Leadership strategies in handling learner violence in secondary schools: a case study in Tswaing district

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DECLARATION

I, Mathe Onkabetse Vincent, declare that this study titled: Leadership strategies in handling learner violence in secondary schools: a case study in Tswaing district, is my work and has never been submitted for any degree at any other unive rsity. All sources in this study have been indicated and acknowledged by means of direct and indirect references.

_____ 02 DECEMBER 2020

Signed Date

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Above all, I thank God Almighty for keeping me in good health and for sustaining me so I could complete this work.

DEDICATION

I dedicate this piece of work to God Almighty, who gave me the grace and strength to finish this study. I also dedicate it to my mother, a single parent, for raising me to be the person I am today. She was always there for me. I would also like to thank my grandparents for standing there by me, and the whole family for their support during those sleepless nights. I say to them God is great and only through him we can achieve the greatest things in life.

ABSTRACT

Learner violence is a serious concern in the South African (SA) education system owing to its devastating effecting on learners, families and the society. Violence can be in a form of physical fight, sexual assault or bullying. Studies has shown that young people in SA in recent years tend to engage in gang related violence and bullying of one another which in most times happens in the communities, peer environments or being perpetrated by learners. Thus, this study explored and described leadership strategies in handling learner violence in secondary schools in the Tswaing district which is a category B municipality in Ngaka Modiri Molema in North West Province, South Africa. The study followed a case study design and a qualitative research approach in exploring leadership strategies used in handling learner violence in secondary schools in the Tswaing district. Data was collected through semi-structured interview and analsysed through coding, categorizing and clustering data in order to arrive at the participant's authentic ideas for the study. The findings of the study revealed that learner violence is very highly prevalent and is a serious challenge in the secondary schools. School managements are struggling in curtailing it and it poses ceaseless topic of discussion with little done about it. The study further revealed that learners engage in indiscipline behaviours among which is bullying each other. The findings showed that learner violence is managed through making and implementing policies, codes of conducts, disciplinary approaches, ensuring conducive learning environment, calling parents and disciplinary committees for defaulters, reviewing of policies and positive behavioural motivations. In addition, the study revealed that the challenges faced by the school leadership in managing learner violence include poor cooperation by parents, and poor protection from the educational system. Therefore, more proactive measures are needed for curtailing learner violence in secondary schools.

KEY CONCEPTS

Discipline, leadership strategy, learner-violence, parental involvement, crime-prevention

ABBREVIATIONS

CJCP	Centre for Justice and Crime Prevention
DoE	Department of Education
DBE	Department of Basic Education
HoD	Head of Department
RSA	Republic of South Africa
SA	South African
SASA	South African Schools Act
SGBs	School Governing Bodies
SMT	School Management Teams
UNESCO	United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization
WHO	World Health Organisation

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CHAPTER ONE

OVERVIEW OF THE STUDY

1.1 INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

Over the years learner violence has been a matter of concern in the South African (SA) education system. According to the World Health Organisation (WHO, 2010:1), violence is the purposeful use of threat, power or physical force on someone with the intent of carrying out injury or even death on the person, community or group of persons. Violence can be in a form of physical fight, sexual assault or bullying. Young people in SA in recent years tend to engage in gang related violence and bullying of one another which in most times happens in the communities, peer environments or being perpetrated by learners (Khuzwayo, Taylor & Connolly, 2016:1216). Youth is the most influential stage in one's life due to the youth being vulnerable in nature because of diverse exposures at homes, social media, in schools, communities and the environment at large. These plays significant roles in the development of the individual (Khuzwayo *et al.*, 2016:1216). It is evident from literature mentioned above that violence in schools include fighting, bullying and sexual harassment, among others. This study seeks to explore the leadership strategies that school leaders employ to handle learner violence in schools.

Vince and Mazen (2014:189) assert that leadership is the ability of an individual or a group of individuals to influence and guide followers or other members of an organization. Bailes and Aksan (2008:2) affirm that as leaders in schools are expected to influence and guide the behaviour of others in the school, it is important that they develop strategies that will aid in dealing with learner violence. Morkel (2017:343) argues that there are existing policies and rules used in schools to control learner violence, but these policies could not be considered effective due to the high rate of violence in SA schools, hence many school leaders are devising strategies to deal with learner violence.

Research has also shown that most learners grow up in violence prone homes either with caregivers, parents, family members or direct abuse by close relative (Khuzwayo *et al*., 2016:1216). More so, due to high health care demands in taking care of injured individuals as a result of learner violence, it poses a serious public health concern to the South African health body (Ahanonu & Jooste, 2015: 2). Schools are integrated organisations with community-based backgrounds which are supposed to focus on teaching and learning, impacting on sound morals

and building of integrity for a better future free from interruptions. But in practice, the reverse is the case with schools becoming a place of gangsterism and other crime related activities and violence (Singh & Steyn, 2013:1).

Kimbuku (2013:4) states that school violence perpetrated by learners in South African (SA) education system has a proximal relationship with the violence in the larger society which is "chronic or structural". In most cases, violent behaviours are socially acquired and are influenced by different factors within the individual's social structure and made noticeable by the interactions of internal and external social agents. With the high level of learner violence, according to the report by Human-Vogel and Morkel (2017:343), school principals believe that learner violence is influenced by families that lack morals and discipline, which the learners carry to their various schools. Ngakane, Muthukrishna and Ngcobo (2012:41) found that most of school indiscipline is as a result of poor problem-solving mechanism in a situation of conflicts. School managements in various schools are struggling to employ ways in dealing with learner violence in secondary school (Kimbuku, 2013:10). This study is therefore aimed at exploring the leadership strategies that are used to curb violence of learners in South African secondary schools.

1.2 BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

Young people are found within the broader context of their societal community and they are easily influenced by the norms of their communities, cultures, family network and the general social group (Dhlamini, 2014:839). A survey on learner violence that was conducted in South Africa between August 2011 and August 2012 with 5939 showed that 22.2% of learners reported to have experienced some form of violence during their days in school, 12.2% reported to have been threatened with violence, 6.3% were physically assaulted, 4.7% were sexually assaulted or raped while 4.5% reported being robbed (Khuzwayo *et al*., 2016:1216). Mncube and Harber (2013:1) confirm that violence in SA has become a public issue with many reports on social media on violence ranging from gangsterism, sexual abuse, and physical assault in schools. According to De Wet (2016:2), school related global news has learner violence accounting for a quarter of the news broadcast while in SA. School violence accounts for more than 10% of the news broadcast on public televisions. Seeing learners going to schools with guns, knives and several other weapons has become a worrying concern as it gives rise to more violence which has negative effects on the learners, families, communities and the society at large. Moreover,

Mncube and Harber (2013:3) identify South African (SA) violence to have started during the era of apartheid which spread across various schools in SA.

Mncube and Harber (2013:1) also report the death of two learners that died in school premises in two unrelated incidents as carried by *Eye Witness News*. One of the learners was stabbed by another learner during break while the other aged 18 was also stabbed on the neck during a fight and later died at the school gate. The schools are supposed to put in place policies and code of conducts for curtailing violence behaviours with strict ban on learner's use of intoxicating substance or drugs, sharp objects, and use of vulgar languages. Gibson (2016:8) argues that the policies placed in schools to control violence and are not effective and the SMTs are seeking strategies they can use to manage violence of learners in schools. Burton (2008:2) reports in a National Schools Violence Study conducted by the SA Centre for Justice and Crime Prevention (CJCP) that 15.3% of learners in primary and secondary schools have been violently victimised during their school days enumerating rape or sexual harassment, assault and robberies among violent activities going on in schools.

Violence has a huge tendency of impacting negatively on the life of the victims and other learners in general, such as creating fear and fear factors, disrupted personality and even avoidance of going to school by learners. Gibson (2016:8) posits that prevention programmes should be utilized as a leadership strategy in monitoring and controlling the behaviours of learners in order to curtail the school related violence. Mncube and Madikizela-Madiya (2014:44) also mention that schools in SA stopped the use of corporal punishment in disciplining learners according to the directive of the law, South African Schools Act no. 84 of 1996 (SASA). It should be noted that a well organised and properly managed schools and good relationship between learners and teachers will produce better results in fighting learner violence (RSA, 1996). Schools' adequate implementation of rules and regulations and codes of conducts such as sweeping the classroom or cleaning of littered surroundings has helped in reducing learner violence and promoting tranquillity within school vicinity and aid in instilling morals into learners (Mncube & Madikizela-Madiya, 2014:44). Getting the learners comply with classroom discipline demands for effective classroom leadership (Kiprop, 2012:121).

Leadership is the act of influencing someone through guiding the individual character or modelling in order to channel the person in a more moral and ethical accepted manner. Ahanonu and Jooste (2015:2) maintain that teachers are posed with great challenges of safeguarding their own life and guiding the learners in the right direction for a better future and society. Therefore,

there is a need to explore and describe leadership strategies in handling learner violence in secondary schools hence this study focused on leadership strategies used in handling learner violence in secondary schools in Tswaing district.

1.3 MOTIVATION TO THE STUDY

The motivation for embarking on this study is both personal and a cry for help regarding the dwindling nature of secondary school education in SA which could be largely attributed to the effects of learner violence in secondary schools and the need for identifying leadership strategies that are being employed to deal with learner's violence.

According to Modisaotsile (2012:1), education is important to a nation; however, the quality of education system in SA over the years is still in a poor state and is coupled with the weak functioning of School Governing Bodies (SGBs), which is a huge concern. The SGBs are functioning in all schools in coordinating the governance of schools, most especially against learner violence. Despite the presence of SGBs in the schools, violence of learners still pose a serious problem to the school authorities (Modisaotsile, 2012:3). As such, I am deeply concerned with the future of the nation and so perturbed with the happenings in various schools which has claimed the lives of many learners and teachers and generally endangering the future of the entire society. It is evident that many learners are not safe in their various schools due to school violence. Thus, this study explored and described leadership strategies used in handling learner violence in some selected secondary schools.

1.4 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Learner violence is one of the major challenges facing the educational system in SA and poses a great threat to the learners, their future, life, teachers, families and the society at large (Singh & Steyn, 2013:2). Learners and teachers are no longer safe in the various learning environments (Singh & Steyn, 2013:2). Consequently, many learners are scared to come to school resulting in absenteeism with many suffering from depression, humiliation and disappointment. Ahanonu and Jooste (2015:2) posit that learner violence predisposes an individual to anxiety, substance abuse, depression, post-traumatic stress disorder and even mental disorder. These results are not only the direct negative effects of violence on learners, teachers are also at risk with most of them scared for their life hence cannot give their best in teaching the learners because of the unsafe learning environment (Singh & Steyn, 2013:1).

Many researchers such (Tintswalo, 2014., Burton, 2008., Mncube & Madikizela-Madiya, 2014) wrote extensively on causes of school violence and types of school violence in SA, but overall, the literature on leadership strategies that can be used in handling learner violence in secondary schools especially in Tswaing district is lacking. Hence, the study explored and described the available leadership strategies that different schools in Tswaing district employ in handling learner violence.

1.4.1 Research questions

Main research question

- Which leadership strategies are used in Tswaing secondary schools on handling learners' violence?

Sub-questions:

- What is the nature of learner violence in secondary schools in Tswaing district?
- Which leadership strategies are used in handling learner violence in secondary schools in Tswaing district?
- What are the challenges faced by school leaders in handling learner violence in secondary schools in Tswaing district?
- How can leadership strategies used in handling learner violence in secondary schools be improved?

1.5 AIM AND OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1.5.1 Aim of the study

- The aim of this study was to investigate the leadership strategies used in handling learner violence in secondary schools in Tswaing district.

1.5.2 The objectives of the study were:

- To understand the nature of learner violence in secondary schools in Tswaing district.
- To explore leadership strategies used by secondary school leaders in handling learner violence in secondary schools in Tswaing district.

- To examine the challenges faced by leaders in handling learner violence in secondary schools in Tswaing district.
- To suggest strategies that can be used by school leaders to improve the handling of learner violence in secondary schools.

1.6 PRELIMINARY LITERATURE REVIEW

Literature review exposes a researcher to information regarding the phenomenon understudy. According to Leedy and Omrod (2014:51), literature review is defined as the review of other researcher's works concerning the present study. Literature review enables the researcher to have a broader understanding of the study (McMillan & Schumacher, 2006:38). Researchers gain more insight in studies by reading through the previous works carried out by other researchers (Marshall & Rossman, 2011:77). Creswell (2013:27) further states that literature review provides a researcher with a focused insight in ascertaining if a research topic is worth studying. Therefore, the review of relevant literature for the study enabled me to understand the work of other researchers regarding the phenomenon under study and also help in bridging existing research gap.

1.6.1 Theoretical framework

For this study, I implemented **Transformational Theory of Leadership.** Transformational theory was first identified by Bass in the 1970s. Bass (1980:363) firstly defines transformation leadership as a unique way of getting the best out of people through motivating them, raising their awareness of the need to work well for a desired outcome and also neglecting their selfish interest for the good of all. Wyld (2013:28) also explained transformational leadership as a theory of leadership "where a leader works with teams to identify needed change, creating a vision to guide the change through inspiration, and executing the change in tandem with committed members of a group". Through the strength of their vision and personality, transformational leaders are able to inspire followers to change expectations, perceptions, and motivations to work towards common goals (Tyssen, Wald, Andreas Heidenreich & Sven, 2014: 376). This theory was deemed suitable for this study because it explained the attributes of a leader which are very important in school leadership and as such will help in describing leadership qualities that will help in understanding the necessary leadership strategies in handling learner violence in selected secondary schools.

1.6.2 Learner violence and quality education

Momodu (2013:535) sees education as the most important element of human transformation and for development of a favourable society. Education also helps to improve the behaviours, attitudes and skill in preparation for future life challenges (Momodu, 2013:535). As such, the learning environment should be violence free and friendly in order to enhance proper learning. Moreover, no country of the world can develop their human capital without education. The South African Schools Act 84 of 1996 (Republic of South Africa, 1996a) came into effect in 1997 made it clear that every public schools in South Africa must have an SGB which is democratically elected and it should include the learners in grade 12, parents, teachers, non-teaching staff and school principals that will work in order to create appropriate teaching and learning environment and making policies. However, the SGBs must adopt measures that will enhance the level of school discipline in order to curtail learner violence (RSA, 1996a).

According to Padayachie (2013:23), the learning environment must always be learning-friendly in order to enhance teaching and learning and proper understanding by the learners hence it should be free of violence. Eke and Singh (2018:1) maintain that South African secondary school leadership is faced with serious challenges of maintaining violent free environment as such, having a safe learning environment should be prioritised by not only the Department of Education but also school authorities, educators, learners and parents. Maphalala (2014:34) adds that section 10 of the South African Education Laws Amendment Act of 2007 (RSA, 2007) highlighted that learners should not be coming to school with any object capable of being used for violence by learner such as dangerous objects and weapons. School principals were empowered to search learners for any possession of dangerous objects or drugs in the schools. The school principals can also involve the police in a more serious case for more extensive search of the learners if needed.

According to Kimbuku (2013:4), with the increasing prevalence of learner violence among secondary school learners, most of the schools have adopted either a punitive approach or the referral of offenders to the police system, but this approach seems to be having more negative effects than the anticipated positives. Tintswalo (2014:57) asserts that learner violence is a global issue which SA is not an exception. However, utilising social capital will go a long way in curtailing learner violence. Social capital, according to Tintswalo, is the "social ties and networks that create a sense of belonging". Furthermore, Tintswalo (2014:57) adds that teachers

in various township schools need to be trained regarding how to detect learners with potential violence and how to deal with learner violence.

Collaborative learning should be encouraged, as this is a type of learning which fosters reciprocation and mutual understanding between the teachers and learners with each understanding their different roles and responsibilities in school (Human-Vogel & Morkel, 2017:345). Dealing with learner violence should be aimed at utilising preventive programmes which will enable the school management teams and teachers to cope with learner's behaviours. These programmes should be developed in order to identify learners' strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats and challenges that can lead to learners' violence (Gibson, 2016:8). It is imperative to employ appropriate leadership strategies in dealing with learner violence. As such, school managements should always bear in mind the factors causing learner violence such as bio-ecological systemic environment in order to appropriately device a means in handling them (Bester & Du Plessis, 2010:204).

1.7 RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

The study employed a qualitative research approach and a case study design. The site and location for the case study is North West Province, Tswaing district. A Purposive sampling was used in order to select schools and participants to respond to the research questions. Participants such as school management teams (principals, deputy principals and HODs) and educators were selected for the study. An in-depth individual interview was conducted with the selected participants and data was analysed and categorised into themes and categories in order to obtain and classify appropriately the authentic participant response obtained in the study.

The next section elaborates more on the research design and methodology used for this study.

1.7.1 Research approach and design

Qualitative research approach enables the researcher in studying people's emotions, perceptions, social and human attribute to various lives phenomenon (McCusker & Gunaydin, 2015:538). Creswell (2014:31) further adds that the choice of a study depends on the researcher's philosophical assumption, personal experience, the type of problem to be addressed and the type of data the research intends to generate for the study. Therefore, qualitative research approach was deemed fit for the study because qualitative research approach does not generate numerical data but allows for an in-depth understanding of a phenomenon on the strategies in handling

learner violence in secondary schools. Qualitative research enabled me to obtain firsthand gathering of data rather than distributing questionnaire which consumes a lot of time.

Research design is the distinct procedure followed by the researcher in gathering, analysing and presenting the data. Maree (2010:70) states that "research design refers to a plan or strategy which moves from an underlying philosophical assumption to specifying the selection of respondents, data gathering techniques to be used and data analysis to be done". Creswell (2011:3) maintains that research design is the totality of the processes and decisions involved data collection, analysis and presentation. However, a good decision regarding research design enable me in answering the research questions appropriately. Creswell (2014:236) further alludes that research design has its origins from the researcher's discipline which comprised of instruments of data collection, analysing and presentation. However, it is expected to flow all through the research process on the leadership strategies of handling learner violence in secondary schools.

For this study, a case study research design was used. Maree (2010:263) is of the opinion that case study research design guides a researcher in describing a social phenomenon through progressive in-depth study. Creswell (2009:13) also posits that a case study design is among the research method of enquiry used for an in-depth study of human activities and events. Babbie (2014:310) opines that a case study design focuses on pressing a social phenomenon for an in-depth understanding. A cases study design was deemed fit for this study because it guided me in in-depth understanding of leadership strategies in handling learner violencein selected secondary schools in Tswaing district.

1.7.2 Site selection

The selected site for the study is North West Province Tswaing district. This district is a category B municipality in Ngaka Modiri Molema and also one of the five local municipalities in Ngaka Modiri Molema District. It consists of Delareyville, Sannieshof and Ottosdal as its major towns. This district was selected because it has been reported as one of the districts that has been using different strategies to curb learner violence. Two secondary schools were purposefully select in Tswaing district representing one was sited in rural area and the other in an urban area. According to Creswell (2012:125), a purposive sample is a non-probability sample that is selected based on characteristics of a selected site and the objective of the study.

1.7.3 Participant selection

According to Creswell (2009:4) participant selection in qualitative studies entails selecting participants who will best answer research questions appropriately. Table 1.1 provides the details on the participants that were selected from each secondary school used for the study.

Table 1.1: Participants selected

	School A	School B
Principal	1	1
Deputy principal	1	1
Head of Department (HoDs)	2	2
Grade 8-12 educators (one per grade)	5	5
Total	9	9
Total for the two schools		**18 participants**

The purposive sampling was used in order to identify key participants that best suit the study. Lekganyane (2011:10) indicates that using a purposive sampling technique entails that the researcher is selecting participants based on the criteria that best suits the study. Rahman (2015:37) recommends that the inclusion of human respondents in the research study should be based on those respondents who are the key role players and the exclusion of other human respondents should be clearly justified by the researcher. The main focus of this study is the school management teams (principals, deputy principals and HODs) and educators. These participants were included in this study because they play major roles in the management of learner violence in schools. In total the study utilised 18 participants. The learners were, however, excluded because leadership strategies in handling learner violence cannot be obtained from them for the study.

The participating schools were selected based on the criterion that the schools should have high cases of violence which has been dealt with by management. This enabled me to investigate various ways used by the school leadership to handle the learner's violence. Information

regarding these schools was obtained from the Department of Basic Education (DoE) centre for learner violence (DoE, 1997). The schools were also easily accessible to me.

1.7.4 Data collection techniques

Brink, Van Der Walt and van Rensburg (2012:157) indicate that an interview technique enables a researcher in gathering data for a study using either one-on-one interaction or any other type of communication approach in order to answer research questions. Semi-structured interviews were used to collect data in this study. I interviewed School Management Teams (SMT) members and educators in Grade 8-12.

1.7.5 Data analysis

During data analysis for this study, thematic data analysis for qualitative data was employed. Open coding, according to White (2005:82), involves transcribing, reading and removing scraps, examining, comparing, conceptualising and categorizing data for authentic understanding of the participant meaning. For data analysis in this study, it took the following steps: I firstly transcribed and broke down data collected from research participants. Thereafter, I read through the collected data in order to determine the related data or repetition. Creswell (2014:337) suggests that researchers should read the transcribed data very well immersing into the meaning of the data and understanding what the participant meant. After, emergent categories and themes were extracted from the data which further helped in the presentation, summary and recommendations. I identified the emerging categories and themes according to their scale of preference which was be guided by the research questions in order to ascertain the most important categories and themes of the research study.

1.8 TRUSTWORTHINESS

Trustworthiness is a set of criteria devised for judging the quality of a research (Bryman, 2012:717). Brink *et al*. (2012:126) is of the opinion that qualitative rigor ascertains the research relevance, methodological consistency and the entire research fairness. However, qualitative researcher disregards reliability and validity as they are used in quantitative studies in place of “credibility”, “conformability” and “transferability”. Kemparaj and Chavan (2013:94) support Lincoln and Guba (1985) by indicating that there are four criteria in ascertaining trustworthiness of qualitative research which are: Credibility, Confirmability, Transferability and Reliability. For this study, trustworthiness was established by performing member checking. Participants had to

cross-check their responses and ensure that they correlate with information that they have provided. Also, the identified themes and categories from data were discussed with the participants to ensure accuracy and dependability. Prolonged engagement in the field was ensured in order to foster in-depth collection of data for the study. Results from field notes, interviews and the research diary was also triangulated with regard to common themes to provide reliable findings. I also maintained trustworthiness through accurate representation of the research findings for credibility, to ensure dependability.

1.9 RESEARCHER'S ROLE

I played the role of an interviewer, listener, recorder and a writer in order to obtain information needed for the research. Mbokodi (2008:57) indicates that the purpose of interviewing is to allow the interviewer to enter into the interviewees' perspective. It begins with the assumption that the perspective of others is meaningful, knowledgeable and amenable to being made explicit. According to Creswell (2009:175), qualitative research is often conducted in the field, allowing direct interaction with the people being studied in their context. My role in this study was to interview the selected participants; to coordinate permission from schools to conduct research; and to arrange for venues and to setup the appointments for interviews. I adequately ensured consideration of all ethical issues and appropriately collect quality data, transcribe it, report the findings and draw conclusions

1.10 ETHICAL CONSIDERATION

Ethical clearance is important in all research. According to McMillan and Schumacher (2006:16), the researcher is ethically responsible for protecting the rights and welfare of the subjects who participate in a study, which may involve issues of physical and mental discomfort, harm, and danger. Bush (2007:245) also confirms that for both ethical purposes, it is vital to ensure that those being interviewed are absolutely clear about their rights to an explanation of aims, procedures, purposes and consequences of the research, publication possibilities and the right to refuse to take part or withdraw at any stage. The ethical considerations which I considered for the purpose of this study included permission to gain access to the schools, which included a letter of permission and consent to the participants for the study. I obtained ethical clearance from the ethics committee in the Faculty of Education of the North-West University to gain access to the selected schools. I further drafted a consent letter to the participants involved in the study. Information obtained about the participants was kept confidential unless otherwise

agreed upon in advance, through informed consent. This implies that no one had access to the original data except myself as well as the supervisor in charge of this research, and the identity of the participants was in no way revealed to external bodies.

1.11 CONTRIBUTION OF THE STUDY

The proposed study may contribute in the subject area on discipline of learners in relation to learner violence in SA schools. Various strategies that are currently used by school leaders in handling learner violence were identified in this study and advanced the already existing body of knowledge concerning leadership strategies in handling learner violence in secondary schools in North West Province and also contribute to scholarly field of literature.

1.12 DEFINITION OF KEY CONCEPTS

Misconduct

The Oxford Dictionary defines *misconduct* as a behaviour that is opposed or contrary to normal social instincts or practices (The Oxford Dictionary, 2012:48).

Discipline

Kohn (2015:58) defines discipline as training expected to produce a specific character or pattern of behaviour, especially training that produces moral or mental improvement. According Serame *et al.* (2013:2), discipline is the act of developing self-control and also the ability to acquire the skills required to live in peace and harmony with other people. In this study, the concept discipline refers to how educators and principals ensure a safe and conducive environment for teaching and learning through effective management strategies so that the rights and needs of learners and educators are respected, vindicated and safeguarded with the intention of controlling discipline.

Learner

Learner, according to the SASA, means someone who is learning to do something. In the context of this study, a learner would be referred to mean “any person receiving education or obliged to receive education” (RSA, 1996a).

School Management Team (SMT)

The SMT are tasked with day to day school management activities. The members of the SMT are usually the principal, deputy principals, and the Head of Departments (HODs) of the school. Particularly according to van Wyk and Marumoloa (2012:101), in section 16 of the amended Schools Act (RSA, 1996), SMT members are tasked with day-to-day implementation of policy making and implementation. Please note, in this document, school management or managers refers to the functions and functioning of the SMT and not the School Governing Body (SGB). The SGBs are elected members who are inclusive of parents and perform governing functions and not daily professional functions like the SMT (RSA, 1996a).

Learner's violence

Learner violence denotes a purposeful use of physical force directed to oneself, another person or to a group of people in order to cause harm or injury. Learner violence can take place in the classroom, within school environment, during school hour or off school hours (Jacobs, 2014:2). Learner violence in this study simply means the use of force by a learner against him or herself or fellow learners or educators/school management teams with the intent of causing harm or disrupting school activities.

Educator

Based on the context of this study, an educator is defined as "any person, excluding a person who is appointed to exclusively perform extracurricular duties, who teaches, educates or trains other persons or who provides professional educational services, including professional therapy and education psychological services, at a school" (RSA, 1996a). The educators focused on in this study are educators employed to work in secondary schools in Tswaing district.

1.13 DIVISION OF CHAPTERS

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

This chapter presents a brief overview of the study on introduction of the study, background of the study, motivation of the study, problem statement, research question, objective of the study, preliminary literature review and theoretical framework.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

This section presents a theoretical framework which underpinned the study. It also outlines an in-depth review of literature for proper understanding of leadership strategies in dealing with learner violence.

CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

This chapter presents the research design and methodology used in the study and data collection technique for the research study.

CHAPTER FOUR: DATA PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

This chapter focuses on the presentation analysis of the data. Data is categorised through coding and thematic data analysis followed by research findings and discussions.

CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

This chapter discusses the research findings, draw pertinent conclusion regarding the entire study and make recommendations.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION

In the previous chapter, an overview on the leadership strategies in dealing with learner violence was outlined. The problem statement, rationale for the study, research objectives and aims of the study were identified. Literature review exposes a researcher to base line information regarding the phenomenon "leadership strategies in dealing with learner's violence" (Chukwuere & Chukwuere, 2020). Literature review enabled me to have a broader understanding of the study. I gained more insight in studies through reading of the previous works carried out by other researchers. As the focus of this study was to explore and describe leadership strategies used in handling learners' violence in selected schools in Tswaing district, literature review enabled the study in understanding the work of other researchers regarding the phenomenon under study and also helped in bridging any existing research gap.

2.2 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

According to Grant and Osanloo (2014:4), theoretical framework is one of the most important aspects in the research process, and the importance of theory-driven thinking and acting is emphasized in relation to the selection of a topic, development of research questions, conceptualization of the literature review, design approach, and the analysis plan for the study. Lysaght (2011:10) affirms that the theoretical framework is the foundation from which all knowledge is constructed (metaphorically and literally) for a research study. It serves as the structure and support for the rationale of the study, the problem statement, the purpose, the significance, and the research questions. The theoretical framework provides a grounding base, or an anchor, for the literature review, and most importantly, the methods and analysis.

In order to investigate the strategies used by school leaders to deal with learner's violence, the study adopted transformational theory of leadership. Transformational theory was first postulated by Bass in 1970s. Bass (1980:363) defines transformation leadership as a unique way of getting the best out of people through motivating them, raising their awareness on the need to work for a desired outcome and neglecting their selfish interest for the good of all. Bass (1980:363) posits that charisma is very important for a transformational leader in order to influence the people

positively. Figure 2.1 presents the qualities of a transformational leadership that aim to ensure a good conduct of learners in the school.



Figure 2.1: Qualities of a transformational leader (Adapted from Tafvelin, 2013:2)

The figure presented above shows that transformational leadership is based on four dimensions thus; idealised influence, individualised consideration, intellectual stimulation and Inspirational motivation.

According to Ahmad, Abbas, Latif, and Rasheed (3014: 14-15) Idealised Influence states that transformational leadership, leaders provide vision, mission and faith and also inspire followers about the objectives of organisation. The main objective of the school is to offer quality education. Quality education can be only be offered in an environment free from violence. Hence, the safety of educators and learners is of paramount importance.

Under this leadership pays attention at individual level thus Individual Consideration. This dimension implies that the principal will consider the opinions of every educator in the school and other stakeholders on handling learner violence at the school. If subordinates are considered, they feel capable for that to tackle tasks. Leaders who apply the leadership style act as coach for whole team who train them for achieving desire goals and objectives of the organisation (Ahmad, Abbas, Latif and Rasheed, 2014: 15).

The other dimension of transformational theory its Intellectual Stimulation (IS). According to Ahmad, Abbas, Latif and Rasheed, 2014: 15), the leader will strive to make the followers to be creative and partake in decision making. Special attention is given on applying the reasoning before taking any action. According to Ahmad, Abbas, Latif and Rasheed, 2014:15), leaders will encourage their subordinates to find solutions to the problems through applying logical thinking thereby making the educators to be creative, critical and logical. Violence in schools is taking a new dimension which need educators to apply their minds effectively.

Inspirational Motivation (IM), is the fourth dimension. This dimension the leader explanation the meanings of challenges that they have to face and motivate them. The leader inspires the followers by directing them towards the goals and encouraging them to express their views on how to find the solutions to the challenges being faced by the organisation (Ahmad, Abbas, Latif and Rasheed, 2014:15). The schools are facing the problem violence therefore; it is the duty of school management to inspire the educators to find the solution to the challenge.

This entails that school management in schools are expected to possess the attributes of a transformation leadership in order to ensure good learners conduct. Smith (2011:44) adds that the roles of the transformational leader in schools also include promoting teamwork among staff, encouraging positive self-esteem, motivating staff to function at a high level of performance, controlling violence in schools.

The transformational leader portrays trustworthiness and ensures that the school is effectively managed to avoid any health issues arising as a result of learner violence in the school (Robbins & Davidhizar, 2017:234). This theory was deemed suitable for this study because it explains the attributes of a leader and helps in describing leadership qualities that will help in understanding the necessary leadership strategies in handling learner violence in selected secondary schools. The theory is also relevant for the study because it enabled this study to identify the attributes of a good leader in order to ensure proper school transformation with regards to learner's violence.

The theory of transformational theory lays the foundation for transformational leadership. According to Arachchi (2012:71), it's one of the most promising form of leadership that is associated with bringing positive change, resolving major challenges and creation of new paradigms. Arachchi (2012:71) and Kwaba and Nyabuto (2015: 165), says the leader who apply the leadership style supports open communication that will foster an opportunity for followers to share ideas. Hence, this leadership style, inspires or motivates the followers, changes the attitude

and supports the goals of everyone at the school. The assertion is supported by Okinyi, Kwaba and Nyabuto (2015:165), who assert that, the leaders who apply this leadership style stimulate and inspires followers towards achieving extraordinary outcomes and a result it creates followers who are leaders as well.

The leaders applying the style are regarded as change agents and take the responsibility for that change (Arachchi (2012:71). Burns (1978) as cited by Arachchi (2012:2), the leaders who apply the principles of transformational leadership, are courageous and take the risks and they believe in teamwork, they are driven by values. Such type of leaders doesn't rely on past experiences alone they are ready to learn new approaches on dealing with the problems they encounter in the organisation. Okinyi, Kwaba and Nyabuto (2015:165), offer, as well their followers the opportunity to discover new ways of doing things. Such leadership according to Bass (1978:21), hence, is based on intellectual stimulation of followers by showing the new ways of looking at a problem and teaching them to view difficulties as problems to be solved focusing on the rational approaches to the problems.

The principals who apply the leadership at the school must act as a role model. Being a role model will make the followers to trust and respect the leader and that will make the followers to experience the same passion and motivation to fulfil the goals of the organisation (Okinyi, Kwaba and Nyabuto (2015:165),

The violence which taking places in schools requires the principals who will bring positive change in the school environment for learning and teaching. The principals who adopt the leadership will be ready to bring in new approaches or strategies on dealing with violence in the schools. The principal applying the leadership need to inspire the followers to assist him/her to find the solutions to the challenge of learners' violence. The principal, hence, needs to involve all stakeholders to deal with the problem of violence of learners. The principal need to lead by example on dealing with the challenges such as a learner violence. Leading by example inspires other educators to adopt the ideals of the principal on dealing with the challenge of violence in the school.

2.3 GLOBAL REVIEW ON LEARNER VIOLENCE IN SCHOOLS

Internationally, learner violence in secondary schools is a serious concern to parents, teachers and principals (Zulu & Wolhuter, 2013:1). Learner violence over the years has posed a huge challenge to the school management body. Learners are regarded as the strength and wealth of every progressive nation because they pose a huge potential that can enhance the continuity of the country but in order to tap out those potentials, school violence has to be mitigated (Ali, Dada, Isiaka & Salmon, 2014:255). Learner violence is the purposeful use of physical or any other type of force purported against oneself, any other person or directed to a group in a secondary school setting with the possibility of harming an individual or leading to psychological trauma, deprivation or death. Furthermore, learner violence cuts across the use psychological or physical mechanisms to cause physical harm on an individual. It can take place in the classroom, within the school setting or off school hours, during break classes or break or during school functions such as cultural day (Jacobs, 2014:2). Mohapi (2014:263) maintains that in order to properly understand learner violence, it should not be viewed from a single lens to ascertain the reasons behind desperate behaviours, hence learners' violence is complex to comprehend.

Jinot (2018:36) posits that learner violence across secondary schools is becoming too alarming which calls for more measures in mitigating it in order to enhance learning and to ensure learning friendly environment. Learner violence is a global challenge which affects all learners irrespective of the age, gender and school and it is perceived to be caused by diverse factors from the learners, school management and the societal influences (Ali *et al*., 2014: 254). As a multifactorial phenomenon, its negative impacts such as high rate of school dropout, poor academic performance, escalated rate of examination malpractice and general rise in behavioural abnormalities continue to threaten the future of the younger generation and the peace of the society at large.

Globally, studies have shown that learner violence undermines the teaching and learning process as educators spend quality of time correcting bad behaviours and in solving learners' problems instead of concentrating on adequate teaching and learning (Ncontsa & Shumba, 2013:1). According to the report of Council of Europe 2003 as cited by Roux and Mokhele (2011:319), learner violence, assaults to teachers and destruction of school properties are on the increase across Europe. In affirmation to this, Maphalala (2014:29) posits that learner violence is a serious issue across some European countries. The study also discovered that boys generally

suffer some forms of violence more than girls, but girls suffer sexual violence. Because of the growing incidence of learner violence and the challenges the school leadership encounters in curtailing them, the schools in the United State of America adopted security and safety response techniques from different intervention programmes across the states (Mabasa & Mafumo, 2017:9239). Furthermore, in Australia, leadership of the various schools develop programmes containing codes of conducts which define standards of learner behaviours and goals. The security and safety needs of the schools guide in the choice of programmes to be used in addressing such gaps (Mabasa & Mafumo, 2017:9239).

In Nigeria, learner violence is among the common challenges facing secondary schools. It disrupts teaching and learning and are believed to pre-dispose learners to future school dropout and social misbehaviours (Temitayo *et al*., 2013:2). Owing to the pressing need to mitigate learner violence in Nigeria, the responsibilities are on the school management to be pragmatic in their efforts through making and implementing adequate rules and regulation for the control of learner violence. This means that the SMTs are expected to enforce rules on each of the uprising learner violence for a healthy learning environment.

In addition, Temitayo *et al.* (2013:3) in their study discovered that absenteeism, stealing, truancy, social and economic factors, school environment or teacher factors, peer influence and political issues are among the factors hindering effective management of learner violence. In Botswana, learner violence is also an issue of concern. Because of that, the Botswana Penal Code (Section 26) maintained that corporal punishment can be used on a learner offender but to some extent. The school leadership adopts intervention strategies such as manual labour to defaulters and also guidance and counselling with the aim of correcting the learner and harnessing the individual character for a better life (Mabasa & Mafumo, 2017:9240).

2.4 DISCIPLINE AND PUNISHMENT IN SOUTH AFRICAN SCHOOLS

Wolhuter and Russo (2013) at the centre for Justice and Crime Prevention in their study confirmed that teachers in South African school are struggling to curtail learner violence. The study confirmed also that more than 124 000 cases of corporal punishment were recorded in 2011 in Gauteng province. This was a bid by teachers to curtail the increase incidence of learner violence in schools (Wolhuter and Russo, 2013:2). Since the beginning of the new democratic era in the Republic of South Africa and the "introduction and implementation of national and international legal frameworks", learner violence has been on the increase with the school

management teams failing in their management to enforce appropriate discipline measures (Tlhapi, 2015:1). In affirmation, Bechuke and Debeila (2012:241) add that the negative impacts of learner violence on teaching and learning are enormous as the majority of learners appear uncontrollable. Researchers over the years have been asking so many questions regarding the main cause of learner violence. In that stance, Tlhapi (2011:70) attributes learner violence to unsound discipline. The unsound discipline maybe from homes or schools. Ahanonu and Jooste (2015:2) maintain that Western Cape Province is among the leading province with high rate of learner violence which can be attributed to peer influence, alcohol abuse and witness of parental violence, this violence can lead to suicidal attempts.

Furthermore, Maphalala and Mabunda (2014:61) maintain that South African secondary schools violence incidents are on the daily news across numerous electronic media with unhealthy reports of increases in sexual abuse, physical violence and gangsterism activities. Learners go to schools with different types of weapons and guns as a daily occurrence endangering their lives, that of other learners and the entire academic and non-academic staff and making the learning environment un-conducive for all. These harming behaviours or the act of possessing weapons in schools generally have lots of negative influence on learners and the education system in general. In another study, Maphalala (2014:34) maintains that violence has led to serious injuries of learners with many spending the school section in hospitals while the unlucky ones lost their lives through the violence.

Maphalala and Mabunda (2014:61) further maintain that United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) emphasised on the need of healthy learning environment where learners are free to learn, gain skills and be prepared for a better future of the society without experiencing any form of violence. Furthermore, Maphalala and Mabunda (2014:61) explain on the report of Eye Witness News (01, March 2012) which reported on the death of a 16 years old boy who was killed at Beauvallon Secondary School in Valhalla Park, Cape Town due to act of learner violence. The learner got stabbed during break period by another learner while three other learners got wounded. Two of the learners escaped the scene then one got treated on the school ground. In another study, Maphalala (2014:35) found that learner violence in South Africa is a gender-based issue with girls being more vulnerable to sexual and physical abuse by either male learners or their educators.

In further portraying on the rising cases of learner violence, The Citizen, (Friday 02 March 2012) gave account on the death of 18 years old boy as a result of being stabbed on the neck. The

learner died outside the Vorentoe High School gate in Auckland Park, Johannesburg allegedly in a fight that erupted from dragging ball (Maphalala & Mabunda, 2014:61). Furthermore, different studies reported learner violence in South Africa such as learners attack on a teacher which was recorded on camera and shooting of a teacher by a learner (Pretoria News, 2013). These attacks continue to pose great threat on other learners and teachers and also limiting the morals of the teachers in enforcing discipline in the school which will foster safe learning environment (Sagalo & Rambuda, 2018:1).

Furthermore, Maring and Koblinsky (2012:379) argue that learner violence in South Africa is rooted in the communities posing a huge public health concern. They further maintain that most schools are situated in the communities and these communities are filled with all forms of violence, hence that violence spread from communities to the school. Owing to the communities being infiltrated with violence, educators working in those community schools complain of the learners coming to school with weapons and consistent exhibition of risk behaviour such as bullying others and threaten their teachers. Dhlamini (2013:249) adds that learner violence in most of the schools across South Africa is the result of learners' home experience and their perceptions about school. Dhlamini (2013:250) further posits that the learner perception could be about their feeling in the area of teacher-learner relationship, learner-peer-relationship pattern of the school management discipline, rules and regulations and the school general environment.

Tintswalo (2014:53) further argues that there are lots of family breakdowns in the townships. In a situation whereby some parents have quarrels about money they fail to transmit the resources to their children which embed the children in poverty with their last resort as violence in schools and in the townships. Also, the attitudes of the teachers and lack of the parental support can also inflict psychological burdens on the learners. Ngakane *et al.* (2012:46) found that the learner violence is caused by the oppression and marginalisation of learners due to their vulnerable nature. Sometimes learner violence can be as a result of external influences from the school environments which take diverse forms or from within the school. For instance, learners might be bullying their fellow learners within their schools or their educator might be bullying the learners (Mncube & Harber, 2013:3).

Ncontsa and Shumba (2013:13) in their study found that vandalism, indiscipline, gangsterism, bullying and intolerance are among the common forms of learner violence in schools. In another study by Xaba (2014:1580), it was reported that stealing cell phone of a teacher, bullying, stabbing with a knife or pair of scissors, verbal abuse, stealing of fellow learners belongings

might escalate to fight and abusing the teacher are among the predominant forms of learner violence in the schools. This implies that the safety of the entire learners and the school staff are under threat and need crucial intervention. Maphalala (2014:35) went further to add that most of these risky behaviours that lead to or predispose learners to violence are learnt during the process of the learners dealing with their daily circumstances.

2.5 LEGAL FRAMEWORK OF LEARNER DISCIPLINE IN SOUTH AFRICA

According to the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa Act no. 108 of 1996 Section 28(1) (c), every child has the right to education (RSA, 1996b). The constitution never supports learner violence as it directly and indirectly prevents learners from accessing the educational right, hence violence is not acceptable as it is not in affirmation to what the constitution stands for (Jacobs, 2014). Masitsa (2011:64) posits that learner violence is a serious issue facing educators in South African secondary schools. The management of learner violence has been a huge problem as a result of the signing into law of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, and the South African School Act no. 84 of 1996, (RSA, 1996a).

In order to have a safe learning environment, the South African Schools Act as contained in both Section 8 and 20 compelled School Governing Bodies (SGB) to adopt a code of conduct for learners as a means of "establishing a disciplined and purposeful school environment dedicated to improving the quality of learning process" (Mestry & Khumalo, 2012:97; RSA, 1996b). To ensure the effectiveness of the code of conduct, school principals, educators and the entire management teams are the most vital components of the SGBs. The code of conduct for learners represent a type of subordinate legislation which "reflects the democratic principles of the Constitution" (RSA, 1996a) through encouraging the importance of human dignity, equality and freedom for every citizen (Mestry & Khumalo, 2012:97).

According to the Department of Education (DoE, 2008:1), the code of conduct explains the rules concerning learner's behaviour and further spells out the involved disciplinary procedure meted out for defaulters. Rossouw (2007:82) further states that the code of conducted is an agreement document which components should be branded by involving learners, parents, academic and non-academic staff in the secondary schools with the intent of ensuring appropriate learning environment. Conley and Mestry (2010:2) as well as Motseke (2010:120) and Masitsa (2011:1640) further maintain that the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, Act No. 108 of 1996 and the South African Schools Act, Act No. 84 of 1996 (RSA, 1996b) abolished the use

of corporal punishment in addressing learning discipline stating the need to protect the right of children from any form of human ill treatment. Sagalo and Rambuda (2018:1) add that the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, Section 10 (RSA 1996:1) states it clearly that everyone has the fundamental right to dignity and protection, Section 12(1) (c) and (e) also prohibits torture of any kind on human, not to be treated in a degrading manner and freedom from every type of violence.

2.6 POSSIBLE REASONS FOR LEARNER VIOLENCE

According to Marais and Meier (2010:50), educators experience learner behaviour that disrupts classroom activities and deem it as the biggest challenge to disruptive behaviour management. Learners talk while learning content is being explained or when they have to complete a task. Even after being warned, learners keep on talking, laughing and making noise. Learners play with stationery, throw objects around, disobey the educators, inattentive, and make noise. Some learners walk or run around aimlessly in the classroom. Learners also shout at other learners. Some educators claims that learners are simply undisciplined. They have a "don't-care" attitude because they are not reprimanded at home, therefore they think they can be unruly at school. Behaviour that disrupts classroom activities includes vandalism, fighting, bullying and theft, using bad language to educators as well as showing disrespect to educators (Marais & Meier, 2010:50).

2.6.1 Vandalism at school

Over the past two decades, concerns about school violence, weapons, drugs, and gangs have enveloped the secondary schools. Vandalism is identified as a serious form of disruptive behaviour (Wolhuter & Oosthuizen, 2003:437). Breaking windows, blocking toilets with toilet paper, scratching teachers' cars, puncturing teachers' car tyres and damaging plants and trees are examples of vandalism in secondary schools. Learners are not disciplined at home. Parents do not instil social values, such as respect for persons and property. Learners are therefore challenging authority both at home and at school (Wolhuter & Oosthuizen 2003:437). School vandalism and break-ins generally comprise many often-trivial incidents. In the aggregate, they pose a serious problem for schools and communities, and the police and fire departments charged with protecting them. Many school fires originate as arson or during an act of vandalism. However, even as concerns about student and staff safety from violence have become school administrators' top priority, vandalism and break-ins continue to occur regularly (Dedel, 2005).

One reason for this may be that schools define vandalism very differently. Some include both intentional and accidental damage, some report only those incidents that result in an insurance claim, and some include only those incidents for which insurance does not cover the costs. School administrators may hesitate to report all cases of vandalism, break-ins, or arson because they view some as trivial, or because they fear it will reflect poorly on their management skills (Dedel, 2005).

2.6.2 Fighting on school premises

Fighting in the classroom and on the playgrounds, apart from verbal aggression, mostly manifests as pushing, slapping, kicking, and aggressive play-fight, all of which are part of everyday school events. Possible reasons for fighting are exposure to violence at home and an abusive family background. Racial intolerance and racial discrimination appear to be a major reason for fighting (Marais & Meier, 2010:51). An issue that many school administrators face on a constant basis is fighting in school. Fighting has become a dangerous epidemic in many schools across the country. Learners often engage in this barbaric practice to prove toughness rather than attempting to settle a dispute peacefully. A fight will draw a quick audience, who without considering the potential ramifications see it as entertainment. Anytime rumours of a fight emerge a large crowd will follow. The audience often becomes the driving force behind a fight when one or both of the parties involved are reluctant.

2.6.3 Bullying

Marais and Meier (2010:55) allude that bullying is a serious problem, especially on the playground, where it takes the form of name calling, teasing, taunting, mocking, as well as intimidating other learners. Persistent physical or psychological harassment occurs daily. Physical abuse includes kicking, biting, hitting, punching and deliberate pushing and shoving; emotional abuse includes the above as well as malicious gossip and ganging up to deliberately ostracise victims. In the study by Marais and Meier (2010:55), a respondent declared that "... gangs/cliques are formed with conversations, such as don't play with ... don't speak to ... he is not our friend". Respondents stated that in some instances, bullies are themselves bullied by siblings at home.

It has been generally recognized that the socially constructed nature of masculinity leads to violence and aggression, which is also approved of or even expected, whereas girls are expected to behave in more empathetic, caring, and helping ways as part of their female social role (Gini & Pozzoli, 2006; Watson, 2007; Young & Sweeting, 2004). In a study about the role of verbal abuse among teenage learners, it was found that verbal abuse function as a cultural resource for the construction of hegemonic masculinities, as well as of power relations between boys and girls (Eliasson, Isaksson, & Laflamme, 2007). Therefore, abuse coming from popular "tough" boys was usually rendered legitimate and invisible, because it was often excused as unintentional or as a joke. In contrast, girls' involvement either as aggressors or as victims of verbal abuse was not similarly advantageous for their femininity.

Another study in secondary schools aimed to investigate learner's attitudes as well as their reasons for involvement in bullying (Boulton, Karellou, Lanitis, Manoussou, & Lemoni, 2001) showed a high prevalence of aggressive incidents and victimization among learners, especially among boys' groups. Therefore, it is evident from literature that bullying in schools is a serious form of violence which needs to be dealt with in order to enhance a safe environment for learners to learn.

2.6.4 Corporal punishment

Some forms of violence at school are spearheaded by educators such as administering corporal punishment. The measures applied by educators must not violate the rights of the learners by applying corporal punishment. Rossouw and De Wet (2017:78), assert that, in accordance with SASA, corporal punishment is illegal. Contravention of this provision will constitute an offence:

(1) No person may administer corporal punishment at a school to a learner

(2) Any person who contravenes subsection (1) is guilty of an offence and liable on conviction to a sentence, which could be imposed for assault.

Smit (2013:346) argues that, despite the illegality of corporal punishment some teachers still apply it on learners. The application of corporal punishment can instigate learners to misbehave. Learners are aware of their rights and they will fight back if teachers infringe on them. Besides knowing their rights, corporal punishment induces anger on learners and as a result it will build hostility between teachers and learners. Smit (2013: 346) asserts that teachers feel disempowered in the human rights environment especially with the abolishment of corporal punishment. Smit

(2013:346) affirms that many teachers blame poor discipline in schools due to the fact that they don't have another alternative form of punishment.

The South African Schools Act 84 of 1996 banned corporal punishment but some parents and teachers desire its return because now students are perceived to be carrying their rights to enter school buildings. According to Tauber, (2007:64) corporal punishment is defined as a physical force used with the intention of causing pain but not injury in order to correct or control a child's behaviour. A survey in England and Wales (2000) found that 51% thought that corporal punishment should be reintroduced in schools. In Canada 79% said that corporal punishment can be justified (Mohapi, 2014:433). According to Njoroge (2014:294) the ban of corporal punishment has been blamed for the increase in indiscipline. Teachers are fearing to punish learners in order to avoid being dragged to court

A study by Mestry and Khumalo (2012:104), confirmed that some schools still use corporal punishment. With other, principals arguing that the use of stick is the best method of disciplining learners. These principals were aware of the illegality, but they still use it secretly. According to Mestry and Khumalo (2012: 104), the continuity of the use of corporal punishment by schools implies that they are failing to enforce the code of conduct regarding enforcing the use of alternative resolution strategies which should be contained in the learner codes of conduct. Mestry and Khumalo (2012:104) assert that corporal punishment does not cherish self-discipline in children, but it evokes feelings of aggression or revenge and leads to anti-social behaviour. Hence, its usage in schools instigate disciplinary problems.

The SASA offers School Governing Body (SGB) with the responsibility of taking specific regulatory and policy measures to improve the safety and well-being at schools and thereby promote good discipline. Some of the duties assigned to SGBs by SASA Act 84 of 1996 are:

- To adopt a Code of Conduct (section 8 and section 20(1) (d)).
- To conduct disciplinary hearings to suspend or recommend expulsion of ill-disciplined learners (section 9).

In the following paragraphs the Guidelines for the adoption of a code of conduct for schools will be discussed.

2.6.5 Disrespect to educators

Another challenging type of disruptive behaviour was categorised as disrespect towards educators (e.g. giving rude answers when spoken to, repeatedly ignoring educator's

instructions/requests, being generally incorporative and flouting classroom rules). From the study of Marais and Meier (2010:58), one educator said that a learner who refused to clean up told her: "Dirty papers will make me sick". One of the respondents commented that learners "... are not disciplined at home. They get away with being disrespectful at home and they just have no regards for authority". Another claimed that learners are "immune towards authority". Possible reasons for disrespect, according to the respondents, can definitely be traced back to the home environment: lack of ethical role models, lack of respect for parents, and lack of discipline at home being the main reasons for disrespect towards educators.

2.6.6 Gender based violence

In a study carried out by Nhambura in the North- West it found out the girl child is a victim of gender based violence (Nhambura, 2020: 127-128). From the records of the disciplinary committee it sat over an issue of a boy child who beat a girl child who happens to be his girlfriend after accusing her of cheating on him with another learner. According to Nhambura (2020: 128) what was experienced by the girl is a universal problem. Nhamnura's assertion is supported by Burton and Leoschut (2013:20), who stated that the girl child is a victim of common forms of gender based violence such as rape, sexual harassment, sexual exploitation, and even trafficking for sexual exploitation, notwithstanding the unwanted touching. Mgijima (2014:199) also concurs with Nhambura they assert that sexual harassment of female learners by males is rife in many South African schools.

2.7 CONTRIBUTORY FACTORS TOWARDS LEARNER VIOLENCE

Simuforosa and Rosemary (2014:79-88) identify four types of goals that motivate learners to be violent. They include:

- Attention Getting: Learners do almost anything to be noticed from being argumentative to being funny. When this fails learner moves on to more problematic goal seeking behaviour such as power.
- Power and Control: Wanting to be in charge or control provides incentive for some children to misbehave. The children simply want their way and are often confrontational in reaching their goal.
- Revenge: Lashing out is how some learners respond to real or imagined hurt feelings to educators, and peers.

- Displaying Inadequacy: Some learners erroneously believe they cannot live up to expectations. They are therefore, afraid of failure. In class they do not pay attention, are dishonest and this is described as informed helplessness by psychologists. This situation is rightly stated by Dreikurs (2008:1) “if a child is misbehaving the main purpose like the well- adjusted child will be social acceptance”. Fundamentally, every action is grounded in the notion that the child is seeking his/her place in the group.

2.8 SCHOOL MANAGEMENT PROCEDURES TO CURB LEARNER VIOLENCE

Discipline is important for maintaining harmony in a school, and for securing a climate in which learners can learn, free from disruption and chaos. Effective discipline creates a climate conducive to high academic and non-academic achievements. It is commonly accepted that learners perform better when they know what is expected of them (Oosthuizen, 2009:10). Research has proven that school management and educators have adopted various ways of dealing with learner misconduct. For the purpose of this study, the principal, deputy principal, educators and governing bodies of the school are regarded as school managers who are responsible for managing the teaching and learning as well as the day to day running of the school.

Educators, however, are not trained to be social workers or psychologists; therefore, schools need the involvement of other professionals in the community to provide support in whatever way is needed. Nevertheless, educators cannot ignore the violent disruption of education and, indeed, are expected to provide learners with a positive climate that has a protective influence in a potentially violent situation. Educators are not only held responsible for the learners that are entrusted to them due to their in loco parentis role; they also have the authority vested in them to create a sound disciplinary environment that is conducive to teaching and learning (Oosthuizen *et al.*, 2003:471).

The following duties should be considered by the school management:

2.8.1 The duty of care of school management

The school management has a duty of care towards all the learners, according to which the child's best interests should be upheld (Oosthuizen *et al.,* 2003:471). To this end, educators need to act in *loco parentis*, as if they assume the position of a responsible parent. While Section 29 of the Constitution of South Africa stipulates that everyone has the right to basic education, children's rights are protected in The Bill of Rights 12(1) C and section 29 and 12 (1) C (RSA, 1996a). The common law principle that a child's best interests are of paramount importance in every matter concerning the child has been included in Section 28(2) as a basic fundamental right (Oosthuizen *et al*., 2003:55). This makes it the duty of the state to protect learners from violence and to ensure their safety so that educational obligations can be fulfilled.

The South African Schools Act, 84 of 1996 (RSA, 1996) highlights that management of discipline calls on educators, principals and governing bodies to make learners feel emotionally comfortable and physically safe so that they (learners) can develop self-discipline and accountability in their actions (Naong, 2007:5). Every educator has to create an environment in which each learner is guided towards an attitude of caring and respect for other learners. Furthermore, there are two coextensive pillars to the in loco parentis role that educators play: the duty of care (which implies looking after the physical and mental wellbeing of learners) and the duty to maintain order at a school (which implies educators' duty to discipline learners).

2.8.2 The protection of learner rights in South Africa

After the advent of democracy in 1994, South Africa passed legislation which required a paradigm shift for educators in South Africa in the way discipline was conducted in schools. The change in the Constitution of South Africa Act 108 of 1996 (RSA, 1996a) laid the foundation for education in South Africa, with the emphasis on human rights and dignity, meaning that no one should be punished or treated in an inhuman way. This was followed by the passing of the Law against Corporal Punishment Act 33 of 1997 (RSA, 1997) which legislated that corporal punishment is unlawful, and that if an educator is found guilty of such an offence, he or she could be liable, on conviction, to a sentence which could be imposed for assault. Mtsweni (2008) observes that after the banning of corporal punishment in schools, most educators and principals felt incapacitated and helpless in dealing with learner indiscipline in schools. Learners are now

believed to have become ill-disciplined to the extent that they even openly challenge the teacher's authority because they know that nothing would be done to them (Masitsa, 2008). Educators from very different schools, primary and secondary, private and public, feel that learners are becoming more unruly and less respectful than they used to be in the past. They further state that the lack of discipline among learners makes it impossible to teach effectively.

SASA also clearly states that no person may administer corporal punishment to a learner at a school. Furthermore, it was required that, in terms of Section 8(2) of the South African Schools' Act, a code of conduct must be adopted by the school's governing body. The implication of these changes for education was that, not only did several legislation documents have to change, but also new discipline measures in schools had to be adapted (RSA, 1996b).

The Department of Education in South Africa provides schools with an example of a code of conduct as part of its guidelines for constructing their own codes of conduct (DoE, 2007:1). Duties of parents, disciplinary steps, accepting responsibilities and the payment of school fees are some of the matters that need to be discussed with learners, parents and educators of the school (RSA, 1996b) before drawing up a code of conduct for the school. Where there is a lack of effective behaviour management and disciplinary practices, Cotton (2010:33) advises that educators should recognise vague or unenforceable school rules, and address these immediately.

The governing body is also empowered to maintain and enforce school discipline in accordance with the SA code of conduct. For instance, in the case of serious misconduct, the governing body can suspend a learner for a maximum of seven days after a fair hearing (RSA, 1996b). However, the punishment must be clearly understood and accepted by the perpetrator. This implies that those responsible for drafting the school rules need to have a knowledge and understanding of the basic law principles to draft rules that will conform to such original legislation.

2.8.3 Enforcement of school code of conduct

The constitution mandating SGBs on the use code of conduct, Mestry and Khumalo, (2012:98) the SGBs encouraged daily enforcement of the code of conducts by the School Management Teams (SMT) and the educators. The processes of implementing the code of conducts should be properly figured out in the school policy regarding disciplinary measures in order to ensure non violation of human right and dignity. In ensuring appropriate disciplinary measures, SGBs constantly review the codes of conducts in order to ensure its consistency. Tlhapi (2015:4)

suggests that educators should adopt any suitable measures to them in addressing learner violence in their school but avoid bridging the right of the learner. Any measures adopted should help to promote orderliness in the schools and encourage the learners towards positive behaviours in order to be a better person to the school, family and the society at large. Also, the school code of conduct should be well explained to the learners and their parents through handbooks, meetings and newsletters in order for all to get acquainted with what the school expect of the learners' discipline (Tlhapi, 2015:5).

In addition, Maring and Koblinsky (2013:385) mention that leadership of the various schools contributes greatly in curbing learner violence through ensuring that code of conduct and policies are properly interpreted to the learners and their parents and also that the behaviours of the learners are under check based on the codes of conducts and regulations. Also, the school leadership should try in establishing good rapport with the violence prone learners, talking them through on the need for positive change of behaviour and emphasising on the future effects of those behaviours should anyone refuse to change. Ncontsa and Shumba (2013:13) posit that most of the schools beside the adoption of code of conduct for addressing learner violence, uses integrated approach where learners, educators and parents work in harmony in maintaining learner discipline. Ngqela and Lewis (2012:87) state that the first approach towards curbing learner violence is the ability of the school stakeholders to articulate the experiences of the violence victims which will give them more clue of the problem before devising intervention approaches for addressing the problems.

2.8.4 Security and safety approach

Xaba (2014:1580) mentions that owing to the threat of learner violence to other learners and educators, some school leadership resorted to utilising diverse security and safety approaches. Among the purpose of utilising security and safety measures is to help in having the activities in the school environment under control and including the psychosocial and physical environment. Furthermore, Eke and Singh (2018:1) acknowledge that school management teams utilise networking for gathering information regarding learner violence and support system for addressing that violence. Burton (2008:3) mentions that owing to the complex nature of learner violence and the secondary school leadership, there is a need for a developmental approach in ensuring safety within schools instead of concentrating on individual aspects within the various schools, by adopting development approach, it entails a "whole school approach" in addressing learner violence. Furthermore, Burton (2008:3) posits that schools can adopt situational

prevention approaches in addressing learner violence. Situational prevention entails addressing emerging act of learner violence in schools and endeavour to ensure no further occurrence.

2.9 METHODS TO MAINTAIN LEARNER DISCIPLINE

According to Serame, Oosthuizen, Wolhunter and Zulu (2013: 4), the educationally preferred method to maintain learner discipline is proper preparation by the educators, which is deemed the most effective. There are two types of disciplinary methods that could be used: those are the preventative methods and the punitive methods of discipline. The preventative methods such as proper preparation by the educator, positive discipline, rewards and encouraging pride amongst the learners are seen as the most effective methods by the educators. Learners see the methods of referral to the principal, discussion meetings with the parents and referral to the SGB as the most effective, followed by the totally discredited form of maintain discipline such as corporal punishment.

Mokhele (2006:157) states that punishment of learners can be avoided if a relationship of trust, respect and cooperation is established between the educators and the learners. Learners must be reprimanded to protect their own human dignity and integrity. Many educators have problems with managing the classroom and thus still use the authoritarian teaching strategies. These educators must be trained to work effectively with a democratic education system. They can also learn from other educators who work as facilitators of education events. A democratic classroom is based on the learner's willingness to accept the educator's authority. Educators must be taught the alternatives to corporal punishment. In many classrooms there is lack of an emphasis of the punitive forms of discipline. Educators wait until misbehaviour occurs before taking action. The emphasis should rather be on the following preventative measures:

- Positive discipline, not blaming, pushing, shouting and using sarcasm
- Classroom management: arranging the furniture in such a way that it is easy to see every learner.

Lack of parental support and help present a serious hindrance to learners accepting educator authority. Learners must be taught by their parents to accept the educators as their parents "in *loco parentis*" meaning on behalf of the parent. Educators must be trained to improve their lesson planning skills and learner management skills. Positive classroom management, control

mechanisms and educator authority towards a positive educator–learner relationship will in turn minimise the occurrence of misbehaviour in the classroom.

Oosthuizen *et al.* (2003: 476) maintain that both the preventive and the punitive must be favoured. In other words, a contextual approach is required. Certain instances call for preventive action while others call for punitive measures. The conceptuality lies in the seriousness of the misconduct, the age, attitude and motives of the perpetrator, the circumstances that persisted at the time of the misconduct and the impact of the misconduct on the teaching-learning environment.

According to Wolhuter and Russo (2013: 9), it is recommended that leaders in charge of developing policies must involve key stakeholders. Educators must be professionally developed to deal with cases of violence on a yearly basis and learners must also be trained. Parents must be helped to develop a manner in which they respond to issues of violence their child is involved and the victims must be counselled. The policies must be reviewed annually. Policies must include clear and precise definition of terms and prohibited behaviour. The policies must include all forms of misbehaviour that is written, physical, verbal and electronic forms of violence. The policies must protect the victims after reporting such any form of violence from being further victimised. The policies must include step by step procedures to be followed when handling such cases. The policies must be included in the learner's handbooks or yearbooks.

2.10 COLLABORATION OF PARENTS AND EDUCATORS IN FOSTERING DISCIPLINE

Transformational leadership promotes teamwork that is based on consultative approach on parental involvement in the drafting of a code of conduct. The positive input of parents in the drafting of school rules is crucial in establishing a safe environment for their children, also in ensuring that they understand and agree with what is expected of their children, regarding the rules of the school. Thus, the duties of parents, as stipulated in the South African Schools Act 84 of 1996 should also be listed in the code (RSA, 1996b).

It is worth noting that the role of parents in the life of the child is of paramount significance. Parents are the first link in preventing problems in effective school discipline practices. Parents who are involved in their children's daily school lives have a better understanding of what is acceptable and expected in the school environment. Varkey (2007:17) contends that the "parent

can be prince charming that turns the children into princes or princesses or the witch that turns them into frogs." As such they have to be the key head in managing learner violence first at home and in school.

In addition, language and parental illiteracy should be taken into consideration so that everybody involved in the school will be able to understand the rules of the school as clearly stipulated in the code of conduct. The wording should therefore be as simple as possible, so that even younger learners would know what is expected of them and what is permitted at their school.

Also, parents are the first guardians of learners, hence there is an enormous responsibility on their shoulders in modelling the behaviours of their children. There should be an understanding of those roles and the need to carefully nurture the children for a healthier generation. When the parents are getting things right in nurturing their children behaviours, there will not be much burden on the educators in the schools (Hummer *et al.*, 2013:196). Parents are the first teachers of the learners because they live with them in their various homes hence institutes the first level of moral values in them while also working in harmony with the school leaders in bringing out the best from their children (Ncontsa & Shumba, 2013:1).

According to Singh and Steyn (2013:6), parents constitute a great deal of force in the school system for curbing learner violence. They assist the principals and teachers in curbing learner violence through their relentless efforts in guiding their children. Parents also influence their children towards positive attitudes and encourage them to deviate from violence. Modisaotsile (2012:3) posits that parents provide the learners with their formal education hence they are the safety net of every child. Parents, till this point, are expected to work with the educators in addressing learner violence and in bringing out the best from their children. By taking the responsibility of giving their children formal education, parents take interest in all concerning their children such as maintaining good relationship with them which will allow the children to confide in them, assist the children in their extra-curricular activities and academic projects. They also help in ensuring that their children are engaged in other activities, school activities such as; being part of drama, music, clubs and sports. Furthermore, parental involvement in their children activities enable them in knowing the type of friends they keep, how they move around and what they do when they are out and be able to guide them in the right direction for a better generation (Modisaotsile, 2012:3).

2.11 CHAPTER SUMMARY

Where there are ineffective ways of dealing with learner misconduct, the teaching and learning in the school environment would be at risk. Hence, school management should therefore develop ways in which learner misconduct should be managed in schools. In doing so, they should consider the various forms of learner misconduct and legal framework that guides the misconduct. Parents should also foster good behaviour in their children in order for them to have a good upbringing at home which would in turn lower the levels of learner misconduct in schools.

The next chapter presents the research design and methodology used in this study.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH APPROACH, DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

In the previous chapter, the literature review elaborated widely on aspects relating to leadership strategies in handling learner violence in schools. This research was based on some underlying philosophical assumptions about what constitutes 'valid' research and which research methods are appropriate for the development of knowledge on the leadership strategies of handling learner violence in schools. In order to conduct and evaluate any research, it is therefore important to know the research design and methodology used.

In this chapter, the following topics are examined; philosophical assumptions relating to the study, research approach, research design, research methodology, site selection, participants selection, data collection techniques, data analysis and ethical consideration.

3.2 PHILOSOPHICAL ASSUMPTION RELATING TO THE STUDY

Philosophy means the use of abstract ideas and beliefs that inform research. Philosophical assumptions are typically the first ideas in developing a study, but how they relate to the overall process of research remains a mystery (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011). Philosophical assumptions are also referred to as research paradigm which refers to worldview (Creswell, 2014:60). Research paradigm brings together the totality of the researcher's perception or choice of the study and the method involved in carrying out the study. Identifying research paradigm is necessary because paradigms are cluster of belief that influences the entire study (Bryman, 2004:453). According to Terreblanche, Durrheim and Kelly (2006:6), research paradigm comprises all the systems of interconnected practice and philosophy that define the nature of the investigation for researchers using three elements; ontology, epistemology and methodology.

Identification of philosophical assumptions at the start of the research process is critically important as it determines the choice of the research design. According to Yuli Rahmawati Weblog (2008), there are three assumptions that exist in research which are defined as follows, Ontological assumptions: This relates to the nature of reality and its characteristics). When researchers conduct research, they are embracing the idea of multiple realities; Epistemological

assumptions: This interpretive is used to acquire the knowledge by investigating the phenomena that is been studied from different spheres as investigations from various phenomena can results in many interpretations (Yuli Rahmawati's Weblog: 2008).

In order to answer the research questions, a social constructivist research paradigm was used which is typically seen as an approach to qualitative research (Creswell 2014:8). The social constructivist believes that people try to understand the world which they live by developing subjective meaning of their daily experience as well as "realities" that occur around them. The goal of constructivist theory in this research is to rely as much as possible on the participant's view of the situation being studied. The constructivist researchers often address the process of interaction among individuals. They also focus on the specific contexts in which people live and work in order to understand the historical and cultural settings of the participants have about the world (Creswell 2014:8). Therefore, to explore the leadership strategies used by school leaders to handle learner violence, the participants involved were studied in their natural context to construct meaning from their response.

3.3 RESEARCH APPROACH

Research approach can be thought of as the logic or master plan of a research that throws light on how the study is to be conducted. It shows how all of the major parts of the research study, including the participants or groups, measures, treatments or programs, work together in an attempt to address the research questions (Yin, 2003). Henning (2005:142) considers the research approach as the management plan that outlines and charts a course of action along which the processes and procedures of the study will finally come to completion.

Qualitative research enables the researcher in studying people's emotions, perceptions, social and human attribute to various lives phenomenon (McCusker & Gunaydin, 2015:538). Creswell (2014:31) further adds that the choice of a study depends on the researcher's philosophical assumption, personal experience, the type of problem to be addressed and the type of data the research intend to generate for the study. Therefore, qualitative research approach was deemed fit for this study because it enabled me to get a deeper understanding on the leadership strategies of handling learner violence in secondary schools.

The primary purpose of using this method, according to Borg and Gall (2009:23), is to understand the facts that form the basis of a certain phenomenon. This design has a number of advantages, among which the following are the most prominent:

- In-depth understanding of the situation and meaning for those involved (Henning, 2004:41). As such, the use of qualitative research design for the study enabled me to have an in-depth understanding of the school management perceptions in dealing with learner misconduct.
- Qualitative research is an effort to avoid the imposition of a previous theory or hypothesis upon the subjects of the research (Lemmer, 2001:7).
- Participants can narrate their experience more efficiently when asked to do so in their own words in interviews (Henning, 2004:37).
- In qualitative research problems become research questions based on prior research experience.
- The selected setting can be as small as one.
- Data collection involves interview, observation, and/or archival (content) data.

As indicated by Punch (2009:112) and Lemmer (2001:7), the qualitative research also has its disadvantages which include;

- Qualitative research still requires a lot of careful thought and planning, to ensure that the results obtained are as accurate as possible.
- Qualitative data cannot be mathematically analysed in the same comprehensive way as quantitative results, so can only give a guide to general trends. It is a lot more open to personal opinion and judgment, and so can only ever give observations rather than results.
- Any qualitative research is usually unique and cannot be exactly recreated, meaning that it does lack the ability to be replicated.

The qualitative research approach frequently employs several designs in realising its objectives in a study. These methods include Ethnography, Narrative, Phenomenology, Grounded Theory and Case Study (Creswell, 2014:1). This study employed the case study design in exploring leadership strategies in handling learner violence in secondary schools.

3.4 RESEARCH DESIGN

Research design is the distinct procedures followed by the researcher in gathering, analysis and presenting the data. According Newsome (2016:41), research design is defined as operations to be performed, in order to test a specific hypothesis under a given condition. Maree (2010:70) is also of the opinion that a "research design refers to a plan or strategy which moves from an underlying philosophical assumption to specifying the selection of respondents, the data gathering techniques to be used and data analysis to be done". Creswell (2011:3) maintains that research design is the totality of the processes and decisions involving data collection, analysis and presentation. However, a good decisions regarding research design enabled me in answering the research questions appropriately.

As indicated in chapter one, a case study research design was used in this study. Maree (2010:263) is of the opinion that case study research design guides a researcher in describing a social phenomenon through progressive in-depth study. Babbie (2014:310) is of the opinion that a case study design focuses on pressing a social phenomenon for an in-depth understanding. A cases study design was deemed fit for this study because it guided the me to get an in-depth understanding of leadership strategies in handling learner violence in selected secondary schools in Tswaing district.

3.5 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

McMillian and Schumacher (2010:8) define the term methodology as a design whereby the researcher selects data collection and analysis procedures to investigate a specific problem. In undertaking research, there has to be a method that is used to collect and analyse data.

The study employed a qualitative research approach that is based on a case study design. The site and location for the case is North West Province, Tswaing district. A Purposive sampling was used in order to select schools and participants that will best answer research questions. Participants such as School Management Teams (principals, deputy principals and HODs) and educators were used for the study. An in-depth individual interview was conducted with the selected participants and data was analysed in themes and categories in order to obtain and classify appropriately the authentic participant response obtained in the study.

The next section elaborates more on the procedure taken on the methodology to be used for this study.

3.5.1 Site selection

According to Creswell (2007), one of the most important steps in a research process is determining the people and the place to study, and how to gain access to those places. To Creswell, "gaining access to sites and individuasl requires several steps ranging from seeking permission from human subjects to ensuring participants' safety".

The selected site for the study is North West Province Tswaing district. Tswaing district is a category B municipality in Ngaka Modiri Molema and also one of the five local municipalities in Ngaka Modiri Molema District with Delareyville, Senieshof and Ottosdal as its major towns. This district was selected because it has been reported as one of the district that has been using different strategies to curb learner's violence. While the two schools were selected based on the criteria that they are the major schools in the district with much report of learners violence. Information regarding these schools was obtained from the Department of Basic Education (DBE) centre for learner violence(RSA, 1997). This study purposefully select two secondary schools in Tswaing district representing urban and rural schools in order to have equal representative of the two rural and urban regions. According to Creswell (2012:125) a purposive sample is a non-probability sample technique that is used in participant selection based on predetermined characteristics of a selected site and the objective of the study. Purposeful sampling was used in order to enable me for the identification and selection of information-rich cases related to the phenomenon of interest (Palinkas, Horwitz, Green, Wisdom, Duan & Hoagwood, 2015:533). This involves identifying and selecting individuals or groups of individuals that are knowledgeable about or experienced regarding a phenomenon of interest, and also willing to participate in the study. Creswell and Plano Clark (2011:1) advised researchers to use purposive sampling for studies that already have a target set of participants who have distinct characteristics that will aid the study.

3.5.2 Participant selection

According to Creswell (2009:4), participant selection in qualitative studies entails selecting participants who will best answer research question appropriately. Creswell (2007:118) says that one of the most important step in the process of data collection is to find people or places to study as well as to gain access to, so that participants will provide good data. To him. gaining access to sites and individuals requires several steps ranging from seeking permission from human subjects to ensuring participants' safety. The selection of the participants is of crucial

importance in qualitative research after the site has been identified. This is because each respondent has access to unique information (Goetz & LeCompte, 2004:215). No respondent can offer universal information. In qualitative studies researchers normally use a relatively small selection from the total population or site identified (Bogden & Biklen, 2012:2). Polit and Beck (2017) posit that the population of a study consists of the selected participants to be studied. To Marshal and Rossman (2011), participant selection is a process of grouping a population for the study. The researcher cannot research the entire population hence, a subset of the population was selected for the study.Table 1.2 gives the details on the participants that was selected from two secondary schools.

Table 3.1: Representation of the participants

	School A	**School B**
Principals	1	1
Deputy principals	1	1
HoDs	2	2
Grade 8-12 educators (one per grade)	5	5
Total	9	9
Total for the two schools		**18 participants**

The purposive sampling was used to select the participants based on a predetermined knowledge that they are leaders in their various positions in the schools with crucial roles in handling learners violence. Hence, they could best answer the research questions. Lekganyane (2011:10) indicates that using a purposive sampling technique entails that the researcher is selecting participants based on the criteria that best suits the study. According to Rahman (2015:37), the inclusion of human respondents in study should be based on those that are the key role players and the exclusion of other human respondents should be clearly justified by the researcher. The study's main focus was the school management teams (principals, deputy principals, educators and HODs). These participants were included in the study because they play major roles in the leadership and management of learner violence in schools. In total the study utilised 18

participants. The learners were however excluded because the study was more focused on leadership strategies in handling learner violence could not be obtained from them for the study.

3.5.3 Data collection techniques

There are different ways of collecting data from research participants. This study employed interviews (semi-structured) as the data collection method. An interview is a "direct personal contact" data collection method from participants who are asked questions relating to the research problem (Bless & Smith, 2000:10). According to Rosenblatt (2014:1), an interview is an arranged meeting aimed to get information from participants in the fact-finding phase of research. For the purpose of this study, the face to-face interviews were conducted with the principal, deputy principal and HoDs from the selected schools. Oltmann (2016:15) indicates that face-to-face interviews enables the study to understand the full views and description of the participants responses in a closed and accommodating environment.

Rosenblat (2014:12) further identified seven steps that should be followed in order to conduct an effective interview on school management perceptions, exploring leadership/management strategies in dealing with learner misconduct. These steps include:

- Determining the people to interview: relevant participants for the interview should be selected with the right questions; for this study, I selected the educators and the school management teams as indicated earlier
- Establishing the objective for the interview: Specific objectives of the interview and area of interest must be identified and listed. In conducting the interviews with the participants, I ensured that the research questions and objectives that have been outlined in this study was answered
- Developing interview question: Well-structured questions should be framed as to assist the interviewer to remain on track in the process. At this level, the questions was open-ended questions (interviewees were allowed to express their views outside the listed questions)
- Preparing for the interview: I ensured that in conducting the interviews, the interview time, letting the interviewee know the duration of the interview, the venue, the date, (possibly through email) are all emphasised.
- Conducting the interview: The interview process began with a personal introduction, project description, interview objectives, after which questions are asked as arranged. At

this point, I ensured that interviewees are given enough time to think before responding to each question and a good rapport is needed in the process.

- Documenting the interview: Note taking is necessary during the interview but with advantages and disadvantages; only important things are noted down and are kept to a minimum.
- Evaluating the interview: at this stage I identified all bias for example, the interviewee might be shy or trying to protect his or her personal image/information or give wrong information.

3.5.4 Data analysis

Data analysis began as soon as the data from the participants was collected. Data analysis in this study involved coding, categorizing and clustering data. Coding refers to the process of dividing data according to a classification system (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010: 461). Creswell 2014:337) suggests that researchers should read the transcribed data very well immersing him or herself into the meaning of the data and understanding what the participant meant. Then, emergent categories and themes were extracted from the data which was further used in the presentation and summary. In analysing data for this study, the thematic data analysis was used to analyse data in themes and categories.

Categorizing refers to a stage where the identified codes, which talk about the same thing, are grouped together and presented. In analysing the data, the following were done:

- The tape-recorded data was transcribed carefully and arranged with the written notes taken at the time of discussion.
- Non- English words were translated into English.
- Thematic analysis was then employed in order to describe the exploratory ideas obtained from the data. Through this process, the information was reduced into manageable chunks or themes.

White (2002:82) indicates that the thematic analysis enables the researcher in transcribing, reading and removing scraps, examining, comparing, conceptualising and categorizing data for authentic understanding of the participant meaning. Thematic analysis also paves way for coding of data. I identified the emerging categories and themes according to their scale of preference which was guided by the research question in order to ascertain the most important categories and themes for the study.

3.6 TRUSTWORTHINESS

Trustworthiness is a set of criteria devised for judging the quality of a research (Bryman, 2012:717). Brink *et al*. (2012:126) is of the opinion that qualitative rigor ascertains the research relevance, methodological consistency and the entire research fairness. For this study, trustworthiness was established by performing member checking. Participants cross-checked their responses and ensure that they correlate with information that they have provided. Prolonged engagement in the field was ensured in order to foster in-depth collection of data for the study. Furthermore, the research questions was scrutinized by the supervisor who is an expert in qualitative research. The study supervisor also mentored me in the data collection process to ensure that in-depth and authentic information was obtained from the participants for the study. Results from field notes, interviews and the research diary was also triangulated with regard to common themes to provide reliable findings. I also maintained trustworthiness through accurate representation of the research findings for credibility, using a triangulation to ensure dependability.

3.7 RESEARCHER'S ROLE

In the case of researchers who carry out qualitative research, ethical issues are raised when the relationship in the research area leads to some degree of communication for the participants (Eide & Kahn, 2008:15). In a qualitative study, researchers are often required to clarify their role in the research process.

In this study, I played the role of an interviewer, listener, recorder and a writer in order to obtain information needed for the research. Mbokodi (2008:57) indicates that the purpose of interviewing is to allow the interviewer to enter into the interviewees' perspective. It began with the assumption that the perspective of others is meaningful, knowable and amenable to being made explicit. According to Creswell (2009:175), qualitative research is often conducted in the field, allowing direct interaction with the people being studied in their context. I coordinated permission from schools to conduct research, arranged for venues and to setup the appointments for interviews. I interviewed the selected participants by asking relevant questions in the interview guide, and recorded the participants responds. I adequately ensured consideration of all ethical issues and appropriately collect quality data, transcribe it, report the findings and draw conclusions.

3.8 ETHICAL CONSIDERATION

Ethical measures are important in all research. According to McMillan and Schumacher (2006:16), the researcher is ethically responsible for protecting the rights and welfare of the subjects who participate in a study, which may involve issues of physical and mental discomfort, harm, and danger. Bush (2007:245) confirms that for both ethical purposes, it is vital to ensure that those being interviewed are absolutely clear about their rights to an explanation of aims, procedures, purposes and consequences of the research, publication possibilities and the right to refuse to take part or withdraw at any stage. The ethical considerations I considered for the purpose of this study include:

3.8.1 Informed consent

The study was approved by the ethics committe of the Faculty of Education in the North West University. A consent letter was further drafted to the participants involved in the study. Information obtained about the participants was kept confidential unless otherwise agreed upon in advance, through informed consent. This implies that no one had access to the original data except me as well as the supervisor in charge of this research, and the identity of the participant was in no way be revealed to external bodies.

Harrison (2002:74) explains that the right to voluntary participation should be observed at all times, and even if the participants started participating in the study, they can withdraw at any time and for any reason. I informed the participants about the study before they gave consent to participate in the study and advised them that they could withdraw at any stage of the data collection if they feel uncomfortable. The participants were obliged to sign the informed consent forms I provided agreeing that they are willingly and voluntarily taking part in the study (Seidman, 2013).

3.8.2 Protection from harm

The participants were also informed that they could choose not to answer any questions that they feel make them uncomfortable in answering, as Fouche (2002) explains that subjects can be harmed either physically or emotionally. However, I ensured that participants were comfortable, unharmed, not humiliated physically or psychologically. The research questions I used during data collection were first checked and corrected and found suitable and credible by the researcher's supervisor as well as the ethics committee from the faculty. In this study, I

interviewed the participants at their convenient time and place so that they could feel free to talk to the researcher; as indicated by (Creswell, 2009:101).

3.8.3 Confidentiality, Privacy and Anonymity

I ensured that all the participants were aware that their privacy would be respected at all times and that everything they shared was kept as confidential as possible (Polit & Beck, 2014). Burns and Grove, (2009:195) emphasize that individuals have the right to determine how and under which circumstances should personal information be shared or withheld from others. Therefore, participants were made aware that their names will be presented in pseudonyms and the identifying details was transformed to ensure confidentiality. The names of the selected schools were also protected and not mentioned in the study as well as those of the participants.

3.9 CHAPTER SUMMARY

In this chapter, the research design, methods of data collection and procedures for data analysis were described. Chapter three also covered the trustworthiness, researcher's role and the ethical consideration.

The next chapter presents findings, discussions and analysis of the findings

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA ANALYSIS AND PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS

4.1 INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter outlined the research objectives in order to keep the audience informed with the research procedure, the research approach, research design which enabled me in exploring the leadership strategies used by school leaders to handle learner violence in two secondary schools in Tswaing district. The current chapter focuses on data analysis and presentation of research findings.

4.2 PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS

In this section, the direct quotes from the collected data are presented in order to demonstrate the richness of the data and also for clarity purpose.

4.2.1 Interpretation of data

According to Rossman and Rallis (2012:262), qualitative research builds on non-numerical data from different participants in order to have sufficient evidence for justifying a study. The collected qualitative data was transcribed from a tape recorder and field notes. Data was analysed through coding. Tnto he codes were integrated into categories which were further merged into themes.

4.2.2 Research objectives

As indicated in chapter 1, the study sought:

- To understand the nature of learner violence in secondary schools in Tswaing district.
- To explore leadership strategies used by secondary school leaders in handling learners' violence in Tswaing district.
- To examine the challenges faced by leaders in handling learner violence in secondary schools in Tswaing district.
- To suggest strategies that can be used by school leaders to improve the handling of learner violence in secondary schools.

4.3 DATA CODING AND CATEGORISATION

Raw data collected was transcribed and analysed into codes and categories. In addition, I included the direct quotes from participant's response under each of the emerged categories while also expanding the findings with literature control for in-depth understanding of the study.

4.3.1 Participant representation

The two schools for the study were represented with school A and school B for clarity purposes. However, the interviewed participants from each of the schools were represented as School A Principal, School A Deputy principal, School A HOD 1, School A HOD 2, School A Educator 1, School A Educator 2, School A Educator 3, School A Educator 4, and School A Educator 5. While participants in school B were represented as School B Principal, School B Deputy principal, School B HOD 1, School B HOD 2, School B Educator 1, School B Educator 2, School B Educator 3, School B Educator 4, and School B Educator 5. The above representations are to foster clarity regarding the interviewed participants in the discussion of findings. Participants response were discussed relation to research objective for in-depth understanding of the study.

4.3.2 Data coding into themes and categories

The findings made on the study were analysed and presented in themes and categories illustrated in Table 4.1.

4.4 DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

4.4.1 NATURE OF LEARNER VIOLENCE IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS

4.4.1.1 Ill-disciplined learners

Learner violence has been a serious challenge facing the SMTs over the years hence a crucial topic of discussion. On that premise, I sought to understand more on the nature of learner violence in some selected secondary school. It was found in the study that ill-discipline and bullying of others are the most occurring nature of learners misconduct.

Table 4.1: Themes and categories

Themes	Categories

Nature of learner violence in secondary schools	• Ill-disciplined learners • Bullying of others
Current leadership strategies in handling learners violence	• Policy making • Disciplinary approach • Parental involvement • Review of policy • Behavioural motivation
Challenges faced by leaders in handling learners violence	• Lack of parental support • Lack of support from the Department of Basic of Education
Leadership strategies to improve learners violence	• Review of policy at all times • Staff protection • Community engagement

The participants in the selected secondary schools gave responses to the research question based on their understanding. It could be deduced from the participants that some learners portray ill-discipline beahaviours which pose even more challenge to other learners, educators, non-academic staff and to the learner in its entirety. Below are the participants' responses regarding the research question.

> *School A Principal reported that learner violence is a very serious challenge, learners in this school are ill disciplined, we are unable to discipline them, maybe it because some learners are old. Corporal punishment that has been faced out makes it difficult to discipline them. Learners come to school being under influence of substances.*

In support of the above participant response, Wolhuter and Russo (2013:1) posit that the abolishment of corporal punishment in 1996 has made teachers and other educators in secondary

schools vulnerable and also toothless in dealing with learner violence. The abolishment of corporal punishment has deprived teachers and other educators the strict approach towards dealing with learner violence and empowering learners who can now misbehave and even talk to their teachers or educators as they wish knowing that nothing serious would happen.

School A Deputy principal maintained that learner violence is really a hook on our neck in this school and it appears that we are handicapped because government seems to have taken away our power. You will find out that most of this learners don't even care that you are a principal or not. They talk us anyhow, abuse their fellow school mate and can even go to the extent of threatening you as the deputy principal. In such case it is really worry-some because you have little or nothing to do in order to correct them.

Furthermore, School A HOD 1 added that Learner violence is a no go area in the sense that it the biggest challenge confronting us the HoDs. As the HOD, you are suppose to be in command of authority in the school but our command or power is threatened by the poor learners behaviours. You will keep getting the report of coming to school late and not doing of home works, these problems of poor discipline are even more with the older students who suppose to be of good example to their younger ones but such is never the case.

In support of the above participant's response, Mohapi (2013:376) posits that learner violence is one of the highest challenges facing the SMTs including the parents of the learners as they are at the receiving end of home critiques, researchers, public speakers and even politicians. Furthermore, Ali, Dada, Isiaka and Salmon (2014:255) maintain that learner discipline constitutes a huge challenge to the policy makers in secondary schools and the society at large as a result of the aggressive behaviours exhibited by learners in the society and violence among teachers. These bad behaviours pose detrimental effects such as increase in school dropouts, poor academic performance and lateness to schools by learners. More so, the high prevalence of learner violence in school leaves the school management powerless due to lack of support from appropriate authorities and interference of political powers. Furthermore, Jinot (2018:36) posits that learner violence across secondary schools is becoming too alarming which calls for more measures in mitigating it in order to enhance learning and to ensure learning friendly environment. Learner violence is a global challenge which affects all learners irrespective of the age, gender and school and it is perceived to be caused by diverse factors from the learners,

school managements and the societal influences (Ali, Dada, Isiaka & Salmon, 2014:254). As a multifactorial phenomenon, its negative impacts such as high rate of school dropout, poor academic performance, escalated rate of examination malpractice and general rise in behavioural abnormalities continue to threaten the future of the younger generation and the peace of the society at large.

School B Deputy principal also maintained that learners behaviours are so depressing to me because i kept wondering what has gone wrong with the children of these days. Children behaviour wasn't that bad during our days but these days it totally no discipline. It hurts a lot and many parents doesn't know what we are passing through in the hands of their children here in school. Learners behaves as they like even to your face with the mind set that it is their right even when the discipline is contrary to the school codes of conducts.

In addition, School B HOD 1 posited that learner violence in this school to me, is quite high like you will find out that some learners like being aggressive even to their teachers or fellow students, they intimidate the younger ones, carry weapon to school. Some even bring marijuana to school and even hard substances knowing fully well that such stuff is prohibited in the school. They do all these because they feel it is their right to have such. How can it be a right to go against a laid down rules in a community like secondary school. It is just a bad behaviour and the perpetrators most times end up in influencing others.

The prevalence of learner violence to a larger extent is working towards defeating the primary objective of secondary school system. According to Chidi and Egboka (2017:4124), the secondary school system is for promoting and acquiring information, positive attitude, knowledge, values and skills that will enable the learner develop into an asset to self, family and the society. Acquired skill and knowledge from secondary schools will enable the learner into making the right decisions and for a better self development. Hence, learner violence remains a fight to finish for a better society.

School B HOD 2 said that learner violence has been a topic of discuss with little or no progress as to getting things right. I think the family system has failed us because all these learners are coming from families so with these bad behaviours, you will

keep asking which type of homes they came out from. You will see them drinking and smoking outside the school gate even while the school is in section. The ones in the school compound feel that they have over grown the school rules and regulations. When you keep inviting their parents, you will find out that there is not coming out of it.

In agreement with the above participant's response, Jinot (2018:35) in a study ascertained that learner violence is a serious problem which they reported to be caused by poor family discipline and the general attitude of those around the learner both in at homes and around schools environment. Furthermore, Maring and Koblinsky (2012:379) argued that learner violence in South Africa is rooted in the communities posing a huge public health concern, they further maintained that most of the schools are situated in the communities and these communities are filled with all forms of violence hence those violence spread from communities to the school. Owing to the communities being infiltrated with violence, educators working in those community schools complain of the learners coming to school with weapons and consistent exhibition of risk behaviour such as bullying other and threaten their teacher. Dhlamini (2013:249) adds that learner violence in most of the schools across South Africa are caused as result of learners home experience and their perceptions about school. According to Dhlamini (2013:250), the learners' perception could be about their feeling in the area of teacher-learner relationship, learner-peer-relationship pattern of the school management discipline, rules and regulations and the school general environment.

Tintswalo (2014:53) further argued that there are lots of family breakdowns in the townships, in a situation whereby some parents has money they fail to transmit the resources to their children which embed the children in poverty with their last resort as violence in schools and in the townships. Also, the attitudes of the teachers and lack of the parental support can also inflict psychological burdens on the learners. Ngakane *et al.* (2012:46) found that learner violence is caused as a result of oppression and marginalisation of learners due to their vulnerable nature. Sometimes learner violence can be as a result of external influences from the school environments which take diverse forms or from within the school. For instance, learners might be bullying their fellows within their schools or their educator bullying the learners (Mncube & Harber, 2013:3).

School A Educator 2 is of the view that learner violence is deeply rooted in schools than we can imagine and it manifest in the form of unruly behaviour such as walking out of the teacher or from class.

In support of the above participant's response, Ncontsa and Shumba (2013:1) maintain that studies have shown that learner violence is undermining teaching and learning as educators spend quality of time correcting bad behaviours and in solving learner problems instead of concentrating on adequate teaching and learning. According to the report of Council of Europe 2003 as cited by Roux and Mokhele (2011:319), learner violence, assaults to teachers and destruction of school properties are on the increase across Europe. In affirmation to this, Maphalala (2014:29) posits that learner violence is a serious issue across some European countries. Furthermore, Singh and Steyn (2013:1) assert that learner violence frustrates learning objectives predisposing teachers and other educators to dangers and to a lager extents breeds unhealthy environment. Interestingly, the violent acts the learners are displaying negatively affect the school ethos and compromise the safety of every one around the school.

4.4.1.2 Bullying of others

Deducing from the participants response, bullying is a serious challenge in secondary schools. Most of the learners engage in intimation of other learners for reasons best known to them.
School A Educator 4 said that bullying is among he major prevalent form of learner violence both inside the school and outside the school. Most of the learners enjoy being the boss, they bully both their fellow school mates and the teachers which is more frightening because the teacher or educators struggle so much in such situation because someone might be at risk
In support of the participant's response, Marais and Meier (2010:55) posit that bullying is a serious problem, especially on the playground, where it takes the form of name calling, teasing, taunting, mocking, as well as intimidating other learners. Persistent physical or psychological harassment occurs daily.

It has been generally recognized that the socially constructed nature of masculinity leads to violence and aggression, which is also approved of or even expected, whereas girls are expected to behave in more empathetic, caring, and helping ways as part of their female social role (Gini & Pozzoli, 2006; Watson, 2007; Young & Sweeting, 2004). In a study about the role of verbal abuse among teenage learners, it was found that verbal abuse functions as a cultural resource for the construction of hegemonic masculinities, as well as of power relations between boys and

girls (Eliasson, Isaksson, & Laflamme, 2007). Therefore, abuse coming from popular "tough" boys was usually rendered legitimate and invisible, because it was often excused as unintentional or as a joke. In contrast, girls' involvement either as aggressors or as victims of verbal abuse was not similarly advantageous for their femininity.

Another study in secondary schools aimed at investigating learner's attitudes as well as their reasons for involvement in bullying (Boulton, Karellou, Lanitis, Manoussou, & Lemoni, 2001), results showed a high prevalence of aggressive incidents and victimization among learners, especially among boys' groups. Therefore, it is evident from literature that bullying in schools is a serious form of misconduct which needs to be dealt with in order to enhance a safe environment for learners to learn.

> *School B Educator 2 stated that educators are really seeing a lot in the hands of these learners, despite their size, you might be surprise to see them bullying each other. The so called little ones are being sent by the bigger ones because of that, they are more courageous to exhibit any form of bad behaviour knowing well that they have a backup.*

> *School B Educator 4 and School B Educator 5 were of the opinion that one can not talk about learner violence in South Africa without mentioning bulling because it has become a trend among learners.*

In affirmation to the participants response, Tustin, Zulu, and Basson (2014:13) maintain that bullying is among the prevalent type of learner violence in South African secondary schools. Ngidi and Moletsane (2018:2) add that bullying in South African secondary schools is widespread on media and newspapers. The bullying most times escalates to harm to others including sexual abuse (Liang, Flisher & Lombard, 2007:161). Marais and Meier (2010:55) mention that bullying is a serious problem, especially on the playground, where it takes the form of name calling, teasing, taunting, mocking, as well as intimidating other learners. Persistent physical or psychological harassment occurs daily. Physical abuse includes kicking, biting, hitting, punching and deliberate pushing and shoving; emotional abuse includes the above as well as malicious gossip and ganging up to deliberately ostracise victims.

Bullying among learners has a wide range of impacts both on the bully and bullied ranging from prolonged psychical to psychological harm. Learners could develop anxiety, impaired concentration and poor educational output (Gevers & Flisher, 2011:30; Mncube & Steinmann, 2014:203). Furthermore, Shaikhnag, Loate and Vakalisa (2015:458) mention that it can take the nature of bullying of other learners, use of intimidating words on educators or swearing at them. Ali *et al*. (2014:50) also add that bullying and carrying of weapon is a common occurance in South African secondary schools including gangsterism, arrogant behaviours and substance abuse. Sometimes the learner violence can be as a result of external influences from the school environments which take diverse forms or from within the school; for instance, learners might be bullying their fellows within their schools or their educator bullying the learners (Mncube & Harber, 2013:3). Ncontsa and Shumba (2013:13) in their study found that vandalism, indiscipline, gangsterism, bullying and intolerance are among the common forms of learner violence in schools.

4.4.2 CURRENT LEADERSHIP STRATEGIES IN HANDLING LEARNER'S VIOLENCE

Leadership position in secondary schools constitutes a vital force in the maintainance of favourable learning environments for learners. On that basis, the above question sought to explore the current leadership strategies used by the study areas in managing learners violence. Therefore, deducing form the participants' response "Management strategies" emerged the following categories.

4.4.2.1 Policy making

Proper code of conduct and policy making or interpretation are crucial leadership strategies which help in ensuring discipline in secondary schools. Despite that, learner violence is still on the rise in secondary schools.

> *School A Principal stated that they endeavour to make policies and implement them for maintenance of good atmosphere for learning. It is really difficult to manage learners because they have lots of influences both in schools and outside school.*

Section 29 of the South African Constitution provides that everyone has the right to a basic education, children's rights are protected in The Bill of Rights 12(1) C and section 29 and 12 (1) C (RSA, 1996). The common law principle that a child's best interests are of paramount importance in every matter concerning the child, has been included in Section 28(2) as a basic

fundamental right (Oosthuizen *et al*., 20033:55). This makes it the duty of the state to protect learners from violence and to ensure their safety so that educational obligations can be fulfilled.

The South African Schools Act, 84 of 1996 (RSA 1996) highlights that the management of discipline calls on educators, principals and governing bodies to make learners feel emotionally comfortable and physically safe so that they (learners) can develop self-discipline and accountability in their actions (Naong, 2007:5). Every educator has to create an environment in which each learner is guided towards an attitude of caring and respect for other learners. Furthermore, there are two coextensive pillars to the in loco parentis role that educators play: the duty of care (which implies looking after the physical and mental well being of learners) and the duty to maintain order at a school (which implies educators' duty to discipline learners).

> *School B Principal maintain that they made policies and codes of conducts under the mandate of the mininstry of education, yes we make policies and codes of conducts for the management of the school. If it was not of the policies he may not be a principal. Learners can be up to something nasty and that can be detrimental.*

In support of the participant response, the 1996, South African Schools Act no. 108 of 1996 (RSA, 1996a) mandated SGBs to make policies and code of conducts that will enhance the management and maintainance of learners discipline for conducive learning environment. On that premise, the SGBs allow the principal the responsibility of making policies and code of conducts. The code of conducts and policies contain the necessary disciplinary measures in order to foster learning in schools (Mestry & Khumalo, 2012:98). In addition, codes of conducts are developed in line with the guideline of the Department of Education but sharpen by schools according to what is best for them (Netshitangani, 2018:169). The transformational leadership theory poses that management should at all times employ strategies that will aid the improvement or change of the organisation (Smith, 2011:44).

Grant, Gardner, Kajee, Moodley and Somaroo (2010:402) further maintain that educators have been included in the leadership teams for enhancing adequate learning environment as a result of policy shift toward collaborative efforts in school leadership and management. Ncontsa and Shumba (2013:1) posit that principals are central to policy making in the secondary schools. They help in implementation of codes of conducts, monitor the activities of the school and try to

set a proper standard for the entire staff. In affirmation, Makhasane and Mthembu (2019:51) posit that South African Department of Education national policy positioned teachers as key drivers of standard education hence authorised them to take charge of ensuring conducive learning environment.

Furthermore, Kiprop (2012:121) adds that with the help of policies, principals collaborate with other staff in safeguarding the life's of learners which is the core challenge in school environment. In addition, Maring and Koblinsky (2013:385) mention that leadership of the various schools contributes greatly in curbing learner violence through ensuring that code of conducts and policies are properly interpreted to the learners and their parents and also that the behaviours of the learners are under check based on the codes of conducts and regulations. Also, the school leadership tries in establishing good rapport with the violence prone learners, talking them through on the need for positive change of behaviour and emphasising on the future effects of those behaviours should anyone refuse to change.

4.4.2.2 Disciplinary approach

Adoption of disciplinary approaches has been the last resort of SMTs since the abolishment of corporal punishment in order to foster learning and protect the learners (Oosthuizen, 2008:4).

> *School A Deputy principal posited that they try to discipline the learners and other educators are mandated not give learners severe punishment in order to bridge their right but they can be reprimanded when they do bad things as corporal punishment was abolished (RSA, 1669a).*

> *School B Deputy principal stated that applying policies the Department of Education policies by suspending learners, or school code of conduct (RSA, 1996), one on one sessions in dealing with violence and giving learners marching orders or try building learners is not working.*

According to Serame *et al.* (2013:4), there are two types of disciplinary methods that can be used those are the preventative methods and the punitive methods of discipline. The preventative methods such as proper preparation by the educator, positive discipline, rewards and encouraging pride amongst the learners are seen as the most effective methods by the educators. Learners see the methods of referral to the principal, discussion meetings with the parents and referral to the SGB as the most effective, followed by the totally discredited form of maintain

discipline such as corporal punishment. Furthermore, Mokhele (2006:157) states that punishment of learners can be avoided if a relationship of trust, respect and cooperation is established between the educators and the learners. Learners must be reprimanded to protect their own human dignity and integrity. Many educators have a problem with managing the classroom and thus still use the authoritarian teaching strategies. These educators must be trained to work effectively with a democratic education system. They can also learn from other educators who work as facilitators of education events.

A democratic classroom is based on the learner's willingness to accept the educator's authority. Educators must be taught the alternatives to corporal punishment. Oosthuizen *et al.* (2003: 476) maintain that both the preventive and the punitive must be favoured. In other words, a contextual approach is required: certain instances call for preventive action while others call for punitive measures. The conceptuality lies in the seriousness of the misconduct, the age, attitude and motives of the perpetrator, the circumstances that persisted at the time of the misconduct and the impact of the misconduct on the teaching-learning environment. According to Wolhunter and Russo (2013: 9), it is recommended that leaders that are in charge of developing policies must involve key stakeholders. Educators must be professionally developed to deal with cases of misconduct on a yearly basis and learners must also be trained. Parents must be helped to develop a manner in which they respond to issues of misconduct when their child is involved and the victims must be counselled.

4.4.2.3 Parental involvement

Some of the participants responses show that schools endeavour to involve the parents of the learners in handling of learners violence. On that premise, some of the participants have the under-represented quotes. School B Educator 1 was of the view that same as leadership and responsible for the proper coordination of the school and ensuring conducive learning environment, they try to involve the parents of the learners most time violence arises. They felt that they could not do it alone that's why it was imperative to involve the parents.

> *School A Educator 3 added that the parents are integral part of their child development so they involve them when the need arise if not it might lead to repercussion when the school management takes laws into their hands without the knowledge of the parents. Learners are so difficult to control so it is the duty of every one to ensure safe learning environment for everyone.*

According to School B Educator 3 they call all parents to meet with the disciplinary committee to address the problems after issuing a warning to learner. Thereafter, the learner is suspended following the proper procedure.

In support of the above participants response, Ncontsa and Shumba (2013:13) posit that most of the schools, beside the adoption of codes of conducts for addressing learners violence, use integrated approach where learners, educators and parents work in harmony in maintaining learners discipline. Parents are the first teachers of the learners because they live with them in their various homes hence institutes the first level of moral values in them while also working in harmony with the school leaders in bringing out the best from their children (Ncontsa & Shumba, 2013:1).

According to Singh and Steyn (2013:6), parents constitute a great deal of force in the school system for curbing learners violence. They assist the principals and teachers in curbing learner violence through their relentless efforts in guiding their children. Parents also influence their children towards positive attitudes and encourages them to deviate from violence. Modisaotsile (2012:3) posits that parents provide the learners with their formal educations hence they are the safety net of every child. Parents till this point, are expected to work with the educators in addressing learner violence and in bringing out the best from their children. By taking the responsibility of giving their children formal education, parents take interest in all concerning their children such as maintaining good relationship with them which will allow the children to confide in them, assist the children in their extra-curricular activities and academic projects. They also help in ensuring that their children are engaged in other activities, school activities such as; being part of drama, music, clubs and sports. Furthermore, parents involvement in their children activities enable them in knowing the type of friends they keep, how they move around and what they do when they are out and be able to guide them in the right direction for a better generation. The consulative approach is one of the principles found within the transformational leadership as stated on 2.2. on literature data. On literature data, Arachchi (2012:71) and Kwaba and Nyabuto (2015: 165), states a transformational supports open communication that will foster an opportunity for followers to share ideas. Hence, this leadership style, inspires or motivates the followers, changes the attitude and supports the goals of everyone at the school.

4.4.2.4 Review of policy

Having policies and conducts without proper implementation or time to time review will definitely amount to nothing. Therefore, deducing from the participant response, policy review is among the leadership strategies in handling learners violence.

School A Educator 4 maintained that the schools principals are trying their best in handling learner violence such as regular reviewing of the the policies. However, these policies are a bedrock to discipline in the school hence they do review them in order that they can improve the control. School B Educator 4 also maintained that:

> *guiding rules for handling learner violence are embedded in the policy documents and code of conduct so that leaders in the secondary schools endeavour in reviewing those policies. By reviewing policies, they enable leaders to modify things where necessary in order to fit in addressing rising learners violence*.

In support of the participants response, Wolhunter and Russo (2013:9) maintain that the policies must be reviewed annually. Policies must include clear and precise definition of terms and prohibited behaviour. The policies must include all forms of misbehaviour that is written, physical, verbal and electronic forms of misconduct. The policies must protect the victims after reporting such misbehaviour misconduct from being further victimised. The policies must include step by step procedures to be followed when handling such cases. The policies must be included in the learner's handbooks or yearbooks. In addition, the Department of Education (2000:2) maintain that leaders across secondary schools should endeavour to set class rules at the beginning of each year and also review their policies on quarterly basis.

According to the transformational leadership theory, there is need for management to continually review policy for a change to happen (Bush, 2009:35). Also, the leaders should hand copies to learners and distribute them to areas frequently visited and endeavour that learners should understand the content of their their copies and also sign signed them. The drafting of policies especillay the code of conduct must be consultative. The schools are sticking to the transformational leadership which states that there is need of Intellectual Stimulation (IS). On literature data on 2.2, Ahmad, Abbas, Latif and Rasheed, 2014: 15), assert that the leader will strive to make the followers to be creative and partake in decision making. Special attention is given on applying the reasoning before taking any action. According to Ahmad, Abbas, Latif and

Rasheed, 2014:15), leaders will encourage their subordinates and stakeholders to find solutions to the problems through applying logical thinking thereby making, the educators, SGB and learners to be creative, critical and logical.as violence in schools is taking a new dimension which need all of them to apply their minds effectively.

4.4.2.5 Behavioural motivation

Deducing from the participants response, motivation of good behaviours is among the strategies used by schools in handling learners violence. The teachers endeavour to motivate the learners towards positive behaviour.

According to School A Educator 5 there are leaders in respective sections in the school hence some educators are in charge of the classrooms. They shouldn't be using their position as an educator against the learners. Because of that some try to prevent learners bad behaviours through encouraging positive behaviours, encouraging their positive deeds with that they are complying.

School B Educator 5 in affirmation with the response of School A Educator 5: added that leaders in their school encourage them to be using positive words to the learners, encourage them to be their role model and try to correct them in a lovely manner when they go wrong.

In support of the learners view, Nelson (2014:1) argued that it is not wise worsening learners bad behaviours through punishments in the name of making the individual better. Physical punishment should not be used because it can encourage resentment, stubbornness and even revenge on offenders. Therefore, it is imperative to adopt positive approaches such as behavioural motivation that will foster good beahviours. Tlhapi (2015:5) is also of the opinion that any measures adopted should help to promote orderliness in the schools and encourage the learners towards positive behaviours in order to be a better person to the school, family and the society at large. In addition, Maring and Koblinsky (2013:385) mention that leadership of the various schools contributes greatly in curbing learner violence through ensuring that code of conducts and policies are properly interpreted to the learners and their parents and also that the behaviours of the learners are under check based on the codes of conducts and regulations. Also, the school leadership tries in establishing good rapport with the violence prone learners, talking

them through on the need for positive change of behaviour and emphasising on the future effects of those behaviours should anyone refuse to change. Ncontsa and Shumba (2013:13) posit that most of the schools beside the adoption of codes of conducts for addressing learners violence, uses integrated approach where learners, educators and parents work in harmony in maintaining learners discipline. Ngqela and Lewis (2012:87) posit that the first approach towards curbing learner violence is the ability of the school stakeholders to articulate the experiences of the violence victims which will give them more clue of the problem before devising intervention approaches for addressing the problems.

Schools tend to rely much on school policies on dealing with violence in the schools , there is need to find other approaches on dealing with learner violence. As stated by literaure on 2.2 Burns (1978) as cited by Arachchi (2012:2), states that leaders who apply the principles of transformational leadership, are courageous and take the risks and they believe in team work, they are driven by values. Such type of leaders doesn't rely on past experiences alone they are ready to learn new approaches on dealing with the problems they encounter in the organisation. On 2.2 the literature data assert that Okinyi, Kwaba and Nyabuto (2015:165), says transformational leader offers the opportunity of discovering new ways of doing things. Such leadership according to Bass (1978:21), hence, is based on intellectual stimulation of followers by showing the new ways of looking at a problem and teaching them to view difficulties as problems to be solved focusing on the rational approaches to the problems. Given the empirical evidence schools are experiencing different forms of violence despite the application of polices such as learner code of conduct, hence, there is need for the leaders to evaluate the approach and devise new approaches such as behaviour modification.

4.4.3 CHALLENGES FACED BY LEADERS IN HANDLING LEARNER VIOLENCE

Managing learner violence poses huge challenge to leaders in secondary schools owing owing to its multifactorial nature **(**Steyn, & Singh, 2018:1029). On that premise, this research question explored the challenges faced by leaders in handling learner violence in Tswaing district. On the bases of analysis the collected data, "Poor support system" was deduced. The categories serves as an umbrella under which participants responses were represented.

4.4.3.1 Lack of parental support

Parents are vital team members in nurturing a learner to a better future hence their roles cannot be undermined. To that effect, below are the response of the participants regarding the research question.

> *According School A Principal poor corporation of parents in the task of managing learner violence was one of the weak effort towards learner violence because parents know their children and their teachers but parents are being dragged to come out to school to assist in learner discipline.*

> *School B Principal added to state that, parents are not rendering the needed help to the school management. One would find out that parents have left the responsibility entirely to the teachers and other school management to deal with. Parents do not face their jobs and expect the school managers to perform miracle in the lives of their children.*

To the above effect, Hornby and Lafaele (2011:39) maintain that working class parents appear to be engrossed in their work which deprives them time to focus on their children. In addition, an empirical study by Cucchiara and Horvat (2009:976) buttressed that parents tend to leave the whole duty of nurturing their children in the hands of teachers, especially those living in townships. Meanwhile, the teachers are not empowered to take responsible of such roles particularly in the aspect of learners discipline.

> *School A Deputy principal was of the view that most parents don't respond to calls when they are needed. For instance if a learner commits offence and because of being handicapped in dealing with the situation, they invite the parents in order to work together with the discipline committee but most of them neglect the calls or even respond at their convenient time which is too discouraging. When there is learners violence that needed to be addressed, if it is suspending the learners with the consensus of the parents, the parent may not respond which delays the whole process.*

> *School B Deputy principal further added that some parents are trying when they are needed but the larger number of parents neglect their roles in the life of their children.*

Sometimes you wonder if the parents talk to their children at home because parents should be close to their children in order to be guiding them while the schools are doing their part.

School A HOD 1 also maintained that bad attitude of parents is one of the challenges they are facing. One finds out that even when the parents answer the school call regarding a violence attitude of their children, they will even turn against the school. Sometimes parents have issues with the school and it is so discouraging. These are people they fight for, and put our lives along in order to nurture their children for good behaviour.

School B HOD 1 stated that most of these learners are from broken home where they have little or no manners which makes them misbehave. They come to school and infiltrate the good ones but if their parents are giving them the right home training, it will not be difficult for we in schools to handle learners violence.

Robarts (2014:76) in a study reported that 77% of school teachers are in affirmation that learners indiscipline is underpinned in the family structures and high level of family indiscipline.

School A Educator 2 acknowledged that parental upbringing is a thing of concern to them and the busy schedules of parents. They are talking about the upbringing of some of the learners now many of them are too busy to even listen to the school. They just dress up their children, send or drop them at school gate and go their leaving the child at the mercy of the teachers. Teachers don't perform miracle but most parents expect us to do it.

School A Educator 4 maintain that some learners are not staying with their parents, child headed families makes it difficult to report the child when they misbehave, and you know when you have no parent to report the child's bad behaviors, the school management will be stocked on how best to deal with the situation".

According to School B Educator 4 some of the learners are playing the roles of parents in their respective homes and also living in townships. You will find out that

their challenges are already numerous which they brings to the school. In school, you will find them demonstrating all manners of indiscipline behaviours.

On the above premise, Segalo and Rambuda (2018:4) posit that it is imperative for parents to endeavour in playing their parental roles in the proper development of their children both character wise and their general well being in order to curtail learners violence. Furthermore, Marais and Meier (2010:51) in their study found that learner violence has its root in their various homes which is as a result of poor upbringing. The learners carry those disrespectful home attitudes to their various schools compounding the challenges of school leaders in managing learners discipline.

According to Mokhele (2006:157), learners must be taught by their parents to accept the educators as their parents "in loco parentis", meaning on behalf of the parent. Educators must be trained to improve their lesson planning skills and learner management skills. Positive classroom management control mechanisms and educator authority towards a positive educator–learner relationship will in turn minimise the occurrence of misbehaviour in the classroom

4.4.3.2 Lack of support from the Department of Basic of Education

Deducing from some of the participants response, the schools are faced with challenges of lack of support from the Departmnet of Basic of Eduaction. This is worry-some because the teachers needs to be protected which will enable them in taking the needed steps in addressing the problem of learners violence.

School B Educator 1 was of the view that the education system fails to protect teachers, it doesn't give teachers enough rights to discipline the learners, its advocacy is one sided and biased. This makes it frustrating to the educators because they can't exercise school rules where necessary.

School A Educator 5 added owing to educational policies, there are no alternative framework to support the school management in handling learner violence leaving the school management vulnerable to harm as a result of their decisions.

School B Educator 5 said that the school management are really vulnerable since the abolishment of corporal punishment. Allowing the schools in making policies are not

enough because there are still some stringent clause to that liberty in the sense that they can not give any learner severe punishment. Not that i want severe punishment for learners but not having tangible disciplinary measure after the abolishment of corporal punishment is making things difficult for the educators.

The Schools' Act of the Republic of South African Act 84 of 1996 (RSA, 1996) also clearly states that no person may administer corporal punishment to a learner at a school. Furthermore, it was required that, in terms of Section 8(2) of the South African Schools' Act, a code of conduct must be adopted by the school's governing body. The implication of these changes for education was that not only did several legislation documents have to change, but also new discipline measures in schools had to be adapted (RSA, 1996).

The Department of Education in South Africa provides schools with an example of a code of conduct as part of its guidelines for constructing their own codes of conduct (DoE, 2007:1). Duties of parents, disciplinary steps, accepting responsibilities and the payment of school fees are some of the matters that need to be discussed with learners, parents and educators of the school (RSA, 1996b) before drawing up a code of conduct for the school. Where there is a lack of effective behaviour management and disciplinary practices. Cotton (2010:33) advises that educators should recognise vague or unenforceable school rules, and address these immediately.

The governing body is also empowered to maintain and enforce school discipline in accordance with the SA code of conduct. For instance, in the case of serious misconduct, the governing body can suspend a learner for a maximum of seven days after a fair hearing (RSA, 1996b). However, the punishment must be clearly understood and accepted by the perpetrator. This implies that those responsible for drafting the school rules need to have a knowledge and understanding of the basic law principles to draft rules that will conform to such original legislation.

4.4.4 LEADERSHIP STRATEGIES TO IMPROVE LEARNERS VIOLENCE

Management of secondary schools in this dispensation demands the application of the right leadership strategies. On that premise, leadership in schools is based on learning for a better society hence leader represents an influence relationship between a leader and followers. The leaders in this perspective motivates the followers towards working in the direction of a shared purpose (Daft, 2018:27). Furthermore, Leithwood, Patten and Jantzi, (2010:695) posit that leadership in schools' influences learners' experience in four distinct flow path ways which are;

rational path, emotion, organizational and family path. These pathways directly influence the all-round development of the learner. Therefore, it is the duty of the leaders in schools to identify how best these pathways suit their learners in order to foster healthy learning environment devoid of violence. In order to understand the strategies that can be used to handle learner violence, participant's most occurring strategies were review of policy, staff protection and community engagement.

4.4.4.1 Review of policy

Leadership in secondary schools constitutes the managerial body with the authority in making policies for the governance of the school. From the participants' response, it could be deduced the need for reviewing of existing policies in order to improve the management of learner violence in the schools.

> *According to School A Principal, the Department of Education must change its policy because right now it is bias. There must be consistency in terms of learner's discipline measures it must be uniform it must be common and consistent all the teachers in the school to discipline learners equally. A joint force of teachers in terms of discipline it should be that all teachers are doing it. Disciplinary committee to be effective with the involvement of parents of learners.*

> *School B Deputy principal maintain there is a need for the review of the learner code of conduct, the policy should be water tight especially from the side of the department. This is imperative owing to the escalating nature of learner violence despite the efforts of the school leaders.*

In support of the participants' response, leaders are the managers in schools because they foster compliance of subordinate to the existing policies and codes of conducts. On that premise, Knapp, Honig, Plecki, Portin, and Copland (2014:4) maintain leaders are instrumental towards achieving school objectives. While "leadership is defined as the shared work and commitments that shape the direction of a school in pursuit of those agendas".

The principal is the school leader with the task of hiring and evaluating teachers, encourage staff on professional development, ensure discipline among learners, foster community outreach, engage in social services, make budgets for the school and ensuring healthy learning

environment (Halverson, Kelley, & Shaw, 2014:57). To a broader extent, the study adopted transformational leadership theory which maintains that leadership positions enable the leaders in getting the best out of people through motivating them, raising their awareness of the need to work well for a desired outcome and also neglecting their selfish interest for the good of all Bass (1980:363). Furthermore, Smith (2011:44) adds that the roles of the transformational leader in schools also include promoting teamwork among staff, encouraging positive self-esteem, motivating staff to function at a high level of performance, controlling misconduct in schools. The transformational leader portrays trustworthiness and ensures that the schools is effectively managed to avoid any health issues arising as a result of learner violence in the school (Robbins & Davidhizar, 2017:234).

> *School A HoD 1 stated that the policy and code of conduct are not effective because the department of education are doing less in ensuring that the schools are working in line with their directives*.

> *School A HoD 2 and School B HoD 2 in their opinion said that policy and the code of conduct are the main documents when it comes to managing learners discipline so the leaders should strengthen the policies more.*

The constitution mandates SGBs to use the code of conduct. According to Mestry and Khumalo (2012:98) and (RSA, 1996), the SGBs are encouraged on the daily enforcement of the code of conduct by the School Management Team (SMT) and the educators. The processes of implementing the code of conducts should be properly figured out in the school policy regarding disciplinary measures in order to ensure non violation of human right and dignity. In ensuring appropriate disciplinary measures, SGBs constantly review the code of conducts in order to ensure its consistency.

Tlhapi (2015:4) suggests that educators should adopt any suitable measures to them in addressing learner violence in their school but avoid bridging the right of the learner. Any measures adopted should help to promote orderliness in the schools and encourage the learners towards positive behaviours in order to be a better person to the school, family and the society at large. Also, the school code of conducts should be well explained to the learners and their

parents through handbooks, meetings and newsletters in order for all to get acquainted with what the school expect of the learners discipline (Tlhapi, 2015:5).

In addition, Maring and Koblinsky (2013:385) mention that leadership of the various schools contributes greatly in curbing learner violence through ensuring that code of conducts and policies are properly interpreted to the learners and their parents and also that the behaviours of the learners are under check based on the codes of conducts and regulations. Also, the school leadership tries in establishing good rapport with the violence prone learners, talking them through on the need for positive change of behaviour and emphasising on the future effects of those behaviours should anyone refuse to change. Ncontsa and Shumba (2013:13) posit that most of the schools, beside the adoption of codes of conducts for addressing learners violence, use integrated approach where learners, educators and parents work in harmony in maintaining learners discipline. Ngqela and Lewis (2012:87) posit that the first approach towards curbing learner violence is the ability of the school stakeholders to articulate the experiences of the violence victims which will give them more clue of the problem before devising intervention approaches for addressing the problems.

School A Educator 1 posit that education system to strengthen the policy, the policy doesn't suit all the schools its was designed for model C schools, irrelevant policies needs to be looked at. Department not supportive. Department should investigate serious misconduct which can assist teachers, intervene and solve those misconduct.

School B Educator 1 maintained that leaders in various schools should encourage more strict rules on absenteeism, coming to school late, yelling at a teacher, teachers yelling at each other in from of the learners, coming to school with weapons.

School A Educator 2 was of the view that policies and codes of conducts adopted should encourage prevention of violence. Because i think that much emphasis are being laid on this learner violence which tend to shift attention from things that might benefit the learners and the school at large such as preventive like encouragement and positive rewards of good behaviours.

According to Serame *et al.* (2013: 4), the more educationally preferred method such as proper preparation by the educator was the method that was most effective. There are two types of disciplinary methods that can be used those are the preventative methods and the punitive methods of discipline. The preventative methods such as proper preparation by the educator, positive discipline, rewards and encouraging pride amongst the learners are seen as the most effective methods by the educators. Learners see the methods of referral to the principal, discussion meetings with the parents and referral to the SGB as the most effective, followed by the totally discredited form of maintaining discipline such as corporal punishment .

Mokhele (2006:157) states that punishment of learners can be avoided if a relationship of trust, respect and cooperation is established between the educators and the learners. Learners must be reprimanded to protect their own human dignity and integrity. Many educators have a problem with managing the classroom and thus still use the authoritarian teaching strategies. These educators must be trained to work effectively with a democratic education system. They can also learn from other educators who work as facilitators of education events. A democratic classroom is based on the learner's willingness to accept the educator's authority. Educators must be taught the alternatives to corporal punishment. In many classrooms there is lack of an emphasis of the punitive forms of discipline. Educators wait until misbehaviour occurs before taking action. The emphasis should rather be on the following preventative measures:

- Positive discipline, not blaming, pushing, shouting and using sarcasm.
- Classroom management: arranging the furniture in such a way that it is easy to see every learner.

4.4.4.2 Staff protection

Secondary school staff member which comprised both academics and non-academic staff are important part of the school hence the need for Department of Education to protect them the more. Deducing from the participants response, it is imperative to protect the staff (Rossouw, 2007:82).

> *School B Educator 2 was of the view that the teachers and other non-academic staff are vulnerable and should be protected through making of rules that will ensure their safety.*

School B Educator 3 stated that the leaders should prioritise the well-being of their staff therefore have them at heart when making decision regarding the school.

Xaba (2014:1580) mentions that owing to the threat of learner violence to other learners and educators, some school leadership has resorted to utilising diverse security and safety approaches. Among the purpose of utilising security and safety measures is to help in having the activities in the school environment under control and including the psycho-social and physical environment. Furthermore, Eke and Singh (2018:1) acknowledge that school management teams utilises networking for gathering information regarding learner violence and support system for addressing those violence. Burton (2008:3) alludes that owing to the complex nature of learner violence and the secondary school leadership, there is need for developmental approach in ensuring safety within schools instead of concentrating on individual aspects within the various schools, by adopting development approach, it entails a "whole school approach" in addressing learners violence. Furthermore, Burton (2008:3) posits that schools can adopt situational prevention approaches in addressing learner's violence. Situational prevention entails addressing emerging act of learner violence in schools and endeavour to ensure no further occurrence.

School A Educator 3 observed that teachers need protection from the policy documents of the Department of Education. Without the teachers and other staff in the schools, policies and code of conducts will not be implemented. Because of that, it is imperative to protect them.

Singh and Steyn (2013:1) maintain that there is a need for strong and devoted leadership among schools which involves stakeholders. In addition, the family influence on the learners leadership path ways should not be neglected because the family is an important basis of learners development (Leithwood *et al*., 2010:696). Effective leadership roles in the schools generally enhance conducive learning environment and foster learner's improvement. Hence, it is imperative for school leaders to map out favourable strategies for learners improvement and discipline which is in line with the school general objectives (Dexter, 2008:544). In addition, for leaders achieving school objectives successfully, orders and disciplinary measures must be taken seriously with a general understanding of the team players regarding the maximization of time, prompt use of available resources and continuous monitoring and evaluating the progress of things within the school environment. can be more. The approaches are concurs with the

transformational leadership as stated on 2.2 on literature datawhich regard the leaders as change agents and take the responsibility for that change (Arachchi (2012:71). They even take a leading role in bringing that change acting role models on bringing that change.

4.4.4.3 Community engagement

Deducing from the participants response, it is imperative for school leaders to engage the communities around the schools. **The engagement of community menbers it based on the school management that applied the transformational leadership principles. On the literature data on 2.2 transformational leadership** pay special attention at individual level thus Individual Consideration. This dimension implies that the principal will consider the opinions of every stakeholder. The community is an important component that must be considered by school on managing violence in schools.

Leadership strategies geared towards management of learner violence will be possible through the involvement of communities because the communities play important roles in nurturing the characters of their kind (Matthews, Crow, & Matthews, 2009:30). On the other hand, getting adequate community assistance relies on the collaborative efforts of the educators and leaders in schools in order to foster adequate approaches that will involve every learners (Mullen & Schunk, 2010:189).

> *School A Educator 4 was of the opinion that the schools cannot exist without the surrounding communities therefore it is imperative for the school leaders to engage the communities around them, engage in community enlightenment in order to educate them on the need for a healthy home which would reflect on the schools.*

In support of the participant's response, it is imperative to understand that schools are the centre for teaching and learning with dynamic nature and complex challenges. The management there of, hence demands effective leadership strategies (Jäppinen, 2014:65). Furthermore, Ndlovu and Proches (2019:12859) maintain that the learning environment is changing drastically hence necessitate leader innovative approach to managing learner's violence. Such leaders must believe in the principles of transformational leadership Singh and Steyn (2013:1) further maintain that the Bill of Rights of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, (RSA, 1996b) ensures safety environment for all citizens (RSA, 1996a) including the learning environment. On that premise, schools are an important organization in the community that is expected to be safe for

every learner, but that is far from happening and is detrimental to leadership. Furthermore, Halverson *et al.* (2014:57) assert that the public depends on the schools to nurture their children towards better individuals for the society such as in the areas of increasing societal opportunities and economic growth. Hence, the need for principals and all the stakeholder to be making the right policies to that effect is imperative.

> *School B Educator 4 stated that school has a good code of conduct the only thing is consistency of applying the code of conduct from the side of teachers. Leniency from the teachers towards the learners maybe because of personal relationship with learners, implementation of learner discipline is not uniform from the side of teache*rs.

> *School A Educator 5 said that, the school leaders are trying because it is not easy to be running the affairs of a school especially now that discipline is a serious issue in the society but there is always room for improvement hence thinking that the leaders should do more in engaging the parents or guardian of the learners and stakeholder. By engaging them more on the latest plans of the schools, the parents or guardian can help in talking to their children at homes.*

According to Wolhunter and Russo (2013: 9), it is recommended that leaders that are in charge of developing policies must involve key stakeholders. Educators must be professionally developed to deal with cases of misconduct on a yearly basis and learners must also be trained. Parents must be helped to develop a manner in which they respond to issues of misconduct when their child is involved and the victims must be counselled. The policies must be reviewed annually. Policies must include clear and precise definition of terms and prohibited behaviour. The policies must include all forms of misbehaviour that is written, physical, verbal and electronic forms of misconduct. The policies must protect the victims after reporting such misbehaviour misconduct from being further victimised. The policies must include step by step procedures to be followed when handling such cases. The policies must be included in the learner's handbooks or yearbooks.

4.5 SUMMARY OF CHAPTER

In this chapter, the study presented data analysis and presentation of findings. The data were analysed using thematic approach and presented in line with the study objectives for clarity and

in-depth understanding. Furthermore, the study carried out literature control which fostered in-depth understanding of study both from the study finding and existing literature. The next chapter presents a summary of findings and recommendation.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter of this study presented data analysis and discussion. Data were collected from two secondary schools in Tswaing district using individual interview and analysed through thematic data analysis technique. From the thematic data analysis, themes and categories were generated for discussion. The following themes were generated: irresponsible behaviours, management strategies and poor support system. Furthermore, the generated themes were used for the discussion in line with the categories for in-depth comprehensive representation of the participant's response. The study further supported the participant's response with literatures in order to foster in-depth understanding of the study.

5.2 CONCLUSION OF CHAPTERS

The study at this point presents the summary of each chapters

Chapter one presented the introduction to the study. The introduction of the study opened the discussion regarding the research topic "leadership strategies in handling learner violence in secondary schools: a case study in Tswaing district". The chapter further covered the background to the study. The background to the study presented a strong argument on the need for study. Furthermore, the chapter presented the motivation to the study. The motivation clarified further on the need for the study. The chapter further presented the study statement of the problem. The statement of the problem is very crucial in this study because it elaborated the problem understudy with enough justification why the study is of paramount importance. The chapter also presented the research questions, aim and objectives of the study, the significance of the study and the preliminary literature review then capped it up with the conclusion of the chapter.

Chapter two presented the literature review. The literature review section exposed me to the works of other researchers in order to foster understanding of the study. The literature review section presented the theoretical framework. Theoretical framework represents a basis for knowledge development which proves vital in this study. The study adopted a transformational leadership theory. Transformational leadership theory enabled the study in in-depth

understanding of leadership qualities and strategies necessary for handling learner violence. The literature review was structured into sub-heading for coordination and in-depth understanding of the study. The following sub-headings were explained in the study; global review on learners' misconduct, discipline and punishment in South African schools, legal framework of learners misconduct in South Africa and learners misconduct and possible reason for the misconduct. In addition, other contributing factors that contribute to learner misconduct, school management procedure used to curb learners misconduct, effectiveness of the methods used to maintain learners discipline and roles of parents in fostering discipline in schools were discussed in the literature review section with the summary of chapter.

Chapter three presented the research design and methodology adopted in this study. The chapter was introduced for sense of direction coupled with the presentation of the research objectives. The research approach was further presented. The study adopted qualitative research approach which enabled gathering of data through individual interview as the instrument of data collection. The research design was also presented which represent the blueprint of the study. The study adopted a case study research design which enabled the me to in understanding of the leadership strategies in handling learner violence in the selected secondary schools in Tswaing district. Furthermore, the study presented the philosophical assumption relation to the study which helped in defining the study philosophical standpoint. Furthermore, the study presented the research methodology. The following research methodology were followed in order to gather and analyse the research data; site selection, participant selection, data collection techniques and data analysis. In addition, trustworthiness, my role and ethical consideration were presented coupled with the summary of the chapter.

Chapter four presented the study data analysis and presentation of findings. The chapter was introduced with sub-headings such as presentation of findings. The chapter also presented the research objectives under interpretation of data in order to maintain clarity of the chapter. The participants interviewed in the two schools were duly represented in this chapter for clarity. Furthermore, the chapter discussed the data in line with the emerged themes and categories for in-depth understanding of the study. The following were the themes that emerged: nature of learner misconduct in secondary schools, current leadership strategies of handling learner's violence, challenges faced by leaders in handling learner violence and leadership strategies to improve learner violence. The chapter concluded with the summary of the chapter.

Chapter five presented the discussion of the findings, summary of the study and recommendation for further studies. For clarity, the discussion of findings was made in line with the study objectives followed by the general summary of the study and recommendations.

5.3 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

As indicated in chapter 1, the study sought to investigate the following research objectives:

- To understand the nature of learner violence in secondary schools in Tswaing district.
- To explore leadership strategies used by secondary school leaders in handling learners' violence in Tswaing district.
- To examine the challenges faced by leaders in handling learner violence in secondary schools in Tswaing district.
- To suggest strategies that can be used by school leaders to improve the handling of learner violence in secondary schools.

5.3.1 To understand the nature of learner violence in secondary schools in Tswaing district.

The above objective intended to enable in-depth exploration of the nature of violence in the selected schools. The participants gave their answer to the question structured from the above objective based on their understanding of the question. The participant's response enabled the study to get a clear nature of learner violence in the selected schools. From the participant's response, it is quite clear that learner violence is a serious challenge confronting the SMTs. The learners, according to some of the participants are really ill-discipline which posed a huge problem to the school management systems. One of the participants went to the extent of saying that their growing up days is better in the sense that children were more mannered compared to this age because children of this age are ruder. It is also clear from the participant's response that learners engage in the abuse of substance and coming to school with weapon which is more dangerous. The teachers and other educators are not exempted because most learners based on the participant response are disrespectful to their teachers and other staff. Bullying is a common thing as deduced from the participant's response which also makes learner violence a thing of serious concern in the selected school environment. The school should be a place of moulding

character and preparing future learners hence should be a conducive environment in order to actual the main objectives.

5.3.2 To explore leadership strategies used by secondary schools in handling learner violence in Tswaing district.

This research objective intended to enable this study in understanding leadership strategies used in handling learner violence in the selected schools in Tswaing district. In order to actualise the above objective, it was structured it into an interview question. The interview question enabled the study to be more explorative thereby giving the participants enough room to voice their opinion regarding the question. From the participant's response, the selected secondary schools' leaders adopt different leadership strategies in handling learner's violence. Some of the participants maintained that the school leaders make use of policies. The adoption of policies by the school leaders is in line with the mandate of the 1996, South African Schools Act no. 108 of 1996 (RSA, 1996a) regarding SGBs making of policies and codes of conduct that will enable them in the maintenance of orderliness in schools and handling learners violence. Though the policies and codes of conduct are in place in the various schools as deduced from the participant's response, the school leaders are still struggling with handling learner violence. One of the participants maintained that leaders encourage using disciplining approach but the discipline measures to use must not be to infringe the right of the learner. In addition, some of the participants posit that the school leaders adopt the approach of learner involvement. Parents are involved because they are an integral aspect of their children development. The disciplinary committee involves the parents in order to see the best way to address learner violence and to make the learning environment friendlier for everyone.

Furthermore, some of the participants maintained that the school leaders endeavour in reviewing the school policies and codes of conduct in order to see how effective it has been, where it needs to be improved and the best ways forward for the school. In addition, some of the participants also posit that the school leaders are encouraging behavioural motivation. The act of behavioural motivation to the participant is more benefiting because it instils positive energy into the learners though seeing their positive sides. The research to this effect believed that behavioural motivation of learners could send good signal in the school and make the learners to see things from more positive angle than the violence way.

5.3.3 To examine the challenges faced by leaders in handling learner violence in secondary schools in Tswaing district

This research objective enabled the study to examine and describe the challenges faced by leaders in handling learner violence in Tswaing district. A research question was deduced from the objective which the participants answered through face-to-face interview. The participants answered the question based on their understanding which enabled the broad understanding of the challenges faced by leaders in handling learner violence in the selected schools. From the participants' response, parental support is really lacking in the schools' endeavours in handling learner's violence. One of the participants maintained that poor parental corporation is weakening the struggle against learner violence.

The parents are more focused on their jobs making the school leaders to be dragging their feet to join in the fight against learner's violence. Most parents do not respond to the calls from schools' leaders whenever there is an incidence of learner's violence. Parents are supposed to be working hand in hand with the school leaders and disciplinary committee for proper disciplinary measures for learner's violence. Some of the learners showcase ill upbringing which is as a result of failures of parents and it is so challenging. Furthermore, some of the participants maintained that poor protection from the educational system is really disturbing their endeavours towards handling learner violence in schools. The educational system should be protecting educators because they also have their families which are in position to lose should anything happen to them. One of the participants complained of the negative impact of the abolishment of corporal punishment on their fight against learner's violence. The abolishment of corporal punishment left the school leaders with little options regarding measures in handling learner's violence.

5.3.4 To suggest strategies that can be used by school leaders to improve the handling of learner violence in secondary schools.

This research objective intends to explore the strategies that can be used by school leaders to improve leadership strategies currently used to handle learner violence in secondary schools. In order to actualise the objective, it was structured into a question. The question was asked through face-to-face interview with the participants responding based on their opinions. One of the participants posit that the policy utilised by the school in managing learner violence is bias and not consistent hence they struggle in maintaining learner's violence. In order to balance the

policy, the Department of Education should ensure the involvement of parents of learners and the uniform adoption of disciplinary measures in handling learner violence in schools.

Furthermore, some of the participants maintained that the policies and code of conducts must be reviewed because that is the main official document that guides the school leaders in their decision making in various schools, especially in handling learners' violence. By reviewing the policies, the educational system to should endeavour to strengthen the school policies for effective handling of learner's violence. In addition, some of the participants also posit that the Department of Education should do more in protecting the interest of the teachers and non-academics staff in the schools. Owing to increasing nature of learner violence in secondary schools, the role of teachers and other non-educators cannot be undermined because they also have families. Hence, the Department of Education should endeavour to protect them. Some of the participants further posit that the role of the communities should always be considered when dealing with learner violence or propounding strategies in improving leadership strategies used by schools. The schools cannot function effectively without considering the communities around or in which the school is situated. The communities help in moulding the behaviours of the learners hence the school leaders should try more in involving them, the parents and stakeholders in addressing learner's violence. I believe that the school leader should step up their games in the fight against learner's violence, involve parents and the communities. Communities can be engaged through community enlightenment on learners' violence, its detriment to the peace of the community and the future of the learner. Also, the leaders should endeavour to hear from the communities regarding their opinion on learner violence in order to map out strategies best for the school and the society.

5.4 RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations are made to address the problems identified in the problem statement and in the course of conducting this study. The recommendations are made in the following categories; recommendation for educators, for HODs, principals, DoE and policy makers and recommendation for future research.

5.4.1 Recommendations for educators

- Owing to the struggles of the educators in adopting alternative measures to corporal punishment, it is recommended that educators should get to master how to adopt alternative measures to corporal punishment in ensuring disciplines in the classrooms.

- Educators tend to lack professional development; thus, it is recommended that educators should be engaging in professional development programmes that will help to equip them in the management of learner violence in schools.
- Educators are vulnerable in the fight against learner violence. Therefore, it is recommended that more protection is needed for the educators in order to enable them in functioning optimally without fear of losing their jobs.

5.4.2 Recommendations for principals

- Owing to the complaints by the teachers, it is recommended that the school principals should priorities the wellbeing of their subordinates in the fight against.
- Parental involvement in the fight against learner violence is crucial. However, many parents are not properly engaged in handling learner violence in the schools. Thus, it is recommended that principals should prioritise the involvement of parents in the handling learner violence in the schools.
- The principal must adopt the transformational leadership style in order to manage the violence in schools and to motivate the teachers to confront the problem of violence in the school.

5.4.3 Recommendations for Department of Education and policy makers

- There appears to be a weakness in the existing policies regarding the handling of learner violence which is negatively affecting the schools' efforts. Therefore, it is recommended that the department of education and policy makers should review and strengthen the existing policies for schools' handling of learner violence in order to foster conducive learning environment.
- Schools are being called out quickly when there are lapses in handling learner violence. Because of this, the Department of Education and policy makers should always carry out in-depth investigation to case of learner violence in order to properly address them.
- Schooled are faced with enormous challenges in the handling learner violence which demands for more support. To that effect, the Department of Education and policy makers should be more supportive to the school management in handling learner's violence.
- The school management teams are directly involved in handling learner violence; therefore, they should be part of the decisions concerning their schools. On that premise,

it is recommended that the Department of Education and policy makers should always involve the school management top official in their decision making in order to understand how best all the parties can perform best in handling learners' violence.

- The increasing prevalence of learner violence in schools is opening the gaps and the plight of the school management teams. Thus, the Department of Education and policy makers should listen to the plight of the school leaders in the struggle against learner violence and endeavour to integrate best measures for addressing learner's violence.

5.4.4 Recommendations for further research

- Handling of learner violence is a struggle that demands for more attention. To that effect, there are lapses regarding the frameworks adopted by schools in handling learner's violence. In order to explore more in that regard and to foster the proper handling of learner violence, it is recommended that more research is needed to ascertain existing supporting framework for school in handling learner violence especially in the Province.
- Parents should be part of handling learner violence. Hence, it is recommended that more research should be conducted in order to assess parental understanding on school management of learner's violence.
- The voice of learners should be prioritised in the struggle against learner violence in order to understand more from their perspective. Hence, it is recommended that more research should be conducted in order to examine the impact of current strategies adopted by schools in handling learner violence from learners' perspective.

5.5 CONCLUSION OF THE STUDY

The study focused on leadership strategies in handling learner violence in secondary schools: a case study in Tswaing district. The study adopted a qualitative research approach following a case study research design which enabled me in generating in-depth data for the study. The study covered a series of chapters with clear presentation of concepts that fostered the understanding of the study. This current chapter presented a summary of the entire study chapters with in-depth discussion of the findings. The study findings were discussed in line with the study objectives which fostered better understanding of the study. Conclusively, the study revealed that learner violence is handled among others through adopting codes of conducts, using disciplinary measures and motivation of learners' positive behaviours. Despite these efforts of the SMTs in

combating learner violence in the selected schools, it is a serious challenge, hence necessary recommendations were made in order to foster further studies for mitigating learner violence in the schools.

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APPENDIX A: ETHICS APPROVAL LETTER OF STUDY



Private Bag X1290, Potchefstroom
South Africa 2520

Tel: 018 299-1111/2222

Fax: 018 299-4910

Web: http://www.nwu.ac.za

Senate Committee for Research Ethics

Tel: 018 299-4849

Email: nkosinathi.machine@nwu.ac.za

ETHICS APPROVAL LETTER OF STUDY

Based on approval by the **Faculty of Education Research Ethics Committee (EduREC)** on 29/10/2020, this committee hereby **approves** your study as indicated below. This implies that the North-West University Senate Committee for Research Ethics (NWU-SCRE) grants its permission that, provided the special conditions specified below are met and pending any other authorisation that may be necessary, the study may be initiated, using the ethics number below.

Study title: Leadership strategies in handling learner violence in secondary schools: a case study in Tswaing district

Study Leader/Supervisor (Principal Investigator)/Researcher: Dr JP Dhlamini Student /

Team: OV Mathe (MEd student

Ethics number :

N	W	U	-										

Institution Study Number Year Status

Status: S = Submission; R = Re-Submission; P = Provisional Authorisation; A = Authorisation

Application Type: Project

Commencement date: 29 October 2020 **Risk:** **Low**

Expiry date: 29 October 2021

Approval of the study is initially provided for a year, after which continuation of the study is dependent on receipt and review of the annual (or as otherwise stipulated) monitoring report and the concomitant issuing of a letter of continuation.

Special in process conditions of the research for approval (if applicable):

General conditions:

While this ethics approval is subject to all declarations, undertakings and agreements incorporated and signed in the application form, the following general terms and conditions will apply:

- *The study leader/supervisor/principal investigator/researcher must report in the prescribed format to the EduREC:*
  - *annually (or as otherwise requested) on the monitoring of the study, whereby a letter of continuation will be provided, and upon completion of the study; and*
  - *without any delay in case of any adverse event or incident (or any matter that interrupts sound ethical principles) during the course of the study.*
- *The approval applies strictly to the proposal as stipulated in the application form. Should any amendments to the proposal be deemed necessary during the course of the study, the study leader/researcher must apply for approval of these amendments at the EduREC, prior to implementation. Should there be any deviations from the study proposal without the necessary approval of such amendments, the ethics approval is immediately and automatically forfeited.*
- *Annually a number of studies may be randomly selected for an external audit.*
- *The date of approval indicates the first date that the study may be started.*
- *In the interest of ethical responsibility, the NWU-SCRC and EduREC reserves the right to:*
  - *request access to any information or data at any time during the course or after completion of the study;*

− to ask further questions, seek additional information, require further modification or monitor the conduct of your research or the informed consent process; − withdraw or postpone approval if:

· any unethical principles or practices of the study are revealed or suspected;

· it becomes apparent that any relevant information was withheld from the EduREC or that information has been false or misrepresented;

· submission of the annual (or otherwise stipulated) monitoring report, the required amendments, or reporting of adverse events or incidents was not done in a timely manner and accurately; and / or · new institutional rules, national legislation or international conventions deem it necessary.

The EduREC would like to remain at your service as scientist and researcher, and wishes you well with your study. Please do not hesitate to contact the EduREC or the NWU-SCRE for any further enquiries or requests for assistance.

Yours sincerely

Prof JAK Olivier
Chairperson NWU Faculty of Education Research Ethics Committee

Original details: (22351930) C:\Users\22351930\Desktop\ETHICS APPROVAL LETTER OF STUDY.docm
8 November 2018

Current details: (22351930) M:\DSS1\8533\Monitoring and Reporting Cluster\Ethics\Certificates\Templates\Research Ethics Approval Letters\9.1.5.4.1 ES-REC Ethical Approval Letter.docm
5 December 2018

File reference: 9.1.5.4.2

APPENDIX B: PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN TSWAING SUB-DISTRICT

education
Lefapha la Thuto la Bokone Bophirima
Noord-Wes Onderwys Departement
North West Education Department
NORTH WEST PROVINCE

10 Nelson Mandela Drive, Mafikeng
Private Bag X10, Mmabatho 2735
Tel.: (018) 388-1964 / 3383
Fax: 086 513 9881
e-mail: bmabati@nwpg.gov.za
e-mail: omolete@nwpg.gov.za (Off. Man.)

OFFICE OF THE DISTRICT MANAGER:
NGAKA MODIRI MOLEMA DISTRICT

Enquiries S.O. Molete
Telephone 018 - 388 – 3383

To : Mr J.C. Muhloyo
Acting Sub District Manager
Tswaing Sub District

From : Mr B.J. Mabati
Acting District Director

Date : 21 August 2019

PERMISSION TO CONDUCT A RESEARCH IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN TSWAING SUB DISTRICT

Permission is hereby granted to **Mr O.V. Mathe,** , who is a Masters Student at the North West University – Mafikeng Campus, to conduct a research under the title: ***The title of the dissertation is: Leadership strategies in handling learner violence in Secondary Schools: A case study in Tswaing Sub District.***

School Managers and members of the SMT of Secondary Schools are herewith requested to provide him with support during the research process.

Permission is granted on the basis that:

- Prior arrangement is made with the School Manager to avoid disruption of formal learning and teaching and examinations.
- Participants will volunteer to participate on the research
- Data collected may not be used as bad publicity that may put the Department into disrepute

Your cooperation and support in this regard is highly appreciated

Yours in education,

Mr B.J. Mabati
Acting District Director

APPENDIX C: TURNITIN REPORT

Leadership strategies in handling learner violence in secondary schools: a case study in Tswaing district

ORIGINALITY REPORT

25%	25%	5%	0%
SIMILARITY INDEX	INTERNET SOURCES	PUBLICATIONS	STUDENT PAPERS

PRIMARY SOURCES

1	ufh.netd.ac.za	
2		

Internet Source 4%

repository.nwu.ac.za

Internet Source 2%

www.scielo.org.za

APPENDIX D: CERTIFICATE OF LANGUAGE EDITING



NORTH-WEST UNIVERSITY
YUNIBESITI YA BOKONE-BOPHIRIMA
NOORDWES-UNIVERSITEIT
MAFIKENG CAMPUS

Department of Academic Literacy

27th November 2020 Private
Bag X2046 Mmabatho

2735

CERTIFICATE OF EDITING A DISSERTATION

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

This serves to confirm that I have read and edited **Mr O.V. Mathe's** dissertation titled: **Leadership strategies in handling learner violence in secondary schools: A case study in Tswaing district.** The candidate corrected the language errors identified. The document is of an acceptable linguistic standard.

Thank you

Yours Faithfully

…….

J. R. Moletsane (Academic Literacy)
Accr. No.
joel.moletsane@nwu.ac.za

APPENDIX F: PRINCIPAL, DEPUTY AND HoD TSWAING DISTRICT



TO: SCHOOL PRINCIPAL

PERMISSION LETTER

I hereby wish to request your permission to obtain entrance into your school to carry out a study. My name is Mathe O.V a student for a Master's degree in Education with North-West University. The study involves School Management Teams and educators in your school.
Before you give permission, please acquaint yourself with the information below. The details of the research are as follows:

TITLE OF THE RESEARCH PROJECT:

LEADERSHIP STRATEGIES IN HANDLING LEARNER VIOLENCE IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS: A CASE STUDY IN TSWAING DISTRICT

PROJECT SUPERVISOR: Dr J.P DLHAMINI
CO-SUPERVISOR:
ADDRESS: North-West University (Mafikeng campus)
CONTACT NUMBER:

MEMBER OF PROJECT TEAM: ONKABETSE VINCENT MATHE

2748

CONTACT NUMBER:

FACULTY OF EDUCATION RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE

Contact person: Ms Erna Greyling, E-mail: Erna.Greyling@nwu.ac.za, Tel. (018) 299 4656

This study has been approved by the Ethics committee of the Faculty of Education Sciences of the North-West University and will be conducted according to the ethical guidelines of this committee. Permission is sought from the Department of Basic Education

What is this research about?

The study aims to determine the Leadership strategies in handling learner violence in secondary schools: a case study in Tswaing district, with a view of investigating how SMTs and educators manage learners' misconduct in the schools. The study intends to answer to the following questions:

- What is the nature of learner misconduct in schools?
- What are the leadership strategies explored by school leaders to deal with learner violence in secondary schools in Tswaing district?
- What are the challenges faced by school leaders in implementing strategies in handling learner violence in Tswaing district?
- How can leadership strategies in handling learner violence be improved?

Participants

- . In each school, 1 principal, 1 deputy principals and 2 HODs and 5 class teachers one from each grade, thus grade 8 to 12. (grade 8-12). Participants in the study will be selected based on their experience with learner discipline in the school.

What is expected of you?

- As the school principal of the school, it is expected that you provide a permission letter for the researcher to gain access to you and other educators selected for the study in your school.
- It is also expected that you provide any relevant information that will aid the researcher in carrying out the study effectively

Benefits to the participant

This study will help in bridging a huge gap in the management of learner discipline and also contribute greatly to an already existing body of knowledge. The conclusions drawn from the

empirical research in this study could help address the research objectives. Thereby, providing useful recommendations for SMTs in Tswaing district in handling learners discipline

Risks involved for participants

There is no risk involved for the selected participants in the schools

Confidentiality and protection of identity

A pseudonym will be used to protect the identity of the participants. This means that all information provided by the participants will not be disclosed to a third party aside from the supervisors responsible for this study.

Dissemination of findings

The researcher will provide a copy of the study upon request.

If you have any further questions or enquiries regarding your participation in this research, please contact the researchers for more information.

DECLARATION BY PARTICIPANT:

By signing below, I ……..……. agree to take part in a research study entitled:

LEADERSHIP STRATEGIES IN HANDLING LEARNER VIOLENCE IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS: A CASE STUDY IN TSWAING DISTRICT

I declare that:

- I have read this information and consent form and understand what is expected of me in the research.
- I have had a chance to ask questions to the researcher and all my questions have been adequately answered.
- I understand that taking part in this study is voluntary and I have not been pressured to take part.

Signed at (place) _____on (date) _____/_____/20____

_____ _____

Principal signature **Signature of witness**

APPENDIX G: THE PRINCIPAL – LODIRILE TSWAING SECONDARY SCHOOL

P.O BOX 457
KHUNWANA
2748
Date 29/08/2019
ENQUIRIES: MATHE O.V
CELL: 0796529356

THE SCHOOL PRINCIPAL
LODIRILE TSWAING SECONDARY
EXT 7
DELAREYVILLE
2770
DEAR Sir/Madam

REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH

I, Vincent Onkabetse Mathe a Master of Education student registered at the North-West University, Mafikeng Campus. Hereby wish to request your consent to give me a permission to conduct an interview with you as a selected participant. The study involves School Management Teams and educators in your school. **Title of the research project: Leadership strategies in handling learner violence in secondary schools: A case study in Tswaing district.**

Data collection will be conducted by way of **interviews**, collection of data will be conducted outside school contact time so as to not interfere with teaching and learning, and the smooth running of the school. The dates and times of the data collections are to be agreed by the principal and the participants.

Participants will participate voluntarily in the data collection. The identity of the participants and the school will be kept confidential and anonymous. It would be appreciated if you could kindly

grant me a **written permission** to collect data in your school. Should you require more information about the project. Kindly contact the supervisor of my studies, her details are as follows: Project supervisor: Dr J.P Dlhamini.

Yours sincerely

Mathe O.V

_____

Signature

APPENDIX H: PARTICIPANT INFORMATION AND CONSENT FORM



PARTICIPANT INFORMATION AND CONSENT FORM

I hereby wish to request your consent to conduct an interview with you as a selected participant for this study. The study involves School Management Teams and educators in your school. Before you give consent, please acquaint yourself with the information below.

The details of the research are as follows:

TITLE OF THE RESEARCH PROJECT:

LEADERSHIP STRATEGIES IN HANDLING LEARNER VIOLENCE IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS: A CASE STUDY IN TSWAING DISTRICT

PROJECT SUPERVISOR: Dr J.P DLHAMINI

CO-SUPERVISOR:

ADDRESS: North-West University (Mafikeng campus)

CONTACT NUMBER: 073 1580 818/018 3892 079

MEMBER OF PROJECT TEAM:ONKABETSE VINCENT MATHE

FACULTY OF EDUCATION RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE

Contact person: Ms Erna Greyling, E-mail: Erna.Greyling@nwu.ac.za, Tel. (018) 299 4656

This study has been approved by the Ethics committee of the Faculty of Education Sciences of the North-West University and will be conducted according to the ethical guidelines of this committee. Permission is sought from the Department of Basic Education

What is this research about?

The study aims to determine the Leadership strategies in handling learner violence in secondary schools: a case study in Tswaing district, with a view of investigating how SMTs and educators want learner's misconduct to be dealt with in the schools. It seeks to answers to the following questions:

- What is the nature of learner misconduct in schools?
- What are the leadership strategies explored by school leaders to deal with learner violence in secondary schools in Tswaing district?
- What are the challenges faced by school leaders in implementing strategies in handling learner violence in Tswaing district?
- How can leadership strategies in handling learner violence be improved?

Participants

- The study will make use of, 1 principal, 1 deputy principal and 2 HoDs and 5 class teachers, one from each grade thus; grade 8 to 12. Participants in the study are selected based on experience with learner discipline in the school.

What is expected of you?

- It is also expected that you avail yourself for an interview with the researcher
- The interview is expected not to exceed one hour

Benefits to the participant

This study will help in bridging a huge gap in the management of learner discipline and also contribute greatly to an already existing body of knowledge. The conclusions drawn from the empirical research in this study could help address the research objectives. Thereby, providing useful recommendations for SMTs in Tswaing district in handling learners discipline

Risks involved for participants

There is no risk involved for the selected participants in the schools

Confidentiality and protection of identity

A pseudonym will be used to protect the identity of the participants. This means that all information provided by the participants will not be disclosed to a third party aside from the supervisors responsible for this study.

Dissemination of findings

The researcher will provide a copy of the study upon request.

If you have any further questions or inquiries regarding your participation in this research, please contact the researchers for more information.

DECLARATION BY PARTICIPANT:

By signing below, I ……..……. agree to take part in a research study entitled:

LEADERSHIP STRATEGIES IN HANDLING LEARNER VIOLENCE IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS: A CASE STUDY IN TSWAING DISTRICT

I declare that:

- I have read this information and consent form and understand what is expected of me in the research.
- I have had a chance to ask questions to the researcher and all my questions have been adequately answered.
- I understand that taking part in this study is voluntary and I have not been pressured to take part.

Signed at (place) _____on (date) _____/_____/20____

_____ _____

Signature of participant **Signature researcher**

APPENDIX I: INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR PRINCIPAL

LEADERSHIP STRATEGIES IN HANDLING LEARNER VIOLENCE IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS: A CASE STUDY IN TSWAING DISTRICT

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR PRINCIPALS

1. How many years of experience do you have as a principal?
2. What is your opinion regarding discipline of learners in this secondary schools?
3. What are the different types of learner violence experienced in your school? Please explain in details
4. What would you consider to be the main causes of violence?
5. What is the nature of learner misconduct in your school?
6. How can you compare the level of learner's misconduct to other schools? Please explain in details
7. As a principal, how are you controlling any form of learner violence?
8. What strategies are used by the school leaders to deal with learner violence?
9. Which challenges do you face as a principal in dealing with learner violence?
10. How can the strategies used by school leaders in dealing with learner violence be improved?

APPENDIX J: INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR HoDs

LEADERSHIP STRATEGIES IN HANDLING LEARNER VIOLENCE IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS: A CASE STUDY IN TSWAING DISTRICT

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR HoDs

1. What is your opinion regarding discipline of learners in this secondary school?
2. Which different types of learner violence found in your school? Please explain in detail.
3. What would you consider to be the main causes of violence?
4. What is the nature of learner misconduct in your school?
5. How can you compare the level of learner's misconduct of this school to other schools? Please explain in detail.
6. How are the school leaders controlling any form of learner violence?
7. To what extent has learners' misconduct or behaviour in the school affected your morale as an HoD of the school?
8. Do you think the SMTs has embarked on strategies in dealing with learner's misconduct? If so, please elaborate these strategies
9. What strategies are used by the school leaders to deal with learner violence?
10. What are the challenges faced by the school leaders in dealing with learner violence?
11. How can the strategies used by school leaders in dealing with learner violence be improved?

APPENDIX K: INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR EDUCATORS

LEADERSHIP STRATEGIES IN HANDLING LEARNER VIOLENCE IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS: A CASE STUDY IN TSWAING DISTRICT

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR EDUCATORS

1. What is your opinion regarding discipline of learners in this secondary schools?
2. What are the different types of learner violence found in your school? Please explain in detail.
3. What kind of learner violence do you face in the classroom?
4. What would you consider to be the main causes of these violence?
5. How can you compare the level of learner's misconduct of this school to other schools? Please explain in detail.
6. How are the educators controlling any form of learner violence?
7. To what extent has learners' misconduct or behaviour in the school affected your morale as an educator?
8. What are the challenges faced by the educators in dealing with learner violence?
9. Which strategies are used by the educators to deal with learner violence?
10. How can the strategies used by educators in dealing with learner violence be improved?