

## A Framework to Deal with Violence in South African Public Schools

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**ABSTRACT** Violence continues to be a major challenge in South African schools. The carrying of knives, guns and other weapons to school has become part of the daily life for many learners. These incidents highlight the extent of violence and crime experienced in South African communities, a factor which negatively impacts education and the maintenance of discipline in schools across the country. Despite the existence of official policies and protocols, violence, physical and sexual abuse, and gang activities are still the order of the day in many South African schools. Through an integrative literature review, this study proposes a model that can influence a review of the current policies with a view to overcoming the ongoing challenges and problems faced by many South African schools in dealing with violence. However, if nothing is done, violence at schools will continue to have a debilitating effect on effective teaching and learning.

### INTRODUCTION

Prior to 1994, South Africa under apartheid was a very violent and oppressive regime. Black learners in particular were disadvantaged in terms of the Bantu education system introduced 1948 onwards by the newly elected White Nationalist Government. Accordingly, the segregated school system became a fertile ground upon which young Black learners could express their dissatisfaction with the system. During the apartheid era, school boycotts and demonstrations thus became the order of the day across many township schools (semi-urban areas created under apartheid regime). As a result, an alternative subculture was created where direct involvement in violence became socially acceptable among oppressed young Black learners as a viable means of securing political and socio-economic liberation.

Following South Africa's first democratic elections in 1994, this culture of violence was left unchecked. This was evidenced by the xenophobic attacks on foreign nationals in 2008 and again in April 2015. A particularly gruesome attack, which grabbed the 2015 headlines and shocked the nation, took place in Alexandra Township, Gauteng, a province of South Africa,

where a Mozambican national was stabbed several times and later died of his wounds in hospital (The Sunday Times 19 April 2015). The South African Government has acknowledged that instead of changing people's psyche, they had wrongly believed that the establishment of the 1996 Constitution would solve all such problems (The Sowetan 21 April 2015). South Africa's transition to democracy was a crucial time that could have been used to educate, help and heal communities from the psychological trauma of violence experienced under the previous apartheid regime. Instead, the South African Government took things for granted and thought that the new era of political freedom would suddenly make everyone happy and think alike. As a consequence, while many Black learners returned to school post-1994, the classrooms across South Africa's impoverished Black communities remained virtually unchanged. Poor facilities and sometimes the lack of essential facilities created a social environment conducive to promoting violence among frustrated learners.

Led by new structures called School Governing Bodies (SGBs), established under the South African Schools Act (SASA) 84 of 1996, the South African school system was soon to experience severe learner discipline problems. One of the reasons for promulgating the South African Schools Act was to abolish corporal punishment in schools. The Act thus states:

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

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

However, this legislative ruling was perceived differently by a number of people, including educators. While some viewed it as a means of liberation, others thought it would lead to the end of a well-disciplined school system. This was evidenced later when learners became unruly across many schools, leading to educators and learners alike being the recipients of violent attacks. One well-documented incident was that of a sword attack, which took place at the Nic Diederichs Technical High School in Krugersdorp, Gauteng, where a Grade 12 Matric learner arrived at the school carrying several swords and allegedly killing one boy and injuring three others (Mail and Guardian 18 August 2008).

In its research, the South African Human Rights Commission (SAHRC) found that forty percent of the children interviewed said they had been the victims of crime at school. More than a fifth of sexual assaults on South African children were found to have taken place in schools. Exposure to domestic violence, gangsterism and drugs has had a substantial impact on learner performance. Recently, there seems to have been an increase in the reported number of serious incidents of school violence in South African schools. South African learners are victimized at a rate of 160 learners per 1,000, a figure that is significantly higher than for example, in the US, where the latest statistical data yields a rate of 57 learners per 1,000 who fall victim to comparative forms of school violence (Burton 2008).

### **Aim of the Study**

It is against this background of school violence that it became important to conduct this study. The research upon which this article is based was aimed at developing a model that can influence a review of the current policies with a view to overcoming the ongoing challenges and problems faced by many South African schools in dealing with violence. Without such, violence at schools will continue to have a debilitating effect of the ability of educators to accomplish their goals and objectives. The research question guiding this research article was:

*“What kind of framework or model can be developed to assist in dealing with violence in South African public schools?”*

### **METHODOLOGY**

The combined work of Jackson (1980) in *Methods for Integrative Review* and Cooper (1982) in *Scientific Guidelines for Conducting Integrative Research Reviews* was used for conducting an integrative literature review. An integrative literature review is a specific approach or method that reviews past empirical or theoretical literature to provide a more comprehensive understanding of a particular phenomenon (Whittemore and Knafl 2005). In this article, some older sources were used for historical purposes or as a second source to demonstrate trends and the extent of violence in South African schools.

### **Related Literature Review**

#### *Defining School Violence*

School violence is defined by Zulu et al. (2004), as any behavior of learners, educators, administrators or non-school persons, attempting to inflict injury on another person or to damage school property. Internationally, violence both, affects schools and is perpetuated and perpetrated by schools (Harber 2004; Pinheiro 2006; Plan 2008; Smith and Vaux 2003). Violence in schools can come from different sources, take on many forms and involve different actors. For example, bullying may be learned outside the school, but perpetuated inside the school because the school ignores it or does not deal with it satisfactorily. It may also involve different actors at different times inside the school, for example, learners may bully each other, teachers may bully learners, learners may bully teachers, parents may bully teachers, and principals may bully teachers or be bullied by them. School violence also takes place in different ways and in a wide range of contexts.

#### *Forms and Patterns of School Violence*

##### *Bullying*

O’Connell et al. (1999) define bullying as negative actions, which may be physical or ver-

bal, have hostile intent, are repeated over time and involve a power differential. They contend that bullying unfolds in a social context, namely the dyad, peer group, the playground setting, and the school environment. Bullying can be direct or indirect. Direct bullying involves physical contact or verbal abuse whereas indirect bullying involves subtle social manipulations such as gossip, spreading rumors and exclusion. Sharing the same view, Fried and Soland (2011) describe bullying as a repeated verbal, physical, social or psychological behavior that is harmful and involves the misuse of power by an individual or group towards one or more persons. These researchers suggest that bullying can involve humiliation, domination, intimidation, victimization and any other forms of harassment. However, bullying in whatever form can have long-lasting effects on those involved, including bystanders. According to Shariff (2004: 223), bullying can either be "overt or covert". Overt bullying involves physical aggression, such as beating, kicking, shoving, and sexual touching and consequently, victims are excluded from their peer groups, stalked, stared at, gossiped about, verbally threatened, or harassed. This results in creating harm that prevents or inhibits a child from achieving her or his maximum physical, social or academic potential. The South African educational psychologist, Wendy Sinclair, has indicated that she deals with four to five cases of bullying a month, and that this had become "the norm rather than the exception" in schools (Govender 2008). One typical example was a case in East London, Eastern Cape Province, where a bullied boy refused to go back to school (Prince 2008). The boy was attacked with a welding rod by another boy, who then threatened to kill him. Since that incident, the boy suffers from post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and his educational performance has deteriorated. This is one of many incidents, which demonstrate that schools fail to address the issues of bullying in whatever form it takes, or they do not take action against the perpetrators. Not only is the victim's Constitutional right to dignity infringed, but bullying often leads to serious psychological problems. Another form of bullying, which has become increasingly common, especially among girl learners, is that of "cyber bullying" (Shariff 2004: 223). This is a form of covert bullying that involves the use of mobile phones or the Internet. Perpetrators make anonymous, mali-

icious comments or threats, tease and engage in gossip through online chat rooms and other social media such as Facebook or Twitter, or use email, WhatsApp or mobile phones to intimidate others (2004: 223). Govender (2008:1) states, "It is an easier way to humiliate abuse and threaten others because mobile messages can remain anonymous." It was reported that many victims of cyber bullying are so traumatized and disempowered by the bullying that they often express, in therapy, a desire to die rather than suffer further humiliation and abuse (Govender 2008). Shariff (2004) goes on to point out that often the consequences for the victim can be psychologically devastating. Cyber bullying poses new challenges for teachers because it is more difficult to detect than direct physical bullying, since it is conducted in a virtual environment. However, one could argue that if the aim of cyber bullying is to poison the psychological school environment for victims, it should be the duty of schools to prevent it as far as possible.

#### *Gang-related Violence*

Another form of violence affecting schools that has become apparent in South African schools, especially in the Western Cape Province, is that of gangsterism. According to the Western Cape Education Department (WCED) (WCED 2003), gang members appear to choose the arrival and departure times of educators and learners and deliberately lay in wait for them at the school gates. This brings with it a terrorizing "fear factor", which can traumatizes educators, learners and parents alike. Furthermore, the reception of threats, intimidation and harassment engender fear, all of which results in the absenteeism of both educators and learners (Segoe and Mokgosi 2007). The Western Cape Education Department (WCED 2003) reported that not only does violence have a serious impact on learning, but also educators are often absent because they need time off for trauma counseling and debriefing. According to research that was conducted on the perceptions of Western Cape educators regarding the course and the scope of violence in the province, the presence of gangs in schools and in the townships increases the incidence of victimization of non-gang members (de Wet 2003). The results of this study revealed that learners and educators are fearful, not only at school, but also on their way

to school and back home. Not without reason, they are afraid that gang members will attack them.

The study conducted by Thompkins (2000) found that one of the reasons that learners in the Western Cape easily identify with street gangs is that they believe that such associations fulfill the need for the transition from childhood to adolescence and adulthood, and they are also made to feel accepted by and important in a society that is ruled by gang leaders. Barbarin et al. (2001) argue that youngsters may, on the other hand, suffer psychological trauma and encounter social alienation, resentment and suspicion from their families and community as a consequence of their involvement in gang-related activities. It is important that teachers understand the nature of these feelings of aggression when developing a disciplinary plan for their schools.

A few preventive measures have been introduced into schools. It was suggested that police presence in the school area would prevent troubling situations from escalating and that police officers could be "adopted" through the "Adopt-a-Cop program" by a particular school (Segoe and Mokgosi 2007: 5). However, many South African schools will not report incidents because of a fear of victimization. What is rather upsetting is that, according to Kodluboy (2004), some staff members at schools are often prone to ambivalence or outright denial of gang presence or the significance of a gang presence in their schools. Thompkins (2000) points out that learners believe that if they retaliate against an act of aggression that is committed by one gang member, they will have to deal with the entire gang, and therefore they refuse to report gang activities at their schools.

Considering that gang activity has become prevalent at many schools, it was further suggested that school districts must implement policies to regulate the behavior of gang members (Segoe and Mokgosi 2007). Moreover, school administrators should develop site-specific, gang-related policies that are aligned with district policies, the school's philosophy and general policies. It was also suggested that gang-related policies should appear in a specially allocated section of the students' handbook and that this section should be displayed in all campus offices as well as in all classrooms. However, it seems that all the best-developed policies

in the world are worthless if incidents of violence are not reported to those who could make a change or the scourge is not addressed in a collaborative manner, where important stakeholders would play critical role.

#### *Violence Related to Drug and Alcohol Abuse*

The researchers, Fagan and Wilkinson (1998) maintain that there is a relationship between violent crimes in schools and the abuse of alcohol and drugs. In township communities, where alcohol and drugs are easily available to underage children, the availability of these commodities put those who live in such communities at higher risk of violent encounters. Ensink et al. (1997) agree that the use of alcohol makes a person less inhibited, and thereby increases the likelihood of violence in situations where violence is not frowned on.

It is also found that alcohol is most commonly used by South Africans of all ages. More than one in four South Africans (28%) aged 15 years and over, currently acknowledge that they consume alcohol. Among adolescents, aged 15-19 years, eleven percent (11%) are current drinkers (Ensink et al. 1997). The Crime Intelligence Unit of the South African Police Service (SAPS), for example, is of the opinion that alcohol abuse plays an important contributing role in crime and violence. The risk of being involved in violent behavior at school also increases with alcohol consumption, and this was confirmed by Rossouw et al. (1999), especially in the case of boys. It was found that in South African schools, *dagga* (cannabis) is the most common drug of choice because it is cheap and easy to access. The research findings of Nesper et al. (2004) have shown that *dagga* was easy to get hold of and could be bought within an hour. Such ready availability has contributed to a widespread substance-abuse market. According to Nesper et al. (2004), one-third of the respondents in their survey admitted to having smoked *dagga*. Learners in more affluent schools who receive more pocket money can afford to buy drugs, while poorer learners who reside in the townships and who have developed the habit could easily become involved in violence to obtain the money to pursue it. This suggests that the proportion of illegal drug use is not negligible, placing young people at risk of negative health and legal consequences that could impact on their education.

In an article on drugs in schools, the National Institute on Drug Abuse Survey researchers found that fifty percent of high school seniors in South Africa partake of an illicit drug at some stage of their lives (cited in McEntire 2007). The Bureau of Justice also reports that eighty-five percent of teenagers know where to access drugs such as marijuana, and fifty-five percent know how to obtain amphetamines. The fact that drugs, such as marijuana, LSD, heroin, cocaine, methamphetamines for example, *tik*, inhalants, Ritalin, prescription and over-the-counter medicines are readily accessible to youngsters in South African townships and suburban schools is bound to impact negatively on education in general, and on what takes place in schools in particular. Furthermore, the knowledge of drug availability is similar, regardless of race or location. However, McEntire (2007) states that what is more shocking is that twenty-nine percent of their respondents reported that someone had offered, sold or given them an illegal drug while they were at school. It would seem therefore that while South Africa has one set of laws, which is equally applicable inside and outside the school fence, learners never hear the message that the school will protect them when they are approached with respect to taking drugs, engaging in drug running, or other criminal activities. Furthermore, McEntire argues (2007) that if a learner's continued presence in a school threatens the safety of other learners or exposes them to danger through the selling of illegal drugs, the other learners deserve protection, and parents have a right to expect a school to act to ensure the maximum safety of their children. School rules, as subordinate legislation, are applicable to all learners of the particular school. McEntire (2007) concludes that this is to ensure that all such learners can know in precise terms what the law expects of them.

### *Illegal Firearms*

According to MacDonald et al. (1996), learners carry weapons to school for a variety of reasons, including protection, security, power and status, or to sell them. A study by Eliazov and Frank (2000) of twenty schools in the Western Cape Province revealed that the carrying of weapons was particularly widespread where intimidation, drug abuse and gangsterism were present. Accordingly, early intervention meth-

ods to address bullying, drug abuse and gangsterism may well help to eliminate the bringing of firearms and other weapons into schools. Furthermore, 40.9 percent of the respondents said that the relative availability of firearms is an important factor contributing to learner violence. In their findings, Eliazov and Frank (2000) documented that most of the twenty schools that they researched seemed to have a "weapon-free policy," and that most schools confiscated all weapons found on school premises. However, educators reported that possession was commonly accepted and often overlooked. Teachers explained that pupils might need to defend themselves on their way to and from school, and teachers also said that they sometimes felt too intimidated to confront learners, particularly those affiliated to gangs (Eliazov and Frank 2000).

In the past, educators and principals have frequently found it necessary to search learners for items, which may be harmful to them or to others. Today, however, the prevalence of drugs and guns or other dangerous weapons has increased the importance of school searches as being in the best interest of all learners. The study by Eliazov and Frank (2000) shows that knives were identified as being present in all schools, while in 11 out of 20 schools (55%), pupils were found to be in possession of firearms. Moreover, MacDonald et al. (1996) reported that other items such as razors, box cutters, metal knuckles, chemical irritants, clubs, and pepper sprays were also used as weapons. Incidents of school stabbings are commonly reported in the media in the Eastern Cape: "Boy stabbed to death at rural school" near Qumbu in the Eastern Cape (Ngcukana 2007: 2), "Teenager in teacher assault suspended after stabbing," in East London (Prince 2008: 1), "Schoolboy from Peddie in the Eastern Cape stabbed after bad joke", "Classmates watch in horror as pupil stabbed to death" in Mthatha, Eastern Cape (Ngcukana 2008: 1), and "Pupil tries to save his friend stabbed at school," in East London, Eastern Cape (Ngcukana 2008: 1). These are just a few of the incidents that have caught the public's attention.

Within South African schools, shootings are also periodically reported: "Horror school shooting with police service pistol of 14-year-old at a Pretoria private school" (cited in Prinsloo 2005: 5). In Delft in the Western Cape, a teacher was

held at gunpoint in a classroom, and in Umlazi in KwaZulu-Natal, a high school learner went on a shooting spree. In this latter case, no one was reported to be hurt (Dibetle 2008: 7). The reasons behind these shocking attacks are still in dispute. However, the seriousness of these incidents has provoked extensive debate about the safety of both learners and staff at South African schools. It has also provoked an attempt to ensure that schools are safe places by erecting fences around all schools, installing alarm systems, burglar bars and security gates, with security guards constantly on duty.

As a result of violence in schools, the South African Democratic Teachers Union (SADTU) has suggested that teachers should be paid a danger allowance because of some learners carrying weapons into school. The union argues that teachers work in dangerous situations like the police (Sapa 2007).

Taking all of this into consideration, one cannot ignore the reality that violence in South African schools does occur. As a result, it is important to emphasize the proactive role that teachers, principals, parents and all stakeholders need to play so as to address high levels of violence in their schools and to provide a safer learning environment for every learner and teacher. The governing bodies in schools should stress the importance of disciplinary policies and interventions that need to be implemented in schools so that all children can have the full benefit of education.

#### *Sexual Violence and Harassment*

Naylor (2002) states that South Africa reportedly has one of the highest rates of violence against women in the world. Schools have to consider the fact that some of the children whom they teach frequently have to endure abuse and violence or even rape at home. This makes education a daunting task. It appears that there are no reliable statistics or data on violence against women and girls at school since not all incidents are reported. Educators, however, have to keep in mind that although rape legally refers only to girls, one should remember that boys could also be victims of sexual abuse. There also appears to be no data or statistics of the incidence of sexual violence perpetrated against boys within the school system. Since the legal definition of rape does not include the rape of a male, the

statistics that are available do not include males (Naylor 2002).

The Human Rights Watch Report (2001) found that South African girls of every race and economic class encounter sexual violence and harassment at school, thereby impeding their realization of the right to education (Naylor 2002). For girl learners in particular, there are high levels of sexual violence and abuse. The Human Rights Watch Report (2001) further concluded that until schools themselves are places in which children are safe, is an environment that is conducive to learning, and is equally accessible to all children, the prevention of abuse and neglect will be impossible and the rights of children to education will not be protected and realized. What is really alarming is that the Human Rights Watch Report (2001) found that at most previously disadvantaged school sites, there was very little or no monitoring of what takes place during or after school hours. In particular, learners were being abused in toilets or secluded classrooms where there was no visible supervision. Naylor (2002) claims that the misuse of alcohol and drugs on school premises also contributes to the problem of sexual violence.

A school, which tolerates such behavior from learners, clearly compromises and jeopardizes the equal right and opportunity of all school learners to study in a safe environment. It is therefore clear that there is a duty for the State to take preventative measures and reasonable steps when dealing with sexual harassment and sexual violence against learners in schools. In addition, it is the school's legal duty not only to protect its learners from sexual violence, but also to include sanctions and punishments for offenders, including instituting a criminal case against alleged perpetrators and providing support to the victims.

#### *The Effects of School-Learner Violence*

According to Saunders (2011), the Vice-Chancellor of the University of Cape Town, the ongoing crisis in maintaining discipline at South African schools has exacerbated matriculation failure rates in its secondary schools at an alarming rate. These alarming failure rates confirm that many schools are rapidly becoming dysfunctional. Serious disciplinary problems have thus led to poor academic performance and poor self-image (Stout and Wood 2004). Furthermore, poor

discipline prevalent in South African schools has had a negative impact on the culture of teaching and learning. Concurrently, poor disciplinary practices in South African schools will inevitably lead to a breakdown of the educational process. The effect of poor learner discipline at the school level inevitably leads to a high learner dropout rate at the tertiary level as well.

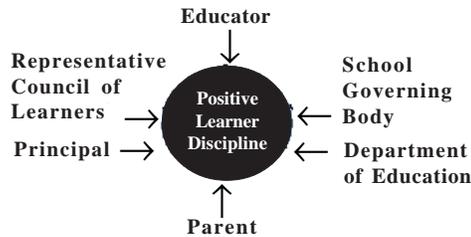
Poor learner discipline has caused considerable stress, anxiety and undue pressure on educators and teaching staff. As a result, derogatory name-calling, punching, tardiness, doodling and fidgeting have made it almost impossible for educators to teach in South African schools (Levin and Nolan 1996). Educators are frequently subject to verbal and physical abuse and other threatening behavior by young learners and therefore often need to seek counseling and protection (Stout and Wood 2004). Significantly, bullying at schools has resulted in low self-esteem, stress, lack of concentration and truancy among learners. Disciplinary problems and learner aggression and bullying lead to the further enactment of violent criminal behavior (Neser et al. 2004).

In the view of many educational specialists and scholars, poor discipline is causing many South African schools to become dysfunctional and the effect on the teaching staff intolerable as they face tremendous pressures and stresses. Educators are now experiencing greater levels of stress due to the rising disciplinary problems resulting in high levels of burnout, mental exhaustion, demotivation and stress. In practice, school violence and the more recent eruption of gangsterism has led to low teacher morale and high absenteeism among staff members. Additionally, it has caused many educators to resign from the profession. According to Legotlo et al. (2002), poor discipline at the secondary school level is contributing to the poor quality of education as educators struggle to teach and focus on academics. In addition, poor discipline has given rise to a number of conflicts between school principals, educators and parents. Instead of all stakeholders working collaboratively to resolve the growing number of disciplinary problems, there is little cooperation. As a result, poor discipline has caused serious divisions among all stakeholders of the public school system (Sithole 2007).

From the above discussion, it has emerged that poor discipline has worsened through weak collaborations, lack of capacity building and partnerships among all stakeholders of the public school system. Accordingly, the misconduct of learners has become an endemic problem across all public schools.

### **A FRAMEWORK TO DEAL WITH VIOLENCE IN SOUTH AFRICAN PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

The poor record of learner discipline has the potential of making schools collapse and education to fail under its weight. It is thus recommended that purposive intervention strategies be initiated at the highest level concerning the issues of learner indiscipline and poor behavior. It is important that discussion takes place in a framework where the accountability and responsibility of everybody operating within the environment of the school is made clear so as to avoid the suggestion that learners are the specific and only subjects of this kind of attention. A national intervention program with a buy-in from the highest office in government is required if the student sector is to develop an implementable code of conduct for learners. Such a program and initiative must give clear guidelines towards implementable alternatives to that of corporal punishment. Initially, the National Department of Education and Training should draft a generic code for application in schools that includes clear policy guidelines to support their practice both provincially and locally. It is further recommended that the implementation of a code of conduct be the responsibility of all relevant stakeholders. Importantly, learners must be empowered to determine the difference between right and wrong as they learn to think, create, read and write. Figure 1 provides a recommended model to effectively deal with school violence (Baruth 2013). This model inevitably emphasizes the networking and collaboration of all stakeholders in handling of the learner discipline. All relevant stakeholders, including school principals, school governing bodies (SGBs), parents, the provincial Department of Education, the Representative Council of Learners (RCL) and all educators alike, should be actively involved in handling the rising phenomenon of learner indiscipline at schools. Indeed, it is the measured opinion that a strong working relationship be-



**Fig. 1. Model to deal with school violence**

Source: Author

tween all stakeholders will eventually have a positive impact on learner discipline. This model emphasizes that all stakeholders focus their activities and attention towards creating effective disciplinary practices and a well thought out disciplinary code of conduct policy that falls in line with the 1996 Constitution, the Bill of Rights, and Section 8(2) of the South African Schools Act 1996 (No. 84 of 1996). In this way, a disciplined environment will be established to minimize disciplinary problems. To achieve this end, SGBs should elect a disciplinary committee to address problems of learner indiscipline. In serious cases of learner indiscipline, SGBs may suspend a learner for a period no longer than one week. That being said, departmental regulations and recommendations must be adhered to in order to maintain a level of trust, while not disclosing confidential information of the specific learners.

The model further proposes that SGBs adopt a restorative disciplinary program to inform parents regularly of the disciplinary measures that are in place. In particular, SGBs should adopt an effective prefect program to emphasize role model learners for the school and the election of the Representative Council of Learners (RCL), whereby learners' complaints can be addressed. The model also proposes the active involvement of learner-governors at SGB meetings to ensure that the learners' problems are discussed. SGBs should also develop workshops to assist learners to negotiate, mediate and manage conflict constructively. Researchers therefore recommend that SGBs encourage parents, educators and school principals to become more familiar with individual learner's emotional, cognitive and psychological development and in this way assist them to deal effectively with problems of indiscipline. Researchers further suggest that SGBs should improvise and implement special

campaigns, workshops and seminars for learners, educators, parents and the community in addressing learner disciplinary problems.

If this model is to be effective, it is also important that the provincial Department of Education becomes more vigilant in learner discipline and redefines and simplifies the guidelines for the handling of learner discipline. Suggested strategies such as detention, verbal warnings, demerits, community service, counseling, the installation of metal detectors and random security checks can be used to maintain strict discipline at schools. Furthermore, the provincial Department of Education needs to become intimately involved in the disciplinary procedures undertaken at schools. Towards this end, the provincial Department of Education should offer professional seminars, workshops and conferences to empower and educate school principals, educators and parents on how to deal with the arising problem of learner indiscipline. Importantly, the provincial Department of Education needs to provide more support to SGBs, especially those in rural and township schools in the quest to address learner indiscipline. The model also recommends that educators become more proactive in facilitating sound discipline within the classroom. Most importantly, educators need to use positive words to build the learners' self-esteem and develop a partnership with the parents of those learners concerned, to address the problem of indiscipline collaboratively. Accordingly, the educator must create a learner-centered environment whereby lessons are more structured and a sense of order is achieved. Educators, who are consistent in addressing disciplinary problems in their classroom environments, have a record of success. In dealing with serious disciplinary problems, educators must not work in isolation of one another, but seek the assistance and cooperation of school principals and the SGBs. Clearly, educators need to be more vigilant during lesson time and constantly monitor their learners' behavior.

Significantly, this model encourages active parent involvement as parents become more aware of what is actually taking place at the school level. Towards this end, researchers recommend that the parents take on a more active role in promoting learner discipline at their respective schools. Parents, who have a thorough understanding of the rules and regulations of their school, will be able to consolidate the rules

and emphasize the importance of teacher respect to their children. This model thus recommends that parents take on the primary responsibility in establishing the concept of self-control and responsibility. Parents need to create warm, open and loving environments so that their children develop positive behavior practices. It is thus imperative that parents and educators listen to the child's concerns and make time to investigate problems of indiscipline. Researchers recommend therefore that parents and educators alike teach the learners themselves to find possible solutions towards maintaining discipline. This model further encourages the incorporation of senior, experienced educators, staff, school principals and community workers to assist with disciplinary problems. The researchers also recommend that each SGB create opportunities for its learners to develop holistically as well as acquire leadership skills.

This model recommends that all stakeholders work together to ensure that all learners enrolled at a school are made fully aware of the disciplinary code of conduct. In this, researchers recommend that all relevant stakeholders deal with all learners in a fair and equal manner, taking into consideration their rights in terms of the 1996 Constitution of the Republic of South Africa. Towards this end, researchers recommend that school principals organize professional counseling sessions. The model further proposes that the school principal conducts staff meetings and discussions with all educators, parents and learners to find ways of overcoming the rising problem of learner indiscipline. In this, researchers recommend that school principals conduct interviews with the concerned parents before initiating any plan of action. All stakeholders need to be constantly aware of what constitutes appropriate and inappropriate learner behavior and how to initiate action plans towards creating an atmosphere of positive discipline as well as reward positive discipline accordingly.

The model also recommends that all relevant stakeholders conduct regular meetings with school learners to discuss potential problems and look for ways of resolving any potential or present problems of indiscipline. In this, the researchers recommend that school principals engage in continuous staff development sessions, programs and workshops to empower and instill in staff members a culture and regimen of posi-

tive learner behavior as well as provide a good orientation program for new learners coming into this school to highlight the culture of positive behavior. Finally, the model suggests that all relevant stakeholders work as a team to provide feedback to the SGB regarding problems of learner indiscipline. To ensure a strict code of conduct, the researchers recommend that parents, educators and school principals create a caring environment, which contains much encouragement and love. Community involvement also plays a significant role in maintaining discipline at schools with such bodies and individuals as correctional service workers, health sector workers, Community Police Forums and other NGOs. The creation and sustenance of positive relationships between all stakeholders of the public school system will greatly assist the development and maintenance of a well-disciplined school. In other words, a strong sense of partnership will go a long way in maintaining an atmosphere of good discipline at any school.

## CONCLUSION

It is believed that if this proposed model is applied to the letter, current scourge of school violence would gradually come under control. However, if nothing is done, violence at schools will continue to have a debilitating effect on the ability of educators to accomplish their goals and objectives.

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