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The influence of gangsterism on the morale of educators on the Cape Flats, Western Cape

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**THE INFLUENCE OF GANGSTERISM ON THE MORALE OF EDUCATORS ON
THE CAPE FLATS, WESTERN CAPE**

by

KAREN MARION DOS REIS

Dissertation submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the

MAGISTER EDUCATIONIS

in the Faculty of Education and Social Sciences at the

Cape Peninsula University of Technology

Supervisor: Dr Beatrice Thuynsma

December 2007

DECLARATION

I, Karen Marion Dos Reis, declare that the contents of this thesis represent my own unaided work, and that the thesis has not previously been submitted for academic examination towards any qualification. Furthermore, it represents my own opinions and not necessarily those of the Cape Peninsula University of Technology.

Signed

Date

ABSTRACT

Gangsterism affecting schools on the Cape Flats, as well as concerns about this phenomenon as addressed by the Provincial Minister of Education, Cameron Dugmore, during his Education Budget Speech in 2006, has led to widespread media attention in South Africa. Despite the Western Cape Education Department's implementation of the Safer Schools project in 2001 to assist educators working in gang-ridden communities, not enough is being done to eradicate the problems caused by gangsterism which educators face in their schools on a daily basis.

This research embarks on enquiring how gangsterism influences the morale of educators, focusing specifically on the educators' perception of their morale and their experiences while working in gang-ridden communities. The research acknowledges that the educators play a vital role in education and are therefore regarded as key stakeholders in a community.

The research is located in a qualitative paradigm because it seeks to achieve a deeper understanding of the educators' morale disposition in gang-ridden communities and investigates the constructs of how gangsterism influences the morale of educators.

Data was collected from principals and educators working in the following gang-ridden communities: Bonteheuwel, Manenberg, Heideveld, Hanover Park and Valhalla Park. A total of 53 respondents, including both educators and principals, participated in this research. Methods of data collection included observations, seven unstructured interviews and six structured focus group interviews.

The result revealed that gangsterism does influence the morale of educators working in gang-ridden communities. It was also found that gangsterism affects the whole school community - educators, learners and parents. It is a powerful yet destructive phenomenon and has a negative effect on educator morale.

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DEDICATION

With all my love to my husband, Jose and children, Seth, Kairo and Kaylib.

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GLOSSARY

Terms/Acronyms/Abbreviations

OBE

FET

WCED

SABC

Definition/Explanation

Outcomes Based Education

Further Education and Training

Western Cape Education Department

South African broadcast corporation

CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

On 26 April 2005, the Provincial Minister of Education in the Western Cape, Cameron Dugmore, in his education budget speech, expressed concern about the gangster phenomenon in the Cape Flats, Cape Town. Arising out of the threat posed by external factors such as gangsterism and crime, the minister re-iterated the need for the creation of a Safe Schools Programme. He expressed concern about the ongoing victimisation of learners and educators by gangsters. He noted the following: "Just last week a gang of about 20 thugs invaded the Arcadia High School in Bonteheuwel, conducting a class-by-class search for a learner, threatening the principal and severely traumatising learners and educators. On the same day an educator at Boundary Primary was robbed of her bag at gunpoint inside the school as she walked down the corridor."(South Africa, Western Cape Education Department, 2005).

Furthermore, a documentary titled *Special Assignment* aired on SABC 3, reported on educators and learners on the Cape Flats who are continually harassed by gangsters in the community. The programme host interviewed educators working in gang-ridden communities and questioned them on how they cope in these situations. One teacher commented on how gangsters either want to sell drugs, or are looking for rival gang members attending the school and often have to be chased off the school premises. Many times this results in gang fights. The point was also made that the teaching staff are not equipped to deal with these situations.

I contacted The Independent Newspaper House to obtain back copies of the *Athlone News* for six months dated 1 February 2006 to 30 July 2006 (the newspaper gives coverage on the following communities: Athlone, Hanover Park, Manenberg, Bonteheuwel and Valhalla Park). These communities are notorious for gang-related crimes. The *Athlone News* reports presented appalling evidence

of how schools are continually being vandalised by gangsters, of how learners are injured or killed, and of how educators and learners are being robbed or assaulted.

1.2 Rationale

Reckson and Becker (2005:107) purport that gang violence in South Africa, and particularly in the Western Cape, remains a “compelling and pervasive” problem. Nationally, crime has assumed different features, with people dying in Natal as a result of political violence, in the Eastern Cape as a result of taxi violence, in Gauteng as a result of robberies and hijacking and in the Western Cape as a result of gangsterism (Kinnes, 1995:17). Reckson and Becker (2005:107) stated that criminologists estimate between 40 percent and 60 percent of serious violent crime in the Western Cape are directly attributable to gang activity.

Ramsey, Rust and Sobel (2003:2) note that violence, in general, and gang participation, in particular, are matters of great concern for educators. An increase in gang membership and violent gang activities have negative effects on our nation’s schools (Ramsey et al., 2003:3). While problems were reported across all school categories, schools in disadvantaged communities persistently experienced more severe problems, particularly relating to vandalism, physical violence, gangsterism and the possession of drugs and weapons (Eliasov & Frank, 2000:18).

Undeniably crime and violence “contaminates” the school environment and jeopardizes the educational process (Eliasov & Frank, 2000:6). Young (1998:10) argued that teacher morale was influenced by the school environment and climate. In addition to this, Lumsden (1998:2) asserts that a healthy school environment and high teacher morale tend to be related. In fact, according to Evans (1998:30) high morale may motivate, stimulate, encourage or energise, while low morale may do the opposite. Evans (1998:26) further notes that her interpretation is centred around Smith’s distinction that job satisfaction is a static, shallow concept, whereas morale is dynamic and forward-looking. In a more recent study, Houchard (2005:28) concluded that practically all the research reviewed indicates that low teacher morale was fostered by extrinsic factors.

It is within this particular context that this research explored and described the nature and extent of gangsterism in schools and how it influences the morale of educators. This research was motivated by the ongoing reports of educators and learners being victimised by gangs, and the need for educators to be equipped to deal with the problem.

1.3 Problem Statement

Educators in South Africa have numerous pressures on them personally, emotionally and academically. Educators, particularly those in gang-ridden communities, are not only bombarded with ongoing change in education but are faced with a phenomenon that influences their work life on a daily basis.

It is evident that there is a lack of attention given to studies focusing on educator morale in gang-ridden communities. Therefore a need remains for more research on the influence of gangsterism on educators' morale.

With this in mind the following research questions were formulated:

- How does gangsterism influence educator morale on the Cape Flats?
- What can WCED do to boost educator morale?

1.4 Objectives of the research

The objectives of the research were:

- To explore and describe how gangsterism influences educator morale working in gang-ridden communities on the Cape Flats.
- To create an awareness of the morale of educators working in gang-ridden communities and to see what WCED can do to boost educator morale.

1.5 Research methodology

This research examined how gangsterism influenced educators' morale in gang-ridden communities. The research therefore made use of qualitative methodology, utilising the unstructured interview and focus group interview method. The unstructured interview allowed me to introduce my research topic to the principal and to question him/her in no particular order. This allowed the principal to 'answer

questions in his/her own way' (Hitchcock & Hughes, 1994:87). The focus group interviews method however, involves an "organised discussion with a selected group of individuals to gain information about their views and experiences" (Gibbs, 1997:1). Focus group interviews usually consist of seven to ten people and a facilitator. The method is particularly useful when the topic to explore is general, and the purpose is to promote talk on a topic that informants might not be able to talk as thoughtfully about in individual interviews. Group participants can stimulate each other to articulate their views, or even to realize what their own views are (Bogdan & Biklen, 1998:109). A structured interview schedule was used in the focus group interview as this approach provided more detailed information on the problem (Chin See, Slacks, Stanley, Tecclab, Tobun and Williams, 1997:1). Four questions were utilised in the structured interview schedule. The first three questions addressed the research question, "How does gangsterism influence educator morale on the Cape Flats"? The fourth question addressed the research question, "What can WCED do to boost educator morale"?

Six schools from the following gang-ridden communities in the Western Cape formed part of the research: Bonteheuwel, Manenberg, Hanover Park, Heideveld and Valhalla Park. Schools from each community were invited to participate in this research. I visited all the schools to inform the principals about the purpose of the research. Between six and eleven educators of each school participated in the focus group interview. Educators were selected on a voluntary basis. Only one topic was discussed during the interview, that being how gangsterism influences the morale of educators.

The unstructured and focus group interviews were conducted at the participating schools. Appointments were scheduled that best suited the educators within the time frame of the research. A tape recorder was used to record interviews, as it was a reliable source for confirming participants' responses.

1.6 Ethical considerations

Permission was granted to conduct research in public schools by the Western Cape Education's Research Department. Written consent was given by the

principals and educators with whom interviews were conducted. Participants were informed that their participation was voluntary and that their identities would remain anonymous.

1.7 Overview of the dissertation: A summary

Chapter One gives the background to the concerns about the effects of gangsterism on schools as raised by the Provincial Minister of Education, Cameron Dugmore, as well as by educators working in gang-ridden communities. I also discuss the rationale for a need to research how gangsterism influences the morale of educators on the Cape Flats, as well as define the problem statement.

Chapter Two reviews literature such as journal articles, theses and books related to educator morale and gangsterism on the Cape Flats. The theoretical background is also presented in this chapter.

In *Chapter Three* the research method utilised in this research is provided. A detailed discussion of the sampling, data collection, data analysis and ethical consideration is presented.

In *Chapter Four* a descriptive report on the results is given to answer the research question.

Chapter Five presents a discussion of the results, the implications of the research, limitations of the research, as well as recommendations for future research and concluding comments.

The next chapter will present a detailed discussion of the literature review of this research.

CHAPTER 2 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

Teaching in the new millennium has become a highly complex and demanding activity. South African educators are asked to accomplish more in school today than ever before with the implementation of Outcomes Based Education¹ in 1994 and, recently, Further Education and Training² in 2006. Expectations that are being placed on them seem to be expanding exponentially (Lumsden, 1998:1). Lumsden further asserts that the educator's role does not only encompass teaching specific content and fostering the love of learning to their pupils, but includes their function as "frontline social workers." These added responsibilities inevitably result in declining educator morale. According to Dladla (2005:211), another factor that influences educator morale is societal aspects that are related to societal conditions. This research will focus on one particular societal aspect, namely gangsterism, and how this phenomenon influences educator morale.

I posed the following question: If empirical evidence suggests that teacher morale is declining due to curriculum changes in education, according to Dladla (2005:211), how is the educators' morale affected by gangsterism in the immediate environment? The purpose of this chapter will therefore be to review current literature and research that relates to morale, in particular educator morale, enquiring how gangsterism influences educator morale and how management can boost educator morale affected by gangsterism.

The enquiry on how gangsterism influences educators' morale will be done under the following subheadings:

¹ OBE – The Outcomes-Based Education approach was implemented in 1994 to advance teaching and learning of all the learning areas in schools in South Africa (Schlebusch & Thobedi, 2004:1)

² FET - Further Education and Training consists of all learning and training programmes of Grades 10 to 12 in the school system (South African Government Information. 1998).

- What is educator morale?
- High morale and Low morale
- The importance of educator morale in schools
- Gangsterism influencing educator morale
- The role of management in addressing educator morale

2.2 What is educator morale?

An analysis of the literature on the definitions of morale is useful to understand the meaning of educator morale. Although many studies have been done on morale, researchers are still debating what the concept morale means. Researchers, Rempel and Bentley (1970:33) and Andrew, Parks and Nelson (1985:534) concur that morale is a multidimensional concept. According to them it has many factors associated with it. This means that morale can be attributed to environmental factors, curriculum changes, or to the group dynamics in an organisation. The reason for this is that not all educators respond to the mentioned factors the same way and at the same time, but often educators will speak about their morale when they refer to their attitude toward their work (Evans, 1998:21).

The following are some of the definitions of the concept 'morale' which underpin this research. Hart, Alexander, Wearing, Carter and Dingle (2000:212) and Hershey (1983:9) see morale in relation to the educators' state of mind being influenced by the social interaction and relation they have with others. They also regard it as a positive and healthy state of mind that is goal directed. Evans (1998:29) concurs with these views and expresses it as follows:

The degree of enthusiasm that a group has for its objective(s). Morale should be considered a state, in the same sense that we can speak of a state of health. A given level of morale for a group must certainly depend upon each member's enthusiasm for its goal.

Andrew et al. (1985:32) point out that morale is perceived by each member in a group in an individual way. Each educator feels the "depression or euphoria brought on by external conditions, but the intensity of feeling is influenced by the personality of the individual." Educators are unique individuals and they all come from different social, cultural and religious backgrounds. What one educator might perceive as part of everyday life another educator might perceive differently.

Moreover, morale, according to Coughlan (1970:222), is linked to the educators' specific needs and individual perception of their working environment for the satisfaction of their needs. The environment where educators are working forms the basis for positive educator morale. If the environment is not conducive for effective teaching to take place due to negative factors such as gangsterism, it could result in low educator morale.

Morale is regarded as dynamic, therefore it is not considered as a permanent condition. Like a "roller coaster", morale has its "peak and valleys" (Andrew et al., 1985:33). Educators can feel enthusiastic and energetic about their profession at a specific moment on the one hand, and on the other hand feel alienated from their work. Which is a clear indication that morale is not only associated with positive feelings, but also negative ones.

It is evident from these definitions that morale has to do with individual and group attitudes, enthusiasm, interests and behaviour shown towards their profession. These definitions also suggest that morale is experienced by individuals in various ways, even though the individuals might be exposed to situations that are similar. What may cause dissatisfaction or low morale with one person may not affect the morale of another (Houchard, 2005:23). However, since this research involves educators, it is aligned with Koerner (1990) as cited by Houchard (2005:24), who defines staff morale as "the quality of lives within a community that involves being known and appreciated, having professional knowledge valued, and being given the freedom to act."

These definitions are closely linked to Maslow's hierarchy of needs in McClelland (1985), who refers to Maslow's hierarchy as the building blocks of educator morale, as well as to Herzberg's two-factor theory in Sergiovanni (1967) that underpins educator morale. As it is believed that theory informs practice, the next section considers the theoretical background of this research.

2.3 High morale and Low morale

For humans, work can be one of the most absorbing activities. People tend to spend most of their waking time at work. In his research, Houchard (2005:23) revealed that for some individuals work can be a great source of satisfaction, while for other individuals it can be a source of discomfort and unhappiness. According to McClelland (1985:42), Maslow established five basic needs of humans which emerge in a hierarchy of importance that addresses the physiological, safety, social, esteem, and self-actualization needs of people.

The following needs, which are arranged from lowest to highest, are contended to be the basic needs of humans and are determining factors when looking at educator morale:

- 1) Physiological needs (need for food, water and sex): homeostatic and organic.
- 2) Safety needs (need for security and protection from pain, fear, anxiety, and disorder); need for order, lawfulness, and discipline.
- 3) Need for belongingness and love (need for love, tenderness and togetherness).
- 4) Esteem needs (need for achievement, respect, and approval).
- 5) Self-actualization needs (need for self-fulfilment, for realizing one's potential, for understanding and insight)

Maslow's hierarchy of needs explains that lower needs affect human behaviour only when they are unsatisfied. As they are satisfied, the person is free to pursue higher needs. Satisfying lower needs removes tension and gives peace and satisfaction. Maslow's liberal view that poor and oppressed people are prevented from functioning at higher levels because poverty and oppression force them to spend their time trying to satisfy physiological and safety needs, leaving them no time or energy to develop self-respect or their own potential, concurs with what is seen in gang-ridden communities. Maslow concluded that being able to satisfy lower needs and seek self-actualization leads to greater biological efficiency, for example sleeping better, eating better, living longer and with less illness. In addition it results in many desirable human traits such as spontaneity, reality

orientation, spirituality, the ability to distinguish between means and ends, creativity, autonomy and democratic values being realised. Satisfying higher needs leads more directly to a feeling of personal accomplishment.

Washington and Watson (1976:4) contend that educators whose basic needs are satisfied tend to constantly strive for fulfilment of higher order needs and this will therefore lead to higher levels of morale. Educators whose basic needs are not met, for example the need to feel safe in their working environment, can result in low morale. The consequence of not satisfying lower needs, according to Maslow, can be detrimental to the educator's personal life and profession and therefore lead to low morale that could affect the perceptions of the professional.

Sergiovanni (1967:67-68), in his study of Herzberg's hypothesis, found morale to be consistent with the motivation theory proposed by Maslow. Herzberg hypothesized that some factors were satisfiers when present but not dissatisfiers when absent, while other factors were dissatisfiers, but when eliminated as dissatisfiers did not result in positive motivation. An illustration of Herzberg's hypothesis in Sergiovanni is presented in Figure 2.1.

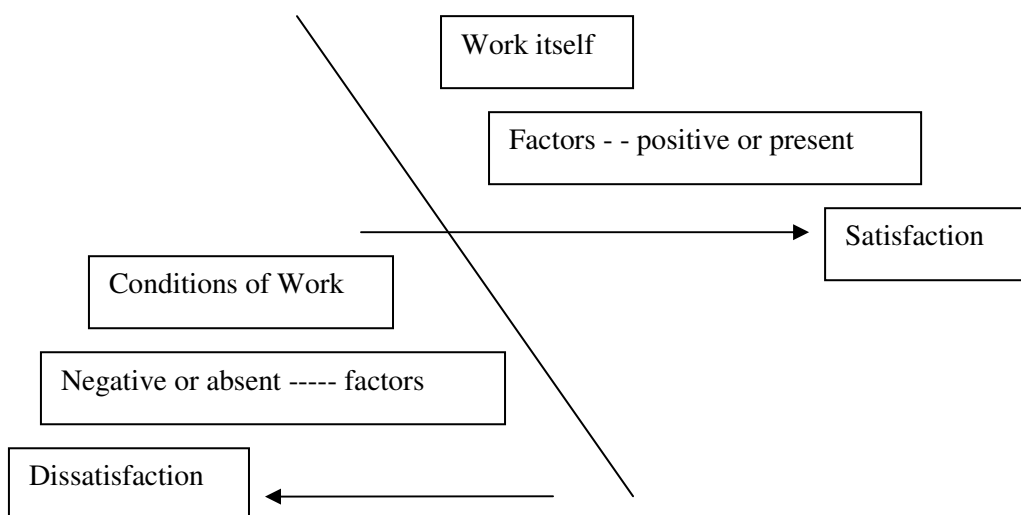


Figure 2.1 Herzberg's hypothesis: satisfiers and dissatisfiers

The factors in their two sub-categories are as follows:

<i>Satisfiers</i> (found in work itself)	<i>Dissatisfiers</i> (found in the environment of work)
1. Achievement	1. Salary
2. Recognition	2. Possibility of growth
3. Work itself	3. Interpersonal relations (subordinates)
4. Responsibility	4. Status
5. Advancement	5. Interpersonal relations (superiors)
	6. Interpersonal relations (peers)
	7. Supervision – technical
	8. Company policy and administration
	9. Working conditions
	10. Personal life
	11. Job security

Herzberg found that five factors (achievement, recognition, work itself, responsibility and advancement) tended to affect educator morale in only a positive direction. The absence of these factors did not necessarily result in job dissatisfaction. The eleven remaining factors, with specific reference to factors applicable to this research, the educator's working conditions and personal life, if not present, led to dissatisfaction, yet the absence of these factors tended not to lead to employee satisfaction. Herzberg observed that job factors which resulted in satisfaction were directly related to the work itself. Job factors which resulted in dissatisfaction tended to be related to the environment of work. I therefore conclude that gangsterism being a destructive phenomenon on the Cape Flats influences the environment of work for educators negatively.

Andrew et al. (1985:39) found that teaching has both its satisfactions and dissatisfactions. They further note that satisfaction comes from going the extra mile for learners, expressions of appreciation by the learners and observing successes from ex-learners. Dissatisfaction in teaching occurs when there are too many social problems in the community. The constant pressure of these problems for example gang violence can lead to burnout, resulting in low morale.

Several factors, according to Magoon and Linkous (1979:21-22), can lead to burnout. Factors that may result in low educator morale are as follows:

1. The escalation of gang violence and vandalism in a school or society;
2. Educators' frustration at being unable to solve social problems encountered by the learners whom they have first hand knowledge of;
3. Uncaring parents who want to place the blame for all things and events on the teacher's doorstep without entering into a sharing relationship;
4. Educators being overwhelmed with administrative duties, workshops and cluster meetings which impact on their time for preparing lessons and school based extra-mural activities;
5. Being asked to be accountable for high production whilst working in an overcrowded classroom with learner numbers ranging from 35 to 50 and a seating capacity for 30;
6. The lack of acceptance as fully-fledged partners in the learning process by management, parents, and learners; and
7. Their continuing struggle to cope with those learners who need intensive, individual assistance to change their attitude toward school and to remediate their basic, school-related skills if they are to avoid dropping out.

To have educators with a high morale is an advantage to the school community. High morale stimulates, motivates and energises educators while low morale demotivates and alienates them (Evans, 1998:21). Lumsden (1998:1) and Evans (1998) concur that a healthy school environment and high teacher morale tend to be related. Further, a school that functions in an environment plagued by gang violence, vandalism, unemployment and poverty is an indication of an unhealthy environment.

Stedt and Fraser (1984:70) posit that low educator morale is a disadvantage to everyone involved in the education process. Educators are key role players in the functioning of a school. Furthermore, Hart et al. (2000:113) allude to the fact that low morale would result in educators lacking pride, energy and enthusiasm. Therefore if educators are experiencing low morale, the consequence is that the

learners will suffer ultimately. Added to this, Evans (1998:21) found that educators who are no longer loyal to their school is indicative of low morale. For a school to achieve its goals, all the role players need to buy into its vision. Educators who are disloyal to their school will result in the goals being unattainable. If low educator morale persists, the community will suffer because education empowers people to contribute positively to the economic growth of a community and the country.

There are clear distinctions between high and low educator morale in the literature reviewed and presented in this chapter. Andrew et al. (1985:11) provide the following profound summary of low and high morale, “Low morale is associated with frustration, alienation and powerlessness. Belongingness, togetherness, achievement and self or group esteem are generally associated with high morale.”

Overall, it can be observed that to improve educator morale, positive teaching experiences should outweigh the negative teaching experiences, which will lead to a better quality of work life (Hart, 1994:113). It can therefore be concluded that educator morale can only be developed positively when the environment is peaceful and social problems are dealt with effectively.

2.4 The importance of educator morale

Several studies have set out to understand the importance of educator morale. Rempel and Bentley (1970:534) found that morale is a vital ingredient for the success of any human enterprise. As such, it is an important ingredient for the effective functioning of a school’s program. Furthermore, morale assists in establishing the character of a school, which may in turn determine whether a school functions at its best, demanding and receiving the utmost from its learners or whether the school is just plodding along to see the passing of another day (Ellenburg, 1972:37).

Young (1998:10) proposes that the level of educator morale can be used as a measure of effective schools. Young further asserts that an effective school is a healthy school and therefore such a school will survive and grow. The quality of the educator’s work life can be a strong indicator of a healthy and consequently an

effective school. For schools to function effectively, educators must possess “high morale, courage, self discipline, enthusiasm, a willingness to share, and the conviction of the ability to achieve success” (Magoon & Linkous, 1979:21). They further state that high morale forms a basis for the effective functioning of a school. Linking with this notion, Mackimmie (1957:47) added that high educator morale is the best guarantee of good school morale. Andrew et al. (1985:42) purport that good morale will cause educators to put more effort into their work, thereby producing high student achievement, which in turn will cause educators to feel good about their work and will therefore produce high morale.

Kalis (1980:89) contended that although schools may look similar or function similarly, every school is unique. What makes each one different is the situation that they find themselves in and the atmosphere within the school. Hart et al. (2000:211) state that morale is influenced by the school environment and climate. Concurring with this, Magoon & Linkous (1979:534), Kalis (1980:89) and Young (1998) agree that the school environment is an important factor in determining teacher morale. Evans (1998:28) considers morale to be situation specific, which she defines as the elements of what the individual's entire work-related circumstances are. Evans identifies these elements as the intricacies of morale, and it is their “amalgamated whole” that morale relates to. Against this the next section considers the literature that investigates the work-related circumstances of educators working in gang-ridden communities.

2.5 Gangsterism influencing educator morale

In order to understand how gangsterism influences the morale of educators working in gang-ridden communities on the Cape Flats, this section first discusses what gangsterism is and then reviews the origins of gangsterism and the influence it has on communities. Lastly, it will consider management's role in boosting educator morale.

2.5.1 What is gangsterism?

In the Western Cape, gangsterism remains a daunting problem. Reckson and Becker (2005:114) highlight gangsterism as one of the most obvious “manifestations of historical oppression and inequality.”

Gangsterism is defined in numerous ways. In his research, Standing (2005:10) asked several people to define the term ‘gangsterism’. According to him, gangsterism can be defined as an “anti-social way of life that pitches loyalty to the gang against loyalty to institutions of civilised society, such as the school, the family, the church and the justice system.” Standing further notes that the gang culture is regarded as being selfish as members take from others without thought of wellbeing and they also have an unhealthy regard for consumer goods such as cars and jewellery.

According to Kinnes (2000:5), gangs operate their criminal activities on the streets, or they are run by highly organised, sophisticated syndicate bosses. Shockingly, gangs use dangerous weapons such as guns and knives to protect themselves from rival gangs and also use them in their criminal activities to instil fear in their victims (Standing, 2005:10). Kinnes (2000:5) concludes that gangs may be involved in criminal activities for the sake of survival, or may be high-level structured criminal organisations. These notions are evident in ongoing media reports.

Moreover, Standing (2005:10) postulates that gangsterism is a culture of extreme masculinity and gross disregard for women, which is expressed through the celebration of rape and exploitation of women for the sex industry. Standing refers to the gang culture as a culture of the uneducated and unsophisticated.

Kinnes (2000:5-6) points out that gang members may range in age from youngsters (‘corner kids’) to adults between 20 and 40 years of age. The nature and activities of gangs are mainly determined by their social context. Membership of gangs may include persons both inside and outside of jails, thus gangs operate from within and outside of jails. Given the above information it can be concluded

that gangs can be perceived as being an unethical, callous and dangerous culture that threatens the existence of law abiding citizens.

2.5.2 The origins of gangsterism in the Western Cape

Pinnock (1985:40) and Nott, Shapiro and Theron (1990:1) argue strongly that the apartheid legislation has greatly contributed to the growth of gangsterism in the so-called coloured urban communities. In the 1950's and 1960's District Six housed most of the so-called coloured community in Cape Town. Although not regarded as a paradise as it was overcrowded and housing was inadequate, it was 'home' to 40 000 people. The extended family took care of many of the social and economic needs of the community. It provided support and a sense of security and belonging. All of this changed with the implementation of the Group Areas Act (Nott et al., 1990:3). Unfortunately the people of the Cape Flats had been forcibly removed from communities such as Cape Town, District Six, Diep River, Claremont, Lansdowne, Constantia and relocated in communities like Manenberg, Mitchell's Plain, Valhalla Park, as well as other communities of the Cape Flats (Kinnes 1995:2). The new housing estates on the Cape Flats were run by the councils and rent was high, forcing both parents of a household to seek employment in order to survive. As a result the children were left unsupervised. This provided gangsters with ample opportunity to replace the extended family as a support network for the children and youth. The result of forced removals has torn communities like District Six apart, destroyed neighbourhoods and has resulted in the breakdown of the extended family (Nott et al., 1990:3).

Pinnock (1984:55) states that, given the framework within which Group Areas removal took place in Cape Town, a "social disaster was inevitable." He notes that with the forced removals "familiar social landmarks in the closely grained working-class communities of the old city were ripped up, [and] a whole culture began to disintegrate." Concurring with this, Herrendorfer (2004:3) purports that the forced removals of coloureds from District Six in 1966 helped disperse gangsterism throughout the Cape Flats.

Pinnock (1984:99) found that the central reason for gang formation is stark poverty in an equally impoverished environment. Poverty has always played a major role in organised crime in any developing country. Before the political transition in South Africa, many communities, as well as banned political organisations, saw poverty as a collective problem (Kinnes, 2000:15). Nott et al. (1990:1) stated that one of the struggles that South Africa is facing is to improve the social, economic and political conditions, as these are issues that encourage gangsterism. Specifically, previously disadvantaged communities that are hardest hit by the apartheid legacy and where gangsterism is rife, need to be uplifted. According to Nott et al. (1990:4), gangsterism is a survival technique and as long as the city is part of a socio-economic system which produces poverty, it could be a daunting task for the justice system to eradicate the gang phenomenon. In his studies on gangsterism, Pinnock (1997:105-106) sums up the problem of this phenomenon as follows:

Gangsters share with all Cape workers a long and terrible history of poverty and relocation. They share the destruction of the extended family. They share the bleak housing-estates. The neglected streets, and also the imported dreams of the consumers' society. Gangs are not necessarily the products of poverty or social dislocation. These factors harden them. They also result from emotional deprivation and the breakdown of supportive family structures.

The manner in which gangs operate is in "their own unwritten codes of behaviour." Gangs can be identified by their dress codes, their language and the gang tattoo (Nott et al., 1990:6). According to Pinnock (1997:32), members of a gang assimilate their gang disposition by conforming to a specific gang style, making use of slang, operating in certain territories and making use of certain symbols to differentiate themselves from other rival gangs. To understand how gangsterism influences the morale of educators, the next section elaborates on the constructs that elucidate the gang disposition.

2.5.2.1 Gang attitude

According to Nott et al. (1990:6), gangs do not show emotions and vulnerability, instead they offer a collective feeling of power and strength that encourages an uncaring and fearless attitude. Gangs have a fatalistic acknowledgement of their

position in life and a cynical view of themselves (Pinnock, 1997:35). He sums up this gang notion as follows, “when two killers meet one must die.” Nott et al. (1990:6) add that the enactment of violence and brutality has become a way of everyday life for a gangster. This concurs with Standing’s (2005:10) notion that gangs live only for the moment and they have no fear for future consequences.

2.5.2.2 Gang language

The use of slang and certain signs and hand signals form part of gangs’ criminal activities (Pinnock, 1997:33). For example, hand signs are for stabbing someone, having sex, checking out the scene, talking to someone, telling a story and for women. Standing (2005:2) says that the cultural divide between gangsters and non-gangsters is reinforced by the use of a slang which is based on the language developed in the country’s prison. Pinnock (1997:33) has found that gangsters use language to differentiate between those who are part of the gang or part the rest of the community.

2.5.2.3 Gang symbols and identity

Gangs on the Cape Flats have adopted an ‘American’ style by wearing the latest takkies, baseball caps, sweat-shirts, baggy pants and leather jackets (Pinnock, 1997:37). Gang members also portray their affiliation to gangs by having hidden tattoos on their necks and arms. These would indicate the territories from where they come and each gang has its own special rules, salute and tattoos (Pinnock, 1997:38).

2.5.2.4 Gang territory

Gangs are often territorial. Pinnock (1997:42) refers to territory as a section of a community that gangs claim to be their ‘own’. Claiming a territory means that only the gang to which this territory belongs may operate their criminal activities there. These territories often cover no more than a one hundred metre strip of residential blocks or four to five streets. Nott et al. (1990:6) note that gang members feel safe to move around in the communities that are controlled by their own gangs. Controlling a territory ensures that other gangsters do not steal from ‘their

customers' or their victims who they rely on for survival (Nott et al., 1990:6). Gangs would naturally want to expand their territories in order to increase their income in the criminal market (Standing, 2005:2). It was also found by Pinnock (1997:43) that territoriality leads to an expectation that children who grow up in the gang's territory will become part of their gang, therefore a child living in an enemy's territory is marked as an enemy.

2.5.2.5 Gangs and their criminal activities

Gangs earn their living from drug dealing, liquor distribution, housebreaking, protecting shops in the community and theft (Pinnock, 1985:6). According to Standing (2005:2), gangs 'tax' local businesses with exorbitant rents and many of them have invested in nightclubs, shops and garages. It is believed that this investment spending is aimed at hiding money from illegal activities. Standing further notes that gangs are also part of other illegal activities such as prostitution, car hijacking and robberies. Gangs would often use school girls for prostitution and young school boys for robberies. In order to protect and expand the territory where they operate their illegal activities, gangs are in a constant war with each other.

2.5.2.6 Gang warfare

Gangs would resort to fatal destruction in order to protect their territory. According to Nott et al. (1990:6), gang wars are matters of life and death, and the smallest incident can set off conflict (physical fighting) between opposing gangs. Pinnock (1997:44) and Nott et al. (1990:6) concur that incidents regarding issues of turf ownership, insulting the manhood of a rival gang, walking across the territory of another gang and flirting with an opposing gang's woman or girlfriend can set off battles between rival gangs. Evidence of these types of incidents is recorded in the Local Education Minister, Cameron Dugmore's 2005 budget speech on gangs disrupting school programmes when seeking out rival gangs (South Africa Western Cape Education Department, 2005). Added to this, Pinnock (1997:44) notes that battles between rival gangs can range from brief confrontations between a few members of a gang to full-scale gang wars. Standing (2005:2) asserts that when conflict erupts, large numbers of gangs fight openly on the Cape

Flats using a “frightening array of weaponry”. The result of gang warfare has turned communities into battlegrounds and stray gunshots often claim the lives of innocent bystanders.

2.5.3 Why the youth join gangs

Nott et al. (1990:3) postulate that during the apartheid era South Africa was characterised as a highly militarised and violent society. They further note that this way of life encouraged the continuous use of force and brutality. It can therefore be argued, according to Nott et al. (1990:3), that the youth have learnt to use violence to resolve conflict and to get what they want, rather than through negotiation. Standing (2005:12) states that young gang members on the Cape Flats are delinquent because they are exposed to violence at home and on the streets, and they internalise this and become “wretched, dysfunctional human beings.” Kinnes (2000:55) is quick to point out that the youth make the rational choice to join gangs because of their frustration with the status quo, their ‘skill is violence’ and it has an economic value to the gangs. The gangs use the youth to commit serious crimes such as murder because they are aware that the justice system will not give the youth harsh punishment for their crimes (Pinnock, 1997).

Nott et al. (1990:3) state that youth who belong to gangs members were victims of gang violence before they joined gangs. Pinnock (1984:100) postulates that in the crisis of surviving in the housing-estates on the Cape Flats, the youth were the hardest hit. Youth are often forced to join a gang to protect themselves and their families from other gangs (Nott et al., 1990:4). Kinnes (1995:3) and Standing (2005:14) found that young people on the Cape Flats join gangs because of peer pressure and use it as a defence mechanism to defend themselves against crime and victimisation.

Recruitment by gangs involves targeting youth that are vulnerable and those whose family situation is unstable. Young people fall prey to gangsterism because of a lack of job opportunities, and therefore gangsterism can entice them to become involved in criminal activities which promise far greater rewards than making an honest living (Kinnes, 2000:54). Further, gangs lure the youth by

promising them wealth and gifts such as designer clothes and drugs (Standing, 2005:2).

Pinnock (1997:44) echoes that youth join gangs to provide themselves with material wealth, and to give themselves a strong sense of belonging and identity. Young people are “physically weaker, have less job experience and are less docile” therefore gangsterism offers them the belonging they so desperately seek (Pinnock, 1984:100). It could therefore be argued that it is because of the lack of proper family structures and community support that the youth become swept up in gangsterism. This notion, however, affects educator morale.

Nott et al. (1990:5) points out that a lack of opportunity to break out of a cycle of poverty, unemployment, feelings of not belonging and of being unwanted can cause young people to feel like failures and to suffer from a low self-esteem. According to Nott et al., a few of them will drop out of school, leave home and become street children, or they will find employment in the formal sector. Others will join gangs where they are provided with an opportunity to act out their feelings of aggression and rebel against society. Standing (2005:12) notes that gangs are a response to a lack of economic possibilities on the Cape Flats, and it is with this notion that young people join gangs to make money to afford consumer goods.

2.5.4 Gangsterism in the Western Cape – Post-Apartheid

Official estimates put the number of gangs on the Cape Flats at approximately 130, with a combined membership of 100 000 (Standing, 2005:1). Kinnes (2000:2) states that “street gangs are no longer characterised by youngsters who hang around the street of local communities to ‘defend’ the community from rival gangsters, they have developed into organised criminal empires.” The new breed of gangs, according to Standing (2005:1), have not only grown in numbers, but are highly organised and seen as exceptionally dangerous.

According to Kinnes (2000:1), a prominent gang expert in the Western Cape, gangsterism has changed over the years due to the “growth of the illegitimate opportunity structure which has been strengthened by the relaxation of social

controls.” Furthermore, Kinnes (2000:8) found that when the new political dispensation started in 1994, there was no uniformity in the approach towards gangs between the departments of Justice and of Safety and Security as a result of political division. He contends that it was apparent that the justice system was going to be unable to cope with the increase in gang activities soon after the 1994 elections. Furthermore a “lack of synergy” between political parties fighting against crime, gangsters on the Cape Flats, sensing this “paralysis among the government factors”, built their empires with a strong vigour. Standing (2005:12) concurs that since the 1994 elections, gangsterism in the Western Cape has worsened, and lists the following reasons for this increase:

- When the first democratic elections in 1994 occurred, restructuring of all government services took place in all the nine provinces in South Africa. Specifically, the Western Cape experienced political turmoil due to ongoing infighting between rival political parties. The ongoing fights resulted in the lapse of control in the justice system. This presented criminal groups such as gang organisations an opportunity to escalate their activities because it went relatively unchecked.
- South Africa went into free trade agreements with other countries and their borders were opened up which resulted in a more fertile transnational criminal environment. New criminal operators and illegal commodities entered into the criminal underworld. In particular, West Africans, the American mafia, Chinese triads and Russian mafias appeared on the scene, and drugs such as cocaine and heroine became more influential.
- Gangsterism has become worse by the transition to democracy as there has been resentment at the way coloured people have suffered economically and politically. According to this argument, the coloured working class lost some of the few privileges that the apartheid system gave them over black South Africans. Privileges such as housing and grants have been reduced to accommodate other previously disadvantaged black South Africans.

- Added to this is the argument that gangs are caused by the Black Economic Empowerment policy which has been implemented to address inequalities of the apartheid legacy. In this policy, black and coloured women get preferential treatment in many jobs. This means many men feel redundant and can not fulfil their role as 'breadwinners'. They then take out their frustration by joining gangs and victimising women.

It is evident that the people of the Cape Flats have suffered severely due to the escalation of crime caused by gangsterism. Kinnes (2000:10) purports that the Western Cape has by far the most convictions for drug-related and gang-related crime, in comparison with other provinces.

2.5.5 Gangsterism influencing communities and schools

Gang organisations have targeted communities such as Manenberg, Bonteheuwel, Valhalla Park and Mitchell's Plain as support bases for their activities (Kinnes, 2000:14). Media reports in local newspapers present evidence that gang-related crime occurs mostly in the above-mentioned communities.

Gangs gained community support by creating various loans schemes within communities and providing resources for sections of the communities across the Cape Flats (Kinnes, 2000:14). An old trick of winning community support was to provide food and basic necessities to community members who needed it. It is in this manner that the stature of gang leaders was considerably enhanced in the eyes of the poor. Another way of gaining community support would be to lend support when a community member dies. Gangs would collect money from residents and deliver it to the bereaved family as a sign of respect. The act of providing for the community is a stepping-stone in gaining control of the community to the point where a gangster is able to commit crime without fear of being reported (Kinnes, 2000:15-17). Thus gangs are regarded in their communities as citizens who are above the law.

Kinnes (2000:53) further notes that whole families in these communities are often found to be involved in a culture of illegal activities, for example stealing from their

employers and supporting criminals by buying stolen goods. Unfortunately, the tragedy of the aforementioned is that moral values are now redirected to criminal morality. In light of Kinnes' notion it is evident that the gangs' way of life influences communities, especially the youth's behaviour and actions, to an extent that it is perceived as being the norm of society.

With the increase of adolescents joining gangs and of schools being situated in a gang's territory, gangsterism has surfaced in schools (Ramsey et al., 2003:3). Miller (1992), as cited in Ramsey et al. (2003: 3), identified the following categories of school-related gang activities (1) the failure of students to acknowledge the educator's authority, (2) school vandalism, (3) students wearing gang-specific colours or clothing and gang members using the student population as a recruitment base. Dealing with gangs has caused many children not to feel safe attending schools, and educators to fear for their lives (Ramsey, et al., 2003:3).

Regarding the safety of educators and learners in gang-ridden communities, a local newspaper, Athlone News, on the Cape Flats dated from February to June 2006, had ongoing reports of gangsterism affecting schools. Reports include the vandalism of schools, educators and learners robbed and, even more chilling, reports of learners killed in crossfire or learners belonging to gangs being killed by rival gangs. Petersen (2006:3) wrote the following excerpt as an example of gangsterism affecting schools:

Our windows are regularly broken by people throwing stones. We also have to fix the fencing as gang members in the area break it down so they can use our school as a quick getaway...Bullets can easily go through our walls and in past incidents that have occurred, luckily no one was hurt.

Gangs use schools to operate their criminal activities. School children are the victims as gangs target schools for selling drugs such as mandrax, dagga and the drug most frequently used by the youth, 'tik' (Standing, 2005:2). 'Tik' is a notorious drug that is widely used by the youth on the Cape Flats. Evidently it has destroyed many young people's lives and created many social problems in the school community.

Educators have to be aware of children who are involved in gangsterism in order to deal with the situation effectively. According to Nott et al. (1990:5), children who join gangs can be identified by their change in behaviour, loosening of ties with old friends, establishing friendships with children who belong to gangs, smoking dagga, irregular school attendance and a drop in scholastic performance.

Society often blames the parents when a child joins a gang. According to Nott et al. (1990:11), parents feel guilty or embarrassed and therefore they do not confront the problem. Parents respond by not admitting to the fact that their child is a member of a gang when confronted by the school or the police. When they do acknowledge that their child is a gang member, they feel helpless and this prevents them from being able to solve the problem. They choose to ignore the problem because they are afraid of retaliation by the gang.

Schools situated on the Cape Flats, specifically in gang-ridden communities, have borne the brunt of school related gang activities and are therefore saddled with major social problems. Kinnes (2000:2) was compelled to say that if communities on the Cape Flats cannot change their mindset from a “selective criminal morality to a more inclusive and caring one, the gangs will succeed in winning the marginalised sections far easier than may be imagined.”

Educators are sitting with the daunting task of combating gangsterism in their schools. However, if their morale is going to be continuously affected by this phenomenon, drastic measures would have to be implemented by management to assist them with this problem. Management therefore has to play a vital role in assisting to boost educator morale.

2.6 The role of Management in boosting educator morale

A major finding in Hunter-Boykin and Evans' (1995:2) research is that management in education is responsible for “developing and maintaining high teacher morale”. Management in the South African context is the principal of the school, circuit managers and the hierarchy in the education department who make decisions in education. In an ideal education system, management would prefer

to lead educators with a high morale rather than to boost a low morale. To develop a high morale, Evans (1998:161-162) proposes that management adopt a teacher-centred philosophy that acknowledges individualism and gives recognition to the educators. Educators are unique individuals; they are different in temperament, age, experience and subject interest. They also differ in relation to ability, commitment and professionalism. Management has to recognise these differences and see educators as individuals rather than as a corporate whole. An educator who receives recognition from management will be influenced to the extent to which he/she will feel a sense of significant achievement, which in turn leads to job fulfilment and high teacher morale. An awareness of what is going on in educators' and pupils' lives will create a better understanding for management to be able to deal with problems within the school and the community.

It is imperative for management to incorporate clear direction towards the realization of a shared vision of what the school should become. Evans' (1998:165) research revealed that failing to provide adequate direction left educators with a sense of lack of purpose which led to dissatisfaction.

Studies have revealed that a lack of effective communication among management and educators is common in most schools (Briggs & Richardson, 1992:4). To solve problems within a school, communication between educators and management is vital. Successful communication, according to Andrew et al. (1985:16), will satisfy many conditions simultaneously. Firstly, what is wanted must be understood, therefore continuous feedback must take place to ensure what is iterated is heard and is correctly interpreted. Secondly, what is wanted must be perceived by all parties as being consistent with the goals of the organization. Thirdly, the communication must be clear in relationship to the need and goals of the individuals who will be responsible for carrying out a decision. Fourthly, the individuals who accept the decision must not only be willing to carry out the decisions made but must be capable of doing so. Furthermore Andrew et al. (1985:17) note that "communication is not telling people what to do; it is involving them in determining goals, needs and obtaining a consensus".

Educators need to be involved in decision-making at school level regarding issues such as gangsterism that affect their morale. The lack of involvement can further lead to low morale. Briggs and Richardson (1992:2) warn that low morale must be viewed by management as “detrimental to the total education program.”

Currently in the Western Cape, a Safer Schools Program was implemented in 2001, out of the threat posed by external factors such as gangsterism and crime, as stipulated by the Local Minister, Cameron Dugmore’s, 2005, budget speech. This program assists educators to report any incidents related to crime and violence in their respective schools. Regarding safety, volunteers to safeguard schools have been deployed by the Education Department to all the schools they identified as being at risk to crime and violence. This project has been labelled Bambanani (South Africa Western Cape Department of Education, 2006:1). Moreover, a campaign called Spoil-A-Teacher has been launched this year (2007) by the WCED to boost educator morale (Kassiem, 2007:1).

2.7 Summary

This chapter presents a theoretical exploration of the concepts; morale and gangsterism. Educator morale is regarded as the key factor for effective education to take place. Educators possessing high morale are proven to be an advantage to all the role players such as pupils, parents and management. However, if educator morale is low, these role players, specifically learners and management, will suffer.

Theory in this literature review informs that educators’ basic needs have to be met in order to develop a positive morale. Furthermore, if educators are dissatisfied with external factors, this could lead to low morale. In South Africa many educational changes have taken place. Educators had to endure the unilateral decision made by the Education Department to implement OBE and recently FET in schools. The implementation of these has led to dissatisfaction among many educators.

Literature on educator morale and gangsterism has highlighted that the two can be related. Educators are not only faced with change, but also with the daunting task of coping with the combating of gangsterism in their school community. In addition to this, educators in gang-ridden communities are not only burdened with change, but are also faced with the gang phenomenon which in turn influences their morale.

After reviewing the literature on gangsterism in the Western Cape, it can be concluded that their criminal activities have escalated after democracy was attained in 1994. It can therefore also be argued that the people most affected are the previously disadvantaged communities where this gang phenomenon is located.

The research methodology to collect data on how gangsterism influences educator morale on the Cape Flats, Western Cape will now be examined in Chapter Three.

CHAPTER 3 RESEARCH METHOD AND DESIGN

3.1 Introduction

This research explores and describes how educator morale is influenced by gangsterism in gang-ridden communities. In Chapter Two the literature review for the research was outlined. In this chapter, the research design and methodology that was implemented in this research is discussed. The aim of the research is given, followed by the methodological approach used, with a brief motivation for the methodological stance. This section is followed by a description of the site and the sample selection. Included is a detailed description of the research method and how the data was analysed. After a brief description of the ethical considerations, the chapter concludes by highlighting the limitations of the research.

3.2 Aim of research

The purpose of this research is to find out how educators' morale is influenced by gangsterism in the community where their school is located. Furthermore, the research aims to create more awareness in the education community of this phenomenon, so that stakeholders may become better informed about the implications for learning and educational reform.

3.3 Research design

The research design followed in this research can be described as a qualitative design with an exploratory, descriptive and contextual focus. It was contextually based on how the gangsterism on the Cape Flats influences the morale of educators. The views of the educators were explored and described and then the findings on the educators' views and experiences were used as a basis for establishing educator morale in gang-ridden communities.

A qualitative approach seemed to be appropriate as the research itself "structures the research" and is not guided by "preconceived ideas or any precise research

design” (Bogdan & Biklen, 1998:49). As this qualitative research is concerned with understanding how the gangsterism influences the morale of educators from their perspective, understanding was acquired by analyzing the educators’ stories of how gangsterism has influenced their morale (Mcmillan & Schumacher, 1993:373). Furthermore, meaning for the educator’s stories could be established. Bogdan and Biklen (1998:6) say that:

The qualitative research approach demands that the world be examined with the assumption that nothing is trivial, that everything has the potential of being a clue that might unlock a more comprehensive understanding of what is being studied.

With this notion in mind, the research set out to form an idea of how gangsterism influences the morale of educators.

The qualitative research attempts to “describe and interpret” how gangsterism influences the morale of educators in the words of selected individuals (Heath, 1997:1). According to Mcmillan and Schumacher (1993:373), qualitative research is based on a naturalistic-phenomological philosophy that views reality as “multilayered, interactive, and a shared social experience interpreted by individuals.” In the context of this notion I have gained insight into the influence of gangsterism on the morale of educators.

I used a qualitative approach with the aim to “describe and understand events within the concrete, natural context in which they occur” (Babbie & Mouton, 2002:272). Bogdan and Biklen (1998:5) say that qualitative researchers assume that “human behaviour is significantly influenced by the setting in which it occurs, and whenever possible, they go to that location.” I conducted interviews at the schools located in gang-ridden communities because I was “concerned with context”. By conducting the interviews at the schools, I could observe the environment that the educators find themselves in first hand. This idea emphasised the importance of attaining a contextual focus.

Fraenkel and Wallen (1990:368) state that qualitative researchers are not only concerned with the process, but also the product. I concur with Bogdan and Biklen (1998:38) that the goal of a qualitative researcher is to better understand human

behaviour and experience. I therefore sought to grasp the processes by which the educators construct meaning of their morale on a personal level and as a group affected by gangsterism

The main reason for using the exploratory design was to explore the dimensions of educator morale when working in gang-ridden communities. I was particularly interested in the manner in which educator morale is manifested and the gang-related factors with which morale is associated. The exploratory design according to Vaughn, Schumm and Sinagub (1996:24) can be used to collect descriptive data to clarify and to better understand how gangsterism influences educator morale.

Bogdan and Biklen (1998:6) purport that qualitative research is descriptive and the “data collected takes the form of words or pictures rather than numbers.” The descriptive design analyzed the educators’ “individual and collective social actions, beliefs, thoughts, and perceptions” (McMillan & Schumacher, 1993:372). I followed the descriptive approach in order to give the educators an opportunity to describe their feelings, emotions and perceptions and to make the data richer in context so as to provide depth to their stories as shared in the interviews. Once meaning had been attached to the data shared by the educators, a description was represented (Dyer, 1979:142).

Hitchcock and Hughes (1994:73) refer to data analysis as a process whereby a mass of data is scrutinized, coded, or sorted so that the researcher’s own appreciation and understanding of the problem investigated may be furthered, and this type of analysis may be conveyed to other professionals. Altricher, Posch and Somekh (1993:122) explain four constructive stages of data analysis. Firstly, read the data in order to recall the events and experiences that the educators represent. Secondly, by selecting data, separate the important factors from unimportant ones; similar factors were grouped; complex details were sorted and simplified. Thirdly, the selected data should be presented in a form that is easy to take in at a glance. Fourthly, once data is interpreted and conclusions are drawn, relationships are explained and a practical theory constructed to fit the situation which had been researched. The theory relates to this study’s research method.

3.4 Research method

This section gives a detailed description of the research method utilized in this research. A brief description of how I selected sites for this enquiry will be given. Following this, a description of the sample and sample size is presented. This section will be followed by description of how I gained access into the sites. The data collection process will include details of the unstructured interviews, focus group interviews and details of the preparation for the focus group interviews. Field notes were also recorded as part of the data collection process. After this section a detailed description of the data analysis is presented.

3.4.1 Site selection

Mcmillan and Schumacher (1993:379) purport that a “clear definition of the criteria for site selection is essential.” They further note that the researcher must ensure that the criteria are related to and appropriate for the research problem. I ensured that I selected sites, namely schools located in gang-ridden communities, as these schools are applicable to the research problem and purpose. I approached twenty five schools located in gang-ridden communities, although I only needed six schools to participate in my focus group interviews. The first letter I sent to the schools was to arrange an appointment with the principals to discuss my research topic. Once I had confirmed telephonically that the principals had received my letter, I would arrange a time and date that would be suitable for them to meet with me.

3.4.2 Sampling and sample size

The population encompassed educators working in gang-ridden communities that I set out to research (Tuckman, 1994:131). The population was a selection of educators within a staff complement from a particular school (Hitchcock & Hughes, 1994:81). The sample comprised 51 educators. Table 3.1 on page 33 indicates the sample and the gang-ridden communities that were included in the study.

Table 3.1: Respondents as per communities

Bonteheuwel	Hanover Park	Heideveld	Manenberg (1)	Manenberg (2)	Valhalla Park
11	6	9	10	8	7

Qualitative researchers (Mcmillan & Schumacher, 1993:382) view the “sampling processes as dynamic, ad hoc, and phasic rather than static or a priori parameters of populations”. A purposive sampling method was used in this research, which, according to Mcburney (1994:203) is “one that is selected non-randomly for a particular reason and can be considered to constitute a population.” This sampling method was chosen because the “target population is knowledgeable and informative” about how gangsterism affects educator morale (Mcmillan & Schumacher, 1993:378).

Mcmillan and Schumacher (1993:382) postulate that “the logic of the sample size is related to the purpose of the research, the research problem, the major data collection technique, and the availability of the information-rich cases.” In this research the sample size was applicable to the data collection technique and I have ensured that strict adherence to the data collection technique was followed.

3.4.2.1 Gaining access

The first problem I faced in my fieldwork was getting permission from the principals and educators to conduct my research. I aligned myself with the advice of Blaxter, Hughes and Tight (1997:143). I e-mailed, faxed and posted a letter (see Appendix A) to request an appointment date with the principal to discuss my research topic. I forwarded a letter of consent (see Appendix B) to do research in a public school that I had obtained from the WCED Research Department to the respective schools. After completing the latter, I contacted each school to confirm whether or not they had received the letters. A few schools did not have access to e-mail facilities due to break-ins and theft of cables.

I found it difficult to get hold of the principals as they were always in meetings with parents or attending workshops. I would sometimes have to phone a particular

school up to five times to confirm receipt of the letter. When I eventually got hold of some of the principals on my list, they would be reluctant to grant me an appointment to see them because of work commitments. When the principal agreed to meet with me, I gave him/her a background of my research and then asked for permission to conduct a focus group interview at the school. When permission was granted, I faxed a letter (see Appendix C) of invitation to hand out to all the staff members, inviting them to participate in the focus group interview. Unfortunately, none of the educators responded to the letter (neither to me directly, nor to the principals). I ascertained that it was problematic or time consuming for the principal to mobilise staff, or else the educators were unclear about when and what time focus group interviews will take place. I therefore used a different method to get the educators on board. I suggested that they appoint an educator to co-ordinate a time, place and volunteers for the focus group interview. This suggestion was welcomed by the principals. It was important to ensure that from the beginning the principal was clear as to how many educators were required and the length of the interviews. A third letter (see Appendix D) was faxed or e-mailed to the participating schools to request a date and time when the focus group interview could take place. In this letter I gave the school a time frame of one month to host the interviews. As a courtesy to the school, I offered to do a presentation of my research findings to all the staff members. The principal and I had an agreement that focus group interviews would not be conducted while the school was busy with major exams.

According to Bogdan and Biklen (1998:75), “getting permission to conduct the research involves more than getting an official blessing from the Education Department and the principal of the school”. They further note that gaining access involves laying the foundation for a relationship of respect and understanding with the educators with whom time would be spent. The educators would therefore have to accept me and the research being done. This advice proved to be sound and served my purposes.

3.4.3 Data collection

Hitchcock and Hughes (1994:43) assert that data collection involves three basic processes which constitute the central ingredients of any qualitative research technique. These are observation, probing and documentary and oral data collection. Firstly, I observed the educators' body language during the interviews. Secondly, I probed the educators about the meanings they attach to their experiences working in gang-violent communities. Thirdly, I interpreted the oral data of the educators. The outcome of all three processes was data collected which then needed to be sifted, analysed, or evaluated.

I ascertained that a community was gang-ridden by doing research through ongoing journal articles, books and media publications. When the communities had been identified, I downloaded information from the Western Cape Education Department's website to obtain the information of schools located in these communities. I contacted the principal of each school and arranged an appointment. When an appointment with the principal was granted, I conducted an unstructured interview to ascertain if educator morale was affected by gangsterism in the community. I then asked for permission to conduct a focus group interview with the educators from the school. The interviews took place at the schools with educators who volunteered to participate in the interview.

In this research, I gathered information needed to address the research problem by taking field notes, using unstructured interviews with the principals, as well as in-depth focus group interviews with educators.

3.4.3.1 Unstructured interviews

Unstructured interviews were conducted with the principals of the schools identified as being situated in gang-ridden communities. The unstructured interview allowed me to introduce my research topic to the principal and to question him/her in no particular order. This allowed the principal to "answer questions in his/her own way" (Hitchcock & Hughes, 1994:87).

In the initial stages of data collection, I scheduled an appointment with the principal of each school identified as being located in gang-ridden areas. When I met with the principal or an educator who was part of management, I gave a brief background of my research. I recorded field notes while they were giving me information and I also reflected and recorded notes after each interview.

Conducting unstructured interviews was useful during the initial stages of my research, as they provided a “general understanding of the problem” as proposed by (Chin See et. al., 1997:1). The principal was able to provide me with information regarding how gangsterism affects the educators. The data I collected in the unstructured interview proved useful as I had not elicited this data in my initial enquiries. The information I uncovered in the unstructured interview guided me when I compiled a structured interview schedule for the focus group interview.

3.4.3.2 Focus group interviews

The focus group interview method was used with groups of educators at their respective schools. This method involved an “organised discussion” with the educators who volunteered to participate and gave information about their views and experiences (Gibbs, 1997:1). Focus group interviews usually consist of six to eleven people and a facilitator. This method was particularly useful as the topic to explore was general and the purpose was to promote talk on a topic that the educators might not have been able to talk so thoughtfully about in individual interviews.

According to Bogdan and Biklen (1998:109), “group participants can stimulate each other to articulate their views or even to realize what their own views are”. The goal of organising the focus groups was to “investigate concerns, experiences, attitudes and beliefs on the particular topic” (Barnett, 2006:2). Concurring with this, Vaughn et al. (1996:16) emphasise that focus group interviews offer researchers in education an opportunity to obtain information regarding educators’ perceptions and opinions of a topic. Thus the focus group interview is a research tool that is highly consistent with current trends in

educational research that aim at understanding more about what respondents think and feel.

In order to prevent educators from diverting from the research question, I utilized a structured interview schedule with open-ended questions in the focus group interview. According to Chin See et al. (1997:1), this approach provides more detailed information on the problem. The open-ended questions permitted the educators to answer in their own words. Using open-ended questions made it more likely that the questions would uncover information that I could not anticipate (Mcburney, 1994:195).

3.4.3.3 Preparing and conducting the focus group interview

In preparation for the focus group interview I followed certain procedures advised by Bell (1987:75). I conducted the interviews according to the time allocated by the educators who had agreed to be interviewed. I requested a venue where the interview would not be interrupted. I phoned the principal on the day of the focus group interview to confirm whether or not the interview would be able to take place. The reason for the confirmation was that schools' academic programmes in gang-ridden communities are often disrupted by gang warfare.

To establish rapport with the interviewees, as suggested by Behr (1973:68), I ensured that I arrived at the school half an hour before the time arranged for the focus group interview. This allowed time to prepare the venue where the interview would be conducted. Light refreshments were provided before the interview started and an informal, social gathering was held with the educators to create a relaxed atmosphere. I found that this served as an effective 'icebreaker'. I ensured that I maintained a pleasant manner.

During the focus group interviews I used probing, continually evaluating the educators' responses by asking for clarification or complete answers (Mcburney, 1994:199). As a result, some questions had to be restated. Verbal and non-verbal communication, patterns of thinking, feelings and behaviour were recorded in field notes or on the tape-recorder as suggested by (Mcburney, 1994:199).

According to Bogdan and Biklen (1998:7), in qualitative research, researchers are concerned with making sure they “capture perspectives accurately”. To ensure this, I used a tape-recorder while conducting the interview. Behr (1973:69) asserts that the use of the tape-recorder is undoubtedly the most convenient method of recording an interview. He further notes that tape-recording provides not only a complete and accurate record of the entire interview, but it also preserves the emotional and vocal character of the responses. Thus recordings can be useful to check the wording of any statement you might wish to quote and to check that your notes are accurate (Bell, 1987:75).

3.4.3.4 Field notes

I recorded field notes during and after each interview. By keeping a record of the process, I could construct a “historical record of the whole process” to which I could later return, as suggested by Mouton, (2005:107). I recorded factors that influenced the fieldwork adversely by keeping track of reasons for refusals, as well as response rates.

I kept track of the dates when access was gained into the schools. I also recorded the dates when unstructured interviews and focus group interviews were conducted. The length of each focus group interview was taken from the tape-recorder. Due to ethics, the educators did not provide their names, and so the field notes also described each educator’s profile and body language. I concur with Fraenkel & Wallen (1990:380) that field notes assist the researcher with forming a detailed account of what he/she has heard, seen, experienced and thought in the process of collecting and reflecting on information.

3.5 Data analysis

The field notes of the unstructured interviews were analysed according to reductive analysis. This type of analysis involves the reducing of data collected according to “more general and understandable conceptual categories (Tuckman, 1994:12).

I analysed the field notes of the unstructured interviews by comparing the data provided by the principals regarding how gangsterism influences educator morale. After I had compared the data and found similarities across the unstructured interviews, I conceptualised categories. I reduced the data if it did not concern the research question. I therefore concur with Tuckman (1994) that reductive analysis is helpful to avoid confusion regarding particular events.

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Verbatim transcription of the focus group interviews was completed according to thematic analysis. According to Aronson (1994) thematic analysis entails identifying patterns from transcribed interviews; thereafter the researcher identifies all the data which relates to the already classified patterns.

I applied analytical procedures to the data collected as recommended by Aronson (1994:1), focusing on “identifiable themes” and “patterns of living or behaviour”. As per criteria themes were identified to highlight the educators’ morale disposition and how their morale is influenced by gangsterism. Further, Aronson notes that ideas that emerge from verbatim transcriptions can be ‘better understood under the control of thematic analysis’.

I read through the transcripts of all the interviews in order to get a global impression of the content. The questions utilised in the structured interview

schedule for the focus group interviews assisted me to identify themes and categories. I catalogued each sentence or phrase given by the educators applicable to a question used in the focus group interview with an abbreviation, for example, FGI 1 Q1 (focus group interview 1, question 1). I found that certain educators provided me with more than one answer in a sentence. I therefore had to break up the sentence applicable to the questions I asked by cataloguing each phrase with a question number for example, one, two, three or four. When I completed the latter process, I was able to compare each question across all six focus group interviews. I could therefore compare related data under each question. In the process of comparing data, I found that data provided by the educators overlapped across questions. I inserted the applicable data under the appropriate questions or deleted data if there was duplication. After the lengthy process of comparing data, themes and categories emerged from the educators' stories. Four themes were identified, together with categories.

3.6 Ethical considerations

Due to the nature of the research, I had to adhere to a number of ethical concerns. As I was required to conduct research in public schools in the Cape Flats, I had to obtain consent from the Western Cape Education Department (see Appendix B), as well as obtain consent letters from principals who agreed to allow the focus group interviews at their schools (see Appendix E). Although principals consented to my request, I respected the rights of the educators to privacy and non-participation, as suggested by Tuckman (1994:13-14), by allowing them to remain anonymous if they agreed to participate in the interview and by treating the data that was collected from the educators with confidentiality. Thus consent letters from educators were also obtained (see Appendix F).

I explained the purpose of the interview at the start to enlist the interviewees' help (Altricher, et al., 1993 & Bell, 1987:75-76). Bell suggests that the researcher should "make it clear to the interviewees what she will do with information and check whether quotations and views must be anonymous or whether they can be attributed". I chose to respect their anonymity.

After collecting all the data, I ensured that no one else had access to the data and that the names of the schools were removed from all the data collection forms as suggested by Fraenkel and Wallen (1990:29). The educators were also made aware that they would not be exploited by the research in any way and that their identities would be protected. I therefore gave each educator a pseudonym, for example all the educators who participated in the first focus group interview had a surname that started with an 'A'. The second interview 'B', third interview 'C', etc.

3.7 Limitations of the research processes

I found a lack of information provided by the Western Cape Education Department's website regarding the name of a school's principal, physical address, e-mail and fax numbers. To obtain the information, I had to personally phone all the schools identified as being affected by gangsterism to obtain the necessary information to send the principal an e-mail, fax and to post a letter requesting an appointment to conduct my research. The Safe Schools Department of the Western Cape Education Department was also reluctant to give me any information regarding schools that are affected by gangsterism on the Cape Flats.

I e-mailed, faxed and posted a letter to twenty five school principals to request an appointment with them to request permission to conduct a focus group interview with their staff. However, after almost a week, none of them had responded to my letter. I therefore phoned all the identified schools principals to confirm whether or not they had received my letter. It was extremely difficult to get hold of the principals as they were often in meetings with parents or busy with workshops. I would phone particular schools up to five times to speak to their principal to confirm receipt of my letter. Out of the twenty five schools I sent letters to, I only managed to get hold of eleven principals telephonically. Only eight principals were prepared to arrange an appointment with me, while the other three denied that their schools were affected by gangsterism, even though their school is located in a gang-ridden community. Only six principals granted me permission to conduct a focus group interview with their educators while the other two principals said that due to their staff members' workload, they would be unable to accommodate my research.

The safety aspect for me also came into consideration while collecting the data . I was continuously warned by the principals to be careful as gang conflicts could happen any time of the day. I therefore had to be extremely careful and exercise caution while driving through the gang-ridden communities to visit the schools.

3.8 Summary

In Chapter Three I gave a description of the research design and method used for data collection and analysis. This is qualitative research designed to investigate the influence of gangsterism on the morale of educators in the Cape Flats, Western Cape.

Chapter Four will present the results of the findings and a discussion will follow in Chapter Five.

CHAPTER 4 RESULTS

4.1 Introduction

The results of the research will be presented according to the data collected from the seven unstructured interviews and six focus group interviews at schools involved in the research. Themes and categories were identified through analysis of the data that was collected in order to explore and describe how gangsterism influences the morale of educators.

The interviews were held at schools located on the Cape Flats. The schools are located in Manenberg, Hanover Park, Bonteheuwel, Valhalla Park and Heideveld. Since 2006 these communities have been referred to as gang-ridden communities by the media in ongoing reports on gangsterism. Local Minister of Education, Cameron Dugmore, also expressed his concern over this phenomenon in schools. Seven unstructured interviews were conducted prior to the focus group interviews. Between six and eleven educators per school participated in the focus group interviews. Written consent was obtained from the principal and each participant before any data was collected, and confidentiality was guaranteed. For this reason pseudonyms are used in this report.

4.2 Results of unstructured interview

Unstructured interviews were analysed according to reductive analysis and were presented in detail according to the categories elicited by the researcher. Pseudonyms were used for ethical reasons. Table 4.1 below illustrates the respondents' pseudonyms used during the unstructured interviews.

Table 4.1: Pseudonyms of School Principals (Management)

Unstructured Interview 1	Unstructured Interview 2	Unstructured Interview 3	Unstructured Interview 4	Unstructured Interview 5	Unstructured Interview 6	Unstructured Interview 7
Mr Minnaar	Mr Mel	Mr Moses Mr Mack	Mrs Melrick	Mr Manie	Mr Mentoor	Mr Malan

School based management expressed several concerns on how gangsterism influences educator morale. They reported on the following matters:

- Gang-related incidents
- Social problems
- The effect of gangsterism on learners
- The effect of gangsterism on educators

4.2.1 Gang-related incidents

A major concern for management was the gang-related incidents that have occurred on the school's premises or outside of the school in full view of educators and learners. Mr Moses, in his frustration, mentioned that recently twenty gang members had jumped over the school's fence to search for an opposing gang member while they were busy with the academic program. This incident traumatised the educators and learners. Mr Minnaar related how the school's secretaries had to crawl into his office because of gangs shooting at each other on the school's premises. Mr Minnaar appeared disgusted about this incident. Adding to this, Mr Malan gave graphic details of a recent incident where police and gangs had a wild goose chase in full view of the educators and learners. He told how they were firing shots at each other, and that this all happened the morning before the school day commenced. Describing a similar incident, Mrs Melrick expressed that gangs were shooting at each other outside the school while the learners were having an interval. Her question was, "What if a learner got shot at in the crossfire?"

According to Mr Minnaar, educators feel unsafe driving in the community, fear of being caught in crossfire when gangs are shooting at each other. On his way home from school Mr Mel witnessed a murdered gang member whose face was covered with bullet holes lying in the street. He said that he had "sleepless nights" after that experience.

An interesting observation was made by Mr Moses. He said that the reason for his school having to deal with so many gang-related incidents was that his

school is situated on the border of rival gang territories. His school is therefore used as a battlefield for the rival gangs.

4.2.2 Social problems

According to Mr Minaar, poverty is rife in previously disadvantaged communities, and is therefore a contributing factor to the growth of gangsterism in the community. He said that he finds it an ongoing battle to manage the school due to the environmental influences. Furthermore, Mr Minaar reported that their school fees are R30, and they only received 30% of it in 2006.

Mr Mack reiterated that their school is “inundated with social problems”. Management continuously has to conduct meetings with parents about their children’s unruly behaviour and gang-related incidents that involve their children. He expressed that the ongoing battle with having to deal with social problems causes management to neglect their administrative duties.

4.2.3 The effects of gangsterism on learners

Mr Mel related that learners are affected on a daily basis by gangsterism. He reported on gang-related incidents of rape, incest, injury and murder that learners at their school had experienced. He said that educators had to get involved in assisting learners with counselling or seeking medical attention for injuries.

Mr Minnaar expressed the opinion that exposure to gangsterism in the community influences learners to resolve conflict with violence. Echoing this sentiment, Mrs Melrick said that the children solve problems with violence, and they use abusive language towards their peers and educators. Added to this, Mr Moses commented that some of the learners are gang members. According to Mr Moses, these learners are abusing drugs - for example, methyl (tik), dagga, mandrax, etc. Furthermore, he said that these learners would attend school under the influence of drugs and when he reprimands them, they respond by laughing at him.

Evidence of dangerous weaponry such as knives, screwdrivers, etc. confiscated from learners was shown to me by Mr Moses. He said they also found two guns hidden in the school's dirt bins during a random search.

4.2.4 The effects of gangsterism on educators

Mr Moses related how gangs came to his office, iterating that if he looks after them, they will look after him. Mr Moses regarded this as a subtle threat. He said gang requests include paying for a coffin for a member's funeral, as well as financing bail. According to Mr Moses, this represents a small drop in the ocean of what he has had to do in the past for gang members.

Commenting on vandalism, Mr Manie and Mr Mentoer said that they had a number of incidents of break-ins and vandalism occurring at their school. They felt that these criminal acts have a major impact on educator morale. This they attribute to the educators witnessing how their classrooms have been vandalised (feaces on the walls, foul language written on their blackboards and damaging of desks and books).

According to Mr Minaar, working in a gang-ridden environment takes its toll on educators. Mr Moses said that he has been booked off for stress a number of times. The problems he encounters at his school have affected his health. He was healthy when he started teaching at his school but now has a number of illnesses (high blood pressure, depression, diabetes) that he ascribes to working in a gang-ridden environment. He also has hallucinations about people in the community wanting to kill him. He has been for psycho therapy a number of times and is hoping that he will recover from his illness. Furthermore, Mr Moses said that two of his educators passed away in 2006 due to stress related illnesses, and he has one educator indefinitely booked off for stress. Added to this, Mr Manie related that he had two educators booked off for stress that term and he was convinced it was due to the environment that they are working in.

Interestingly, Mr Mack commented that some of the educators have grown immune to gangsterism in the community. He stressed, however, that educators need to be cautious against becoming immune, as they might be careless regarding their behaviour toward learners affiliated with gangs without thinking of the consequences.

The turnover rate of educators was a concern for Mr Minaar. He said that he battles to find long-term educators. When he appoints new educators they often resign from their post within a week or a month. A major reason for resignations would be the environment where the school is located.

4.3 Results of the focus group interviews

Focus group interviews were analysed according to thematic analysis and presented according to the themes and categories elicited. Verbatim quotations from the interviews are used to support the findings. Educators were given the freedom to speak in a language which makes them feel comfortable; therefore quotations in Afrikaans were given verbatim in order to present feelings and concerns with as much authenticity as possible to illustrate the influence of gangsterism on the morale of educators. Where necessary, clarification of the excerpts was given in brackets in order to place the quotations in context for the reader. As said earlier pseudonyms were used for ethical reasons. Table 4.2 on page 48 illustrates the respondents' pseudonyms during the focus group interviews.

Table 4.2: Pseudonyms of Educators

Focus Group 1	Focus Group 2	Focus Group 3	Focus Group 4	Focus Group 5	Focus Group 6
Mr Abrahams	Mr Bles	Mrs Chatburn	Mr Desai	Mr Elrick	Mr Faure
Mr Adams	Mrs Botes	Mrs Chaston	Mr Demas	Miss Elliot	Mr Faria
Miss Ackerman	Mrs Bothma	Mr Clark	Mrs Dempsey	Miss Ellis	Mr Farrell
Mr Adonis	Mrs Baatjies	Mrs Cary	Mr Dempster	Mrs Elman	Mr Fargo
Mr Allie	Mr Baron	Mr Carr	Mrs Denny	Mr Elmes	Mrs Felix
Miss Ackerman	Mr Barnes	Mrs Calder	Mrs Denton	Miss Elmie	Mrs Fataar
Mrs Allerman	Mrs Barry	Miss Cairns	Mrs De monk		
Mrs Appel	Mrs Bester	Mrs Cane	Mrs De Vries		
Miss Aries	Mrs Bierman				

To ensure that educators did not divert from the topic, four central questions (see Appendix G) were posed to the participants during the focus group interviews. The four questions were elicited from the unstructured interviews. As mentioned earlier in the study, the first three questions in the structured interview schedule addressed the first research question and the fourth question addressed the second research question. All the focus group interviews were recorded and transcribed verbatim. Subsequent to this I analysed the transcribed interviews utilizing open-coding (Henning et al., 2005:131). In order to ensure the trustworthiness of this research, I kept the translations as close to the original meaning as possible as given by the educators during the focus group interviews. I endeavoured to gain insight into the unspoken words, namely, the body language of the educators and the atmosphere of the focus group. Therefore observations that were made during the focus group interviews were recorded as field notes and assimilated into the data analysis process.

Four themes were identified which describe the influence of gangsterism on the morale of educators on the Cape Flats. Theme one reflected the educators

perceptions on their morale; theme two added the descriptions of gang-related factors that affect educators' morale; theme three illustrated the feelings of educators on the influence of gangsterism on their morale and theme four provided a description of the educators' response to the support from the Western Cape Education Department for educators who work in gang-ridden communities. I will discuss each theme in detail.

Table 4.3 provides a summary of themes and categories as identified from the transcribed focus group interviews and the field notes recorded during the research. The findings are discussed and interpreted according to the table.

Table 4.3: Schematic summary of identified themes and categories

4.3.1	THEME 1: EDUCATOR PERCEPTIONS OF THEIR MORALE
4.3.1.1	Low educator morale.
4.3.1.2	Unaffected educator morale
4.3.1.3	Boosted educator morale
4.3.2	THEME 2: GANG-RELATED FACTORS AFFECTING EDUCATOR MORALE
4.3.2.1	Educators' personal experiences with gangsterism.
4.3.2.2	Gangsterism affects the learners.
4.3.2.3	Gangsterism affects educator and learner relationships.
4.3.2.4	Educators' responses on how they deal with learners who are involved in gangs.
4.3.2.5	Gangsterism affects educator and parental relationships.
4.3.3	THEME 3: EDUCATORS FEELINGS ON THE INFLUENCE OF GANGSTERISM ON THEIR MORALE
4.3.4	THEME 4: EDUCATORS RESPONSE ON THE ROLE OF MANAGEMENT'S SUPPORT FOR EDUCATOR MORALE IN GANG-RIDDEN COMMUNITIES.
4.3.4.1	Educators' response on Management's lack of support.
4.3.4.2	Educator suggestions to management on how to boost their morale.

4.3.1 Theme 1: Educator perceptions of their morale

When I posed my first question to the educators: "How does gangsterism in this community affect your morale at this school?" I found that educators working in gang-ridden communities perceive their morale in various ways. I identified three categories in this theme. The first category gives the educators' reasons for their low morale, the second category gives the reasons for their morale being unaffected by gangsterism, while the third category the reasons for 'boosted' morale.

4.3.1.1 Low educator morale

The educators who perceived their morale as low, I perceived as being extremely agitated by gangsterism. Their opening statements indicated that the disposition of their morale is severely influenced by gangsterism. According to the educators the reasons are as follows:

- Gangsterism has escalated over the years
- First encounters for educators to gangsterism
- Female educators perceive themselves as being affected by gangsterism more than male educators.
- Absenteeism of learners due to gangsterism
- Learners' encounters with gangsterism
- Gangsterism affects educators' workload

While I will provide brief descriptions of the reasons given by the educators for their morale, some of these will be described in more detail in theme 2 and 3.

Some educators indicated that their morale was lowered due to the ongoing gang-violence in the community. They stressed that the conflict between rival gangs had escalated over the years. When this conflict erupts, ongoing shooting occurs and it can be seen and heard while learning and teaching takes place. With regard to this, Mrs Appel said, "My morale is definitely low, things have just gotten worse". Mr Adonis agreed with Mrs Appel and said, "My moraal is laag, die tyd wat ek by die skool was wil ek sê het dit al erger geword." (*My morale is low, the time that I have been at this school I am of the opinion that the situation has gone worse*).

Echoing the above sentiment, Mr Barnes and Mrs Barry, who have been teaching at a particular school for more than a decade, expressed that the ongoing shooting had escalated outside their school and it was affecting their morale. They highlight their point in this excerpt:

My morale is rock bottom. Of late it's become much worse than it's been for that past five to ten years. They have been shooting constantly. (Mr Barnes)

Ek is nou hier vir 20 jaar en dis die eerste keer dat ek nie meer hier wil wees nie. Dit is die eerste keer dat dit so erg is. Gister was daar omtrent 15 skote of 'whatever'. My moraal is nog laer as die Mnr Barnes s'n....dinge het al erger geword. (*I am now here for 20 years and it is the first time that I do not want to be here...it (gangsterism) is the first time that it is so bad. Yesterday there was about 15 gunshots that went off or whatever. My morale is even lower than Mr Barnes morale, the situation has worsen*). (Mrs Barry)

The ongoing shooting in the community has caused Mr Clark to worry about who is being shot at and who will be next. He said, "Every time I look out my classroom window or door and I hear gunshots going off, I wonder who is going to be next to be shot at." Mrs Cary expressed that she cannot get used to the gunshots and the sound of a gunshot causes her to "freeze". Mr Desai indicated that his morale is mostly low because "at anytime there can be a shooting".

Certain educators have never been exposed to or lived in communities where gang related activities are prevalent. Therefore, when they started teaching in a gang-ridden community, they experienced a culture shock at the way of life in these types of communities. This culture unfortunately spills over into the schools. Mr Adonis said, "Ek kom van Calvinia, so toe ek hier gekom het was dit vir my soos hulle sê 'n kulturele skok." (*I come from Calvinia therefore when I started here it was like a cultural shock*). In addition to this, Miss Ackerman and Mr Baron, who have been teaching at their respective schools for less than two years, have never been exposed to gang-ridden communities, and agreed that they will never get used to the situation in the community. They expressed the following sentiments:

My moraal is laag want ek is nie gewoond aan hierdie tipe omgewing nie. Ek dink nie ek sal ooit gewoond word aan dit nie. (*My morale is low because I am not use to this type of area and I do not think I will ever get use to it (gangsterism)*). (Miss Ackerman)

My moraal is laag want ek is nie gewoond daaraan nie. Geen mens kan gewoond raak daaraan. As ek hier uity, is ek maar baie haastig want ek wil net hier wegkom. (*My morale is low because I am not used to it (gangsterism)*). No human being can get used to it. When I drive out here, I am in a hurry to get away from here). (Mr Baron)

Miss Aries, who recently started her teaching career at a school, indicated that her morale is affected negatively by gangsterism in the community. She said, "This is my first teaching post, to have gangsters in your class is a bit bad

therefore my morale is low.” Mr Elrick agreed with Miss Aries, stating that gangsterism also affected his morale when he started teaching at the school. He said, “When I started working here the first couple of months I had a problem with my morale because of gangsterism in the community”.

In this research, I have found that female educators feel more vulnerable to gangsterism than male educators. Female educators felt that their female status made them a ‘soft’ target, especially to male learners who are gang members. Mrs Allerman, who has been teaching at the school for twenty years said, “I think that the female teachers are affected more than the male teachers by gangsterism here at school.” Miss Arries agreed with Mrs Allerman and gave the following reason for her sentiment, “To have gangsters in your class is a bit bad especially for us female teachers because a male teacher is physically stronger than us females.”

When gang conflict occurs, it can become so violent that it deters the community, especially children, to move around freely - even when they have to go to school. Educators commented that when this happens, their morale is low, because they come to school prepared to teach, yet learners may not be able to attend school. Their enthusiasm is dampened because what they have planned for the day cannot be executed successfully if half the learners are absent. Mrs Botes made the following comment, “My morale is definitely low, because you come to school ready to work and then half of the class is absent due to gangsterism.”

According to the educators, certain parts of the community can be affected by gangsterism more than other parts. Schools situated where gangsterism is more prevalent, which educators refer to as ‘hotspots’, are more affected than other schools within the gang-ridden communities. Some of the learners coming from these ‘hotspots’ are exposed to gangsterism on a daily basis and these learners, according to the educators, always have many stories to tell them (these stories will be elaborated on in theme 3). Mrs Chatburn said:

Some of our learners, they come out of the hotspots or from a background where their parents or their relatives are participating in gang activities. They come and share it with us, and it really gives us goosebumps. I mean starting the day with that type (gang-related) of news; it really drops your morale.

Almost all the educators interviewed indicated that they are saddled with more than their educational duties due to social problems caused by gangsterism. Educators have to spend time listening to the learners' problems and counselling them. Mr Carr had this to say:

We are saddled with much more than just teaching because we have to listen to their problems and counselling them. Your morale is not what it should be.

In fact, Mrs Denton shared that her morale is "not all the time low." She said that "...gangsterism is not all the time rife..." in their community. However, when gang warfare erupts, she feels that her morale tends to be low. She said, "Then as a teacher I feel very threatened, very scared and I'm speaking for myself now".

4.3.1.2 Unaffected educator morale

While most respondents indicated that their morale is low, a few educators expressed that gangsterism does not affect their morale. The reasons the educators provided were that they were born and raised in gang-ridden communities, or they have been working in this type of community for a long time.

Mrs Elman stated that she was born and bred in a gang-ridden community. She was always exposed to gangsterism. In her opinion it is the way of life she has become accustomed to. She said, "I've been living in the same type of community all my life so for me this doesn't bring my morale down."

In addition to this, Mr Abrahams and Mr Adams iterated that their teaching experience at their particular school have made them "immune" to gangsterism in the community and therefore their morale remains unaffected. This is what they had to say in this regard:

I feel my morale is not low and it is also not high because I have been at this school for almost twenty years. I am used to the way of life in this community and at this school.” (Mr Abrahams)

I also agree with Mr Abrahams about my morale, I have been teaching at this school for more than twenty years, I am immune to the situation. (Mr Adams)

Mr Bles agreed with Mr Abrahams and Mr Adams by saying that he was use to gangsterism and the violence that occur in the community, due to his long teaching experience. He said: “I do not hear the gunshots anymore and I am used to the guns.”

4.3.1.3 Boosted educator morale

There were educators who felt that gangsterism has not affected their morale, and that in fact this phenomenon has motivated them to remain teaching in the community to improve the lives of the learners in gang-ridden communities.

Miss Elliot said:

Omdat ek gewoon is daaraan is dit nie vir jou snaaks vir sekere dinge wat gebeur nie. Ek dink dit maak liewers dat jy vir jousef sê dat hier wil ek in gaan en 'n verskil maak. Ek dink dit boost daai ding wat jy van gepraat het jou moraal. (*Because I am used to this (gangsterism) is it not unusual for me when certain things (gang-related incidents) happen. I think it rather boost that thing you spoke about your morale.*)

Echoing Miss Elliot’s sentiment, Mrs De Monk was quite adamant about gangsterism boosting her morale and commented, “It (gangsterism) doesn’t affect me, it just makes me more determined and it actually pushes up my morale.”

4.3.2 Theme 2: Gang-related factors affecting educator morale

My second question to the educators was to give me examples of gang-related incidents that affect their morale. The educators’ emotions were quite high when answering this question. The graphic descriptions they gave me were thought-provoking and chills ran down my spine. In fact, while conducting a focus group interview at a school in Manenberg, an ensuing gang fight took place outside of

the school and gunshots were heard. The educators were terrified and kept looking behind them toward the window, as if they were scared that the gunshots might hit them through the window of the staffroom. The gunshots were captured on the audiotape used during the focus group interview.

4.3.2.1 Educators' personal experiences with gangsterism

When the educators gave graphic descriptions of how they have encountered gangsterism on a personal level, I observed that gangs endanger educators' and learners' lives. They also disrupt academic time and extra-mural activities.

Learners who are gang members pose a risk to their fellow peers and educators. If a learner is affiliated with a gang, s/he is at risk of being injured or killed by rival gang members. Miss Aries, who only started her teaching career this year (2007), experienced an incident where rival gangs came to the school, specifically her class, to seek out their enemies. She was very emotional and found it difficult when she relayed the following story:

My class is situated at the back (uhm) I was teaching Accounting to one specific class 11b. Uhm... the next minute my door gets kicked in, there were about twenty people with hockey sticks, knives the works on the roof. The children were even saying "Miss come and look outside" and they were on the roof coming directly to my class, they did not even go to another class. They were looking for two specific students. Luckily or unluckily the students were not there and they moved out and I don't know if they went to go look for the students somewhere else. But in the end there was a whole fight between the gangsters and the Bambananis... and I couldn't do anything, I was numb.

Another educator related how he had seen the incident taking place at Miss Aries class, but he feared for his life and at that specific moment he forgot about learners and Miss Aries who needed protection and ran away instead. He said:

Toe het 'n stuk van twintig van hulle oor die draad gespring met messe en kieres en weet nie wat alles nie. Ek het weggehardloop en daai tyd vergeet ek van leerders wat beskerm moet word en sy (Miss Aries) is in gevaar en gaan na myself kyk, ek is weg. *(About twenty of them (gangsters) jumped over the fence with knives and picks and I don't know whatever else. I ran away and that time I forgot about the learners that must be protected and Miss Aries is also in danger but I am going to look after myself, I am gone).*

Mr Allie added that when they confronted these gangsters as to what their business on the school's premises was, they made it very clear that they were looking for two learners and they were there to kill them. Mr Allie also expressed how when gang-related incidents occur at their school, all the educators would be present at school the next day. He said, "Gangs do not deter us from teaching in gang-ridden communities".

Mr Adams stated that being familiar with ex-learners affiliated with gangs can assist them to get rid of gangsters who are looking for rival gang members at the school. Educators are able to persuade them to leave the school premises and are therefore protecting themselves and the learners against pending gang conflict. He said:

Eendag kom 'drop' daar 'n stuk van vier by my klas uit, hulle kom nou 'n klong soek binne in my klas wat ek weet wat aan 'n gang daar buite behoort maar toe kon ek nou die deur toe druk en met hulle praat by die deur want een van hulle het hier skoolgegaan. Het ek nou nie vir hom geken nie, het hulle die deur oopgeskop en vir hom uit die klas kom haal. Toe kan hulle nou weer loop want toe het ek gesê hy is nou nie hier nie. *(One day about four of them came to my class to seek a gang member. I was able to keep the door close and speak to them outside. Did I not know one of the gang members who was an ex-pupil who were looking for this pupil, they would have kicked the door open and take this pupil out of my classroom. They left because I told them this pupil was absent).*

Mrs Bester expressed that she was twice caught in cross-fire. The first time was with two learners while driving her car. She said, "Nou onlangs moes ek my kar se deur oop los en hardloop met twee kleintjies van die skote af." *(Now recently, I had to leave the door of my car open and run with two pupils away from the gunshots).* The second time she said, "Ek was in die 'main road' toe skree die ouers juffrou moet nou draai want hulle skiet." *(I was in the main road when the parents shouted at me to turn around because the gangs are shooting at each other).* Mrs Denny, however, had the unfortunate experience of having a gun-pointed at her. She said:

Some of us have been gun pointed at here in the community after school hours like myself you know. When I went to drop off about five girls and at this one particular corner I was gun -pointed by an ex-pupil.

Mrs Fataar witnessed a brutal murder outside their school's gate, while the rest of the staff was in a meeting. She expressed her utter horror and amazement at the nonchalant attitude these gangsters displayed when they killed the victim. She said:

It was about a month ago. The teachers were busy here in the staffroom and then there was this tiff with the bicycle story. There were these three guys; we didn't know what was happening. I saw how they were shooting that guy and they used all that bullets on him. The smoke was coming out of the guy. The way they walked away was as if they did nothing wrong.

Mr Felix confirmed Mrs Fataar's story and said, "Yes, we were busy with our planning here in the staffroom when the shots went off."

A few educators encountered the traumatizing experience of being threatened and injured by gangsters when they reprimanded the learners who are affiliated with these gangs. While relating their stories, there was an unusual silence in the room and the educators seemed uncomfortable. Mr Carr relayed that a girl in his class was misbehaving and he grabbed hold of her and unfortunately her button broke. He said:

She ran home to fetch her stepfather and he came and he stood by the door and he said: 'Vir jou gaan ek nou vrek skiet met die gun.'*(I am going to kill you now with my gun)*.

Mrs De Vries had a similar experience as Mr Carr when she slapped a gangster's child. She offered up a prayer and was fortunate to escape with her life. She said:

There was a '28' gangster who just came out of jail and I slapped his child and he came with all the other gangsters. So before I went in the principal's office, I just said: 'Lord you must help me now here.' you know, and I won the battle in there.

Another teacher, Mr Farrell, who was stabbed by gangsters about ten years ago, was unable to relay his story to me. It seemed as if that incident still had a negative effect on him. He therefore asked one of his colleagues, Mr Fargo, to tell the story. He said:

According to Mr Farrell he reprimanded this girl and she ran home and she went to fetch her two brothers, which were gangsters. They came to school and at that time we already left with the bus. Myself and a couple of teachers went. There were only about two male teachers at the school. They came to his class actually looking for me when they kicked my door open, but it was unclear why they were looking for me because I didn't do anything to the child. But possibly she told them a teacher or her teacher and they understood her wrong. Obviously they couldn't find me because I had left and then they came downstairs to Mr. Farrell's class. He tried to speak to them but they started hitting him with sticks and when he tried to defend himself one of them turned around and stabbed him. So he ran over the quad to look for help otherwise they would have killed him. He ran to the office side and that was actually when he got away from them.

According to Mr Farrel this incident occurred in 1997. I was amazed than an incident that occurred a decade ago, still affects him in such a way that he is unable to talk about it. I also asked him on which part of his body the gang had stabbed him. He said, "They stabbed me on my chest and on my back, the knife just missed my spine".

Apart from being threatened and injured by gangsters, educators also have to face the experience of being robbed by the gangsters on the school's premises. Mrs De Vries related that she was attacked in her classroom by gangs in 2002 and said, "They robbed me at gunpoint." While Mr Desai related, "My car was stolen from the school premises, while I was busy teaching".

Educators have encountered several acts of intimidation from gangsters and have also been victims of abuse. These personal encounters have caused educators to resign from their posts or be booked off due to stress. According to Mr Allie, when gang conflict occurs, gangs are oblivious of innocent peoples' safety. They will shoot blindly at their rivals regardless of innocent bystanders. Unfortunately these types of encounters have caused educators to resign from their post. Mr Allie illustrates this notion by relaying this story:

The gangs came on to the school and we were standing at the corner. I think it was during interval or something. They came for one of the learners and the guy had a gun and he started shooting whether we were standing there or not. The learner ran that way to the back of the school. The learner was shot in the leg and I think a couple of months after that one of the teachers that was also involved who had to basically run for his life, left the school.

Similar stories were shared by educators at other schools. Mr Elrick related that the encounter he experienced with gangs, made him continuously watch his back for fear of retaliation by gangs. He further expressed that he became so fearful for his life that he had to be booked off for stress. He said:

Die bendes het beweeg op die stoep. Hulle was twee en ek het vermoed iets gaan gebeur en gelukkig was daar nie kinders in die klas nie. Ek het met die skool se finansies gewerk en ek het daai dag my vuurwapen op my gehad en die kinders was uit die klas uit. Ek het die deur toegemaak en ek het die vuurwapen byderhand gehad. Toe hoor ek langsaan die deur oopgevlieg en ek hoor net (Gwah!) en daar was kinders in die klas langsaan maar die juffrou was nie in die klas nie sy was seker êrens gewees. (Uhm) en toe wag ek vir my deur om oop te vlieg toe my deur oopvlieg toe staan ek by die deur met my vuurwapen. Toe die persoon sy kop insteek, staan ek met die vuurwapen teen sy kop. Hy het hom vrek geskrik en vreeslik om verskoning gevra. Hulle is toe weg maar dit was 'teenagers' gewees dit was nie groot persone gewees nie. Daar het ek groot geskrik en ek het 'n bietjie gevrees daarvan...en toe op 'n stadium het ek geknak en toe was ek af vir stres en ek wou nie terug kom skool toe nie. (*The gang was roaming on the school ground. They were two and I suspected that something was going to happen. Luckily there were no children in the classroom. I was busy with the school finances and had my gun with me and the children were not in class. I closed the door and had my weapon on my person. I then heard the door fly open next door (Gwah!) and there were kids next door but the teacher was not in the class. I waited for my door to be open and when it flew open, I aimed the gun against his head. He got a huge fright and apologised profusely. They left and they were teenagers and not adults. I also got a fright and feared for my life. I eventually snapped and was booked off for stress and I did not want to go back to the school).*)

Even though the majority of educators did not have personal encounters with gangsterism, I found that all the educators are affected by gangsterism. Gangsterism affects the learners who live in gang-ridden communities and therefore affects the educators' morale. The educators expressed that they experience problems with learners and parents who are involved in gangsterism.

I posed my third question to the educators: "How does gangsterism in this particular community affect your relationship with the learner at this school?" Their responses related to gangsterism affecting the following constructs; learners, educators and learners' relationships and educators and parental relationship. I will present each construct by category.

4.3.2.2 Gangsterism affects the learners

From the responses of educators on how gangsterism affects the learners, it became apparent to me that gangsterism is a major problem in society. I found that learners find it very difficult to defy the influences of gangsterism. I also sensed that the effect of gangsterism on learners was a grave concern for educators, especially its effect on their morale. The educators' responses related to the following issues:

- Gangs recruiting learners
- Learners joining gangs
- Learners idolize gangs
- The consequence of learners' quitting a gang
- Gangsterism traumatizes learners
- Learners affiliation to gangs
- Learners behaviour toward gangs' criminal activities
- Gangsterism influences the learners' behaviour when solving conflict
- Gangsterism affects the learners' academic performance

Gangs have a way of luring young people to them. The gangs create an image that portrays gangsterism as a glamorous way of life. Unfortunately, gangsterism is a dangerous and an illegal way of life, but young people are impressionable and only see the glamour. Mr Faure said, "If you look at these gang-leaders, they actually flaunt around with their nice cars, thick gold chains and dress code." Gangs recruit young children and entice them with money and expensive clothing. Miss Elliot was quick to point out that it is easy to identify when a child has joined a gang. At one stage that child would look neglected and poor, and the next stage you notice that the child wears expensive clothing and shoes. She said:

Dis gou om te sien daai kind was 'n vuil kindjie wat hier rond geloop het en het nooit rêrig aangetrek nie en het snaaks gelyk (uhm) en skielik op 'n kol is hy agtermekaar en hy het die duurste skoene en die mooiste klere aan. *(It is easy to see that a child who was a neglected child who walked around and never had nice clothes to wear and looked funny and then all of a sudden this child dresses well and wears the most expensive shoes and the most beautiful clothes).*

Moreover, Mrs Denny expressed that gangs target poor people to become involved in their criminal activities. Gangs therefore capitalize on poverty

stricken communities. She said, “The people are poor that’s why the children are in gangs. They learn to steal for what they want.” Mr Allie was compelled to say that gangsterism is so powerful in their community that often the learners find it difficult to resist their temptations. He said:

Sometimes a learner tries to better his life but it’s impossible, totally impossible for him. He gets hooked into gangsterism, not that he wants to, but because gangsters lure the learners or the children towards them.

The educators mentioned that learners find it difficult not to join gangs, as they would otherwise be victimized. Mrs Allerman found evidence of gangs victimizing learners when she marked their scripts. The learners wrote a test for her in Life Orientation. She said:

Now in the exam, there was a question ‘what problems do they have’ and a lot of them wrote how they are affected by gangs and how they are forced to join gangs. If they don’t they will be victimized.

Thus, as Mr Farrell pointed out, the gang phenomenon has a strong influence in their community and that some learners decide at a young age that they will join gangs otherwise they will suffer. He said, “In their lives they have already made up their minds, I’m surrounded by this so I join, if I don’t join, then I suffer”.

Mr Demas related that when a learner joins a gang, he or she is unable to quit due to gang ‘laws’. Unfortunately their school suffered the loss of learners who wanted to quit but, according to gang law, if members want to quit they face the risk of being killed. The following excerpt illustrates this point:

We have lost some kids at school last year. Some boys came to me who were gangsters and said that they want to quit now. The gangs were chasing them. So they came to me for help but they still killed them. They want to quit but they can’t.

The educators indicated that most learners in their schools are exposed to gangsterism on a daily basis. The result of this is that the learners idolise the gangs and perceive members as their role models. Mr Farrell said, “Kids are very easily influenced, now the gang leaders outside are idolized by the kids.” Mrs Chatburn related that the learners have the notion that belonging to a gang

is fascinating. She said, “The learners feel it’s ‘kwaai’ (boastful) to belong to a gang because they idolise the mainstream gangsters”.

Given the above information, Mr Faure related how, when their school hosts a casual day, the learners’ dress code is gang-style. The gangs’ style is therefore evident in their dress code. He said:

These youngsters they watch them and say “Ja ek wil soos Donnie wees” (*Yes, I want to be like Donnie*) and even when we have casual day then we can see it coming out. Their role models they take from gangsters.

Mr Clark complained that he continuously needs to reprimand learners who try to copy gangsterism. He said that they wear their school uniform inappropriately because they want to display their school shirt gang-style. He said:

Can you believe that grade 4 boy are saying: ‘Sir, these are the ‘stoepas’ these are the bad boys, these are the players’. Everytime I have to say ‘sak julle collar.’ (*Make your collar look appropriate*).

Gangs have such a prominent status in the community that some of the learners believe that the gangsters are the heroes and the police are the enemy. The learners will even go as far as protecting the gangsters in their criminal activities. Mr Clark said, “When we were watching a movie and they were shooting at the police, the kids actually said ‘goed so’(it is okay for the police).” Mr Carr related a story where the learners protected the gangs when the police questioned them about an incident that they had witnessed. He said:

There was also an incident where the police was chasing a gang. They ran across the school and they dropped the gun in the gutter. The children saw it and no one spoke. The police came and asked “Het julle gesien?” (*Did you see?*) and they said “Nee mnr.” (*No, Sir*)

Even though most learners are not gang members, they are in some way connected to gangsterism. Mrs Bothma said, “Many of the children, the gangsters are their uncles and so it’s family of them.” Mrs Chatburn related that the learners “come out of a background where their parents are participating in

gang activities.” According to Mrs Faria, the parents can be “gang leaders as well”. Mrs Denny said, “Cousins and brothers or whatever might be gang members”.

When gang-fights occur over the weekend or during school hours the learners, according to the educators, are traumatized. Miss Cairns said: “They are so traumatized when things (gang-fights) like this happen.” Mr Clark added that the learners are continuously traumatized “by these activities going on Manenberg” and are therefore “traumatized when they come to school”.

When the learners are traumatized, the educators are unable to carry on with their normal teaching duties. The educators have to calm the learners down first, and often have to counsel them before they can start with their lessons. Mrs Bothma said, “You first have to calm the learners down before you can start with your lessons.” Mrs Chatburn said, “You can't start with your work. We first need to counsel those learners before we start with our work.” According to Mr Clark, they are “neglecting their educational purpose in the classroom” as a result of gangsterism.

The educators told compelling stories of how learners react when they witness a gang-related murder. As can be expected, these learners do not display normal behaviour, when such crimes are committed. Mr Clark's story:

A child in my class who came one morning to school was telling me “Sir while I was on my way to school a lady was shot and the person was lying there as I was coming to school.” The mere fact he saw the person lying on the ground, the person was shot by gangsters.(Mr Clark)

Mrs Cane related that she could not handle the news when told by a learner of a toddler being shot in a gangs' crossfire. She said:

When a child comes to me 11 or 10 years old and tells me that last night a three year old or a four year old was shot in front of them and they could give you graphic information. It's too much.

Mr Faure mentioned that the learners can “give you graphic descriptions of incidents where gangsters’ guts were hanging out.” Another compelling story related by Mr Carr was of how a learner committed a murder and brought the murder weapon to school and told him what had happened. This story shocked him. He said:

I very clearly remember a child in my class grade 7, he shot somebody and he came to school with the gun and he said: “Meneer ek het nou net iemand geskiet met die gun” (*Sir, I just killed someone with this gun*) and it was a silver gun. I mean it appeals to him, the fact that he killed somebody.

The educators observed when gang fights occur during school hours, the learners have the impulse to run to the window to see what is happening, instead of lying flat on the ground to protect themselves from stray bullets. Mr Barnes said, “The learners generally run towards the window. They don't drop and lay flat, hulle hardloop om te kyk wat aan gaan” (*they run to see what is happening*). Mrs Faria agreed with Mr Barnes and said, “Many times when there is gunshots then only some of them will bend down on the floor or they will tell you what’s going to happen.”

In addition to this, the educators agreed that when an ensuing gang-fight occurs, the learners are unsettled and the educators feel helpless. Mrs Barry said, “Daar is niks wat jy daaraan kan doen nie en jy moet die kinders beheer. Veral as hulle die skote hoor is almal deurmekaar” (*There is nothing that you can do to control the children. When they hear shot being fired they become unsettled*). Miss Aries related that the learners are “uncontrollable” when gang fights occur on the school’s premises, and her concern is for the learners’ safety.

Mrs Cary and Miss Cairns concluded that for the learners to behave ‘dangerously’ when gang fights occur is normal behaviour for these learners. According to them, the learners are not aware of another way of life.

Of grave concern to educators is that they have observed how learners’ behaviour change. Educators interviewed said that the learners’ exposure to

gangsterism has resulted in them solving conflict in a violent manner. They display negative behaviour such as aggression and hostility towards their peers. Mr Barners said, "It's just the normal incidents of aggression amongst the learners. Stabbing, fighting and throwing stones at each other." Mr Clark related that the learners come to school with a culture of violence and they display "aggressive and very hostile behaviour." Mr Faure said:

How they resolve conflict in the classroom in front of the teachers is either grabbing a pen and stabbing another learner. The way the fights are done is similar to the way the gang fights are done.

Mr Allie brought a box of knives to the focus group interview. He expressed that he wanted to show me evidence of the type of weapons learners carry with them. He related that when they confiscated these weapons, most of the learners said that they carry the weapons for protection against gangs. He said:

There are 4 or 5 knives in there that we took from learners last Friday because we did a random search in certain classes. A week or two weeks preceding that there were quite a number of gang-related incidents at the school and after school. Learners have been stabbed and learners were hit with picks. At the search we found 4 knives as you can see the knives there and all of those learners said that they brought the knives for their own protection.

According to the educators, gangsterism does not only affect the learners' behaviour, but also their academic life, and this in turn affects the educators' morale. The educators related how they are unable to give learners an assignment that requires them to do research at a local public library. Mrs Bothma said, "As hulle miskien wil biblioteek toe gaan dan sê hulle juffrou ek kan nie daar stap nie" (*If the learners want to utilise the library facility they say to the teacher that not allowed to walk in that vicinity*). The learners who live in a designated area where rival gangs operate are not allowed access to the library if it is located in another rival gang's territory. The reason for this is that gangs operate in a territorial way. If they are caught in a rival gang's territory, regardless of whether they are gang members or not, they can get injured or killed. Furthermore Mrs Bothma said:

You give them assignments, the library is on that side. They will tell you that they live on this side and that they can't go there even though they don't belong to gangs. So it's like a territorial thing.

Educators complained that they are unable to have extra-mural activities after school or detention because if the learners do not go home in a group, they risk being "accosted" by the gangs. Mr Dempster said, "When you try to sort of do extra with the kids and you keep them later, they go home on their own then they are accosted." Mr Barnes related that the learners also risk being caught in crossfire if they must stay after school. Another aspect of normal school life that is affected negatively is learners' extra-mural activities. Mrs Denny pointed out that the learners refuse to stay after school. She said, "You know that you can't do things after school because the children will not stay after school."

Mr Barnes expressed concern that learners are unable to complete homework because of shootings that occur between gangs and it disrupts their concentration on their schoolwork. He said, "Hulle sê hulle kan nie hulle huiswerk gedoen het nie want hulle (gangs) het die hele aand geskiet" (*They say that they were unable to complete their homework because the gangs fired gunshots throughout the night*). Moreover, gang-fights can become so brutally violent, that schools are compelled to dismiss early.

Mrs Barry related that their school dismisses earlier when there is a gang member's funeral. According to her, their school is compelled to do so because, after the funeral, ongoing shooting occurs between rival gangs. She said, "As een van die gangsters nou begrawe word en hy's klaar begrawe dan baklei en skiet hulle eers dan moet al die skole toemaak." (*If it is a gang member's funeral then all the schools must close early due to gang conflict after the funeral*).

Mrs Denny related "sometimes when they fight over the weekend we have to dismiss school early because of the fighting." Meaning that if any gang members were killed or injured over the weekend, revenge attacks is imminent on Monday. Added to this Mrs Demonk said, "There were three occasions

where we went home at about eleven o'clock because gangs were shooting and they were racing past the school."

Ongoing gang fights result in parents collecting their children before the school dismisses them, or they will keep them at home if these gang-fights are putting their children's lives at risk. Mrs Barry expressed that this disrupts the execution of their academic planning. She said, "Jy sit met kwart van die kinders in die klas" (*You sit with only a quarter of the pupils in your class.*)

Mrs Bothma said, "Due to the shooting, parents are scared to send their children to school." Mrs Faria, in her frustration, said, "If there are shootings then the parents are all flocking to come and fetch their children. So what can you do?"

4.3.2.3 Gangsterism affects educator and learner relationships

Some educators indicated that when they are aware of a learner being affiliated with a gang, it influences their relationship with that particular learner. Mrs Dempsey narrated a chilling story on this matter. She said:

To be completely honest with you, the fact that when I know whether a child belongs to a gang or not does influence my relationship with that child, because I will be very careful with that particular child. Because a few years ago I had a learner in my class who just came out of jail because he murdered somebody. To be very, very honest I was extremely, extremely scared of this child because his eyes were so cold and the way he would look at you.

Moreover, Mr Allie related that learners who are gang members are in fact endangering educator and fellow learners' lives. A rival gang can come to the school at any time to seek out these learners and innocent people can get hurt. He said:

We had two boys actually three boys whom we identified as gang members and we brought them to the office and we told them that they are putting the learners and educators in danger.

Many educators have reported that learners who are affiliated with gangs display an aggressive attitude toward them. These educators complained that

due to learners' negative behaviour, they are unable to maintain effective discipline. In light of this discussion, the educators related the following reactions by the learners when they want to discipline them.

- Learners threaten the educators
- Learners are disrespectful toward the educators
- Learners retaliate against educators
- Learners display an attitude of being untouchable
- Learners do not reciprocate educators' efforts

From the transcripts of the interviews it became apparent that the learners use their affiliation to gangs as a 'weapon' to threaten the educators. They threaten to harm the educators after school hours. The learners also make it known to the educators that they will use their gang friends to hurt them. Mr Barnes said, "Baie van ons word gesê dat ons wag jou in vanmiddag na skool." (*Many of us are threatened that we will be accosted after school*). Moreover, Mr Elmes added that he reprimanded a learner in his class and the learner threatened him by saying, "Kyk hier jy moenie baie praat nie want aan die einde van die dag ken ek ouens hierso." (*Look here, you must not talk too much because at the end of the day do I know pupil here*).

Learners show educators no respect and they use foul language to provoke the educators. On this matter Mr Clark said, "You as a teacher are there to teach them, but there's no respect." Mr Felix echoed Mr Clark's sentiment and said, "Today, children don't have any respect for teachers anymore."

According to the educators, the learners use foul language against them. They regard this as a sign of disrespect. Mrs Bothma said, "Die kinders sal vir jou uitvloek. Hulle het nie respek vir jou nie." (*The children will swear at you. They do not have any respect for you*). Mrs Appel expressed the opinion that the learners are not even aware when they use foul language because they use it all the time in their vocabulary. She said, "When they swear, they don't even know that they're swearing because they do it so much." Added to this, Mr Desai related that the learners would use foul language to provoke the

educators. He said, "They might swear loudly just to get you to react to what they are doing."

Many educators expressed that they are extremely careful as to how they deal with learners who are affiliated with gangs. They noted that they are careful because they do not know what these learners are capable of. Mrs Dempsey said, "I wouldn't discipline a child belonging to a gang because you never know what can come out of a pocket or whatever." Miss Elmie related that even though you treat certain learners with respect, they remain ill-disciplined and never change their behaviour. She said:

Somtyds raak die leerder nog altyd ongeskik en hy verander nooit. Dan weet jy nie meer wat om met die leerder te maak. Sommer so, dat jy nie weet waartoe daai leerder in staat is. *(Sometimes you handle a learner with absolute respect and sometimes that learner is continuously disrespectful and he never changes and you do not know what to do with that learner but you do know what he is capable of.)*

On this matter Mr Elmes stated that when he knows that a child is affiliated with a gang he will not enquire about that specific child. He said:

Jy voel somtyds dat die kind is by bende aktiwiteite betrokke en jy wil nie eers vra wat soorte aktiwiteite hy betrokke is by nie. Maar jy moet versigtig wees want miskien gaan sê sy maat vir hom dat jy het dit en dat gevra. Want as jy begin uitvra kan die of dat gebeur. *(You feel sometimes that the child is involved in gangsterism and you don't want to ask what type of activities he is involved in. But you have to be careful because maybe his friend will tell him that you asked questions. Because when you ask questions can this or that happen).*

Mr Faure related that he still practices corporal punishment because he feels that this is the only method children in gang-ridden communities respond to. However, when he applies this method of punishment and the learner does not pitch the next day, he fears that there might be retaliation from the gangs. He said:

You know the fact that you overstep the legal boundaries at times just because you are a parent and you whack them so now and then. You then always hope that nobody would come to school the next morning and it happens all the time so you are very cautious, you are very cautious.

Educators have reported that incidents of retaliation by learners have occurred at their particular school. Mrs Bothma related that a learner ran home to fetch a

gun to shoot an educator. She said, “Daar was 'n insident waar die kind huis toe gegaan het om 'n gun te gaan haal om die onderwyser te kom skiet.” (*There was an incident where the child ran home to fetch a gun to shoot the teacher*). Mrs Faria stated that the learners would often run home after they have been reprimanded by the educator to go and fetch their gang- friends to hurt the educators. She said:

You even find the children running from the classroom when the teacher gives them a hiding. They will run out during school hours to go and fetch whoever and they bring that person to school.

Mr Allie sadly expressed that their school had recently been severely vandalised. He related that he had an inkling that it could be learners who are affiliated to gangs at their school whom they were trying to expel from the school. He said:

I have an idea that some of the gangsters that we are trying to get rid of here at school is sort of retaliating against what we are trying to do here at school by vandalising the school.

The educators stressed that learners who are affiliated with gangs are very difficult to discipline. These learners wilfully leave their stationery at home or do not complete homework assignments. Mrs Bothma said, “Daardie kind kom sonder huiswerk, sonder 'n potlood en juffrou kan niks doen nie omdat hy glo nou sy pa is 'n gang 'member’.” (*That child would come without his homework or a pencil and the teacher can do nothing because he believes that his father is a gang member*). The educators are therefore unable to discipline these learners in a manner that seems fit because they display an attitude of being untouchable. Mr Faure said:

What we find in the classrooms is that you have the child whose father just came out of jail for murder and he served 20, 30 years for murder. So he's exposed to his dad, he's got that nobody touches me you know.

Although the educators are trying to make a difference in the lives of children affected by gangsterism, it seems as if it is not reciprocated by the learners. I

observed that educators felt that their efforts were not being appreciated by the learners. On this point Mrs Denton said:

I think the major thing that comes with that is the disappointment because you want to reach out and make a difference and then the learner just turns around and just throws it back in your face as a matter of speaking.

Mr Carr expressed that it is actually like a “double edge sword.” He said, “On the one hand you really want to help them and give them your best and on the other hand they discard it.” Added to this, Mr Faure, in his frustration, said:

When a child misbehaves you take three steps back and (sigh) it doesn't work. You take three steps back and they take twelve steps forward. You know they tramp all over you.

4.3.2.4 Educators' responses on how they deal with learners who are involved in gangsterism

Some educators indicated that they behave negatively toward learners who are affiliated with gangs. Mr Adams related that he displays a fearless attitude towards these learners. He said, “Jy as onderwyser moet vir hom wys dat jy nie bang is vir hulle nie.”(*As an educator you must show them that you are not scared of them*). Mrs Dempsey agreed with Mr Adams and said, “Don't show the child that you are actually scared of him.” Furthermore Mr Faure related that “to create order in the class” educators need to “stand up” against learners affiliated to gangsterism.

Certain educators said that they prefer to avoid or ignore learners who are affiliated with gangs. Mr Desia expressed that he and his colleagues prefer to “side-step” these learners and do not treat them in the same way as other learners. He said:

Sometimes we do side-step (avoid) certain children because you know that certain children are connected to gangs. You are going to mind what you speak to them, because in some situations you can't be treating them exactly the same.

Mrs Denny related that she will not “spend all her energy and efforts” on children who belong to gangs. She indicated that she treats everybody the

same and said, “until somebody does something in my class or maybe something happening on the school premises that reflects that gangster behaviour.” Mrs Bester said that she allows learners who are affiliated with gangs to do as they please in her classroom. According to her “what is the use?” of reprimanding them.

Some educators have indicated that they deal positively with learners who are affiliated with gangs. Mrs De Monk was adamant when she said, “I’m not going to treat that child differently if he belongs to a gang. So far I found that children respond to discipline.” According to Mrs Chaston “no child wants to be rude” but “you must know how to discipline.” Mr Adonis expressed that there is no need for an educator to stoop down to the learners’ level of aggression and hostility. He maintained that educators should rather focus on being professional at all times. He said, “Ek voel dat jy as onderwyser teen alle tye professioneel moet optree.” (*I believe that as an educator you need to maintain professionalism at all times*). Miss Elmie agreed with Mr Adonis that maintaining professionalism guarantees that learners will not retaliate against her. She said:

Ek probeer altyd maar ons praat maar die juffrou stem dan sink ek in en daar is ‘n beter sense of respek. want die kind weet ek mag nie dit aan my juffrou doen nie. Hoe ek my kinders hanteer weet ek dat ek verwag nie ‘n mes in my rug nie want ek hanteer vir hom ook soos ‘n mens. (*I always try to speak to them in a teacher voice and there will be a better sense of respect because the child therefore knows I cannot harm my teacher. How I handle my children I expect not to be stabbed in the back because I treat him like a human being*).

In light of the above discussion, some educators expressed that respect should be reciprocal. They maintained that respecting their learners could alleviate unnecessary problems in the classroom. Miss Aries said, “I will tell them straight from the start that if you respect me then I will respect you.” Moreover, Mrs De Monk said, “I firmly believe that if you have respect for everybody and you treat children with respect then it shouldn’t be a problem.”

4.3.2.5 Gangsterism affects educator and parental relationships

I found that educators have a troublesome relationship with parents whose children are affiliated with gangs. To illustrate this notion Mr Allie said:

When we brought learners whom the gangsters were looking for in front of the governing body, the parent protected the learner and said that 'my child is not a gangster' in fact the parents got quite heated and upset. To let the parents see or face the truth sometimes, my child is a problem at this school and we have to deal with it. The first thing they do is to ask 'Do you have proof that my child is part of that? Do you have proof that my child had this and this on him?'

According to Mrs Bester, parents are in denial when they are confronted about their child's affiliation with gangs. She related an experience where gangs were looking for a learner and she had to hide him in the school's safe. Fortunately the learner was not harmed. She said, "Sy ma sweer nou nog hy behoort nie aan 'n gang nie, hy is die beste kind wat jy kan kry en dis net juffrou is verkeerd."*(His mother still swears up to today that he does not belong to a gang, he is the best child ever and the teacher is wrong).*

Educators gave several reasons for learners' affiliation with gangs. Interestingly, all the reasons given were related to parental care. The reasons are as follows:

- Lack of family structure
- Teenage pregnancy
- Parents are fearful of their children

The educators expressed that, in their community, many learners are raised by single parents which in most cases are the mothers. These learners do not have a father figure and gangs therefore replace the father figure. Mr Carr said, "The family unit doesn't exist anymore." Adding to this Mrs Chatburn said, "They are reared by single parents."

According to Mrs Fataar, some of the learners' parents attended their school recently and were young when they had their children. They therefore lack the necessary experience to raise a child. She said:

I see it everyday, young parents here in the area when they bring their children to school, they just left also a few years ago. They did not get a chance when their parents wanted to discipline them as a child, because they were still children also when they had the child.

Educators also observed that parents find it difficult to discipline their children. They attribute it to parents being afraid of their children. Mrs Fataar said, "You know what is so sad our parents are afraid of our children." Agreeing with Mrs Fataar, Mr Felix related that it was evident when he had an altercation with a parent and the disrespectful manner in which the child responded to the parent. He said:

Ek dink haar kinders 'rule' vir haar by die huis. Ek kon self sien dat hy nie respek het vir daardie ouer nie en sy laat hom toe om met haar te praat net soos hy wil. (I think her children rule her at home. I could see for myself that they have no respect for that parent and that she allows him to speak to her as he wishes).

Mrs Denny related that it is unfair toward the educators that parents are unable to discipline their children. She said, "The parents can't handle them at home so you are sitting with the problems that the parents can't handle."

However, some educators have stated that they do experience positive relationships with the parents regardless of the gang-ridden communities. Educators have found that when parents offer their co-operation in assisting the educators with disciplinary problems, they experience more 'power' over the learners. Mr Adonis said:

Toe ek eers a verhouding begin bou met die kinders en ook 'n verhouding begin bou met die ouers raak die verhouding met my klas en met die kinders beter. Op die einde van die dag kry ek 'n bietjie meer mag oor die kinders want die ouers help ook die probleem uitsorteer by die huis.

Mrs Bester expressed that if she is familiar with the parents, she is able to discipline the child more effectively. She said, "Ander kinders kan jy nog 'n bietjie sê want jy ken nou die mummie." Mr Felix said, "There are good parents that assist us with disciplining their children."

Interestingly, Miss Elmie attributed the safety of their school to the gangsters' children attending their school. Their particular school had no incidents of gangsters shooting on their school premises. She said, "Ek sal sê dat die rede hoekom ons skool veilig is, is omdat die benedelede se kinders hier skoolgaan."

4.3.3 Theme 3: Educators' feelings about the influence of gangsterism on their morale

Educators have expressed many opinions on how they feel about the influence of gangsterism on their morale. They expressed feelings of helplessness, fear, demotivation, worthlessness, frustration, anger and being replaceable.

Some educators felt that they were always on the 'receiving end'. They are continuously putting an effort into assisting with the social problems that learners encounter, but nobody is addressing their needs as educators. On this matter, Mrs Allerman said, "We all try to help and in the other way nobody is helping us." Mr Carr complained when he said, "There is no outlet for us. There's no way anybody is going to listen to us."

Mrs Denton was desperate in her plight for help. She said, "We need someone to intervene and do something." According to Mrs Chatburn the protection for the educators at their school is inadequate. She said, "We need better protection."

According to the educators, they were only trained to teach their specific subjects in higher education. They were not trained to deal with problems associated with gangsterism at their respective tertiary institutions. They therefore feel ill-equipped to teach in gang-ridden communities.

Mr Abrahams said, "We as teachers are not trained for this type of thing that goes on in the community." Echoing this, Mr Allie said, "We are not equipped to deal with certain things." Miss Elmie expressed that educators lack the proper skills to deal with learners affiliated with gangs. She said, "Ons word nie die nodige skills geleer om met daai kind te sit nie."

A few educators reported that ongoing gang-fights were taking place during school-hours because their school is situated on the border of a gang's territory. They indicated that it makes them feel scared. Mrs Bester apologised that she could no longer handle the situation. She said, "Ek was nooit eintlik bang nie. Ek is jammer om te sê maar ek kan dit nie meer hanteer nie." On this matter Mrs Barry said, "Op die oomblik voel ek bang soos ek hier sit." Mr Barnes stated that a person might come across as one not being scared and said, "We are all human at the end of the day."

Mr Allies expressed that he fears to intervene when gang-fights happen at school or outside the school gates when he is not familiar with the gangsters. However, if the gangs are ex-learners he is able to negotiate with them to stop the fighting. He said:

The danger for the educators here at school is for the gangsters coming on to the school and we don't know them, which are always a danger. I'm scared sitting here and the only reason why I'm scared is because of the gangsters that I don't know. I can approach old or past learners that are gangsters.

Commenting on demotivation, Mr Barnes related that there are so many more expectations from the Department of Education than previously. It is a challenge to meet the requirements of the Education Department and cope with the social problems of the learners. Due to the social problems in gang-ridden communities, the learners need individual attention. He said:

The relationship that should exist is not there anymore.....so many expectations,.... so much work from the Department. That one-on-one that you had previously does not exist. You feel demotivated.

Mr Faure highlighted some of the social problems that learners face and expressed his sentiments on how such problems influence teacher morale. He said:

Many times we sit in an overcrowded classroom where these children are victims of abuse. They are exposed to gangsters every single day. It's depressing, demoralizing and many times because you go home and sometimes you discover that you can't sleep at times. You feel worthless as a teacher.

Mr Barnes also indicated that he feels teachers are dispensable because nobody really cares about their safety at school. According to him if he gets killed by gangsters, he will be replaced by another educator the next day. He said:

You feel as if you as an educator are replaceable at the end of the day. If I get shot today, tomorrow someone else will be in my position at the school. You are replaceable that's the bottom line.

Many educators have expressed frustration that gangsterism has escalated dramatically over the years. It unfortunately affects the whole school community negatively. Mrs Bester, amongst other educators, felt frustrated that they are unable to find solutions to combat this negative phenomenon. She said, "Jy is moeilik met jousef want jy het nie 'n oplossing vir die kinders nie." (*You are miserable with yourself because you do not have a solution for the children*). Mrs Denny agreed with Mrs Bester and said, "I couldn't handle the fact that I can't do anything about it." Mr Carr pointed out that he is frustrated to "walk into a class and being saddled with so many social problems." He further said:

It's really frustrating coming here to listen to all of this and you know that there is nothing that you can do about it. There just seems to be no solution.

Commenting on anger, Mrs De Monk stated that she battles to understand how gangs in a community are allowed to place fear in people and operate their criminal activities 'freely'. Furthermore, gangs seem to get away with their criminal activities without fear of the justice system. She said:

In actual fact I get angry. I really get angry. Because the fact that a small group of the community is allowed to put terror in the hearts of children, teachers, parents and drug dealers are allowed to get away with it.

Teaching in gang-ridden communities has become a daunting task for certain educators. They feel that the problems associated with gangsterism far outweigh the job-fulfilment they would like to experience at these schools. Regarding this matter Mr Carr said, "The negative influences are so great and it impacts negatively on your teaching." Mr Barnes elaborated further on this point and also indicated that he is intending to resign in the near future. He said:

It is becoming very difficult. There are so many negatives compared to the amount of positives. There is no job satisfaction anymore. I think I've paid my dues.

Gangsterism and the problems associated with it have caused educators to feel overwhelmed. They are unable to 'switch off' from their work life when they go home. They felt that the situation is stressful and unfortunately they take it home with them. Mrs Bothma said, "Op die einde van die dag gaan jy met daai stres huis toe." Added to this Mr Barnes said, "It affects your home life, it affects your personal relationships and you go home with the stress."

Gang-related factors emotionally drain the educators. Mrs Bester indicated that when she arrives home after an incident, she has no energy to do any schoolwork and prefers to only sleep. She said:

Jy sê vir jouself jy het nou al die werk wat jy moet doen en jy sê dat jy wil 'n 'nap' vat, maar glo my jy 'nap' tot môre oggend want jy het nie lus nie. (You say to yourself that you have brought all this work to be done at home but instead you take a nap and believe me you sleep until the next morning because you do not feel like doing anything).

Moreover, Mrs Denny expressed that her encounters with gangsterism affected her in such a way that she did not display "normal behaviour." She said, "I went to the doctor got some pills and I just slept for two days."

A few educators seemed quite disgusted that some of their ex-learners have become gangsters. They felt that they were defeating their purpose to educate

these learners to become good citizens who contribute positively to society. Mrs Bester said:

Baie keer is dit die kinders wat miskien in jou klas was en nou is hy 'n gangster. Dan voel jy dat jy het jou tyd gemors want jy maak eintlik gangsters groot. (*Many times it is children that were in your class that is now a gangster. Then you feel as if you wasted your time because you are in actual fact raising gangsters*).

Mr Fargo related that he is disgusted by the thought that these gangsters “were actually in his class and they were sitting there.” He said, “Now they are hit men, they are now gangsters, they are now killers.”

On a positive note, some educators indicated that they do feel empathetic towards the learners affected by gangsterism. They iterated that they understand the situation in the community and they will do their best to assist wherever they can. Mr Carr said, “Most of us have an empathic relationship with the learners knowing where they come from and what they go through.” Mr Barnes agreed with Mr Carr and said, “You do feel a sense of empathy for the situation.” Echoing their sentiment, Mr Allie said:

We do have a lot of empathy. I have a lot of understanding for the learners at the school and most of us we are going out of our way to try and help these learners at the school.

4.3.4 Theme 4: Educators’ response on the role of the Education Department’s support for educator morale in gang-ridden communities.

The last question I posed to the educators was: “What in your opinion can the Western Cape Education Department do to boost educator morale?” Tempers were running high and the educators immediately responded negatively to this question. Instead of answering my question, they gave responses that I did not elicit. Two categories were therefore identified namely, the educators’ response on WCED’s lack of support and the suggestions to WCED for boosting educator morale.

4.3.4.1 Descriptions of the educators' response on WCED's lack of support

All the educators in the six focus group interviews expressed strong views on the lack of support by the Western Cape Education Department (WCED) for educators working in gang-ridden communities. They had the following complaints:

- Management does not care
- Management does not provide sufficient support structures
- Management is unreliable
- Management's expectations are unreasonable

Educators perceived the Department of Education as being unaware of the problems that exist in gang-infested schools. They accused WCED of not caring about them. Mrs Chatburn iterated that it is useless to send requests to management. According to her the hierarchy in the Education Department is in a 'comfort zone'. She said, "I think they really don't care. We don't even want to make a request because I don't think that they are capable of assisting us." Mr Faure agreed with Mrs Chatburn and said, "Nobody cares actually what's happening with us here and I'm talking about the Department of Education's view here." Mrs Barry pointed out that continuous restructuring is taking place within the government, but WCED she said, "vergeet van ons." (*forget about us*)

Furthermore, Mr Adams commented that management "do not see what the educators have to cope with." Added to this, Miss Elliot related that management is never available in the communities where they are needed. She said, "Hulle is nooit in daai areas waar dit rêrig nodig is nie om te kyk onder wat se druk ons werk nie." (*They are never in those areas where you really need them to see under which pressure we are working*). Moreover, Mr Faure was livid when he said, "The education department is doing absolutely nothing. We have a system that stinks. This you can report."

According to the educators, the assistance that management provides to them at present is inadequate for them to teach effectively. Although structures such

as the Safe Schools programme and the Bambanani Project are in place, they expressed that these projects do not solve the problems they are saddled with. Mr Allie is on the Safe Schools committee and has “close ties’ with the Education Department. He said, “At this stage they are not doing much to assist the teachers.” Mrs Appel further stated that staff of the Bambanani Project are not trained as “security people.” She said, “If anything should happen they are not trained to deal with gangsterism.”

In addition to this matter, Mrs Denny complained that although there is security at school, it is only available when the learners are present at school. Her concern is about security being unavailable for the educators after school hours. She said:

The people who are here to protect the school are only here for the children, the learners; they are not here for us. The Department of Education they let the police patrol in the area in the morning and in the afternoon when the children go home.

Counselling services are provided to the educators, but the educators felt that a once off counselling session with a counsellor does not solve their problems at school. Mr Barnes said, “They sent a counsellor and nothing happened.” Mrs Bester said that they were promised a counsellor to serve their schools’ needs on a permanent basis. She said, “Ons wag nou nog.”(*We are still waiting*)

Mrs Chatburn related that there is a 24 hour hotline available to educators for any issues that concern them. However, she stated that she does not want to speak to a counsellor she cannot see or does not know. She said:

A spokesperson of the WCED said we’ve got access to a wellness clinic and it’s a toll free number and they’re there for 24 hours. I mean you sit here traumatized by gangsterism and you have to talk to a counsellor you don’t even know.

Mr Allie reported that when their school experienced vandalism, they were unable to get hold of the people who could assist them with that incident. He felt that the Education Department is unreliable. He said:

The Safer Schools I tried to contact when there were burglaries over the weekend and vandalism, heavily vandalism at the school. The people I needed to speak to were just not available.

Agreeing with Mr Allie's sentiment, Mrs De monk said, "The Department of Education is the last department that you can depend on."

Educators expressed their disdain by saying it is unfair that they are expected to deliver the same quality of education as those schools that are not affected by gangsterism. According to the educators, the Education Department should be aware of the problems that they are faced with. They are, however, expected to deliver the same results as schools that are located in safer communities. Mr Bles summed up their comments effectively. He said:

Die department weet wat die omstandighede is van Manenberg maar hulle verwag dieselfde 'results' Manenberg moet produce wat die ander skole produce. Dit frustrate jou want hulle verwag jy moet nou dieselfde gehalte werk lewer. (*The department knows under which circumstances we are working in Manenberg but they expect Manenberg to produce similar results that other schools produce. This frustrates you because now they expect you to deliver a similar quality work*).

4.3.4.2 Educators' suggestions to management for morale boosters

After the educators had expressed their disappointment with the lack of support from the Western Cape Education Department, they made an attempt to give suggestions on what management could do to alleviate the problems they are saddled with in gang-ridden communities. The educators provided the following suggestions:

- A need for a psychologist stationed at schools
- Smaller classes and more educators
- Provide equal facilities
- Providing a platform to listen to the educators

Many educators felt that a full-time psychologist should be available at the school to assist them and the learners. A once-off counselling session is not sufficient to alleviate the problems they are experiencing. Mrs Chatburn said, "I think we need a psychologist." Mrs De Vries and Mr Elrick agreed with Mrs

Chatburn and said respectively, “We need a psychologist”; “Dienste soos sielkundige dienste.”(*Services such as counselling services*)

The educators indicated that having smaller classes and more educators would allow them to cope better with social problems. They would also be able to give the learners individual attention and quality education. Mrs Bothma said, “Kleiner klasse”(*Smaller classes*), while Mrs Bierman related that she does remedial teaching and she finds that smaller classes could be a solution to their problems. Thus “township schools need more teachers” according to Mrs De monk. Echoing this sentiment, Mrs Barry said, “Ekstra onderwysers is nodig in hierdie tipe areas.”(*Extra educators are needed in these types of areas*).

Mrs De Monk expressed her concern that schools located in gang-ridden communities do not have similar facilities as ex-model C schools. She felt that if the Department of Education could provide the school with equal facilities, it would boost the morale of educators. She said, “Provide equal facilities to that of ex-model C schools.”

Some educators felt that this was the first time that someone from outside the school had made an attempt to listen to what they have to say about how they feel working in gang-ridden communities. Mr Clark said: “What is happening now is the first time in my 17 years of teaching, where someone has come to speak to us.” Miss Elliot felt that it is “good to talk” because it “does a lot for you.” She said:

Soos ons nou hierso sit as hulle dit kan doen om jou moraal op te bou, sal hierdie klein groepies uitstekend wees om uit te vind dat jy is nie alleen is nie maar deel is van 'n legkaart. (*As we are sitting here it is an excellent manner to boost your morale because you will realise that you are not alone but are part of a puzzle*)

Mr Faure suggested that this type of platform should be used to ascertain what can be done for them. It will assist the Department of Education in getting their “act together” and doing something about the problems. He said:

But I think that it's time that we use these sort of platforms to speak out so that the Department itself must get their act together and make teaching for us worth while.

4.4 Summary

This chapter has presented the results of the research. It has outlined what the educators' perceptions are of their morale. The chapter has also presented the educators' responses to gang-related factors that affect their morale. It has further outlined the educators' feelings on the influence of gangsterism on their morale. Finally, the chapter has outlined the educators' responses on the Education Department's lack of support for educators in gang-ridden communities.

Based on the results in this chapter, the discussion, recommendations and conclusion on how gangsterism influences the morale of educators on the Cape Flats will be presented in Chapter Five.

CHAPTER 5 DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS OF RESULTS

5.1 Introduction

The main purpose of this research was to describe how gangsterism influences the morale of educators on the Cape Flats. The results of this research were presented in detail in Chapter Four. In this chapter, an overview of the findings is discussed, followed by a discussion of the results. Finally, the limitations encountered will be discussed and recommendations made.

5.2 Summary of the research

The research aimed to determine how gang-related factors influence the morale of educators working in gang-ridden communities on the Cape Flats. Furthermore, the research aimed to determine what the Education Department can do to boost educator morale in gang-ridden communities.

To achieve the objective of this research an unstructured interview and focus group interview design was utilized as an appropriate method to address the research question. Four primary schools and two high schools located in gang-ridden communities participated in this research. The number of educators, who participated in the focus group interview, varied between six and eleven people. A structured interview schedule was used during the focus group interview to determine which gang-related factors influence the morale of educators in order to address the research questions: “How does gangsterism influence the morale of educators on the Cape Flats?” and “How can educator morale be boosted in gang-ridden communities?”

5.3 Discussion and analysis

After the data was analysed a report of the unstructured interviews was written and four themes were identified from the focus group interviews. The report and the four themes identified in this research relate to how gangsterism influences educator morale. The unstructured interviews and focus group interviews results

validate each other. The first three themes relate to the first research question and the fourth theme relate to the second research question. I will therefore discuss the findings according to the themes documented in Chapter Four.

The *first theme* focuses on the educators' perception of their morale. The literature reviewed and the data collected indicate that morale is a subjective phenomenon (Andrew et al., 1985: 32). The educators who indicated that their morale was low expressed frustration. The findings are synonymous with Andrew et al. (1985:11), who indicate that low educator morale causes frustration, alienation and powerlessness amongst the educators. It is evident from the literature review and data that low educator morale is a disadvantage to everyone involved in the education process (Stedt and Fraser,1984: 70).

The data and literature (Andrew et al.,1985:32) highlight that the educators do not perceive their morale as a 'permanent condition'. The literature further indicates that morale is like a "roller coaster" (ibid). According to the data, educators expressed that they do not regard their morale as continuously low or high.

The data also indicated that certain educators perceived their morale as unaffected by gangsterism. I found no evidence of similar indications of unaffected morale in the literature reviewed. Thus the term 'unaffected morale' can be highlighted as a contribution to literature.

A few educators expressed that their morale is in fact boosted by gangsterism. It should be noted that the term 'boosted morale' was also not evident in the literature reviewed. However the term 'high morale' is evident and is to a certain degree synonymous with 'boosted morale'. The educators stated that gangsterism in the community motivates them to make a positive difference in their respective communities. Their view is aligned with high morale as indicated in the literature review (Evans, 1998:21).

An interesting fact in the data and literature is that educators also experience morale as a group phenomenon (Hershey, 1983:9). The data indicates that educators unite as a group when gang-related incidents occur. They offer moral

support and the physical presence of staff members create a sense of camaraderie. Thus educators do not allow gangsterism to deter them from working in gang-ridden communities.

The *second theme* identified was how gang-related factors affect educator morale. This theme was divided into five categories. In the *first category* a detailed description was given of educators' personal encounters with gangsterism. The data indicated that the educators who were victims of gangsterism perceived their morale as low. Magoon and Linkous (1979:21) allude to the fact that low morale can be attributed to gangsterism within the community spilling into the schools. According to Standing (2005:10), gangsterism is a selfish culture and has no regard for civil institutions such as schools. Furthermore, gangs in general disregard the justice system. I found this to be evident in the data.

In the *second category*, descriptions were given of how gangsterism affects the learners. It was evident in the data that learners find it difficult to resist the temptations that gangsterism offers. In this research, educators expressed their concerns and fears of how learners fall prey to gangsterism. The literature (see Kinnes, 1995:3 and Standing, 2005:14) explains that young people on the Cape Flats join gangs because of peer pressure and as a defence mechanism to protect themselves against crime and victimisation. According to the data, the learners perceive the gangs as their role models.

The data and literature emphasised that poverty is rife in gang-ridden communities on the Cape Flats (Pinnock, 1997:105). The unemployment rates in these communities are high, or parents earn a measly salary to provide their children with what they need or want. Unemployment and the lack of money cause poverty and therefore gangsterism is seen by the learners as a good option to eradicate poverty. According to the literature (Kinnes, 2000:54), a lack of job opportunities on the Cape Flats gives gangs a chance to entice learners to become involved in criminal activities, which promise far greater rewards than making an honest living. Therefore, as indicated in the data and literature, gangs capitalise on poverty stricken communities by promising the learners wealth and gifts such as designer

clothes and drugs. The data and literature concur that gangs give the youth a strong sense of belonging and identity (Pinnock 1997:44).

The data and the literature point out that gangs use schools to operate their criminal activities (Standing, 2005:2). School children are the victims as gangs target schools for selling drugs such as mandrax, dagga and the drug currently most frequently used by the youth, 'tik'. The data indicated that high schools are more at risk of the selling of drugs by gang members to the learners. The data highlights that the use of drugs at school by the learners can lead to the victimisation of fellow learners and educators. Thus educator morale is lowered as they see themselves as victims.

In addition to this, the data also indicated that both high and primary schools located in 'hotspots' (situated on the border of two opposing gang members) are more at risk of being caught in crossfire when gang conflict occurs. The educators and learners hear the gunshots and see gang members shooting at each other while the school programme is in progress. Being exposed to gang conflict in such a manner traumatises the learners and educators, which in turn affects their morale.

The data and the literature reviewed highlighted that gangs have a prominent stature in their communities (Kinnes, 2000:15). According to Kinnes, gangs strengthen their stature by providing food and money to the community. They are therefore able to commit their crimes without fear of being reported. There is evidence in the data of gangs committing crime and learners denying witnessing the crime when questioned by the police.

Further, the data illustrates that gangsterism disrupts the school's academic programme. Gang conflict has prompted certain schools on several occasions to cancel their academic programme for the day. It should also be noted that parents will fetch their children at any time of the school day when gang conflict in the neighbourhood occurs. The literature highlights that gangs are often territorial (Pinnock, 1997:42). Gangs, according to Nott et al. (1990:6), will protect their territories against rival gangs to ensure that they do not steal from their customers or victims on whom they survive. Thus if rival gangs enter their territory, the result

could be gang warfare that often spills over into the school ground and disrupt the academic programme (Pinnock, 1997:44). The data and the literature (Standing, 2005:2) indicate that gangs use dangerous weaponry in their warfare. In light of the above discussion the data and literature (see Ramsey et al., 2005:3) conclude that gang warfare can cause many learners to feel unsafe attending school.

According to the data, territorial activities may infringe on learners' freedom of movement, for example, to access the library to complete their school assignments. The literature explains that the reason for this is that, regardless of a learner not being part of a gang, they will be marked as an enemy if they live or move in a rival gangs territory (Pinnock, 1997:42). Thus educators are unable to effectively implement the criteria according to the National Curriculum Statement. Given the above information, it is evident that gangsterism deprives learners and educators of a safe environment conducive for effective education.

Gangsterism, as indicated in the data and literature, is a destructive phenomenon; it engages itself in criminal activities such as drug trading, pornography, robbery and murder. Unfortunately gangsterism has taken its unlawful place in society and it is well rooted in certain communities on the Cape Flats, as described by the educators and the literature reviewed. Gangsterism negatively affects almost everybody in the community where it occurs, especially the youth, as they are at a stage where they are vulnerable and impressionable. If this phenomenon is going to be allowed to carry on, with criminals continuously recruiting new members (our youth) to increase their growth in society, how can educators be expected to make a difference in these communities while working under such harsh circumstances?

In the *third category* the data indicates that the learners' affiliation with gangsterism causes the educators to be unable to discipline them according to the schools' rules and regulations. The learners could be gang members themselves; or their family members, for example where parents, siblings and cousins are part of a gang and its criminal activities. The result is that educators fear that the learner or their family might retaliate against them. This causes a negative relationship between educators and learners. The literature points out that learners who join gangs can be identified by their change in behaviour (Nott et al., 1990:5).

This means that the learners will display hostile behaviour towards their educators and peers.

I ascertained in the results of this research that high schools located in gang-ridden communities are more affected by gangsterism than primary schools in similar communities. According to the data and the literature, the reason for this is that some learners at high schools are already actively involved in gangsterism, whereas primary school learners could still be in the process of joining a gang (Nott et al., 1990:5). Nott et al. further note that, if an educator at primary school is able to identify the changes that occur within the learner who is joining a gang, the educator might be able to intervene. High schools are therefore more prone to being victimized by gangs on their school premises because members are looking for rival gang members. Yet, the anomaly is that the morale of educators in both high schools and primary schools are negatively affected by gangsterism.

The data in the *fourth category* highlights that certain educators are aggressive in the manner in which they address the learners who are affiliated with gangsterism. These educators indicated that, although they do not regard themselves as aggressive in nature, they are forced to change their personality in order to deal with these learners effectively. However, the data does indicate evidence of educators who maintain their professionalism regardless of whether or not a learner is affiliated with a gang.

Moreover, in the *fifth category*, another major problem that educators face, as highlighted in the data, is the way parents respond when their children are affiliated with a gang. According to the literature reviewed, parents feel guilty or embarrassed when they are confronted about this problem (Nott, et. al., 1990:11). The data and the literature indicate that parents are in denial when confronted by the school's management about their child's involvement in a gang-related incident. This causes the educators to become frustrated with the parents and the result is low morale.

The *third theme* identified how educators feel about the influence of gangsterism on their morale. The data indicates that the educators' morale is at a very low point

working in gang-ridden communities. The literature review highlighted that morale is associated with the educators' enthusiasm, happiness, pride, good school dynamics and joy (Hart et al., 2000:212). The data indicates a lack of evidence regarding Hart et al's notion. Evidence in the data and literature however highlights feelings of frustration, fear, demotivation and worthlessness by the educators (Andrew et al., 1985:11). These are all indicators of low morale.

The data indicates that the aspect of safety was a concern for the educators. The issue of safety is regarded as a lower need according to Maslow's hierarchy. Thus the literature review suggests that if lower needs such as safety remain unsatisfied, educators will be unable to pursue higher needs such as self-actualization (McClelland, 1985:42).

Moreover, job dissatisfaction amongst the educators is highlighted in the data. According to Herzberg's hypothesis, working conditions can be a factor that causes dissatisfaction (Sergiovanni, 1967:67). It is evident in the data that the educators are dissatisfied about their working conditions in gang-ridden communities. Furthermore, educators indicated in the data that their working conditions are affecting their personal life. Thus, as confirmed by the literature, they are experiencing job dissatisfaction (Sergiovanni, 1967:67).

In the data I found that educators working in gang-ridden communities for a decade or more make up the majority of the staff complement at the participating schools, which is an indication that newly appointed educators do not stay there for very long. Certain educators who participated in the focus group interview indicated that even though they have empathy for the learners, they are nonetheless planning to resign from their post in the near future because of gangsterism. I therefore conclude that schools located in gang-ridden communities could be faced with staff shortages and a high staff turnover rate.

I also found that the educators are not trained to deal with social problems related to gangsterism, yet they are expected to deal with it by their employer, the Education Department.

Teaching in gang-ridden communities is a daunting task. The results of this research showed many examples of educators being saddled with more than their prescribed duties. Educators have to deal with many social problems that the learners encounter, such as learners witnessing a murder, robbery or an ensuing gang-fight between rival gangs or the police happening during school hours or after school hours. Furthermore, learners were killed or injured in crossfire and this also affected the educators' morale.

The literature and data indicate that dealing with many social problems could lead to lowered morale (Andrew et al., 1985:39). According to the literature, pressurising educators to deal with ongoing social problems could be an instrumental factor which causes them to suffer from burn-out (Magoon and Linkous, 1979:22). The data clearly showed evidence of symptoms of burn-out among educators.

The *fourth theme* identified was the educators' response to the Western Cape Education Department's lack of support for those affected by gangsterism. The data and the literature highlight that projects such as the Safe Schools Project and Bamabani have been deployed for schools located in gang-ridden communities. The data however indicates that these are not sufficient to assist the educators in solving the social problems caused by gangsterism.

All the schools that participated in the research are known as previously disadvantaged schools. According to the literature previously disadvantaged schools are hardest hit by gangsterism (Eliasov and Frank, 2000:18). Furthermore, the data and the literature concur that learners' affiliation with gangs and violent gang-related incidents have negative effects on the school community (Ramsey et al., 2003:3).

In the data the educators expressed that the social problems they encounter due to gangsterism have escalated since the 1994 democratic elections. The literature supports this finding and highlights that gang activities have spiralled since the 1994 democratic elections (Standing, 2005:12). Whilst visiting the schools to conduct the interviews, I observed that the schools are polluted (plastic bags and

packets against the fence), have broken fences, show evidence of gunshots through the schools' windows, as well as learners who appeared neglected. Furthermore, all the schools were barricaded with burglar bars.

The data also indicates that the educators working in gang-ridden communities are expected to accomplish the same educational outcomes as their counterparts who are not plagued by this phenomenon. They deem this as unfair practice by their employer because they are saddled with social problems, inadequate facilities and overcrowded classrooms. The data and literature highlight that educators want their employer to work with them on an individual basis so that it can be made clear to their employer exactly what the problems they are facing (Evans, 1998:161). In essence, the educators want effective and continuous communication to take place between them and their employer, have structures such as permanent counsellors at school, as well as smaller classes and better security to safeguard them against gangsterism, to make teaching in gang-ridden communities worthwhile.

The lack of good school morale, as indicated in the data and the literature, can result in educator and learners being unable to live out their school's vision and mission (Briggs & Richardson, 1992:2). It is therefore evident that a school being unable to function effectively due to low educator morale can result in the learners being deprived of the right to proper education. The data also indicated that the effects of gangsterism in the school community have caused educators so many 'unnecessary problems' that in fact it actually far outweighs the positive reasons for teaching in gang-ridden communities.

In summary, the findings of the research indicate that gangsterism does influence the morale of educators working in gang-ridden communities. These educators are faced with many gang-related challenges that they are not equipped to deal with. Furthermore, the lack of effective assistance by their employer also affects educator morale negatively.

5.4 Limitations of the results

This research found that educators are not trained to deal with social problems associated with gangsterism in their respective communities. Their teacher training involved academic content and didactics. Thus educators have not been exposed to the reality of working in gang-ridden communities and have not been given strategies to deal with gangsterism. Further, the research found that not all educators have been trained as counsellors to assist learners who are severely traumatised by gang activities.

This research found that the Bambanani volunteers do not have sufficient training to combat gang-related crime encountered at schools. The educators also indicated that these volunteers are unarmed and do not serve as a deterrent for gangs coming onto the schools.

The Safe Schools Programme is not sufficient to assist the educators to deal with gang-related factors that affect their morale. However, the programme does assist the educators in reporting incidents of violence and crime, yet they are not involved in the decision making to help solve the gang-related problems they encounter.

According to the educators, the Western Cape Education Department officials do not conduct meetings with them to find out what problems they encounter that affect their morale. Meetings for academic matters are normally scheduled at other schools. Therefore the WCED officials are unable to observe the environment that the educators are working in.

5.5 Recommendations

The findings from this research are followed by recommendations with specific reference to the educational environment and further research.

5.5.1 Educational environment

A safe and peaceful environment can play a vital role in improving educator morale. However, if an environment is not conducive for effective teaching, educators can be deprived of job satisfaction. Choosing teaching as a profession is seen as a 'calling' and the rewards are in the satisfaction of seeing learners progress to the next level and ultimately become citizens who contribute positively to our country, South Africa. Educators teaching in gang-ridden communities are held accountable for educating and improving the lives of learners. However, it is impossible for them to eradicate poverty, unemployment and the unlawful activities that take place in these communities without additional support. Schools in gang-ridden communities need 24 hour security at the school to safeguard the role-players of the school and to guard against vandalism. However, the security staff need to be trained to deal with hard core gangsters. An active stance of zero tolerance needs to be taken collectively by the Education Department and the Department of Justice to effectively deal with gangsterism.

Training programmes can be introduced in gang-ridden communities to offer entrepreneurial skills to the unemployed people, especially the youth, as a stepping stone to encourage them not to join gangs. To create greater sense of ownership of the school and to develop a sense of pride amongst the people in the community

It is evident that the educators need a lot of support to improve their morale and to achieve their educational objectives. The Education Department can demonstrate their support by creating a platform where educators can voice their concerns about the challenges they are faced with in gang-ridden communities. However, it should be conducted personally with the educators. The Education Department could send officials once a quarter to address educators' concerns. A committee from the Education Department can be established to investigate the concerns and look for possible solutions.

Moreover, at school level, management can arrange that group discussions amongst educators be held to ascertain the problems they are faced with

regarding the environment where the school is located. A detailed report can be compiled of all the problems and possible solutions can be discussed and implemented. If, however, the problem cannot be solved, it should be referred to the Education Department.

Despite having a new democratic government in place, previously disadvantaged schools are still disadvantaged. Educators working in gang-ridden communities are faced with the same amount of work pressures as their counterparts in previously advantaged communities, despite the fact that they have to deal with endless gang-related social problems. The Education Department can offer their support by drastically reducing the educator-to-learner ratio, employing a permanent counsellor at each school, and by offering educators an incentive to work in gang-ridden communities.

5.5.2 Research

There is a need for further research to establish the morale disposition of all the educators working in gang-ridden communities by encouraging more support for these educators. There is a need to:

- Conduct research with a larger population of educators;
- Conduct research in schools in different gang-ridden communities to find out how other educators cope in similar situations;
- To develop a questionnaire based on the gang-related factors in this research to establish educator morale in all gang-infested schools on the Cape Flats and
- Conduct research on how to promote educator morale specifically for educators working in gang-ridden communities.

5.6 Conclusion

The educators illustrated in Chapter Four how gangsterism influenced their morale negatively or positively. The unstructured interviews provided a brief description on how educator morale can be influenced by gangsterism. Further, the themes and categories elicited of the focus group interviews gave a detailed description of gang-related factors that influences educator morale. The results in Chapter Four and Chapter Two concur overall in Chapter Five. I therefore conclude that findings

presented in Chapter Four and the discussion in Chapter Five has answered the research question in this study.

Furthermore, the educators in gang-ridden communities need to be saluted for the efforts they provide to the school community, despite the challenges they are faced with on a daily basis. Their resilience and passion for teaching have assisted them to persevere under the circumstances they are working. The sharing of their stories in this research will highlight their plight for quality education for all South African citizens.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A - LETTER TO SCHEDULE AN APPOINTMENT WITH PRINCIPALS

APPENDIX B – LETTER OF PERMISSION FROM WCED

APPENDIX C – LETTER OF INVITATION TO EDUCATORS

APPENDIX D – LETTER TO ALLOCATE A TIME FRAME TO PRINCIPALS

APPENDIX E – CONSENT LETTER FOR PRINCIPALS

APPENDIX F - CONSENT LETTER FOR EDUCATORS

APPENDIX G – STRUCTURED INTERVIEW SCHEDULE



Universiteit vir Tegnologie:
Kaapse Skiereiland
Cape Peninsula
University of Technology

Highbury Road
MOWBRAY

7700

9 March 2007

xxxxxxxx

Dear Sir/Madam

Re: Research on educator morale

I am currently a Masters in Education student at the above-mentioned institution. My thesis is titled: The influence of gangsterism on the morale of educators on the Cape Flats, Western Cape. I have identified the community where your school is situated, as a possible site that is gang-ridden. I am interested to do research on how this phenomenon affects the educators' morale. I will need between six and eleven volunteers of your staff to participate in a focus group interview (a once-off 1½ session) with a structured interview schedule.

I therefore request to schedule an appointment with you, to discuss my research topic on educator morale. The objective of the research is to create awareness on the morale of teachers working in these communities.

Attached please find a letter from the Western Cape Education Department granting me permission to do research in a public school.

Yours in building an empowered nation

Mrs K Dos Reis

APPENDIX B – LETTER OF PERMISSION FROM WCED

Mrs Karen Dos Reis
75 Letchworth Drive
EDGEMEAD
7441

Dear Mrs K. Dos Reis

RESEARCH PROPOSAL: THE INFLUENCE OF GANGSTERISM ON THE MORALE OF EDUCATORS IN THE WESTERN CAPE, CAPE FLATS.

Your application to conduct the above-mentioned research in schools in the Western Cape has been approved subject to the following conditions:

1. Principals, educators and learners are under no obligation to assist you in your investigation.
2. Principals, educators, learners and schools should not be identifiable in any way from the results of the investigation.
3. You make all the arrangements concerning your investigation.
4. Educators' programmes are not to be interrupted.
5. The Study is to be conducted from **2nd March 2007 to 21st September 2007.**
6. No research can be conducted during the fourth term as schools are preparing and finalizing syllabi for examinations (October to December 2007).
7. Should you wish to extend the period of your survey, please contact Dr R. Cornelissen at the contact numbers above quoting the reference number.
8. A photocopy of this letter is submitted to the Principal where the intended research is to be conducted.
9. Your research will be limited to the list of schools as submitted to the Western Cape Education Department.
10. A brief summary of the content, findings and recommendations is provided to the Director: Education Research.
11. The Department receives a copy of the completed report/dissertation/thesis addressed to:

**The Director: Education Research
Western Cape Education Department
Private Bag X9114
CAPE TOWN
8000**

We wish you success in your research.

Kind regards.

Signed: Ronald S. Cornelissen
for: **HEAD: EDUCATION**
DATE: 1st March 2007



Universiteit vir Tegnologie:
Kaapse Skiereiland
Cape Peninsula
University of Technology

Highbury Road
MOWBRAY

7700

14 March 2007

xxxxxxxxxx

Dear Sir/Madam

Re: Research on educator morale

I am currently a Masters in Education student at the above-mentioned institution. My thesis is titled: The influence of gangsterism on the morale of educators on the Cape Flats, Western Cape. I have identified the community where your school is situated, as a possible site that is gang-infested. I am interested to do research on how this phenomenon affects educator morale. I need between six and eleven volunteers to participate in a focus group interview (a once-off 1½ session) with a structured interview schedule. The objective of the research is to create awareness on educator morale in gang-ridden communities.

I therefore extend an invitation to educators who are willing to participate in this study. The participants' identity will be held strict confidentiality. If you are interested in participating in this project, please sms your name and school to the following cellular number: xxxxxx or contact your principal. I will contact you to make the necessary arrangements.

Yours in building an empowered nation

Mrs K Dos Reis



Universiteit vir Tegnologie:
Kaapse Skiereiland
Cape Peninsula
University of Technology

Highbury Road
MOWBRAY

7700

26 March 2007

xxxxxxxxxx

Dear Sir/Madam

Re: Research on educator morale

I would like to express my sincere thanks for agreeing to meet with me and allowing your staff to participate in the focus group interview.

I would like to schedule the focus group interview between the 29th of March and 20th of April 2007. Please confirm the date and time when the focus group interview will be held at your school.

Thank you once again for your time and patience.

Yours in education

Mrs Karen Dos Reis



**Universiteit vir Tegnologie:
Kaapse Skiereiland
Cape Peninsula
University of Technology**

Dear Sir/Madam

PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH

I am currently a Masters in Education student at the above-mentioned institution. My thesis is titled: The influence of gangsterism on the morale of educators on the Cape Flats, Western Cape. I have identified the community where your school is situated, as a possible site that is gang-infested. I am interested to do research on how this phenomenon affects educator morale. I need between six and eleven volunteers to participate in a focus group interview (a once-off 1½ session) with a structured interview schedule. The objective of the research is to create awareness on educator morale in gang-ridden communities.

The insight of your staff on this topic will be highly valued as they could provide first hand information regarding how gangsterism affects their morale.

With your permission, a tape recorder will be used for purposes of facilitating data analysis. Strict measures will be taken in order to protect your anonymity and confidentiality. I will ensure the anonymity of the participants and their schools by omitting the use of their names and/or the schools' names. Each interview will be audiotaped, transcribed verbatim by myself as the researcher.

The participation of your staff in this study is strictly voluntary and they are under no obligation to participate in the study. The participants will have the right to withdraw their at any stage during the research process should they wish to do so. A summary of the research finding will be made available to you on request.

Should you agree, you hereby give consent to the participation in the research.

Signed at _____ on the _____ day of _____ 2007.

.....
Signature: Principal

Thank you for your support



Universiteit vir Tegnologie:
Kaapse Skiereiland
Cape Peninsula
University of Technology

Dear Educator

PARTICIPATION IN A RESEARCH PROJECT

I am currently a Masters in Education student at the above-mentioned institution. My thesis is titled: The influence of gangsterism on the morale of educators on the Cape Flats, Western Cape. I have identified the community where your school is situated, as a possible site that is gang-infested. I am interested to do research on how this phenomenon affects educator morale. I need between six and eleven volunteers to participate in a focus group interview (a once-off 1½ session) with a structured interview schedule. The objective of the research is to create awareness on educator morale in gang-ridden communities.

Your insight on this topic will be highly valued as you could provide first hand information regarding how gangsterism affects your morale.

With your permission, a tape recorder will be used for purposes of facilitating data analysis. Strict measures will be taken in order to protect your anonymity and confidentiality. I will ensure the anonymity of the participants and their schools by omitting the use of their names and/or the schools' names. Each interview will be audiotaped, transcribed verbatim by myself as the researcher.

Your participation in this study is strictly voluntary and as a participant you are under no obligation to participate in the study. As participant you reserve the right to withdraw consent at any stage during the research process should you wish to do so. A summary of the research finding will be made available to you on request.

Should you agree, you hereby give consent to the participation in the research.

Signed at _____ on the _____ day of _____ 2007.

.....
Signature: Participant

Thank you for your support

APPENDIX G – STRUCTURED INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

- How does gangsterism in this community affect your morale at this school?
(Meaning: the amount of enthusiasm a person or group of people feel about their situation at a particular time)
- How does gangsterism in this particular area affect your relationship with the learners at this school?
- Can you give me examples of gang-related incidences that directly or indirectly affect your morale at this school?
- What in your opinion can the Western Cape Education Department do to boost educator morale?