challenging traditional adult-child hierarchies and positioning children as co-researchers (Kellett 2010; Gerlach 2018); structural, by addressing institutional inequities and systemic barriers that limit children's agency (Ginwright and Cammarota 2002; Gonzalez et al. 2020; Bang and Vossoughi 2016); and cultural, by valuing alternative epistemologies and community-based knowledge (Clark and Moss 2011; Moll et al. 2006).

This comprehensive approach moves beyond superficial participation (Lundy, 2007), toward research partnerships that acknowledge children's distinct vulnerabilities while respecting their potential for meaningful contributions to knowledge creation and social transformation.

For the child learner in this study, participation in TPAR does not imply expertise but instead fosters mutuality and sensitivity to the transformative potential within peacebuilding processes (Aaron 2009). Though this study initially proposed Appreciative Inquiry (AI), its principles remain applicable. This approach aligns with AI principles, particularly in how it supports participants in co-creating outcomes through a progression from discovery to destiny (Bushe & Avital 2009; Calabrese et al. 2007). One contextually sensitive approach within TPAR is the elicitive method of intervention (Aaron, 2009). LeBaron (as cited in Aaron 2009: 92) describes this approach as focusing on gathering culturally contextual information from participants. This allows them to shape the setting, procedures, communication methods, desired outcomes, and the roles of external facilitators. The elicitive process is essential as it enables alignment among parties, processes, and the intervenor.

This study's generosity-centred approach enhanced TPAR to elicit Transformational Social Capital (TSC) from child learners—defined here as the inherent assets, agency, resources, and mechanisms that empower them to transform their situations. TSC underscored learners' capacity for agency, problem-solving skills, and self-directed inquiry. This approach complements PAR's (Wadsworth 1998; Irene 2014) emphasis on empowering learners to reflect on and reshape their experiences within their social and educational contexts, especially in environments affected by slow violence. This study thus approaches PAR's cycles as evolving through ongoing processes of meaning-making and transformation.

5.4 Research design: Case Study and Interpretive Analysis

For the sake of contextual relevance, the research design centres on a case study approach supported by interpretive analysis. According to Yin (1994; Alavi and Carson 1992; Lee 1989; Tellis 1997; Gerring, 2004), case studies are valuable for investigating contemporary phenomena within real-life contexts, allowing for in-depth analysis of complex social dynamics. The criticism against case studies according to Hamel (1995 cited in Patton et al. 2003) is that: (i) they fail representativeness in observations of social phenomena and; (ii) they lack rigour in the collection, construction and analysis of data. In other words, the first criticism against case studies is that it is difficult to make generalisations using the method, and in the second instance, the biased nature of the researcher will impact the rigour of the research in progress. However, Gummesson (1991 cited in Patton et al. 2003) criticises natural science's shortcomings and suggests that case studies offer the opportunity to gain a holistic view, instead of the reductionist-fragmented view of the research process. Hunt (1990 cited in Riege 2003) states that qualitative methods such as case studies follow a mode of inquiry to discover new relationships of realities and to explain the meanings of the experiences rather than verify results based on predetermined hypotheses.

The interpretive analysis complements the case study design by focusing on the meanings participants assign to their experiences, an approach grounded in phenomenological and hermeneutic traditions. According to Neuman (1997), interpretive research is a study about what is meaningful or relevant to the people within the study. Human beings attach themselves to cultural patterns and social actions that add to the meaning of their lives. Neuman (1997: 69) states that

the interpretive approach notes that human action has little inherent meaning. It acquires meaning among people who share a meaning system that permits them to interpret it as a socially relevant sign or action.

For this study, interpretivist research explored violent conditions and the impact of slow violence on the lives of learners' context of place and school. From this perspective, one can ascertain the why and how of social actions displayed by learners at the focused school. According to Husserl (1965 cited in Kelliher 2005), interpretivists believe that reality is socially and not objectively determined.

The study employed a hermeneutical approach, which involves the interpretive process of engaging with texts (Gadamer 1984 cited in Boland et al. 2010). The hermeneutic approach is encapsulated not only in the stories that have been written down on paper, but as Mattelmäki and Battarbee (2002: 270) assert that these "documents ...communicate not only through the content but also through handwriting, drawings, composition." As Schwandt (2000 cited by McAuley in Cassell et al. 2004) explains, hermeneutics suggests that understanding inherently involves interpretation. This means that reaching an understanding does not involve disregarding or removing one's perspectives, assumptions, or biases; rather, it necessitates actively engaging them. Furthermore, the hermeneutical process operates as a continuous movement between the whole and its parts, returning from one to the other to deepen comprehension (Gadamer 1976 cited in Klein and Myers, 1999). This approach proved valuable for identifying factors that shape or alter experiences (Ihde 1979, cited in Inglesant 2007). Following Jones' (1999 cited in Thompson, 2002) perspective, interpretation in this analysis was understood as a process influenced by, but not limited to, material conditions. Instead, interpretations emerged from dynamic social and technical interactions, shaped by unique contexts and learners' circumstances.

By adopting an interpretive lens, this study captures the nuances of learners' perspectives, interpreting their experiences within the broader social and educational context. This combined design allows for a holistic understanding of how learners navigate their environment, linking individual narratives to collective themes.

5.5 Population and study location

This study was conducted at WD Hendricks Primary School, Cape Town, a school situated in a community facing significant socioeconomic challenges. I volunteered as an assistant educator at WD Hendricks Primary School for over two years from 2019-2020. I assisted with Grades 4-7, but particularly with Grades 5 and 6. The principal permitted me to assist in teaching Life Orientation and Social Science. These classroom sessions allowed me to gather insights about the learners. One of the lessons in Life Orientation was a discussion around the concept of Ubuntu. The concept can loosely be translated as 'a person is a person through

other persons'. It was during one of these discussions around the concept that learners came up with the initial idea to have an Ubuntu day. This idea came about in the Grade 6 class discussion. This idea gestated into the humanitarian notion of peer helping peers. It was close to the end of 2019 that the Grade 6 learners came up with the suggestion to prepare food for learners from Grades 4, 5, and 7. We made use of the school's kitchen and these learners prepared burgers and cold beverages for the learners, going from class to class to deliver these meals. This practice would then continue in 2020 when they would then be in Grade 7. Unfortunately, the COVID-19 pandemic struck in 2020 and contributed to lost opportunities for the learners and the research project. In the process, we lost the pictures we took of the Ubuntu day since we lost contact with the educator who had the pictures on her phone. However, it was 2019, that provided the bedrock to approach this study from a humanitarian perspective, which resumed in the latter part of 2022, after the COVID-19 restrictions were lifted.

The primary school is located in Factreton, Cape Town, a historically disadvantaged area with a high population of Coloured individuals. "Coloured" refers to mixed-race communities in South Africa that faced social and economic barriers under apartheid. The school caters to primarily Coloured students from Grades 1 to 7 and the class sizes can be large, ranging from 28 to 47 students, with an average population of 401 students.

The learners in this school come from diverse backgrounds, with many experiencing hardships that impact their educational journeys. Poverty is a challenge in Factreton, which impacts students' behaviour as well as their communication and literacy skills. For example, the annual school fees were R100 at the time of the study, and only 20% of the population was able to pay them in full, but the school has subsequently been classified as a no-fee school. This location was chosen for its relevance to the study's objective of examining how structural violence affected the educational experiences of learners. As Pather and Remenyi (2005) note, qualitative research benefits from a setting that reflects the diverse social constructs that shape human experiences, allowing the study to investigate how community context influences learners' education.

5.6 Sample selection and size

According to Bless and Higson-Smith (1995:85), sampling is the selection of "objects, persons, events... from which information will be drawn". We can differentiate between probability and non-probability sampling (Bless and Higson-Smith 1995). With probability sampling, there is a fair expectation that the selected sample can be determined based on certain variables against

that of the whole population. With nonprobability sampling, there is no certainty that the outcomes of the findings are representative of the whole population. Although the advantages of probability sampling are higher than those of nonprobability sampling, in terms of generalisation, non-probability sampling is useful as it can save on cost and enlarge the sample in homogeneous groups. The latter is frequently used in social sciences, and this study's sample selection corresponds with its non-probability categorisation, and for good reason since idiographic case study allows for in-depth exploration of a phenomenon.

A purposive sampling technique was used to select twelve learners from Grades 5 and 6. Purposive sampling, as described by Merriam and Tisdell (2015), involves selecting participants who can provide rich, relevant information that aligns with the research objectives. The school principal supported the selection of participants to ensure a sample that captured a broad spectrum of the learners' lived experiences, which centred on academic performance, behavioural backgrounds, and levels of engagement in school activities. This approach aimed to provide a comprehensive representation of the learner population's daily challenges and achievements, enriching the study's relevance and depth.

This study intentionally focused on Grade 5 and 6 learners, recognising that they experience and are reasonably able to articulate their feelings on everyday realities of school violence and slow violence. By prioritising the child as a method, this study moved away from viewing young learners as passive recipients of educational interventions and instead positioned them as active agents in understanding and responding to the challenges they face. The priority was to centre learners' interpretations of their struggles and, crucially, their strategies for overcoming them. By listening to how they perceive and navigate slow violence, the study not only uncovered hidden forms of harm but is also a reflection of how the learners themselves could imagine alternative and more generous possibilities for education and their peers. In this way, the intended research process was not something to be imposed on them, but something developed with them. Their perspectives provided an essential foundation for building strategies that were not only theoretically sound but also deeply ingrained in the realities they experience every day. Although teachers, parents, and community stakeholders could play a significant role in shaping the outcome of this study, the emphasis was on placing importance on the authentic experiences of the learners themselves.

The ages of the learners ranged between ten and eleven. The selection process was designed as a system of reward rather than a traditional research sampling approach. The principal and educators chose learners based on their positive behaviour in the classroom, helpfulness, and

responsible attitude toward their education. However, only one boy was selected, and this provides an illustration of the troubles and problems at the school.

Table 5.1: Sample size

Sample Size		
Learner Grades	Female learners	Male learner
Gr. 5	6	
Gr. 6	5	1

In this community, harsh socio-economic conditions greatly influence the lives of learners. Many live in cramped, inadequate housing, and face food shortages, violence, and unstable support systems, all of which undermine their overall well-being. Such surroundings contribute to increased stress and insecurity for learners, hindering the mental and emotional concentration essential for effective education. Often, fundamental needs go unmet, preventing children from fully participating in their educational experiences. The selection of a few learners based on their positive attributes reflects how these challenges affect the development of constructive behaviours necessary for learning and growth, complicating their academic or social success. In these settings, learners who exhibit helpfulness and responsibility emerge as exceptions, underscoring the profound effect of their circumstances. The limited number of chosen individuals emphasizes the difficulties educators face in fostering positive behaviour amid widespread poverty, instability, and ongoing exposure to violence.

Despite the selection criteria, this small yet representative sample of 12 learners allowed for an in-depth exploration of individual experiences, aligning with the idiographic approach of Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) (Smith et al. 2009), which seeks to examine the unique perspectives of each participant.

The idiographic approach within Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA), as discussed by Blake Peck and Jane Mummery (2019) focuses on exploring the unique, subjective experiences of individuals. Instead of seeking universal or generalisable conclusions, this method emphasises in-depth analysis of personal, lived experiences and meanings within specific contexts. By concentrating on the individual and their unique perspective, researchers using an idiographic approach can delve deeply into how a person makes sense of particular events, challenges, or emotions, allowing for a nuanced understanding of the human experience that general, nomothetic approaches might overlook.

Furthermore, in qualitative research, particularly in case studies, a sample size of 12 participants can be sufficient due to the focus on depth rather than breadth of insights. This adequacy is supported by several academic sources that emphasize reaching data saturation, where further interviews yield no new themes or information. Studies have shown that qualitative studies often achieve saturation with small sample sizes, typically between 9 and 17 interviews, depending on the complexity of the topic and the study's objectives (Hennink and Kaiser 2022). Moreover, smaller samples are common in qualitative case studies since they allow researchers to conduct thorough, nuanced analyses.

When exploring complex phenomena, such as the impact of specific structural issues on behaviour or perception, a focused sample provides in-depth understanding without requiring large numbers, provided each participant offers rich insights. This approach aligns with academic recommendations that sample sufficiency in qualitative research is achieved not by numbers alone but by capturing the diversity of experiences essential for answering the research questions (Sarfo et al. 2021).

Additionally, the sample size was intentionally limited to facilitate a detailed analysis of each learner's experiences, as IPA emphasizes examining how individuals interpret their lived realities rather than generalizing findings (Smith et al. 2009). The small sample provides sufficient depth to explore themes and patterns while preserving the unique qualities of each participant's narrative.

5.7 Data collection methods

Initially, I planned to use a specifically designed questionnaire and interview guide (Appendix 12) to collect data aligned with my research questions and objectives. However, after conducting a few initial interviews, it became evident that the selected learners struggled to understand and respond to the academically designed questionnaire due to their limited literacy and comprehension skills. They simply showed disinterest in being questioned. As a result, I shifted from conventional interview methods to a conversational approach, engaging with learners in a non-threatening way to invite them to share their perspectives. For that reason, data collection in this study employed narrative inquiry, observations, and conversational interviews to capture a rich, multi-dimensional understanding of learners' experiences in their school environment.

These methods were chosen to respect the learners' dignity, encourage open expression, and capture both verbal and non-verbal insights into their daily experiences. As Patton notes (in

Merriam 1991) qualitative data collection relies on methods that gather "detailed descriptions of situations, events, people, interactions," supporting a deep understanding of participants' realities.

Narrative enquiry: This method encouraged learners to share personal stories about their school experiences, providing a way to express thoughts, emotions, and perceptions authentically. Weatherhead asserts (2011) that narrative analysis can be a useful qualitative methodology, particularly where there are a small number of participants, and where the focus of enquiry is upon the relationship between self and culture. Storytelling in narrative inquiry serves as a powerful tool to frame experiences and reflections within broader narratives, highlighting unique perspectives and values (Griffin and May 2012; Shaffer et al. 2018). Senehi (2002) suggests that storytelling fosters social understanding by enabling individuals to see their lives as part of a shared narrative, reflecting cultural and personal values. According to Freire (cited in Arnett 2002: 495), "a story-centred ethic assumes the importance of education based on stories learned and applied to the unique demands of given historical moments." In this study, narrative inquiry allowed learners to recount experiences freely, which led to more profound insights into how they interpret and respond to their school environment. This approach also underscores the educational value of storytelling as a means to foster empathy, identity formation, and social awareness among learners. This is practically done by asking learners to write narratives about their lives and aspirations. The data collected in this way were sufficient to examine slow violence and its various manifestations within societal and educational contexts, which was one of the study objectives.

Observations: Conducting research in hostile environments, like war zones refugee camps or gang-ridden areas, presents unique challenges for researchers. WD Hendrick Primary School is situated in an area where community violence and gang fights occur at frequent intervals. These hostilities flow over into the school environment. Observing participants in these contexts requires careful consideration of safety, ethics, and methodology.

Here are some key aspects to consider:

- **Safety:** Researchers must prioritize their safety and the safety of participants (Grimm et al. 2020). This may involve risk assessments, obtaining security training, and having clear protocols in place.

- **Ethics:** Ethical considerations are paramount in research, especially in sensitive environments (Bhandari 2021). Researchers must ensure informed consent, protect anonymity and confidentiality, and minimise any potential harm to participants.
- **Methodology:** Traditional observation methods may need to be adapted (Locke 2023; Fox 1998). Openly taking notes or using recording devices might not be feasible. Researchers may need to rely on covert observation, and memory recall, or focus on more subtle cues.

Overall, successful observation in hostile environments requires a balance between collecting valuable data and mitigating risks. However, observational data offered insights into the day-to-day interactions and routines within the school, adding a layer of contextual understanding to the narrative data. Through both formal and informal observations, the study was able to capture non-verbal behaviours, interactions between peers, and responses to the school setting that learners may not have articulated directly. Observations revealed subtleties in behaviour and group dynamics, enriching the understanding of the school environment and the social framework learners navigate. This aligns with the value of non-intrusive observation in ethnographic research, which seeks to understand the natural behaviour of individuals within their authentic social contexts.

In the context of this study, the data collection through observation was done by attending classes and witnessing the interaction between learners and their pronunciation of interest in schooling. However, it is important to note that this method of data collection was rather complex when dealing with primary school learners. This led to the involved interpretation of their input in the sense of analysing and re-analysing the observed context and content.

Reflective conversational interviews: Conducted as informal, open-ended dialogues, reflective conversations allowed learners to express their thoughts in a relaxed, non-structured setting. Research supports conversational interviewing as a qualitative method that explores participants' thoughts, perceptions, and emotions, acknowledging that reality is individually and socially constructed with multiple perspectives (Leverentz 2021; Burgess-Limerick & Burgess-Limerick, 1998). Researchers use carefully crafted questions to maintain dialogue, interpret narratives, and facilitate meaningful conversations (Sharafuddin 2021). Sharafuddin (2021) emphasizes that researchers do not rigidly follow a fixed set of questions but use adaptable, well-phrased questions to deepen discussions, allowing participants to share their experiences. This method is particularly effective for marginalized groups, aligning with this study's focus on such learners (Leverentz 2021). It provides an insider's view through

dialogical inter-subjectivity (Roland and Wicks 2009) and aims to develop practical theories and models while addressing validity and reliability concerns in qualitative research (Burgess-Limerick and Burgess-Limerick 1998; Roland and Wicks 2009).

Conversational methods are a cornerstone of research that involves understanding children's experiences and perspectives (Kristoffersson et al. 2020). Here are some key aspects:

- **Adapted language:** Researchers use age-appropriate language, simpler sentence structures, and avoid technical jargon (UNICEF, nd).
- **Open-ended questions:** These encourage children to elaborate on their thoughts and feelings, rather than giving simple yes/no answers (Lewis-Dagnell et al. 2023).
- **Active listening:** Researchers pay close attention to verbal and nonverbal cues, showing genuine interest in the child's perspective (Sevón et al. 2023).
- **Creative approaches:** For children with communication challenges, researchers may use pictures, dolls, or storytelling to facilitate expression (Lewis-Dagnell et al. 2023; Sevón et al. 2023).

The specific methods used will vary depending on the research question, the age and developmental level of the children, and their communication abilities (Bloom et al. 2020). This method aligns with sensory ethnography principles, as described by Pink (2015), which emphasize openness to the experiential and sensory aspects of participants' lives. Through reflective conversations, learners shared spontaneous insights into their daily experiences and challenges, supporting a naturalistic approach to data collection that respects participants' agency in shaping the conversation.

In the context of this study, conversational interviewing provided unique access to the participants' thoughts within societal and educational contexts, related to the objectives of the study. In this way, they could freely explore ideas without the constraints of structured interviews. Together, these methods created a comprehensive, contextually grounded understanding of learners' school experiences. The combination of narrative enquiry, observation, and conversational interviews facilitated the capture of nuanced details, emotions, and behaviours that contribute to a holistic view of each learner's world within the school setting. The collected data and the subsequent analysis ultimately helped in developing the proposed Transformative Slow Violence Model.

5.8 Data analysis

This study sought to identify and interpret that moment when a learner assumes the meaning of the experience of life as being potentially transformative. Hill (2007) states that a researcher must, in the use of qualitative methodology, possess certain personal qualities. These qualities are, for example, insight, imagination, logic, strong interpersonal skills, empathy, the capacity for deep listening, ability to form accurate impressions and relationships. In terms of the interpretation of data, inductive reasoning methodology was applied. Inductive reasoning works by scanning the detailed field of information, and then moving toward more abstract generalisations and ideas or themes (Neuman 1991).

There are several steps to follow when adopting IPA. An analysis is typically described as being an iterative and inductive cycle (Smith 2007 cited in Smith et al. 2009). This cyclical process may involve several strategies (Smith et al. 2009):

- A line-by-line analysis of experiential claims, concerns and understanding of each participant;
- Identifying emergent themes;
- Coding data as a result of dialogue between researcher and participant of the meaning of aspects emerging within the interview;
- Constructing a framework illustrating relationships between themes;
- Developing a format showing the process from start to end in the development of themes, from initial comments to a final list of the identified themes;
- Collaborate with the help of others to establish coherence and plausibility of interpretation;
- Create a narrative of the themes to describe the interpretive meanings of the data.

The researcher's influence on the theme-building structure, and what it suggests about the processes of data analysis falls within the hermeneutical journey of making sense of the participant's account. As such, although I approached the text strictly adhering to what the participant was describing, Schneiders (1999: xxxi) makes the point that "texts do not derive their meaning from their author's intention even though, in successful writing, it begins there. Rather, meaning arises in the interaction between texts and readers. Strictly speaking, texts do not "mean" any more than musical scores "sound". They present possibilities for meaning the way a score offers the possibility for making music in a certain way. Meaning is not in texts but mediated by texts". In addition, Bronsema and Keen (1983: 37-38 cited in Myers 1994)

explained that data collected in the form of text is to be analysed in terms of themes, motifs, and keywords.

In the final analysis, it is the detailed interpretations of the texts from which generalisations can be arrived. Although the researcher was the one doing the analysis, the understanding remained that the learner was the one who created the experience and perspective for reaching alternative realities (Geven et al. 2006).

5.9 Ethical considerations

This study prioritised protecting the rights and well-being of young participants. Consent was obtained from the learners and their guardians mediated through the School Governing Body (SGB) and the principal using the assent and consent forms provided by DUT. Confidentiality and privacy were upheld throughout, with a commitment to keep all discussions within the study group private. These safeguards align with the ethical principles required by all research (Wardhono and Lestari 2023) emphasizing the importance of protecting participants' identities and ensuring the integrity of the research.

Additional measures included creating a supportive environment that encouraged openness and trust. For instance, the conversational interview approach was deliberately designed to create an egalitarian dialogue, minimising the hierarchical relationship between myself and the participants. This approach aligns with the principles of Transformative Participatory Action Research (TPAR), fostering mutual respect and ensuring that learners feel empowered to articulate their experiences authentically. By reflecting on these practices, the study demonstrates its commitment to ethical research engagement and enhances the credibility of its findings.

Ethical considerations also addressed the sensitive nature of discussing challenging topics, with the researcher taking care to approach each conversation empathetically and respectfully (Feldman, 1999).

5.10 Limitations and delimitations

The study encountered certain limitations, notably resource constraints that limited the scope of some learner-led projects. Additionally, the research setting—a single school—limits the generalizability of findings. However, as Yin (2003) notes, case studies are valuable for their depth and contextual insights, providing detailed findings that can inform similar settings despite limited generalizability.

The delimitations of the study included focusing exclusively on Grades 5 and 6 learners in one school. This choice reflects the study's aim of conducting an in-depth examination of a specific learner group, allowing for a detailed analysis that would be challenging with a broader sample.

While this study offers a deep insight into school violence and slow violence within the Facticeon community, its findings may not be universally applicable to regions with different socio-economic and cultural dynamics. Future research could explore comparative case studies across urban and rural communities in South Africa or even extend to international contexts. Such comparisons would help refine the proposed strategies and assess how a generosity-based educational framework could be adapted to diverse educational settings.

5.11 Validity and reliability

Validity and reliability are key aspects of all research. According to Brink (1993), qualitative researchers are more concerned with people's beliefs, experiences, and systems of meaning, rather than causal laws. The methods used in qualitative research are subjective in nature and do not involve statistical analysis or empirical calculations. Instead, phenomena are viewed in their entirety and within their social context. Brink (1993) states that qualitative researchers should refrain from using terms such as validity and reliability. Instead, they should utilise terms such as credibility, trustworthiness, truth, value, applicability, consistency, and confirmability when discussing the criteria for evaluating the scientific merit of qualitative research. This viewpoint is supported by Noble and Smith (2015) who outline the elements associated with viability and reliability as follows: truth value (validity), consistency (reliability), and applicability.

The truth value (validity) acknowledges the existence of multiple realities. The researchers acknowledge that their personal experiences and viewpoints may have influenced their methodology. The participants' perspectives are presented clearly and accurately.

Consistency (reliability) refers to the reliability of the methods used, which relies on the researcher keeping a clear and transparent record of their decisions. Ultimately, an independent researcher should be able to reach similar or comparable findings. Neutrality, or confirmability, is achieved when the truth value, consistency, and applicability have been addressed. It is important to recognise the complexity of engaging with participants over a long period, and that the methods used and findings obtained are inherently linked to the

researcher's philosophical stance, experiences, and perspectives. These factors should be taken into account and distinguished from the participants' accounts.

Applicability refers to whether findings can be applied to other contexts, settings or groups. According to Punch (1998 cited in Roberts and Priest 2006) applicability in case studies can occur in two ways: by conceptualising or developing propositions. Conceptualisation is the creation of concepts or themes as a means to define complex issues emanating from qualitative studies of an in-depth nature. In the second instance, a researcher develops propositions around a hypothesis that seeks to link factors or themes within a particular case. This study adopts the first approach in developing themes or concepts and generalises the results concerning its aims and objectives.

5.12 Reflections on the research process

The research process presented several challenges, particularly the impact of COVID-19, which required the research design to adapt and evolve. This disruption provided unexpected insights into learners' resilience, highlighting their adaptability under changing circumstances. Reflecting on these experiences reinforced the importance of flexibility in qualitative research, especially in studies with young participants.

Additionally, the researcher's close engagement with participants underscored the value of informal, relationship-based methods, affirming the effectiveness of PAR and interpretive analysis for capturing authentic, meaningful data. These reflections align with the perspectives of Dreyfus (1998), who argues for a balanced approach that allows scope for intuition and adaptability, essential qualities in dynamic research settings.

5.13 Conclusion

In this chapter, the methodological foundation of the study has been thoroughly outlined, detailing the research approach, design, and procedures used to explore the lived experiences of learners in a primary school within a socioeconomically challenged community. Through a Participatory Action Research (PAR) framework, the study emphasizes the importance of involving participants as active contributors to the research process, respecting their insights and fostering an environment that values their unique perspectives. This approach aligns with established research principles (Bushe & Avital, 2009; Weil, 1998), allowing the study to achieve both depth and authenticity in capturing learners' voices.

The choice of a case study design, enriched with interpretive analysis, further supports the study's objective of understanding the nuances of each learner's experience within their educational environment. The interpretive framework, grounded in phenomenological and hermeneutic traditions (Schwandt 2000; Smith et al. 2009), allows for a comprehensive, layered analysis of the data, respecting the individual and collective meanings that participants assign to their experiences.

Ethical considerations, validity, and reliability measures were meticulously planned and implemented to ensure the integrity of the study, particularly given the young age of participants and the sensitive nature of the topics explored. By employing multiple data sources and validating findings through participant feedback, the study seeks to enhance credibility and accurately reflect the participants' lived realities.

This chapter has laid a strong methodological foundation for the study, providing a clear pathway for data collection, analysis, and ethical engagement. In the chapters that follow, the findings will be presented and discussed concerning the broader literature, to identify actionable insights that can inform practices to support learners in similar educational settings. Through this approach, the study aims to contribute valuable knowledge about the experiences of young learners and propose meaningful, context-sensitive strategies that can help address the social challenges they face.

CHAPTER 6: FINDINGS

6.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the findings of the study, focusing on how Transformative Participatory Action Research (TPAR) enhanced the inquiry into the effects of slow violence and the application of a generosity-based educational model in a school setting marked by adversity. The TPAR methodology, with its roots in co-creation and iterative cycles of discovery, allowed for meaningful engagement with learners, fostering trust and enabling more nuanced insights into their experiences, resilience, and aspirations. Through TPAR, this chapter investigates the framework's capacity to provide structure for building resilience and fostering a supportive school environment and underscores the multifaceted impacts of slow violence on learner identity, agency, and well-being, while evaluating how educational practices centred on generosity may offer transformative potential in settings like Factreton. Through observational data, learner narratives and conversational interviews, the findings present a layered understanding of how generosity can serve as both a socio-emotional and pedagogical tool, fostering resilience and agency among learners facing chronic adversity.

The study was conducted through a child-centred approach, in which learners are placed at the core of exploration. Young learners naturally engage with and make sense of life through narratives. As Senehi (2002 cited in McKee 2008:2) suggests, storytelling can either deepen social conflicts or help transform them. According to Moran (2023: 47):

For children and youth living in circumstances of precarity, the intersubjective project of sharing perceptions and narrating experiences through story can be a lifeline.

Similarly, Egerton (2021:181) notes that "our stories define our sense of self and we use [them] to convince the world who we are." While children may not intentionally set out to shape others' perceptions, they often seek to understand themselves by asking why they are the way they are, looking to the world around them for answers. In line with Burman's (2019) framework, the concept of "child as method" offers a valuable lens for examining how childhood images are constructed and perpetuated to serve political agendas. "Child as method" positions the child as an analytical framework to interrogate and critique societal structures, particularly concerning concepts of innocence, vulnerability, and childhood under various social conditions.

6.2 Objectives and themes

The chapter is organized thematically, tracing TPAR's contributions across key areas: learners' reflections on personal growth; the school environment; and the potential of generosity-based interventions.

6.2.1 The collected and analysed data

The data for this chapter were collected through multiple qualitative methods, including narrative accounts (N1–N12), interviews (I1–I12), and structured observations (O1–O6). Each method contributed unique insights into the learners' experiences of slow violence and their engagement with generosity-based education. The coding used for these data sources is summarized in the table below.

The table below consolidates data coding based on the document's description of data collection methods (narrative inquiry, interviews, and observations). Codes are assigned to each participant and method for clarity.

Table 6.1 Data coding scheme (Source: Author)

Method	Code Prefix	Participant Identifier Example
Narrative	N	N1, N2, ..., N12 (e.g., N1 for a Grade 5 learner's story)
Interview	I	I1, I2, ..., I12 (e.g., I3 for an interview with a Grade 6 learner)
Observation	O	O1, O2, ..., O6 (e.g., O4 for observing classroom dynamics)

To maintain the focus on the research findings, the participants' first-hand accounts are provided in Appendix A. The narratives, observations and conversational interviews are identified in themes presented below.

6.2.2 Data collection overview

Narrative enquiry: Learners were asked to share personal stories reflecting their daily experiences and challenges, such as their understanding of generosity and resilience. These narratives provided insights into individual perceptions of slow violence and coping mechanisms.

Conversational Interviews: Conducted with learners and teachers, these interviews were semi-structured to capture diverse perspectives on education's role in mitigating violence and fostering positive peace capabilities.

Observations: Focused on non-verbal behaviours, interactions, and responses to educational activities. Observations were conducted in classroom settings, during collaborative exercises, and within the broader school environment to document the effects of socio-economic challenges.

Example usage in the findings section”

A learner's narrative (N) highlighted their feelings of belonging when participating in group activities promoting kindness. An observation (O) revealed instances of peer-led conflict resolution, demonstrating agency among Grade 5 learners. A conversation (CI) with a teacher emphasized the critical role of collaboration in addressing educational inequities and learner problems.

For instance, one narrative (N3) described the profound impact of food insecurity on a child's ability to concentrate in class. Similarly, an interview (L2) revealed that some learners viewed acts of kindness, such as sharing meals, as pivotal in fostering a sense of community. These insights, corroborated by observations (O2), highlight the collaborative role of generosity-based education in mitigating the effects of slow violence.

6.2.3 Objective 1: To examine slow violence and its various manifestations within societal and educational contexts

This section examines slow violence's pervasive and multifaceted impacts on learners' daily lives within societal and educational contexts. The data reveals how environmental adversities—such as chronic poverty, food insecurity, and community violence—create conditions that disrupt learners' cognitive, emotional, and social well-being.

Slow violence in the form of poverty, chronic insecurity, and social marginalization affects every aspect of learners' lives, creating barriers to cognitive development, self-worth, and educational engagement. Through Transformative Participatory Action Research (TPAR), the study highlighted that learners in impoverished communities often struggle with a "precarious identity," marked by feelings of instability and helplessness. These effects stem from ongoing adversities, such as food insecurity, violence, and socio-economic neglect, which impact learners' self-perceptions, expectations, and sense of agency.

Incorporating soundscapes and silences as indicators of hidden violence, the study revealed how learners' emotional landscapes are shaped by their environments. Soundscapes within the school, including doors slamming and moments of silence, reflected the pervasive, yet often unseen, weight of slow violence. Silence, in particular, emerged as a refuge for learners, temporarily providing relief from external stressors. This nuanced understanding highlights the importance of fostering environments that mitigate the emotional burden of slow violence, allowing learners to feel secure and supported in their educational settings.

6.2.3.1 *Manifestations of slow violence in learners' lives*

Drawing from Nixon's (2011) concept of "attritional violence," which describes slow violence as a gradual, hidden, and cumulative force, the findings show that the adversities faced by learners in Facticeon significantly influence their sense of stability, safety, and self-worth. Learners' descriptions of their environments as "unsafe" and "unpredictable" highlight a deeply ingrained expectation of instability, which shapes their engagement with education.

The following evidence supports Nixon's (2011) observation:

- **Environmental descriptions by learners:** The narratives and interviews reveal that learners frequently describe their environments as chaotic and unsafe. Observations document exposure to gang violence, substance abuse, and crime within Facticeon, significantly impacting their sense of security and stability. For example, one narrative states, "Sometimes I don't even know if it's safe to come to school."
- **Community instability and violence:** Facticeon is depicted as a place where violent conditions, poverty, and crime are pervasive. According to historical and recent accounts, these factors contribute to an "ambient insecurity" that affects the psychological well-being of children, making them feel unsafe and unworthy.
- **Educational disruption:** The instability outside the school frequently spills into the classroom, resulting in rowdy and chaotic learning environments. Teachers report that violence and external stressors impede both learning and teaching, with educators often feeling unsupported in managing violent incidents.
- **Structural and Slow Violence:** Nixon's (2011) notion of "slow violence" aligns with the cumulative effects of poverty, crime, and lack of resources in Facticeon. This form of violence erodes learners' self-worth and stability over time, often leaving them feeling powerless.

Constant exposure to adversity was apparent in learners' descriptions of violence both within and outside school, shaping what Nixon (2011) describes as a 'precarious identity,' where socio-economic marginalisation diminishes self-worth (Yehuda and Lehrner 2018).

Specific phrases from learners' narratives illustrate the above points:

“I just feel like it’s hard to think about school when you’re always worried” (Narrative N5).

Observational findings of behavioural patterns reflecting fear and anxiety, such as hesitations in participating in classroom discussions when community violence was mentioned (Observation O3).

Observations and narrative data from TPAR revealed how chronic instability has normalized a perception of worthlessness, which undermines learners’ educational engagement. For example, learners frequently used phrases like “it’s hard to think about school when you’re always worried” and “sometimes I don’t even know if it’s safe to come to school,” illustrating the constant mental and emotional drain imposed by their circumstances. Such statements reflect the broader, often invisible, landscape of slow violence that contributes to what Massey (2020) describes as an “ambient insecurity,” a pervasive sense of threat that affects cognitive and emotional development.

This erosion of self-perception and confidence appears to manifest in their written narratives, where learners’ writing style and language usage often fall short of basic educational standards. Gerde et al. (2022) describe composition as a creative process where the writer expresses their purpose, whether in poetry, stories, or other forms. However, Thomas et al. (2020), highlight that children who struggle with reading often face similar difficulties with writing. Writing challenges are the second most common reason students are referred to school psychologists after reading issues. While Thomas et al. (2020) make a valid point, should writing in a textual format be the sole standard for assessing children’s abilities? If a child can express ideas through drawing, does this limit their intellectual capacity to grasp complex concepts simply because it isn’t in written or tabular form? This study did not emphasise the learners’ writing skills. Instead, it aimed to open up a space where the learner could enter an imaginative world, enabling them to construct a reality—whether as a form of escape or a space of welcome. Although these challenges in written expression suggest a need for additional support, they also highlight how ongoing adversity and marginalisation can undermine academic skills and self-efficacy. However, in line with this study’s child-centred approach O’Shea (2019: 1) puts forth a strong argument that even though the writing she produces is “bad writing” it still deserves to be read. In the author’s own words:

My writing is ‘bad writing’ but what should become of it? Does a concern with style, whether or not over content, based on taste preclude some stories and different ways of writing? Should I be excluded from academe and silenced, or can a room be found for a tasteless account like mine?

The following themes emerged from learner narratives (LN) symbolically reflecting an understanding of their real life.

Theme 1: Unloved child

Learner narrative 1: The title of this narrative is "Carmenita."

"Carmenita, much like the Cinderella story, had a mother who did not care much for her, and she eventually was raised by her aunt."

The narrative depicts a feeling of distance from warmth and acceptance. The idea is conveyed that unloved pain never goes away, but is reintroduced into relationships that eventually end up as failures.

Theme 2: Comforting and strength

Learner narrative (LN) 2: The title of the narrative is "My stray cat."

"The learner daily walks the cat in the park and gives it food."

This narrative is related to the sensitivity and emotional expanse that can be experienced when a pet enters the life of the learner. The learner provides the cat with heroic characteristics to create and reflect a meaningful view of his own life.

Theme 3: Power of believing

Learner narrative (LN) 3: The title of this story is Assassin's Creed.

"The mission of this caped man was to hunt down a killer who killed and hanged people on instruction from the king."

This narrative relates to how the learner seeks control over his environment. The desire is expressed to overcome and root out bondages that overwhelm the storyteller.

Theme 4: Living with uncertainty

Learner narrative (LN) 4: The story happens at school.

There is a shooting in the area close to the school. The story is gripped with fear and terror.

The narrative relates an everyday encounter of the learners living in violent conditions. The uncertainty of life is ingrained in navigating the daily encounters from school to home and back. I witnessed this once during one of my school visits. The principal advised me to leave

the school as the shooting was heard down the road from the school and gangsters were approaching the field adjacent to the school. I saw how learners were huddled together in the passages protected by their teachers who instructed them to stay down in case a stray bullet might enter the school.

Theme 5: Living in fear

Learner narrative (LN) 5: The story is titled: how we feel. This story is about a dangerous neighbourhood.

"Once they could manage to get home from school, they locked themselves up, with sporadic gunfights continuing in the streets."

The narrative tries to show how everyday violence can have a numbing effect on one's emotions, accepting hostilities as normal. This quote highlights the normalisation of violence and the coping mechanisms used to navigate fear.

Theme 6: Living in dreams

Learner narrative (LN) 6: The title of this story: I am leaving for America.

"Whenever they visit from America, the writer loves to visit her grandparents in the Western Cape."

The narrative relates to desiring comfort and stability and living a life where there is no lack of basic human resources. Furthermore, this reflects the longing for familial connection and stability, contrasting dreams of a better life with familiar comforts.

6.2.3.2 The role of sound and silence as indicators of slow violence

Through TPAR's conversational methodology, learners shared their perspectives on the soundscapes and silences within the school environment, offering unique insights into the emotional weight carried by these elements.

Theme: hermeneutics of sound

The "hermeneutics of sound" emerged as a theme, wherein ambient sounds like slamming doors and shouting were reflections of hidden tensions. These "soundscapes" illustrated how environmental conditions influence learners' emotional landscapes, underscoring that sound is an indicator of the unseen weight of slow violence. Learners related their experiences through conversational interviews highlighting very similar encounters almost daily.

Understanding the sounds of violent conditions and their impact, especially on child learners, offers valuable insights into why these learners behave as they do. The sounds they emit and respond to reflect those embedded in their environments—sounds that resonate within their schools, as schools are situated within the communities where they live. From birth, children are immersed in the embodied sounds of their surroundings. Frank La Rue (cited by Slanchak 2019: 17) emphasises that sound plays a crucial role in shaping our thoughts and behaviour. Pallasmaa (2005) highlights that hearing is our first active sense, engaged even before birth. Similarly, Bull and Back (cited in Al-Masri 2017) explore how sound shapes our identity through the auditory experiences of home, family, and community. Burrell (2014 cited in Sou and Webber, 2023) further argues that loud noise, unpleasant smells, and environmental degradation reflect social inequalities, leading to hostile effects that shape the lived experiences of those in marginalised communities.

Gunshots are the more frequent and audible examples associated with violence, especially among gangs. Gunshots may generate some type of excitement among youth and gangs, but these sounds also carry with them a sense of power and bravado. Child learners, when they hear gunshots close to the school go into hiding in their classrooms, but once these sounds subside, these same child learners talk excitedly about the fascination of guns and the sputtering of machine gunfire or the bang, bang of handguns.

Another form of sound in violent conditions learners confront is that which rings forth from within their community. The screams and cries of distress, agony, and anxiety, these screams and cries can signify calling for help or to call attention to the occurring violence. However, in these cases, the reaction of people may be to proactively help the one in distress, or unfortunately, as is mainly the case such violence occurs so frequently that it goes unnoticed and people live lives of indifference.

Protests and clashes with police have their distinctive sounds reflecting anger and displeasure at the impact of violent conditions on society. The crashing sounds of store windows shattering and booming thumps and shouts of angry crowds reverberate through the distressing skies, and on captive television screens. In domestic violent contexts, the effects of violent conditions can also be heard through crockery being flung and smashing against walls, crushing of furniture or slamming doors, and the pounding of physical bodies. Even the piercing sounds of police or emergency sirens display the unease that accompanies the ominous sounds of violent conditions.

To understand the sounds of violent conditions and how they impact people, the child learner can offer valuable insights that explain why child learners act and do things they do. This finding supports Feld's (Rice and Feld 2021; cited in Friedman, 2017) acoustemology concept, which posits that sound and silence shape emotional and social experiences, playing a critical role in learners' well-being.

6.2.3.3 The cumulative impact on learner development and teacher well-being

The observational findings also show that slow violence has a cumulative impact on learners' cognitive, social, and emotional development. As observed, learners often displayed disengagement, low motivation, and diminished agency, manifesting as apathy or fatigue in the classroom.

The observational method was employed to gain an in-depth understanding of learner behaviour and social dynamics within the school setting, particularly in response to the cumulative disadvantages associated with slow violence. Observations were conducted primarily on the school playgrounds, where learners' interactions were largely unstructured, providing a natural setting to witness authentic behaviours and expressions of identity.

As the observer, I recognised my position not merely as an outsider but as a participant in the school environment. Reflecting on my potential influence, I would keep my distance and have idle conversations with learners during these lunch breaks. While doing so, I will make mental notes of behaviours and suggestions that can be relevant to the study. Certain instances occurred and emerged that helped in the creation of themes appropriate to the learners' actions and behaviours at the time.

The observations were categorized into thematic areas to illustrate patterns in social dynamics and expressions of identity, linking these behaviours to their broader context and highlighting how education can play a transformative role, either positively or negatively impacting learners' psychosocial development. This thematic structure not only facilitated an organized presentation but also provided a framework to contextualize behaviours within the socio-economic conditions that contribute to cumulative disadvantage, as noted by Killian et al. (2008) and Schafer et al. (2009). Each theme highlighted below reflects both the observable behaviours and the underlying socio-psychological processes influencing them.

Vulgarity

The frequent use of offensive language such as “Jou ma se %\$##” highlights the entrenched role of vulgarity as a mechanism for asserting dominance and inflicting harm within peer interactions. This phrase, commonly deployed among male learners, operates as a powerful insult because it targets deeply personal aspects of identity, such as family and honour. Literature on language use in high-stress and violent environments suggests that such expressions serve as tools for both self-defence and aggression. Pascale (2019) notes that language in these contexts is frequently weaponized to uphold masculinity norms and protect self-worth in spaces where identity is precarious. Adeyemo et al. (2024) similarly emphasize that verbal aggression often functions as a learned response to environmental stressors, reflecting how youth internalize societal norms of dominance and hierarchy. These observations suggest that vulgarity is more than casual language; it is a reflection of social survival strategies shaped by the learners' environmental contexts.

Observation proved particularly effective in capturing these dynamics because it allowed for real-time documentation of interactions that might otherwise be sanitised or underplayed in self-reported data. By observing learners in real-time, it was possible to contextualise the cultural and relational significance of such language.

Herdism

I observed a clear distinction between the adaptive social grouping and the phenomenon of "herdism," where obligation and conformity overshadow individuality. One example involved a learner fighting another for befriending someone outside of their immediate social circle without permission. I approached the aggressor and asked why he fought with his friend, and he explained that they were friends first and that his friend (the victim) should know that. This "herdism" illustrated a surrender of independent thought and agency, often manifesting in impulsive, defensive actions. The tendency revealed the impact of identity formation through peer alliances, which emphasize the loss of autonomy and the role of social allegiance in shaping youth behaviour. This aligns with findings by Tajfel and Turner (2003; Ham and Woodcock 2022) on social identity theory, which posits that in-group favouritism and out-group hostility often dictate behaviour in tightly bonded groups. Herdism among learners often manifested as impulsive conformity, where the fear of exclusion outweighed personal judgment or decision-making. For instance, gangs and tightly knit peer groups significantly influence their members by offering a sense of belonging, security, and identity, often

compensating for fragmented families or lack of community support. Loyalty and conformity within these groups often override individual thought, reinforcing norms that dictate behaviour. This can lead to the internalisation of group values, even when conflicting with personal beliefs or social norms. For adolescents, such formations can become a primary identity source, providing social validation and protection. However, this reliance often comes with implicit demands for obedience and allegiance, where deviation is met with ostracism or punitive responses, as seen in instances of violence over perceived betrayals of group loyalty. The pressure to conform stifles critical thinking and self-expression, perpetuating exclusionary behaviour, territorialism, and conflict. Hierarchical structures within these groups can amplify power imbalances, encouraging coercive or destructive behaviours to maintain status. This underscores the critical need for educational interventions that challenge these oppressive dynamics by creating environments where individuality is respected, and positive peer relationships are encouraged.

By promoting empathy, agency, and positive peace, and transforming conflict environments, schools can disrupt the appeal of gangs and destructive interpersonal dynamics, steering learners toward more inclusive and empowering identities.

Threatening behaviour

Verbal and symbolic threats emerged as prominent means of resolving disputes and establishing dominance, with noticeable gender-based variations. Girls typically relied on sarcasm to undermine reputations (e.g., “Kyk hoe lyk djy” or “You are good looking, aren’t you”), while among male learners, physical posturing, such as clenched fists or gestures suggesting violence, was a common means of establishing dominance. These gendered differences echo findings by Connell (2015), who discusses how hegemonic masculinity and emphasized femininity shape expressions of power and aggression differently across genders. Connell’s work (2015) on masculinities examines how masculinity is shaped by power dynamics and social power. Similarly, studies (Parkes 2015; Mosaval et al. 2012) highlight that threats and aggression in youth often reflect deeper vulnerabilities tied to exposure to structural violence and trauma.

Observation enabled the researcher to document these behaviours within their natural context, offering insights into the intersection of gender, power, and aggression that might be overlooked in self-reported accounts. This underscores the strength of observation in capturing nuanced social dynamics.

Soliciting respect

A recurring theme in my interactions with learners was their need for respect and acknowledgement, often perceived as challenges to my authority. When I asked a learner to sit down, he responded, “Who are you to tell me?” Attempts to assert my authority without mutual respect led to disruptive behaviours across the class. Respect emerged as a recurring and contested theme, often linked to broader issues of authority and power dynamics in environments characterized by systemic marginalisation. Wolf (2011; Janoff-Bulman and Werther 2008) argue that in high-risk settings, respect becomes a critical form of social capital, with any perceived slight triggering defensive reactions. This behaviour reflects the learners' struggle for acknowledgement and agency within an environment where their dignity is frequently undermined.

The observational method was critical in uncovering the interplay between authority and respect. My observation captured non-verbal cues, group dynamics, and the immediacy of emotional responses, providing a fuller picture of the underlying tensions. I realised that I needed to be careful in how I confronted learners when I desired discipline and attention in class. A difficult balance, I must admit, and many times I felt disempowered, yet also committed to continue giving lessons for the sake of those who wanted to learn. One thing I learned was to remain kind to all learners, even when I felt I was being disrespected.

Impostorisation

Many learners displayed behaviours that seemed performative, adopting personas of toughness and arrogance to mask deeper insecurities and needs for acceptance. The performative toughness displayed by many learners points to the psychological impact of prolonged adversity. For example, young learners will come up to me and look me up and down challenging my authority as a teacher. There would be an exchange of glances to see who would give in first. I realised these were fragile boys, who needed to perform tough when among their peers. These were non-threatening gestures, but for these boys, they were important signifiers of recognition. Adopting personas of arrogance or aggression often masked deeper insecurities, revealing a struggle for acceptance and belonging. This aligns with Brinthaupt and Scheier's (2022) exploration of identity formation under adversity, which argues that youth in marginalised contexts often internalise negative stereotypes, leading to a fragile sense of self-worth. The observed behaviours also reflect Erikson's (1968) theory of

identity development, where unresolved crises of trust and autonomy in early life stages can result in defensive, performative behaviours during adolescence.

The observation allowed for a deeper understanding of these performative behaviours as they unfolded in real-time, capturing both the outward display of confidence and the subtle signs of underlying vulnerability. This real-time engagement provided insights into the challenges and complexities of identity formation that learners have to struggle with.

Educators' perspectives on learner behaviour

In many casual conversations with educators, I frequently heard them describe learner behaviour as symptomatic of broader community struggles, echoing assertions made by several authors (McLaughlin 2018; Gee 2021) that prolonged exposure to adversity erodes resilience and disrupts positive developmental pathways. Educators would make comments like the learners are “a micro-level reflection of their community.” or “there’s no way to teach when I am constantly having to manage behaviour.” One educator told me she still believes in teaching as a “rewarding profession” but working with “these kids” gets to her emotionally as well as having an impact on her motivation to teach. The observed frustration highlighted the systemic challenges of fostering engagement in environments where socio-economic disadvantage perpetuates cycles of violence and disengagement.

Observation proved invaluable for triangulating these educator perspectives with learner behaviours. By directly witnessing the classroom dynamics educators described, I could validate their accounts with my own experience, and analyse the interplay between systemic challenges and individual behaviours.

Implications of observation

The observational method proved particularly effective in capturing the complexity of slow violence and its manifestations within the school environment. Unlike other methods that rely on participants' accounts or self-perceptions, observation allowed for the real-time documentation of interactions, behaviours, and social dynamics. These findings underscore the urgent need for interventions rooted in generosity, moral efficacy, and mutual respect, aligning with transformative educational frameworks proposed by Freire (1970). Such frameworks aim to restore resilience and agency by addressing the systemic inequities that shape learners' experiences and behaviours.

6.2.3.4 *Summary of findings for objective 1*

Overall, the findings indicate that slow violence in societal and educational contexts deeply impacts learners, shaping their emotional and cognitive development and diminishing their sense of safety and agency. Through TPAR, learners could articulate and understand that the “sounds of violence” are not innocuous, but influenced their perception of themselves and their surroundings. These insights underscore the urgent need to address the pervasive effects of slow violence on young learners through interventions that foster stability, agency, and well-being within educational contexts.

6.2.4 Objective 2: To explore principles of generosity, transcendence, and transformation in primary school learners, contributing to a coherent educational framework anchored in peacebuilding

In line with the second research objective, this section explores how principles of generosity, transcendence, and transformation influenced primary school learners, contributing to the foundation of a generosity-based educational framework that fosters peacebuilding. Observational data and learner narratives reveal that these principles encouraged the development of relational bonds, self-worth, and a shared sense of purpose among learners, even within a challenging environment.

The study focused on nurturing empathy, mutual support, and relational bonds, creating a culture that encouraged learners to engage with each other compassionately. Through activities such as the "Dream Team" project, learners practised small acts of kindness and developed a sense of pride in helping their peers, transcending the limitations imposed by their challenging environments.

The findings demonstrated that engaging in acts of kindness fostered self-worth and allowed learners to envision themselves as capable of positive impact. For example, learners expressed a newfound sense of significance through statements like “It’s nice to feel noticed... like what I do matters here.” This development aligns with theories on social-emotional learning and peacebuilding, showing that principles of generosity not only foster connection and empathy but also contribute to creating a supportive school environment that can counteract the effects of slow violence.

6.2.4.1 *Conversational themes*

The following themes express the learners' comments through casual conversational interviews and discussions over time, highlighting the role of empathy and social concerns of the learners.

Theme 1: Hope and aspirations for change

Several learners expressed hope and a belief in their ability to create positive change, both in their communities and schools. For instance:

L1 stated, "I believe I and I think there are others in my community who feel the same, in that we can make a difference in our area."

Similarly, L4 commented, "I believe that as learners, if we stand together, we can make a difference in our school and where we live."

L2 articulated her aspirations by writing a vision statement instead of a narrative, expressing her desire to escape her circumstances. She shared, "I want to improve my life and need to surround myself with people who can help me do so." This activity unlocked a new world of possibilities for her.

L4 expressed her determination to endure, stating, "I believe I have potential, but we are poor. I do not always have the motivation to come to school, but I must try not to give up, despite my circumstances."

These reflections align with the study's findings that fostering agency among learners can inspire collective action and resilience, even amidst adverse circumstances. They demonstrate the potential of a generosity-based framework to empower learners to view themselves as active contributors to societal transformation.

Theme 2: Experiences of violence and loss

The devastating impact of violence within learners' communities was a recurring theme, often expressed through personal anecdotes:

L5 recounted, "The people had thrown stones and killed a child...I do not know why...I only heard about it....people were talking about it."

L4 shared, "My one uncle shot dead my other uncle."

L11 mentioned, "Sir, I want to tell you about the cruelty in my area. A man abused his wife and she died. It was all over the newspaper."

L5 described her fear of her violent community, noting, "I am scared and worry a lot, but I show resilience and courage to go to the shop even if I am scared." Her ability to mimic bravery illustrates her resilience in an environment fraught with danger.

L8 highlighted the pervasive violence and disruption in her street, saying, "I write about funerals and shootings and violence in my street. Children in my street are violent and bullying types. There is loud music and noise almost every day, especially on weekends."

L9 reflected upon his exposure to violence and his struggle to envision an alternative reality, sharing, "As a child, I have seen much violence, but I have no idea how to stop it or if it will ever cease."

These comments highlight the prevalence of slow violence in learners' environments, reinforcing the urgent need for interventions that address emotional trauma and promote a culture of peace. The findings underscore that such interventions must go beyond the classroom to include holistic support for learners and their communities.

Theme 3: Longing for stability and emotional support

Learners also expressed a deep yearning for stability, safety, and emotional connection:

L8 shared, "I wish my mom was with me for this Christmas. I also wish I could have a school bag and school shoes. One day I would love to become a writer."

L7 expressed, "I want a new home, I also want a pair of sneakers, I want my future to become true, it must be a good future as I want to live in a good area, and where I can live long, and that I can have a good weekend."

L2 added, "I love children and share good things with children. I also want a good school where we as children can be safe."

N6 shared, "I feel safe at home because of good friends and supportive family, and this is what makes my life feel great."

N7 expressed her longing for identity and belonging, stating, "I do not mind who my family may be, whether they are dysfunctional or not. I just want to know who I am."

These statements reveal learners' unmet basic needs and aspirations for a better future, emphasizing the importance of creating nurturing environments that address both material and emotional well-being. Programs rooted in empathy and care can play a transformative role in helping learners achieve these goals.

Theme 4: Acts of kindness and positive relationships

The importance of kindness and supportive relationships was also emphasized in learners' reflections:

L6 remarked, "Someone who believes in me, and looks from the inside and not from the outside...someone who loves you for who you are...this makes me happy... you are the reason why he is in your life today."

L1 recalled the contrast between negative experiences with an abusive educator and the positive influence of a kind teacher, noting how she "flourished in an atmosphere and environment of kindness."

These comments underscore the transformative impact of kindness-based interactions on learners' self-esteem and motivation, aligning with the study's emphasis on generosity as a cornerstone for peacebuilding.

Theme 5: Material needs and aspirations

Many learners expressed aspirations tied to meeting their material needs, often linked to broader desires for security and prosperity:

L9 wished, "I wish I could have a lot of money to provide for my family."

L10 shared, "I wish to have a dog. I also want to live in a house with everything therein, such as food and clothes to wear."

L11 reflected, "I wish to one day have my own home; also I want to feed children who do not have food."

L9 added, "I want a house and a pool, and I want a yard to play in...I also want a doll who looks like a baby...I also want to give people clothes and shoes."

These comments illustrate the intersection of learners' basic material needs with their broader aspirations to care for others, reinforcing the importance of addressing socio-economic inequalities through educational frameworks that build both resilience and opportunity.

Theme 6: Learner empathy and solidarity with the aggrieved educator

Some learners demonstrated empathy and solidarity in response to an educator's personal challenges:

L1 expressed, "Sir, don't worry about the burning of your house. I am really sorry about it; it makes me feel sad, but don't worry, you are the best sir ever; you always help us with our work."

L3 drew from her own experiences to connect with the educator, saying, "I have experienced this in my life as our house burned down twice. I know how you must feel, but sir must be strong for yourself and your family."

L4 offered encouragement grounded in faith, stating, "The Lord has something in store for you, and he has a plan for you. Even if it hurts now, do not give up."

L5 encouraged the educator to "look forward and step into the future," reinforcing the importance of resilience and optimism.

These comments reflect the learners' capacity for empathy, a critical peace-oriented value that aligns with the principles of generosity and transformation emphasized in this study.

Theme 7: The role of educational frameworks in supporting individual strengths

The findings also highlight how personalized approaches can nurture learners' unique strengths and interests:

N3, who wrote in a linear style, signified a desire for order amid chaos. She shared her interest in science and mathematics but expressed uncertainty about her ability to pursue these subjects.

N1 recalled the impact of a kind educator, noting how she "flourished in an atmosphere and environment of kindness."

These insights illustrate the need for a responsive educational framework that fosters learners' innate potential while addressing the structural and emotional barriers they face.

6.2.4.2 Generosity in action: Fostering connection and self-worth

The generosity-based framework introduced through activities such as the "Dream Team" project allowed learners to practice small acts of kindness, including sharing meals and writing supportive notes to peers. These activities encouraged empathy, care, and respect among learners, fostering a sense of connection and community. Learners engaged in these actions reported feeling noticed and valued, marking a departure from their typical experiences of isolation or invisibility. For example, one learner shared, "When I help my friends, it feels like I'm finally good at something."

These statements reflect a growing sense of self-worth and pride in contributing positively to others, aligning with theories of social-emotional learning that emphasize pro-social behaviours as foundational to personal growth and peacebuilding (Yehuda and Lehrner, 2018). By emphasizing generosity, learners began to see themselves as capable of positively impacting their environment, cultivating a mindset that extends beyond individual gain to collective well-being.

6.2.4.3 Transcendence through empathy and mutual support

The findings reveal that, as learners engaged in acts of generosity, they began to transcend their immediate adverse circumstances, experiencing a shift in perspective and sense of self. These small acts provided learners with opportunities to exercise agency, even within an environment marked by adversity. As learners practised empathy and mutual support, they cultivated an understanding of their potential to contribute to a supportive and inclusive school community.

Confidence to do some good was a key personal development attribute learners were able to take away from their experience. During classroom discussions on Thursdays, we would normally reflect on the previous week's lived experiences, and whether learners had been able to find ways to help another, or be aware of others who were doing good around them. They would often talk of a particular aunty who would feed hungry children of the community, normally with huge pots to feed many. They even suggested that we should approach this aunty and work with her to feed those learners who are in need. It was through such conversations that the following statements would be made:

“I love doing this kind of service. At first, I was not sure about anything, but in doing something practical, I feel that schooling can prepare me for something in the future.” [L1]

“I think I am able to grow, and sharing food and things with others helps me as a person.” [L2]

“I didn't believe I could do anything. I came here and discovered I can; this kind of service to my peers makes me work hard so I can feel I do something good.” [L3]

“I like to work with my hands a lot and doing good work, as it does improve myself” [L4].

Through these interactions, learners developed what can be described as "micro-transformations" in self-conception, wherein they gained confidence and resilience through their relationships with peers. Theories on care-based education, such as those advanced by

Noddings (1986), emphasize that relational interactions rooted in empathy and mutual respect serve as catalysts for transformation. For instance, one learner's reflection when returning from handing out gifts to a teacher remarked "It's nice to feel noticed by teachers... like what I do matters here", this illustrates this growing awareness of self-worth and significance in the school community, even if only within a supportive microcosm.

6.2.4.4 Building a framework for peacebuilding in education

This study's findings indicate that the principles of generosity, empathy, and transformation when consistently applied to address adverse lived experiences, lay the groundwork for an educational framework underscored with positive peace principles. For example, generosity fostered a culture of care where learners felt valued and supported, as evidenced by learners who shared personal resources with struggling learners or peers to endure through a day of schooling. These acts of kindness created a sense of belonging and reduced feelings of isolation caused by poverty and violence. The development of empathy among learners overcame the feelings of disempowerment by ensuring that collective attempts to alter circumstances can be attained. Transformation empowers learners to disrupt cycles of violence and despair, demonstrated by learners in Transformative Participatory Action Research (TPAR) initiatives who co-developed solutions to school and community issues, which improved their confidence and sense of agency. Similarly, recognizing and celebrating small achievements helped learners build resilience and persevere despite adverse conditions. Together, these principles address learners' social and emotional needs, enabling schools to move beyond traditional academic goals to become spaces for healing and empowerment. Rooted in the theoretical foundations of Freire's transformative education, Galtung's positive peace, and Noddings' ethics of care, this framework provides a practical strategy for overcoming violence and inequality in educational settings while promoting sustainable peace. Such a framework not only promotes a harmonious environment within the school but also instils values that can counteract the effects of slow violence. As learners practice generosity, they begin to develop interpersonal skills and a sense of belonging, creating a foundation for resilience and conflict resolution.

These initial transformations, though subtle, provide a glimpse into how generosity-based interactions have the potential to serve as building blocks for a larger peacebuilding strategy. By focusing on mutual respect, empathy, and supportive interactions, the study highlights the power of generosity to foster a culture of peace within educational settings, particularly where learners experience chronic adversity.

6.2.4.5 Summary of findings for objective 2

In summary, the findings indicated that the principles of generosity, transcendence, and transformation significantly contributed to learners' development of empathy, agency, and interpersonal connection, which are foundational to a peacebuilding educational framework. By engaging in kind activities and empathetic relations, learners began to perceive themselves as integral participants in a supportive and collaborative community. These transformation pathways highlighted the potential of a generosity-based framework to not only inculcate peace-oriented values but also to foster emotional resilience and psychosocial well-being in learners who experience persistent adverse circumstances. Moreover, the framework allowed learners to navigate and critically engage with systemic inequalities and entrenched cycles of violence. In doing so, it empowered them to act as agents of change within their immediate environments and beyond, aligning with broader goals of transformative education that seeks to address structural violence and promote sustainable peace.

6.3 Conclusion

This chapter examined the pervasive impact of slow violence on learners in a high-adversity school context and assessed the transformative potential of a generosity-based educational framework in addressing these challenges. The findings highlight the complex ways in which slow violence permeates both societal and educational domains, affecting learners' emotional resilience, agency, and motivation. Through TPAR and direct engagement with learners, this study uncovered how the stressors of poverty, instability, and chronic insecurity shape learners' perceptions, behaviours, and capacities for growth.

In response to these adversities, the generosity-based framework emerged as a promising pedagogical approach, with principles of generosity, empathy, and humanitarian service fostering resilience and empowering learners to reclaim agency and self-worth. The findings show that when learners actively participate in acts of kindness, experience empathy from peers and teachers, and engage in humanitarian service, they begin to transcend the limitations imposed by slow violence. Such practices helped them develop a stronger sense of connection, motivation, and self-efficacy, creating a positive ripple effect on their academic engagement and social interactions.

The integration of humanitarian service within the educational model not only enriched learners' experiences but also instilled a culture of care and shared responsibility. This approach provided learners with valuable opportunities to practice agency and develop

interpersonal skills, offering a counter-narrative to the cycles of disempowerment associated with slow violence. Additionally, the participatory co-creation process empowered learners to shape the framework in ways that resonated with their unique needs and experiences, further enhancing the model's relevance and effectiveness.

Overall, the generosity-based educational framework recommended in this study demonstrates a powerful capacity to address the psychological and social scars left by slow violence. By fostering an environment rooted in empathy, shared support, and humanitarian values, this model provides a pathway for learners to develop resilience and experience meaningful growth within a supportive educational setting. The findings suggest that adopting such a framework could benefit educational contexts affected by adversity, offering a structured, sustainable approach to promoting well-being, agency, and peacebuilding among learners.

CHAPTER 7: DISCUSSION

7.1 Introduction

This study reveals that slow violence—chronic adversity and instability caused by structural neglect—profoundly affects learners in marginalized communities, shaping their educational and personal development. For example, a news report (Dean 2024) illustrates the profound impact of slow violence on young minds. When asked to "write a personal narration of five sentences about what you want to do one day and why you want to do it," a third-grade student from a Western Cape primary school in the Metro South district provided an alarming response. The child wrote: "One day I am going to be a gangster and hold a gun in my hand. I am going to be a gangster and smuggle guns in my house." This troubling account demonstrates how young learners internalise violence, indicating an urgent need for interventions that address both psychological and social aspects of learning environments affected by ongoing adversity. Through examining the impacts of slow violence and implementing a generosity-based educational model, the research offers insights into how humanitarian principles, empathy, and service can reshape the educational experiences of learners who face continuous socio-economic challenges.

This discussion interprets the study's findings through the lens of the research objectives, highlighting how the generosity-based framework can address slow violence's effects on learners' well-being, agency, and motivation. By fostering a culture of generosity, the framework provides pathways for learners to experience agency, transcendence, and resilience, demonstrating that education can serve as a transformative force in contexts of adversity.

7.2 The role of the study objectives in developing a transformation model for addressing Slow Violence

This section delves into the transformative potential of a generosity-based educational framework in addressing the impacts of slow violence within school communities. It explores how learner-centred approaches, emphasising humanitarian service and empathy-driven practices, foster agency, motivation, and resilience among learners. By grounding its findings in the iterative methodologies of Transformative Participatory Action Research (TPAR), the study highlights the role of collaboration and lived experiences in shaping an inclusive and supportive educational model. The narratives, reflections, and data presented in this section

offer insights into the framework's ability to counteract the pervasive challenges of slow violence and build a foundation for personal and collective growth.

7.3 Objective 3: Developing a model integrating humanitarian service as a pedagogical Approach

A central contribution of this study is the development of a generosity-based educational model that integrates humanitarian service as a key pedagogical approach. By involving learners in activities that encourage service, empathy, and mutual support, the model enabled them to experience agency and a sense of belonging within their school community.

TPAR played an instrumental role in co-creating this model, as learners actively participated in shaping the framework based on their experiences and needs. Humanitarian service was embedded in school activities, such as peer mentorship and support networks, which provided learners with structured opportunities to engage meaningfully with their community. This approach shifted the educational experience from one of passive reception to active engagement, allowing learners to see themselves as contributors and agents of change. The humanitarian service component proved vital in developing a model that resonates with learners' realities and aligns with their socio-emotional needs.

This section addresses the third objective by presenting the development of a generosity-based educational model that integrates humanitarian service as a core pedagogical approach. Through the collaborative, iterative methods of Transformative Participatory Action Research (TPAR), learners' action-based enthusiasm and the researcher's facilitation co-created a framework grounded in acts of service, mutual care, and shared responsibility. This approach helped learners not only engage actively in their growth but also contribute meaningfully to their school community.

7.3.1 Humanitarian service as a pedagogical transformative approach

The humanitarian service model within this generosity-based framework emphasized activities where learners could serve and support one another. Through this model, learners engaged in small but impactful acts of service, such as mentoring younger peers, organizing shared resources, and participating in group projects that involved cooperation and support. These activities fostered a sense of responsibility and provided learners with opportunities to develop agency and empathy. During one of our Thursday discussions, the learners brainstormed on the topic of dreams. This is also how it came about to call themselves the 'Dream Team'. As the findings indicate certain learners wanted material things such as houses and to have their

basic needs met, while a few dreamt of becoming writers. It was what to write about that narratives were borne, and that a book should be written about what they do in the group, as inspiration for other learners when they read the book. Unfortunately publishing books cost money, yet they decided to write down their experiences while being part of the study project, especially the humanitarian aspect in which they were involved. The following narrative or story, based on learner input and activity, has been written to describe the emotional well-being that can be created through their humanitarian service projects:

Our school is WD Hendricks primary school, Facticeon.

We are learners who all come to this school. We are ordinary learners who come from humble homes. We aim to reinvent our memories. We know only of memories that dictate to us a life that is mundane. Do you know that as children, we all have stories to tell? Some of our stories are sad, and then there are stories that just make us feel...grateful? Grateful that we are able to help one another. We have three such stories to share with you.

We have many wonderful educators at our school. And you know what? We do not always show our appreciation to them. So one day, we decided to make up a bag of sweet treats to hand to each teacher as a token of our appreciation. We decided on a date and on that day each one of us went to a classroom to give a surprise gift bag to a teacher. We were so delighted to see the surprise and happiness that lit up the eyes of our teachers. We came back to our meeting room and could share these lovely moments with each other. Oh, how, wonderful it made us feel to bring such joy to our teachers and other school staff.

Now this is a sad story that happened to one of our educators. We heard from our principal that one of our educator's house had burned down. The fire started from a house next door to his and the flames spread over to his home destroying the house and most of his belongings. When our team heard this sad story we came together and brainstormed what we could do to help our teacher. We thought the best way to help him was through offering him some encouragement. Some of us in the 'Dream Team' had similar incidents that happened to them when they also lost a home that burned down and we decided to invite him to our meeting room and to read him some of our letters of encouragement. We planned to have him come the next Thursday. That is the day we have our weekly meetings. On that day we shared with him our letters of encouragement. We also brought some things to eat and drink and enjoyed these with him. When we were done eating the teacher gave us a word of encouragement and said 'we may at times face difficulties, but we as human beings have within us the powers to rise up against traumas and difficulties, and not to let these things break our spirit and keep us downtrodden'. The team felt grateful that we could be of some encouragement to our teacher...

The following story is close to all of our hearts and talks about our own daily experiences. We are learners who come from a poor community and many days some of us come to school without having had anything to eat at home.

During one of our weekly meetings, we had a suggestion to feed our fellow classmates. The suggestion was great but we soon realised it would cost too much to feed everyone. What we finally decided upon was that each one of us must identify one needy learner and invite him or her to our next meeting where we will share a meal with each one of them. WE did not tell them what we planned to do as we wanted to keep it a secret for that day. The learner will then sit next to the other learner who brought him or her and give the reason why that person was chosen to share a meal. One learner said: "this boy always comes to our house in the morning and asks for something to eat. Another learner said: 'She always asks me during every break time if she can eat a piece of her sandwich... The other learner invited her brother because: "We did not have food last night and that is why I wanted to share this meal with him". The other learners had similar stories to share. We felt humbled and grateful that we were able to do such a small but 'telling'??? deed to our fellow learners.

We are happy to have shared with you our story and hope you can do the same at your school or community you live in.

These stories are all true.

The learners uttered statements like, "helping others makes me feel like I'm important like I can make things better here." This statement reflects how humanitarian service helped learners move beyond passive roles, transforming their educational experience into one where they could actively contribute to the well-being of others. The framework thus redefined the role of learners as both participants and contributors within their school community, giving them a sense of purpose that counteracted the passivity often engendered by slow violence.

7.3.2 Co-creation and the role of TPAR

The TPAR methodology played a crucial role in developing this model by involving learners directly in shaping the generosity-based framework. Learners participated in discussions, planning and decision-making processes, contributing their perspectives on what acts of generosity meant to them and how they could be incorporated into daily school life. This collaborative approach provided insights from learners to contribute towards the generosity-based model, fostering a sense of ownership and aligning the framework with their lived experiences and needs.

For instance, learners shared ideas about how sharing resources, providing mentorship, and supporting classmates could create a more inclusive and supportive school environment. TPAR's iterative structure allowed learners to revisit these ideas, critique the practicality of their plans, refine them, assist one another through their collaborative skillset, and even experiment with new ways to incorporate humanitarian service into the school culture. The

process empowered learners to see themselves as change agents, contributing to a collective model that promotes empathy, support, and shared responsibility.

7.3.3 Theoretical underpinnings and practical applications

Integrating humanitarian service as a pedagogical approach within the generosity-based framework aligns with theories that emphasize the value of service-oriented education in fostering social responsibility and self-efficacy. By engaging in acts of service, learners experienced what Bandura (2001) describes as “agentic behaviour,” wherein they gained confidence in their capacity to affect positive change within their environment. The model also draws from Freire’s (1970) concept of education as a liberatory practice, allowing learners to “name their world” through participatory action and co-creation.

The practical applications of this model are profound, as the generosity-based framework can serve as a scalable and adaptable approach for schools facing similar adversities. The humanitarian service component could be easily tailored to suit various school contexts, providing learners with structured ways to practice generosity and agency through service. These structured service opportunities also support the development of essential social skills, resilience, and empathy, making the model a practical and sustainable addition to school curricula.

7.3.4 Summary of findings for objective 3

The findings for this objective illustrate the potential of integrating humanitarian service into a generosity-based educational model to promote agency, empathy, and social responsibility among learners. By incorporating lessons learned from learners in the TPAR study, the framework is built around learners’ needs and experiences. The generosity-based educational model was created in response to the slow violence in Facticeon's schools and communities. Rooted in Transformative Participatory Action Research (TPAR), it involved iterative reflection and action cycles prioritizing learners' experiences and voices. TPAR findings, highlighting learners' agency, empathy, and social responsibility, were crucial in shaping the model.

7.3.4.1 *Learner-centred design*

The model focuses on learners’ needs and experiences. During TPAR, learners used reflection, narratives, and conversations to identify barriers caused by structural violence. As Freire (1970) noted, such discourse enabled learners to become active co-creators of solutions. Their insights informed a pedagogical framework integrating humanitarian service to foster agency and socio-political navigation skills (hooks 1994).

7.3.4.2 *Integration of humanitarian service*

A key aspect of the model is using humanitarian service as a pedagogical tool, particularly through shared meals among learners. The study showed that service activities foster agency, and empathy, and transform peer relations, aligning with Noddings' (2002) care ethics in education. These activities helped learners understand the importance of contributing to their communities, fostering social responsibility and a deeper understanding of their role in addressing collective challenges.

7.3.4.3 *Response to slow violence*

The model specifically addresses the cumulative and intergenerational effects of slow violence, defined by Nixon (2011) as the harm that occurs gradually and often goes unnoticed due to its diffuse and delayed nature. Slow violence erodes the physical, emotional, and social foundations essential for healthy development, especially in marginalized communities. The generosity-based model counters these effects through relational and transformative pedagogies prioritizing healing and resilience. Drawing on Cleary's (2021) analysis of slow violence's impact on human development, the model equips learners to critically engage with and challenge systemic conditions perpetuating this violence.

7.3.4.4 *Iterative refinement through research*

The study's participatory methodology with learner input and everyday life stories ensued its relevance and adaptability. This aligns with Reason and Bradbury's (2008) assertion that participatory action research fosters sustainable change by integrating local knowledge and iterative learning. Learners highlighted the importance of safe, secure, and empathetic spaces during the TPAR process, directly shaping the framework's emphasis on creating transformative educational environments. This iterative approach ensured the model evolved dynamically, responding to both immediate needs and long-term aspirations.

7.3.4.5 *Promoting personal and collective growth*

The generosity-based educational model bridges personal development and collective empowerment. Individually, it promotes self-awareness, critical thinking, and values such as generosity and compassion, aligning with Mezirow's (1997) transformative learning theory. Collectively, it fosters community cohesion by embedding practices that encourage collaboration and mutual support. This dual focus reflects Galtung's (1969) principles of

positive peacebuilding, which emphasizes addressing the root causes of conflict and fostering social harmony.

7.3.5 Significance and potential Impact

This framework offers a novel approach to education in contexts affected by structural violence. By grounding its design in the realities of learners' lives and emphasizing humanitarian service, the model challenges traditional deficit-based educational paradigms that often pathologize marginalized communities (Giroux 1983). Instead, it positions learners as active agents of change capable of personal growth and meaningful social contribution. Consequently, the generosity-based model holds significant promise for transforming educational practices in underserved and violence-affected communities, offering a pathway to resilience, agency, and systemic change.

This model thus holds promise for addressing the challenges posed by slow violence, providing learners with a pedagogical structure that encourages both personal growth and community support.

7.4 Objective 4: Evaluating the influence of generosity-based education on learner agency, motivation, and well-being

The generosity-based educational framework significantly enhanced learner agency, motivation, and well-being. Learners who engaged in acts of generosity demonstrated an increased sense of self-worth and agency, often viewing their school as a place of safety and support. This empowerment was reflected in statements from learners who felt “noticed” and valued through kindness-based interactions. The model's focus on empathy and connection fostered an environment that countered the psychological impacts of slow violence, helping learners develop resilience, focus, and emotional stability.

The study also found that learners showed heightened motivation and engagement in school activities, particularly those that emphasized collaboration and peer support. This increase in motivation can be attributed to the supportive and inclusive atmosphere created by the generosity-based framework, which reinforced learners' sense of purpose and provided a counterbalance to the adversity in their lives. These findings illustrate the effectiveness of generosity-based practices in promoting a culture of engagement, motivation, and well-being within educational contexts marked by chronic hardship.

This section evaluates the impact of a generosity-based educational model on learners' sense of agency, motivation, and well-being, particularly in mitigating the negative effects of slow violence. The data reveal that through participation in generosity-based practices, learners experienced notable shifts in their self-perception, engagement, and resilience. These changes demonstrate the model's potential to counteract the emotional and cognitive toll of slow violence, fostering a sense of empowerment and inclusion.

7.4.1 Enhanced learner agency and self-worth

As learners engaged in generosity-based activities, they reported feeling more capable and valued within their school community. The act of giving—whether through sharing resources, helping peers, or participating in collaborative projects—provided learners with a sense of agency that was previously undermined by their challenging environments.

For instance, one learner said,

“I feel like I can make a little difference, even if it's just helping my friends with the little I have.” [L4]

As has been expressed above similar statements are generally heard from most learners who face hardships at school, and when they are helped by their peers, a certain bond is recognised that “we all share the same circumstance, because today you help me tomorrow I may be able to help you.” These expressions reveal agency from learners, even if it means having to call on others to provide help:

“Each morning I hear him shout at our gate for something nice to eat. My mother would find whatever there is to eat, give it to him, and he would then return home or go to school.” [L6]

“I have helped sometimes since at school she always asks me if I have something to eat.” [L3]

Statements like these underscore how generosity-based practices fostered a new sense of self-efficacy and self-worth among learners, allowing them to see themselves as active contributors rather than passive recipients of their circumstances.

This increase in agency aligns with Bandura's (1982) theory of self-efficacy, which posits that individuals' beliefs in their capabilities can significantly influence their actions and resilience. Through generosity-centred activities, learners practised decision-making, empathy, and responsibility—skills that not only enhanced their self-perception but also empowered them to actively engage with their educational environment. This shift in perspective is critical in

contexts marked by slow violence, as it helps learners break cycles of passive acceptance and instead fosters an outlook of potential and purpose.

7.4.2 Increased motivation and engagement

The findings indicate that the generosity-based educational model positively influenced learners' motivation and engagement. A generosity-based educational model served as a transformative antithesis to the effects of slow violence, offering learners a pathway to rediscover motivation and engagement while fostering resilience. Slow violence, manifesting through pervasive poverty, food insecurity, and systemic neglect, had eroded learners' sense of agency and belonging.

However, through the generosity-based framework, many experienced a shift in how they perceived themselves and their environment. One learner remarked,

"At first, I didn't think my voice mattered, but now I feel like I have something to offer."

Collaborative activities rooted in mutual support allowed learners to rebuild trust and community, with one saying,

"Working together made me see I'm not alone in this, Like them I am needy and as such they care about me too."

Reflective practices encouraged students to process their experiences and envision change. A learner shared,

"Writing about what we did for each other made me realise how much we've grown; it gave me hope and instilled pride in myself."

The model's emphasis on relational generosity also addressed the emotional scars left by slow violence. Trust-building efforts, such as personalized mentorship and family inclusion, made learners feel seen and supported, as one explained,

"When my teacher showed gratitude when I gave her a gift, I felt great, it's like I was important to do something good."

Over time, these practices cultivated a renewed sense of self-worth and agency, empowering learners to reimagine their potential beyond the limitations imposed by systemic violence. As one participant reflected,

"This helping my fellow learners changed how I see myself. I'm not so afraid anymore of life, I want to do more"

These transformations highlight the model's capacity to mitigate the effects of slow violence, enabling learners to heal and engage with education as a tool for personal and social change. These were small steps of encouragement, but the participant learners for this study who were previously more disengaged than attentive toward their studies showed keen interest in participating more actively in school activities, demonstrating renewed interest in both academic and social aspects of school life. The TPAR data highlighted moments where learners showed excitement about kindness projects, with some expressing that helping others gave them a sense of pride and enthusiasm to be involved in projects related to improving the school environment. For example, one learner mentioned:

L1: "I have also become a better person by sharing food with my fellow learners."

L2: "Before this there was a wall around me I could not break; I am also now able to work in a team, since by nature a lonely and shy person."

L 3 noted, "I am not good at learning and I needed a lot of help, but coming to this room to plan to help other learners like me, I want to grow more in myself."

This increase in engagement was particularly evident during activities that allowed learners to work together and support one another, as they became more motivated to attend school and take part in group efforts. Social-emotional learning theories suggest that when learners feel a sense of belonging and purpose, they are more likely to engage positively with their educational setting. The generosity-based model capitalized on this by creating an environment where learners' social contributions were valued, leading to heightened motivation and a deeper investment in their educational journey.

7.4.3 Positive impacts on well-being and resilience

The model's focus on generosity and supportive interactions contributed significantly to improving learners' well-being and emotional resilience. The findings show that, as learners engaged in acts of kindness and empathy, they began to experience a reduction in feelings of isolation, fear, and helplessness, which are often intensified by the effects of slow violence. For example, one learner remarked, "I am shy, but I can now work in a team, the dream team" illustrating the sense of relief and comfort that came from feeling supported by peers.

By fostering positive social bonds, the generosity-based framework provided learners with emotional support networks within the school, which served as a buffer against the adversities in their external environment. This aligns with Noddings' (1984) theory of care-based education, which emphasizes the role of empathy and relational care in enhancing learners'

emotional resilience and sense of belonging. The TPAR data revealed that learners who felt included and supported showed greater emotional stability and resilience, suggesting that the generosity-based model holds promise as an intervention to mitigate the psychological impacts of slow violence.

7.4.4 Reduction of slow violence effects through generosity-based education

Overall, generosity-based education emerged as a meaningful approach to reducing the effects of slow violence by addressing learners' needs for agency, motivation, and emotional well-being. Learners demonstrated a renewed sense of agency as they engaged in helping others, a heightened motivation to attend and participate in school activities, and improved well-being through supportive peer relationships. These findings underscore that a GBE approach can help in transforming a challenging school environment into a space of shared support, where learners can develop resilience and reclaim a sense of personal empowerment.

7.4.5 Summary of findings for objective 4

In summary, the generosity-based model positively influenced learners' agency, motivation, and well-being, helping to counteract the debilitating effects of slow violence. By fostering a supportive, empathetic environment, this model enabled learners to reconnect with a sense of purpose and resilience, empowering them to see their school as a place of stability and inclusion. These findings highlight the model's potential to create transformative change in educational settings affected by chronic adversity, offering a pathway for learners to overcome the limitations imposed by slow violence.

7.5 Objective 5: Recommending a transformative generosity-based educational framework

The generosity-based educational model developed in this study offers a transformative approach to addressing slow violence by fostering a supportive, empathy-driven environment that empowers learners to overcome adversity. Key components, including humanitarian service, empathy-based interactions, and structured opportunities for generosity, provide learners with tools to build resilience, agency, and community engagement.

This section provides recommendations for implementing a generosity-based educational framework in schools, focusing on its transformative potential for addressing slow violence. Based on the positive outcomes observed in this study, the proposed model emphasizes

generosity, care, and humanitarian service as core elements to foster resilience, agency, and community among learners. The findings suggest that such a model could be adapted across various educational contexts to mitigate the impacts of adversity and support holistic learner development.

7.5.1 Key components of the generosity-based framework

The generosity-based framework developed through this study includes key components such as humanitarian service, empathy-driven interactions, and structured opportunities for learners to engage in acts of generosity. These elements collectively create an environment that prioritizes social-emotional well-being and mutual support. By integrating these principles into school curricula, educators can provide learners with a sense of purpose and belonging, addressing some of the core emotional needs that are often unmet in settings affected by slow violence.

- **Humanitarian Service:** Incorporating service-oriented activities, such as peer mentorship, resource-sharing initiatives, and school service projects, offers learners a way to contribute meaningfully to their school and peers. This approach promotes agency and social responsibility while also developing relational skills that are essential for resilience and emotional stability.
- **Empathy-driven interactions:** Building a culture by developing empathy and altruism as a skill through daily interactions and structured activities will help to create a safe and thriving educational space where learners feel valued and supported. By fostering empathy, educators can cultivate a school atmosphere for learning that counters the isolating and devaluing effects of slow violence.
- **Structured generosity opportunities:** Offering learners specific service learning opportunities to practice generosity, such as kindness projects, collaborative tasks, and inclusive events, ensures that these principles are consistently reinforced. This provides a practical way for learners to build confidence and feel a sense of agency within their school community.

7.5.2 Recommendations for implementation in diverse educational settings

The generosity-based model holds promise for various educational settings, particularly those in marginalized or high-adversity environments. The following recommendations outline practical steps for schools to implement this framework effectively:

- **Integrate generosity into the curriculum:** Schools can integrate activities that promote generosity and empathy within existing subjects, such as group projects in social studies or literature discussions focused on themes of compassion. Embedding these principles into academic content makes generosity a consistent part of the educational experience.

- **Create spaces for humanitarian service:** Establishing structured programs that allow learners to engage in service—such as mentoring younger students, leading support groups, or organizing resource-sharing events—can help foster a culture of care and responsibility. These programs provide learners with real opportunities to practice agency and contribute to their community.
- **Foster empathy through teacher-student interactions:** Training educators to acquire empathetic skills will enhance their interactions with students and can contribute to a better learning environment. Educators can model generosity and care, making learners feel understood and supported, which is essential for creating a safe and inclusive learning environment.
- **Implement participatory action research (PAR) in schools:** Adopting a participatory methodology similar to TPAR enables schools to involve learners directly in the development and refinement of generosity-based practices. PAR encourages learners to express their needs, share ideas, and play an active role in shaping the educational environment.
- **Establish peer support networks:** Facilitating peer-led support groups and mentorship programs creates a support system within the school, where learners can turn to each other for encouragement and guidance. These networks foster a sense of community and ensure that learners have accessible emotional support.

7.5.3 Implications for educational policy and practice

The findings indicate that adopting a generosity-based framework can address the broader implications of slow violence by providing learners with tools for resilience, agency, and emotional well-being. As educational policies increasingly recognise the need to support social-emotional development, this model aligns well with contemporary efforts to create inclusive and supportive learning environments. By prioritizing generosity and community-centered values, this framework can contribute to long-term positive outcomes, helping learners overcome adversity and build meaningful relationships.

In particular, this model's emphasis on social-emotional support and agency provides a pathway for schools in under-resourced or high-stress areas to transform educational experiences into sources of stability and empowerment. Policymakers and educators are encouraged to consider the generosity-based model as a sustainable approach to address the needs of learners in disadvantaged settings, ensuring that educational environments foster both academic success and personal resilience.

7.5.4 Summary of findings for objective 5

In conclusion, the generosity-based educational framework recommended in this study holds significant transformative potential for addressing slow violence in diverse educational settings. By embedding principles of generosity, humanitarian service, and empathy into the

school environment, this model provides learners with the social-emotional support they need to develop resilience, motivation, and agency. The proposed framework offers a comprehensive, adaptable approach for schools aiming to counteract the cumulative effects of adversity, fostering an inclusive, compassionate, and supportive educational experience.

7.5.5 Overview of objectives

A clear and systematic alignment between the study's objectives and findings strengthened its coherence and demonstrated the fulfilment of its research aims. Objective 1, which examined the manifestations of slow violence within societal and educational contexts, is addressed through the rich qualitative data highlighting learners' lived experiences of poverty, hunger, and structural inequities. These narratives illustrate the pervasive impact of slow violence on their psychological, social, and academic well-being. Objective 2, which explored the principles of generosity, transcendence, and transformation in primary school learners, is met through the findings that reveal increased empathy and agency among participants who engaged with the GBE framework. Objective 3, focused on developing a model integrating humanitarian service as a pedagogical approach, culminated in the creation of the Transformative Slow Violence Model (TSVM). This model demonstrates how acts of kindness and collaborative problem-solving can address both immediate and structural challenges faced by learners. Objective 4 evaluated the influence of generosity-based education on learner motivation and well-being, with findings showing marked improvements in resilience, self-worth, and social cohesion among participants. Finally, Objective 5, which recommended the adoption of a transformative generosity-based educational framework, is addressed through the study's actionable recommendations for policymakers and educators. These recommendations emphasize the scalability of the TSVM and its potential to mitigate the effects of slow violence in diverse educational contexts.

By explicitly mapping each finding to its corresponding objective, the study not only affirms its contributions but also ensures that its theoretical, practical, and empirical components are seamlessly integrated. This alignment enhances the narrative coherence and positions the study as a comprehensive response to the challenges it seeks to address

7.6 Towards formulating the proposed transformation model for addressing Slow Violence

7.6.1 Educational challenges

When this study commenced in 2019, educators noted a significant motivational deficit among learners, influenced by various social and economic factors. These included low parental education levels, lack of parental involvement, and exposure to crime and violence. Munje and MnCube (2018) and Sibanda (2021) highlight how these socioeconomic factors severely limit parental support, which in turn diminishes learners' intrinsic motivation. According to Deci et al. (1991), a supportive social environment that fosters competence, empathy and autonomy is crucial for sustaining learner motivation and self-regulation. Without this environment, learners in impoverished areas, such as those in the focus of this study, face chronic barriers that contribute to disengagement, reinforcing the need for targeted educational interventions to ignite motivation (see Figure 7.1 on welfare support, Treasury, 1999).

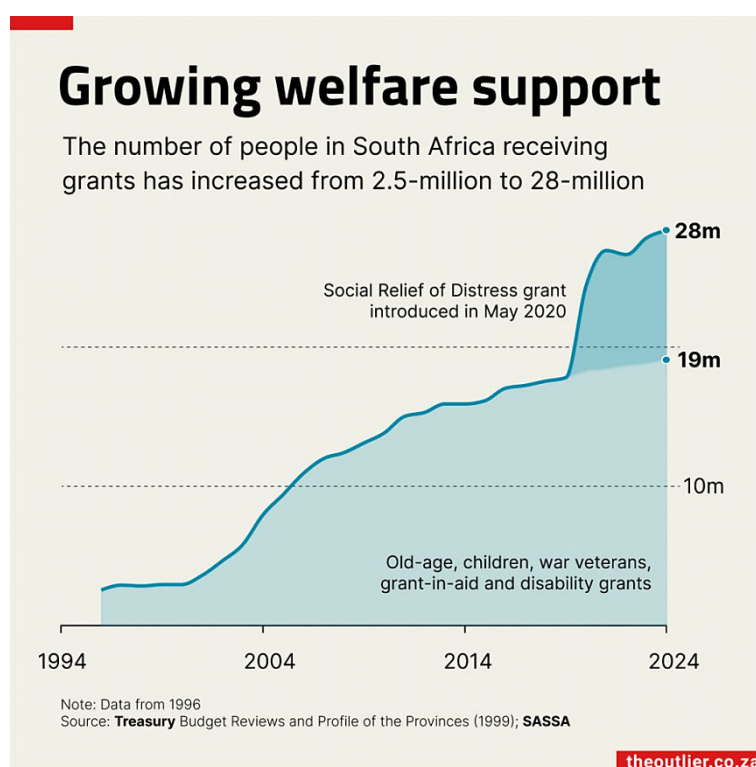


Figure 7.1: Growing welfare support (Treasury, 1999)

The study highlights that learners in impoverished areas face chronic barriers that contribute to disengagement, reinforcing the need for targeted educational support to ignite motivation (see Figure 7.1 on welfare support, Treasury 1999).

Despite various governmental efforts, such as the Child Support Grant (CSG) and the National School Nutrition Programme (NSNP), many learners still struggle with meeting basic needs, which hampers their cognitive development and academic performance. For example, the average monthly food basket cost (R5,227.14, according to the Pietermaritzburg Economic Justice & Dignity Group, 2024) far exceeds the CSG allocation, leaving a "hunger gap" (Figure 7.2). This gap underscores how hunger, a direct consequence of poverty, remains a significant barrier to learning and well-being.

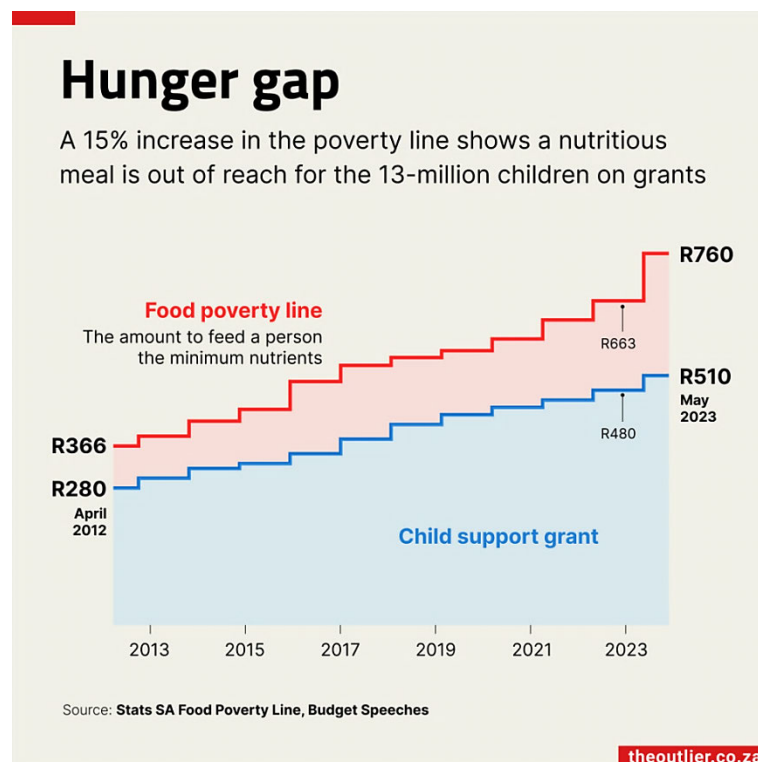


Figure 7.2: Hunger gap (Source: <https://charts.theoutlier.co.za/>)

Dickerson and Popli (2012 cited in Mowat, 2015) argue that chronic poverty has a greater negative impact on children's cognitive development than episodic poverty. Furthermore, many children in impoverished areas face additional challenges, such as orphanhood or living in single-parent households, exposure to gang-related violence, and the trauma of parental incarceration or tuberculosis due to poor living conditions. As Wyngaard (2013) reports, many young people in these communities either drop out of school or succumb to substance abuse, further illustrating how social deprivation hinders their potential.

This study indicates that addressing educational challenges caused by structural conditioning necessitates a learner-centred, needs-based approach, aligning with the thesis's focus on combating slow violence in education. Many learners pursue education as a customary practice inherited from previous generations, often without understanding its purpose or potential. This generational pattern suggests a history where education has failed to bring meaningful change, making it a mere routine activity. By reshaping education to be more responsive to learners' needs and aspirations, we can mitigate the effects of slow violence and promote resilience, self-worth, and genuine opportunities for change.

7.6.2 Poverty, Hunger, and Educational Barriers

The barriers to educational success in impoverished communities are compounded by poverty and hunger. Despite government programs aimed at addressing these issues, the persistent "hunger gap" continues to affect learners' ability to thrive academically. The study by Mowat (2015) and the findings of Dickerson and Popli (2012, cited in Mowat 2015) reaffirm that ongoing poverty, rather than short-term hardship, significantly hampers children's cognitive development. Thus, it is imperative to address the root causes of hunger and poverty as part of any educational reform, ensuring that learners have the resources needed for optimal learning.

7.6.3 Slow violence and educational inequity

Nixon's (2011) concept of "slow violence" provides a framework for understanding the long-term impact of structural neglect on education, where underfunded schools become microcosms of the violence and deprivation that permeate society. John (2018 citing Harris, 1990) asserted by Harber and Skade (2009) argues that schools often prioritize cognitive learning over social development, neglecting the emotional and social needs of students. In communities grappling with slow violence, structural issues such as poor infrastructure, lack of safety, and limited resources further marginalize learners, thereby reinforcing inequalities. Jones (2022: 12) states that school-specific slow violence refers to "acts of slow violence that are found in the school that inhibit the educational process or impact how education is used to advance folx in the future."

South African schools in impoverished areas are often caught in a cycle of deprivation that mirrors broader societal issues (Vally et al. 1999; Le Roux and Mokhele 2011; Mncube and Harber 2013). Over the past 25 years, South Africa's education system has seen significant reforms to achieve educational equality (Arends et al, 2021: 54). Policies were adjusted to address racial disparities in school access, including the South African Schools Act of 1996,

which mandated education for children aged 6 to 15. Changes also involved school fees, governance, and funding redistribution. However, studies indicate insufficient progress in reducing educational inequality. Arends et al. (2021: 66) state that the quality of education remains dependent on the type of school attended, with students at fee-paying schools achieving higher scores than those at no-fee schools, reflecting higher-quality education. These schools, operating in an environment of systemic neglect, become places where learners' self-esteem is further undermined, limiting their ability to succeed academically.

The most evident form of slow violence was the delayed response by Education authorities and public safety organs, like the police, to address school violence promptly. The school has often been "forgotten" (as one educator states), and when violence occurs, calls for help are not prioritized, leaving educators and learners vulnerable. Slow violence in the education system constantly reminds learners of their lower status in the socioeconomic hierarchy, as seen in the inadequate playground resources. During lunch breaks, learners have no choice but to loiter, sit on dirty sandy playgrounds, and boys play soccer wherever space is available. The school environment mirrors the surrounding community's culture of neglect, abuse, vandalism, and general disrespect for property, reflecting structural violence. Additionally, the influence of slow violence extends beyond immediate experiences. It instils damaging social norms and behaviour patterns that the learner is likely to display among peers and such experiences may take years, if at all to unlearn, or for healing to occur (Hoosen et al. 2022).

7.6.4 GBE as the antithesis of systemic barriers in overcoming poverty, hunger and violence

The persistence of systemic conditions such as poverty, hunger, and violence presents a significant challenge to educational interventions, including the Generosity-Based Education (GBE) framework and the Transformative Slow Violence Model (TSVM). While these frameworks excel in fostering emotional resilience, agency, and social cohesion, they also highlight the limitations of education in directly transforming structural inequalities. However, GBE positions itself as a critical counterpoint to these conditions by addressing their immediate effects on learners' psychological and social development, creating spaces where healing and growth can occur even in the face of ongoing adversity (White 2018).

A key strength of GBE lies in its ability to foster micro-environments of change within schools. These environments provide learners with stability, safety, and recognition—essential elements for countering the emotional and psychological toll of systemic neglect. Chronic

stress, anxiety, and depression, often exacerbated by slow violence, are addressed by emphasizing relational care, mutual respect, and community support (Stark and Landis 2016). Through acts of generosity and collaborative problem-solving, learners develop a sense of agency and purpose that allows them to reframe their relationship with adversity. For many, these experiences nurture the confidence and optimism needed to navigate difficult circumstances and envision a future beyond the constraints of slow violence (Jackson 2014).

However, the question of how education can address conditions that remain materially unchanged remains pertinent. While systemic poverty and inequality may not be directly altered by educational interventions, the GBE framework equips learners with the tools to challenge and resist these conditions over time. By emphasizing social cohesion and mutual responsibility, GBE fosters collective resilience among learners, their peers and communities, laying the groundwork for broader societal transformation. Intersectoral approaches, which integrate education with health, social services, and community engagement, further enhance this potential by addressing the multifaceted needs of learners and their families (Shohel 2012). These efforts provide not only a shield against immediate adversities but also the means to challenge structural barriers through collective empowerment.

Ultimately, the impact of GBE extends beyond individual transformation. By positioning learners as agents of change, it creates a ripple effect that has the potential to influence families, communities, and, eventually, larger systemic structures. As White (2018) emphasizes, education rooted in human well-being and equity can disrupt cycles of poverty and exclusion. While the conditions of poverty, hunger, and violence may persist, the empowerment of learners through generosity-based education offers a pathway to resilience and advocacy, ensuring that education remains a practice of both immediate healing and long-term hope.

7.6.5 Life Orientation (LO) and empathy development

During my 2019 voluntary internship at WD Hendricks Primary School, I observed that numerous grade 4 and 5 students exhibited a lack of exposure to empathy and demonstrated difficulties in establishing positive peer relationships. In my experience teaching Life Orientation (LO), students displayed a lack of interest in the subject, which was not exclusive to LO but indicative of their general apathy towards education. However, I also noted that students were unable to emotionally relate to concepts such as empathy. I subsequently concluded that their lack of engagement in the classroom stemmed not from disinterest but

from a disconnection from empathy. As Čehajić et al. (2009) suggest, empathy cannot thrive in environments where dehumanization is prevalent. In a community characterized by violence and trauma, as described by Savahl et al. (2013) empathy may be virtually absent due to the erosion of emotional connection caused by constant exposure to violence. Exposure to violence, both in the home and in the community, further exacerbates this issue. Studies by Malti et al. (2016) and Mrug et al. (2016) show that young people exposed to high levels of violence often experience emotional desensitization, which reduces their ability to empathize with others. As Palmeri and Truscott (2004) argue, low empathy and exposure to community violence are linked to increased violent behaviour. This desensitization process, as described by Kennedy and Ceballo (2016) suggests that repeated exposure to violence leads to a diminished emotional response, further hindering the development of empathy.

According to Prinsloo (2007: 154) a significant number of children in South Africa, including those in biological families, foster homes, safe houses, and street children, are at risk due to inadequate opportunities for socialisation. This lack of guidance contributes to negative self-concept formation and the inability to reach their potential. As a result, they may grow up to be irresponsible and unfulfilled adults who cannot form harmonious relationships. They often have a lack of respect for their dignity, suffer from negative self-concepts, and show little respect for others. In adulthood, they may adopt anti-social behaviours and engage in criminal activities, contributing to the trend of violent crime, rape, and murder. Prinsloo (Prinsloo 2007: 156) asserts that the Department of Education has acknowledged the extent and severity of these issues and to address it has introduced the LO learning area to have a positive impact on the lives of learners. The creation of LO programs has led educators and educational planners to recognise that the only way to assist at-risk children is through a comprehensive support system.

LO includes health promotion, social development, personal development, physical development and movement as well as orientation to the world of work. In general, LO aims to “assist learners to make informed decisions about personal, community and environmental questions and to promote physical health, while it also seeks to encourage learners to form positive social relationships” (Adewumi 2012: 12).

Although the Department of Education intended LO to support at-risk children, Van Deventer (2009) and Prinsloo (2007) found its implementation fragmented and its curricular role unclear. This is supported by Adewumi (2012) who asserts that Life Orientation (LO) remains marginalised as extra time is allocated for more importance subjects like Mathematics, since

Life Orientation (LO) does not require external assessment, even though it is a compulsory subject. Despite these issues, Nathan (2018) believes LO remains valuable and should be improved rather than discarded.

7.6.6 Pedagogy of Chaos

Teaching in the focus school also revealed the need for a "pedagogy of chaos" as an alternative to traditional classroom norms. Merewether (2019) suggests that instead of viewing children's propensity for vitalism in a negative light or egocentrism, one should view it as a key to wonder and enchantment with the world. Learners from diverse backgrounds may exhibit this kind of vitality in different forms and intensity but are all in a process of living out a world from which they get their understanding and experience. Sellers (2013: xiv) express this type of behaviour, which many seem as disruptive, as learning-living: "living experience of learning and learning about living". Furthermore, Merewether (2023) affirms that children are very familiar with their propensity to animate their biotic and abiotic surroundings. Children frequently ascribe sentience, intentions and motivations not only to animals but also to so-called 'mindless' things like stones, wind and trees. Merewether (ibid) posits that children's animism should be conceived as a 'matter of care' which may then offer possibilities for living more responsively and attentively with non-human others. Saylag (2014) and Kontovourki, (2022) suggest that social identity is shaped by cultural contexts, and for many of the learners in this study, their environments are characterized by noise and chaos. Hanna (2021) and Ochoa and Pineda (2008) argue that silence in classrooms often reinforces power hierarchies, while chaotic environments can foster more authentic, culturally relevant engagement. This study posits that allowing learners to engage within their familiar, noisy contexts may encourage participation and reduce resistance to learning.

In 2019, while teaching a grade 4 class, I encountered a disruptive classroom atmosphere. Initially unsure whether to admonish the students or allow their behaviour, I eventually realised that their chaotic behaviour reflected their lived realities. Rather than attempting to impose a traditional, quiet classroom model, I considered whether allowing the classroom environment to mirror their everyday experiences—filled with noise and energy—would facilitate more effective learning. Saylag (2014) argues that when individuals encounter new environments, they may struggle to engage due to conflicting social knowledge. In this context, embracing the chaos in the classroom might be the key to engaging learners who are accustomed to such environments.

7.7 Methodology of Imagination

Armitage's (2011) "methodology of imagination" supports an approach where learners express themselves through narrative and metaphor, encouraging them to reimagine their reality. Armitage (2011: 3) argues that a methodology of the imagination calls for transcending the realm of experience, which is shaped by an individual's perception of reality and ultimately filtered through their senses, and entering a reality that cannot be readily accessed by others who are not privy to an individual's unique experiences, thoughts, or language.

The participatory framework applied in this study allowed learners to use storytelling as a means of imagination and self-expression, cultivating a sense of agency and collective purpose. According to Stetsenko (2017), imagination fosters "collective agency," empowering learners to envision alternatives to their current circumstances and actively work toward positive change. Furthermore, by integrating these ideas into actions and accomplishments, the learners could alter their perspective that achieving things is feasible, even with limited resources. Wong et al. (2021: 3) assert that self-transcendent emotions encompass a plethora of sentiments, including but not limited to awe, love, elevation, and appreciation, among various others, all of which cultivate stronger social bonds among individuals. For example, one activity where participants had to invite another learner to share a meal resulted in initial feelings of self-transcendence. In one image (not included) the older learner shifted his perspective taking into account the needs of the younger learner. I believe both had a range of feelings and emotions they shared and unwittingly, they produced an experience of transcendence. In this respect, a changed mindset was on an arduous path toward self-transcendence. The best way to encounter this path toward self-transcendence is to situate it in a humanitarian process. A process, where hunger will still be prevailing, but where agency is possible to assist and to transform a lived dilemma.

7.7.1 Humanitarian Practice as Motivation for Learning

Hunger emerged as a critical factor shaping learners' daily lives and influencing their academic motivation throughout this study. According to Adams (2011) the "seen" world—comprising tangible factors like poverty—often contrasts with the "unseen" world of children's imagination. For many learners, the "unseen" world is filled with the silent yet pervasive "sound of hunger," a reality that profoundly impacts their academic and social engagement. Janet Brown, as cited by Sobel (2004) suggests that food can serve as a transformative tool to address the root causes of poor academic performance and health issues. Sobel's advocacy for place-based

education emphasizes the power of hands-on, community-centered learning, which not only enhances academic achievement but also promotes active citizenship.

A study conducted among university students concluded that there is a high association between their need satisfaction and academic intrinsic motivation (Daguplo 2015). Maslow (1958) asserts that motivation is based on the satisfaction of needs. For example, according to Maslow (1958):

“physiological needs are the most pre-potent of all needs. What this means specifically is, that in the human being who is missing everything in life in an extreme fashion, it is most likely that the major motivation would be the physiological needs rather than any others. A person who is lacking food, safety, love, and esteem would most probably hunger for food more strongly than for anything else.”

There are many other types of needs, such as psychological need satisfaction (Ahn 2014) that aid in academic motivation, but this study is concentrated on physiological needs, particularly hunger, and satisfaction.

This study confirms that motivation can be fostered through action-oriented experiences directly linked to learners' immediate needs, such as hunger. This study confirms that motivation can be effectively fostered through action-oriented experiences that address learners' immediate needs, including hunger. The findings underscore that hunger, a subtle manifestation of slow violence, significantly diminishes learners' cognitive functioning and emotional engagement in education. Action-oriented strategies, such as providing meals during school activities and involving learners in food-related projects directly mitigated these effects and fostered a sense of purpose.

For instance, learners who participated in shared meal preparation expressed a renewed interest in attending school, especially for our Thursday meetings, noting how these activities not only satisfied immediate nutritional needs but also created opportunities for collaboration and agency. One learner shared, “When I know I won’t be hungry, I can think better and want to try harder in class.” Similarly, preparing and serving meals to their peers became an inspiration toward transformation. Learners reported increased confidence and engagement, with one stating, “Sharing food with fellow learners showed me we can take care of ourselves and each other—it made me feel proud and happy to come to school.”

These findings are supported by research linking hunger to reduced academic performance and motivation. According to Cleary (2021), food insecurity constitutes a form of slow violence

that undermines learners' ability to engage with education fully. By addressing this need directly, the generosity-based educational framework not only mitigated the impacts of slow violence but also created pathways for learners to reclaim agency, as evidenced by their increased participation and enthusiasm in educational activities.

Wong (2016) presents a framework of genuine self-transcendence, which involves shifting one's focus from self-interest to the well-being of others, embracing new values, deepening moral concern, and experiencing emotions of elevation. Engaging in humanitarian activities allowed learners to participate in tasks with real-world impact, helping them to cultivate self-transcendence. These activities allowed them to envision transformative behaviours and educational growth, despite the violent and challenging conditions surrounding them, which often form a "veiled vista" that obscures their full potential.

Through approaches like project-based learning, which Kaldi et al. (2011) identify as effective for building knowledge and fostering positive peer relationships, learners were empowered to take meaningful actions that addressed hunger in their community. This not only boosted their motivation but also enhanced their sense of self-efficacy. The study underscores that introducing humanitarian practices as an educational intervention offers a powerful means of motivation. By engaging in meaningful, community-based actions, learners were able to overcome immediate challenges, fostering greater educational engagement and a more active pursuit of learning.

7.7.2 Generosity-Based Education: A Practical Humanitarian Pedagogy

This study examined how humanitarian education can empower learners in disadvantaged environments to envision possibilities beyond their immediate struggles, promoting both a transformative mindset and practical skills. Rather than simply imparting knowledge, humanitarian education should inspire students to make small but meaningful changes that contribute to a better future. Currently, there is a lack of humanitarian education in schools, particularly in understanding how hunger impacts learners' motivation to engage in learning. This gap highlights the need for an educational approach that provides purpose and meaning, especially in settings characterized by poverty and marginalization (Sawahel 2022). Humanitarian education plays a crucial role in addressing issues like violence and its social consequences, while also fostering empathy and purpose among students.

In this study, the introduction of humanitarian practices encouraged learners to take ownership of their learning and demonstrated the potential for increased autonomy and agency.

Traditional views often depict children as passive (Wyman, 2006), but recent research (Cavazzoni et al. 2023; Stornaiuolo et al. 2017) highlights that children are competent, capable agents of change. For example, studies like Bresee et al. (2016) show that even young learners in challenging environments can positively influence their communities by communicating health-related behaviours. In this study, guided projects sparked excitement and a sense of agency among the learners, illustrating that when activities align with their level of understanding and ability, students can engage meaningfully.

However, the agency must lead to tangible outcomes to combat the "boredom" often associated with poverty (Orwell 1993). Bazzani (2023) identifies three key outcomes of agency—adaptation, autonomy, and influence—which this study sought to promote by encouraging learners to recognise the impact they can have on their communities. This process nurtured agency from a young age, helping students understand their potential influence even in resource-limited contexts. Coates (2015) suggests that agency often begins with highly motivated leadership and teaching learners social and survival skills, an approach that schools can integrate by teaching students how to positively impact their own lives and communities.

Through weekly discussions with learners in grades 5 and 6, this study created a supportive environment where students could safely reflect on their positive and negative experiences. These sessions promoted empathy, self-awareness, and a sense of belonging, encouraging learners to contribute meaningfully within their contexts. As Hart (2016) notes, learners' aspirations to make a difference often reflect both personal experiences and communal influences, which help develop their altruistic agency. Engaging with students in this reflective, humanitarian-focused space proved effective in fostering motivation and empowering them to take action for positive change.

7.8 Humanitarian principles: A Generosity-based education conceptual framework

McCorkindale (2019) highlights the importance of adhering to humanitarian principles such as neutrality, impartiality, and humanity. For this study, I also incorporate additional principles, including "I-Thou/You-I relationships," participatory activities, imagination/creativity/play, addressing social issues, reflective processes, and project-sensitive planning—considering input from child learners. Initially, I doubted whether primary school learners would grasp these concepts. I mistakenly applied Freire's (1970) "banking model" of education, assuming it would be difficult for young learners to engage. However, I realised that when learners are motivated

by an inspiring environment, they naturally learn both independently and collaboratively with their peers. The humanitarian practice approach allowed learners to express themselves, learn, and engage in activities they found enjoyable, fostering a sense of ownership in their learning.

7.8.1 I-Thou/You-I Relationships

In this lesson, we explore how we relate to each other as authentic beings, free from judgment, prejudice, or stigma. This means I approach you as you are, and you approach me as I am. Honneth (1996) simplifies this concept as the recognition of each other's physical integrity, acknowledgement as individuals with rights and obligations, and respect for our diverse ways of life.

7.8.2 Participatory Activity

While children are inherently social and often interact easily with one another, developing participatory skills is an important aspect of their growth. Participation encourages a sense of belonging and empowerment, helping learners feel more confident in expressing themselves, forming opinions, and making decisions. As Alanko (2019) notes, participatory skills are key to living a meaningful life and empowering learners to take an active role in their communities.

7.8.3 Imagination/Creativity/Play

The development of imagination, creativity, and play is vital and cannot be overstated. Lederach's (2005) definition of moral imagination resonates with the challenges humanitarian work often presents. He defines moral imagination as the ability to envision solutions that address real-world problems while creating something new. Jane Addams also emphasized that much of the insensitivity and hardness in the world stems from a lack of imagination, which prevents us from understanding others' experiences. I believe imagination is a crucial tool for fostering empathy, allowing learners to better understand the struggles of others and respond with compassion.

7.8.4 Unpacking Social Problems

In their Life Orientation (LO) books, learners encounter issues such as violence, hunger, and abuse. We examine these topics and explore whether the curriculum's portrayal aligns with how learners personally relate to these issues. By unpacking these topics, we help learners develop a deeper understanding of social problems and their potential impact on their lives and communities. However, this study suggests that TPAR requires the implementation of a programme or project to address social problems, even at primary school levels.

7.8.5 Reflective Process

Each session includes a built-in reflective process, allowing learners to engage personally with the material. This reflection may involve individual discussions with me or group reflections. Learners can also express their thoughts and emotions through creative outlets such as poetry, essays, or drawings. These reflections provide a space for students to articulate their feelings and better understand their own experiences.

7.8.6 Project-Sensitive Planning

For primary school learners, humanitarian practice-based projects must be realistic and achievable. If projects are too complex or disconnected from the learners' interests, they may lack motivation or a sense of agency. Planning projects that align with learners' capabilities and interests ensures that they feel invested and empowered in their learning process.

7.8.7 Humanitarian action through engaging with narrative

The power of storytelling lies in its ability to create personal narratives that help learners reflect on their journey of self-transcendence. Through storytelling, learners can make meaning of their life experiences and continue to create their personal stories throughout their schooling years and beyond. These narratives offer valuable opportunities for learners to engage with humanitarian principles and reflect on their potential to make a positive impact on the world.

7.9 Towards a transformative slow violence model: A generosity-based education (GBE) framework

The final model developed for transforming slow violence—Transformative Slow Violence Model: A Generosity-Based Education (GBE) Framework—addresses the integration of humanitarian service as a pedagogical approach within a generosity-based framework, thus answering Research Question 3 (RQ3).

7.9.1 Foundational aspects (The systemic soil of slow violence)

Slow violence in education is deeply rooted in historical, social, and economic structures that perpetuate inequity. These systemic issues hinder sustainable development and progress in communities over time. Understanding these foundational aspects is essential for addressing the broader impacts of slow violence on learners and society.

The foundational elements that give rise to slow violence include:

- **Colonial legacy:** Historical exploitation and systemic inequities rooted in colonialism.

- **System of apartheid:** Persistent racial and social divides embedded in education and governance.
- **Global reset policies:** Budget cuts in essential services, affecting education and community well-being.
- **No-fee school system:** Underfunded educational institutions are unable to meet student needs effectively.
- **Lowering of educational standards:** Policies that diminish the quality of education, leaving learners unprepared for future challenges.
- **Fractured state system:** Weak state institutions, inadequate infrastructure, and fragmented governance.
- **Slow economy and poverty-induced policy legacy:** Economic stagnation, perpetuating poverty cycles and inadequate public services.

These deep-seated conditions represent the "soil" from which slow violence grows. By acknowledging these foundational aspects, we can begin to dismantle the systemic barriers that perpetuate social inequality and limit the potential of education. Breaking the cycle of slow violence requires comprehensive reforms aimed at building a more equitable future.

7.9.2 Outcomes of slow violence

The consequences of slow violence are widespread and affect various aspects of society, especially marginalized communities. These outcomes are the direct result of deep-seated structural problems that gradually undermine community well-being.

Key outcomes of slow violence include:

- **Environmental degradation:** Communities are exposed to pollution and insufficient environmental protections.
- **Health impacts:** Chronic health issues, malnutrition, and limited access to healthcare services.
- **Economic hardship:** Poverty exacerbated by limited educational and economic opportunities.
- **Psychosocial stress:** Mental health challenges arising from exposure to violence, instability, and economic strain.
- **Social inequality:** Widening disparities in access to resources and opportunities.
- **Low educational achievements:** Underperforming schools, high dropout rates, and disengaged learners.

Addressing these outcomes requires targeted interventions aimed at breaking the cycles of poverty, poor health, and educational underachievement. Only by confronting these consequences can meaningful social change be achieved.

7.9.3 Transformational mediation: generosity-based education (GBE)

GBE functions as a form of transformative mediation, addressing slow violence through a pedagogical model based on problem-posing pedagogy, critical thinking, and participatory learning. The key principles of GBE are:

- **Humanitarian pedagogy:** Following Freire's humanizing pedagogy, which fosters critical consciousness and individual empowerment. While my empirical findings align with this concept, I introduce a unique perspective centred on humanitarian pedagogy.
- **Problem-posing pedagogy:** Moving away from traditional "banking" education, GBE encourages collaboration between educators and learners to co-create knowledge and address real-world community issues.
- **Context transcendence:** Focused on community-driven projects that engage learners in transforming their local environment, a concept not found in previous literature but integral to the final model.
- **Holistic development:** Education that nurtures the mind, body, spirit, and social responsibility, grounded in principles of freedom, empathy, and critical thought.

GBE offers a powerful response to slow violence by transforming the educational experience, empowering learners to actively engage with their realities and work toward meaningful change. By fostering holistic development and critical consciousness, GBE not only addresses immediate challenges but also lays the foundation for long-term social transformation.

7.9.4 Outcomes of generosity-based education (GBE)

Research Question 4 asks how generosity-based education influences learner agency, motivation, and well-being, particularly in reducing the effects of slow violence. GBE fosters educational equity and community engagement, empowering learners to become agents of change within their communities.

The transformative outcomes of GBE include:

- **Educational equity:** Providing disadvantaged learners with opportunities for success through contextual and experiential learning.
- **Community upliftment:** Encouraging learners to engage in humanitarian and community projects, creating a positive cycle of education and social change.
- **Critical consciousness:** Developing learners' ability to question societal structures and seek ways to transform their personal and community circumstances.

- **Sustainable transformation:** Equipping learners with tools for lifelong learning and environmental improvement beyond the classroom.

GBE's outcomes go beyond educational settings, promoting equity, critical awareness, and lasting transformation. By empowering learners to challenge societal structures and contribute to community development, GBE helps break the cycles of slow violence and supports the creation of a just, equitable society.

7.9.5 Generosity-based education as a response to slow violence

GBE offers a profound response to slow violence by shifting the educational focus to active, learner-centred pedagogy. It tackles the deep-rooted inequalities perpetuated by colonial legacies, systemic injustice, and economic hardship, transforming schools into empowering spaces for social change.

GBE challenges structural violence and provides a model for schools to become havens for educational and social transformation. By focusing on experiential, hands-on learning, GBE emphasizes the importance of engagement and action in overcoming slow violence. The approach encourages:

- **Short classroom intensity:** Drawing from examples like Queen Elizabeth II's minimal formal education, GBE proposes reduced classroom hours focused on experiential learning rather than traditional lectures. Although this approach was not directly found in the reviewed literature, it is a critical element for the final model.

When classrooms lack intensity, disengagement and disruptive behaviours may follow. The risks include:

- **Off-task behaviour:** Daydreaming, talking to peers, or fiddling with objects.
- **Disruptions:** Minor disruptions escalate into larger behavioural issues.
- **Reduced learning:** A lack of engagement impairs knowledge retention.
- **Strategies to Increase Classroom Intensity:**
- **Engaging activities:** Use hands-on experiences, games, simulations, and technology.
- **Clear expectations:** Set concise behaviour and task completion guidelines, using positive reinforcement.
- **Active learning:** Encourage participation through discussions, debates, and presentations.
- **Pacing:** Adjust the pace to maintain interest, alternating between fast and slow-paced activities.

- **Positive classroom climate:** Build supportive, transformative (positive) relationships and a welcoming learning environment.
- **Learning through action:** Learners from challenging backgrounds often thrive in unstructured, socially oriented environments, making experiential learning a natural fit.
- **Collaborative problem-solving:** GBE encourages learners to engage in community-based projects, identifying issues and developing solutions together.

By fostering experiential learning, collaborative problem-solving, and engagement with real-world issues, GBE empowers learners to confront and challenge the structural violence in their communities. Through this transformative approach, education becomes a tool for personal growth, social responsibility, and the creation of lasting, positive change.

The concepts of "true generosity" and "false generosity" as articulated by Freire are central to this study's theoretical framework and its proposed Generosity-Based Education (GBE) model. Freire (1970) critiques false generosity as a superficial alleviation of injustice that ultimately perpetuates systems of oppression. It is characterised by acts of charity that provide immediate relief but fail to challenge the structural inequalities that sustain poverty and marginalisation. In contrast, true generosity involves addressing the root causes of these inequities through transformative action. It seeks to empower individuals by dismantling oppressive systems and fostering autonomy and social justice.

Within the context of this study, Freire's notion of true generosity is directly operationalised in the GBE framework, which emphasizes acts of kindness, empathy, and collaborative problem-solving as pedagogical tools. The GBE model moves beyond charity by fostering critical consciousness among learners, enabling them to understand and address the systemic factors underpinning their lived experiences of slow violence. This alignment illustrates how true generosity serves not only as a theoretical principle but as a practical mechanism for transformative education. By succinctly presenting these distinctions, the study ensures that the theoretical grounding remains clear and directly tied to its empirical and practical contributions.

7.10 The final model Transformative Slow Violence Model: A Generosity-Based Education (GBE)

Combining the literature review and empirical findings, the following figure (Figure 7.3) depicts the final model of transforming slow violence, related to GBE.



Figure 7.3: Transformative Slow Violence Model: A Generosity-Based Education (GBE) Framework (Source: Author)

The tabular view of the Transformative Slow Violence Model: A Generosity-Based Education is represented in Table 7.1 below:

Table 7.1: Transformative Slow Violence Model: A Generosity-Based Education

Main model categories	Sub-categories
Foundational Aspects (The Soil of Slow Violence)	• Colonial legacy • System of apartheid • Global reset policies • No-fee school system • Lowering of educational standards • Fractured state system • Slow economy and poverty-induced policy legacy
Outcomes of Slow Violence	• Environmental degradation • Health impacts • Economic hardship • Psychosocial stress • Social inequality • Low educational achievements
Transformational Mediation: Generosity-Based Education (GBE)	• Humanitarian pedagogy • Problem-posing pedagogy • Context transcendence • Holistic development • Outcomes of Generosity-Based Education (GBE) • Educational equity

	• Community upliftment • Critical consciousness • Sustainable transformation
Generosity-Based Education as a response to Slow Violence	• Short classroom intensity • Learning through action • Collaborative problem-solving

7.11 Proposing the Transformative Slow Violence Model

The Transformative Slow Violence Model, grounded in Generosity-Based Education (GBE), provides an innovative approach to addressing the deep-seated inequities and violence that have historically undermined the education systems in marginalized communities. By focusing on learner-centred pedagogy, experiential learning, and community-driven problem-solving, this model not only addresses the immediate effects of slow violence but also equips learners with the tools and critical awareness needed to drive long-term social change. Through GBE, education becomes a transformative force, creating empowered individuals capable of dismantling the structures of slow violence and fostering equitable and sustainable futures for their communities.

7.11.1 Recognise the foundational aspects of slow violence

Begin by understanding the deep-rooted structural conditions that contribute to slow violence in education, such as colonial legacies, systemic inequality, and economic stagnation. Awareness of these foundational issues is critical to addressing their impacts on learners and communities.

7.11.2 Identify and address the outcomes of slow violence

Focus on mitigating the adverse effects of slow violence, including environmental degradation, health impacts, economic hardship, and social inequality. Use education as a tool to reduce these negative outcomes and improve the well-being of affected communities.

7.11.3 Implement generosity-based education (GBE)

Shift to a learner-centred, transformative educational model that promotes humanising pedagogy (Camangian and Cariaga, 2022; Gill and Niens 2014; Maistry 2015) problem-posing learning, and community engagement. Focus on empowering learners to critically reflect on their realities and collaborate on real-world solutions that address local challenges.

7.11.4 Engage learners in experiential learning and collaborative problem-solving

Prioritize hands-on, action-based learning experiences that involve learners in community projects. Encourage collaborative problem-solving to enable them to address pressing societal issues, reinforcing the connection between education and social responsibility.

7.11.5 Foster critical consciousness and holistic development

Support learners in developing critical thinking skills that allow them to challenge societal structures and envision positive changes. Promote holistic growth—mind, body, and spirit—while nurturing empathy, social responsibility, and freedom of thought.

7.11.6 Aim for educational equity and sustainable transformation

Use GBE to create equitable learning opportunities for disadvantaged communities. Encourage continuous learning and community involvement, enabling learners to create lasting, positive change that disrupts the cycles of slow violence.

By implementing the Generosity-Based Education (GBE) framework, educators, schools, and communities can transform the traditional educational environment into a space of empowerment and social responsibility. Prilleltensky (2014: 23) makes a poignant remark that “we must educate for justice, but we send our children to playgrounds of injustice.” This model offers more than just academic success—it nurtures learners' holistic growth, equips them with critical consciousness, and positions them as active agents of change in their communities. In doing so, GBE works to break the cycles of slow violence by providing disadvantaged learners with meaningful educational opportunities that directly challenge structural inequities. Through experiential learning and collaborative problem-solving, GBE ensures that learners can address real-world issues, creating a positive feedback loop between education and societal improvement.

Ultimately, this transformative approach positions education as a catalyst for lasting, positive change, allowing communities to grow stronger and more resilient in the face of ongoing adversity. By fostering critical thinking, social responsibility, and sustainable transformation, the GBE model not only uplifts individuals but also strengthens the very fabric of society, ensuring a brighter, more equitable future for all.

7.12 Alignment between the Transformative Slow Violence Model (TSVM) and Life Orientation (LO) approach

This section highlights an urgent need for a generosity-based educational approach. By centring empathy, social connection, and community values, a generosity-based model goes beyond the intentions of LO, offering a transformative framework that builds self-worth and mutual care. This approach not only fills critical gaps in LO's delivery but also fosters resilience, compassion, and positive social bonds—key qualities for breaking cycles of slow violence and establishing a more supportive and empowering educational environment.

7.12.1 Similarities

Focus on holistic development:

- Both TSVM and LO emphasize the holistic growth of learners, including cognitive, emotional, and social development.
- Life Orientation develops these skills by addressing physical education, health, and citizenship, while TSVM extends this by including experiential learning and critical consciousness to encourage holistic empowerment of learners within marginalized communities.

Empathy and social responsibility:

TSVM and LO both foster empathy and social responsibility. LO encourages learners to become active and responsible citizens, similar to TSVM's aim to instil social responsibility through Generosity-Based Education (GBE) and community engagement.

Addressing socioeconomic challenges:

Both models address socio-economic factors influencing learners' lives. LO discusses societal issues such as inequality, health, and violence, whereas TSVM focuses specifically on "slow violence"—structural inequalities impacting marginalized groups, aiming to address these through learner-centred, transformative educational practices.

Critical thinking and problem-solving:

TSVM and LO both encourage critical thinking and problem-solving. LO fosters these skills through decision-making exercises and life skills training, while TSVM explicitly develops critical consciousness in learners, helping them challenge societal structures through collaborative problem-solving and experiential learning.

7.12.2 Differences

Theoretical foundation:

LO is a structured subject within the national curriculum aimed at developing life skills and values, whereas TSVM is a transformative, community-driven model focused on addressing structural injustices. TSVM uses Generosity-Based Education to address long-standing inequities and “slow violence,” targeting more systemic and structural concerns than the standard LO curriculum.

Educational approach:

Life Orientation primarily delivers a set curriculum through traditional teaching, while TSVM prioritizes experiential learning and community-based projects. TSVM engages learners in hands-on, real-world problem-solving to apply what they learn to immediate social challenges.

Transformative goals:

TSVM aims to empower learners to dismantle oppressive structures and foster long-term social change, positioning education as a tool for societal transformation. In contrast, LO focuses more on preparing learners to adapt to existing societal structures, covering career guidance, personal wellness, and responsible citizenship rather than dismantling systemic inequities.

Community engagement:

Unlike LO, which generally involves limited community interaction, TSVM integrates community engagement deeply into its framework. Learners participate in projects that address real community issues, bridging education with direct community impact and engagement.

In conclusion, while Life Orientation and the Transformative Slow Violence Model both aim to equip learners for better personal and social outcomes, TSVM’s transformative approach and its use of Generosity-Based Education differentiate it significantly. TSVM seeks not just to develop responsible individuals but to create agents of systemic change, especially in underprivileged contexts.

7.13 Conclusion

This discussion chapter presents a generosity-based educational model as a viable, transformative approach to addressing the impacts of slow violence in marginalized educational settings. By centring empathy, humanitarian service, and community engagement, the framework enables learners to experience agency, resilience, and a sense of purpose, even in the face of chronic adversity. The findings indicate that this model not only fosters positive social and emotional development but also equips learners with practical tools to navigate and reshape their environments.

Ultimately, the generosity-based model proposed in this study has the potential to reframe education as a vehicle for resilience and empowerment, providing a pathway for learners to transcend the limitations imposed by slow violence and contribute meaningfully to their communities. This model offers a promising direction for future educational interventions, aiming to foster equity, agency, and sustainable transformation within educational contexts marked by adversity.

CHAPTER 8: CONCLUSION

8.1 Introduction

The primary aim of this study was to develop a Transformative Slow Violence Model within the framework of Generosity-Based Education (GBE) to help learners confront and transcend the pervasive effects of structural violence—specifically those related to poverty, hunger, and complex social conflicts. By conceptualizing this study as an open-ended and adaptable exploration, it employs a "walking-with-a-walking-through" approach (Springgay and Truman 2018), creating space for discovery and responsive learning. This study drew on diverse educational and theoretical frameworks, including Masschelein's (2010) "poor pedagogy," Lederach's (2005) serendipitous learning, and Freire's (1970) problem-solving education, to cultivate a human-centred, curiosity-driven approach to learning. By aligning these perspectives, the study explored how a generosity-based framework can effectively inspire learner agency, resilience, and transformation, ultimately empowering children to confront and reduce the impact of slow violence in their lives.

8.1 Conceptualising the study and meeting objectives

8.1.1 Revisiting the study objectives

This study intended to explore how humanitarian education could help learners transcend their difficult circumstances and develop a transformative mindset. To achieve this, the research was conceptualized as an open-ended, exploratory journey, resembling a "formless piece of art" that adapts to its context rather than adhering to rigid structures. This "walking-with-a-walking-through" approach (Springgay and Truman, 2018) fostered an environment of exploration, integrating diverse theories to remain responsive to learners' needs. Embracing Masschelein's (2010) concept of "poor pedagogy" and Lederach's (2005) ideas on serendipity, the study emphasized adaptability, openness to unexpected discoveries, and peripheral vision rather than narrow, prescriptive methods.

The Generosity-Based Education (GBE) framework drew on these concepts to create a practical, humanizing pedagogy. Freire's problem-posing education (1970) influenced the structure, shifting away from rote learning to collaborative, action-based approaches where learners identify and address community issues. This framework also mirrors Montessori and Waldorf methods by centring hands-on, experiential learning that fosters agency. Unlike these models, however, GBE uniquely incorporates a humanitarian and self-transcendent focus,

enabling learners to positively impact themselves, their peers, and their communities. This context-sensitive, problem-posing pedagogy equips learners to develop real-world problem-solving skills, cultivating their agency and growth potential for responsible citizenship (Isaac et al. 2020). The outcome was a comprehensive model, the Transformative Slow Violence Model within GBE, that seeks to counteract structural violence in education and inspire students to pursue meaningful change within their environments. Through this process, GBE achieved the study's objectives by empowering learners to transcend their limitations, fostering self-awareness, and cultivating an ethical, community-driven agency.

The primary aim of this study was to develop a Transformative Slow Violence Model to empower learners to overcome the pervasive impacts of structural violence, particularly those arising from poverty, hunger, and related complex social conflicts. This was achieved and portrayed in Figure 7.3, Chapter 7.

The specific objectives of this study were:

- To analyse slow violence and its diverse manifestations within societal and educational contexts.
- To investigate how generosity, transcendence, and transformation shape primary school learners' development, informing a peacebuilding-oriented educational framework.
- To design a pedagogical model that integrates humanitarian service within a generosity-based educational approach.
- To assess the impact of generosity-based education on learner agency, motivation, and well-being, particularly in mitigating the effects of slow violence.
- To propose a transformative generosity-based educational framework for addressing slow violence across diverse educational settings.

The subsequent section will detail the fulfilment of the study objectives.

8.1.2 Meeting objectives through TSVM

The stated objectives are achieved in the following way:

Objective 1:

Analyse slow violence and its diverse manifestations within societal and educational contexts.

The TSVM focuses on slow violence as a concept that captures the enduring impacts of systemic inequalities and historical oppression within marginalised communities. It highlights how factors like poverty, social inequality, and limited access to resources manifest as structural barriers in education. By centring education as a response, the model enables learners to identify and address the long-term effects of slow violence, thereby fostering awareness of these hidden injustices in their educational journeys.

Objective 2:

To investigate how generosity, transcendence, and transformation shape primary school learners' development, informing a peacebuilding-oriented educational framework.

Principles of Generosity-Based Education (GBE) foster a sense of community and shared responsibility, encouraging learners to develop empathy and social awareness through acts of generosity and collaborative problem-solving. In this model, generosity is foundational to peacebuilding as it instils values of compassion, collective well-being, and transcendence in learners. Through engaging learners in hands-on school community service and collaborative learning, TSVM sought to nurture individuals who value personal and societal transformation as part of a holistic educational experience.

Objective 3:

To design a pedagogical model that integrates humanitarian service within a generosity-based educational approach.

The TSVM applies experiential learning where learners participate in school community service projects that address real-world issues. By integrating humanitarian service, the model promotes character development, boosts social awareness, and increases intrinsic motivation as learners experience first-hand the impact of their actions on their communities. This pedagogy of service encourages self-reflection, empathy, and personal growth, cultivating learners who view their education as a path to positive change.

Objective 4:

To assess the impact of generosity-based education on learner agency, motivation, and well-being, particularly in mitigating the effects of slow violence.

Through Generosity-Based Education, TSVM emphasizes the development of agency by engaging learners in decision-making processes within school projects. This model enhances learner motivation and well-being by creating a supportive learning environment that values their input and encourages a sense of ownership over their contributions. This generosity-centered approach also provides a buffer against the negative effects of slow violence, as learners develop resilience, a sense of belonging, and optimism about their potential to effect change.

However, this objective could not be fully achieved due to the following circumstances:

- It was not possible to integrate the model into the education program, as permission from the Department of Education could not be obtained due to the lengthy approval process.
- The principal indicated that implementing such a model would present organisational challenges and place additional burdens on teachers.

Objective 5:

To propose a transformative generosity-based educational framework for addressing slow violence across diverse educational settings.

The TSVM model advocates for a transformative educational framework centred around generosity, which directly addresses the impacts of slow violence by embedding principles of peacebuilding, critical consciousness, and resilience within the curriculum. This approach not only prepares learners to face structural inequalities but empowers them to challenge these injustices actively. The model's experiential and collaborative learning practices make it adaptable across diverse educational settings, offering a pathway for schools to become hubs of social transformation that nurture capable, socially aware individuals.

8.2 Reflection

At the heart of this study are the learners whose voices, experiences, and growth have deeply enriched both the process and outcomes of this research. My goal was to explore how a generosity-based educational framework could support learners facing profound challenges, particularly those affected by persistent poverty, insecurity, and environmental stressors. As the learners began sharing their stories, I realised how much I had underestimated their resilience and the complexity of their lived realities. They were not just participants but co-creators, shaping a model that reflected their hopes and their need for safe, nurturing spaces.

A central theme in this research is the importance of authenticity and vulnerability. The researcher's journey is intertwined with the learners' experiences, demonstrating how sharing personal stories fosters empathy, understanding, and a deeper connection between the researcher and participants. The study embraces a "messy" research process, recognizing the value of serendipitous discoveries. The researcher's journey is seen as an ongoing process of self-discovery, aiming to contribute to a more just and equitable world.

Ultimately, the study advocates for education as a practice of freedom, empowering learners to reflect on their circumstances and work toward positive change. By centring learners' voices and adopting a child-centred methodology, the research challenges traditional academic conventions and promotes a more inclusive approach to education.

8.2.1 Initial observations and challenges: Breaking through apathy

When I first approached the learners, I faced challenges that highlighted the slow violence this study sought to address. Many were hesitant or disengaged, reflecting behaviour rooted in education fatigue. Many were reluctant to invest in something that might only add to a cycle of unmet expectations and broken trust. These initial interactions revealed the need for a different approach—one that gently encouraged openness. Shifting from structured interviews to a conversational, participatory style, I sought to create a safe environment, allowing learners to share at their own pace. Over time, when we discovered the root cause of education fatigue, we were set to overcome the problems learners faced in their everyday lives.

8.2.2 Learner transformation through generosity-based engagement

As the study progressed, small but meaningful shifts in the learners began to appear, illustrating the transformative potential of a generosity-based model. Once learners understood the humanitarian perspectives around generosity-based education they began to actively participate in conversations and planning around projects of generosity. Leah ese principles and activities with enthusiasm. This simple reframing helped them to see themselves as capable of making a positive impact, sparking a visible change in their demeanour. The learners realised that this approach nurture a sense of agency and worth among learners.

As these learners shared stories of small acts of kindness, the school became aware of the positive impact learners can have on its environment. Acts of mutual support became more common, and learners began sharing their experiences of generosity within their families and among their peers. This subtle but significant change highlighted the potential for a generosity-

based approach to create a culture of trust and support, even in environments overshadowed by adversity.

8.2.3 The power of sound in learners' reflections

An unexpected aspect of my work with the learners was the role of sound and silence in their environment. In moments of quiet during our conversations, I became aware of the sounds around us—distant shouting, noises from outside, and creaks within the building. These sounds reflected the tension in their daily lives, while silence became a sanctuary, a rare moment of calm that allowed learners to collect themselves.

For many learners, silence was a precious respite. One learner, for example, described seeking out a “quiet corner” at home when things felt overwhelming. These conversations revealed that the silence wasn’t emptiness; it was safety. This realisation deepened my understanding of how the absence of external chaos contributes to creating a reflective and secure learning environment.

8.2.4 Insights from conversational interviews: learner reflections on Identity and Community

Using a conversational approach to interviews provided insights that formal methods might have missed. Learners were able to speak candidly, revealing their inner worlds and aspirations shaped by the quiet strength they had developed in response to adversity. Common themes of safety, identity, and community emerged, reflecting their desire for acceptance, belonging, and a voice within their environments.

One learner shared about her difficult life at home and that she might have to leave school since she had to move to another home. She carried a baggage of emotional turmoil, and somehow I must have been able to enter this world, which made it easy for her to open up to me. Her words expressed a deep yearning for acknowledgement, a sentiment shared by many of his peers. I take the liberty to express her thoughts to me in story form. Her real is masked as Jeje.

8.2.5 The story of Jeje (fictional name)

It had never occurred to Jeje that she could love anything or anyone—or that she could be loved in return. But in her mind, she created a world where everything was perfect. In this world, she lived on a grand estate, nestled deep within a glorious and mysterious forest. Still, Jeje knew she was a flesh-and-blood girl with a real home and a real family.

"If only I could trade my real life for the one in my mind," Jeje often thought to herself.

In reality, Jeje spent most of her time cloistered in her bedroom, too afraid to venture beyond the door. She barely dared to look out her window. Whenever she thought about the world outside her room, she would freeze, trembling with fear. Beyond her small sanctuary, everything felt cold and cruel, as though a dark, ominous presence had taken over her home. Jeje lived in constant fear, unable to trust anyone. The faces she encountered were hard and cold, with empty, indifferent eyes. She never felt safe.

To survive in this harsh environment, Jeje learned to put on a façade. She pretended to be tough and emotionless, hiding behind a mask of strength. It seemed to her that everyone around her was doing the same, and she often wondered if they, too, escaped into their imaginary worlds, as she did.

In her dream world, Jeje stood by the expansive bay windows of her grand estate, watching squirrels play in the oak trees. She could smell the fresh, clean fragrance of her perfume, carried in the breeze as it drifted through the well-ventilated anteroom—a place she visited every morning to greet the new day. In that world, she felt at peace. Her mind was quiet and untroubled. Yet, despite the beauty of her fantasy, she knew something was still missing, just as it was in her real life.

Her peaceful reverie would often be shattered. One day, a group of young men banged on her bedroom door. They began shooting at other boys who were outside, fighting in the alley next to her house. This wasn't the first time something like this had happened. Every time the gunfire stopped, Jeje feared what would come next. The boys did horrible things to her, threatening her afterwards: "If you tell the police, we'll come back for revenge." So, everyone in the house kept silent, living in a constant state of anxiety. Her foster family was always angry with her, blaming her for everything. Jeje felt like a burden, unwanted and unloved—a foster child who was both a nuisance and a victim, abused behind closed doors.

She learned not to cry anymore. She would wait for the pain to pass, then quietly wash herself. And she would wait for the day when she could leave this place she was forced to call home.

Eventually, Jeje did leave. She went to a new school and moved to a new place. But she took with her both her imaginary world and the deep, enduring pain of her real one. Perhaps, in time, she will find love.

However, for others, the journey was about gaining the confidence to express themselves and live out their dreams in a safe and secure place. These reflections underscored the importance of generosity in education, which affirms learners' worth, dignity, and sense of community.

8.2.6 Personal reflections as a researcher: lessons learned from the learners

Engaging with these learners deeply reshaped my perspective as a researcher. Their courage, resilience, and willingness to overcome prejudices, stigma and adverse home and social conditions humbled me and expanded my understanding of what it means to foster an educational model grounded in transformation, empathy and mutual respect. I found myself re-evaluating not just the study's goals but my experience through it. I often realised that my efforts were minuscule and fell short of alleviating their everyday difficulties. My time with them was on Thursdays which they eagerly anticipated. Beyond that, after a meal we normally would share, I would leave and they had to confront life with uncertainty and lack of basic needs. This study is an academic journey into the lifeworld of these learners, the outcome for them was a snapshot in the research process, enjoying maybe a meal and being engaged to make a difference in their lives and those of their peers. The future remains uncertain, but we all have delved deeply enough into the vast network of resilience to hold on and continue the path of transformation. As I pointed out at the beginning of this thesis, peace remains elusive in a world where hostilities continue to escalate.

However, these learners are a reminder to me that genuine transformation requires an educational approach that recognises learners as individuals with unique strengths, voices, and aspirations.

Through their reflections, I came to understand that the true impact of a generosity-based framework lies in its ability to foster both academic growth and a profound sense of belonging and agency. These learners became active participants and advocates for the type of education they had longed for.

8.2.7 Learners as agents of change

Reflecting on their stories, I feel a powerful sense of hope. Despite their difficult circumstances, these learners have shown remarkable resilience and a willingness to envision a future beyond the constraints of slow violence. The generosity-based approach, which centres their voices and dignity, has not only facilitated individual transformation but also cultivated a collective vision for a more compassionate educational framework. These reflections confirm a powerful truth: when provided with a nurturing environment, each child can imagine and pursue a better world.

In closing, the learners' growth has reinforced the value of a generosity-based educational framework, revealing them as potential agents of change in their communities. With the right

support, they have the power to transform their environments, advocating for a future where empathy, respect, and resilience form the foundation of their everyday lives.

8.3 Limitation

The disruptions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic presented significant challenges, including the loss of the original participant cohort and a reduction in sample size. These limitations, while constraining certain aspects of the research, also necessitated methodological adaptability. After the pandemic, when we could return to school, many of these learners were at high school, and some fell along the wayside. I then, with the help of the principal worked with a new set of learners. The incorporation of a new cohort of learners and the shift toward a more focused, participatory approach allowed the study to maintain its core objectives despite external disruptions. This methodological flexibility highlights the resilience of the research design and underscores the validity of its findings. I assert that explicitly acknowledging these adaptations has strengthened the study's credibility and demonstrates the feasibility that research can be conducted despite unforeseen constrained conditions.

This thesis is a subsequent development out of this second group of learners.

8.4 Recommendations

This study found that motivation is affected when learners struggle with having their basic needs met. I agree with Kaldi et al. (2017) that project-based learning benefits learners with motivation and in developing positive relations with their peers. Schools should identify their own set of challenges, and based on those develop related projects and engage learners in these activities.

I think in broad terms schools and education systems should adopt Freire's (1970) 'true generosity' framework and not assume that giving learners a daily meal is generous enough. A whole ethic and ethos must be developed around being generous, of course, holding a critical perspective in this regard, but ultimately the end should be that learners, as well as educators, flourish together in a world where the impact of slow violence is challenged.

8.5 Implications for Policy and Practice

The literature review proposes that a generosity-based educational model can serve as a transformative approach to addressing slow violence within educational contexts. By centring

empathy, peer engagement, and collective care, this model offers a promising strategy for fostering resilience and agency in South African learners affected by structural violence. Implementing such a model requires policy support, particularly in teacher training and resource allocation, to ensure that educators have the tools and support necessary to foster empathetic, community-focused learning environments.

In conclusion, while slow violence presents profound challenges, a generosity-based model grounded in empathy and positive peace education offers a means of cultivating resilience and fostering a sense of agency among learners. Through these transformative approaches, schools can not only mitigate the immediate effects of structural violence but also empower young learners to become agents of positive change within their communities.

8.6 Further studies

This study highlighted the placed-based chaos of learners' everyday life experiences. Schools require certain discipline and education practices that learners who come from areas of chaos have difficulty adapting to. This study revealed the need for a "pedagogy of chaos" as an alternative to traditional classroom norms. Saylag (2014) suggests that social identity is shaped by cultural contexts, and for many of the learners in this study, their environments are characterized by noise and chaos. Hanna (2021) and Ochoa and Pineda (2008) argue that silence in classrooms often reinforces power hierarchies, while chaotic environments can foster more authentic, culturally relevant engagement. This study posits that allowing learners to engage within their familiar, noisy contexts may encourage participation and reduce resistance to learning. However, more research is needed to test this theory.

In addition, there is a dearth of studies that focus on slow violence and schools. Research in this area will significantly add to knowledge and lead to the designing of appropriate interventions when addressing structural problems, especially when we start to understand these problems at the primary school level.

This study reimagined conflict transformation within the framework of slow violence (Nixon 2011), recognising that its effects unfold gradually and are often unnoticeable. This complexity requires methodologies that provide explanations and strategies for such phenomena. Transformative Participatory Action Research (TPAR) served as the foundation of this study, ensuring that learners comprehend the issues and can actively contribute to both data collection and intervention design. This aligns with Israel et al. (2019) who stress the importance of participatory methods in research with marginalised communities, bridging the

gap between academic inquiry and meaningful real-world impact. To further ground the study in lived experience, auto-ethnographic reflections were integrated, allowing the researcher to critically engage with their evolving positionality. As Allen et al. (2015) argue, auto-ethnography offers a methodological bridge between personal narrative and structural critique—an essential consideration in contexts where harm is cumulative and often unseen (Nixon 2011).

To deepen the study's analytical scope, narrative inquiry and Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) were employed to centre learners' voices and their agency in navigating experiences of oppression (Brison, 2002; Chawla and Rodriguez 2008). Brison (2002: ix) writes that "finding language that is true to trauma experience is, however, a daunting one." Chawla and Rodriguez (2007) argue that embracing new, liberatory forms of knowledge creates tension in how they fit within established geographies and topographies. The narrative approach provided a means for learners to imagine and reconstruct agency through storytelling, transforming individual testimony into a liberatory discourse of self-awareness, self-transcendence and resistance. Meanwhile, IPA ensured that the learners' lived realities were interpreted within their broader socio-political contexts (Smith et al. 2009).

While the study focused on the Facticeon context, its insights have broader implications for addressing educational inequities in other marginalised settings. The conditions explored in this research, such as poverty, slow violence, and educational barriers, are not unique to Facticeon but resonate with challenges faced by disadvantaged communities globally. By drawing parallels to similar socio-economic contexts, the study demonstrates the potential applicability of the Transformative Slow Violence Model (TSVM) beyond its immediate setting. Highlighting these broader implications enhances the study's relevance and positions its findings as a significant contribution to the discourse on transformative educational frameworks. Future research could expand on this foundation by testing the model in diverse contexts to validate and refine its scalability.

8.7 Conclusion

This study succeeded in meeting its objectives by developing and implementing a Generosity-Based Education framework aimed at addressing the effects of slow violence in disadvantaged educational settings. The study emphasized principles of humanization, agency, and context sensitivity, inspired by Freire's problem-posing education and in particular his emphasis on 'true generosity'. Through reflective practices and hands-on learning, the GBE model nurtured

motivation, empathy, and agency among learners, equipping them with the tools to confront and transcend their challenging circumstances. Despite limitations imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic, the study made significant strides in developing a humanitarian-centered approach to education, which emphasizes learner well-being, agency, and active engagement with community issues. Future research on slow violence in schools and chaos pedagogy is encouraged to validate and expand upon these findings, offering practical interventions that can help primary school learners in marginalised communities build a more resilient, hopeful future.

EPILOGUE

“Where were you when the meaninglessness of life hit you?” This is the first line in Frank Martela’s book, *A Wonderful Life*, (2020). Existentially, I have always lived thinking about the meaning and essence of life. However, Martela’s question is more confronting. I would not have been able to answer this question truthfully in this study if I had not experienced COVID-19. As a child, I had unpleasant asthma but managed to lose it in my adult life. However, COVID-19 opened up a fear that should an asthmatic attack occur, my chances of survival would appear slim. Hence, I had to keep a watch on my breathing, and my body temperature, and hope not for an asthmatic relapse.

Tyner and Rice (2020: 118) provide a more holistic and positive insight into the pandemic than mine:

To be aware of one’s possible death is to be aware of the possible deaths of others. Furthermore, with shared mortality comes the realisation that our lives are dependent on the actions and inactions of others; for the provisioning of food, water, and the avoidance of threats to our well-being. Likewise, certain actions we may take, or fail to take, could lead to the deaths of others. Framed in the positive, how we choose to produce our own lives may either complement or hinder the reproduction of others’ lives. From this, we offer that meaning in life is cultivated through those actions and inactions that advance and do not inhibit the life and well-being of others. In this way, the reproduction of *meaningful life*—not just biological life—can be understood as a social good...A meaningful life is only possible within a form of social organisation that provides opportunities for the flourishing of all people, not some at the cost of others—that is, one that fosters a meaningful life by making empathy its top priority.

Reading Viktor Frankl reminded me of “how a tiny minority of people sent to slave camps managed to survive without proper food or shelter over several years of physical and emotional abuse because their life had meaning” (Light et al. 2017: 4). I have read Frankl’s book, *Man’s search for meaning* (1985), many times over, and have always found it enlightening, but somehow COVID-19 has sharpened my sense of human fragility. In the examples elicited in Frankl’s book, human volition enabled survivors to hammer away at the futility and aspire to keep meaningfulness alive.

Human volition, once organised and prepared, can subject adverse and violent human or non-human forces to its powers of resilience. Ironically, human volition, in the face of plagues and pandemics, such as COVID-19, succumb to the strain of terminal conditions. COVID-19 was

a hostile, angry and murderous virus that threatened the integrity and defences of the human mind and its volitional capabilities.

And this brought the question to mind about the essence of life. A search for meaning defines our existence, and so we love and we hate, we build and we destroy, we hope and we despair, but (try as much as we can) we are unable to fully trust our fellow neighbour. We create systems of suspicion that set up boundaries, ideologies and belief systems to protect ourselves against each other. We can ruthlessly employ our human evils and power, but nature still trumps us with its sheer magnificence, force and finality.

Jean-Paul Sartre (1948: 5) said “Man is condemned to be free. Condemned, because he did not create himself, yet is nevertheless at liberty, and from the moment that he is thrown into this world he is responsible for everything he does”. In essence, this is a delirious state to imagine. As humans, we are condemned yes, but therein we discover its wonder, the wonder of our life of ambiguity. Peacebuilding has come to trouble me in this respect. For example, the world thrives on the thrills of death, continually weaponising to keep death alive. I understand that death too will have its end, and I can play a part in helping another not to inflict harm or death on others, thus avoiding a path that invariably may lead to his or her early death. Am I, like you, condemned to help one another? Is this the freedom we strive for, to be responsible? And yet, can we ever escape our responsibility to help one another make better choices, choices that lead to harmony, rather than to harm? We are capable of transcending ourselves, hope from having learned from the past how we ought to adjust and reengage a better way ahead (Freire 2005). But we are stalled by ambiguity and create “isms” by which we rule our lives.

However, the choices we have been able to make so far have less than satisfied or advanced the excellence of human beings. If we view human excellence as *eudaimonia* (happiness) following Aristotle’s argument as being the highest claim we then understand “being happy as equivalent to living well and acting well” (Crisp 2014: 5). However, Aristotle adds a disclaimer:

Happiness obviously needs the presence of external goods as well, since it is impossible, or at least no easy matter, to perform noble actions without resources...Again, being deprived of some things such as high birth, noble children beauty spoils our blessedness. For the person who is terribly ugly, of low birth, or solitary and childless is not the sort to be happy, still less perhaps if he has children or friends who are thoroughly bad, or good but dead.

For most of us, we fidget through life dissatisfied and desiring psychosocial harmony. In this endeavour, to reach *eudaimonia* humans remain searching and thus the goalposts for happiness keep on shifting.

Condemned to be creative

For me, *eudaimonia* is a process and the end towards which human beings thrive, but toward this end all humans can make a claim. Thus, unlike Sartre (1948: 3) who claims man [woman] is “condemned to be free”, I am of the added view, borrowing from Sartre, that humans are condemned to be creative. The central dynamic to creativity is boredom. It is true for the rich, I am sure, that boredom can have its reach even if one is living in the most expensive and exclusive place on earth. For the poor, like the rich, the same-old-same-old repetitiveness is how to judge life. In this way we are condemned to be creative to dispel boredom and its insatiable appetite for eating away at the peace (*eudaimonia*) we yearn for. In this respect, creativity is ceaseless and ever-advancing.

The child, like the adult must create. It is inescapable that our nature expects us to create. Creativity is fluid and runs through human nature and anyone can use a medium through which to create, be it stories, acting, speech, music, action or any other form of representation. Whether it is for the aesthetic or vulgar, in meaning positive or negative, these are creative avenues open to humans. I use Adam Smith (2002: 11) to explain this point: “How selfish soever man [woman] may be supposed, there are some principles in his[her] nature, which interest him [her] in the fortunes of others, and render their happiness necessary to him [her], though he [she] derives nothing from the pleasures of seeing it”.

Within creative produce, we can discern its qualities, whether it is toward the propagation of human flourishing (*eudaimonia*) or human denigration (*dysphoria*). But in both these endeavours the creative remains active, and never-ending, and everyone is served its fruits on whichever side of the spectrum one finds oneself. Thus, ultimately human nature is creative either to build or to destroy. Humans are bored since life does not suggest a reason or explanation for itself, and so they must be creative to make sense of life. Creativity toward *eudaimonia* strikes at the core of boredom in humans to co-create to help and heal others and the world. And it is there I believe, while suffering we recognise our fellow neighbour, and as we become aware of our common human fragility, we can hold the lightness of life in our minds and understand why we need to move closer to one another and make responsible choices.

“The plague”

It was in reading *The Plague* (Camus 2010) that these finest qualities of humanity opened up to me. These were not humans with perfect qualities, but imprecise and authentic qualities rendering humans inordinately weak and resilient at the same time. Dr Rieux, the central figure and conscience bearer of this novel, thoughtfully reminisces at the end of the novel on the many ways of human emotions and behaviour about the plague, and “resolved to compile this chronicle, so that he should not be one of those who hold their peace, but should bear witness in favour of those plague-stricken people so that some memorial of the injustice and outrage done them might endure, and to state quite simply that we learn in a time of pestilence, that there are more things to admire in men than to despise.”

“Nonetheless, he knew that the tale he had to tell could not be one of a final victory. It could only be the record of what had had to be done, and what assuredly would have to be done again in the never-ending fight against terror and its relentless onslaughts, despite their afflictions, by all who, while unable to be saints but refusing to bow down to pestilences, strive their utmost to be healers” (Camus 2010: 297).

In this respect, as humans, we can strive to be creative agents forging the proverbial iron and casting a newer circumstance that can outdo an earlier version of discontent and despair. I learned much from Dr Rieux and he changed my perspective about doing a study in peacebuilding. Initially, when I decided upon peacebuilding as a field of study, I thought of it in idealistic terms.

I entered it “abstractedly” not revering the tense and dangerous path people go through to attain peace. It was a response by Dr Rieux to a comment made by Tarrou that made me question my character concerning my studies. Tarrou enquired why one should devote oneself to helping others fight death when “your victories will never be lasting.” Dr Rieux replied, “...but it’s no reason to give up the struggle”. Tarrou: “...Only I can picture what this plague means to you.” ‘Yes. A never-ending defeat’ was the doctor’s reply (Camus 2010: 124). It was this last response that made me realise that many people suffer, and face death through conflicts and warfare, and though our peacebuilding efforts may seem futile, there is no reason to give up trying to help others. So, like Mah, (2019) my own journey of transformation and hope forms the backdrop to this study. It is still very much a work in progress – some days were good, some were not so good.

This study is in response to my COVID-19 experience. I have come to the belief that COVID-19 has similar effects that violence and wars have on the well-being of people. However, the period during COVID-19 and post-COVID-19 changed all of that. COVID-19 has brought about a new normal in the way of life of humans. Like wars and natural disasters, such as

earthquakes and hurricanes, a new normal will settle over people and as much as we may wish for the recent past, the aftermath of any disaster requires us to do things differently.

I remember my mother, who passed away just after COVID-19, and how much emotional weight she carried to rear her nine children. As a family, we were not rich, but had a support system held up by my mother's ability to make ends meet, but also to help us feel that there was enough for all of us to be had. As a youngster, I could not imagine what burdens she bore to keep us well-fed and properly clothed. It was only as I matured beyond my adolescent years that I got a glimpse of her love for her children. I did not know of violent conditions then but knew we had to leave our place in District Six due to the Apartheid government's Group Areas Act. We then went to live as backyard dwellers on someone else's property in a suburb called Tiervlei, now Ravensmead, many kilometres away from District Six. I knew I suffered as a result of Apartheid. But the suffering then was not known as violence to me as I now understand. Then I was angry and felt dislodged from my land and identity. It was merely political power at play, I believed. I remember looking for psychological counselling to help me work through my trauma as a victim of Apartheid.

However, there was no one trained or experienced in such a particular field who could help me then. I do not know if even now such a field exists, especially dealing with Apartheid trauma. I worked through this pain by myself, and I suppose time has aided in burying these earlier feelings. My mother was a victim of such violence, and I knew it not until now. She had loved 'frantically' just to keep us from experiencing the pain she bore herself, but little did she know we all, or at least I (I up to now cannot speak for my siblings) too experienced pain. We never did speak about it, because we were ignorant about the diverse ways in which violence works. It is only now, writing about violent conditions that these thoughts emerged. How late and tragic.

My study in peacebuilding has helped me to adopt a transformative lens through which change becomes possible. It has taught me to be sensitive and open to different soundscapes and '*experience-scapes*' that we inadvertently overlook. In this respect I am reminded, and as discussed in this study, how when too fixated on formula and academic rigidity, I would have missed out on the appearance and significance of 'sound' that repurposed this study around the 'sounds of hunger' of the learners. Thus, peacebuilding has become to me a vivid and experiential, nuanced, chaotic, unpredictable process, roads less travelled but attaining an intended destiny.

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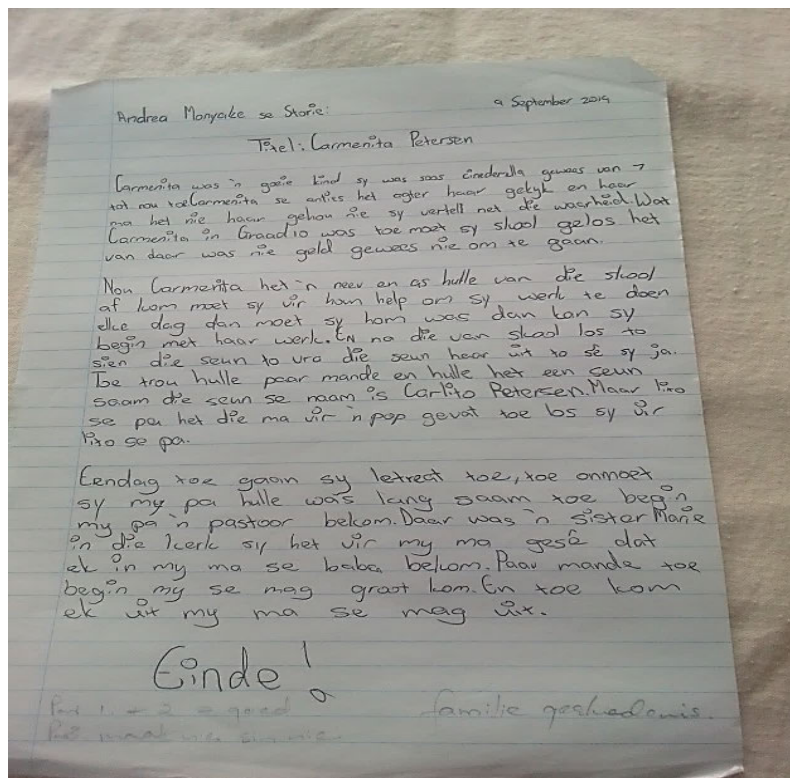
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APPENDICES

11.1 Appendix A: Learners stories

Theme 1: Unloved child

The title of this narrative is Carmenita. Carmenita, much like the Cinderella story, had a mother who did not care much for her, and she eventually was raised by her aunt. She attended school as far as grade 10 but had to leave school to find work, because of lack of income to the house.

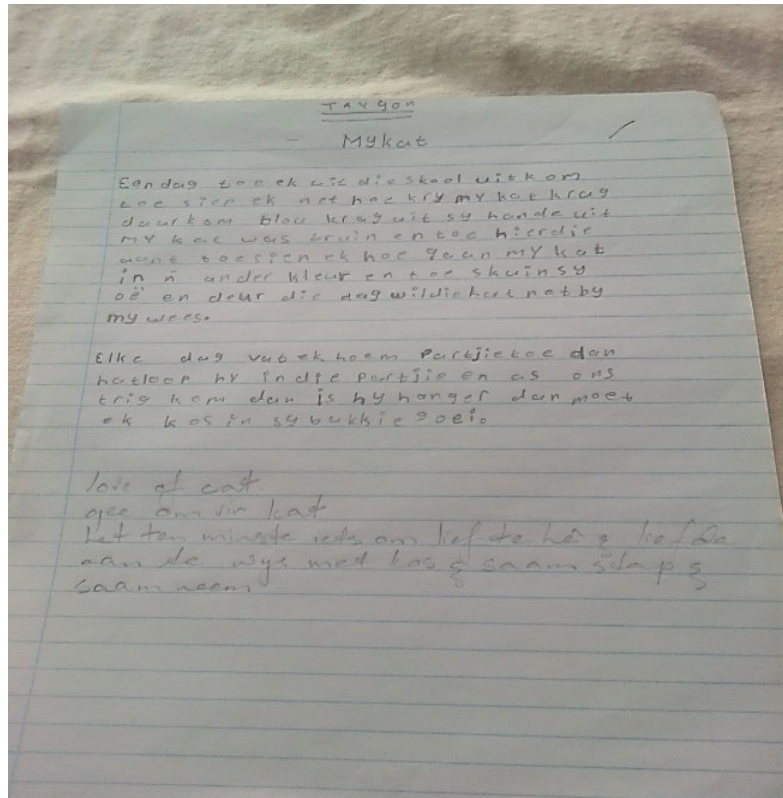


Theme1-Figure 1: Carmenita (Source: Learner's work)

Carmenita also had the task of looking after her nephew and helping him with his schoolwork. After a while, Carmenita found a young man and married him. However, she realised after some time, that her husband was a fool, and she left him. She then later met another man and they moved in together, and that is how the one who wrote this story was born. End of story.

Theme 2: Comforting and strength

This story is about a cat that can change into many colours. If the cat changes colour, it also possesses great strength and powers.



Theme2-Figure 2: Nine Lives (Source: Learner's work)

The powers the cat possesses are blue powers that flow through its paws. The eyes of the cat also shine brightly when these powers come upon it. But when the cat saw the one who wrote the story, they became inseparable friends. What the script writer does daily is take the cat for a walk in the park and give it food.

Theme 3: Power of believing

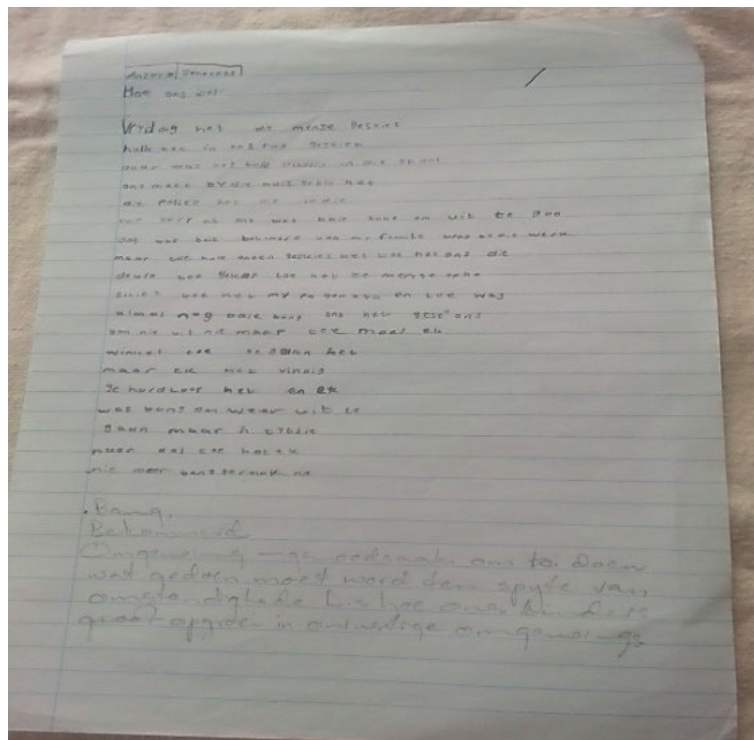
The title of this story is Assassin's Creed. This story is about a man on a mission. He was white of complexion, wore a cape and always carried with him a black pistol and a sword. He was able to scale walls.

One day he was summoned to meet the boss at the castle. The boss gave him a band to put around his wrist that would make him invisible. The mission given to this caped man was to hunt down a killer who killed and hanged people on instruction from the king. His second mission was to kill the horrible king as well. Though the story sounds gruesome, it is not. The caped man's name is Merkel, and he is the assassin.

to shoot the one who was writing the story, and he was filled with fear and did not want to go home after school. Once the shooting subsided everyone left to go home after school, and so also the writer of this story who felt sad that his friend was shot in the gunfight.

Theme 5: Living in fear

The story is titled: how we feel. This story is about a dangerous neighbourhood. There was a shooting in the street where the writer lives. The kids were still at school at the time of the shooting and were uncertain how to get home afterwards.

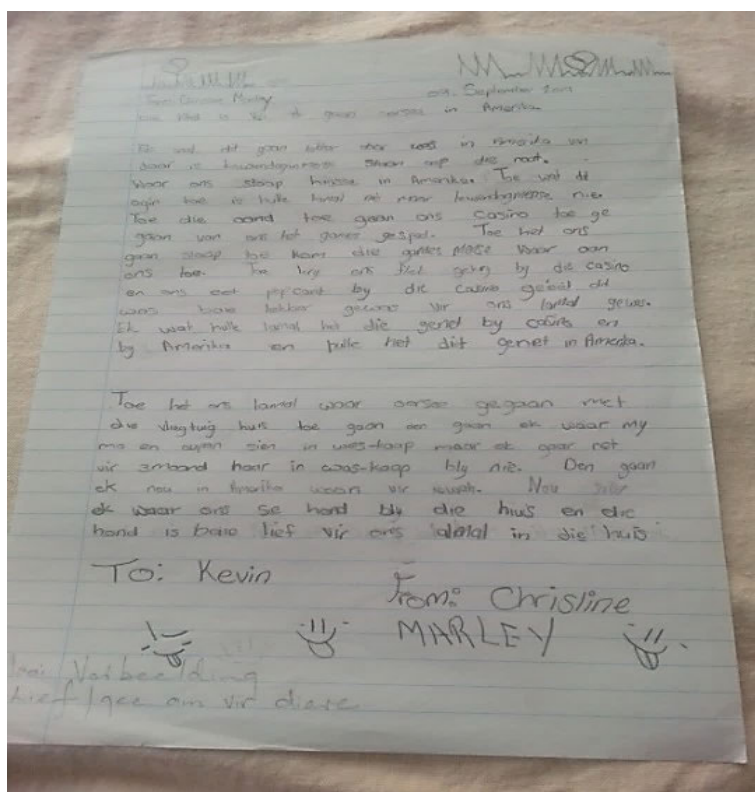


Theme5-Figure 5: The way we feel (Source: Learner's work)

The police also did not show up to put a stop to the shooting. The writer was concerned about family members at work who would be caught up in the fighting that was raging in the area. Once they could manage to get home from school, they locked themselves up, and sporadic gunfights were still ringing about in the streets. The writer was forced to go to the shop and ran as quickly there and back. After some time he managed to feel less fear and managed to stay calm while the shooting was continuing in the street.

Theme 6: Living in dreams

The title of this story: I am leaving for America. The story is about people being alive in America. There they also live in houses. Somehow the people are not so alive in the morning, but at night they are all in the casino.



Theme6-Figure 6: Going overseas (Source: Learner's work)

One day they got an invitation from the casino bosses to watch a movie and eat popcorn. The casino is the place that people like going to. Whenever they visit America, the writer loves to go see her grandma and grandpa in the Western Cape. They have dogs at home, and these dogs love them very much. Once the visit is over, they return to America.

11.2 Appendix B: Letter of Ethical Clearance



Letter of ethical clearance

Dear participants to this study

I wish to thank you for agreeing to participate in this study.

My study topic is “Conflict transformation education: a strategy to resolve schools and community violence in the Factreton area, Western Cape”

As the topic suggests, the success of this study relies on its participatory strength involving staff and learners from the school as well as members from the local context. The study is relevant to the area as it seeks to find ways on how to learn to deal with violence and conflict that affects the school, the learner and the community at large.

I undertake to assure you, the participant, of the following:

- I will maintain your confidentiality
- You are free to withdraw from the study at any time should the need arise
- Every effort will be made to ensure a safe environment to conduct the study and to protect your welfare and human rights.
- The study aims to reflect all information that has been captured as truthful and presented as research that is of high quality and maintains the dignity of participants.
- The study is public document, and not for private gain and will be open for access for further research and public benefit.

I appreciate your willingness to volunteer and contribute to this body of knowledge as a significant contribution to the area of Factreton.

Yours sincerely

Mr Kevin Thompson

0820757516

Email: kevin.gordonsbay@gmail.com

11.3 Appendix C: Gatekeeper's Letter



Gatekeeper's letter

Letter to Department of Education to do study at W.D Hendricks Primary School Factreton

Dear Directorate

I sincerely request your permission to undertake my study at W.D Hendricks primary school in Factreton, area central. I would like to conduct my study at the school that will involve selected learners and staff. I will explain the nature of my study and will explore with you any confidentiality and other concerns that will be of importance to the school. I can assure you that the school will be closely involved with the study, and everyone involved, especially the learners selected for this study, will be directed by the school and parents or guardians. I will seek consent from parents for learners to participate in the study and explain the aim and any confidentiality concerns related to the study. I will also issue the identified learners with their own consent letters with prior explanation of the extent and nature of the study. I will also meet with the SGB and relevant stakeholders of the local community who also will be important role players to the study.

I approach you in order that I will have proof and explain that I have asked consent and permission letters from the Department of Education to do the study.

My study topic is “Conflict transformation education: a strategy to resolve schools and community violence in the Facticeon area, Western Cape”. The study will involve interviews and focus groups, and the information obtained will adhere to strict confidentiality and be used solely for the purpose of the study.

Before I engage with any data collection exercise I will explain and seek input from the school about the type of questions that will be asked in the interviews and focus group, and what the role of each participant will be. The study is based on participatory action research and as such the school will have an active role to play in the process of the research.

I would like to thank you in advance for assisting me in this study. I trust that the study will be a benefit and meaning to you and your school, as well as the local community, as it will be to me for being part of this process.

Persons to Contact in the Event of Any Problems or Queries:

The researcher: Kevin Thompson (0820757516)

My supervisor: Dr Sylvia Kaye (031-373-6860; email: sylviak@dut.ac.za)

The Institutional Research Ethics administrator on 031 373 2375. Complaints can be reported to Prof. C. E. Napier - Acting Director, Research and Postgraduate Support. Contact number is 031 373 2326 or carinn@dut.ac.za

Yours sincerely

Mr Kevin Thompson

Email: kevin.gordonsbay@gmail.com

Please sign this letter of declaration that I have permission to conduct the study at your school.

Directorate signature _____: Date

11.4 Appendix D: Letter of permission to conduct study at school



Letter of permission to conduct study at school

Dear principal and colleagues

I sincerely request your permission and voluntary assistance to undertake my study at your school. I would like to conduct my study at your school that will involve selected learners and staff.

At our meeting I will explain the nature of my study and will explore with you any confidentiality and other concerns that will be of importance to the school. I can assure you that the school will be closely involved with the study, and everyone involved, especially the learners selected for this study, will be directed by the school and parents or guardians. I will seek consent from parents for learners to participate in the study and explain the aim and any confidentiality concerns related to the study. I will also issue the identified learners with their own consent letters with prior explanation of the extent and nature of the study. I will also meet with the SGB and relevant stakeholders of the local community who also will be important role players to the study. I will provide proof and explain that I have asked consent and permission letters from the Department of Education to do the study.

My study topic is “Conflict transformation education: a strategy to resolve schools and community violence in the Facticeon area, Western Cape”. The study will involve interviews and focus groups, and the information obtained will adhere to strict confidentiality accord and used solely for the purpose of the study. I intend to conduct interviews with the principal, the staff, the learners as well as parents of learners and the SGB. I will aim that interview sessions will not last longer than 30 minutes. Focus groups will emerge out of interview sessions and those will run at 45 minutes intervals over a period of three months at two sessions per week. The time slots for this will still be worked out with the relevant participants. Also, the please

take not that focus groups and interviews sessions will make use of audio recorder, and this is accompanied with due regard to confidentiality and privacy.

I have provided you with a copy of my proposal which includes copies of the data collection tools and consent and/ or assent forms to be used in the research process, as well as a copy of the approval letter which I received from the Institutional Research Ethics Committee (IREC).

I would like to thank you in advance for assisting me in this study. I trust that the study will be benefit and meaning to you and your school, as well as the local community, as it will be to me for being part of this process.

Yours sincerely

Mr Kevin Thompson

Email: kevin.gordonsbay@gmail.com

Please sign this letter of declaration that I have permission to conduct the study at your school.

Principal's signature _____: Date

Chairperson of SGB signature _____: Date

Head of Department signature _____: Date

11.5 Appendix E: Letter of Information



Letter of Information

Letter addressed to Principal and Staff and SGB of W.D. Hendricks Primary School

Dear Principal

I sincerely request your permission for an interview in your capacity as educator at W.D. Hendricks primary school. I will explain the nature of my study and will explore with you any confidentiality and other concerns that are of importance to you.

This letter provides a short overview of the study and the procedures I wish to follow. All ethical, confidentiality and credibility requirements will be strictly adhered to.

Title of the Research Study: "Conflict transformation education: a strategy to resolve schools and community violence in the Facticeon area, Western Cape"

Principal Investigator/s/researcher: (Kevin Thompson: Doctoral candidate)

Co-Investigator/s/supervisor/s: (My supervisor is Dr Sylvia B Kaye PhD)

Brief Introduction and Purpose of the Study:

I am conducting this research for a doctoral degree in Peacebuilding at the Durban University of Technology. The study is conducted in Facticeon and a focused school as the unit for this explorative study. The purpose of my study is to develop a framework for conflict transformation education (CTE) toward building positive peace capabilities within the school, 'hard to reach and teach' learners of the school, and do so with the integration and close interconnectedness to the local community context.

Outline of the Procedures:

This study will take three years to complete. The study will use interviews and focus groups to collect data, and will make use of participatory action research, meaning that participants to this study will actively engage to shape the study process. I intend to conduct interviews with the principal, the staff, the learners as well as parents of learners and the SGB. I will aim that interview sessions will not last longer than 30 minutes. Focus groups will emerge out of interview sessions and those will run at 45 minutes intervals over a period of three months at two sessions per week. The time slots for this will still be worked out with the relevant participants. Also, please take note that focus groups and interviews sessions will make use of audio recorder, and this is accompanied with due regard to confidentiality and privacy. The study will be conducted in such a way that participants will have the freedom to determine the nature, extent, scope and consequences of the study as part of my intention that they experience ownership of the study process.

Benefits:

The study will ensure that any contributions made will be published in journals and/or papers presented at conferences.

Reason/s why the Participant May Be Withdrawn from the Study:

Everyone who wishes to be part of this study will be invited as voluntary participants. There will be no pressure placed on participants to remain part of the study should they wish to withdraw.

Remuneration:

The study will be voluntary, and no remuneration will be paid to any participants, but due recognition will be given to participants in publications that will proceed from this study.

Costs of the Study:

The study will be conducted in such a manner that participants will not be required to incur any cost toward the study such as spending on travelling or any other costs related to the study.

Confidentiality:

This study ensures the confidentiality of all participants who wish to do so. All participants will be given the opportunity to request confidentiality, and this will be respected in a signed document of confidentiality, or if permission is given to quote a particular statement a pseudo-name can be suggested.

Research-related Injury:

Although this study is done in a non-threatening environment the researcher cannot be held responsible for any research-related injury. The option will be given though that participants may be given indemnity form to this end should this matter arise.

Persons to Contact in the Event of Any Problems or Queries:

The researcher: Kevin Thompson (0820757516)

My supervisor: Dr Sylvia Kaye (031-373-6860; email: sylviak@dut.ac.za)

The Institutional Research Ethics administrator on 031 373 2375. Complaints can be reported to Prof. C. E. Napier - Acting Director, Research and Postgraduate Support. Contact number is 031 373 2326 or carinn@dut.ac.za

Kind regards

Mr Kevin Thompson

Cell: 0820757516

Email: kevin.gordonsbay@gmail.com

11.6 Appendix F: Participant Consent Form



Participant Consent Form

Statement of Agreement to Participate in the Research Study

The participant understands the nature, extent and scope of the study and agrees to the following:

- I hereby confirm that I have been informed by the 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
Thumbprint

Date

Time

Signature / Right

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

Full Name of Witness (If applicable) Date Signature

Full Name of Legal Guardian (If applicable) Date Signature

Declaration of student

I have undertaken to take time with the participant and explained the study, its procedures, expectations, risk and value and I believe the participant has a firm understanding of the consent and commitment to this study.

Name of student: _____ Signature of
student _____

Persons to Contact in the Event of Any Problems or Queries:

The researcher: Kevin Thompson (0820757516)

My supervisor: Dr Sylvia Kaye (031-373-6860; email: sylviak@dut.ac.za)

The Institutional Research Ethics administrator on 031 373 2375. Complaints can be reported to Prof. C. E. Napier - Acting Director, Research and Postgraduate Support. Contact number is 031 373 2326 or carinn@dut.ac.za

11.7 Appendix G: Letter of permission to conduct interview



Letter of permission to conduct interview

Dear Educator

I sincerely request your permission for an interview in your capacity as educator at W.D. Hendricks primary school. I will explain the nature of my study and will explore with you any confidentiality and other concerns that are of importance to you.

This letter provides a short overview of the study and the procedures I wish to follow. All ethical, confidentiality and credibility requirements will be strictly adhered to.

Title of the Research Study: "Conflict transformation education: a strategy to resolve schools and community violence in the Facticeon area, Western Cape"

Principal Investigator/s/researcher: (Kevin Thompson: Doctoral candidate)

Co-Investigator/s/supervisor/s: (My supervisor is Dr Sylvia B Kaye PhD)

Brief Introduction and Purpose of the Study:

I am conducting this research for a doctoral degree in Peacebuilding at the Durban University of Technology. The study is conducted in Facticeon and a focused school as the unit for this explorative study. The purpose of my study is to develop a framework for conflict

transformation education (CTE) toward building positive peace capabilities within the school, 'hard to reach and teach' learners of the school, and do so with the integration and close interconnectedness to the local community context.

Outline of the Procedures:

This study will take three years to complete. The study will use interviews and focus groups to collect data, and will make use of participatory action research, meaning that participants to this study will actively engage to shape the study process. In addition to interviews the researcher will make use of a voice recorder during the focus group sessions. The study will be conducted in such a way that participants will have the freedom to determine the nature, extent, scope and consequences of the study as part of my intention that they experience ownership of the study process.

Benefits:

The study will ensure that any contributions made will be published in journals and/or papers presented at conferences.

Reason/s why the Participant May Be Withdrawn from the Study:

Everyone who wishes to be part of this study will be invited as voluntary participants. There will be no pressure placed on participants to remain part of the study should they wish to withdraw.

Remuneration:

The study will be voluntary and no remuneration will be paid to any participants, but due recognition will be given to participants in publications that will proceed from this study.

Costs of the Study:

The study will be conducted in such a manner that participants will not be required to incur any cost toward the study such as spending on travelling or any other costs related to the study.

Confidentiality:

This study ensures the confidentiality of all participants who wish to do so. All participants will be given the opportunity to request confidentiality, and this will be respected in a signed

document of confidentiality, or if permission is given to quote a particular statement a pseudo-name can be suggested.

Research-related Injury:

Although this study is done in a non-threatening environment the researcher cannot be held responsible for any research-related injury. The option will be given though that participants may be given indemnity form to this end should this matter arise.

Persons to Contact in the Event of Any Problems or Queries:

The researcher: Kevin Thompson (0820757516)

My supervisor: Dr Sylvia Kaye (031-373-6860; email: sylviak@dut.ac.za)

The Institutional Research Ethics administrator on 031 373 2375. Complaints can be reported to Prof. C. E. Napier - Acting Director, Research and Postgraduate Support. Contact number is 031 373 2326 or carinn@dut.ac.za

If you are willing to be participate in this interview, please sign this letter as declaration of your consent. You sign this letter with my agreement that you may withdraw from the study at any time. Also, under no circumstances will your identity be made known to any other participants involved in this study.

Educator's signature _____: Date

Researcher's signature _____: Date

Kind regards

Mr Kevin Thompson

Cell: 0820757516

Email: kevin.gordonsbay@gmail.com

11.8 Appendix H: Letter of assent to conduct interview (learner)



Letter of assent to conduct interview

Dear learner

I sincerely request your permission for an interview as a learner at W.D. Hendricks primary school. I will explain the nature of my study and will explore with you any confidentiality and other concerns that are of importance to you. You will not be alone and will be assisted by your teacher in support of your parents or guardian.

This letter provides a short overview of the study and the procedures I wish to follow. All ethical, confidentiality and credibility requirements will be strictly adhered to.

Title of the Research Study: "Conflict transformation education: a strategy to resolve schools and community violence in the Facticeon area, Western Cape"

Principal Investigator/s/researcher: (Kevin Thompson: Doctoral candidate)

Co-Investigator/s/supervisor/s: (My supervisor is Dr Sylvia B Kaye PhD)

Brief Introduction and Purpose of the Study:

I am conducting this research for a doctoral degree in Peacebuilding at the Durban University of Technology. The study is conducted in Factreton and a focused school as the unit for this explorative study. The purpose of my study is to develop a framework for conflict transformation education (CTE) toward building positive peace capabilities within the school, 'hard to reach and teach' learners of the school, and do so with the integration and close interconnectedness to the local community context.

Outline of the Procedures:

This study will take three years to complete. The study will use interviews and focus groups to collect data, and will make use of participatory action research, meaning that participants to this study will actively engage to shape the study process. In addition to interviews the researcher will make use of a voice recorder during the focus group sessions. The study will be conducted in such a way that participants will have the freedom to determine the nature, extent, scope and consequences of the study as part of my intention that they experience ownership of the study process.

Benefits:

The study will ensure that any contributions made will be published in journals and/or papers presented at conferences.

Reason/s why the Participant May Be Withdrawn from the Study:

Everyone who wishes to be part of this study will be invited as voluntary participants. There will be no pressure placed on participants to remain part of the study should they wish to withdraw.

Remuneration:

The study will be voluntary, and no remuneration will be paid to any participants, but due recognition will be given to participants in publications that will proceed from this study.

Costs of the Study:

The study will be conducted in such a manner that participants will not be required to incur any cost toward the study such as spending on travelling or any other costs related to the study.

Confidentiality:

This study ensures the confidentiality of all participants who wish to do so. All participants will be given the opportunity to request confidentiality, and this will be respected in a signed document of confidentiality, or if permission is given to quote a particular statement a pseudo-name can be suggested.

Research-related Injury:

Although this study is done in a non-threatening environment the researcher cannot be held responsible for any research-related injury. The option will be given though that participants may be given indemnity form to this end should this matter arise.

Persons to Contact in the Event of Any Problems or Queries:

The researcher: Kevin Thompson (0820757516)

My supervisor: Dr Sylvia Kaye (031-373-6860; email: sylviak@dut.ac.za)

The Institutional Research Ethics administrator on 031 373 2375. Complaints can be reported to Prof. C. E. Napier - Acting Director, Research and Postgraduate Support. Contact number is 031 373 2326 or carinn@dut.ac.za

If you are willing to be participate in this interview, please ask your guardian or parent to sign this letter as declaration of your consent. You sign this letter with my agreement that you may withdraw from the study at any time. Also, under no circumstances will your identity be made known to any other participants involved in this study.

Parent/guardian signature _____: Date

Researcher's signature _____: Date

Kind regards

Mr Kevin Thompson

Email: kevin.gordonsbay@gmail.com

11.9 Appendix I: Letter of consent to conduct interview (Parent/Guardian)



Letter of consent to conduct interview

Dear Parent /guardian

I sincerely request your permission to conduct an interview with your child who is attending W.D. Hendricks primary school.

This letter provides a short overview of the study and the procedures I wish to follow. All ethical, confidentiality and credibility requirements will be strictly adhered to.

Title of the Research Study: "Conflict transformation education: a strategy to resolve schools and community violence in the Facticeon area, Western Cape"

Principal Investigator/s/researcher: (Kevin Thompson: Doctoral candidate)

Co-Investigator/s/supervisor/s: (My supervisor is Dr Sylvia B Kaye PhD)

Brief Introduction and Purpose of the Study:

I am conducting this research for a doctoral degree in Peacebuilding at the Durban University of Technology. The study is conducted in Facticeon and a focused school as the unit for this explorative study. The purpose of my study is to develop a framework for conflict

transformation education (CTE) toward building positive peace capabilities within the school, 'hard to reach and teach' learners of the school, and do so with the integration and close interconnectedness to the local community context.

Outline of the Procedures:

This study will take three years to complete. The study will use interviews and focus groups to collect data, and will make use of participatory action research, meaning that participants to this study will actively engage to shape the study process. In addition to interviews the researcher will make use of a voice recorder during the focus group sessions. The study will be conducted in such a way that participants will have the freedom to determine the nature, extent, scope and consequences of the study as part of my intention that they experience ownership of the study process.

Benefits:

The study will ensure that any contributions made will be published in journals and/or papers presented at conferences.

Reason/s why the Participant May Be Withdrawn from the Study:

Everyone who wishes to be part of this study will be invited as voluntary participants. There will be no pressure placed on participants to remain part of the study should they wish to withdraw.

Remuneration:

The study will be voluntary, and no remuneration will be paid to any participants, but due recognition will be given to participants in publications that will proceed from this study.

Costs of the Study:

The study will be conducted in such a manner that participants will not be required to incur any cost toward the study such as spending on travelling or any other costs related to the study.

Confidentiality:

This study ensures the confidentiality of all participants who wish to do so. All participants will be given the opportunity to request confidentiality, and this will be respected in a signed

document of confidentiality, or if permission is given to quote a particular statement a pseudo-name can be suggested.

Research-related Injury:

Although this study is done in a non-threatening environment the researcher cannot be held responsible for any research-related injury. The option will be given though that participants may be given indemnity form to this end should this matter arise.

Persons to Contact in the Event of Any Problems or Queries:

The researcher: Kevin Thompson (0820757516)

My supervisor: Dr Sylvia Kaye (031-373-6860; email: sylviak@dut.ac.za)

The Institutional Research Ethics administrator on 031 373 2375. Complaints can be reported to Prof. C. E. Napier - Acting Director, Research and Postgraduate Support. Contact number is 031 373 2326 or carinn@dut.ac.za

If you are willing to be participate in this interview, please sign this letter as declaration of your consent. You sign this letter with my agreement that you may withdraw from the study at any time. Also, under no circumstances will your identity be made known to any other participants involved in this study.

Parent's signature _____: Date

Researcher's signature _____: Date

Kind regards

Mr Kevin Thompson

Cell: 0820757516

Email: kevin.gordonsbay@gmail.com

11.10 Appendix J: Letter of permission to conduct interview (Principal)



Letter of permission to conduct interview

Dear Principal

I sincerely request your permission for an interview in your capacity as principal of W.D. Hendricks primary school. I will explain the nature of my study and will explore with you any confidentiality and other concerns that are of importance to you.

This letter provides a short overview of the study and the procedures I wish to follow. All ethical, confidentiality and credibility requirements will be strictly adhered to.

Title of the Research Study: "Conflict transformation education: a strategy to resolve schools and community violence in the Facticeon area, Western Cape"

Principal Investigator/s/researcher: (Kevin Thompson: Doctoral candidate)

Co-Investigator/s/supervisor/s: (My supervisor is Dr Sylvia B Kaye PhD)

Brief Introduction and Purpose of the Study:

I am conducting this research for a doctoral degree in Peacebuilding at the Durban University of Technology. The study is conducted in Factreton and a focused school as the unit for this explorative study. The purpose of my study is to develop a framework for conflict transformation education (CTE) toward building positive peace capabilities within the school, 'hard to reach and teach' learners of the school, and do so with the integration and close interconnectedness to the local community context.

Outline of the Procedures:

This study will take three years to complete. The study will use interviews and focus groups to collect data, and will make use of participatory action research, meaning that participants to this study will actively engage to shape the study process. In addition to interviews the researcher will make use of a voice recorder during the focus group sessions. The study will be conducted in such a way that participants will have the freedom to determine the nature, extent, scope and consequences of the study as part of my intention that they experience ownership of the study process.

Benefits:

The study will ensure that any contributions made will be published in journals and/or papers presented at conferences.

Reason/s why the Participant May Be Withdrawn from the Study:

Everyone who wishes to be part of this study will be invited as voluntary participants. There will be no pressure placed on participants to remain part of the study should they wish to withdraw.

Remuneration:

The study will be voluntary, and no remuneration will be paid to any participants, but due recognition will be given to participants in publications that will proceed from this study.

Costs of the Study:

The study will be conducted in such a manner that participants will not be required to incur any cost toward the study such as spending on travelling or any other costs related to the study.

Confidentiality:

This study ensures the confidentiality of all participants who wish to do so. All participants will be given the opportunity to request confidentiality, and this will be respected in a signed document of confidentiality, or if permission is given to quote a particular statement a pseudo-name can be suggested.

Research-related Injury:

Although this study is done in a non-threatening environment the researcher cannot be held responsible for any research-related injury. The option will be given though that participants may be given indemnity form to this end should this matter arise.

Persons to Contact in the Event of Any Problems or Queries:

The researcher: Kevin Thompson (0820757516)

My supervisor: Dr Sylvia Kaye (031-373-6860; email: sylviak@dut.ac.za)

The Institutional Research Ethics administrator on 031 373 2375. Complaints can be reported to Prof. C. E. Napier - Acting Director, Research and Postgraduate Support. Contact number is 031 373 2326 or carinn@dut.ac.za

If you are willing to be participate in this interview, please sign this letter as declaration of your consent. You sign this letter with my agreement that you may withdraw from the study at any time. Also, under no circumstances will your identity be made known to any other participants involved in this study.

Principal's signature _____: Date

Researcher's signature _____: Date

Kind regards

Mr Kevin Thompson

Cell: 0820757516

Email: kevin.gordonsbay@gmail.com

11.11 Appendix K: Letter of permission to conduct interview (SGB Chairperson)



Letter of permission to conduct interview

Dear SGB Chairperson

I sincerely request your permission for an interview in your capacity as SGB Chairperson of W.D. Hendricks primary school. I will explain the nature of my study and will explore with you any confidentiality and other concerns that are of importance to you.

This letter provides a short overview of the study and the procedures I wish to follow. All ethical, confidentiality and credibility requirements will be strictly adhered to.

Title of the Research Study: "Conflict transformation education: a strategy to resolve schools and community violence in the Facticeon area, Western Cape"

Principal Investigator/s/researcher: (Kevin Thompson: Doctoral candidate)

Co-Investigator/s/supervisor/s: (My supervisor is Dr Sylvia B Kaye PhD)

Brief Introduction and Purpose of the Study:

I am conducting this research for a doctoral degree in Peacebuilding at the Durban University of Technology. The study is conducted in Facticeon and a focused school as the unit for this explorative study. The purpose of my study is to develop a framework for conflict transformation education (CTE) toward building positive peace capabilities within the school, 'hard to reach and teach' learners of the school, and do so with the integration and close interconnectedness to the local community context.

Outline of the Procedures:

This study will take three years to complete. The study will use interviews and focus groups to collect data, and will make use of participatory action research, meaning that participants to this study will actively engage to shape the study process. In addition to interviews the researcher will make use of a voice recorder during the focus group sessions. The study will be conducted in such a way that participants will have the freedom to determine the nature, extent, scope and consequences of the study as part of my intention that they experience ownership of the study process.

Benefits:

The study will ensure that any contributions made will be published in journals and/or papers presented at conferences.

Reason/s why the Participant May Be Withdrawn from the Study:

Everyone who wishes to be part of this study will be invited as voluntary participants. There will be no pressure placed on participants to remain part of the study should they wish to withdraw.

Remuneration:

The study will be voluntary, and no remuneration will be paid to any participants, but due recognition will be given to participants in publications that will proceed from this study.

Costs of the Study:

The study will be conducted in such a manner that participants will not be required to incur any cost toward the study such as spending on travelling or any other costs related to the study.

Confidentiality:

This study ensures the confidentiality of all participants who wish to do so. All participants will be given the opportunity to request confidentiality, and this will be respected in a signed document of confidentiality, or if permission is given to quote a particular statement a pseudo-name can be suggested.

Research-related Injury:

Although this study is done in a non-threatening environment the researcher cannot be held responsible for any research-related injury. The option will be given though that participants may be given indemnity form to this end should this matter arise.

Persons to Contact in the Event of Any Problems or Queries:

The researcher: Kevin Thompson (0820757516)

My supervisor: Dr Sylvia Kaye (031-373-6860; email: sylviak@dut.ac.za)

The Institutional Research Ethics administrator on 031 373 2375. Complaints can be reported to Prof. C. E. Napier - Acting Director, Research and Postgraduate Support. Contact number is 031 373 2326 or carinn@dut.ac.za

If you are willing to be participate in this interview, please sign this letter as declaration of your consent. You sign this letter with my agreement that you may withdraw from the study at any time. Also, under no circumstances will your identity be made known to any other participants involved in this study.

SGB Chairperson's signature _____: Date

Researcher's signature _____: Date

Kind regards

Mr Kevin Thompson

Cell: 0820757516

Email: kevin.gordonsbay@gmail.com

11.12 Appendix L: Interview and Focus Group Questions

This section provides a copy of a possible interviews and focus groups:

Interview design

The interview questions will be open-ended and built around the AI 4-D themes of discovery, dream, design and destiny.

Discovery

Can you please describe Factreton as place in which to live?

Can you please describe who you are as person and how living in Factreton has had an influence on you?

Is there anything about living in Factreton that you will leave unchanged?

Dream stage

If there is anything you would wish to change about living in Factreton what would that be? Please explain.

Who do you think are the most likely people or institutions that must play a part in contributing to this change? Explain why.

Can you please describe what are the things you learned and experienced that brought a change in your life?

Design stage

Can you please describe how these same things that have changed you can help others in your community?

Can you explain if those things that have helped you already exist in your community, and what can be done that these positive influences flow through the community? Please describe.

Do you think people will be ready for these positive influences, and how will these bring about change in their lives? Please explain.

Destiny stage

Who do you think should all be involved in developing this vision so that these positive influences can flow through the community? Please explain

What do you think should be done, based on your own experience and perspective of change, that will bring about change in your school, your home and in your community/

How then you will you like to become part of such a programme, and what do you suggest we do to roll out such a programme in school and in the community. Please describe.

Questionnaire design

The aim of the questionnaire is to identify; key elements that are the root causes of violence in the community and school; the impact and extent of exposure of community violence in the focused school and local community; the resources and capability of the school in intervening to deal with the violence at school; the relationship/connectedness of the school and local context in working together to deal with violence in the school and in the community.

The questionnaire will be open ended question asking participants to describe or explain what they understand about the question. I will make use of content analysis to draw data from the responses. I will assist anyone who may not feel comfortable to write down their thoughts and I will do so for them and then read it back for clarification. In this respect I will also make use of audio recordings to assist in the process where needed, especially with regards to learners.

Root causes

- Why do you think people become violent? Please explain.
- What types of violence are you aware of, and how does any of these make you feel? Please explain.
- Have you ever experienced any violence done against you? Describe what you did not like about what was done to you?

Impact on school and community

- Describe how you feel when you are at your most peaceful and feeling safe?
- Do you get the same feeling at school, at home and in your community? Please describe your feelings in each of these.
- What do you think should be done at your school, at home and in your community to make you feel safe and at peace? Please describe.

Resources and capability

- When something violent should happen to you at school or at home, what kind of help can you expect from others around you to help you deal with the violence? Please describe.
- When something violent should happen to you in your community what kind of help can you expect from your community to help you deal with the violence? Please describe.
- Do you feel that should any violence happen to you at school or community that you need not to worry because assistance and many others will get involved quickly to help you to deal with the violence? Please explain.

Inter-relationship of school and community

- Why do you think that people of the area will do damage to your school or property? Please explain.
- How do think your school and the community can work together to create a more peaceful area in which you can learn and live without fear? Please explain.
- How can your school and community come together so that school learning and community knowledge can be used to teach people how to learn to deal with and overcome violence? Please describe.

Focus Group Questions

The following are typical questions that can come from focus group sessions:

The questions are related to broad categorisation of the lived experience of violence at school and in local context; the inter-related impact of violence on school and local environment; transforming education as peacebuilding impacting the ecosystem of school and local context

Lived experience:

- Thinking about your school and local community would you suggest that violence occurs only at school, only at community, or does it happen across schools and community?
- How would you describe your feeling of being safe: do you carry your fears with you to school or do you experience your fears all the time whether you are at school or in your community?

Inter-related impact of violence:

- School/community: how will you describe dealing with violence: are you able to speak to someone at school about how you feel; are you able to speak to someone in the community about how you feel?
- Is there as much help at school or in your community to help you deal with violence; where do you think you are able to be helped the most in your community or at school, or are both equally helpful in you dealing with violence?

Education transformation as peacebuilding:

- Do you think that if a school should teach more about how to deal with violence what are the important things that must be concentrated on?
- If a school wants to get the community involved into ways of dealing with violence what kinds of education projects can be introduced to develop this partnership?

11.13 Appendix M: Letter of permission to conduct studies



**Western Cape
Government**

Education

METRO CENTRAL EDUCATION DISTRICT OFFICE
(MCED)

Donovan.Cleophas@westerncape.gov.za

Tel 021 514 6968

Haven Road, Maitland, 7405

13 November 2018

Attention: Mr. K. Thompson

To whom this may concern

Dear Sir / Madam

Re: Permission to conduct studies

Permission is hereby granted to Mr. K. Thompson to conduct a study at WD Hendricks Primary School in Factreton, Kensington. Mr. Thompson obtained the necessary permission from both the school and MCED (Metro Central Education District) to pursue his studies/fieldwork at W.D Hendricks Primary School.

My best wishes accompany this letter, for all his future endeavours.

Kind Regards

Donovan Cleophas

Circuit Manager



11.14 Appendix N: Observation Guide

Objective

To observe behaviours, interactions, and environmental factors that reflect learners' engagement with principles of generosity, agency, and social awareness within their educational context, particularly in the presence of socio-economic challenges.

Key areas to observe

- Learner Interactions and Peer Relationships
 - Observe how learners interact with peers, especially in contexts requiring sharing or collaboration.
 - Note examples of generosity, empathy, or support provided by learners to one another.
 - Pay attention to conflicts and how they are resolved, as this may reveal aspects of agency and social awareness.
- Learners' Responses to Educational Content and Activities:
 - Observe engagement levels in activities related to generosity and community service.
 - Look for signs of intrinsic motivation, such as enthusiasm, focus, and proactive participation.
 - Identify any changes in behaviour when learners are involved in generosity-based or humanitarian service activities versus routine academic tasks.
- Impact of Environmental Factors on Learner Behaviour:
 - Document the physical and social environment of the school, including resource availability and facilities.

- Observe how environmental challenges (e.g., lack of resources or food insecurity) impact learners' engagement, resilience, or well-being.
- Note any adaptive behaviours or coping mechanisms learners use in response to slow violence manifestations.
- Non-verbal Indicators of Well-being and Agency:
 - Pay attention to non-verbal cues such as body language, facial expressions, and signs of stress or contentment.
 - Look for behaviours that indicate agency, such as initiative-taking or seeking help when needed.
 - Record signs of peer support or collective problem-solving efforts among learners.

11.15 Appendix O: Narrative Guide

Objective

To capture personal accounts and reflections from learners, focusing on experiences that reveal insights into their understanding of generosity, resilience, and the challenges of slow violence.

Key prompts and questions

- Personal experiences of generosity and kindness:
 - "Can you tell me about a time when you or a friend showed kindness or helped someone?"
 - "What do you feel when you help others or when someone helps you?"
 - Aim to understand how learners define generosity and view its impact on their relationships and personal growth.
- Understanding and coping with challenges:
 - "What are some challenges you face at school or at home? How do you usually handle them?"
 - "How does it make you feel when things are difficult? What helps you keep going?"
 - This helps identify how learners perceive and respond to slow violence and whether they view education as a pathway to resilience.

- Reflections on educational activities related to generosity:
 - "What do you enjoy most about activities where you work together to help others or improve the school?"
 - "Do these activities make you think differently about your school or community? In what way?"
 - These prompts assess the impact of generosity-based education on learners' sense of agency, motivation, and community belonging.
- Future aspirations and the role of education
 - "What would you like to do in the future? How do you think school is helping you get there?"
 - "If you could change one thing about your school or community, what would it be?"
 - Questions explore learners' future outlooks, self-perception, and how education influences their aspirations despite socio-economic challenges.

11.16 Appendix P: Permission to conduct the study



Gatekeeper's letter

Letter to Department of Education to do study at W.D Hendricks Primary School Facticeon

Dear Directorate

I sincerely request your permission to undertake my study at W.D Hendricks primary school in Facticeon, area central. I will like to conduct my study at the school that will involve selected learners and staff. I will explain the nature of my study and will explore with you any confidentiality and other concerns that will be of importance to the school. I can assure you that the school will be closely involved with the study, and everyone involved, especially the learners selected for this study, will be directed by the school and parents or guardians. I will seek consent from parents for learners to participate in the study and explain the aim and any confidentiality concerns related to the study. I will also issue the identified learners with their own consent letters with prior explanation of the extent and nature of the study. I will also meet with the SGB and relevant stakeholders of the local community who also will be important role players to the study.

I approach you in order that I will have proof and explain that I have asked consent and permission letters from the Department of Education to do the study.

My study topic is "Conflict transformation education: a strategy to resolve schools and community violence in the Facticeon area, Western Cape". The study will involve interviews and focus groups and the information obtained will adhere to strict confidentiality accord and used solely for the purpose of the study.

Before I engage with any data collection exercise I will explain and seek input from the school about the type of questions that will be asked in the interviews and focus group, and what the role of each participant will be. The study is based on participatory action research and as such the school will have an active role to play in the process of the research.

I would like to thank you in advance for assisting me in this study. I trust that the study will be benefit and meaning to you and your school, as well as the local community, as it will be to me for being part of this process.

Persons to Contact in the Event of Any Problems or Queries:

The researcher: Kevin Thompson (0820757516)

My supervisor: Dr Sylvia Kaye (031-373-6860; email: sylvia.k@dut.ac.za)

The Institutional Research Ethics administrator on 031 373 2375. Complaints can be reported to Prof. C. E. Napier - Acting Director, Research and Postgraduate Support. Contact number is 031 373 2326 or carinn@dut.ac.za

Yours sincerely

Mr Kevin Thompson

Email: kevin.gordonsbay@gmail.com

Please sign this letter of ~~confirmation~~ that I have permission to conduct the study at your school.

Directorate signature _____

_____; Date 02/11/2018

11.17 APPENDIX R Turnitin report

2024-11-29, 08:35

Turnitin Originality Report
 Thesis by Kevin Thompson
 From thesis (proposals)
 Processed on 25-Oct-2024 20:47 SAST
 ID: 2497302603
 Word Count: 118645

Similarity Index	Similarity by Source
5%	Internet Sources: 4% Publications: 2% Student Papers: 2%

Sources:

- 1 < 1% match (student papers from 24-Oct-2018)
 Class: proposals
 Assignment: thesis
 Paper ID: 1025863082
- 2 < 1% match (student papers from 07-Oct-2024)
 Class: proposals
 Assignment: thesis
 Paper ID: 2478162328
- 3 < 1% match (student papers from 21-Oct-2024)
 Class: proposals
 Assignment: thesis
 Paper ID: 2221667734
- 4 < 1% match (student papers from 10-Oct-2024)
 Class: proposals
 Assignment: thesis
 Paper ID: 2481169819
- 5 < 1% match (student papers from 28-Nov-2023)
 Class: proposals
 Assignment: thesis
 Paper ID: 2240728416
- 6 < 1% match (student papers from 07-Aug-2024)
 Class: proposals
 Assignment: thesis
 Paper ID: 2268819117
- 7 < 1% match (student papers from 04-Mar-2024)
 Class: proposals
 Assignment: thesis
 Paper ID: 2311749325
- 8 < 1% match (student papers from 14-Jun-2017)
 Class: proposal
 Assignment: thesis
 Paper ID: 824894716
- 9 < 1% match (student papers from 03-Jun-2013)
 Submitted to Durban University of Technology on 2013-06-03
- 10 < 1% match (Internet from 25-Jul-2024)
https://openscholar.dut.ac.za/bitstream/10321/3862/5/Zigubu_S_2019.pdf
- 11 < 1% match (Internet from 26-Jul-2024)
https://openscholar.dut.ac.za/bitstream/10321/809/1/Ashoknoman_2012.pdf
- 12 < 1% match (Internet from 25-Jul-2024)
https://openscholar.dut.ac.za/bitstream/10321/3584/3/Sheeta%20Cross_2021_Final_Redacted.pdf

26/11/2024

11.18 APPENDIX S: Editor's letter



TRACY KHUZWAYO



(+27)78 208 4552



tracykhuzwayo126@gmail.com



14 Wynnford Place
Windermere
Durban
4001

October 2024

To whom it may concern,

This letter serves as formal confirmation of my services as editor for PhD student Kevin Thompson (student number 21751127) from the Faculty of Management Sciences at the Durban University of Technology (DUT).

I was responsible for editing Mr. Thompson's thesis as an approved editor on the DUT Supplier Database.

I submitted my final edit to the student on the 26th of August, 2024.

If any further information is required, please feel free to contact me using the contact details listed above.

Yours sincerely,

Tracy Khuzwayo

Freelance Academic Editor