# Your child is my child! The plea to address challenges of school violence in South Africa

Tshepiso MOHALE and Rebecca Mmamoagi SKHOSANA

**ABSTRACT**

*The incidence of violence in schools and their surroundings is increasing. Although violence within schools is not a new phenomenon, the recent spate of attacks in South African schools resulting in the loss of lives of both learners and educators has raised serious concerns. This study aimed to develop an in-depth understanding of the challenges experienced by educators in addressing violence in schools. This study applied a 'qualitative research approach' to develop an in-depth understanding of the challenges experienced by educators in addressing violence in schools. The objectives were to explore and describe the challenges educators face in addressing violence in schools and make recommendations. Only educators from the four schools in Soweto, Braamfischerville, Gauteng Province, South Africa, were selected by employing 'purposive sampling'. The study was guided by two theoretical frameworks: social learning theory and Ubuntu philosophy. The data was analysed using Tesch's eight steps, with ethical considerations considered. The results indicate a rising trend of violence in schools, which is exacerbated by the lack of sufficient resources and effective disciplinary measures to tackle this issue. The study also underscores that Ubuntu is the cornerstone in communities and emphasises an urgent need for the government to collaborate with educators and provide them with the necessary support to mitigate the challenges of school violence.*

**AUTHOR/S DETAILS**
- *Mohale Tshepiso, Department of Social Work; University of South Africa. Email: tshepiso@gmail.com*
- *Skhosana Rebecca Mmamoagi, Department of Social Work; University of South Africa. Email: skhosrm@unisa.ac.za*

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## INTRODUCTION

School violence is a global concern, with South Africa being a country with a prominent level of school violence, according to the statistics. School violence increases daily or annually, according to global statistics. School violence, therefore, is a social concern to be attended to as it affects the entire world. School violence infringes on the right to education intrinsically whilst violating additional fundamental human rights, predominantly those of the individual's right to human dignity and personal integrity. Eliminating violence at school is of primary importance for the embedment of human rights, democratic citizenship, and social cohesion. Violence occurring at schools cannot be interpreted as an exclusive school phenomenon. It is of concern that school violence has now moved beyond mere bullying to become a form of victimisation with a more serious and violent nature. This study enhances understanding of educators' daily challenges, contributing to both practice and education. The paper starts by providing the background, followed by a theoretical framework, methodology, results, implications, recommendations, and conclusions.

## BACKGROUND

Burton and Leoschut (2013) affirm that school violence has garnered considerable media attention in South Africa recently. In the past year alone local media coverage of brazenly violent acts, at times fatal, fuelled the public opinion that school violence in South Africa is intensifying at a distressing rate and that action is needed. According to Burton and Leoschut, (2013), violence occurring between learners, 74.4% of principals claimed to have received reports of physical violence between learners, 78.5% had received reports of learners verbally abusing one another, and one in two schools (53.7%) had received reports of incidents involving drugs or alcohol at school during the past year. The latter point was corroborated by the number of educators who reported having learners in their classrooms who have come to school drunk (33.1%) or under the influence of drugs (22.2%) in the past years. Burton and Leoschut (2013) further reveal that the consequences of school violence indicate violating children's fundamental rights. School violence may cause reduced educational performance and increased seclusion. It may also result in secondary victimisation, infusing fear, negatively affecting children who may not have experienced violence directly but may have witnessed affected friends or peers. School violence influences the children directly victimised in these incidents and those who observe it. This indirect victimisation contributes to an atmosphere of fear and insecurity at school, which unavoidably interferes with learning and inhibits academic performance whilst leading to a negative influence on the longer-term developmental paths of young people.

The concept of Ubuntu, originating from Southern Africa, is a deeply rooted philosophy that emphasizes communal values, interconnectedness, and the essence of humanity. It is often expressed as "I am because we are," highlighting the interdependence and collective identity of individuals within a community (Hailey, 2008; Tutu, 2000). This profound philosophy provides a compelling framework through which to analyze and understand the complexities of school violence within African contexts. By embracing Ubuntu, we can explore the impact of community dynamics, social interconnectedness, and shared responsibility in addressing and preventing school violence. Ubuntu stresses the importance of community relationships and mutual support. In an educational setting, fostering a sense of belonging and communal responsibility can mitigate feelings of isolation and aggression among students. When schools embody Ubuntu principles, they create an environment where students feel valued and connected, potentially reducing violent behaviors (Mugumbate & Nyanguru, 2013). Traditional African conflict resolution practices often involve dialogue and community mediation, reflecting Ubuntu's emphasis on understanding and reconciliation rather than punishment. Schools that embrace restorative justice approaches, prioritizing healing and understanding over disciplinary measures, foster student peace and collaboration. Many African nations are home to a rich tapestry of cultures and ethnicities. Introducing Ubuntu into school policies and curricula can foster respect for diverse backgrounds, reduce discrimination, and address bullying and violence in general. Schools that prioritize diversity and cultivate empathy can create an environment where all educators and learners feel secure and valued (Murove, 2014). The lasting effects of colonialism, civil conflicts, and social injustices often manifest as tensions in school settings. In a school setting, Ubuntu can offer a comprehensive framework for effectively addressing the challenges that arise in the aftermath of trauma. This approach emphasizes the healing and unity of the community, providing support and guidance to educators, learners, and parents as they navigate through difficult experiences. Ubuntu encourages a collective effort to acknowledge, understand, and overcome the impact of trauma, fostering an environment of empathy, resilience, and collaboration within the school community.

Burton and Leoschut, (2013) affirm that school violence can also corrode the victim's capability to form strong, pro-social and trustful affiliations with peers and grownups. This applies when adults encounter violence, specifically those in a care position over the child, such as educators. Such violence (including all forms of corporal punishment) and exposure to violence can strengthen the significance that violence is the most suitable way of settling disagreements whilst encouraging discipline. Messages are internalised and are acted on as the child grows into adulthood. Conversely, trusting relationships with peers and adults can be a strong protective or tough factor for youngsters, particularly those raised in adverse circumstances. School violence can erode young people's perception of hope and optimism in their future and, consequently, their ability to handle adversity and problems they may encounter growing up in a demanding social and economic environment. Ubuntu is centred around community, interconnectedness and emphasizes the importance of individuals contributing to the collective good through empowerment and giving voice to their opinions. This philosophy suggests that empowering individuals and allowing them to express their voices can foster a sense of unity and purpose within the community (Hailey, 2008). In the context of education, schools that actively involve students in decision-making processes and empower them as community leaders promote a sense of ownership and responsibility and cultivate a profound sense of agency among the students. This empowerment can play a crucial role in reducing feelings of helplessness, which are often linked to violent behaviour. By empowering individuals and fostering a sense of agency, Ubuntu's philosophy aims to create a harmonious and inclusive community where each member feels valued and empowered to contribute positively to the collective good (Mugumbate & Nyanguru, 2013; Chikoko & Ruparanganda, 2020).

Power (2017) established that feeling safe is a significant part of learning and development. Unfortunately, school violence in South Africa is a prevalent problem. Various factors cause it, with adverse and sometimes consequences for learners. Violent acts are comprehended as the deliberate use of physical force, power threatened or actual incidents resulting in, or holding a high likelihood of resulting in injury, death, psychological harm, maldevelopment or deprivation. School violence includes more than just acts at school; it concerns the school setting and learners' school experience. It is worth noting that for the study, physical and psychological violence will be presented as a type of violence in schools that affects educators.

The study *aimed to develop an in-depth understanding of the challenges experienced by educators in addressing violence in schools in Soweto, Braamfischerville, Gauteng Province.* The following research question was formulated: *What are the challenges experienced by educators in addressing violence in schools?* The objectives of the study were *to explore and describe the challenges faced by educators in addressing violence in schools and make recommendations based on the findings.*

## Theoretical framework

The study was based on the social learning theory and the philosophy of Ubuntu. According to the social learning theory, proposed by Bandura (1976), violent behavior is acquired by observing and imitating behaviors within the individual's immediate surroundings. The imitation of violent behaviour will depend on whether the models observed receive positive rewards for their actions; if the person had a benefit through the violent behaviour, the observer would probably imitate such behaviour, but if the models are punished for their violent behaviour, the probability of imitation will decrease. Bandura (1976) also outlines that in several cases violence is not only a mere imitative behaviour; alternative forms of violence arise, generalising the model effect. Exposure to violent models proportionates the information on how to act and the consequences of those actions. From this assessment, the behavioural models, which play an important role as socialisation agents, such as parents, educators, friends, and media, are crucial in this theory. This would be, for example, the case of the positive reinforcement produced by praising and being applauded by peers when an adolescent conducts violent behaviour at school or when parents tolerate violent behaviours at home.

Ubuntu has its roots in the cosmology and individual ontology of the Bantu peoples of Africa. Ubuntu underscores the profound significance of human connection in understanding our existence. It teaches us that our overall well-being, social justice, dignity, and the value of each individual are interdependent on others. Additionally, it emphasizes the pivotal role of human relationships, integrity, and competence in shaping a just and harmonious society (Murove, 2014). Ubuntu means humanness – treating others with kindness, compassion, respect and care. These virtues are usually referred to as the summation of Ubuntu or humanness. Ubuntu is well captured in the adage which says *Umuntu ngomuntu ngabantu* (Zulu); *Motho ke motho ka batho ba bangwe*

(Sotho) [a person is a person because of other persons]. Exploring the complex issue of school violence through the Ubuntu framework, which emphasizes interconnectedness and community, offers a more nuanced and thorough understanding of the underlying causes and potential solutions. By advocating for community, empathy, and restorative practices, educators and policymakers can collaborate to create and implement targeted strategies to cultivate safer, more inclusive, and supportive school environments across Africa. This concerted effort not only addresses the immediate challenges posed by school violence but also plays a pivotal role in shaping the well-being and future prospects of the upcoming generations.

Utilizing the social learning theory and the Ubuntu theory provides a comprehensive framework for understanding how school violence can be acquired through complex interactions with friends, family members, community members, educators, and peers. The social learning theory elucidates how learners observe and imitate the behaviours of family members or influential figures, and subsequently exhibit those behaviours if they perceive the rewards to be sufficient. Additionally, the Ubuntu theory emphasizes the interconnectedness of individuals and the impact of community involvement on shaping behaviour. Both theories underscore the significance of environmental interaction in the learning process, emphasizing the lasting impact of these interactions on knowledge and behaviour, ultimately enhancing human performance. They demonstrate how individuals, through participatory learning, can cultivate essential skills to become the best versions of themselves. This process involves demonstrating integrity and seeking to collaborate with others in various challenging scenarios, ultimately contributing to a more peaceful and harmonious community.

## METHODOLOGY

The study employed a qualitative research methodology. The research design adopted for this proposed study is the phenomenological research design, supported by explorative research design, descriptive research design and contextual research design. The population of the study was selected for this study was Soweto, Braamfischerville, Gauteng. The researchers used purposive sampling to select eight Life Orientation educators from four schools out of the 12 government-owned schools, namely, Primary Schools A and B, and Secondary Schools C and D, for the study. Educators who have two or more years in school, only participants willing to participate voluntarily and Life Orientation educators were included in the study. The other four educators were excluded since they did not meet the inclusion criteria.

The Ubuntu philosophy was utilized to guide practical applications and gain insights into the perspectives of the participants involved. It emphasizes the interconnectedness of humanity and the importance of community, offering a framework for understanding and addressing various social and ethical issues. During data collection, an audio recorder was used to record the semi-structured interviews. After collecting the data, it was transcribed, translated into English and cross-checked with the transcripts and notes by the initial researchers to authenticate the data. The researchers employed the eight steps by (Tesch, 1990), to analyse the data systematically. The interviews were transcribed verbatim, using codes in the place of real naming or identification to ensure confidentiality and anonymity. The data were interpreted and managed following the literature for verification. The researchers applied Lincoln and Guba's model to attain the study's trustworthiness. Ethical clearance to conduct the study was granted by the University of South Africa Scientific Research Ethics Committee (Ref: 240816-052). The Department of Education and the selected schools also sought permission to conduct the research. Participants provided informed consent to participate in the study.

## RESULTS

The analysis of data from interviews with the educators yielded three main themes and nine sub-themes as illustrated below in Table 1.

*Table 1: Themes and sub-themes arising from the interviews with the educators*

| Themes | Sub-Themes |
|---|---|
| Theme 1: Kinds of violence in schools | Sub-theme 1.1: Bullying<br>Sub-theme 1.2: Psychological violence<br>Sub-theme 1.3: Physical violence |
| Theme 2: Causes of violence in schools | Sub-theme 2.1: Ineffective disciplinary measures<br>Sub-theme 2.2: Learned behaviour<br>Sub-theme 2.3: Peer pressure |
| Theme 3: Challenges faced by educators in addressing violence in schools | Sub-theme 3.1: Risks of educators ending up in violence<br>Sub-theme 3.2: Non-core function of educators<br>Sub-theme 3.3: Creating enmities |

**Kinds of violence in schools**

This theme was prompted by the researchers' request: What kind of violence do you experience in the school? All participants who were interviewed managed to name various kinds of violence that were experienced in schools. The types of violence in schools are divided into the following three sub-themes.

*Bullying*

Participants reported that the most common type of violence that happens in schools is bullying. This type of violence affects everyone (learners, educators, school management teams and parents) in schools. The participants also indicated that they experience more cases of bullying in schools. Furthermore, participants mentioned that bullying is the most challenging violence that they experience in schools. The participants made the following comments regarding bullying:

We experience bullying and I am the victim of bullying (P5).

Bullying and physical violence are the most challenging violence that we are exposed to in our school (P4).

*Psychological violence*

Participants stated that this type of violence is happening in schools, especially to educators and it causes harm to them because it makes it hard for them to have peace in their lives. The concept of Ubuntu embodies the essence of humanness within the African context. It is pertinent for educators, social workers, and the broader community to engage with individuals who are part of a cultural framework shaped by Ubuntu. The participants had the following to share about emotional/psychological violence:

We have emotional/ psychological violence, especially as educators (P7).

Yes, I am hurt and unhappy by being bullied by learners, parents and my colleagues at this school. This affects me psychologically and having peace is important to my well-being (P1).

*Physical violence*

The participants mentioned that there are daily reports of more physical violence in schools in which educators and learners end up being hospitalised or injured. This is summarised in the following experts from participants' interviews:

There is physical violence and bullying, these are the most challenging and difficult to deal with because even if reported they are not attended to (P5).

We are exposed to physical violence, bullying, sexual violence, psychological violence, emotional violence and verbal violence (P3).

The results indicate that different forms of physical violence take centre stage in schools as educators and learners are exposed to such pain daily.

## Causes of violence in schools

Participants emphasised that they regard ineffective disciplinary measures, learned behaviour and peer pressure as the main cause of violence in schools. This theme emerged into the following three sub-themes in response to the researchers' request:  In your opinion what causes this violence in schools?

*Ineffective disciplinary measures*

Participants reported that violence in schools is uncontrollable and is continuing to grow. The educators cannot discipline learners anymore because the government or human rights support learners and parents more than educators. This is confirmed by the following extracts:

I think our government is failing our education because there are new cases of violence in schools reported daily and I believe is because we do not have a better way to discipline learners(P5).

I am more concerned about disciplining learners because I feel that since we do not have a better way to discipline them, violence in school will continue to be a challenge in school (P6).

The results also reveal that educators have lost hope in addressing the challenges of violence in schools as they mentioned that there is no proper way to discipline learners.

*Learned behaviour*

Participants reported that violence is a learned behaviour, which can be learned from the people that the person considers as role models. as highlighted in the following responses:

Pinyana ge ere ping e kwele ping ye kgolo [A child learns or models behaviour from the adults. A child who is violent or who bullies other children, in most cases learns all this behaviour from his or her parents/ guardians]. Remember, we come from different homes and communities; some of the behaviours of violence are learned from our community, our homes and television. Therefore, we tend to believe that is how we should live our lives (P1).

According to my view, we learn to behave violently from other people. In most cases, you find that the person was abused physically and people believe that things are solved in the form of violence (P2).

The above results report that violence is a learned behaviour and that most learners learn violence from their community, from social media as well as from their parents. Learners learn that violence is the only way to solve problems, especially because they have seen the people whom they consider to be their motivators behaving violently. This is depicted by  social learning theory which in relation to violence explains how violence patterns develop, what provokes people to behave violently, and what sustains such actions after they have been initiated. Consequently, social learning theory predicts that learners exposed to violence are more likely to imitate violent acts in their social situations and exhibit externalizing behavior problems.

*Peer pressure*

Participants state that people get involved in violence to please their friends or colleagues or to be part of a certain group. The following storylines support this:

> Yes, and another cause of violence may be the environment that the person socialises in or grows up in, peer pressure whereby a person behaves violently to fit in a certain group or to impress friends. Ya šika le ye e garago le yona e tlo gara [A child who associates himself/herself with children who disrespect or who are always involved in violence/bullying, will adopt the behaviour and will end up being bullied by other children] (P2).

> As we look at or listen to the media daily, we hear a new story of violence that has occurred or that has happened because of peer pressure (P4).

The results from this study reveal that peer pressure is another cause of violence. It shows that in most cases if a learner associates themselves with people who are bullies end up being bullied or behaving violently towards other people. The social learning approach to development is that children learn about their social worlds, and how to behave within these contexts, through direct peer tutelage and observation of peers in action. The concept of Ubuntu, with its deep roots in African philosophy emphasizing collective well-being and mutual care, offers a compelling framework for tackling the issue of school violence. This approach advocates for a holistic engagement of community members, including educators, students, parents, and local stakeholders, in collaborative efforts to address and mitigate acts of violence within educational settings. By drawing on Ubuntu's principles, the strategy underscores the importance of unity, compassion, and shared responsibility in fostering a safe and supportive learning environment. This inclusive and community-oriented approach not only aims to combat the immediate manifestations of school violence but also addresses the underlying social and emotional disconnects that often contribute to such behaviours. This will promote a culture of respect, understanding, and peace, essential for the holistic development of students and the community's overall health.

**Challenges faced by educators**

Participants highlighted challenges that educators face when addressing violence in schools in the following three sub-themes.

*Risks of educators ending up in violence*

Participants confirmed that educators ended up being in physical violence while they were trying to stop the people who were fighting, it might be a fight between learners, learners and educators, educators and parents, or educator and educator. The participants highlighted the following comments:

> The challenge encountered by us as educators is that we end up also being involved in violence trying to defend ourselves or trying to stop the people who are fighting, especially where physical violence is happening (P2).

> There are a lot of challenges that we come across as educators in addressing violence. I am a victim as I told you I called the mother of a learner who was bullying other learners, believing that we would come up with a solution to stop her child from bullying other learners instead she decided to have physical violence with me (P5).

Further, the results reveal that there are a lot of challenges experienced by educators in addressing violence in schools because some of the educators end up being the victims of violence.

*Non-core function of educators*

Participants believed that social workers were the ones who could address the challenges of violence in schools best and help to decrease the violence. The participants shared the following:

> We are failing to address this challenge of violence as educators, if we were able to, it was not going to escalate. To be honest that is not our part or our role to play as educators, it is too much for us (P4).

> Yes, is not our job to fight violence, I think that is the reason it is increasing instead of decreasing, the relevant people (social workers) are the ones who will address this challenge better (P8).

*Potential for creating enmities*

Participants emphasised that educators ended up having enemies while trying to address the challenges of violence in schools. This is supported by the following statements:

> You end up having more enemies, from learners, educators and parents just because you were trying to address violence (P6).

> The parents usually take the learners' side without getting both sides of the story. We are always wrong (P8).

The research findings indicate that educators are frequently held accountable for the misconduct of their learners, often leaving them feeling powerless to address the situation effectively. It is suggested that to effectively manage school violence and prevent a lack of parental involvement, it can be beneficial to apply African traditional jurisprudence, leadership, and governance, which are deeply rooted in the values of Ubuntu. This approach emphasizes the interconnectedness of individuals and communities. When one person against another commits an act of violence, the repercussions are far-reaching, impacting not only the individuals involved but also the broader community. Ubuntu jurisprudence proposes remedies and consequences that aim to restore harmony and unity, often involving the active participation of parents in the process. This approach recognizes the importance of collective responsibility and community involvement in addressing and resolving conflicts or violence.

## DISCUSSION

This study provided evidence of the challenges experienced by educators in addressing violence in schools. The results revealed that violence in school is a serious challenge and educators find it hard to do their work in schools. This is exacerbated by learned behaviors when the learners are exposed to violence. Educators work in a nonconductive environment as they face the challenges of violence daily, where they must intervene as educators to stop the violence. In some cases, educators end up being trapped in or they end up being involved in the violence, while they were trying to help. Mampane (2018) found that there was no one cause of violence in schools; but rather, several intersecting factors that led to violence in schools. Further, Mampane (2018) mentions that should a learner become injured while under the school's protection, a teacher or the school will face legal action for negligence and will have to prove that a duty of care was not breached, and the injury was not a reasonably foreseeable consequence.

Overall, the findings are consistent with the social learning theory and the philosophy of Ubuntu in that violence is learnt and communities should step in. According to Murove (2014), Ubuntu echoes the African thought of acceptable ideas and deeds. In Ubuntu, the meaning of responsibility is premised on the relationships which the individual has with others in the community and not on the idea of individual autonomy. One who has Ubuntu takes into consideration the concerns of others in relation to his concerns. This calls for a high demand for all stakeholders to help educators in addressing the challenges of violence in schools by modelling good behaviours. Social learning theory emphasises learning from one another through observation, imitation and modelling (Bandura, 1976) The community needs to work together to stop the scourge of violence in schools by assisting educators with the motivation of the learners in reproducing the good behaviors. Social workers are needed in schools to offer counselling services, to offer academic support and to address the challenges of violence, that is escalating in schools. The educators, police force, social workers and parents need to help each

other on the understanding that the present predicament of the other person is my predicament in the future. In Ubuntu, there is a popular adage saying 'Your child is my child' – implying that one should not discriminate against our common belongingness as we are bonded in this common life.

Pandea, Grzemny, and Keen (2020) state that all forms of violence have a psychological aspect since the main aim of being violent or abusive is to hurt the integrity and dignity of another person. This includes isolation or confinement, withholding information, disinformation, and threatening behaviour. The learners who are frequently exposed to violent interactions at home were more likely to approve of the use of violence and to subject themselves to the influences of delinquent peers, which increased their involvement in violent behavior A significant decrease in the work performance of educators was found in educational institutions where educators were exposed to psychological violence. To prevent psychological violence in educational institutions, certain measures should be taken at an individual level since environmental change can lead to behavioral change.

Netshitangani (2014) found that peer pressure was seen as a contributor towards the problem of violence because most perpetrators outside the school are seen as successful "heroes" on account of their criminal exploits in the school. Masilo (2018) found that learners spent most of their time in the school environment, and as such, made friends and became part of groups. The implication is that learners easily learn bullying behaviour from their peers and that makes it difficult for adolescents to try to modify their antisocial behaviour once they have started to engage in it. To mitigate this, parents not only can serve as powerful models of social behavior for children but also have a unique opportunity to shape their children's behavior over the course of years through parent–child interactions (Detweiler et al, 2014).

While the study has shown that peer pressure is another factor, it is urged that the learners learn to perpetrate violence through observational learning through emulating the violent behavior of role models such as parents and intergenerational transmission of attitudes that are conducive to violence. The results revealed that educators battle to manage and control learner-on-educator violence in schools. Educators experienced different encounters of learner-on-educator violence, and these had varying effects on them. Although they tended to address the aggressiveness of learners at school through school disciplinary and safety committees, the schooling system was deemed to be deteriorating rapidly, and educators reported not coping. De Cordova, Berlanda, Pedrazza and Fraizzoli (2019) state that teaching has been reported to be one of the most stressful occupations, with heavy psychological demands, including the need to develop positive relationships with learners and their parents; relationships that, in turn, play a significant role in educators' well-being. It follows that the impact of any violence perpetrated by a student or parent against a teacher is particularly significant and represents a major occupational health concern. Educators who experience violence could develop a negative attitude towards their professions, such as discouraging the development of their professional abilities or reducing their motivation and commitment. Botha (2021) declares that an educator's role requires them to uphold discipline and deal with learner distractions while encouraging security and safety amongst all in the school, in the interest of the learners and society at large.

Mcmahon (2020) notes that learners with severe behavioural problems are too frequently not receiving the support services they need, and educators are not well-equipped to manage these issues. As a result, educators and learners alike do not feel safe in school. Sitoyi (2020) concludes that educators struggle to deliver lessons if learners are violent and unruly in class and educators spend more time disciplining learners than teaching. Skaland (2016) further mentions that the educators' self may end in 'dissonance' when learners threaten and physically assault them. The study further indicates that educators' professional and individual selves and their experience of security or insecurity are closely linked to student-to-teacher violation and the reactions to it from the school culture. This confirms that violence against educators is a major issue in schools that is often overlooked. The media only highlights extreme cases of teacher abuse, leaving many incidents unreported. In most cases, educators are left to handle these delicate situations independently without adequate support from the system. This lack of protection must be addressed to ensure a safer learning environment for learners and educators.

## IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Given the increasing prevalence of violence in schools, educators need to have access to training and support that will enable them to identify and respond to potential threats. This will require Ubuntu collaborative effort among educators, police officers, administrators, parents, and community leaders to develop and implement effective prevention and intervention strategies. The appeal to address the challenges faced by educators in managing school violence is a matter of great importance. The safety and security of educators and learners are paramount to their

academic success and emotional well-being. Educators must be equipped with the necessary tools and resources to create a safe and secure learning environment for the learners. There is a need to recognize that every child is our own and rise to the challenges faced by educators in addressing violence in schools.

   Based on the results, participants emphasized the need to educate or inform communities about the significance of school violence and its consequences. Overall, raising awareness about school violence and involving all relevant parties in researching and addressing the issue is crucial for creating a safer and more secure learning environment for students. More research on the reasons for unabated violence and bullying in schools needs to be done because now violence in schools is uncontrollable and educators do not know what to do anymore. Participants recommended that stakeholders should work together in the spirit of Ubuntu in addressing the challenges of violence in schools. It is further recommended that the community at large, the School Management Team, School Governing Body, educators, parents, district officials and the Department of Basic Education should find good strategies to address the challenges of violence in schools with a greater focus on integrating social learning and Ubuntu as cornerstones. Further investigation is required to find ways to tackle the issue of violence in schools.

**CONCLUSION**

This paper aimed to develop an in-depth understanding of the challenges experienced by educators in addressing violence in schools. We have outlined the background, followed by a theoretical framework, methodology, results, implications, recommendations, and conclusions. Through Ubuntu, we can create a secure learning environment for every child.

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