CHALLENGES FACING SECONDARY SCHOOL MANAGERS IN DEALING WITH SCHOOL SAFETY AND SECURITY

by

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this research work to the Lord Almighty God who gave me wisdom and strength to work tirelessly until the end. To my father Mabalanganye Joe and my mother Masindi Elisah Khomola, my wife Maitele Sharon, my son Murangi Leomartin, and my two daughters Uhone and Mukonazwothe Eucharist, I salute them for their unconditional support day and night. Truly you are the pillars for every success that I see myself through.
DECLARATION

I hereby declare that “Challenges facing secondary school managers in dealing with school safety and security” as mini-dissertation submitted to the Faculty of Education Management, at the University of Johannesburg in partial fulfillment of the Masters degree, is the original document of my own work. This document has never been formally submitted to any other university in South Africa for any degree purpose.
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MAY THE GOOD LORD RICHLY BLESS YOU ALL
EDITOR’S DECLARATION

I……………………………………………………………………..as the language editor declare that I edited “Challenges facing secondary school managers in dealing with school safety and security”

Signature:……………………………………

Date:………………………………………..
SYNOPSIS

South African education system faces lots of challenges around school safety and security which disturb the smooth running of proper teaching and learning. Creating and maintaining safe and secure school learning environment requires support from all interested stakeholders. Every school tries to develop better and effective strategies to curb safety and security challenges which hamper educational development.

Kennedy (2006:36) says education administrators have many tools available to them as they strive to establish a safer climate for learning, but no one strategy or piece of equipment is a magic solution that keeps potential trouble beyond the campus boundaries. Most educational institutions recognize that the presence of security personnel is vital to keeping its students and staff safe and its ground protected.

Comprehensive schools enjoy better security personnel than ordinary and poor rural schools which actually depend on mere community member who keeps the gate open or closed. The installations of surveillance cameras with the use of metal detectors maximize school safety procedures. Majority of our schools do not have even natural access control of streets, sidewalks, building entrances and landscaping to clearly indicate public routes and discourage access to private areas. Better and the so called “State Art Schools” enjoy government privileges than other schools by falling under their watchful care and support.

Safe schools must be a priority and never an option for school managers. Learners must learn in a safe environment without intimidation, harassment, violence, abuse and bullying. Parental involvement and support for teaching and learning programmes must be encouraged at all times. School managers, SMT members, staff in general must be consistent in the application of regulations and policies within the school. Safety policies, emergency plans, and code of conduct for learners must be enshrined and be exercised for the safety of everyone at school.

A code of conduct for learners and educators serves as an important stepping-stone towards fostering a culture of teaching and learning, mutual respect, accountability, tolerance, cooperation and personal development within schools and the surrounding environments. These conduct code may not reduce the incidence of violence and injury, but together with other environmental, educative and structural interventions, they create a context in which behaviour expectations are clearly communicated, consistently enforced, and fairly applied (Stevens, Wyngaard & Van Niekerk, 2001:150).

Create conducive atmosphere where everybody owns it with pride. All stakeholders and community leaders must promote safe and secure schools. Teaching and learning cannot take place in a disorganized environment; neither school principals alone can do it without partnership with parents. Community lifestyle affect school environment the same way as the
school lifestyle affect community. Troublemakers and offenders must be clearly identified and close monitoring must be in place. Partnership and communication networks in well established schools in violence and crime detection are necessary, for the improvement of school safety and security.

De Waal (2011:175) says the weakness at South African schools is that the level of learner discipline that is seen to be instilled is unacceptably low.
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Pages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>DEDICATION</td>
<td>(i)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DECLARATION</td>
<td>(ii)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS</td>
<td>(iii)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EDITOR’S DECLARATION</td>
<td>(iv)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SYNOPSIS</td>
<td>(v)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## CHAPTER 1

1. **ORIENTATION AND MOTIVATION FOR THE STUDY** 1
   1.1 Introduction 1
   1.2 Research problem and motivation of the study 1
   1.3 Research question 3
   1.4 Aim of the research 3
   1.5 Research design and methodology 4
   1.6 Research approach 4
   1.7 Population and Selection 4
   1.7.1 Population 4
   1.7.2 Selection 5
   1.8 Data collection 5
   1.8.1 Interview 6
   1.8.2 Observation 6
   1.9 Data analysis 6
   1.10 Trustworthiness 7
   1.11 Ethical consideration 7
   1.12 Concepts Explanation 8
   1.12.1 School 8
### CHAPTER 4

**4. DATA COLLECTION, INTERPRETATION, ANALYSIS AND PRESENTATION**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Pages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4.1 Introduction</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.2 Data collection, interpretation, analysis and presentation</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.2.1 School (SS1)</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.2.2 School (SS2)</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.2.3 School (SS3)</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.2.4 School (SS4)</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.2.5 School (SS5)</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.2.6 School (SS6)</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.2.7 School (SS7)</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.2.8 School (SS8)</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.3 Data Analysis</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.4 Interpretation of data</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.5 Conclusion</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### CHAPTER 5

**5. FINDINGS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Pages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5.1 Introduction</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.2 Findings</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.2.1 Disciplinary problems</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.2.2 Security personnel</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.2.3 Small schools suffer</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.2.4 Neglect of policies</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CHAPTER 1

1. ORIENTATION AND MOTIVATION FOR THE STUDY

1.1. Introduction

Lack of discipline and safety has been one of the challenges facing South African education during the number of years (Mtsweni, 2008:3). Teaching and learning cannot take place in an unsafe environment. The art of creating peaceful school environment poses great challenges to school management.

It is stipulated in the Bill of rights (Act no 108 of 1996, section 24) that every person has the right to an environment that is not detrimental to his health and wellbeing. This right also applies to learners, and in principle protects them from being exposed to any harmful environments, including the schools.

Oosthuizen (2008:1) outlines that in terms of section 29 of the South African constitution SA, 2006 (a) says everyone has the right to basic education, which also entails the right of learners and to learn and to be taught in a safe environment which is free from all forms of violence.

Van Wyk, Dugard, De Villiers and David (1994:238; 2004:86) say a security of a person deals with the right to the protection of mental and physical integrity. Security of a person elates for instance to all clinical intervention or all acts which result in physical and mental or psychological injury. According to one school of thought, the legal duty of protecting a learner against danger arises from the delegation of such legal duty by the parents to the educator (or to the school).

Chukwu (2008:1) says insecurity of the school environment presents a situation in which learners are routinely exposed to gang violence, rape, robbery, and assault. Gangs operate with impunity in some school environments, making school places to be a haven of drug dealers, thugs and weapons without restrictions. This makes schools to be ungovernable and chaotic.

1.2. RESEARCH PROBLEM AND MOTIVATION FOR THE STUDY

In South Africa many daunting challenges are emerging and these raise questions about how the education of the young is best managed? (Moloi, 2007: 464). According to the speech of the MEC for education in KwaZulu-Natal honorable premier, Dr JS Ndebele on Thursday, 8 July 2005 says another key area that has been making headlines is the issue of school safety and security. He further says “Let us look at this matter soberly, taking into account, the importance of safety and security and the constitutional imperatives, which should guide us in dealing with this challenge”.

1
According to Xaba (2006:565) safety at school is beginning to receive attention in South Africa as articulated in various media reports. Schools as sites of teaching and learning can deliver their educational mandate of safe and secure conditions, free from injuries, crime, and violence. Safe and secure environments are requirements by law. Section 24(1) and 28(1) of the constitution (Republic of South Africa) provide that “everyone has a right to an environment that is not harmful to their health and well-being”.

School officials have historically engaged school psychologists, councilors, and mental health professionals to work with students, staff and the school community after school violence crisis. Pressures are on the school governing body, superintendence and principals to improve security (national school safety and security services, 1996-2007).

Secondary school managers are faced with challenges of safety and security which negatively affect learning process in our schools today. Mtsweni (2008:5) agrees when he says educators cannot provide an effective and rigorous education for all the learners if they are not secured and safe. SAPS (2009:5) say school safety is often a critical obstacle to learning. Principals must provide quality education with an increasing ill absent and demoralized teacher corps, to increasingly ill and disrupted learners and AIDS orphans who are often not able to benefit from education because of dismissal living condition.

The community, the learners and the department benefit from secure and safer school environment in achieving their purpose. Chukwu (2008:6) says principals of schools are, challenged by deteriorating school functionality (safety and security problems).

Van Jaarsveld (2008:177) says students and teachers are alike, demanding security and safety at schools after a series of more serious incidents have recently taken place and are continuing to occur:

- During the time between May and September 2006, five high school students were killed by other schoolmates in Gauteng.
- In March 2007 a teacher was stabbed to death by a pupil in her classroom at Thornwood Secondary in Marianhill, Durban.
- On 6 April 2007 two students of Umlazi Commercial High School (KwaZulu-Natal) was gang raped while attending holiday classes.
- In May 2007, a grade nine pupil (aged 17) stabbed a classmate, also 17, to death with a pair of scissors in the neck at Eerste River High School on the school premises.
- According to Sunday Times, 17 May 2009, at Rhodes High School in Mowbray, Cape Town, a 13 year old pupil in grade 8 class mercilessly bludgeoned an educator with a hammer.
- Also on 22 May 2009 at Jack Lavhengwa School, a grade 12 learner was stabbed to death by another learner in Limpopo (Mirror).
- On 30 November 2010, at Jules High School, “three boys were found in possession of dagga, one girl with a sealed 200ml klipdrift bottle of liquor and the other girl with 10 tablets. They earlier claimed that the tablet were for headaches, but upon investigation they were found to be drugs” (Sowetan Page 4)
Chukwu (2008:6) says principals of schools are challenged by deteriorating school functionality (safety and security problems). It is under this tedious and unbearable work environment where principals have to and are expected to make change. Apparently the researcher became interested in investigating in the challenges facing secondary school managers in dealing with school safety and security.

1.3. RESEARCH QUESTION

Oosthuizen et al (2008:108) say it is international practice that educators also have the legal duty of care pertaining to the learners entrusted to them for either curricular or extra-curricular purposes. Since the dangerous situations to which learners may be exposed could rise in a multitude of forms, it is essential for the educator, and especially the principal to take cognizance of all these possibilities and to ensure all the general principles relating to the civil legal liability, which are frequently applied in such situations. It is also necessary to take note of the fact that the legal implications which arise from them, differ from case to case.

Against all responsibilities and liabilities vested upon school managers, the researcher came up with the research question as:

What are the challenges facing secondary school managers in dealing with school safety and security?

1.4. AIM OF THE RESEARCH

- This research is aiming at investigating the challenges facing secondary school managers in dealing with safety and security.
- To observe the nature and condition of surrounding in schools.
- To investigate if learners, educators, non-teaching staff and school property are really safe.
- To make recommendations for the solutions of the challenges.
1.5. RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

Research design is a plan or strategy which moves from the underlying philosophical assumption to specifying the selection of respondents, the data gathering technique to be used and the data analysis to be done. The choice of research design is based on the researcher’s assumptions, research skills and research practices and influence the way in which she or he collects data (Creswell et al, 2009:70). Schumacher and McMillan (1993:31) define it as a plan and structure of the investigation used to obtain evidence to answers research questions, where its purpose is to provide the most valid, and accurate answers possible to research questions.

In this study the researcher will use qualitative research design because:

The researcher will focus primarily on the evidence provided, to understand what exactly secondary school principals are facing in terms of school safety and security. It is in-depth, explorative contextual and descriptive. It is humanistic and it studies people in their situations. Social beings create meaning and constantly make sense of their worlds as well as allowing the researchers to act with participants in their natural settings and site.

Human experiences and perceptions will be analyzed through detailed descriptions and explanations with regard to challenges facing secondary school managers in dealing with school safety and security.

1.6. RESEARCH APPROACH

For this study, I intend using phenomenological research approach in order to investigate challenges facing secondary schools managers in dealing with school safety and security because it answers what is really happening out there. It helps us to understand the structure of various types of experience ranging from perception, thought, memory, imagination, emotion, desire, and volition to bodily awareness, embodied action, and social activity, including linguistic activity.

1.7. POPULATION AND SELECTION

1.7.1. Population

Schumacher and McMillan (1993:596) refer population as a group of individuals or events from which a sample is drawn, whereas Goddard and Melville (2001:31) support that population is any group that is the subject of research interest.

The purpose of this study comprises of some secondary schools in the Vhembe District of Limpopo Province in South Africa.
1.7.2. Selection

Babbie (2007:184) says purposive sampling is a type of non-probability sampling in which the units to be observed are selected on the basis of the researcher’s judgment about which ones will be the most useful or comprehensive. Creswell (2007: 79) says sampling refers to the process used to select a portion of the population for study.

In order to achieve the purpose of this study, I will use purposive sampling method as it appropriates the selection of a sample on the basis of knowledge of a population, its elements, and the purpose of the study. On the basis of my knowledge of the population, I will make decisions on participants who will be selected to provide the best information of my research topic.

The target for this research will be eight secondary schools in Vhembe District. Request made the Department of Education revealing those schools within the Vhembe district, where school managers of those schools are faced with crucial challenges emanating from school safety and security within their schools. Four secondary schools with the highest track record of unsafe and insecure school environment, and four secondary schools with high incident record of safe and secure school environment will be selected amongst the other from 2005 to 2011. The main reasons are to find out the different types of challenges which those schools experience in terms of school safety and security. The researcher would like as well needs to find the seriousness of those challenges to the safety and security of learners, educators, and non teaching staff members.

Statistical information from the Department of Education about school safety and security will be requested and selection of those schools will be done according to such accumulated data. A sample of one participant (n=1) in each secondary school will be selected from the study and will be interviewed on the different types of challenges he/she is facing in dealing with school safety and security. The composition of this sample will be a school principal or one management member from each sample.

1.8. DATA COLLECTION

Leedy and Ormrod (2005:95) say qualitative research is more holistic and emergent with the specific focus, design measurements (e.g. interviews) and interpretations developing and possibly changing along the way. Data will be collected by means of in-depth face to face interviews with secondary school managers from selected schools.

Chukwu (2008:15) defines data collections as the way in which information and knowledge about the research problems is going to be obtained.
1.8.1. Interview

Creswell (2007:87) defines an interview as a two way conversion in which the interviewer asks the participant questions to collect data and to learn about the ideas, views, options and behaviors of the participants. The aim of qualitative interview is to see the world through the eyes of the participants, and they can be a valuable source of information provided they are used correctly. The aim is always to obtain rich descriptive data that will help you understand the participant’s construction of knowledge and social reality.

Babbie (2007:306) indicates that qualitative interviewing is an interaction between an interviewer and a respondent in which the interviewer has a general plan of enquiry including the topic to be covered.

For accurate and consistent information, voice recorder will be used for exact data collection after consent form has been processed and acknowledged by the participants in order to put them at ease. Written records shall also be used in order to avoid loss of valuable information in case of some technical or electronic failure with voice recordings. Cooper, Endacott and Chapman (2009:3) indicate that questioning will be less formal and user friendly to allow participants to remain in their everyday experience and to respond in ordinary language.

1.8.2. Observation

According to Creswell (2003:185), observation is where the researcher takes field notes on the activities of individuals at the research sites. The observer may also engage in roles varying from a non-participant to a complete participant. De Vos, Strydom, Fouch and Delport (2002:279) say in participant observation, data cannot really be reduced to figures and the researcher endeavours to become part of the lives of and daily routine of respondents. The researcher’s involvement varies from no participation to full participation.

Therefore, the researcher shall spend a day in the field for both participant and non-participant observation in order to familiarize himself with the respondents and the setup of the sites as they form part of the researcher’s study. The researcher will use digital camera and note book for capturing data.

1.9. DATA ANALYSIS

According to Tustin, Lighthelm, Martins and Van Wyk (2005:475) the principle aim of data analysis is to extract all the relevant data that are hidden in the mass of collected raw information. Cooper et al (2009:775) say in phenomelogical analysis, researchers work with participant’s stories, which are translated from audio-tape to text. Additional data are also translated to text and textual analysis becomes the conduit for understanding the phenomenon in question. Researchers intertwine their experiences with those of participant(s) and find a way through the ‘forest’ of events.
According to Schumacher and McMillan (1993:479) explain that qualitative data analysis is primarily an inductive process of organizing the data into categories and identifying patterns (relationships) among the categories.

For this study, I will analyze data collected through direct interpretations, and data analyzed will depend on my own personal judgment with quality evidence accumulated before me. Categorizations and interpretation of data will be done and the synthesis into an overall portrait of the situation will play a major role.

1.10. TRUSTWORTHINESS

According to Cooper, Endacott and Chapman (2009:775) questioning is often less formal than in traditional research, phrasing questions that are user-friendly, allows participants to remain in their everyday experience and to respond in ordinary language. Mtsweni (2008:75) agrees that establishing a positive relationship with participants, time spent with the participants, and speaking the language they preferred, increase their trust in the researcher and then expose any hidden facts regarding the investigation.

For the purpose of this study, the researcher will analyze data through direct interpretations and interpretive data will rely on the researcher’s thinking style with the provision of evidence from participants during interview sessions. The researcher will verify the trustworthiness of data by the amount, quantity or thickness of information captured from participants. The richness of the information gathered will proof whether the information is trustworthy for my research.

1.11. ETHICAL CONSIDERATION

Permission was requested and granted from the Limpopo Department of Education in the office of the District Senior Manager (DSM) in writing. Permission was also requested from individual school managers for participating in the research after completing consent forms. Participants were clearly informed and fully explained that they have the rights to withdraw from taking part in the research process or withdraw during the research process if they feel uncomfortable and no charges will be incurred.

Communication was held in participants’ best preference to assure confidentiality and stress free atmosphere. Freedom of expression was promoted from all participants and they felt at ease. Various places were preferred by participants for interview sessions, like at school, the researcher’s car, participant’s home, participant’s car and participant’s office. No victimization of participants because of telling his/her life experiences on school safety and security. Any information from participants was treated with maximum confidentiality.

According to the research standards, the researcher considered and respected the anonymity and confidentiality of all participants including information gathered. The rights of every participant were respected through consent letters, and all appointments were seriously honored looking into
participant’s time budget and convenient venue. Any change of venue and time by participants were highly acknowledged.

1.12. CONCEPTS EXPLANATION

1.12.1 School

According to South African National Education Policy Act 27 of 1996, “school” means a pre-
primary, primary or secondary school which enrolls learners in one or more grades from grade R
(Reception) to grade twelve. But according to Oxford School Dictionary & Thressaurus (2005:598), says school means a place where teaching is done, especially of pupils aged 5-18,
although Juta (2009:9) defines school as a public school or an independent school which enrolls
learners in one or more grades from R (Reception) to grade twelve.

According to Chukwu (2008:8) confines a school as an institution where learners learn, educators teach in a positive climate and atmosphere without infringement to their social and
constitutional rights.

1.12.2 School managers (Principals)

According to Policy on Learner Attendance (Department of Basic Education, 2010) says “principal” means an educator appointed or acting as head of a school.

1.12.3 School Safety

According to Marotz et al (2005:9) say safety refers to the behaviors and practices that protect
children and adults from risk or injury whereas Mathe (2008:11) says safety means freedom from
or prevention of danger, risk or injury. Sunday Observer (2009:1) says is regarded as the degree
to which those inside the school are out of harm’s way.

Chukwu (2008:9) says school safety means ‘an effective  structure and organization free from
potential and physical harm, absence of violence and presence of nurturing, caring and protective
staff.’

1.12.4 School violence

The South African Concise Oxford Dictionary (2002:1312) defines violence as behavior involving physical force intended to hurt, damage, or kill. Hoffman (1996:8) confirms by saying violence refers to verbal or physical abuse (including the threat of or the actual use of guns, knives, and other weapons) perpetrated against school staff, students, or others. It also includes vandalism and property crime (that is, taking someone’s belongings without their permission or by force, destruction of property).
Cowie and Dawn (2007:12) define violence as the intentional use of physical force or power, threatened or actual, against oneself, another person, or against a group or community that either results in or has a high likelihood of resulting in injury, death, psychological harm, mal-development or deprivation.

1.12.5 School environment

According to Marotz, et al (2005:183) say environment is the sum total of physical, cultural and behavioral features that surround and affect an individual.

School environment is the total area in which learners on their own and/or with their educators engage themselves in formal or informal learning and teaching without infringements.

1.12.6 School security

Chukwu (2008:9) says school security refers to the measures that we take to make the school environment free from crime and violence, whereas Sunday Observer (2009:1) dated Saturday1, August 2009, define security as the existence of physical barriers such as perimeter fencing.

1.12.7 School discipline

Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English (2002:443) says “discipline” is a way of training someone so that they learn to control their behavior and obey rules. Marotz, et al (2005:277) agree that discipline is regarded as training or enforced obedience that corrects, shapes, or develops acceptable patterns of behavior.

According to Mtsweni (2008:19, discipline is what the educators do to assist the learners to behave acceptably in classroom situation. Discipline is intended to suppress and redirect learners’ behavior and Beckmann (2006:1033) says discipline is about positive behavior management aimed at promoting appropriate behavior and developing self-discipline and self-control in learners.

1.13. STRUCTURE OF THE STUDY

Chapter 1

Chapter 1 comprises of introduction to the study, orientation and motivation for the study, research problem and research question, aim of the research, research design and methodology, research approach, trustworthiness, ethical consideration and concepts explanation.
Chapter 2

This chapter provides theoretical background to this research which then explores what other literature exposes about challenges facing secondary school managers in dealing with school safety and security.

Chapter 3

This chapter will examine the research design and methodology which will further indicates population and selection, sampling and how data were collected.

Chapter 4

Chapter four exposes data collection, interpretation, analysis and presentation.

Chapter 5

Chapter five presents the overall findings of the research, recommendations and concludes the entire research.

List of References

Annexure

1.14. Conclusion

This chapter introduced the research study and outlines the topic as- “Challenges facing secondary school managers in dealing with school safety and security”. The main purpose of this study is to investigate the challenges facing secondary school managers in dealing with school safety and security, and investigating if learners, educators, non-teaching staff and school property are really safe. We shall now continue to chapter two where the literature related to challenges facing secondary managers in dealing with school safety and security will be discussed in detail.
CHAPTER 2

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter provides a theoretical background to the research. It explores what literature exposes about challenges facing secondary school managers in dealing with school safety and security.

Voce (2004:2) says reality is subjective. Subjective reality is important (what people think, feel, and see). The use of language defines a particular reality.

Interpretive approach will play an important role in what school managers are experiencing as they are dealing with school safety and security. Reality will be socially constructed when interviews will be conducted in the in-depth face to face with the secondary school principals. Deeper and wider knowledge of the principals` daily experiences and feelings will be attained as meaning will be created giving them sense of reality.

School safety involves an atmosphere of safety, a climate in which children feel comfortable and happy. Safe schools have principals, educators and learners, who care for each other, care about buildings and grounds are well maintained, discipline, policy is well-known and respected. The former American president, Bill Clinton supports the goal of schools that are free of drugs and violence. Some parents are starting to organize, to provide goods and services themselves to their schools to make them safer and healthier.

It has been suggested that our education system mirrors the dynamics of our society. But how prevalent is violence in our schools? What effects has violence had on students, educators, administrators and learning process in general? What can be done to combat this menace and once again provide a safe and secure place of learning- an intellectual sanctuary for our children?

There are different types of violence which threaten the safety and security of our schools such as bullying, vandalism, drugs and alcohol abuse, sexual harassment, gangsterism, verbal, physical, and mental abuse.

2.2 LEGISLATION AND SAFETY IN SCHOOLS

2.2.1 Constitution

During the emergence of democratic government in 1994, South Africa passed the supreme law of the country to ensure order and stability amongst everyone. The Constitution was therefore arrived at by General Agreement Act (Act 108 of 1996). Chapter 2: Bill of Rights, section 9(1) which states that “everyone is equal before the law and has the right to equal protection and
benefit of the law”; section 12(1) indicating that “everyone has the right to freedom and security of the person” whereas section 24 of the same constitution reflects that “everyone has the right-

(a) to environment that is not harmful to their health or well-being; and
(b) to have the environment protected for the benefit of and future generations, through reasonable legislative and other measures that-
   (i) prevent pollution and ecological degradation;
   (ii) promote conservation; and
   (iii) secure ecologically sustainable development and use of natural resources while promoting justifiable economic and social development.
South African Constitution section 28(2) promotes “a child’s best interests which is of paramount importance in every matter concerning the child” and section 29(1) says everyone has the right –
   (a) to a basic education, including adult basic education; and
   (b) to further education, which the state, through reasonable measures, must make progressively available and accessible.

Section 14(a)-(d) reflects the right to privacy, including their personal search; property search, possession seized and even privacy of their communications infringed. Section 28(1) (d) states that “every child has the right to be protected from maltreatment, neglect, abuse or degradation”.

The implementation of the above mentioned rights, reflect much flaws from both concerned groups such the government, Department of Education, school governing bodies, principals and communities. Provision of necessary resources and measures are inevitable for maximum school safety and security. If all personal rights outlined by the Constitution of South Africa, SASA, and code of conduct for schools are seriously practiced, teaching and learning would take place in safer and secure school environment.

2.2.2 South African Schools Act no 84 of 1996

According to South African Schools Act, Act 84 of 1996 as amended; there are regulations such as; section 61(a) and (f) which states that the Minister of Education may make regulations “to provide for safety measures at public and independent schools; and on initiation practices at public and independent schools” (Rossouw and Oosthuizen, 2005:70), but Eberlein (2009:18) says regulations for safety measures at schools- 2001 defines three key areas of school safety which are: schools as violence and drug free zones, access to public school premises and general measures to be adopted at public schools in order to ensure improved safety for both learners enrolled and staff employed at these schools.

Eberlein (2009:19) further says the Regulations also attempt with the removal of dangerous objects and illegal drugs to secure the “safe environment” which is everyone’s right according to section 24 of the Constitution (1996).

If regulations which are in place today are seriously enforced, our schools today would show greater improvements in discipline, school safety and compassionate environment. The major
concern is when South Africa has excellent rules and regulations, but remaining the worst country in terms of safety and security measures. South African education is far behind compared with other countries in terms of quality and productivity. There is much reluctance in the implementation of school rules and regulations. To proof this, South Africa is experiencing much chaotic situations in their classrooms like undisciplined learners, drug and alcohol abuse in school premises today. If these culprits are brought to books and punished accordingly, restoration of school safety and security can be experienced. Weapons and dangerous objects took the lives of innocent people in our schools. To curb all these abnormalities, special investigations and commitment from affected individuals must be adhered to.

Eberlein (2009:22) says the Regulation to Prohibit Initiation Practices begins to detail the responsibilities of educators with regard to such practices by stating in Section 6(1) that “educators must protect, promote and respect the rights of learners”. The rest of section 6 highlights the educators’ duty to assist the principal and the governing body with the maintenance of discipline at school and while away from the premises, on trips and tours. According to South African Schools Act 84 of 1996, section 10A, prohibits any form of initiation that may take place within the school premises (Rossouw and Oosthuizen, 2005:40).

It is Constitutional, and amended laws prove that majority of people are held responsible for the safety of learners, both inside and outside school premises. According to SASA, section 60(1) indicates that the State is liable for any damage or loss caused as a result of any act or omission in connection with any educational activity conducted by a public school and for which such public school would have been liable but for the provision of this section.

According to Oosthuizen et al. (2003:61) say an educator, in his capacity as a professional, didactical educationist, act as a secondary educator within the school, whereas education at home ideally proceeds on the basis of love (ethical), but at school a secure environment must be created to ensure that education must proceeds in an orderly and harmonious fashion. An educator drives his in loco parentis position from the authority delegated by a parent as well as from primary authority.

2.2.3 The School Governing Body (SGB)

Beckman and Prinsloo (2009:3) say that a school governing body is a body functioning in terms of section 16 of SASA and also constituted in terms of that Act. It exercises the functions accorded to it in terms of the decentralization of power to school communities.

2.2.3.1 The right of parents in the governance of a public school

The governing body consists of a majority of parents (the representatives of parent community), a number of educators, administrative staff and, in the case of secondary schools, also learners. It is responsible for the governance of the school (section 16 of SASA). In terms of section 23(9) of SASA, the number of parent members must comprise one more than the combined total of the other members of the governing body who have voting rights. The fact that parents make up the majority (section 23(9)) of the governing body demonstrates the importance of their involvement.
and constitutes the principle of partnership and responsibility for a public school. The parent
majority in the school governing body implies that parents have a strong and decisive voice
(Beckman & Prinsloo, 2009:3).

The School Governing Body has to adopt a code of conduct for learners at the school SASA,
section 20(1) (d), administer and control the school’s property, and buildings and grounds
occupied by the school, including school hostels, if capable; encourage parents, learners,
educators, and other staff at the school to render voluntary services to the school, SASA, section
20(1) (g) and (h).

In terms of section 15 of the same Schools Act, a public school is a juristic person with the legal
capacity to perform its functions. A juristic person may be a natural person or an association of
person- a body or organization (a school or a bank) that has the same legal rights and obligations
as a natural person. The school performs its actions through its governing body, meaning that,
the governing body acts on behalf of the school (Bisschoff & Mestry, 2003:57).

Therefore, the SGB of any public school by virtue of being a juristic person can sue or be sued. It
is accountable and responsible to any performed functions. It is also held liable for damages
incurred at school which are within its legal framework. Negligence is punishable by law,
especially where conduct falls short of the standard of the reasonable person. The SGB must
prevent any damage within the school before it occurs (foreseeability and preventability).

Oosthuizen et al (2003:95) state the case in Knouwds v Adminitrator, Kaap 1981 (1) SA 544
(C), where the facts of the case were as follows: eight-year old Ester Louw and a friend were
running around between the school building before school. The gardener was busy mowing the
lawn. He went to the office quickly and left the machine idling. Ester stumbled over the machine
and her finger got caught in the fan belt (this particular machine had an open, uncovered fan
belt). Her finger was injured so severely that it had to be amputated.

According to the judge in his verdict, the principal should have foreseen the possibility of young
children colliding with a machine such as the one under discussion if it were to be used at that
specific time and place. Even the occurrence of their injuries should have been foreseen. The
court found both the gardener and the principal negligent and therefore guilty.

2.2.4 Code of conduct of the school

Beckman and Prinsloo (2009:4) say SASA, section 8(1) places a duty on the governing body of
every public school to adopt a code of conduct for its learners following consultations with the
learners, parents and educators of the school. Disciplinary proceedings section 8(5)-(9) of SASA
should at least comply with the following requirements:

- The existence of a valid reason for disciplining the learner (transgression of the code of
  conduct or any other legislation).
- To be given adequate notice of the hearing.
- To have access to support, protection and presentation in line with the learners’ legal
  status, where necessary.
To ensure sufficient proof of misconduct and that the evidence is valid and permissible. To ensure the impartial decision the person responsible for the preliminary investigation (principal or senior staff member) should not be involved in any decision regarding the incident.

According to SASA, section 20(1) (d) as articulated under 2.2.3, the SGB adopt a code of conduct for learners at the school (Bisschoff & Mestry, 2003:59).

The Department of Education made provision for an example of a code of conduct which aligns with the supreme law of South Africa thus the Constitution. Each individual school has been given equal chances to draft its own school code of conduct according to the agreement of parents, educators, learners and stakeholders. Code of conduct for schools may differ from school to school. SASA, section 8(5) states that “a code of conduct must contain provisions of due process safe guarding the interest of the learner and any other part involved in disciplinary proceedings.

Smith (2009:48) says parental involvement in the drafting of a code of conduct could, in fact, play an important role in establishing a safe school environment. The positive impact of parents in 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.

According to Sowetan (2011), SADTU national secretary John Maluleke says “Teachers are afraid to discipline pupils because they carry phangas while others bring drugs on school premises and rape female pupils in the toilets”

The code of conduct of a school, must give a general idea of strategies which can be implemented to protect learners and visitors the same way. School safety plans must form part of the school code of conduct, where learners will be given opportunity to learn in a safe and supportive environment. Teachers and administrators at school will work together with each other and people in the community, including law enforcement officials, to ensure that learner safety is a priority.

Code of conduct forces every learner at school to behave in an orderly manner. Any learner who feels his/her safety threatened, must be able encouraged to report to an educator, deputy principal or principal so that proper actions may be taken. Safety plans must as well be specific in terms of emergency cases if they occur at school. Specifying contingency plans and procedures to be adhered to if a learner or an educator is injured at school. First Aid Kit (FAK) must always be ready and accessible making all emergency numbers intact. Always provide parents with latest information concerning safety of their children. In case of highest threat at school, call police for help. Maximum safety of everyone must always be assured. Van Deventer and Kruger (2003:139) say a code of conduct ensure a disciplined and orderly environment in which academic pursuits are not disrupted.
According to National Association of Elementary School Principals 28 March 2005, some schools include a section on electronic devices in their code of conduct, while others mandate that electronic devices, cell phones in particular, be concealed during class time.

2.3 CHARACTERISTICS OF UNSAFE SCHOOLS

2.3.1 Corporal Punishment

2.3.1.1 What is corporal Punishment?

Oxford School Dictionary & Thesaurus (2005:151) defines corporal punishment as punishment on the body, such as spanking or caning where Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English (2002:351) supports that it is punishment that involves hitting someone, especially in schools and prison.

Crawage (2005:49) says corporal punishment put learners at rise of violence-prone behavior. The reason for this is that some educators use physical force and sometime verbal abuse as well as abuse of power to “motivate” learners to learn when they administer corporal punishment.

The most common form of physical abuse that occurs in schools is corporal punishment. Corporal punishment is not just canning but also refers to an assault on a person in any manner whatsoever, including violent shaking, using a stick/belt or any object designed to threaten learners, or any other physical act which may cause discomfort to the learner.

According to Global Initiative (December 2007), corporal punishment is prohibited in legislation pertaining to child rights generally. Teaching methods and discipline in educational institutions shall respect the rights and guarantees of children and young persons and shall exclude all forms of abuse, ill- treatment and disrespect, and, accordingly, any form of cruel, inhuman or degrading punishment.

The South African National Policy Act (1996) also contains the prohibition, stating in article 3 that “[n]o person shall administer corporal punishment, or subject a student to psychological or physical abuse at any educational institution”

According to National Educators Policy Act 27 of 1996, discipline must be maintained in the school and the classroom to ensure that the education of learners proceeds without disruptive behavior and offences. Its goal is to teach and lead learners to self discipline. The disciplinary process must be expeditious, fair, just, corrective, consistent and educative. Where possible the parent should be informed and involved in the correction of the learner’s behavior.

The use of corporal punishment in some of the schools today after being abolished is a clear sign that learners are not as safe as they thought. Immoral and unacceptable behavior by learners put educators and school leadership in a dilemma with regard to their safety before the law. Managers of schools are bound to account before circuit managers on the behavior of their learners as it impacts on end-year results.
2.3.2 Punishment

Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English (2002:1329), defines punishment as something that is done in order to punish someone, or the act of punishing them, but National Education Policy Act 27 of 1996 regard punishment as a corrective measure or a penalty inflicted on an offender who has to suffer the consequences of misconduct in order to maintain the orderly society of the school.

Juta (2009:117) states punishment as a corrective measure or a penalty inflicted on an offender who has to suffer the consequences of misconduct in order to maintain the orderly society of the school.

According to Oosthuizen, Elda de Waal, De Wet, Rossouw, Smith and Van Huyssteen (2008:56) say educators should seek effective alternative to corporal punishment and refrain from using any physical or psychological violence as a form of punishment. Treating learners with respect concerning their dignity and bodily integrity would create a safer school environment and a more positive climate.

South Africa School CP-June (1997:3) says they apply their punishment, which on many occasions includes forcing the child to clean up a particular area at the school for a day or two. It works very well and in recent months it has acted as a very good deterrent in restraining pupils from wrong.

Ngeai (1997:5) emphasizes that teachers should also be empowered to deal effectively with discipline in schools while maintaining the right of children to fair treatment. Finding ways to protect these various rights will be a challenge, but we need to find solutions, if a culture of learning is to be promoted.

Mtsweni (2008:47) says it is important and necessary that educators should be empowered for implementing authority and discipline to be able to manage their classes effectively. They should therefore be empowered to work productively in the classroom where conditions are not always optimal.

Matidze (2003:40) adds that school managers attributed to positive culture of teaching and learning at their schools to the maintenance of order and discipline. The school management has a duty to maintain order and discipline at school.

According to Beckmann (2006:1033), discipline is about positive behavior management aimed at promoting appropriate behavior and developing self-discipline and self-control in learners. A well-disciplined school is usually defined as one where rules, policies and procedures are followed and where everyone realizes the implications and consequences of breaking the rules.
2.3.3 Classroom Cell phones

2.3.3.1 What is a cell phone?

According to Johnson and Kritsonis (2007:2) say “cell phone” –refers to a telecommunications device that emits an audible signal, vibrates, displays a message, or otherwise summons or delivers a communication to the possessor. A “cellular telephone” is a portable, cordless communication device that receives and delivers communication.

Neo, (2010:5), indicates that "our matric pass rate has been declining since 2003, where students need to take blame as well, apart from the Outcome Based Education. Mokgatho says how a student can pass when she is studying while listening to an iPod or chatting on Mxit, Face book and Twitter and they spend most of their time on these social networks instead of doing their school work. Those phones also make it easy for them to access adult materials, which contaminate their minds.

Reavy (2008) says text messaging and placing or receiving calls is a huge distraction to other students and teachers, and now police are coming across a growing number of incidents where the communication devices are also being used to facilitate crimes.

They are huge hindrance to an educational process. Cell phones are being used for more than just violating school codes. Sexual explicit pictures are taken with cell phones and sending them to the cell phones of their teens; which has received big media attention.

Henshaw (March 22, 2010) says as cell phones are equipped with cameras, cheating has become more of a concern with teachers and school administrators, whether by taking photos of exams, texting answers to other students, or looking up answers on the web.

Lynne (2007; 11 March) says cell phones can be used for recording teachers –no one is perfect and teachers are reputed to be above any misdeed. It is up to the administrator to complete an investigation. Students who misbehave should be affected by the same basic rights. No one is to be recorded without knowledge or consent. These are very serious offences that are not only wrong, but illegal such as arranging a drug deal, plotting a bomb threat, setting others to fight and unlawful taking of pictures.

Many teachers claim that cell phone provide too much of a distraction for students at any age. Whether it is a student playing a game on their phone rather than listening to class or a ring tone disrupting a lecture, cell phone use tends to take students’ minds off of the subject at hand.

Johnson and Kritsons (2007:1) say school system in America face many critical challenges pertaining to regulating cell phone use by the students in today’s schools. School executives and classroom teachers face challenges daily relative to how to effectively deal with student’s using cell phones.
According to the National Association of Elementary School Principals; (28 March 2005), say today’s school districts are more reluctant than in the past to ban cell phones altogether, instead letting principals decide school by school. Some schools include a section on electronic devices in their student code of conduct, while others mandate that electronic devices, cell phones in particular, be concealed during class time.

Although it has been a major debate in developed country like America, cell phones are a distraction to students in a learning environment in the following ways:

Bullying or harassing other students with unwanted voice or text messages, text-messaging or phoning friends during class time, cheating (recording, sending or receiving text questions and/or answers. Secretly taking inappropriate photographs of other students and distributing them. Phoning others outside the school to meet at the school during or after school to witness or participate in a fight or confrontation. School administrators and law enforcement officials have learnt that drug deals have been made via cell phones during school hours.

2.3.4 Drugs in schools

According to Joubert (2008:77), the presence of drugs in schools is a major concern and keeping schools free of drugs is one of the more difficult tasks facing school personnel. The use and abuse of drugs among school children and the availability of drugs in schools is on the increase. Catching culprits is one of the real difficulties in eradicating drugs in schools.

The most problematic situation for the school personnel in dealing with drugs in a school is when it comes to testing learners who are involved in drugs. Schools are not allowed to conduct compulsory drug testing in learners until green light from the government is issued. Only those found in possession of drugs may be subjected to disciplinary proceedings as articulated in SASA section 12 (a). Evans and O’Connor (1992:55) say “those who said earlier that there are some schools that didn’t have drugs problems are not in touch with reality, and they are not reflecting their communities”

Oosthuizen (2010:56) points out that there is a relationship between the use of antidepressant and an increase in suicide trends. Unacceptable behavior will be noticed within the school premises or in classroom, because other learners are afraid to be victimized by the offenders. Proper protocol must be followed carefully when dealing with drug searches in schools or in classrooms though learners’ rights have some limitations.

According to Netshitahame and Vollenhoven (2002:316) identify the sniffing of fumes such as glue and benzene; alcohol abuse pose safety threats at schools in Soutpansberg East Circuit in Limpopo Province. Weinstein (1999:91) says researchers generally agree now that substance abuse is a social disease and that social relationships are major sources of risk and protection.

The Department of Education (2002:1) says young people who use or abuse drugs are found in many secondary schools, and there is growing usage in primary schools as well. The stigma attached to this is very real, and denial is a stumbling block, a situation inherent in dealing with
drug use/ abuse. While the school is an institution of learning, it is neither one-dimensional nor static, nor does it work with one-dimensional or static people. To be effective in its primary task, the school has to take into consideration and manage those elements, which negatively affect its primary task.

2.3.5. Witchcraft

According to SASA 84 of 1996, section 10 provides protection of learners against physical and mental harm.

Although programmes and necessary measures are applied for the safety of both teachers and learners respectively, one major outstanding problem of safety in learners in almost all schools, is witchcraft. Belief and culture of both parents and learners are intertwined. No matter how strong the school safety and security might be, witchcraft issue still persist in African school.

Netshitahame and Van Vollenhoven (2002:316 pronounce that there are more safety threats of learners’ belief in witchcraft. Learners were frightened that they might be bewitched. This results in a psychological (mental) threat. This can however, also be a physical threat because a person who is viewed as a witch can be harmed (attacked) or even killed by others.

The majority of schools in the Limpopo Province are tormented psychologically with witchcraft spirits. Radio news report reveal cases of evil spirits which eventually result in death in the Vhembe District. Television (TV) channels always show the attacks and manifestations of evil spirits in their services. The same manifestation we view over the TV, the more we witness such in our classes. How much disturbances do they create in teaching and learning environments where conducive atmosphere must prevail? Some learners after being prayed for reveal sophisticated things such as, “I can no longer see when the teacher writes on the chalkboard”, “when I am in my class, I always feel sick”, “when I try to read my books, I discovered that I can no longer see” and someone says immediately she gets inside her class, she just see snakes everywhere and suddenly starts screaming disturbing the whole class and even other grades. Others even disturb to the level of chasing other learners from their respective classes and majority of them suffer injuries.

Although learners are not allowed to cross transfer mostly in the Further Education and Training (FET) band, learners are bound to cross transfer from one neighbouring school to the other avoiding witchcraft in their local schools. Learners are even cross transferred in June as a result of pressure from parental beliefs in evil spirits. Schools are subject to intimidation and accountability in this regard. Attacked learners always miss their daily lessons and examinations. Educators’ and other learners’ time is lost while attending sick and troubled learners. Although it cannot be proven both scientifically and before court of law, the one million dollar question is “how safe are educators and learners around this external and/ or internal threat?” School safety policy is a must in each school to ensure educational effectiveness and its personal safety, but this one is too hard to resolve.
2.3.6 Crime and theft

According to the South African Concise Oxford Dictionary (2002:273) defines crime as an action which constitutes a serious offence against an individual or the state and is punishable by law. Wanko (2001:78) says the principal has the responsibility to maintain a safe and secure environment for all students. More often than not, when the doors are locked, the criminal element will seek the path of least resistance and move to another location. Locks on every classroom are a must not only for safety, but for security of supplies and equipments.

According to Sunday Times dated 17 May 2009, says Tonia Jacobs, school children terrify her. Jacobs’s life fell apart eight years ago at Rhodes High School in Mowbray, cape Town, when a 13 year old pupil mercilessly bludgeoned her on the head with a hammer-in front of his horrified grade 8 classmates.

On Wednesday Sowetan, 26 August 2009 states that Limpopo Department of Education says it is losing the battle against criminals after another burglary which left school without 21 computers. Spokes person Ndo Mangala was incensed and accused schools’ management and the police of failing to provide adequate security at their schools.

According to the Mirror, 22 May 2009, vol: 36, says security at schools has come under spotlight, following the fatal stabbing of a learner on the school premises at Khalavha outside Thohoyandou in Limpopo Province, a grade 12 learner aged 20, miserably died in the hands of other learners after being stabbed in the chest by another learner following an argument at Jack Lavhengwa Secondary School.

According to the Sowetan, 15 April 2009, a former Krugersdorp schoolboy aged 18, pleaded guilty to murder and attempted murder in Gauteng South High court. The boy killed another learner by slashing him on the back of the neck and died on the scene while other pupils tried to perform first aid on him. Another learner was injured on the leg and face.

Managers of these schools were faced with stressful situations which needed their attention and accountability for the bereaved family and the Department of Education. Indeed to be a leader and manager of a school mean to face lots of countless challenges. Some school managers retire before their ages, sometimes because of ill-health conditions, unbearable challenges, unlimited and unresolved problems, and gloomy school destiny.

2.3.7. Gangsterism

According to South African Concise Oxford Dictionary (2002:474), defines gang as an organized group of criminals or disorderly young people and Saunders (1994:46) says is a group of people who have joined together, usually either to defend a turf area or for perceived protection from other gangs. Membership quickly leads to illegal behavior like stealing, shoplifting, mugging, fighting, underage drinking, doing drugs, and trespassing. Members often have to commit crime in order to belong to a gang as part of their initiation. Buying, selling and
using drugs are frequent requirements, as are carrying and using weapons. Gangs are community problem, but schools are a part of that community and cannot operate in isolation while hoping the gang members will drop their gang alliances and activities once they cross the school house door.

The National School Safety and Security Services say: factors motivating kids to join gangs vary individual to individual. A multitude of social and economic reasons can be involved. Power, status, security, friendship, family substitute, economic profit, substance abuse influences, and numerous other factors can influence. Gang members also cross all socio-economic backgrounds and boundaries regardless of age, sex, race, economic status, and academic achievement, depending upon the specific gang activity in a specific given school, or community, gang identification may include:

- Graffiti:- unusual sings, symbols or writings on walls, note books, etc
- “Lit” (gang literature):-gang signs, symbols, poems, prayers, procedures, etc, in note books or other documents.
- Initiations: -suspicious bruises, wounds or injuries resulting from “jumping in” type initiation.
- Hand signs: -unusual hand signals or handshakes.
- Behavior: -sudden changes in behavior or secret meetings.
- Tattoos: -symbols in arms, chest, or elsewhere on the body.

2.3.8. Sexual harassment

MacMillan English Dictionary for Advanced Learners (2002:1301) defines sexual harassment as the offensive or threatening behavior of a person who regularly makes sexual comments or touches someone in a sexual way; whereas the South African Concise Oxford Dictionary (2002:1074) says is the repeated making of unwanted sexual advances or obscene remarks to a person, especially in a workplace.

Sexual or gender–based offences take place everywhere in a workplace including schools. These offences include amongst others getting hold sexual satisfaction from an opposite person either male or female through touch, rubbing, or gestures, film or video shows, pictures, music, offensive comments etc, that seduces or arouse sexual feelings of such a person without consent.

There are socio-sexual behaviors such as:
- Physical contact - brushing against the target
  - Unwanted touching
  - Pinching/patting of sensitive places
- Verbal conduct - unwelcome sexual or dating proposition accompanied by threats.
  - Offensive flirtation
  - Loud comments
- Non-Verbal conduct- conspicuous display of graffiti or pornographic material for the target to see.
- Sexually suggestive gestures
- Sex based conduct – gender-related derogatory remarks
- Sexually offensive comments.

Although the South African Council for Educators (SACE) tried to regulate the ethics of professional behavior through Code of Conduct for Educators, shocking incidents of sexual harassment still persist especially in the Limpopo Province like:

✓ A Limpopo principal was accused of sexual harassment and accepting bribes to renew the contracts of temporary educators (Mtsweni, 2008:37)
✓ Daily Sun, 16 February 2011 says in Thohoyandou- a teacher aged 36 appeared in court for allegedly raping a 14 year pupil in a classroom during break.
✓ A Limpopo educator has been arrested for allegedly sodomizing a 15 year old learner and then “buy the boy’s silence” by giving him the answers to an Afrikaans examination paper.
✓ Another educator from Bolobedu South High, was allegedly caught having sex with a young female learner in the school’s science laboratory.

Joubert (2008:84) says school principals have a duty to protect learners from sexual offences and not to sweep the matter under the table. A school is responsible for the care and welfare of its learners. Teachers and especially the school principals are entrusted with the care and safety of the learners but Mtshali (2011) says the growing trend of teachers having sexual relations with pupils is a major concern for the Sa Council for Educators (SACE).

2.3.9 School violence

Shafii (2001:25) says youth violence has been termed a national epidemic and hence a public health problem. It has become a priority of the Department of Education and Justice, through the office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention. The US Congress and State legislatures around the country have passed legislation in attempts to control youth violence. Hoffman (1996:141) agrees that violence has been declared a public health issue. There is pressure on educators to intervene and make sure their schools are safe and orderly. Saunders (1994:3) says violence, crime and environmental problems are on the rise in many communities and these ills extend into the school. Children are at risk at school from many sources: students wielding weapons; decaying physical plants suffering from lax maintenance; environmental toxins; even their own dangerous behavior. In addition to suffering injuries in schools, students are victims of violence and crime.

Nelson (1996:403) says violence is among the most “radical conditions” now confronting the nation and its school-age children. Violence increasingly affects the daily lives of children. Violence inevitably flows from the community into the children’s daily lives, violence is on the rise. Kimberly and Gregory (2005:28) say children who are exposed to violence and intimidation in the home, will perceive violence and intimidation as the most appropriate method by which to obtain their desires.
According to Sunday Times, 24 January 2010, p4, it says South Africa’s crime rate—particularly violent crime—is among the highest in the world, a violent incident happen on average, every 47 seconds. Marotz, et al (2005:227) say safety must always be a continual concern. Safety must be a concern of all school personnel including support staff. Safety must always be a priority when teachers select, plan and implement learning activities.

2.3.9.1 Nature of school violence

Cursio and First (1993:6) say when violence erupts at school, the major actors often are students harming other students. Dysfunctional children, from dysfunctional families, are found in schools and communities of all shapes and sizes, and unfortunately their hostility, anger, frustration, and danger to themselves or others are not always apparent.

That is why Cowie and Dawn (2007:13) say school violence is the results of multiple levels of influence on behavior, which include individual, relationships, social, cultural and environmental factors.

(i) **Individual context**—considers how the personal history and biological characteristics of an individual might contribute to the development of violent behavior.

(ii) **Interpersonal context**—considers the manner how adults and young people communicate, both at home and at school and how these interactions may then lead to the development of particular behavioral patterns.

(iii) **Community context**—where interpersonal relationships occur and how is associated with an increased risk of violent behavior such as high population density, high levels of unemployment, local drug dealing activity, weapon-carrying and gang fuels on the streets; can permeate into school communities and support violent attitudes and behaviors and lastly is the violent behavior.

Conoley and Goldstein (2004:64) confirm that certainly parents and parenting practices can be factor contributing to students’ problem behaviors. Rogers (2007:231) agrees when he says it is in the privacy of some dysfunctional homes.

Shafii (2001:31) says large school size makes it more difficult for students to feel that they are part of the school and to have sense that their participation makes a difference. Larger school size also makes it more difficult for school administrators to be aware of potential problems among students.

The challenge still remains, “we cannot control the disturbing and dysfunctional home environments, we cannot control abuse in some homes, but we can and must report our suspected concerns. We cannot control abuse by parents and a child’s siblings; but we can create safe, sane, secure school environments in our schools” (Rogers, 2007:231).
2.3.10 Bullying in schools

2.3.10.1. Introduction

Joubert (2008:71) says in South Africa, the majority of schools, if not all, experience bullying. This is still experience even after the government has encouraged all schools to have a code of conduct for learners that also address bullying problem. Nearly 40% of South African children are victims of bullying and children who are bullied are victims of bullying and may even commit suicide. Also bullies are more likely to be arrested for committing a crime and more likely to abuse their spouses in later life.

Pollard and Triggs (1997:382) say recent research evidence on the extent of bullying in schools indicates not only the size of the problem but its widespread prevalence. A survey by the School Health Education Unit at the University of Exceter (1996) found that, from the 12-year olds questioned, more than one-third of the girls and one quarter of the boys reported being afraid to go to school because of bullying. Pupils, teachers, non-teaching staff, parents combine together to create an anti-bullying climate where both bullies and victims can ask for help.

According to Smith and Sharp (1994:1) say bullying in schools has long been a matter of concern. Bullying can occur in many contexts, including the work place and the home; it is particularly likely to be a problem in social groups with clear power relationships and low supervision, such as the armed forces, prison and also schools.

2.3.10.2 What is bullying?

Smith and Sharp (1994:2) say bullying can be described as the systematic abuse of power. There will always be power relationships in social groups, by virtue of strength or size or ability, force of personality, sheer members or recognized hierarchy. Research suggests that bullying not only causes considerable suffering to individual pupils but also has a damaging effect on the school atmosphere. Bullying is generally hidden from the adult supervising community, and when it is noticed is quite difficult to stop, because of the reluctance of the bullied pupils to complain very loudly.

According to Professor Pierre du Plessis in his presentation on 18-19 February 2011 at the University of Johannesburg (Soweto Campus) during the Educational Leadership Workshop/Symposium, he says bullying involves aggressive behavior which implies the forceful attacking of people over a period of time. It is abusive and is based on an imbalance of power. Bullying is a repeated oppression, psychological or physical, of a less powerful person by a more powerful person, therefore bullying involves the attempt to gain power and dominance over another person. Bullying in schools is a worldwide problem that can have negative consequences for the general school climate and for the right of learners to learn in a safe environment without fear.
2.3.10.3. Causes of bullying in schools

Smith and Sharp (1994:162) say other reasons may relate to the physical environment of the playground. These include boredom, over-crowding, marginalization, exclusion and lack of opportunities for raising self-esteem. Boredom is a major factor. Dull environments can favour anti-social behavior. Bored children may for stimulation or out of frustration pick fights, tease or bully. Dealing with bullying effectively is crucial to changing behavior. Inhospitable places do little to encourage a sense of pride and belonging for teachers, pupils’ lunchtime supervisors and parents. Bleak school yards do not suggest that school is a caring environment. Bullying thrives in an “un-supportive environment”.

Although bullying is said to be a stage through which learners must go- and harmless, it leaves a feeling of helplessness and defenselessness anxiety which at the end damages his/her self-esteem, school dropouts and suicide.

Pierre du Plessis on the 18-19 February 2011 at University of Johannesburg (Soweto Campus) outlines five causes of bullying as follows: family factors, individual factors, school factors, supervision of children and social climate in the school.

2.3.10.4 Characteristics of bullying

Oosthuizen (2008:14) says bullying:

Has an intended harm, has imbalance of power, it is organized and systematic. It involves a repeated pattern of aggressive behavior over a period of time where victims are vulnerable. Lack of support for victim exists, leaving the victim isolated, exposed and scared.

Du Plessis in his presentation at the symposium revealed that:

Physical, psychological and verbal behavior is reflected. Dominance over a fenceless person or someone who is less powerful occurs. A need to feel powerful and in control leads the show. Bullies have come from homes where physical punishment is used, where children are taught to strike back physically as a way to handle problems, where parental involvement and warmth are frequently lacking.

2.3.10.5 Forms of bullying

- Physical bullying
- Verbal bullying
- Relational bullying
- Sexual and gender related bullying
- Electronic bullying
According to the Sowetan dated, 16 February 2010, a pupil at Dr AMS Makunyane Secondary in Limpopo allegedly became agitated and grabbed the teacher by the collar and dragged her to the school’s squad; where they were observed by many teachers and pupils. The learner allegedly assaulted the teacher.

2.3.10.6 Signs of possible bullying in school community

Rogers (2007:238) reveals that someone who is normally happy, displaying uncharacteristic, unhappiness particularly before recessing. There is sudden deterioration of school work, not wanting to go to school; sudden increase in anxiety about going to school and loss of, or damage to, personal property. There is unexplained bruises cuts’ or injuries with an uncharacteristic desire to be with an adult coupled with extra requests for pocket money.

Joubert (2008:71) confirms that bullying in schools is a serious problem that needs to be dealt with in the code of conduct or a separate policy. A real problem with bullying is that educators and parents often don’t spot bullying, or they brush aside as nasty behavior, not wishing to make too much of it.

2.3.10.7 Consequences of bullying in schools

According to Blandford (1998:132) bullying or other form of harassment can make pupils’ lives unhappy and hinder their academic progress, and can sometimes push otherwise studious children into truancy. It can lead to hypochondria, psychosomatic illness, and in extreme cases, it has led to pupil taking their own lives.

2.3.10.8 Zero tolerance

Morrison (2007:53) says the genesis of zero tolerance began with the “war on drugs” in the 1980 and it is now regularly applied to school discipline in the United States. Shafii (2001:42) refers zero tolerance to predetermined consequences for various student offences, such as weapon carrying, and tobacco, alcohol, or drug abuse. Zero tolerance policies have been widely implemented in schools throughout the country. The National Centre for Educational Statistical Study found that 79%- 94% of schools surveyed had zero tolerance policies.

Netshitahame and Van Vollenhaven (2002:317) say schools should adopt a “zero tolerance approach” in order to reduce school violence and crime; but according to Prof Mestry in his Educational Leadership Workshop / Symposium, on 19 February 2011 at the University of Johannesburg (Soweto Campus), states that zero tolerance policy should be tailored to individual schools and to their local needs. The purpose of “ one size fits all” approach is keeping children safe and making the school environment a better place for learning, even if it’s at the expense of a few good kids.

Policies of zero tolerance has been effective in American schools for variety of offences; but in South African Schools can be better on weapons and drugs at school. Prof Mestry continues to say it’s a method of sending strong messages that serious offences would not be tolerated and
offenders would be punished accordingly. It is argued that this approach is unlawful and unfair. It imposes severe, predetermined penalties for misconduct regardless of individual circumstances.

According to Guidelines for the consideration of governing bodies in adopting a code of conduct for learners, section 4(4) (1) states that every learner has the right not to be treated or punished in a cruel, inhuman or degrading manner, educators and learners, seek and negotiate non-violent solutions to conflict and differences and to make use of due process of law (Juta, 2009:110).

2.3.11 School environment

According to Juta (2009:124) school environment is explained as “public school premises” including a building, structure, hall, room, office, convenience, land, enclosure, which is under the control of a public school, to which a member of the public has the right of access, or is usually admitted, or to which he or she may be admitted.

Juta (2009:111) on Guidelines for consideration of governing bodies in adopting code of conduct for learners says learners have the right to a clean and safe environment that is conducive to education. Security and property, well-cared for facilities, school furniture and equipment, clean toilet facilities, water and green environment, absence of harassment in attending classes and writing tests and examinations, all create atmosphere that is conducive for education and training.

According to the Bill of Rights Chapter 2 of the South African constitution, section 24 says, everyone has the right:

(a) To an environment that is not harmful to their health or well-being; and
(b) To have the environment protected, for the benefit of present and future generations through reasonable legislative and other measures that-
(i) Present pollution and ecological degradation;
(ii) Promote conservation; and
(iii) Secure ecologically sustainable development and use of natural resources while promoting justifiable economic and social development (Juta, 2009:393).

2.3.12 School characteristics

Conoley and Goldstein (2004:9) say the nature of leadership and governance in a school can be a major correlate of violence within its walls. A firm, fair, consistent principalship style, for example, has been shown to be associated with low level of student aggression. High level of arbitrary leadership and severe disciplinary actions tend to characterize school experiencing high level of aggression. School size is a further correlate of school violence. Crowding is a particularly salient school violence correlate, as aggressive behavior.
Schools with poor interrelationships mostly experience resilient disciplinary measures including aggression. Unhealthy communication amongst the SMT and educators dent the image of the school’s safety and security. Team spirit forms the base of leadership skills for any success. A feeling of belonging concretizes the mission and vision of the school.

Wanko (2001:75) says school community, embrace difference and learn from everyone. Everyone should feel like a key part of the school community. If all have ownership, a feeling of pride will result. If the stakeholders possess pride in the school, a safer environment will ensue. Saunders (1994:2) says parents need a way to be heard about their safety concerns in schools and to hold schools accountability for safety.

Conoley and Goldstein (2004:65) say schools cannot achieve all their social goals alone. They must work vigorously, as one community resource, in collaboration and coordination with other resources if they are to make a significant difference.

2.3.13 Truancy

It is essential that pupils must attend school regularly and throughout the whole day without failure unless a learner has experience a situation beyond his/her control. It is one of the major problems in maintaining regular attendance in learners.

According to Blandford (1998:132), children who truant, or who are otherwise absent without good reason, are more likely to grow up under-qualified and unfulfilled. They may damage their future chances of adult happiness and employment. They may place themselves at greater risk of being drawn into crime.

Many factors can contribute to truancy. The factor over schools have complete control is the experience which pupils have in the classroom. Good practice in teaching and discipline is also likely to be good practice in preventing truancy. Schools which seem most likely to prevent pupils drifting into truancy are those which are well-ordered places, where teaching is interesting and effective and, where expectations of pupil achievement, attendance and behavior are high.

Mostly learners who play truancy are demotivated, lazy, ignorant, preoccupied with school work, bully and come from either single headed families or child headed families.

2.3.14 Disruptive behavior

Disruptive behavior is regarded as deviance from doing which is right and consequently negatively affects teaching and learning in classrooms.

Blandford (1998:134) reveals some unacceptable behaviors which show a lack of respect for self, lack of concern for others including acts of verbal, physical aggression, racism, sexism or intolerance. Irregular or poor attendance, late arrival and a negative attitude to work is reflected in a lack of effort and underachievement.
There is disregard for the school rules and guidelines resulting in dishonesty and disruptive conduct. There is lack of care for equipment, the building, grounds or personal belongings of others resulting in litter, graffiti or damage.

Pollard and Triggs (1997:373) add some disruptive behaviors such as:

Non-work related chat, refusal to do the work set, wandering around the room, making cheeky comments to the teacher, interrupting other pupils’ work, failure to produce homework, swearing at another pupil or wearing at the teacher, provoking others to laugh by clowning, hitting/attacking another learner, talking when silence has been requested, not listening to instructions, doing work for another subject, looking at non-school material-comics, photos, cards, etc. Threatening the teacher, making faces behind the teacher’s back, using obscene gestures, hitting the teacher, talking constantly, throwing rubber/ pencil across the room, arriving late and twanging a rule.

According to Fritz in her presentation on 18-19 February 2011 during Education Leadership Symposium under “Classroom management and discipline from an Educational Psychology perspective” indicates some behavioral problems that also create disruption in classroom are, yelling, pushing, fighting with peers, difficult changing from one activity to another, sleeping problems, anger outburst and being unable to sit still and focus.

Discipline is intended to promote the learning of self order and to change inappropriate behaviour of learners, whereas expected behaviours must be actively taught both at home and in school. Defiance from proper behaviour must never be ignored but appropriate action(s) must always be taken.

2.4. CONCLUSION

The matter of school safety and security has been in newspapers, radio news, television shows, and variety of books (journals, articles and magazines), internet networks, national bargaining chambers, provincial levels, districts, circuits, schools, and community structure meetings. Incidence of lack of suitable and proper safety and security in our schools has been a burning issue. Both leaders in educational fraternity tried to outsource remedial strategies to fight against this disturbance in teaching and learning.

Apart from the Code of Conduct for learners, Criminal law has been put into power to deal with all cases pertaining to crimes directed to public interest like rape, theft, murder and assault. The government prosecutes all offenders and brings them to books. Rules and regulations against misconduct by both learners and educators are revised time after time, yet the number of offenders increases every day. Joubert (2008:75) concurs with these when he says crime and violence are on the increase in schools.

Joubert (2008:69) explains that in many schools CCTV cameras have been installed in corridors and in classrooms to protect learners, staff members and the school property. School governing
bodies may decide to install these cameras to monitor learners’ behavior and to act as deterrent against school violence and vandalism. Joubert (2008:51) further says while positive school rules are needed for schools to be effective, it is also necessary to have punishments (corrective discipline) for those who break the rules and disrupt school activities.

Both educators and learners must be safe and feel secured in their daily activities. If they feel insecure and unsafe when they interact with each other in their natural environment like classrooms, grounds, corridors, halls, libraries and extra-mural activities, how can they effectively execute their mandate for learning and teaching? Majority of schools are located in deep rural areas where large numbers of parents are unemployed. Therefore when will they enjoy and benefit from these technological equipments in their dilapidating schools?
CHAPTER 3

3. RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

South African secondary schools have been labeled unsafe places because of perennial reports of ridicule, intimidation, harassment, humiliation and violence (Sowetan, 2009:8; 2010:2). Effective teaching and learning may prevail under safe and secure school environment; conducive work climate; controlled and orderly atmosphere. Cases of learners threatening each other, killing one another, threatening educators are reported daily. Educators are resigning seemingly because the government is doing little if not at all to supply them with proper security in their work places. Instead, the government has thrown the towel upon the safety of both learners and educators on school governing bodies. Are school governing bodies trained enough to safe guard its components and properties? School principals are held reliable and liable for any case taking place within their jurisdictions as the father or mother. Manager’s safety at school may not be guaranteed. How tough is the principal’s job under this deteriorating school safety and security?

School Safety Team (SST) is formed in secondary schools to look after the safety of everyone within the school premises as necessitated by frequent incident reports from the media. Unfortunately none of those safety teams underwent training or induction courses, hence lack of skills and suitable equipments to answer their daily challenges. How safe are teenage pregnant learners within the school premises where educators are never trained for midwife courses, but are held responsible for anything that goes wrong? What then are the challenges facing secondary school managers in dealing with school safety and security in secondary schools in the Vhembe district? The level of safety and security differ from one individual school to another.

We cannot however regard the installation of metal detectors and security guards as satisfying all over safety needs. We must look beyond and invest in a time when we will normalize the learning environment as a place of freedom and respect, valued as nerve centre of a safe community (DoE, 2004:4).

3.1.1 Qualitative Research Method

Qualitative research encompasses several approaches to research that are in some respects, quite different from one another. Yet all qualitative approaches have two things in common. First they focus on phenomena that occur in natural settings—that is, in the “real world”. And second, they involve studying the phenomena in all their complexity. Qualitative researcher believe that researcher’s ability to interpret and make sense of what he or she sees is critical for understanding any social phenomenon. In this sense, pages the researcher is an instrument in
much the same way that a sociogram, rating scale, or intelligence test is an instrument (Leedy & Ormrod, 2005:133).

The goal of qualitative research is better understanding of human behavior and their experiences. Qualitative research takes the form of words or pictures rather than numbers. Data can include; transcripts, field notes, photographs, video recordings, audio recordings, personal documents and memos. It does not reduce the pages of narration into numbers like quantitative researchers (Bogdan & Bilken, 1994).

According to Mtsweni (2008:55), qualitative research is one of the approaches that researchers use when they want to expose information and knowledge and analyze data about the nature of reality or the world.

The researcher chose qualitative research method as a result of:

- Purpose of this research.
- Its relevancy to the investigation of the challenges facing secondary school managers in dealing with school safety and security.
- Intensive understanding on where, how, when and under what circumstances do behavior comes into being.
- Its nature of unlimiting reality as observed in the setting in which it occurs.
- Revealing the nature of certain situations, settings, processes, relationships, systems or people.

3.2 RESEARCH APPROACH (METHOD)

3.2.1 Phenomenological research approach

Phenomenology is a philosophical approach to the study of experience (Smith et al, 2009:11). According to Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy (2008:2) define phenomenology as the study of structures of consciousness as experienced from the first-person point of view, along with relevant conditions of experience. Literally it is the study of “phenomenon”: appearances of things, or things as they appear in our experiences, or the ways we experience things, thus as the meanings things have in our experience. It studies conscious experience as experienced from the subjective or first person point of view. Again it studies the structure of various types of experiences ranging from perception, thought, memory, imagination, emotion, desire, and volition to bodily awareness, embodied action, and social activity, including linguistic activity.
Phenomenological approach has been chosen in attempt to understand the meaning of events to ordinary people in particular situations. Phenomenological researchers believe that it is possible to interpret events in many different ways depending upon the “frame of reference” and believe that the term “reality” is socially constructed.

Spinelli (2005:134) says phenomenological methods concern themselves primarily with exploratory strategies designed to accumulate an ever increasingly adequate description of any given phenomenon as it presents itself to one’s experience.

According to Leedy & Ormrod (2005:139) the researcher had personal experience related to the phenomenon in question and wants to gain a better understanding of the experiences of others. By looking at multiple perspectives on the same situation, the researcher can then make some generalizations of what something is like from an insider’s perspective. A phenomenological study attempts to understand people’s perceptions, perspectives and understanding of a particular situation. McMillan & Schumacher (2010:336) support that phenomenology understand the essence of lived experience; generates more research questions.

According to McMillan & Schumacher (2010:346) confirm that phenomenological study describe and interpret the experiences of participants regarding a particular event in order to understand the participants’ meanings ascribed to that event. It focuses much more on the consciousness of human experiences.

This form of approach will enable the researcher to achieve the purpose of his research through inductive way of reasoning. The approach will further inspire the researcher about knowledge acquisition and understanding with deep insight of participant’s day-to-day lived experiences. Spinelli (2005:135) says phenomenological researchers focus upon the quest for statements of ‘increasing adequacy’ regarding the structure of an experience. The overall aim of phenomenological research is to provide increasingly adequate meaning statements rather than final laws or uncontestable truths. It is more concerned with ‘speaking truthfully’ about an experience rather than focus upon the achievement of a final, or “arrived at” truth.

3.3 POPULATION AND SELECTION

3.3.1 Population

Goddard & Melville (1996:34) define population as any group that is the subject of research interest; McMillan & Schumacher (2010:129) concur with them to say, is a group of elements or cases, whether individuals, objects, or events, that conform to specific criteria and to which we intend to generalize the results of the research.
Limpopo Education Department is composed of five districts of which their names are: Capricorn, Mopani, Sekhukhune, Waterberg and Vhembe. The population of this study comprises of all secondary schools in the Vhembe district. Vhembe district consists of 27 circuits with the total of 285 secondary schools. This study focuses only on the secondary schools within the Vhembe district.

3.3.2 Selection

Schumacher & McMillan (1993:401) say purposive sampling is selecting small samples of information-rich cases to study in depth without desiring to generalize to all such cases; and sample size depends on the purpose of the study, the data collection strategies, and the availability of information-rich cases.

McMillan & Schumacher (2010:351) say choosing a site is a negotiation process to obtain freedom of access to a site that is suitable for the research problems and feasible for the researcher’s resources of time, mobility, and skills. After the researcher identifies a possible site, contact is made with a person who can grant permission for access to the setting and participants. Gaining entry into the field requires establishing good relations with all individuals at the research site. Once researchers have initially mapped the field, they selectively choose the persons, situations and events most likely to yield fruitful data about the evolving research questions. Researchers search for information-rich informants, groups, places and events from which to select subunits for more in-depth study.

Flick (1995:122) agrees with Schumacher and McMillan when he says cases may be selected according to the intensity with which the interesting features, process, experiences and so on are given or assured in them; or selection of critical cases aims at those cases in which relations to be studied become especially clear.

As it is impossible to include the entire population of the Vhembe secondary schools in my study, selection has been done through purposive sampling method which Maree (2007:178) says is used in special situations where sampling is done with a specific purpose in mind.

Selection of schools has been conducted on the basis of the following information which the researcher needs to achieve:

- Four secondary schools with the highest incident track record of unsafe and insecure school environment.
- Four secondary schools with the lowest incident track record of unsafe and insecure school environment.
- District in which the researcher stays.
- Schools nearer and closer to the researcher in order to minimize costs and time constraints.
Schools familiar and well-known to the researcher with track record within the scope of his study; in collaboration with statistical assistance from Limpopo Education Department in Vhembe district.

3.3.3. Selection size (Sample size)

McMillan and Schumacher (2010:141) say when selecting a sample from a population, a sample size that is only a small percentage of the population can approximate the characteristics of the population satisfactorily.

The size of the sample size provides the best answers to the research questions and generalizing research conclusions. The number of participants should provide credible results. It is of no use to have high number of participants, whose information cannot be credible and relevant but time consuming and cause constraints to the researcher.

According to this study, principals of secondary schools or one SMT member per secondary school in the Vhembe district were chosen and interviewed. Face-to-face interview was conducted with eight (8) respondents on challenges facing secondary school managers in dealing with school safety and security.

3.3.4. Advantages of purposeful sampling (selection)

McMillan and Schumacher (2010:140) outline the strength of using purposeful method as less costly and time-consuming, ease of administration, usually assure high participation rate, generalization possible to similar subjects and assures receipt of needed information.

3.4 DERMACATION OF THE RESEARCH

Limpopo Province is popularly known as “Aden of Africa” because of its mountains, rivers and valleys. Its everlasting beauty attracts tourists from all corners of Africa and abroad. Limpopo province is regarded as a gateway to Africa. This research is centered on this province, although the experiences might be the same from other provinces of South Africa. The researcher chose this province because that it is where he stays; the sampled schools are known and even closer to the researcher. This research has been confined to Limpopo province because the researcher wanted to avoid financial constraints.
3.5 DATA COLLECTION

3.5.1 Interviews

3.5.1.1 What is an interview?

According to Babbie (2007:306) an interview is an interaction between an interviewer and a respondent in which an interviewer establish a general direction for the conversation and pursues specific topics raised by the respondent, but Creswell et al (2007:87) say interview is a two-way conversation in which the interviewer asks the participant questions to collect data and to learn about the ideas, beliefs, views, opinions and behavior of the participant.

3.5.1.2 In-depth interviews

Smith et al (2009:57) describe in-depth interviews as “a conversation with a purpose”. The purpose is informed, implicitly at least, by a research question. The conversation is rather artificial; the aim of an interview is largely to facilitate an interaction which permits participants to tell their own stories in their own words. The participants tell and the interviewer listens.

The aim of the interview is to enter the participant’s life world or allow the participant to recount their life experiences. Participants should be granted an opportunity to tell their stories to speak freely and reflective, and to develop their ideas and express their concerns at some length (Smith et al, 2009:56).

McMillan and Schumacher (2010:355) say in-depth interviews use open response questions to obtain data on participants’ meanings-how individuals conceive of their world and how they explain or make sense of the important events in their lives.

Marshall and Catherine (1995:80) say in-depth interviewing is a data collection method, where the participant’s perspective on the phenomenon of interest should unfold as the participant view it, as the researcher view it.

Although Frey and Oishi (1995:4) say telephone interviewing is being used more because of being cost-efficient and speed of data collection, the researcher decided to ignore it as the researcher wanted to discover more additions from participant’s sign language and to get reflection on how experiences affect him/her.

The purpose of this interview strategy depends on the purpose and context of this study which is to obtain the present challenges that secondary school managers are experiencing, their feelings, concerns, thoughts, behavior and perceptions. This study focuses on individuals who have special knowledge, status and communication skills to share with the researcher; and they are principals of secondary schools or any person in management position in secondary schools. Open-ended questions were prepared in advance in order to get what the researcher wants
(purposes). Questions were followed with some probing and pauses to enable the participants release everything they know, experience, feel, etc. A note book and voice recorder has been used with permission from the participants. Interviews have been conducted after working hours at participants’ conducive and best preferred environments. Each interview lasted for roughly 1-2 hours long.

I concur with what Schumacher and McMillan (1993:419) say “people’s perceptions are richly constructs of their world, or constructed realities”. Indeed, reality is socially constructed.

3.5.1.3. Advantages of using interviews

According to Schumacher and McMillan (1993:250) say nonverbal as well as verbal behavior can be noted in face-to-face interviews, and the interviewer has an opportunity to motivate the respondent. Interviews result in a much higher response rate than questionnaire, especially for topics that concern personal qualities or negative feelings.

Creswell et al (2007:87) say the purpose of qualitative interviews is to see the world through the eyes of the participant and they can be a valuable source of information; with the aim to obtain rich descriptive data that will help to understand the participant’s construction of knowledge and social reality. Participants may propose solutions or provide insight into events, but the focus is mainly on their own perceptions of the event or phenomenon being studied.

Oppenheim (1992:81) supports that interviews improve response rates, more convincingly, more easily reach less well-educated respondents; help the ones with reading difficulties, offer standardized explanations to certain problems, prevent many misunderstandings and maintain control over the order or sequence in which the questions are answered.

3.5.1.4. Interview schedule for the research

3.5.1.4.1 What is an interview schedule?

According to Smith et al (2009:58), interview schedule is a way of preparing for the likely content of an interview. The researcher typically sets out the questions as she would like to ask them (in an ideal world), and in the order which she expects might be the most appropriate for the participant. These things can and do change once an interview is underway.

Interview schedule for this research study has numerous framed questions related to some spotted areas where managers of secondary schools might be facing some challenges in dealing with school safety and security. The following questions have been used as instruments for capturing data from participants:

1. How is the surrounding of your school?
2. What type of fence does your school have?
3. Are there no unauthorized openings around the school fence?
4. How do you deal with unauthorized persons?
5. Security personnel:
   (a) Do you have security personnel in your school?
   (b) How many and how do they work (exchange/shift)?
   (c) Is/ are the security personnel trained for his/her job?
   (d) How do they ensure that school property, educators, learners and non-teaching staff are safe?
6. How is the inflow of drugs and alcohol within the school premises?
7. Fighting:
   (a) What is your experience with regard to learners fighting each other?
   (b) What is your experience on learners fighting an educator or educators and vice-versa?
   (c) What have you learnt on educators’ conflicts?
   (d) How do educators’ conflicts affect school safety and security?
8. NSNP:
   (a) Does your school fall under NSNP (National School Nutrition Programme)?
   (b) How safe are learners when it comes to food preparation and distribution?
   (c) Which other challenges are you experiencing as you distribute food to learners?
9. Which incident(s) shocked you within your school premises?
10. Which other management area faces more safety and security problems?

3.5.2 Written Records (Field Notes)

Mtsweni (2008:67) defines field notes collectively to all the data collected in the course of a study, including the field notes, interview transcripts, official statistics, pictures, and other materials.

Capturing of data for this study has been mainly done through voice recorder, digital camera, official statistics and field notes. Voice recorded information has been further stored in a disc and USB to avoid its loss through viruses or any other form of damage. Any feature or object taken by a camera has been printed to hard copies and further stored in a computer to safeguard them and for future references. Official statistical documents have been printed and filed together with drafted notes during data gathering process.
3.5.3 Non-participant observation

The researcher took one day visit to each sampled school in order to gain access to the physical nature of school buildings, surrounding, toilets, playground, school kitchen, and other accessible features. Eberlein (2009:8) states that the time is spent noting any physical features of each of the schools that might enhance or hamper the school in its quest to be a safe environment for learners and staff.

The researcher would like to be physically in the site of research in order to get to know the inside of his situation. The research will gain access to first hand information which will be described as is. The observed situations have been self-explanatory through the view of different original photos, for example, what people regularly or usually do, how the environment looks like (playground, kitchen, toilets, windows, classrooms and surrounding in general).

The researcher will develop the so called "Epoche” which means “the first step in coming to know things, in being inclined towards seeing things as they appear, in returning to things themselves free of prejudgments and preconceptions (Moustakas, 1994:9).

3.6 CONCLUSION

According to Masitsa (2011:163 says the question of safety in schools and the child’s right to receive education, the world over, have been under spotlight for some years.

Masitsa (2011:171) says learners sometimes fight among themselves and that schools are sometimes not safe for learners during and after hours indicates the learners’ safety at these schools is not guaranteed. Schools do not only have to deal with common learner misdemeanours, but with learners involved in criminal behavior at schools, some of which may be injurious to teachers and fellow learners. The fact that the perpetrators of misbehavior at these schools come from within and without the schools makes the resolution of problems difficult.

De Waal (2011:175) says educators, learners and parents/caregivers should be held accountable for instilling learners discipline through clear guidelines and limitations to achieve security at public schools. De Waal further talks of convincing educators, learners and parents/caregivers of their accountability concerning creating/maintaining safe learning environments.

Prinsloo (2005:6) says the *in loco parentis* status of educators furthermore forces schools to foresee the potential dangers to which learners may be exposed at schools and to act pro-actively by taking steps in the form of safety measures or policy to protect learners from harm.
CHAPTER 4

4. DATA COLLECTION, INTERPRETATION, ANALYSIS AND PRESENTATION

4.1 INTRODUCTION

Interviewing is the predominant mode of data collection in this study. Data can be collected through different ways using different instruments depending on the research type. Although interviewing the participants involves the description of the lived experience, participant’s viewpoint is never undermined. Thick descriptions of one’s experience play a major role in data capturing process. The interviewer’s skill of interviewing also plays an important role. Leedy and Ormond (2005: 134) says qualitative research studies the description, where they can reveals the nature of certain situations, settings, processes, relationships, systems or people, and interpretation where they enable a researcher to gain new insights about a particular phenomenon and / or discover the problems that exist within then phenomenon.

Relevant individuals have been selected by the researcher typically forming sample size of the research study. The purpose of the sample size is because of the type of information such participants will provide basically on the challenges facing secondary school managers in dealing with school safety and security. Thick and dense everyday lived experience was focused much on secondary school managers in order for the researcher to achieve his aim.

The data collected have been reflected in tables according to school codes. Each school has two different tables according to topics. The researcher suspended all preconceived notions or personal experiences that may unduly influence what the participants say. In this regard the researcher wanted to study and obtain the richest information from his situation of study which is the secondary schools in the Limpopo Province.

4.2 Data collection, interpretation, analysis and presentation

4.2.1 School (SS1)/ Secondary School Number 1: HITR (High Incident Track Record)

4.2.1.1 Surrounding

The surrounding of this school is not clean and welcoming. There are lots of bushes along the school fence which promote frequent trespassing.
4.2.1.2 Fence type

The type of fence is an ordinary steel diamond mesh wire, without spikes. There are some holes cut off from the fence whereas some other areas have hedges underneath the fence (refer to photo number 14). Cementing has not been done at the base of the fence hence much access inside the school premises.

4.2.1.3 Openings on fence

The fence has some holes at the backside of the school especially behind boys’ toilets. These holes are the exit points for majority of learners. Local people make use of them to steal some school properties and playing around school premises. The village boys chase their goats inside school premises and go for soccer in the nearby community ground. These goats even enter some open classroom and stay there overnight (photo number 8, 9, and 10).

4.2.1.4 Unauthorized persons

There are unauthorized persons entering school premises through the off cut openings in the fence. Former and learners from other schools trespasses school premises through the fence behind boys’ toilets. When asked, they simply say they pay their friends some visits or to collect some home keys from their younger brothers or sisters. This behavior subsequently creates disorder and interference to teaching and learning milieu.

4.2.1.5 Security personnel

The school has two security personnel who have not been trained. The security officers work day and night. They make use of register book to control people who enter through the gate. They do not conduct search for learners or in their school bags. They open the gate for whosoever wants to enter the school premises. They do not deny anybody permission who comes at anytime of the day. There are no strict measures for gate control by the security personnel. Friendship with learners by the security personnel is very rife which leaves him without any proper control at school.

4.2.1.6 Drugs & alcohol

There is an inflow of drugs and alcohol through the cut-off holes in the fence and sometimes through the gate. Alcohol enters through the gate in juice bottles and smoking is famous within the school premises especially behind boys’ toilets. Drunkards always put school and learning processes to a standoff as others will be watching them misbehaving. Learners who are found drunk within the school premises are simply sent back home and then the following day come to school with their parents for the matter to be resolved. Later such learners will be punished by digging holes within the school premises for roughly an hour and then go back to class. This form of punishment has never been effective and fruitful in curbing their behavior. Educational time for teaching and learning is ultimately utilized for solving misdeeds always performed by these kinds of learners.
4.2.1.7 Fighting's among learners

Learners fight each other within school premises especially the grade 8 and 9 boys, fighting for girlfriends and also for gambling. Most gambling activities are playing cards and “murabaraba”. These games are played during breaks and even during study times. For example, one afternoon some learners stated fighting each other towards school out within the school premises. Suddenly the school was out of control. The following day two boys came up with two “pangas” and hide them behind the boys’ toilets, but around 10am, the fight started again and eventually one of the boys was cut under his feet.

Learners sometimes use to fight educators, and threaten them. One learner from grade 9 threatened an educator in grade 11 class with an iron bar and fortunately the educator was defended by other school kids. The situation in this school mostly becomes dramatic even to villagers and passersby. Teaching and learning is under frequent disruptions which makes the situation unfavorable, unsafe and insecure.

4.2.1.8 Educators fighting each other

Educators fight each other verbally and experience communication break-down. Educators even threaten each other with the use of muti which mostly brings a feeling of jealousy and conflict. Eventually the promise of ‘muti’ becomes practical and a norm to members of the staff. Misunderstanding among educators with regard to certain practices within their extra-curriculum activities like LEPIST classes are rife. Unhealthy talks and behavior coupled with lack of respect and degrading statements are familiar to the members of this school. Vulgar language is openly used in pathways, staffrooms, and corridors mostly before learners. This fighting culture is also cultivated to learners in their respective classes and sports grounds, making the atmosphere undesirable for formal teaching and learning.

4.2.1.9 Educators fighting school manager

There is greater tension between educators and the school manager. There are lots of camps with less than 25 educators of this school. The seriousness of this ill feeling amongst staff members and the school manager leaves less to be desired. Team work still needs to be taught among them to safeguard and uphold the culture of teaching and learning in this school. Weaker likings among educators have negative feedback on integrated and exchange educational programmes.

4.2.1.10 Food Handlers

The school has nutrition programme which has started some years ago. Food handlers are clean and have suitable clothes such as hats, aprons and “takkies”. The school has proper storeroom for learners’ food and food is prepared under shade and clean place. Learners’ health in terms of food security leaves much to be copied by other schools which are still far behind the NSNP programme.

4.2.1.11 Distribution of food during breaks

There is no co-operation from educators and supervision by class- teachers. Some learners end-up not eating because of fighting and pushing against each other. Learners do not eat their food inside their classes. Food mostly spill out because of disorder and some learners remain hungry in most week days. Some other learners carry containers of food and run away with them. The situation has turned on “the survival of the fittest”. Weaker and innocent learners are overpowered by the bully ones. The situation is dangerous on its own when monitoring is
unlikely to be adhered to. Apart from shortage of food, other learners can suffer serious burns apparently from hot food as there is no teacher supervision.

4.2.1.12 Shocking incidents within the school

An incident took place towards 13h00 in 2011, when educators left the school premises without pre-agreement with the school manager a day before Easter holidays. The school manager was left alone within the school premises with very few learners in classes who were later released. Tension from this behavior because of misunderstandings increased the unpleasant working condition within this school. Learners feel unsafe under this unfavorable atmosphere, teaching and learning more so turns bitter to both learners and educators. Unwelcoming behavior among members of the school has negative impacts on educational achievements. When learners are left unattended and in dilemma, trust and confidence is mostly destroyed.

4.2.1.13 Area of leadership challenge

No unity amongst managers of the school. There is no co-operation between SMT members. School manager is failing to cope with the current change in the field of his operation. The school manager fails to monitor lesson plans, negative at CASS issues within his leadership as spelled out by curriculum design. These frequent and unpleasant work environments negatively affect the culture of teaching and learning. Team work spirit and the sharing of expertise amongst members of this school is very low impacting on the results which are very poor. The future of most learners in this school is at stake

4.2.2. School (SS2): HITR

4.2.2.1 Surrounding

The surrounding is not good. There are bushes and long grasses around the school. Refer to photo number 2 and 3 respectively.

4.2.2.2 Fence type

The type of fence is an ordinary one, made up of diamond mesh wire and surrounded by razor wire. The school has double fences wherein the inner one has razor wire all around but the outer one is popular like ordinary home high fence.

4.2.2.3 Openings on fence

There are openings around the fence. Boys looking after goats and cattle are the first suspects, so that their animals may graze inside while playing soccer in the school ground outside the school yard. Over the weekends school gates remain unlocked for learners to get access for study, hence trespassers take advantage to utilize this premises for their unknown purposes (refer to photos number 8 and 10).
4.2.4 Unauthorized persons

Unauthorized persons get inside the school premises for anybody they need at any time of the day. These people create unnecessary disturbances to the smooth running of our educational setup. One morning another woman came to school ask for another school girl and pretended to be her relative. The security officer gave her way straight to the class in grade 12. The girl was innocently learning, suddenly the woman without any knock at the door, she entered and request for the poor girl. Before the girl even reaches the doorstep, the woman grabbed her by the clothes and throws her outside her class with the question, “why do you take my husband?” Suddenly the crowd of people from other classes was out to rescue but the girl was already red in blood. Police van arrived together with ambulance to take the girl to the hospital. Warrant of arrest was issued against the woman and the SGB of the school expelled the security officer in charge for negligence.

4.2.5 Security personnel

There is one security personnel who only works during the day and knocks off immediately after school with learners. The security’s time to knock off is determined by learners’ time to knock off. Security works from Monday to Friday and on weekends there is no security. The safety of valuable resources is under threat. The security officer works as he desires. There are no strict measures to control and to identify visitors who come to school.

4.2.6 Drugs & alcohol

Learners drink during breaks from the nearby taverns and come back drunk. Some of them do not come back from lunch due to smoking problems. Drunken learners create unbearable disturbances in class causing teaching and learning environment undesirable. The rights of other learners to learn in a safe and secure environment are violated. Truant learners disadvantage themselves from their constitutional right to education.

4.2.7 Fighting’s among learners

It is a normal thing to see learners fighting from their respective classrooms in this school. Majority of learners even fight when an educator is inside the class while busy teaching. The environment which consist fights does not steer proper teaching and learning to take place. Bullying behavior dominates the entire situation leaving most of the learners failing to enjoy their educational benefits. This atmosphere is characterized of fear and pressure, turning it to multiple crises.
4.2.2.8 Educators fighting each other

Educators have unlimited conflicts and have camps against each other. There is no unity amongst them hence more problems in integrated teaching. Exchange programme suffers unhealthy communication among educators from the same institution. The whole setup boils back to the issue of safety and security teaching and learning environments. Educator’s fights impede learners’ academic development.

4.2.2.9 Educators fighting school manager

Educators undermine the school manager to an extent of dodging their work. Some leave their cars within the school premises and bode some taxis to town during working hours. This behavior reflects lack of knowledge in the supervisory obligation of the teacher as a caring person. According to the Educators Policy Handbook, code of conduct for educators has been clearly spelled out to guarantee the safety of all learners under their jurisdiction. Irresponsible educators widen the gap of unsafe and insecure learning environment of learners.

4.2.2.10 Food Handlers

The school has two food handlers who are always clean. They do not have proper gowns necessary for food handlers. They use their own clothes. The surrounding where they prepare food is not clean as it is dusty, refer to photo no.6. Safety of learners in this environment cannot be guaranteed. Learners may easily be affected by variety of diseases. Proper hygienic conditions must always be apprehended to safeguard the health of learners.

4.2.2.11 Distribution of food during breaks

Food is distributed inside classrooms which are not clean, refer to photo no: 7 and 8, after cleaning, there are some rubbish materials which are left inside the corners of classrooms. Educators do not monitor the distribution of food where they are class teachers which lead to shortage of food to some learners. On the days of fruits, like oranges and apples, majority of learners do not receive their share due to bully and unruly students. The safety of learners is not fairly monitored as expected.

4.2.2.12 Shocking incidents within the school

In 2007 another learner was found drinking alcohol inside the school premises and was immediately sent home. In the same year another school boy was drunk and then vomited in the class during lesson. The lesson was suddenly disrupted. The other incident took place in 2008 when another learner forcefully over-come the security guard at the gate demanding to go to the toilet outside the school premises in the nearby bushes leaving behind the real toilet buildings inside the school premises. In 2010, an LRC president of this school collected R1, 00 from every grade 8 and 9 learners for personal gain or enrichment. Again in 2010, a grade 12 learner who fell pregnant in her academic year of study and continued studying at this school died as she was giving birth.
In 2011, a grade 11 learner who was pregnant mysteriously gave birth and throws the baby into her neighbor’s pit toilet and the baby was later found dead immediately after removal and the culprit went back to the class after social workers, police and magistrate considered variety of factors, the same learner dropped out in 2012. According to health and social welfare department, this school took position number one in teenage pregnancy in 2011 academic year. The total number of passes in this school in May-June 2011 examinations was lower than the number of pregnant teenagers on the day of issuing school report cards (school reports).

4.2.2.13 Area of leadership challenge

Discipline in this school is so poor. Educators are negligent in their leadership roles. Learners are unruly and undisciplined. There is lack of parental support in the activities of the school giving rise to hooligans. De Waal (2011:175) says the weakness at South African schools is that the level of learner discipline that is seen to be instilled is unacceptably low.

4.2.3 School (SS3): HITR

4.2.3.1 Surrounding

The school is surrounded by bushes in and outside the school fence. Bushes and rubbish from broken chairs, desks and tables are packed closer to learners’ classrooms and twinning bushes are intertwined with all these materials giving them chance to can even enter through classroom windows. Refer to photo no.3. The safety of learners outside as well as inside their classrooms is not guaranteed (refer to photo no. 13). Young learners for grade eight use the class with uncovered electric distribution box with live current. It is easy for learners to temper with electric cables which may lead their lives to danger. The chances of learners to suffer from electric shocks are very high.

4.2.3.2 Fence type

It’s a high fence made up of diamond mash with iron steel materials.

4.2.3.3 Openings on fence

The fence has lots of holes around it. Because of the school fence with plenty entrances, learners make holes in the school fence in order to short cut their ways home after school and when they come to school. Through the uncontrolled entrances, the safety of school members cannot go announced.
4.2.3.4 Unauthorized persons

Unauthorized persons again access to school premises through many openings. These openings are also used by community people getting their way through the school premises to either side of the village. After school and even over the weekends animals are visible in the school premises. Sometimes village soccer teams are found playing inside school ground without the knowledge of the school manager especially on weekends. School properties disappeared without any trace and break-through. This simply indicates that school property has never been safe because cases have been reported to the police station but none had breakthrough.

4.2.3.5 Security personnel

The school has two security personnel who work under shifts. The other one works in the evening whereas another one during the day. The whole staff of security personnel is not trained except just ordinary community people who do not have any weapon to use. Security personnel do not conduct any form of search in classrooms or even at the gates. There are many loopholes through which school property disappear without trace. Police investigating officers tried to investigate cases of theft, but in vain. Training of security personnel and building of strong storeroom may eliminate this trouble.

4.2.3.6 Drugs, alcohol & weapons

The school is surrounded by taverns’ which sell liquor to everyone. Learners of this school are permitted to go out and buy what they want from nearby ‘spaza’ shops. They gain access to alcohol and drugs during breaks. Periods after breaks reveal unruly behavior, fights and disruptions of both teaching and learning. Educators are badly troubled while busy teaching in their classrooms.

4.2.3.7 Fighting’s among learners

This is a common practice for learners fighting each other in and outside school premises. Learners reflect this kind of behavior during breaks. Cases of conflict among learners are very popular although they are resolved accordingly. Despite the fact that it seems like a common norm, other learners are threatened and abused in public. Wrongdoers must receive suitable correctional measures in order to stop this tendency.

4.2.2.8 Educators fighting each other

Educators have frequent conflicts and physical fight with each other. In 2008 two lady teachers fought inside the school premises over personal issues. They fought very early in the morning next to the school managers’ office. This incident was also witnessed by other learners who were seriously shocked about it.

The other physical fight was between two male educators who lost their tempers within the school premises in 2009. The school has many staffrooms which mostly are in conflict with each other even in staff meetings. Persistence of these conflicts had adverse results in educational output of the school. Creation of healthy and living educational atmosphere may remedy the situation as learners might also copy from their role models.
4.2.2.9 Educators fighting school manager

In 2010 one of the teacher components in the SGB structure was in serious loggerheads with the school manager over some misunderstandings on application of certain laws in the workplace. An educator was later warned, and reprimanded. Unhealthy work environment creates unlimited frictions resulting in higher failure rate of learners. Upset educators cannot deliver in class which hampers both psychological and physical nature of the child.

4.2.2.10 Food handlers

The school has five food handlers who have children at this school. The school has purchased uniform for them including hats for hygienic purposes. These people are always clean and presentable. The area where food is prepared is not clean and not in good condition. The area is not protected from dust and wind. The area is very close to a gravel and dusty street passing by. Learners’ health is always at risk as they can be affected by diseases.

4.2.2.11 Distribution of food during breaks

Learners queue outside their classrooms while others queue away from clean areas. The area is dusty and it is in an open space. Class teachers do not monitor learners during this process and it makes other groups suffer pressure from disorganized learner especially those who do not want to be in the line. Troublesome learners put weaker learners under pressure by pushing them out of the queue leaving them without food.

4.2.2.12 Shocking incidents within the school

It was in 2008 and 2009 when educators fought each other physically within the school premises before the learners. It was quite embarrassing and humiliating for both learners and educators (discussed under 4.2.3.8). These educators’ dignity and respect was to be restored from the side of learners after this drama.

4.2.2.13 Area of leadership challenge

Senior educators with long service experience heavy pressure from young competent leaders. They are bound to take instructions from them and they sometimes resist and do the opposite expecting to be corrected. This resistance to change has negative impacts on leadership role of the school manager and school development at large. Unlimited conflicts and fights against one another hamper healthy and mutual interaction amongst the staff members. Frequent meetings in the school manager’ office deprives learners’ precious learning time and more so they remain unattended.

4.2.2.14 Sexual relationships

There is common practice of some educators falling in love with learners at this school. In 2010 one SMT member had an affair with four learners within his school. One amongst those in grade 9 fell pregnant and her parents came to school and confront the school manager. Such an SMT
member ended up resigning after facing some charges of law. Learners also fall in love with each other which also lead to high rate of dropouts immediately they fall pregnant and become shy to be in class. Some learners have sexual relationships with taxi drivers making them to play truancy. Learners who fall prey to this situation, mostly faces learning difficulties. Educators abusing learners sexually also do not adhere to school safety policies.

4.2.4 School (SS4): LITR (Low Incident Track Record)

4.2.4.1 Surrounding

The surrounding of this school is clean and neat. Nothing can obstruct the view in and outside. There are flowers and green grasses which are always looked after. Community offered casual workers for keeping the surrounding of the school clean. Refer to photos number 16 and 17 respectively. This is one of the secure and compassionate school environment which influences proper teaching and learning to take its course.

4.2.4.2. Fence type

Palisade fence type made of cement material has surrounded the school; refer to photo number 5 and 13. Although palisade fence does not guarantee hundred percent safeties, to a certain extent, higher level of safety and security at such schools worthy it.

4.2.4.3 Openings on fence

There are no openings in the school fence. If an opening in the fence is found, it is immediately closed that very same day. Security personnel make sure that they patrol around the fence daily as it is in their duty sheet. Chances of openings to stay for a longer period of time not attended if found are not there because of full time community volunteers. Safety and security of learners may be assured in this school.

4.2.4.4 Unauthorized persons

It’s difficult to get an intruder in this school premises. The school uses only one gate as an entrance for everyone to avoid complications in their control of inflow and outflow of people.

4.2.4.5 Security personnel

Three security personnel are in charge for the safety of every single member within the school premises like learners, educators, school manager and non-teaching staff members. The safety of everyone is strongly guaranteed. Security personnel work according to shifts. Each security officer is trained and inducted before the execution of their job. Security officers have been mandated to conduct minor search when learners enter through the gate daily in pair especially in the mornings. Every school bag is searched as included in their safety policy document.

4.2.4.6 Drugs & alcohol

No weapons, drugs or alcohol detected or found within this school premises. Each learner has been trained to be the security of other learners in case of unwanted substances or anything that can be dangerous to them and reporting such learners to security officers.
4.2.4.7 Fighting among learners

2265 learners in this school are taught to love each other. This includes education as well. One who can fight with another learner knows that he/she will have to go home and come back with parents and they are afraid to call their parents for such misbehavior and it leads to no fight. The school promotes learning throughout and nothing else. Educators promote competitions on educational matters.

4.2.4.8 Educators fighting each other

72 educators are friendly towards one another. Team work dominates the entire staff. There is no syndicate at this school but educators are overwhelmed with love for one another. They share food with each other. There is no friction or gossips among educators of this school. They treat each other as brothers and sisters. They ignore their personal interests immediately they enter school premises but focus mainly on learners. Educators use one staffroom except HOD’s offices but during breaks or after their regular tasks, they pay visit to the general staffroom for socialization with other educators. There is healthy communication between educators. These promote good and inviting school environment in which every learner enjoys safety and security.

4.2.4.9 Educators fighting school manager

There is no conflict between educators and the school manager. The school has developed healthy friendship among themselves. The school manager greets everyone every morning before getting into his office and everyone feels recognized. The school manager talks to each educator in their staffroom and this practice destroys unhealthy conditions amongst them. Working conditions at this school are attractive. The mood among educators promotes a feeling of belonging and responsibility from learners. They take their educators as friends and parents to share their personal problems.

4.2.4.10 Food handlers

Food handlers are the parents of learners within the school. Committee members for NSNP also monitor the cooking of food handlers. The school purchased proper garments for food handlers like aprons and hats to cover their heads. The risk of the spread of diseases is so minimal.

4.2.4.11 Distribution of food during breaks

After food have been prepared, they take them to respective classes where class teachers will be the ones to open the containers with food and taste them first with the help of class representatives (a boy and a girl). A bowel of water is placed in each classroom for learners to wash their hands before eating to promote hygienic conditions. Class teachers monitor the sharing of food in their respective classes. Order and proper serving of food in this school is highly commendable.

4.2.4.12 Shocking incidents within the school

In 2011 an incident happened when new security personnel who were inducted made a mistake and did not follow the correct procedures when a visitor comes at the gate. The security officer was to report the visitor to the clerk and the clerk will contact the HOD or Deputy Principal. The
HOD or Deputy Principal will verify if the person concern knows the visitor, if not the visitor will be denied access to enter.

In 2010 another learner denied to be searched at the gate early in the morning and the security officer followed him with a ‘shambock’ but suddenly disappeared amongst other learners. Later the security officer saw the learner and then picked a stone trying to hit the learner but fortunately another educator shouted at the security officer to stop it and he obeyed. Later the security officer entered the Deputy Principal’s office where the matter was resolved. The whole setup started as a result of an exchange of words between the security officer and the learner for improper dress code. It has not been a usual behavior in this school although in some other schools might be normal.

4.2.4.13 Area of leadership challenge

The school does not have electronic detectors for conducting their regular search and this gives them a big challenge for their daily search tasks.

4.2.5 School (SS5): LITR

4.2.5.1 Surrounding

Surrounding is very clean and from Monday to Friday there are people who are always cleaning in and outside the fence (refer to photos number 16, 17 and 18).

4.2.5.2 Fence type

Wall fence made up of breaks and razor wire on top is visible even from a distance. No person is allowed to be found inside the fence except through one gate. It is not easy for anyone to climb the brick wall as it is too high and insurmountable.

4.2.5.3 Openings on fence

The fence does not have other openings. No one gains access to anything outside or inside the fence. No learner is allowed lingering closer to the fence. If a learner is seen closer to the fence, is then called and account why he/she is closer to the fence, to avoid tempering to the fence.

4.2.5.4 Unauthorized persons

There are two security personnel from private company located at the gate plus one support staff member who has a room next to the gate to assist visitors to the school and to know who they are and what do they want. No unauthorized persons inside the school premises are permitted. No learner will get inside the school premises without proper school uniform. Tight code of conduct and behavioral pattern of learners is strictly practiced giving learners much safety and security guarantee.
4.2.5.5 Security personnel

There are two security personnel who work according to shifts. No learner will enter the school premises without uniform. Visitors and parents of the learners are all controlled at the gate. Parents of learners are attended after school to avoid interruptions during working hours. Security officers are not given permission to search learners in their school bag because learners are cooperative. Security officers are there at school 24 hours.

4.2.5.6 Drugs & Alcohol

Learners are told during assembly to behave properly at all times. They are taught during Student Council Organization (SCO) to be responsible. Learners participate to the functions conducted at this structure and it assist in molding their behavior. Learners who use drugs at school are punished. In 2009 other learners were found in the position of alcohol in their juice bottles and they were discovered. Parents of these learners were called and the case was resolved. Cell phones which are discovered are taken and stored until the end of the year. Learners are not searched in their school bags or drugs and alcohol as they don’t bring such at school.

4.2.5.7 Fighting’s among Learners

Learners who fight each other are sometimes found in lower classes or during studies especially due to affairs amongst them. According to their discoveries, the cause of fights mostly comes as a result of learners taking someone’s boyfriend or girlfriend. There are 2475 learners in total at this school. These fights are minor and they are easy to resolve them although there are some forms of bullying among them. Bullying can lead to school dropout. Another level of safety and security of this school decreases which due to persisting behavior of learners.

4.2.5.8 Educators fighting each other

The chances of fights between an educator and another educator are very rare. That does not mean conflicts do not exist. There is a mediator structure in place to resolve cases of this nature in case it happens. There are presently 80 educators in this school. There are three staff rooms but there is healthy teamwork within the school. The school has syndicate for everyone which supports and strengthens relationship amongst them.

4.2.5.9 Educators fighting school manager

This is also rare at this school, except in 2008, when another educator was in conflict with the school manager to a level of not talking to one another until a transfer was arranged for the educator to leave the school through professional mediators. The educator was so resilient to the school manager. These are just ordinary conflicts between educators and the office of the school manager but not physical fights. Some other conflicts are between unions for educators and the school manager, which through conflict resolution structure, there is now healthy atmosphere within the school.

4.2.5.10 Food handlers

The school does not have NSNP

4.2.5.11 Distribution of food during breaks

No NSNP
4.2.5.12 Shocking incidents within the school

A fight between learners whom one of them was taken a photo by her boyfriend naked and she sent such a photo to her friends. When they fight is when this girl sent the naked photo to other learners.

Other school learners had club wherein 16 learners of this school were using another parent’s house who was in Gauteng Province as brothel. These learners would use the house during breaks time when the school gate was not permanently closed from morning until school out in the afternoon.

This was discovered and their parents were called at school. There was a ‘fricking’ group during weekends and holidays. Another learner stole a parent’s credit card and utilized for ‘fricking’ purposes. Learners who were ‘fricking’, had letters from the doctor that they were ill, which was not true.

4.2.5.13 Area of leadership challenge

The school does not have metal devices for detecting weapons within the school premises. It is not easy to control a very large number of learners without such technological equipment.

4.2.5.14 Sexual relationships

Learners fall in love with each other but without educators involved. Educators always promote healthy relationship amongst learners. Sexual relationships jeopardize the spirit of education, security and safety. Unexpected conflicts demand educators’ time to resolve them.

4.2.6 School (SS6): LITR

4.2.6.1 Surrounding

Surrounding is very clean and no bushes along the fence. Refer to photos no.16 and 17.

4.2.6.2 Fencing type

It is a high fence made up of diamond mesh with iron steel material.

4.2.6.3 Openings on fence

There are no unauthorized openings on the fence. The fence does not have holes or off-cuts. The fence is always monitored and checked more often. Community people honor and respect school property. Feeling of belonging of the school as community asset has dominated the villagers hence the surrounding also looks so attractive.
4.2.6.4 Unauthorized persons

There are no unauthorized persons within this school premises. The school uses only one gate for proper control of learners when they come inside and when they leave the school premises. The school has developed pathways to gain access to all important places around the school and to avoid access to private places.

4.2.6.5 Security personnel

Two security personnel employed by SGB of the school are in charge of the total security of everything within the school premises. Although these security personnel are not from any security company, or private company, they do excellent job and are supportive to the plans and mission of the school. The security officers have been inducted before they are put into power. Their job description is clearly spelled out. Security officers use control register where names of visitors are written and their purpose of visit as well as the person to be visited.

4.2.6.6 Drugs & alcohol

The inflow of drugs and alcohol within the school premises is very low if not completely not found. The use of weapons within the school premises is not a challenge to this school. Learners are also disciplined and code of conduct for learners is highly enforced.

4.2.6.7 Fighting’s among learners

Cases of fighting among learners are a matter of security. Learners are highly motivated towards their school work. Cases of this nature are so minimal.

4.2.6.8 Educators fighting each other

There are minor threats towards educators by some learners with outstanding behaviors especially those from child headed families and those from ill disciplined families. There are only verbal conflict but with very high team spirit. Educators’ verbal conflicts occur behind closed doors where no learner witnesses such hence stable condition and controllable without adverse results on the school’s posture.

4.2.6.9 Educators fighting school manager

Educators are supportive and goal oriented to their teaching profession. Conflicts among educators are very rare to exist. Minor verbal conflicts do occur at very limited range. Team spirit is the major source of success and faster development of this school.

4.2.6.10 Food Handlers

The school falls under National School Nutrition Programme. The school has nine food handlers who are basically not very clean. Some learners do not enjoy or eat such food due to their home backgrounds and nature around food preparations. Most of the food is thrown away as surplus. Food is prepared under constructed structure which is protected from dirt and other contaminations.
4.2.6.11 Distribution of food during breaks
Food is distributed in respective classes but in some other grades especially where class teachers do not monitor them, they fight and push each other which lead to spilling away.

4.2.6.12 Shocking incidents within the school
A grade 10 learner killed herself after she was discovered at school making love with another school boy in class after school. The manner in which the case was handled ultimately leads the learner to commit suicide by hanging herself.

4.2.6.13 Area of leadership challenge
There are no leadership challenges which the school management is experiencing at the moment.

4.2.6.14 Sexual relationship
Teenage pregnancy is one of the major challenges of this school. In 2010, between 70 and 80 learners fell pregnant which mostly impact them negatively in their academic performance? Majority of learners who fall pregnant are the grade 8 and 9.

4.2.7 School (SS7): HITR

4.2.7.1 Surrounding
The school is surrounded by high security fence. There are bushes outside and inside the fence. The fence is too wide or covers a large area. The fence is very far away from the school buildings. Refer to photo no.4

4.2.7.2 Fence type
The type of fence is an ordinary diamond mesh wire.

4.2.7.3 Openings on fence
The fence has lots of holes which have been cut off by learners.

4.2.7.4 Unauthorized persons
There is no control of people coming inside and going out of the school premises. The gate is opened for anybody who needs to enter without any question.

4.2.7.5 Security personnel
There are two security personnel operating on day and night shift. These are security officers appointed by the SGB and they are qualified security officers. They do not conduct any search to anybody who needs permission to enter the school premises. Learners enter without any monitoring.
4.2.7.6 Drugs & Alcohol

There is lot of drugs, for example dagga; alcohol such as ‘marula’ juice (bukanyi) and weapons are carried to school. This influx of unwanted materials passes through unauthorized openings. When security guard is at the gate, those who use unauthorized openings take advantage and snick in although others also pass with them through the gate without security guard’s notice. There is no control register of visitors. More often educators are taken by surprise to see a visitor at his / her door step without prior consultation.

4.2.7.7 Fighting’s among learners

Learners frequently fight using fists and weapons. At average, a day cannot pass without a fight. One can witness five to seven fights per week. Amongst these fights, educators are always promised and threatened verbally and with the throwing of objects at them such as with orange peels and banana peel while writing on the chalkboard. An educator can be denied entrance or exit by learners. Attempts of educators by learners are a daily threat.

4.2.7.8 Educators fighting each other

Educators are mostly found in loggerheads with each other turning the whole setup of the school into a battle field. Pointing fingers at one another using vulgar language turned the culture of teaching and learning of the whole school upside down. The atmosphere reflects ‘the survival of the fittest’.

4.2.7.9 Educators fighting school manager

Educators have some form of resistance against the school manager especially in his leadership style. He does not want to lead by an example but always dictates and blame others.

4.2.7.10 Food Handlers

The school runs the National School Nutrition Programme (NSNP) with seven (7) food handlers. The safety of learner is not guaranteed.

4.2.7.11 Distribution of food during breaks

Food is distributed in various classes without any supervision of educators, but only class representatives monitor the distribution. Hijacking of food before it arrive the class is regarded as a usual practice. Spilling away of soup and any foodstuff mostly takes place and survival of the fittest is a daily song.

4.2.7.12 Shocking incidents within the school

In August 2011, a learner hit another learner with a plank at the back of the head and suddenly collapsed. Ambulance was called to rescue and the police van arresting the one who indulge himself in hitting. The learner was admitted in the hospital unconscious for two days and then discovered after two weeks. Another learner was dragged and pulled by the hairs by a school boy
out of the school premises to the nearby bushes and finally she ended up raped. The girl suffered serious injuries all over her body.

4.2.7.13 Area of leadership challenge

Management is so reluctant against perpetrators. The school management team is falling to control as well as managing regular fights at school. They are failing to cope with the present situation. There is total absence of discipline at the school, playing of cards, and lack of respect by learners for their educators. Educators are so reluctant to take control as well as restoring the culture of learning and teaching.

4.2.7.14 Sexual relationship

Most of the fights are caused by problems from sexual relationships, such as boys fighting for girls and girls fighting for boys. Cases of sexual abuse and sexual harassment are always thorny issues within the school premises hence lots of teenage pregnancies.

4.2.8. School (SS8): LITR

4.2.8.1 Surrounding

Surrounding is very clean and safe, though the school is found far away from villagers.

4.2.8.2 Fencing type

The school has high security fence made up of diamond mesh.

4.2.8.3 Openings on fence

No openings around the fence except two gates used for entrance; one by learners and the other one for motor vehicles.

4.2.8.3 Unauthorized persons

One main gate is under full operation twenty four hours. No unauthorized persons are found inside the school premises without permission from school manager in writing.

4.2.8.4 Security personnel

There are six security personnel who work in groups of three people per shift. The security officers work 24hrs. It is a private security company which has been chosen by the department. The school is in good relationship with the SAPS and at times they conduct surprise visit at this school to assure safety and security.
4.2.8.5 Drugs, alcohol and weapons

There are no drugs, weapons and alcohols at this school. No cases of drunkenness around school premises or in school excursions. Any case occurring outside the school premises but happens to sneak inside the school, is deemed in very serious light especially for counseling reasons.

4.2.8.6 Fighting’s among learners

There are no fights among learners of this school. In 2009 only one learner fought another learner during exam time in the playground and the culprit was immediately arrested because he was regarded as dangerous to himself and to others. That was the last fight at this school and learners are now aware that fights are not allowed.

4.2.8.7 Educators fighting each other

Unity among educators is a driving force towards their greater achievements in better results within the Limpopo province. Respect and dignity for each other cannot be overemphasized. Healthy language and positive criticism is heard amongst the educators during normal working hours as well as during extra-curriculum activities.

4.2.8.8 Educators fighting school manager

Both young and old support and defend for their school manager in matters against him. Intimate friendships between educators, SMT members and the school manager exist without borders. The office of the school manager is highly valued and respected. There are no personal grudges within the staff members and the school manager. Harmony and peace prevail at all times.

4.2.8.9 Food Handlers

The school has ten food handlers who are very clean. Food is stored in safer places before they are prepared. The National School Nutrition Programmed Committee has strong strategies of monitoring learners’ food before and after preparations for maximum safety and security. Cleaning and storage of utensils is done properly with care.

4.2.8.10 Distribution of food during breaks

Food is distributed in clean places though is done outside classes due to overcrowding in classrooms. The distribution of food is done in well lawned places where there are no dust; except under unfavorable weather conditions, classrooms are only therefore utilized as circumstances dictate.
4.2.8.11 Shocking incidents within the school

No shocking incidents in this school except harmony and compassionate environment.

4.2.8.12 Sexual relationships

No sexual relationship has been spotted within the school premises. Both learners and educators work in good faith, full of trust and harmony. The safety of everyone is guaranteed.

4.2.8.13 Area of leadership challenge

Care and Support Programme (CSP) for teaching and learning is given by pastors and NGOs. Culture of teaching and learning is well developed in this school. Educators are so goal focused for better attainment of results. Responsible and committed educators and heads of departments work as a team to conquer most challenges before them.

4.3 DATA ANALYSIS

Schumacher and McMillan (1993:480) define data analysis as an ongoing cyclical process integrated into all phases of qualitative research. Qualitative analysis is a systematic process of selecting, categorizing, comparing, synthesizing and interpreting to provide explanations of the single phenomenon of interest. Qualitative data analyses vary widely because of the different research foci, purpose and data collection strategies.

Majority of writers and researchers believe that the process of data analysis takes place simultaneously with data collection of which I also agree with them. During data collection stage, some of the data is automatically analyzed. Mtsweri (2008:68) says data collection and analysis in qualitative research go hand in hand and should be done simultaneously in order for the researcher to focus and shape the study as it proceeds.

The researcher becomes more familiar with the data while identifying all themes in his data. Data has been examined in depth in order to provide thick descriptions in major settings of each school, nature of participants and daily activities performed in such a school. Description of the school according to its nature and daily experiences by its participants play a key role in understanding daily and lived experiences each secondary school manager goes through.

Schools have been categorized or classified and coding pieces of data according to themes and sub- themes as a way of breaking them into small components which can easily be organized and ordered through classification process. Different aspects are easily examined after thorough listening to a voice recorder, field notes and checking photos taken from some of the school in
case where interviews have been conducted right there. The researcher managed to capture true picture of the natural settings of some schools as depicted by photos.

Collected data has been stored in the following documents: voice recorder, field notes, USB, digital camera, files as hard copies and discs for proper management and future use. Most of the collected data have been labeled, numbered and some also dated the days on which they have been captured.

4.4 INTERPRETATION OF DATA

According to De Vos (2002:344) says interpretation involves making sense of the data the ‘‘lesson learned ‘’ whereas White (2004:74) says interpretation means to identify the important themes or meanings in the data.

The safety of learners, educators and non-teaching staff members is necessary within the school premises. Unsafe and violent school environment make top stories in the newspapers and news headlines. Most unsafe schools have lots of shocking incidents, disorders, lack of discipline, the use of drugs and alcohols including weapons, and life threatening atmosphere. The safety of learners and everybody within the school premises is never guaranteed.

Examples are schools SS1 and SS7 under shocking incidents within their school premises, educators fighting school managers, surrounding, and openings on their fences, food distribution, unauthorized persons, sexual relationships and leadership challenges. One can learn that the culture of teaching and learning is highly interrupted which impede these schools to achieve very well in their matric results and a sign of leadership failure.

Blandford (1998:125) says good discipline in school is dependent on a shared understanding of what is accepted behavior among members of the school community.

School SS8 and SS4 are the examples of low incident track record school communities. These schools are reflecting their values and beliefs by respecting the rights and property of the school and others taking personal responsibility for one’s actions. School community members take charge for their daily responsibilities. The school’s moral code underpins its behavior policy which will be reflected in the style and atmosphere within its premises.

According to Kgabo and Nyathela (2011:13) discipline in the school such as Mbilwi Secondary School is a norm, learners are taught to co-operate with fellow students and educators as well as school management to maintain an environment conducive to their teaching and learning.
4.5 CONCLUSION

According to this chapter, data have been collected and represented for the purpose of data analysis. Literature control and management has been done through categorization, organizing, classify, coding, concept analysis, constant comparison throughout the collected data, comparing grouping, the use of themes (topics) and context analysis. The researcher looks for various challenges which secondary school managers face in dealing with school safety and security. The researcher discovered may challenges that secondary school managers are facing depending on the community in which the school are situated, the type of leaders, educators, discipline, parent involvement, and code of conduct for both learners and educators.
CHAPTER 5

5. FINDINGS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

5.1 Introduction

According to Leedy (2005:140) the researcher groups the segments into categories that reflect the various aspects (meanings) of the phenomenon as it is experienced. DE Vos (2002:357) says qualitative data in the form of words, pictures and quotes are more information rich than qualitative data in the form of numbers; it is more difficult to condense.

According to Marais and Meier (2010: 41) disruptive behavior continues to be the most consistently discussed problem in South African schools. Misbehaving learners and disciplinary problems are a disproportionate and intractable part of every teacher’s experience of teaching.

5.2 FINDINGS

5.2.1 Disciplinary problems

Schools with unauthorized persons entering school premises mostly have disciplinary problems. Uncontrolled permission in entering or leaving the school premises by learners, educators and community members lead to lose disciplinary procures. Safety of school community members therefore, cannot be assured. If school fence have many gates, and / or unauthorized openings which are not controlled, decline of school safety drops, Although nature of the fence influence very little to the safety of learners at school, rules and sanctions uphold good order and conducive environment for teaching and learning. Good and pleasant surrounding invites the culture and desire for teaching and learning. Safe and secure school environment positively influence the effectiveness of the school, whereas the untidy and unworthy surrounding negatively affect the psychological status of both learners and educators.

Good discipline is dependent on shared understanding of what is accepted behavior, among members of the school community. Many of the strategies and approaches to the management of discipline relate directly to the development of self-esteem and self confidence in the individual and school (Blandford, 1998:125). Those schools with upheld school discipline and order function as a team for support. Newly appointed educators undergo induction process to keep the vision and mission of the school up to date. Majority of our secondary schools in Limpopo Education Department, are failing to maintain the required order and safety within these schools. Despite the cases of unsafe school milieu, many abort before they reach media or higher authorities.
5.2.2 Security personnel

Schools with private security personnel enjoy safer and secure school environment. Untrained security personnel enjoy the benefits of getting paid without any proper job done. Some keep their visitor’s registers in their guardroom after being reminded to do so. Security personnel, who do not do its job properly, promote the school environment to be more unsafe and insecure as openings behind the school fence prone to lack of control, drugs, weapons and alcohol inflow. Some of the unruly learners gain access to drugs through these exit points.

5.2.3 Small schools suffer

School managers who are facing more school security and safety challenges are those secondary schools with very low learner enrolment of ±350 to 500, whereas secondary schools with very high enrolment of ± 1500 to 2500 learners, their school managers experience very little challenges and to some extent nothing at all. These schools have special programme in dealing with learner’s behavior like inviting therapists and other specialists who are actively engaged in the school. They work on specific programmes like anti-bulling and anti-violence in the school. School governing body members of these schools support both educators and school management team by policy formulation and with expertise that could help the learning support teams. Workshops on parental skills and community-based efforts such as “adopt a cop” are functional. Schools with small learner enrolment suffer unity and lack of parental involvement in educational matters of the school. Initiated programmes for teacher empowerment and building the morale in teaching, counseling and support groups for the victims of violence, bullies and sexual abusers are at stake.

5.2.4 Neglect of policies

Drug and substance abuse policies are neglected in schools with small learner enrolment. These schools have records of severe substance abuse in their premises, yet no legal steps are taken against the transgressors. Phangas, knives, pair of scissors, guns and other dangerous weapons are found in these small schools. Cases of general disruptions of the whole school tuned a movie to both learners and educators. It is rare not to witness two or three fights in a week; surely the spirit of learning is very low, hence poor performance academically. Unruly learners mostly come from single- headed and/ or child- headed families, they become the victims of drugs and alcohol abuse, sexual harassment, teenage pregnancy, HIV/AIDS and school drop-outs. The sexually abused learners come from poor economic backgrounds. Children from dysfunctional families witness violence at home and around the entire community, experience more social challenges which are reflected at school community. Children who are unattended and have parents who are less qualified than them become more bullies, turning schools to be unsafe through gambling games. Vandalism of school properties and graffiti on walls are dominant in schools with little learners’ enrolment. Both school managers and educators in these little
secondary schools in number are faced with many challenges in dealing with school safety and security.

5.2.5 Professional development of principals

There are genuine reasons for school managers to undergo thorough training and workshops in equipping them in their leadership and management positions. Professional development of principals is a priority in most of the secondary schools in Limpopo Province. Van der Westhuizen and Van Vuuren (2007: 431) say South Africa is one of the few countries that do not consider compulsory and specific qualification for principalship. A major historical shortcoming has still been neglected, namely, lack of training of school principals to a national professional standard.

5.3. RECOMMENDATIONS

5.3.1 Training and development of principals

Compulsory training and development for principals should be provided to equip them in proper management of their schools. Most of the challenges they are experiencing and failing to address are lack of certain management leadership skills.

5.3.2 Control and monitoring of drugs in schools

Policies and legislation on the control and management of drug abuse in schools should be complemented and thoroughly monitored. The department of health and social welfare must recommend that the provincial education department support the victims of drugs and alcohol abuse to an extent of regular visits. Evidence indicates that school communities are vulnerable and drug use by learners is rife in our schools. Develop safe and supportive school environments that value human dignity and respect for all. Educate the entire school community regarding drugs and alcohol abuse taking into account safety of others and leaving the school environment conducive for both effective teaching and learning. Strict measures should be adhered to eliminate or reduce high failure rate in classrooms.

5.3.3 Recognition of learning environment

Provision of a safe and supportive learning environment is necessary for both learners and educators. Safe and secure learning environment as a critical element to successful delivery of quality education must be recognized, by deploying private security companies to all schools experiencing drastic challenges in school safety and security. All schools must be encouraged to embark on programmes such as “adopt a cop” and NGOs to curb all the flaws that schools are failing to address.
5.3.4 Disciplinary measures

Soft disciplinary measures laid down by the department of education need to be revised and tightened to bring back the true culture of teaching and learning in class or else the situation turns wild. All support structures or in place interventions must be put in place to alleviate violence in our schools. Community organizations and relevant structures including SGB and SMT must work together for one common purpose. Parents of learners must be involved fully in education as their failure to cooperate with schools is a major contributing factor to high failure rate, poor discipline, and poor safety in classroom and schoolyards and weak learner morale. Zero- tolerance policy should be tailored to some individual schools and their local needs. The purpose of “one size fits all” approach can keep learners safe and making the school environment a better place for learning.

De Waal (2011:176) identified three education challenges of which one is informing public school educators/ school authorities, learners and their parents/ caregivers of the extent to which they could be held accountable for maintaining safe learning environments. The ultimate challenge lies in making the education partners accept their personal accountability concerning the creating safe schools.

5.3.5 Communication development

Develop curriculum which promotes communication, friendship and assertive skills. Improve communication among school administrators, teachers, parents, and learners, during special days like, school conference day addressing crucial cases of the school especially parents and transgressors. Educators indulging themselves in sexual affair with learners must receive the heaviest punishment they deserve according to educators code of conduct in order to build a safe learning environment.

5.3.6 Construction of dining halls

In higher institutions where catering by private or hospitality companies are recognized, special structures have been constructed specifically for serving the needs of students. The department of basic education promoted the NSNP programmes from primary to secondary schools for the purpose of eliminating poverty and is fine, but the same department did not provide basic structures that will cater or facilitate their programme accordingly like storerooms for storing learners’ food, serving points and necessary equipments for the same purpose. Most schools do not conform to the required hygienic standards or conditions for the programme.

Dining halls must be erected in every school to avoid inconveniences on proper teaching and learning to take place in the same classrooms where learners have been served. Lessons after breaks are negatively affected due to late coming from collection of plates and cleaning their desks or tables.
5.3.7 Private health inspectors in schools

Upon lots of challenges on the safety of learners on the NSNP programme, private health inspectors must be in place to supervise and monitor, explicit hygienic condition must be adhered to and make recommendations on their findings. If private health inspectors can be deployed to every school, taking daily records on every aspect on NSNP for the whole month ones per quarter and make their necessary recommendations to the department of education, safety of learners can be improved.

Basically what is recently happening, are records on the supply of food by the suppliers to the department of education for statistical claims without proof of the quality of perishable products supplied. Majority of learners ask for permission to leave immediately after breaks complaining of stomach pains. Further research on this issue by those from health department, can narrow the gap. How can one be a referee and a player at the same time? Can tender owners be able to improve on their services without someone monitoring?

5.3.8 Moral regeneration programmes

Moral regeneration programmes must be initiated by the department of education to restore order and discipline in schools. More freedom with less or no responsibility and accountability results in chaos in our schools today and something needs to be done to reclaim the situation. Classroom rules and policies should be promoted for better improvement of the present status. The rights of educators must be clearly spelled out as well, rather than for learners to know their rights only and never know the rights of their educators at school and even in class. The safety of educators in our schools is not considered equally important like the safety learners we teach.

5.3.9 School-Based mental health services

School–based mental health service provides services to all learners who are exposed to high risk mental situations. These learners cannot sometimes avail themselves to health facilities as expected. Strong counseling helps them to be exposed to the atmosphere of caring and love in a school environment making them more connected to other learners and their parents or guardians. Pastors, psychologists, nurses, day care centers, motivational speakers and other professionals can be trained to provide mental health services in schools. These service providers can manage to bridge the gap of mental rejections.
5.4 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

From the topic of this research, the researcher discovered that there are apparent reasons to further research around “challenges facing secondary school managers in dealing with school safety and security”. The following topics have been suggested for further study as the researcher might have not covered all related topics and sub-topics in this field of education management:

- The role of heads of departments in people management towards school development.
- Educators’ supervisory obligation in classroom management.
- Principals in the management position of schools in the new era.

5.5. CONCLUSIONS

According to PD Pointer newspaper volume 15 on page 1, South African president Jacob Zuma responded to training of teachers and say “To improve school management, formal training will be a pre-condition for promoting teachers to become principals or heads of department”. He said the government was “extremely” concerned at reports of sexual abuse of pupils, and vowed to crack down on offenders. “We will take very serious and very decisive action against any teachers who abuse their authority and power by entering into sexual relationships with children. He further promised that “We will ensure that the Guidelines on Sexual Harassment and Violence in Public Schools are widely disseminated, and that learners and teachers are familiar with and observe them.

The safety of human and physical resources of the school cannot be compromised. School Safety Teams must be formed to address all safety and security related issues that affect the school in totality. A safe school community arises from other formed support structures to enhance its functionality. Community Police Forums (CPF) concretize the safety and security of everyone within the school through either police reservists who undergo proper training in dealing and ensuring school safety. All the support structures must operate under the ambits of the department of education’s policy framework. Sustainability of all support programmes must be strongly adhered to, for consistency.

SAPS members working with school safety should not only focus on serious or criminal issues, but also consider petty offences. Working with the school, educators and other supporting professionals, such as social workers, the cause of petty crimes should be addressed. Early intervention is the cornerstone of effective crime prevention. Early intervention is often more likely to succeed and less expensive than dealing with the effects of a serious offence (SAPS, 2009:13).

According to Kgabo (2010:105) leadership is an observable and learnable process. School principals should be trained to be trailblazers and trendsetters, visionaries who are strategic, who
should systematically plan and inculcate a collective belief among his/her staff in what the school as an organization and its members can become.

Analysis done by Masitsa (2011:163) reveals that both teachers and learners are not safe in their schools, either during or after school hours. The cause of lack of safety in these schools resides with or without the schools, implying that learners are sometimes the culprits. Masitsa (2011:164) says there is a deep-rooted culture of violence in schools that has been cultivated unsafe and insecure.

In schools with lower rates of violence, administration and teachers work together. The school has clear and enforced rules, and teachers are able to manage behavior in their classrooms and are engaged enthusiastically in their roles. Changes in leadership at the school make it difficult for rules to be clearly and consistently articulated and enforced, so consistent leadership is important (Shafii, 2001:33).

Schools should attempt to meet a wider range of student needs and improve their relationship with the community by assisting with parent training, crisis intervention, and employment and skills training. Many more schools need to provide self-esteem building programs, drug abuse prevention education, peer counseling, conflict resolution, tutoring, nutritional supplements and testing for learning disabilities. Schools should provide more after-school programs that offer students positive alternatives to gang activities (Hoffman, 1996:40).

Sound discipline and safety underpins every aspect of the school life. For successful teaching and learning to take place, it is essential that good discipline exist in every classroom in particular and in the school as a whole in general (Mtsweni, 2008:1)
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**ANNEXURES**

**ANNEXURE A**
ANNEXURE B

ANNEXURE C
APPLICATION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN THE DISTRICT

1. The above matter bears reference.
2. Your application for permission to conduct research in the District on "challenges facing secondary school managers in dealing with school safety and security" has been approved.
3. Kindly inform the Circuit Manager and Principals of affected schools prior to your visits in the schools and please ensure that such visits do not disturb normal teaching and learning activities.
4. In order to obtain a list of all secondary schools contact the EMIS Office (D227) who will assist you with the procedures to be followed.
5. Wishing you the best in your intellectual pursuit.
DEAR SIR

RE: RESEARCH WORK

As a Master student with the University of Johannesburg working with Dr Pierre du Plessis, I am recently engaged in a research study entitled: “Challenges facing secondary school managers in dealing with school safety and security”. Secondary school managers will form part of the study and their participation is highly necessary for the completion of this study.

I therefore request your permission to conduct this research and involve your principals in my study. Your positive response for securing data for this study will be highly appreciated.

Yours faithfully

Mr Khomola P.L (M Ed Student)   Supervisor: Pierre du Plessis
TO THE PRINCIPAL

NAME OF SCHOOL………………………………………………………………………………..

DEAR SIR/ MADAM

RE: RESEARCH WORK

Your school has been selected to take part in a research study entitled: “CHALLENGES FACING SECONDARY SCHOOL MANAGERS IN DEALING WITH SCHOOL SAFETY AND SECURITY”. The Limpopo Department of Education has approved this research to proceed. Your participation is voluntary, and in case you feel uncomfortable during the course of interview session, you are free to excuse yourself and discontinue the process.

I therefore anticipate that the research results of this study shall greatly assist in the improvement of challenges facing secondary school managers in dealing with school safety and security.

Thanking you in advance

Yours faithfully

Mr Khomola P.L

Supervisor: Pierre du Plessis

pierredp@uj.ac.za
ANNEXURE: B

ACRONYMS

SMT- School Management Team
SAPS- South African Police Service
SST- School Safety Team
HITR- High Incident Track Record
LITR- Low Incident Track Record
CASS- Continuous Assessment
LRC- Learner Representative Council
NSNP- National School Nutrition Programme
HOD- Head of Department
SGB- School Governing Body
NGO- Non Governmental Organization
SS1- Secondary School 1
SS2- Secondary School 2
SS3- Secondary School 3
SS4- Secondary School 4
SS5- Secondary School 5
SS6- Secondary School 6
SS7- Secondary School 7
SS8- Secondary School 8
CPF - Community Police Forums
HIV- Human Immunodeficiency Virus
AIDS- Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome
DSM- District Senior Manager
CSP-Care and Support Programme
FAK-First Aid Kit
SCO- Student Council Organization
ANNEXURE C

Photo no: 1   [Security personnel replacing the cut off fence]
Photo no: 2     [Long grasses along school fence]
Photo no: 3  [broken chairs, desks and tables behind learners’ classrooms]
Photo no: 4  [Schoolyard bordered by thick bushes]
Photo no: 5  [outer side of security fence in one of the schools in Limpopo]
Photo no: 6  [Food handlers preparing food for learners]
Photo no: 7  [untidy classroom piled up with rubbish]
Photo no: 8  [unclean classrooms where learners daily share their food]
Photo no: 9     [unprotected classroom without door]
Photo no: 10 [broken door and lock]
Photo no: 11  [damaged ceiling due to vandalism]
Photo no: 12  [Classroom graffiti- sign of negligence and irresponsibility]
Photo no 13: [Unprotected electric DB box in learners’ classroom]
Photo no: 14  [Palisade fence surrounded the school]
Photo no: 15  [Opening underneath the school fence]
Photo no: 16

[Clean and attractive school environment]
Photo no: 17  [Learners taking care of their school surrounding]
Photo no. 18 [Pathways leading to public venues]