



Guidelines for primary school educators dealing with learner aggression associated with psychological trauma

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Dissertation accepted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree *Master of Education in Educational Psychology* at the North-West University

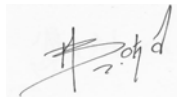
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VERKLARING / DECLARATION

I, the undersigned, hereby declare that the work contained in this dissertation is my own original work and that I have not previously in its entirety or in part submitted it at any university for a degree.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'J. van der...' with a stylized flourish at the end.

Signature

25 November 2019

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PREFACE

This study has been one of the most challenging endeavours of my life. It was an immense honour to undertake and complete this challenge.

First and foremost, my greatest thanks to our Lord for giving me the opportunity, the ability and the strength to undertake the challenge.

I would like to dedicate this study to:

- My darling husband, Marnus, for all your love and for always being in my corner.
- My parents, siblings and friends for all the unconditional love, support and encouragement.

Great appreciation to my supervisor, Prof JF Hay, for the guidance and support.

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this action research study was to collaborate with primary school educators to develop guidelines for use in the school context when dealing with learner aggression associated with psychological trauma. The intent was to develop these guidelines in a range of different quintile schools, in order to ensure that the guidelines are applicable to a wide range of schools and classrooms.

For the study, the constructivist paradigm was used as point of departure for the research methodology, combined with the interpretivist and transformative paradigms. The aim of interpretivism is the description, understanding and interpretation of reality that is multiple, realistic and context-bound. Experts on the transformative paradigm explain that this paradigm leads to research that can be influenced by a variety of philosophies and theories with the common theme of emancipation and transformation of communities, through group action. In this instance, it included educators from various schools and circumstances to ensure that the study leads to empowerment and transformation that could be applicable to most primary school classrooms. Three primary schools in an education district in the North-West Province, from different quintiles, were asked to take part in the study. This allowed the researcher to gather information from various sources and socio-economic levels to provide a more holistic understanding of the phenomenon. Action research has been shown to empower teachers to sustain change in the workplace – here primary schools – to have a lasting impact on the lives of learners. Action research was therefore deemed appropriate for the study. Action research aims to democratise the process of knowledge creation, address inequality, limit social conflict and stress the importance that educators should be involved in actions that are intended to change or adapt the education system. In the study the action research process and all the cycles therein are discussed, providing a deeper explanation of action research or, in this case, more specifically participatory action learning and action research. Participatory action learning and action research indicates an endless learning cycle during which those involved generate new knowledge and draw from the newly generated knowledge to enable sustainable and relevant social change for the community.

Educators realise that they have a collective responsibility to improve their own practice to the benefit of the entire community. The guidelines developed during this research on how to deal with learners demonstrating aggression based on traumatic experiences, are

thus aimed to empower educators to provide the most effective support to learners in these situations.

The findings have shown that most teachers feel that they do not have the knowledge they require in dealing with learners who behave in this manner, and they have come to the realisation that the way most of them have handled these learners in the past may have possibly done some damage. All of the participants indicated that they had come across such learners in their classrooms, experienced a wide array of aggressive symptoms associated with trauma. The participants furthermore also contributed richly on how such guidelines should be developed.

From the study it was deduced that a substantial need exists to capacitate educators on how to handle learners demonstrating aggressive behaviour based on trauma – and it is the researcher’s hope that these guidelines will address this need.

Key terms: Aggression, educator, learner, middle childhood, psychological trauma and posttraumatic stress disorder.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AECMHI	Australian Early Childhood Mental Health Initiative
DSM-V	Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders
NCTSN	National Child Traumatic Stress Network
NSVS	National School Violence Study
PALAR	Participatory action learning and action research
PTSD	Posttraumatic stress disorder
SACE	South African Council for Educators

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CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION AND ORIENTATION

1.1 Introduction, background and rationale

Violent and aggressive behaviour of learners and students have attracted substantial media and research attention across South Africa (Burton & Leoschut, 2013). One example relates to the findings of the second National School Violence Study (NSVS) conducted in 2012 by Burton and Leoschut, in which the extent to which family and community factors in South Africa are intersecting with levels of violent and aggressive behaviour occurring in schools has been highlighted. The NSVS results portray that upon entering high school, a large number of learners have previously been exposed to violence. More than a tenth of those participating in the NSVS have seen family members intentionally hurt one another, while one in ten learners has been assaulted at home (Burton & Leoschut, 2013). Events of such a violent and aggressive nature can be experienced as traumatic for those involved.

According to the National Child Traumatic Stress Network (NCTSN), in the United States of America, trauma can be described from a psychological perspective involving the experience of an emotionally painful or difficult event, which often leads to the development of traumatic symptoms that have a lasting mental and physical impact (NCTSN, 2008). Children (learners) can be exposed to traumatic events in various ways, including neglect by parents (emotional or physical) and abuse, whether physical, sexual or emotional, as well as exposure to violence (Collin-Vétaylorzina *et al.*, 2011).

The concept “traumatic event” can be classified in emotional and behavioural terms; identification occurs by using key moments in the development during which traumatic events have occurred (Nader, 2008; Taylor & Siegfried, 2005). Using classification of the trauma allows one to identify conceivable trauma triggers, to predict behavioural patterns and to identify factors that increase the risk of victimisation and possibly increase mental health problems in future (Nader, 2008; Taylor & Siegfried, 2005).

South African research on the psychosocial impact of trauma has grown in recent years. However, Kaminer and Eagle (2010) state there is a lack of local data on risk and protective factors of trauma, developmental aspects of trauma and effective

intervention strategies. South Africa has a high rate of various types of violent behaviour, such as sexual abuse, physical abuse, criminal victimisation, assault and school-based violence (Burton, 2006; Seedat *et al.*, 2009), in addition to a high number of accidental injuries within and outside the home (Matzopoulos *et al.*, 2008; Van Niekerk *et al.*, 2004). For most children living in such circumstances, the trauma that follows can be described as a condition rather than an event (Finkelhor *et al.*, 2007).

Furthermore, for many South African children, multiple traumatisations occur within a broader context. Kaminer and Eagle (2010:226) explain that this “places a burden on family structures as well as parental coping capacities”, on “an inadequate educational system” and on “limited mental health services for children”. Learners’ academic performance and holistic development (physical, emotional and social) are highly dependent on the management of learner aggression in the school system (Singh & Steyn, 2013). A clear understanding of contributory factors to and forms of learner aggression is important to manage learner aggression. In this regard, various factors contribute to learner aggression (Singh & Steyn, 2013), including school-related factors and environmental factors.

The Bill of Rights of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (Republic of South Africa, 1996) guarantees a safe environment for all citizens. After experiencing family violence, either as witnesses or victims, children and adolescents are likely to ascribe negative feelings towards their parents. These negative feelings can lead to learners being aggressive (Spillane-Grieco, 2000), and “without effective behaviour management, a positive and productive classroom and school environment will be impossible to achieve” (Lewis *et al.*, 2008:715).

The NSVS conducted by the Centre for Justice and Crime Prevention (2016) involved 12 794 learners from primary and secondary schools. The study determined that 15.3% of children in primary and secondary schools have experienced some form of violence while at school. However, the findings have to be contextualised within the family and community environments of these learners.

The same centre makes the following statement on its website:

The findings point to the need for an integrated strategy to dealing with school violence, addressing both short-term and longer-term change. Immediate measures such as situational prevention in the schools can limit

weapons, drugs and alcohol on school grounds, as well as making schools generally safer.

Leoschut and Kafaar (2017) emphasise that violence (and aggression) has become a characteristic feature of the South African society, where mostly women and children are affected by it. Understanding violence and the causes of violent actions may prevent or reduce child victimisation, as suggested by research.

1.2 Problem statement and purpose of the study

The purpose of this action research study was to collaborate with educators to develop guidelines for primary school educators to apply in school context when dealing with learner aggression associated with psychological trauma. As stated in the Introduction, South Africa's learners are under siege of violence and the concomitant aggression and trauma it brings. Educators (and the school system) may benefit substantially from guidelines on how to deal with these learners. The intent was thus to develop guidelines in a range of different quintile schools, to ensure that the guidelines are applicable to a wide range of educators.

1.3 Research questions

Questions form part of all scientific research studies. Formulating a clear research question allowed me to remain focused and ensured that the purpose of the research would be achieved.

1.3.1 Primary research question

The following primary research question has been formulated for the purpose of the research: What guidelines are needed to capacitate primary school educators in dealing with learner aggression associated with psychological trauma?

1.3.2 Secondary research questions

Underlying the primary research question, the following secondary research questions have been formulated:

- What are the experiences of primary school educators regarding learner aggression associated with psychological trauma?
- How do primary school learners react when exposed to trauma?

- What are the various contributory factors to aggressive behaviour shown by primary school learners?
- What knowledge do primary school educators require to support primary school learners showing aggression associated with psychological trauma?

1.4 Concept clarification

1.4.1 Aggression

Bandura (as cited in Lochman *et al.*, 2012) explains “aggression” as interpersonal actions that are primarily set. A person will thus react towards a specific situation in a particular manner. These actions comprise verbal or physical behaviour that can be disruptive or injurious to other people or objects (Lochman *et al.*, 2012). Tremblay *et al.*, (1993) state that aggression can roughly be defined as occurrences leading to a set of behaviours that range from typical and adaptive behaviour to atypical and maladaptive behaviour. This behaviour would most likely be anger and frustration shown in the person’s behaviour and a wish or need to inflict pain. Aggression can thus be viewed as behaviour that causes physical or emotional harm to the person him- or herself or others (Gabbey & Jewell, 2016). According to Cherry (2016), aggression refers to a range of behaviours that can lead to physical or psychological damage to the person him- or herself, others or objects in the environment. The manifestations of aggression can include several types, such as verbal, emotional and physical aggression (Cherry, 2016).

1.4.2 Educator

According to Van Rensburg and Landman (cited by De Witt, 2016), an “educator” represents a professionally trained adult who assumes the responsibility for accompanying a child (learner) on his or her voyage to maturity.

1.4.3 Learner

“Learner” in this context indicates a primary school learner in the period between six and twelve years of age (Bender, 1996). According to Bender (1996), a learner in primary school can be classified as being in middle childhood. The age range of the

middle childhood cycle is approximately between six and twelve years, which mainly represents the foundation and intermediate cycles of schooling in South Africa.

The above-mentioned definition explains a learner in the broader context. For the purpose of the study, “learner” can be categorised as a school-going child in middle childhood. Green (2009) explains this to be the period in life that is characterised by the consolidation, refinement and expansion of earlier gains.

1.4.4 Middle childhood

Age six to twelve is generally defined as “middle childhood” (Bennett *et al.*, 2016). During middle childhood, a child develops skills to build healthy social relationships. Green (2009) defines the middle childhood as the period between the onset and the shedding of milk teeth.

1.4.5 Psychological trauma

The Centre of Non-violence and Social Justice (2014) based in the United States of America, defines “trauma” as experiences or situations that are described as emotionally painful and distressing, which influence people’s ability to cope and often leave them feeling powerless. Furthermore, “psychological trauma” is defined in the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-V, 2013) as a direct personal experience of an event that entails death or the possibility of death, as well as events that could lead to serious injury or other physical threats.

According to the conclusion arrived at by the Australian Early Childhood Mental Health Initiative (2010), a traumatic event or situation is when a person’s life is endangered or when serious injuries are sustained, such as a car accident, a natural disaster, an operation or being a victim of crime. A traumatic experience is an incident that is so daunting that the experience overwhelms a person’s ability to handle and process the event. The trauma-handling techniques a person has are weakened, and this leads to a feeling of impotence (AECMI, 2010).

1.4.6 Posttraumatic stress disorder

According to the DSM-V (2013:463-464), “posttraumatic stress disorder” can be described as follows:

The essential feature of posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD) is the development of characteristic symptoms following exposure to an extreme traumatic stressor involving direct personal experience of an event that involves actual or threatened death or serious injury, or other threat to the physical integrity; or witnessing an event that involves death, injury, or a threat to the physical integrity of another person, or learning about unexpected or violent death, serious harm, or threat of death or injury experienced by a family member or other close associate (Criterion A1). The person’s response to the event must involve intense fear, helplessness, or horror (or in children, the response must involve disorganized or agitated behaviour on (Criterion A2).

Goelitz and Stewart-Kahn (2013) define PTSD as a disorder that develops due to exposure to a traumatic event or events. PTSD requires the following symptoms for at least a month: emotional distress and fear; disgust; helplessness; flashbacks or nightmares of the events; avoiding situations that hold memories of the situation; and increased arousal.

1.5 Theoretical framework

The theoretical framework utilised in this study aimed to understand the variety of influences South African educators are faced with as individuals in their primary school classrooms. Apart from the broader systemic influences, it also includes psychological trauma, PTSD and aggressive behaviour of learners

In order to achieve this goal, personology and the ecosystemic approach were the two frameworks selected as theoretical basis of the study. As these were both highly appropriate, I mainly focused on the mentioned theories to understand the educator and the learner experiencing aggression associated with psychological trauma better. Jordaan (1994) describes personology as a formal counterpart of informal knowledge of human nature. According to Meyer *et al.*, (2013), personology ranges from the individual to the ecosystem. Taking the view of Meyer *et al.*, (2013) into account, for the purpose of this study, an ecosystemic approach was supported by the use of personology, since human nature plays an important role in the manner in which an individual will conduct him- or herself.

The ecosystemic approach can be explained not as a specific personality theory, but rather an integration of particular fields of study (Meyer *et al.*, 2013). An ecosystemic approach emphasises a specific thought process. The term *ecosystemic* implies an approach, a way of looking at the functioning of humans with the focus on systems. An ecosystemic approach assumes that any view of the person will be regarded as only one possible construction of reality (Meyer *et al.*, 2013). The following diagramme has been adapted from Jasnoski (cited in O'Connor & Lubin, 1984:44) to explain the structural framework of the ecosystemic approach.

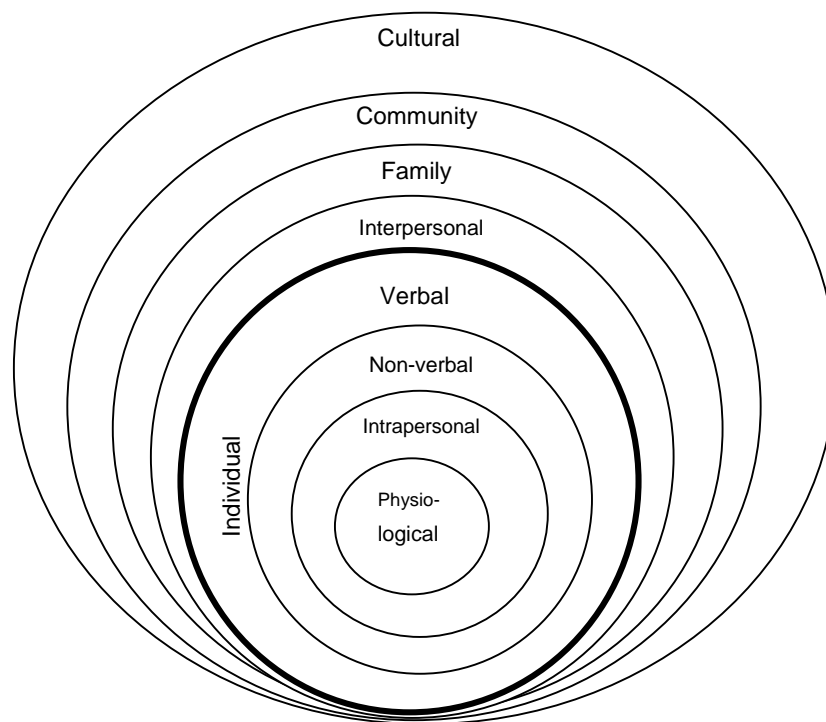


Figure 1-1: Structural framework of ecosystemic approach focusing on the individual (adapted from Jasnoski, as cited in O'Connor & Lubin, 1984:44).

An ecosystemic approach, by its very nature, assumes that all stakeholders in the educational context play a role in the educational structure and process. The views, perceptions and expectations of all role players are taken into account in the decision-making that affects the process and structures in the educational context (Meyer *et al.*, 2013).

The view of the person implicated in the approach is of equal importance. Meyer *et al.*, (2013) describe personology as a subject which everyone knows something about. Everyone has implicit theories and ideas regarding the functioning of humans. The study would be conducted using the branch of psychology named personology. Personology provides remarkable benefits; it allows for the re-examining of the views regarding human functioning and leads to a better understanding of this functioning (Meyer *et al.*, 2013). Meyer *et al.*, (2013:16) define personology as follows:

Personology is the branch of psychology which focuses on the study of the individual's characteristics and of differences between people. It therefore covers essentially the same ground as everyday knowledge of human nature, namely those abilities which enable us to say that we know someone well.

The above-mentioned combination of an ecosystemic approach, supported by personology, was used to broaden the theoretical use of personology to a larger view of the individual and all the factors that play a role in the development and reactions of this individual. The ecosystemic approach was then adapted to place the educator at the centre of the theory to get a clear view of the various influences on the educator and his or her classroom. Using this approach, I was allowed to focus mainly on the situation of the educator in the South African context, followed by a detailed look at psychological trauma, PTSD and aggressive behaviour of learners, as well as the influence a learner's personality (using personology) and ecosystemic aspects may have on the behaviour of the learner after a traumatic event.

1.6 Research design and methodology: overview

1.6.1 Research paradigm and approach

Maree (2010) explains there are four underlying worldviews in research: positivism, post-positivism, critical theory and constructivism. For this study, the constructivist worldview was used, combined with the interpretivist and transformative paradigm. An interpretivist paradigm is often used in combination with constructivism (Creswell, 2014). The aim of interpretivism is the description, understanding and interpretation of reality that are multiple, realistic and context-bound (Merriam, 2009). The transformative paradigm, on the other hand, leads to research that can be influenced by a variety of philosophies and theories with the common theme of emancipation and transformation of communities through group action. Combining these two paradigms

ensures that the educators will form part of the team attempting to change their environment and empower themselves with new knowledge and skills.

When choosing the type of research that would be most appropriate, one has to take into account what the research aimed at. The study aims not only to gain an understanding of the influences on South African educators and their primary school classrooms, but to better comprehend psychological trauma, PTSD and aggressive behaviour of learners in these classrooms as well. Action research has been shown not only to improve understanding of a phenomenon, but also to empower educators to sustain change in the workplace such as schools and have a lasting impact on the lives of learners (Joubert *et al.*, 2016). An action research approach was deemed as highly appropriate for the study.

1.6.2 Research design

A predominant qualitative research design was used for the study, more specifically action research from an interpretivist and transformative research paradigm. Three primary schools in an education district in the North-West Province, from different quintiles, were requested to take part in the study, with a number of educators participating. This design allowed for me (and participants) to gather information from various sources of observation and aimed to provide a more holistic understanding of the phenomenon and to reflect on the guidelines that would be most effective.

1.6.3 Research methodology

In order to develop guidelines for primary school educators when dealing with learner aggression associated with psychological trauma, a qualitative research design was used with action research methodology, from both an interpretivist and transformative research paradigm.

Participatory action learning and action research (PALAR) was used for the purpose of this study. PALAR aims to democratise the knowledge creation process, address inequality, limit social conflict and stress the importance that educators be involved with actions that are intended to change or adapt the education system (Koshy, 2005). Wood and Zuber-Sherrit (2013) explain that PALAR follows a cycle similar to most action research methods. In order to ensure that this method is effective, the

researcher and the participants collaborate in respect of their needs and decide on the best course of action, implement the action all those involved decided on, evaluate the action taken and decide on further action together.

1.6.3.1 Participant recruitment

Educational research relies on the participants' knowledge, perceptions, experiences or beliefs as a source of information (Joubert *et al.*, 2016). The selection of both the schools and the participants was done by different sampling methods. An in-depth explanation of the sampling is presented in collaboration with the data collection in Chapter 4.

1.6.3.1.1 Sampling of schools

Convenience and quota sampling were used in combination to select the schools for the research. A detailed description of a sample obtained through this method can support the reliability of the research results to a large extent (Joubert *et al.*, 2016). Convenience sampling allowed me to select schools based on their convenient location and accessibility. By using quota sampling, the researcher identified categories of schools and the required number (quota) in the identified categories.

1.6.3.1.2 Sampling of participants

Purposive sampling, that is, sampling made with a specific purpose in mind, was used for the sampling of the participants (educators) in the selected schools.

Subsequent to my briefing the principals of the schools involved, they discussed the possibility of the research with the educators and inquired about their opinions. The principal then arranged that I meet those who required more information or those who were interested to meet with me.

1.6.3.2 Data generation

I firstly obtained consent from all of the stakeholders and ensured that all ethical conditions had been met before the data collection took place in accordance with the conditions of the ethical clearance given by the North-West University. Before the empirical research took place, I obtained consent from the principals of each of the

schools, as well as consent from the district office or director of the Kenneth Kaunda education district of North-West Province.

The data collection was rolled out in different cycles as research conducted through action research requires. A detailed explanation of these cycles follows in Chapter 4. Data collection in the study was done as set out in Table 1-1 below.

Table 1-1: Cycles in the data collection.

Pre-conference cycle:		
<p>Three schools and a number of educators were chosen using a combination of convenience, quota and purposive sampling.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Schools in the district close to me were used in the study (convenience sampling). ○ Three schools in the district were selected: each from different group quintiles – a school from quintile 1 and 2, a school from quintile 3, and a school from quintile 4 and 5 (quota sampling). ○ Educators were recruited in each school – eventually totalling 11 (purposive sampling). 		
Cycle 1 – Relationship and research		
Stage 1:	Stage 2:	Stage 3:
Introduction	One-on-one action learning set	Group action learning set
<p>Introduction to the study including compiling shared objectives and purpose of the study to participants. I discussed the proposed process of the research with the participants. They gave their input on the proposal and we decided on a mutually beneficial process and aim.</p>	<p>During the one-on-one action learning set, I asked the participants questions related to their biographic information, teaching experience, as well as educators’ knowledge and experiences of learners who display aggression that may be related to traumatic experiences.</p>	<p>A group action learning set took place per school with all the participants. During these discussions, the participants and I informally discussed opinions, experiences and ideas regarding possible guidelines needed in dealing with learner aggression associated with psychological trauma.</p>

Cycle 2 – Implementation		
Stage 1: Implementation of guidelines (trial cycle)		
<p>During this stage of the research, the participants implemented the guidelines compiled during the group action learning set in Cycle 1: Stage 3. During this stage, I was in contact with the participants once a month. This ensured that the action research process was and stayed valuable to the educators as well as the learners.</p>		
Cycle 3 – Reflection and research on implementation		
Stage 1:	Stage 2:	Stage 3:
Group action learning set reflecting on guidelines per school	Group action learning set reflecting on final guidelines	One-on-one action learning set - reflecting about the research process
<p>Collaboration, collection and analysis were used to gather information on Cycle 2: Stage 1 (Implementation of guidelines). Collaboration, collection and analysis were conducted separately at each school, including all participants of that specific school. This was used to gather perceptions and opinions of the participants regarding the gap or gaps in the guidelines or possible amendments or</p>	<p>The final guidelines compiled from input received from participants from various schools were analysed and discussed with the participants as a group. Reflection on the validity and usefulness of the guidelines for the specific school took place.</p>	<p>Individual discussion and reflections of the participants on their knowledge and skill development was done to gather any and all individual input that participants might not want to share with a group of colleagues. After this, all the data (including opinions and experiences of participants) were taken into account and the final guidelines that are appropriate for schools in all relevant quintiles were developed.</p>

changes that need to be made.		
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1.6.3.3 Data analysis and interpretation

For the purpose of the study, content analysis was used. The goal of content analysis is to identify general themes or, in this case, guidelines, in participants' comments or opinions, about this particular phenomenon (Leedy & Ormrod, 2010).

The qualitative data gathered during the study were the following:

- Educators were requested to complete a questionnaire, combining a small amount of quantitative data (years' experience, etc.) with qualitative research in the form of their opinions and specific cases they have handled where learners show aggression after psychological trauma (Cycle 1: Stage 2). The reason for the collection of the specific data was to ensure that educators who formed part of the study were qualified and had adequate experience.
- The opinions, experiences and ideas of the participants regarding possible guidelines (Cycle 1: Stage 3).
- The reflective individual discussions with the participants during the implementation of guidelines stage (Cycle 2: Stage 1). The discussions were to ensure that the implementation was and stayed within the educators' frame of expertise and that no learners showed severe signs of traumatic stress that needed to be addressed by a trained professional, for example a social worker, counsellor or psychologist.
- The perceptions and opinions of the participants regarding guidelines that needed to be amended or eliminated (Cycle 3), as well as input from the participants regarding the final set of guidelines. This was done in Stage 1 in the form of focus group interviews. The aim of these focus groups was to gather information in the implementation cycle (Cycle 2: Stage 1). The interviews allowed the educators from the specific school to share their perceptions and opinions regarding their views on the guidelines and their effectiveness in their school. Stage 2 allowed me to conduct semi-structured group interviews with the participants of the schools involved after having given them the amended guidelines. The final guidelines compiled from input received from the

participants from the various schools were discussed with the participants as a group, allowing the participants to agree or disagree with amendment or changes made by other educators. Stage 3 presented the individual participant with a safe space where he or she could share an opinion or concern that he or she did not feel comfortable with sharing in front of other participants from the school. This presented the participant with a final opportunity, should he or she wish to share something with me.

The above-mentioned methods allowed me to identify where the needs of a particular school in a specific quintile may coincide with or differ from those in another quintile. Taking the information from various schools and comparing gaps and issues experienced by the educator, I was able to combine and amend the guidelines in order to ensure that the guidelines would be effective and applicable if implemented in a large variety of schools.

All of the interviews conducted were recorded to make transcribing possible (*cf.* Henning *et al.*, 2004).

1.7 Role of the researcher

According to Maree (2010), qualitative research is a subjective investigation in which the researcher is used as a research instrument in the data collection and data analysis cycles. During PALAR, the role of the researcher differs from that of other more traditional research methods.

Ethics can be seen as morally and ethically responsible behaviour of the researcher, thus executing the research ethically and behaving ethically towards each participant. The study was carried out on the basis of the ethical considerations discussed in more detail later on. I was aware that there might be ethical issues due to the fact that the study included topics that were of a sensitive nature. Trauma is a sensitive topic, and steps were taken to protect the participants and the learners from psychological harm. A detailed description of the ethical considerations of the study follows in Chapter 4.

1.8 Ethical considerations and trustworthiness

To ensure that all research is conducted in a moral and ethical manner, the responsible behaviour of the researcher and participants are valuable and necessary. A brief description of the ethical considerations of the research involves the following:

- Consent should be obtained from all parties involved (department and participants).
- Each participant should be provided with detailed information regarding the study.
- All participants should be ensured that their participation is voluntary.
- The confidentiality of participants should be guaranteed.

A detailed discussion of the ethical considerations carried out in the study is presented in Chapter 4.

1.9 Contribution of the study

Despite the enormous potential for personal reflection and development in PALAR (Noffke, 1997), questions arose about the impact of this type of research on the development of communities. McNiff and Whitehead (2002) unequivocally state that clear empirical evidence suggests that research into teaching has certainly had an influence on the quality of teaching and learning within the broad education community. Educators realise that they have a collective responsibility to improve their own practice to the benefit of the entire community. The research aim was to identify and compile guidelines for primary school educators dealing with learner aggression associated with trauma. By identifying and compiling these guidelines for educators to apply in their classrooms and schools, educators will experience an improvement in their relationship with learners and discipline and be empowered to provide the most effective support to learners in these situations.

McMillan and Schumacher (2010) agree on the many benefits of action research. One of the benefits is that stakeholders have an opportunity to cooperate in the investigation process and can reflect on the results and on the meaning the study adds to their practices. The study involved various stakeholders in the education process and serves as a powerful and professional developmental action. The study can

change the climate of a school to an open, reflective atmosphere in which it would be acceptable to evaluate teaching methods in a transparent manner. This atmosphere offers educators the opportunity to take risks in designing teamwork and practices that can lead to a better understanding of their particular school community.

1.10 Layout of the study

Chapter 1: Introduction, background and rationale of the study. This chapter orientates the reader regarding the research problem and research goals. The research design and methodology are briefly mentioned to provide a starting point for the reader.

Chapter 2: Chapter 2 provides the reader with a background regarding the influences on South African educators and their primary school classrooms.

Chapter 3: Psychological trauma, PTSD and aggressive behaviour are explained. The influence a learner's personality (using personology) and ecosystemic aspects may have on the behaviour of a learner after a traumatic event is discussed.

Chapter 4: Chapter 4 provides a detailed description of the research design and methodology used in the study.

Chapter 5: The data collection, data analysis, the findings of the study and the empirical research are discussed in depth.

Chapter 6: A conclusion to the study is presented. The guidelines for educators in dealing with learner aggression associated with psychological trauma compiled during the course of the study are provided.

CHAPTER 2 INFLUENCES ON SOUTH AFRICAN EDUCATORS AND THEIR PRIMARY SCHOOL CLASSROOMS

2.1 Introduction

The literature review of the study consists of two chapters. Chapter 2 starts with a focus on primary school educators and the influences to which they and their classes are exposed. This will set the scene for Chapter 3, where the focus moves to the learners in these classrooms who may have been exposed to trauma and react with aggression.

The role of the educator is multifaceted and complex; therefore this chapter will provide a description and explanation of the role of the South African educator in the primary school classroom experiencing a vast number of influences. Overall, the study aims at compiling guidelines for primary school educators when dealing with learner aggression. These guidelines should support educators by exploring the general role the educator plays when dealing with behavioural challenges in the classroom. Therefore, in order to truly understand and comprehend where educators come from, as well as what is needed to deal with the challenges they face on a daily basis, all contributing systems that have an influence on the educator and the classroom need to be examined. In Chapter 2, the various influences on the educator and the primary school classroom are explained using Bronfenbrenner's ecosystemic approach as a theoretical point of departure, with the educator as the main focal point. Chapter 3 then, as stated, provides an in-depth discussion of the learner as individual, which includes the influence the environment has on the learner, as well as the role the personality of the learner plays in his or her reaction to psychological trauma.

The NSVS conducted by the Centre for Justice and Crime Prevention (2016) revealed that 15.3% of learners experienced some form of violence while at school. This, in turn, influences the educator who has to deal with the learners exposed to violence on a daily basis, often placing the educator in danger. The Bill of Rights of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (Republic of South Africa 1996), guarantees a safe environment for all citizens. However, a safe environment will be impossible to achieve without effective behaviour management, and a positive and productive classroom and school environment (Lewis *et al.*, 2008). As mentioned, a safe environment is provided

by effective behavioural management and a positive environment in the classroom and the school. However, even within a safe environment, with effective behavioural management and a positive environment in the classroom and the school, for various reasons, some learners still act out in an aggressive manner. The learners' academic performance and holistic development (physical, emotional and social) are often highly dependent on the management of learner aggression in the school system (Singh & Steyn, 2013). A safe environment, effective behavioural management and a positive atmosphere in the classroom and the school are therefore mainly the responsibility of the educator – a system which creates serious challenges.

A clear understanding of the contributory factors and forms of learner aggression is important for educators to manage it, as a wide range of factors contribute to learner aggression (Singh & Steyn, 2013). These include school-related factors as well as environmental factors. Therefore, for one to understand the behaviour of the learner, as well as how educators should react towards behaviour displayed by learners, one has to take a clear look at the educator's role in the classroom and in the school context, as well as how best to handle aggressive behaviour shown by learners in middle childhood. Empowering an educator with the knowledge and skills to address these issues may ensure a safe environment, effective behavioural management and a positive atmosphere in the classroom and the school for both the educator and the learner. In order to understand the influence of various systems on the educator, the classroom, the school and the education processes, Bronfenbrenner's ecosystemic perspective provides an appropriate point of departure. In this chapter, this perspective will be adjusted to focus on the educator as an individual among all the surrounding systems in which he or she operates, and not only on the learner, as in Bronfenbrenner's ecosystemic theory.

2.2 Theory of Bronfenbrenner's ecosystemic perspective

Bronfenbrenner's (1979) ecological systems theory places individuals in a particular context, namely within the microsystem, mesosystem, exosystem and macrosystem. Bronfenbrenner (1989) later engaged in self-criticism for discounting the role the individual plays in his or her own development and focusing too much on context. Bronfenbrenner's earlier theories (1977 and 1979) were revised, extended and altered. These earlier theories were ecological in nature, stressing individual-context

interrelatedness (Tudge *et al.*, 1997). The single most important change from earlier writings is the concern about processes of human development. However, following the revision and alteration, in the 1990s, the proximal processes were identified as a key factor in development (Bronfenbrenner, 1999; Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 1998).

These proximal processes are fundamental to Bronfenbrenner's ecosystemic perspective. The nature of proximal processes varies, according to the individual as well as the context (Bronfenbrenner, 2005; Bronfenbrenner & Evans, 2000). Tudge *et al.*, (2003) define proximal processes as the development of a human that takes place through progressive processes that represent complex interaction between an active, evolving biopsychological human organism and the individuals, objects and symbols in the immediate external environment thereof. To be effective, the interaction should occur on a fairly regular basis over extended periods of time. According to Donald *et al.*, (2014), increasingly, efforts have been made to understand how children's development is shaped by their social context. Bronfenbrenner (1977) explains in his ecosystemic perspective that child development occurs within four nested systems, where each successive level is contained in the level or levels above it, namely the microsystem, mesosystem, exosystem and macrosystem. All of the above-mentioned systems interact with the chronosystem. The following diagram provides a visual explanation of Bronfenbrenner's theory.

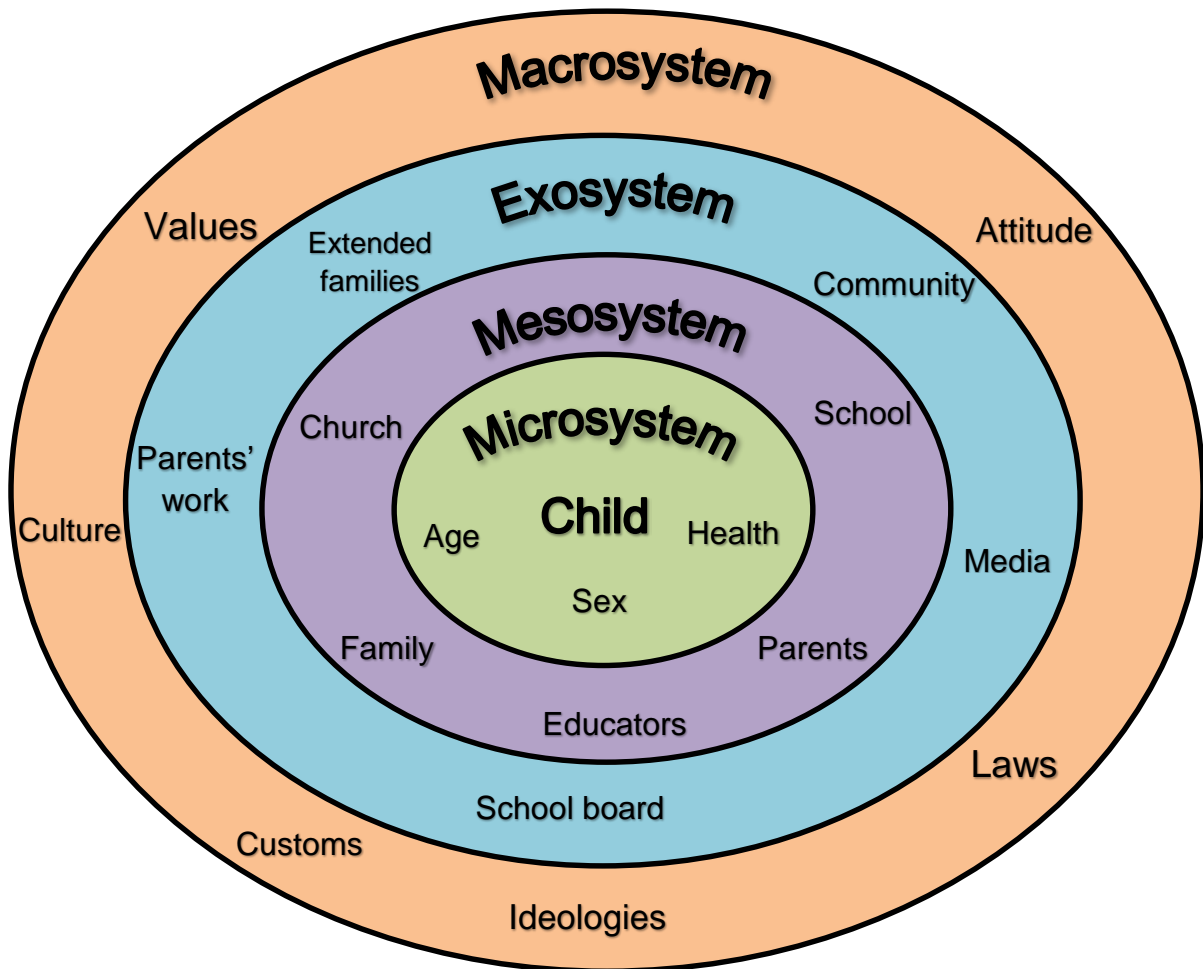


Figure 2-1: Levels of a system related to the education process focusing on the learner (adapted from Donald et al., 2014).

2.2.1 Defining the ecosystemic perspective

Bronfenbrenner argues that to understand human development, the entire ecological system in which growth occurs should be considered. Bronfenbrenner (1979) explains that the system consists of mainly four subsystems that support and guide human growth. Bronfenbrenner (in Phelan, 2004) states that a systemic theory can be described as circles of influence that surround all people. Tudge *et al.*, (1997) define this perspective as a standpoint for conceptualising the maturing and changing individual in relation to his or her changing environment – social, physical and psychological.

Bronfenbrenner assigns a name to each of these circles. The *microsystem* indicates the individual's immediate environment, including family, peers and school; the *mesosystem* entails the interactions and influences among various components of the microsystem. The *exosystem* includes the systems (circles) in which the individual is not directly involved; however, there is an influence of proximal relationships with other systems (circles), for example the school system, the local town, and so forth. The *macrosystem* enlightens the influence of the social systems that dominate social and economic structures, including values, beliefs and practices. This highlights the fact that various systems have an impact on the educator as an individual, as well as an influence on the classroom of the educator. The core understanding of Bronfenbrenner's ecosystemic perspective is that all individuals, in this case educators, exist within a particular context that influences both who that individual is and how that individual responds to life situations. The ecosystemic perspective emphasises that an individual (for the purpose of this chapter, the educator) cannot be understood in isolation from factors that create both reinforcement for behaviour and patterns of interactions.

Bronfenbrenner's (1994) primary goal was to provide a differentiated and complex sense of the various "systems" that influence a developing individual, and the interrelations among these systems. Bronfenbrenner (1979) portrays the developing person at the centre of an interconnected set of contexts, including the direct impingement on the individual (Tudge *et al.*, 1997). Swick and Williams (2006) explain that each system depends on the context and the nature of the individual's life and offers a diversity of options and sources of growth. As previously mentioned, the ecosystemic perspective is used in this chapter to describe the impact the environment has on the educator and his or her primary school classroom. The reactions or behaviour shown by an educator towards a learner and the manner in which a learner behaves, are not only limited to how the learner as a person reacts (discussed in the next chapter as personology), but also how the learner's environment has shaped him or her. This in turn has a direct impact on the educator and how the latter reacts towards the learner. The various systems as described and discussed above, have a major influence on any person.

2.2.2 Ecological concepts

Donald *et al.*, (2014) refer to the ecological theory as based on interdependence between different individuals and their physical environment. The relationship between the individual and the physical environment is seen holistically. Donald *et al.*, (2014) emphasise that each part of the environment is of equal importance. In this chapter, reference is made to the influence and interdependence between the educator and the physical environment in which he or she conducts his or her everyday life.

Even though a parent influences a child, vice versa, the child also influences the parent and the educator (Brendtro *et al.*, 2005). This falls under the same context for the educator. Although the educator's parents and relatives have an influence on his or her development as an individual, the community, the school environment, parents and learners exercise an undeniable influence as well. As with any other interaction between the individual (child) and other people, mainly focusing on the interaction between a learner and an educator, this means that several factors influence the educator. The fate of the child or educator changes as the ecology changes (Ungar, 2013). Ecology can either be healthy (i.e. normal developmental milestones of the child) or a considerable risk (i.e. aspects that influence normal developmental milestones). Figure 2-2 shows aspects that are either healthy ecology or high-risk ecology.

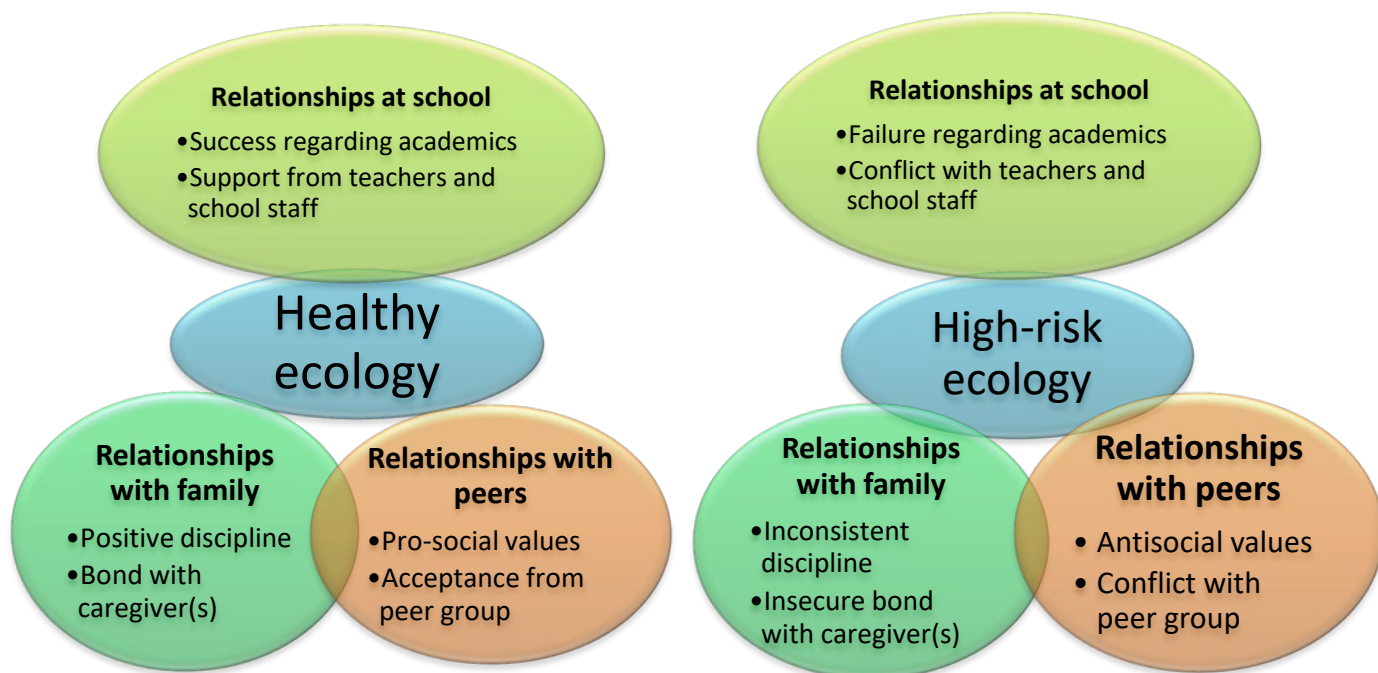


Figure 2-2: Aspects of healthy ecology and high-risk ecology in the school context (adapted from Lewis, 1997).

To understand systems, the relationships among the various parts of the systems need to be examined. The various levels allow those involved to comprehend the continuous dynamic interaction and interplay among multiple influences; therefore, it can be derived that each system possesses critical contributing factors and causes. Personal characteristics can contribute to positive developmental outcomes and play a role in buffering potential risks (Dawes & Donald, 2000:19). This is an explanation of the original theory regarding aspects of ecology and the influences on those involved. For the purpose of this chapter, the focus will be shifted from the learner to the educator.

Balance is a notion that is central to ecological concepts. A system can be sustained when the relationships and cycles within the complete system are in balance. The balance of the complete system will be threatened when there is a major disturbance in any part of the system. The ecology of an individual's childhood is in no way static, but changes over time. For instance, the impact a traumatic event (e.g. neglect by parents, emotional or physical, and abuse, whether physical, sexual or emotional) in

the child's life or exposure to violence may have on the learner can and most likely will lead not only to a major primary disturbance in the ecology of the learner, but similarly to a secondary disturbance in the case of the educator. As explained, each successive level is contained in the levels above it. Bronfenbrenner (1979) describes natural ecology as a set of nested structures, each inside the next like a set of Russian dolls.

For the purpose of this chapter, the ecosystemic perspective is somewhat adapted by placing the educator at the centre of the structure. The reason for this is to ensure that the research and the guidelines that will be compiled, focus on the educator and the support necessitated. The following figure allows one to visually experience the impact and influences on the South African educator. Each of the systems has a significant impact on the individual (educator) shown at the centre of Figure 2-3 (adapted from Donald *et al.*, 2008). The levels illustrated in the diagram can be identified as the micro-, meso-, exo-, macro- and chronosystems (Shaffer & Kipp, 2014).

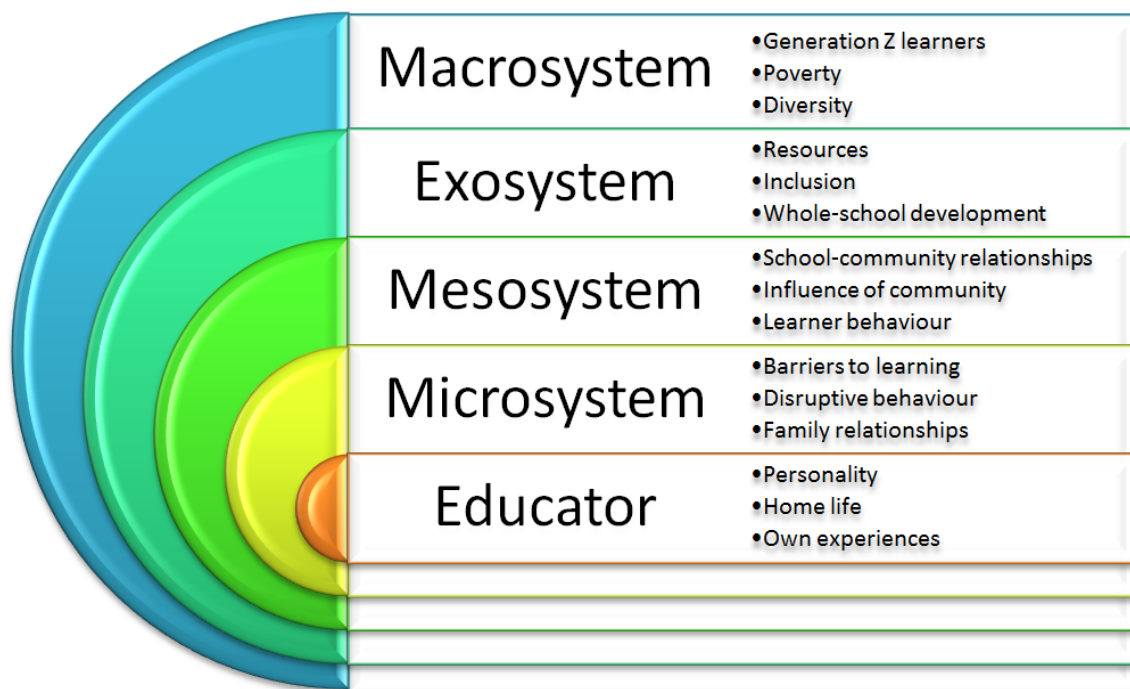


Figure 2-3: Levels of a system related to the education process focusing on the educator (adapted from Donald et al., 2014).

The following sections provide an elaboration on various systems and their contributing factors and the influence these issues have on the educator.

2.2.3 Levels of system related to the education process

On a daily basis, educators are those who are required to face learners' reactions and behaviour to the complex and multifaceted phenomena to which learners growing up in South Africa are exposed. For those involved (educators) to understand the development of a child and particular phenomena portrayed during a specific stage of development, the educator is required to consider the dynamic and continuous interaction among the various and multiple contextual influences faced by the learner. By using the ecosystemic view, the educator will be able to gather a better understanding of how the child might change, develop and, if necessary, be healed (Apter, 1982). This will allow for those involved (educators) to support and assist learners who have experienced a traumatic event or a series of traumatic experiences. This detailed understanding will be attempted in Chapter 3, where an explanation of trauma and the reactions of a learner after a traumatic event will be presented.

For an educator to gather the understanding needed for this support and help, concentration needs to be, in some instances, on the levels of a system that has a greater influence on the child involved than other, less influential, systems at the time. However, limited changes will be made, unless all the levels of a system are considered. During the study, all the changes and implementations have been made on the basis of the above-mentioned. The educators and I took into account the multiple influences on the learner involved, as well as other influences on the learner in order to ensure that the changes made in the implementation of the guidelines were effective and essential.

Figure 2-3 does not change or replace Bronfenbrenner's model; Bronfenbrenner's model is far more complex and specifically directed at understanding child development (adapted from Donald *et al.*, 2014). However, Figure 2-3 attempts to show various interactions of various levels of systems that relate to the education process and the influences on the educator as well as the learner, and the environment they face daily.

All interactions between the primary school learner that is involved and his or her systems should be considered in this attempt to support and empower the educator in dealing with learner aggression associated with psychological trauma. These factors

are likely to operate in the education process at diverse levels of the system involved. Learning may be influenced at family level by a substantial number of factors, including the language of the family, the resources the family has, the values held by the family, as well as the degree of both the cognitive and emotional support the child receives at home and at school for the task of learning (Ungar, 2013). Beyond the levels represented in Figure 2-3, there are additional levels to be considered, namely regional society (South African), continental society (African) and global society (the people of the world). Even though the wider levels influence the represented levels, there is less direct influence than on the levels indicated in the figure. It is particularly important to understand the interactions of these various systems when considering the wider community, especially in South Africa, where various communities have cultural and socio-economic factors in common and have distinct subsystems within.

Keeping the ecological perspective in mind, one is able to better comprehend and explain the reactions of an individual. The process and product of human beings vary with time and place. Included in this is the personality of the person involved. There have been recent extensions to the ecological paradigm, which involve the reconceptualisation of the role of genetics in the development of the human being (Bronfenbrenner & Ceci, 1994). The human species appears unique in its capacity to tolerate, adapt and, in this case, create ecologies wherein the human lives and grows. This supports the premise that educators are just as critically influenced by learners who experience trauma as the learners are themselves.

Using the above-mentioned approach, a conclusion is drawn about how the influences of the various levels in the education system have an impact on South African educators and their primary school classrooms. Using this approach, the influences and reactions in various issues will be discussed according to the various systems, namely the microsystem, mesosystem, macrosystem and exosystem.

2.3 Ecosystemic-based discussion of influences on educators

Many role players have an influence on the education system, not only in South Africa but also worldwide. The educators in this day and age face a variety of complex and challenging influences. In order to fully understand the challenges South African

educators face in their primary school classrooms, one needs to take a look at the picture as a whole, starting with the influence of international trends on the South African system and then working towards the educators as individuals.

2.3.1 Macrosystemic influences on the primary school educator

The macrosystem entails a variety of social and economic structures and various values, beliefs, attitudes and ideologies in the system of a society and a culture. A selected few of these influences on the educator are described below.

2.3.1.1 Generation Z learners in the classroom

The term “millennials” refer to Generations X, Y and Z. The emotionally blunt and post modernistic views of Generation Z are highlighted by Nehring (2003). He explains that the relationship between this generation’s emotions and ideologies have become increasingly problematic, and this makes it difficult or even impossible for those involved to find meaning in their emotional experiences. Van der Watt and Prins (2003:578) quote a learner who wants the educator to “dance, sing, and cry ... we expect so much more from everything now because of the media”. Sacks (1996) is of the opinion that a new classroom approach is necessary in order to adapt to the new generation’s views. This approach needs to ensure that teaching, interaction and learning take place by ensuring that there is room for creative creation and application of new knowledge by the use of new technology. Learners now have the need to create, apply, integrate and manage their own learning. Sacks (1996) is of the opinion that the slogan *knowledge is power* needs to be adjusted to *imagination is power*. Faust *et al.*, (2001) state that learners are unable to sit quietly for a demonstrative lesson; however, they have the necessary skills to handle a multi-tasking lesson. Generation Z learners are reluctant to use printed resources and are far more comfortable with technology than with their educators. The above-mentioned challenges regarding the teaching strategies required by Generation Z place an enormous strain on the educator and the extra effort required to successfully teach this generation.

2.3.1.2 Quality education and social interaction

For a primary school educator, the ability to include and adapt to the great variety of learners in the classroom is a tremendous challenge. This includes adapting to various cultures, worldviews and other demographic issues. Educators are also required to adapt their teaching styles to cater to the new views of Generation Z learners. All of this is achieved with the aim of providing quality education for all learners involved in mind. The judgement of quality education can be done in a variety of ways. A crucial way of judging the quality of the education is social interaction – what happens between people – and the nature in which this interaction takes place. The interaction between learners and educators is an integral part of the success of a primary school as well as the study. In order for the educator to have a positive impact on the learner and provide support and guidance during a difficult time after trauma has occurred, the social interaction between the educator and the learner has to be conducted in a positive and caring way.

2.3.1.3 Poverty

Poverty and education influence each other bi-directionally. It is stated in research that this is the case because poor people often are not able to afford quality education, and without quality education, one is constrained to a life of poverty (Van der Berg, 2008). In the United States of America, the Equality of Education Opportunity Report of Coleman (1966) opened the discussion of the role education can play to overcome disadvantages faced by learners. Van der Berg (2008) posits that improvement of educational outcomes occurs when the socio-economic status of learners rises in all countries at all age levels and for all subjects (UNESCO EFA, 2004:48). According to studies done in developing countries, access to education differs depending on the income level of a person. When an individual has very few resources and his or her basic needs are not met, Van der Berg (2008) refers to this as absolute poverty. This level of poverty results in poor living conditions, no food, and so forth. This also affects physical and mental well-being and influences a child's ability to learn.

Poverty leads to poor nutrition, which affects those involved and their ability to learn. According to the EFA Global Monitoring Report (UNESCO EFA, 2006), more than 5% of children under the age of five in sub-Saharan Africa are underweight due to a poor

diet and malnutrition. This makes them more vulnerable to disease and less able to concentrate. Educators face a tremendous challenge in trying to support these learners and ensure that they do not fall behind even though they may miss an alarmingly high number of school days.

2.3.1.4 HIV and related diseases

Guest (2003: ix) describes HIV/AIDS as a pandemic “deadlier than war, deadlier than tyranny, even deadlier than malaria”. HIV/AIDS is a challenge for all the role players in an individual’s life. Carboni and Dawson (2001) found that many educators are still having negative perceptions regarding HIV-positive colleagues and learners. This ranges from beliefs that the disease is a punishment for immorality, to others who would rather quit teaching than work with these individuals. There is an overwhelming amount of research on HIV/AIDS. Quinn (2003) estimates that 29.4 million of the 42 million infected individuals worldwide reside in sub-Saharan Africa. In South Africa, more than 1 in 10 South Africans are HIV-positive.

Education is a process that is driven by a number of people; however, in sub-Saharan Africa, many people integral to the education process are dying (Theron, 2005). This limitation is not only caused by HIV-positive learners, but also the following: educators who suffer from this disease; the quality of education being effected by the loss of experienced educators; decline in the demand of education due to fewer learners enrolling or remaining in school; and extra costs due to temporary educators (Theron, 2005). According to the World Bank (2002), at least 12% of the educational staff and educators in this region have HIV/AIDS. Given the involvement of educators in the lives of learners, learners are affected by observing how the educators’ health declines and by the absenteeism of educators. This diminishes the example of a positive role model by an educator. As mentioned previously, healthy educators avoid densely populated HIV/AIDS-infected areas, which leads to these areas having an increased educator-learner ratio.

HIV/AIDS has a tremendous impact on both infected educators and educators who are not infected. Educators who do not have HIV/AIDS face augmented workloads and heightened responsibility; thus work demands will escalate. Therefore, whether the educator faces learners who are infected with HIV/AIDS, colleagues with HIV/AIDS

or an HIV/AIDS diagnosis of his or her own, there is an enormous impact on South African educators.

2.3.2 The exosystemic influence of the department of basic education on the primary school classroom

To ensure that education is of a high quality and that the process results in meaningful education for those involved, educators need to ensure that education results in the healthy development of whole, confident and competent persons, and empowers everyone. Only then is quality education ensured. South Africa has restructured the whole education system – qualifications, the curriculum and the education of educators – with this in mind. To ensure that the transformation process of education is successful, individuals are required to examine and modify their practices and values (Donald *et al.*, 2014).

2.3.2.1 Inclusion

“Inclusive education” is a term that refers to teaching practices and policies that focus on the rights and needs of learners with special needs (Green, 2001). Inclusive education creates an integrated and fairer society where a variety of learners with special needs are optimally accommodated within the same education system (Donald *et al.*, 2002). Furthermore, inclusive education implies that mainstream schools are required to restructure to be more receptive and knowledgeable regarding the wide variety of learners’ needs (Burden, 1997; Clark *et al.*, 1997; Engelbrecht *et al.*, 1999; Green, 2001).

Inclusive education in South Africa therefore indicates the integration of two separate education systems (special needs education and mainstream education) into one education system that can cater to the diverse needs of all learners (Naicker, 1999). The inclusive education policy (Department of Education, 2001) allows for the implementation of the previously mentioned, single education system and puts an end to the previous separation between learners with basic education needs and learners with special needs. Inclusive education focuses on providing for the education needs of all learners, including learners with emotional and behavioural needs. Inclusion cannot be seen as a set policy, but rather a dynamic process that includes and follows

a bottom-up systemic approach (Burden, 1997; Clough, 1998; Green, 2001; Jones 2004).

A systemic perspective views different, multifaceted levels in a social context as a system. Donald *et al.*, (2002) suggests the use of a systemic model for the implementation of inclusion in education. These systems function as a whole where the “functioning of the whole is dependent on the interaction between all parts” (Donald *et al.*, 2002:82). Therefore, education has to be organised to provide support to educators and learners on various levels. By taking these social systems into account, behaviour is understood clearly (Engelbrecht *et al.*, 1999; Farrel, 2006). Inclusive education could not be implemented by using the traditional view of education. The literature provides a variety of different arguments regarding the implementation of inclusive education, as well as challenges created by inclusive education.

The inclusive education system in South Africa requires educators to understand learners in context. The learner is viewed as a part of the community and cannot be excluded in any way based solely on his or her special needs. The influence of various systems on learners and the interaction between the learner and these systems are of major importance. Intervention on various levels can have a positive influence on change (Winter, 2007). In order to ensure successful promotion of inclusion in the classroom, the educator is responsible for addressing all the factors that might have an influence on the learner, such as classroom management, classroom relationships, teaching methods and punishment techniques, which should be taken into account when analysing the demands educators face on a daily basis.

2.3.2.2 Whole-school development

Holistic and systemic approaches are very promising for educators attempting school-based interventions for learners (Weare, 2005). In order for educators to create a promising school-based intervention or mental health programme, a clear understanding of the reason for the intervention is required. These reasons include parental dysfunctions and psychopathology, family structure and relations as well as the school’s inclusive and preventive policy (Zipper & Simeonsson, 2004). In recent years, educators and therapists have focused on learners who exhibit emotional or

behavioural problems; they relate these problems to dysfunctions in the family, in the school system or in the family-school relationship (Maitel & Scher, 2003). Managing change in a human system or organisation is known as organisational development. The aim of organisational development is to use the facilitation of the development of both people and structures to increase the effectiveness of the organisation (Davidoff & Lazarus, 2002). To ensure that organisational development is successful, strategic planning is essential. Donald *et al.*, (2010) explain that the process of conscious decision making is as follows:

- Changes made to the organisation's environment have to be understood and monitored.
- Future trends have to be anticipated.
- Appropriate goals need to be set.
- Achieving these goals has to be planned and aligned with the vision of the organisation.
- Action should be implemented.
- The action needs to be evaluated in terms of the intended outcomes.

In order for a school to be both inclusive and health-promoting, both environment-centred and individual-centred aspects need to be developed. It is of the utmost importance for a school to cultivate a supportive and non-discriminatory culture in order to ensure a health-promoting school. A school presents learners with various problems – emotional, academic and behavioural. All of these problems and challenges are about the wisdom of knowing “how to do the right thing at the right time” and “how to do things right” (Davidoff & Lazarus, 2002:15). In order to ensure that a school provides a healthy environment for the educators as well as the learners, the community is required to engage with the school on a social level, where educators are used as the tools in these attempts. This places a major responsibility and a heavy burden on the educator. Educators are seen as being responsible for ensuring that the community and the school have a functioning relationship, despite all of the other issues they face in the classroom and the school context.

2.3.3 The school as mesosystem – and the effects on the educator

2.3.3.1 The primary school in general

Ebersöhn and Ferreira (2012), Herselman (2003), Hofmeyr and Hall (1995), the Human Rights Watch (2004), Mahlomaholo (2010) and Pandey (2010) conclude that the features of a school or community that influence a learner or educator might include the following: less access to staff, classrooms, electricity and running water, as well as poorly developed infrastructure and dilapidated buildings; a shortage of state-subsidised transport for educators and learners to schools; learners who come from informal settlements and communities with extreme poverty, illiteracy and unemployment; large numbers of children in classes and multi-grade classes; principals who have to teach and unqualified educators without remedial training; learners' developmental and learning deficits remaining unidentified due to the lack of early childhood development programmes; limited access to health and welfare services; and the presence of HIV/AIDS in the communities and the loss and grief, healthcare responsibilities and additional financial constraints associated with it.

De la Porte and Davids (2016) explain that one of the most prominent issues South African educators and the youth have to face, other than substance abuse, is the violence in and around schools. The NSVS (Burton & Leoschut, 2013) was conducted for a second time to find that South African educators and learners are more commonly being exposed to school-related violence. The latter study provides evidence that the school-related violence has a profound impact on those involved.

2.3.3.2 Influence of the school-community relationship on the school, educator and learner

Providing emotional and physical support to primary school learners is possible only by building a strong school-community relationship (Fisher *et al.*, 2000). People have different beliefs about life and how life should be lived. The development of a supportive school environment demands that educators acknowledge, respect and draw on different views (Lazarus, 2006).

Social structures in South Africa have tremendously adapted in terms of urbanisation, the decrease in family support, a decline in moral values and the effects of HIV.

Learners are therefore confronted with confusing contradictions. It is important for educators to realise that living conditions and the systems wherein the learner functions, cannot be seen as independent from one another. If this connection cannot be made, the educator will struggle to understand learners, adapt to their needs and, ultimately, support them.

Challenging social conditions within communities have a severe impact on learners' development potential and education and the quality of schools within these communities (Hofmeyr & Hall, 1995). This then has a direct impact on the school and the classroom. The literature confirms there is a significant difference in the progress and achievements of learners in schools serving communities with higher levels of poverty, such as rural areas, as opposed to schools in more affluent communities (Sass *et al.*, 2010). Therefore, to truly form a picture of the South African school system and what educators face on a daily basis, one has to take into account the various communities and people in these communities. The reasons for this are the inadequate educational infrastructure, poor social conditions and the detrimental effects of the circumstances on children's physical growth.

South African research indicates that the circumstances of some schools are characterised by shortcomings and unmet needs. Acar (2011) and Van Wyk and Lemmer (2007) therefore state that relationships between the school, home and community systems must be strengthened to support the formation of social capital for learners' development which, in turn, will lighten the load of primary school educators.

Parental involvement and a good parent-educator relationship, which act as bridging social interactions, can therefore be a form of valuable social capital for parents, learners and educators, based on the possible positive results it holds for the various role players. Acar (2011) argues that it is important for educators, parents and communities to understand that various aspects contribute to learners' academic success when setting up new strategies and plans for better educational success.

Ali (2011) emphasises the importance of recognising that parents and educators are essential role players, which can lead to consistency within environments at schools,

homes and communities in which learners operate. The role of educators, as well as that of parents and community members in the educational context, is emphasised in various documents and articles. Warren *et al.*, (2009) refer to several authors who state that schools of higher confidence in the relationships among role players show greater capacity to adapt to change and improve their practices. La Rocque *et al.*, (2011) agree that families, community groups and educators each play an important role in the academic performance of the learners involved. Therefore, these role players should understand one another's roles well and there must be effective communication among them.

The above-mentioned is supported by Bronfenbrenner's theory, which posits that all the various systems of an individual are interlinked with one another. Therefore, in order for the educator to successfully support the learner in the classroom, it is essential to acknowledge that the community of the educator and the learner has a tremendous influence on both the way the learner would react and the way the educator would deal with a situation.

2.3.3.3 International views and the impact on dealing with challenging behaviour

Prior research suggests that exposure to a classroom and a school environment with high levels of aggression may have an influence on not only children's development but also on the educators dealing with this class on a daily basis (Thomas *et al.*, 2008). Mounting evidence indicates that school environments not only contribute to socialisation but promote childhood aggression and behavioural problems as well. Various studies indicate that the structural features of a school, including large size, economic disadvantages and a risky neighbourhood surrounding the school, have a decisive influence on increased levels of learner aggression (Colder *et al.*, 2000). This leads to even bigger challenges for educators to face on a daily basis. Large classes mean more learners who are awaiting the educator's individual attention. In addition, economic disadvantages cause educators to face issues such as learners who do not have food, warm clothes in winter or even basic school supplies.

Thomas *et al.*, (2008) reveal that school and learner demographics may increase the risk of exposure to high aggression in classrooms. Howley *et al.*, (2000) reviewed a

large number of studies showing that larger schools are more likely than smaller schools to have learners who act out or learners with greater difficulties in behavioural management in the classroom. In the review, Howley *et al.*, (2000) found increases in aggressive classroom behaviour in correlation with classroom size as well as socio-economic disadvantages. Howley *et al.*, (2000) found that African-American students were more likely than European learners to attend large urban schools and would be more likely to be aggressive.

Findings from various approaches and studies show an increase in the number of emotional, learning and behavioural problems in learners, affecting the learners' school and social adjustment as well as that of the educator (World Health Organisation, 2001). Kazdin (2000) explain if these problems are not adequately treated, the above-mentioned difficulties increase the probability of more serious problems, such as psychosocial and psychiatric problems in the foreseeable future.

2.3.4 The classroom as a microsystem – and the influence on the educator

2.3.4.1 Barriers to learning in developing classroom contexts

Donald *et al.*, (2014) explain that in various parts of the world, “special needs education” has a different meaning. In more developed countries, this term refers to intrinsic factors that influence an individual; however, in countries such as South Africa special needs education is more influenced by extrinsic factors, including severe social and educational disadvantages. The educator is expected to deal with either the factors that influence an individual directly or extrinsic factors that influence all of those involved. While dealing with these factors, educators are required to provide quality education for all learners.

In the joint report by the Commission in Special Needs in Education and Training, and the Committee for Education Support Services in South African (Department of Education, 1997), a range of factors that commonly occur in the South African context and create barriers to development and learning has been identified. These barriers include:

- socio-economic factors, such as poverty;
- social factors that place learners at risk, such as violence;
- discrimination;

- inflexibility in the curriculum and the educator;
- unsafe school environments;
- learning difficulties and disabilities; and
- a lack of parental involvement.

Taking the above-mentioned report into account, one can argue that a large number of South African learners have to overcome barriers in order to have a chance at making a success. In the study, the educators and I had the important role of ensuring that learners who were exposed to these barriers were supported and understood. A school is an ideal site for interventions and mental health programmes because learners' (children's) psychiatric needs differ from those of adults (Dryfoos, 1994).

2.3.4.2 Disruptive behaviour

Disruptive behaviour should be taken seriously and not be allowed to escalate to prolonged, dangerous and serious behaviour. Good and Brophy (1991) explain that there are two basic methods for educators to intervene directly in disruptive behaviour. The educator can demand appropriate behaviour from the learners involved. This can entail short and direct demands, for example naming the learner and what is expected from him or her. Furthermore, the educator is urged to constantly remind the learners of their rules and what is expected from them.

The ultimate goal and constant struggle are to elicit the commitment of all learners to participate in any and all activities for the duration of the lesson. Santrock (2009:78) warns that "without clearly defined classroom rules and procedures, the inevitable misunderstanding can breed chaos". Santrock (2009) explains that for an educator to avoid chaos, the procedures or routine includes what learners are expected to do or not to do in the classroom or during a lesson. Three golden rules are identified that each educator should adhere to: prevention is better than cure; communicate outcomes with the learner; and manage the class as a group while thinking of the individual (Good & Brophy, 1991).

2.3.4.3 Coping with minor problems

Educators learn to cope with challenges in the classroom through experience; however, there are a number of techniques to help educators until they have acquired

their own set of techniques. According to the Teaching-Learning Dynamics, there are basic techniques in coping with minor problems in the classroom. In the case where a learner follows the rules, the educator is required to provide praise for the presenting of positive behaviour. The praise can be directed at an individual or at the class as a whole. This form of reinforcement can only be successful if the educator provides positive feedback or the learners follow the rules (Jacobs *et al.*, 2012).

According to Wheldall and Glynn (1989:13), the key rule for an educator to bear in mind when dealing with minor misbehaviour in and around the classroom is as follows: "... praise the good and try to ignore the misbehaviour. This is a widely used technique known as RPI – rules, praise and ignoring." This technique suggests that in particular instances, the educator should ignore minor misbehaviour, for instance talking during a lesson. This does, however, not imply that an educator should not intervene when there is a fight or a dangerous and harmful situation. Good and Brophy (1991) disagree with this view and state that even when the misbehaviour is minor and three or more learners are affected simultaneously, the behaviour requires a different approach.

Sustained misbehaviour can be stopped by the educator by using eye contact. According to Good and Brophy (1991), eye contact forces learners to pay attention. This is because the learners will look at the educator before conducting behaviour that is inappropriate or off-task. Moving around in the classroom therefore ensures that the educator has a full view of the learners at all times. Once the educator calls on a learner who is not paying attention to the lesson or who is misbehaving, the learner will focus on the lesson in an attempt to prevent being asked a question to which he or she does not know the answer.

2.3.4.4 Family circumstances of learners

The family as a system plays an important role in the mental health of learners (Silver & Hagin, 1990). Independent variables, namely economic status, mother's or father's level of education, family size and structure (single parent, divorced or married), can have a dramatic influence on the learner's achievements, emotional needs and

behaviour (Gericke, 1998). Factors within the family, such as the parent-child relationship, marital issues, alcoholism, abuse and the development of emotional and behavioural needs, have an influence in the learner (Raymond, 2008). These influences on the behaviour of learners will be elaborated on in Chapter 3.

A traumatic experience during the childhood caused by a broken or unstable family background, for example divorce is regularly associated with emotional and behavioural needs (Farrel, 2006). In the South African context, violence, crime and a culture of no protection can be added to these. Increased aggression and hyperactivity, for example, is related to restrictive fathers and mothers who experience conflict in the marriage (Watson & Gross, 2000). As explained earlier, all systems involved with the individual have a direct impact on one another. As the educator forms part of the learner's immediate support system, all of the above-mentioned issues have a direct impact on the educator and how the educator deals with the behaviour presented by the learner.

2.4 Conclusion

All interactions among the primary school learners that are involved, as well as their systems, should be considered to support and empower the educator in an attempt to deal with primary school learners who display aggressive behaviour after a psychological trauma. There are a large number of role players who influence the education system, not only in South Africa but worldwide. The educators in this day and age face a variety of complex and challenging influences. In order to ensure that education is of high quality and that the process results in meaningful education for those involved, it is important to take these complex and challenging influences into account. A crucial way of judging the quality of education is social interaction – what happens between people – and the nature in which this interaction takes place. Education results in healthy development of whole, confident and competent learners, and empowers all. In order for the educator to facilitate the development of these competent learners, one has to take into account all of the other systems – classroom, school, community and so forth – that may have an impact on the learner. Providing emotional and physical support to primary school learners is only possible by building a strong school-community relationship. People have different beliefs about life and

how life should be lived. The development of a supportive school environment demands that educators and learners acknowledge, respect and draw on different views.

Challenging social conditions within communities have a severe impact on learners' development potential and education and the quality of schools within the communities where these schools are found. Teaching is a complex task, since each learner is a unique human – physically, emotionally, mentally and socially. Knowing and understanding learners is an important part of the educator's planning of classroom activities, in conjunction with the previously mentioned, the educator is required to acknowledge the important role the family as a system plays in the mental health of learners. Therefore, a traumatic experience during childhood caused by a broken or unstable family background, for example divorce is regularly associated with emotional and behavioural needs. The educator is urged to address all needs of the learners in their classroom in order to ensure quality education. Therefore the successful addressing and inclusion of these specific needs require a particular set of skills from the educator.

Limited success has been achieved with school-based interventions, since reactive and remediation orientation has not sufficiently served the needs of school communities. This is where the interest and need for the study arose. The limited success in the known intervention plans of schools piqued my interest. Chapter 3 provides a detailed explanation of aggression and trauma, as well as the correlation between learners who show aggressive behaviour in the classroom after a traumatic event.

CHAPTER 3 AGGRESSION, PSYCHOLOGICAL TRAUMA AND POSTTRAUMATIC STRESS DISORDER IN PRIMARY SCHOOL CLASSROOMS

3.1 Introduction

As explained in Chapter 2, the school environment and the challenges educators face on a daily basis are complex and multifaceted phenomena. Chapter 2 uses the ecosystemic approach to sketch the backdrop where South African educators find themselves. Educators are not only expected to face challenges in the classroom on a daily basis; there are also various contributing factors that influence the manner in which educators conduct their classroom and how they handle learners. These factors include South African education as a whole, the Department of Basic Education, the school, the classroom and the educator as individuals. Realising that there are so many influencing factors on the educator as individual, it is clear one has to take into account a variety of factors when attempting to understand any human behaviour. In the case of this study, simply focusing mainly on aggressive behaviour due to a traumatic experience can never be viewed as a single, isolated incident. According to research, aggression is one of the main behavioural traits that learners who experience trauma will exhibit. However, learners who experience trauma may have various reactions and show a range of behavioural issues. The reaction of a learner to psychological trauma is influenced by the learner's ecosystem and the contribution of his or her personality, based on personology. Chapter 3 aims to show the link between how learners' environment and their personalities influence the way they react towards a difficult situation.

A study conducted by Kessler *et al.*, (1995) identifies three types of trauma most commonly experienced by humans: the sight of an individual who is seriously injured or killed; involvement in a fire, a flood or a natural disaster; or involvement in a life-threatening accident. Diverse types of trauma are identified, namely acute trauma, chronic trauma and secondary trauma (Endres, 2008). Collin-Vezina *et al.*, (2011) explain that there are numerous ways in which children are exposed to traumatic events. These events include physical and emotional neglect by parents, including physical, emotional or sexual abuse, as well as exposure to violence. For many South African children, traumatisation occurs within a broader meso- and macrosystemic

context. Kaminer and Eagle (2010) explain that the above-mentioned traumatic events place “a burden on family structures as well as parental coping capacities” (Kiser & Black, 2009; Klebanov *et al.*, 1994).

The extent to which family and community factors in South Africa intersect with the levels of aggressive and violent behaviour occurring in South African schools is highlighted in the NSVS, conducted in 2012. The NSVS, conducted by the Centre for Justice and Crime Prevention (2016), determined that 15,3% of children have experienced some form of violence at school. The Centre for Justice and Crime Prevention (2016) states that the findings point to the need for an integrated strategy to deal with school violence, addressing both short and longer-term change. Leoschut and Kafaar (2017) emphasise that violence (and aggression) is a characteristic feature of the South African society. However, a better understanding of violence and the causes of violent behaviour may reduce or prevent child victimisation.

3.2 Theoretical perspectives: personology and the ecosystemic perspective

There are various theories and perspectives that explain individuals, their behaviour and development. For this study, the ecosystemic perspective and personology are the core underlying theoretical focuses explaining the behaviour and challenges of primary school learners who are exposed to psychological trauma. The ecosystemic perspective is used to explain the impact or influence the environment has on the educator (Chapter 2) as well as the learner in the classroom (Chapter 3), while personology allows an understanding of how and why individuals react differently in similar circumstances, based on their temperaments or personalities (Chapter 3).

The ecosystemic perspective has been discussed in some detail in Chapter 2, but the implications thereof for learners will be discussed at a later stage in this chapter.

3.2.1 Personology

The character of man, also called personality, and the knowledge of character traits are known as personology. Personology includes the distinctive characteristics and qualities of a person, such as expressions, emotions and feelings. Personology is in

no way related to the spiritual or mystical fields; personology is, however, related to scientific and empirically based research (Meyer *et al.*, 2003).

3.2.1.1 What is personology?

All human beings have some knowledge regarding personology. Every person has implicit theories or ideas about how people function. Personology provides us with important knowledge regarding the nature of human behaviour. Personology can be defined as:

... the branch of psychology which focuses on the study of the individual's characteristics and of differences between people. It therefore covers essentially the same ground as everyday knowledge of human nature, namely those abilities which enable us to say that we know someone well. (Meyer *et al.*, 2013:5)

3.2.1.2 Reasons for various personality theories

Several books focusing on personality theories have been written, revealing more than 30 different theories, starting as early as Levy (1970), and including Feist and Feist (1998). Taking this into account, it shows there is a great interest in the development of personalities and the traits thereof. This research also suggests that the journey to understand the explanation and description of human functioning still is an ongoing process (Meyer *et al.*, 2013). In addition, there are various other reasons for the great diversity of personality theories, including the following:

- Complexity of human beings and their behaviour:
Various interdependent factors determine the highly complex actions and behaviour of humans. Meyer *et al.*, (2013) posit that there are specific types of factors that have an influence on behaviour, including biological factors, environmental circumstances and stimuli, social factors and spiritual and psychological factors. Using a multifaceted diamond, one can explain the complexity of human functioning and the links among the various facets. Each theory represents one facet in the diamond; in other words, each personality theory holds value and merit regarding a possible explanation for the way in which humans function and react.
- Ethical and practical problems in research:
For research to be practical and ethical, the researcher involved would have to manipulate every aspect of the involved group of people and the environment

they are exposed to over a prolonged period (Meyer *et al.*, 2013). A perennial controversy of personology is whether people are motivated by sexual and aggressive drives or by finding the meaning of life; this could only be investigated in an experimental situation. For the experiment to be valid, people could be subjected to severe circumstances to observe the reactions of those involved. Such research is impossible to carry out when taking ethical and practical issues into consideration, which leads to the researcher confining research to random studies of people.

- A variety of assumptions concerning scientific research and the person conducting the research:

There are various pre-scientific and scientific convictions on what humans are and what precisely the science entails. According to Meyer *et al.*, (2013), the different personality theories are all based on various assumptions concerning these scientific matters to understand the variety of theories and to gain insight into areas of agreement and disagreement between the theories involved. Thus, it is of the utmost importance that there is a clear understanding of the assumptions upon which the theories are based.

3.2.1.3 Definition of concepts related to personology

Although some of the concepts related to personology are basic and contained in the daily vocabulary of most people, there are particular concepts that need further explanation.

3.2.1.3.1 Personality

Gordon Allport (1937) made a survey of as much as 50 different definitions of personality. Today, there are substantially more definitions. Taking this into account, one can argue that personality is a complex phenomenon, which cannot be explained by a single, simple definition. There are various definitions for personality in the literature, including that it is:

- the unique patterns and behaviours of a person (Guilford, 1959);
- that which would make a prediction of what a person would do in a specific situation (Cattell, 1950); or

- the characteristic of behavioural patterns (including emotions and thoughts) that allows everyone to adapt to their living conditions or surroundings.

According to Möller (1993), there are clear recurring themes in these various definitions, namely:

- Personality refers to the characteristic structure, combination and organisation of behavioural patterns, thinking and emotions that make each person unique.
- Personality helps a person to adapt to unique daily living conditions.
- Personality refers to the dynamic nature of humankind, as well as its propensity to react with a degree of consistency or predictability over time, in a variety of situations.

3.2.1.3.2 Nature of personality

Dynamic organisation refers to the constant changes and growth of an individual's personality. This growth is organised, and not random at all. When Allport (1961) refers to personality as being psychophysical, he focuses on the composure of mind and body functioning together as a unit. With this, Allport (1961) indicates that personality is neither all mental nor all biological. All acts, characteristics and thought processes are typical of a specific person; therefore, everyone is unique.

In support of the emphasis placed on the uniqueness of an individual, Allport (1961) states that reflection on both the hereditary and environmental factors is essential. Hereditary factors provide the personality with raw material, including intelligence and temperament. These factors shape, expand or limit the conditions of our environment.

3.2.1.3.3 Personality traits

Schultz and Schultz (2013) regard personality traits to be predispositions that respond, in the same or an analogous manner, to different stimuli. In other words, personality traits are considered to be consistent and ongoing reactions to the environment.

Allport (in Schultz & Schultz, 2013) summarises the characteristics of these traits as follows:

- In each of us, personality traits exist and form a real part of the being of that individual. However, personality traits are not theoretical constructs that are made up of particular behaviour.
- Personality traits cause or determine behaviour; these traits motivate the individual to seek responses in situations and interact in their environment.
- Some personality traits may overlap, while being interrelated to distinctive characteristics, for example aggressiveness and hostility.
- Personality traits vary with every situation the individual is part of. One personality trait may be prominent in a specific situation, but not present in another.

3.2.1.3.4 Temperament and nature

Temperament and nature focus on the biological and inherited aspects of an individual. These terms also refer to emotions experienced by an individual, including the way in which the individual deals with these emotions or expresses these emotions (Meyer *et al.*, 2013).

3.2.1.3.5 Psychosocial aspects of personality development

Erik Erikson has had a profound impact on psychoanalysis and providing an understanding of the impact an individual's culture, in general, may have. Erikson has developed an approach to personality, which maintains the core of Freud's work and broadens his work. After a lifetime of accomplishments, accolades and honours, Erikson has created an approach that divides the growth of personality into eight psychosocial stages. Freud focused on biological factors, while the approach created by Erikson emphasised psychosocial correlates (Schultz & Schultz, 2013).

Erikson proposed that in each psychosocial stage, an individual develops a series of basic strengths. The theory states that human development involves a series of personal conflicts. These conflicts and their potential exist at birth as predispositions and will be prominent at various stages when change is demanded by the environment. Each confrontation with the environment can be called a "crisis". According to Schultz and Schultz (2013), a crisis is the turning point faced by an

individual in each developmental stage. This crisis will then refocus the instinctual energy of an individual, according to the need in the specific stage of the life cycle.

Table 3-1: Erikson’s stages of psychosocial development and basic strengths (adapted from Schultz & Schultz, 2013).

STAGE	AGES	ADAPTIVE VS MALADAPTIVE WAYS OF COPING	BASIC STRENGTHS
Oral-sensory	Birth – 1 year	Trust vs mistrust	Hope
Muscular-anal	1–3 years	Autonomy vs doubt, shame	Will
Locomotor-genital	3–5 years	Initiative vs guilt	Purpose
Latency	6-11 years	Industriousness vs inferiority	Competence
Adolescence	12–18 years	Identity cohesion vs role confusion	Fidelity
Young adulthood	18–35 years	Intimacy vs isolation	Love
Adulthood	35–55 years	Generativity vs stagnation	Care
Maturity – old age	55+ years	Ego integrity vs despair	Wisdom

Primary school learners are in Erikson’s latency stage of psychosocial development. Erikson’s latency stage of development occurs from the age of six to eleven years. During this stage, a child starts school and is exposed to a variety of new influences. The ideal is that the child is taught good habits both at home and at school (Schultz & Schultz, 2013). During the latency stage, the learner develops and grows powers of deductive reasoning and the ability to follow rules.

Schultz and Schultz (2013) explain the importance of the behaviour and attitudes of educators and parents. The influence of educators and parents largely determines how learners perceive themselves, including applying and developing their skills. This stage of development is of major importance to the development of learners’ personalities. During the latency stage, if a learner is scolded, rejected or ridiculed, there is a likelihood that he or she may develop feelings of inadequacy and inferiority. In contrast to this, if the learner experiences reinforcement and praise, feelings of competence and encouragement will be fostered, which will encourage continued striving. Erikson (1950) explains that there is a crisis present in each stage of a

learner's development and the outcome of this crisis is dependent on others. The resolution of the crisis is more focused on what is done to the learner than on what the learner can do for him- or herself. Thus, experiencing a traumatic event will have an impact on a learner in the latency stage.

3.2.1.4 Personality, situation and behaviour

Meyer *et al.*, (2013) explain that most or even all psychologists would agree that both the situation and an individual's personality play a role in the way they behave in a specific situation. There is, however, a difference in opinion regarding the role played by each of the individual aspects. There are three groups with a difference of opinion: the first group accentuates the situation; the second group emphasises the role of the person's personality; and the last group focuses on the interaction between the person and the situation in which he or she is. Meyer *et al.*, (2013) explain these viewpoints as follows:

- **Situationalism** is based on the view that the situation is the only or the most important determinant of the behaviour that develops, retorting to the theories of Freud. The most extreme form of situationalism is the opinion that all people would behave the same in the same situation. This view is linked to the idea that all are equal, denying genetic differences; however, the environment shapes the individual's specific attributes.
- **Personism** is based on the view that behaviour is influenced mainly by the individual's personality. Personism argues that individuals have fixed characteristics or tendencies to behave in a particular way, which distinguish individuals from one another. Personism conveys the view that the differences among individuals are apparent in all situations.
- When behaviour is the outcome of the interaction between the situation in which the behaviour occurs and the individual's characteristics, it is called **interactionalism**. This viewpoint, therefore, acknowledges the influence of individual differences, as well as the situation in which the individual finds him- or herself. In short, different people react differently to different situations.

Personality theories do not have a clear or handy system for implementing a specific theory. Although the content of personality theories varies considerably, they have some characteristics in common. Every personality theory is based on a particular

view of the person – particular assumptions about the existence and nature of a person. The theory allows one to adequately explain and describe human behaviour. The view of the person is an interesting and constantly changing aspect of the theory.

Personology identifies all characteristics of a person and allows for the individual to find out more about him- or herself (Meyer *et al.*, 2013). From this it can be derived that personology is the key to understanding individuals and their behaviour. In order for this study to be successful in compiling guidelines that primary school educators can use when dealing with learners who are aggressive after experiencing trauma, a particular amount of attention has to be paid to the theory that makes the learner who he or she is. Therefore, the previous section focused on the personality and how big an influence the personality of a learner has on the manner in which he or she conducts him- or herself. Personology is the key to understanding the learner and what he or she specifically needs to be supported through a difficult time.

It should be taken into account, as mentioned in Chapter 2, that all individuals are influenced by the systems in which they interact (the family, school and community). However, individuals are not merely products of their environment. Each individual's reaction towards his or her systems is guided by his or her personality. Therefore, in order to truly understand the behaviour, shown by an individual one has to take into account all of his or her systems (micro-, meso-, macro- and exo-) as well as the situation the individual is in and the kind of person the individual is. South African primary school learners face a unique and challenging environment as well as complex family relationships and interactions. To ensure that South African primary school learners can be understood, one has to take into account the society in which they live.

3.2.2 Ecosystemic view of the South African society and the influence on the learner as individual

Bray *et al.*, (2010) explain that learners growing up in contemporary South Africa are faced with opportunities, but more so, obstacles, trying to navigate through the diverse South African society. In order for a primary school educator to be a productive teacher and make a lasting impact on a learner, he or she has to realise the challenges in and around the classroom and be equipped to handle particular situations.

3.2.2.1 Societal issues in South Africa using Bronfenbrenner's model of child development

Various efforts have been made over the past years to better understand child development and how the child is shaped by his or her social context (Brooks-Gunn *et al.*, 1997). According to the ecosystemic model, development is defined as the change and continuity in the psychological characteristics of humans – in both individuals and groups (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 1998). Bronfenbrenner's model (Bronfenbrenner, 1977, 1979; Bronfenbrenner & Evans, 2000) has had a noteworthy influence on shaping the understanding of how diverse levels of systems in the social context interact in child development. Bronfenbrenner's (1988) earlier work in 1980 referred to process as the connection between aspects of the context (e.g. social class or culture) or particular aspects of the individual (e.g. gender) and the outcome of interest.

Later, however, in the 1990s, the proximal processes were defined as the key factor in development (Bronfenbrenner & Ceci, 1994). Bronfenbrenner's bio-ecological model of development emphasises the interaction between the development of an individual and the systems within the social context or environment. Donald *et al.*, (2010, 2014) make use of the ecosystemic and constructivist perspectives to explain how various individuals and various levels of a system in their social contexts continuously affect one another.

In Bronfenbrenner's model, four interacting dimensions are central to the process:

- individual factors (e.g. temperament of the child or parent/caregiver)
- contexts (e.g. families, schools or local communities)
- process factors (e.g. the forms of interaction that occur in the family)
- time (e.g. changes over time in the child or his/her environment)

Taking the above-mentioned into account, it is indicated that the interactions that occur in long-term, face-to-face relationships are most important in shaping lasting aspects of development. As briefly explained above, as well as in Chapter 2, child development for Bronfenbrenner (1977) happens within four inter-related systems, namely the microsystem, the mesosystem, the exosystem and the macrosystem, which all interact with the chronosystem.

3.2.2.1.1 Microsystem

The microsystem is the system in which an individual constitutes various patterns of activities and interpersonal relations and roles between individuals and the systems they are actively involved in (including family, peer groups and other role players). The microsystem can, therefore, be described as the immediate environment (including physical, social and psychological environment) where the proximal processes play out. The microsystem provides an environment for children to gather their initial knowledge about the world. The knowledge gathered in this system offers a reference point to those involved.

The microsystem provides the individual with a feeling of belonging, support and love, which subsequently serve as protective factors (Landsberg *et al.*, 2016). In developing countries, such as South Africa, support for children by their communities, educators and peers allows positive adjustment to hardship (Theron & Donald, 2013). In South Africa, the role of relations with ancestors and the extended family in traditional African communities should be considered as a potential factor that influences these children, as children are socialised as communal beings who respect others (Theron & Theron, 2013).

3.2.2.1.2 Mesosystem

The mesosystem refers to the relationships that develop and exist between various microsystems at a given moment in the individual's life. Mesosystems vary from relations between the family and the child's peer group or school. Experiences and interactions in one microsystem may influence interactions and activities in other systems (Landsberg *et al.*, 2016).

Bronfenbrenner's model provides a framework that allows for the identification and development of various protective resources and assets in the microsystems involved. These include a caring community, religious settings and support regarding social problems, such as poverty and violence. This includes the spiritual domain, including traditional and spiritual healers in the African context (Tabane, 2014).

3.2.2.1.3 Exosystem

An exosystem refers to the various systems in which the learner is not directly involved as an active participant; however, the learner may be influenced by either these systems or what happens in these various settings. For example, if a parent loses his or her job, works long hours or is unemployed, the child is not directly involved in that, but can be influenced by the quality of the relationship he or she has with the parent involved, as well as by other microsystems where the child has proximal relationships, including educators and the peer group (Lerner, 2005).

3.2.2.1.4 Macrosystem

The macrosystem entails a variety of social and economic structures and various values, beliefs, attitudes and ideologies in the system of a society and a culture. The macrosystem in which the child lives, has an impact on the nature of the various interactions on all the other levels. This provides structure and the content of various inner systems and specific cultures at a given moment. The interactions include values, beliefs, democracy, social justice and Ubuntu.

3.2.2.1.5 Chronosystem

In the context of the model, time has a prominent place at three successive levels – micro-, meso- and macro-time. In Bronfenbrenner's model, the property of time is more comprehensively described and the complexity and eternal presence thereof acknowledged (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 1998). This system encapsulates the dimension of time and how these dimensions relate to the interactions between these various systems and the influences thereof on the individuals and systems involved.

3.2.2.1.6 Influence of all the levels of the system as a whole

South Africa is a multi-cultural, multi-lingual country. De la Porte and Davids (2016) comment on the diverse demographics and the hallmarks of South Africa, mentioning, among others, poverty, crime and violence. However, they are also eager to include Ubuntu and Batho Pele as a cornerstone of the South African community. De la Porte and Davids (2016) state that the literal translation of Ubuntu is "collective morality and personhood". The Department of Social Development (2008) defines Ubuntu as "the

interdependence of community members, especially in recognising, respecting and upholding individual rights and responsibilities to promote healthy development and responsible citizenship and ensure a safe and supportive environment”.

Taking the above-mentioned into account, in order to understand the South African community and related events, a person should focus on both the individual as well as the environment in which the individual lives. The ecosystemic approach allows one to have a better understanding of the possible influence and reactions a traumatic event may have on a learner. Barker (1995) explains that this system provides a broader context of the understanding of an individual, as well as the relation between the individual and his or her family, community and environment.

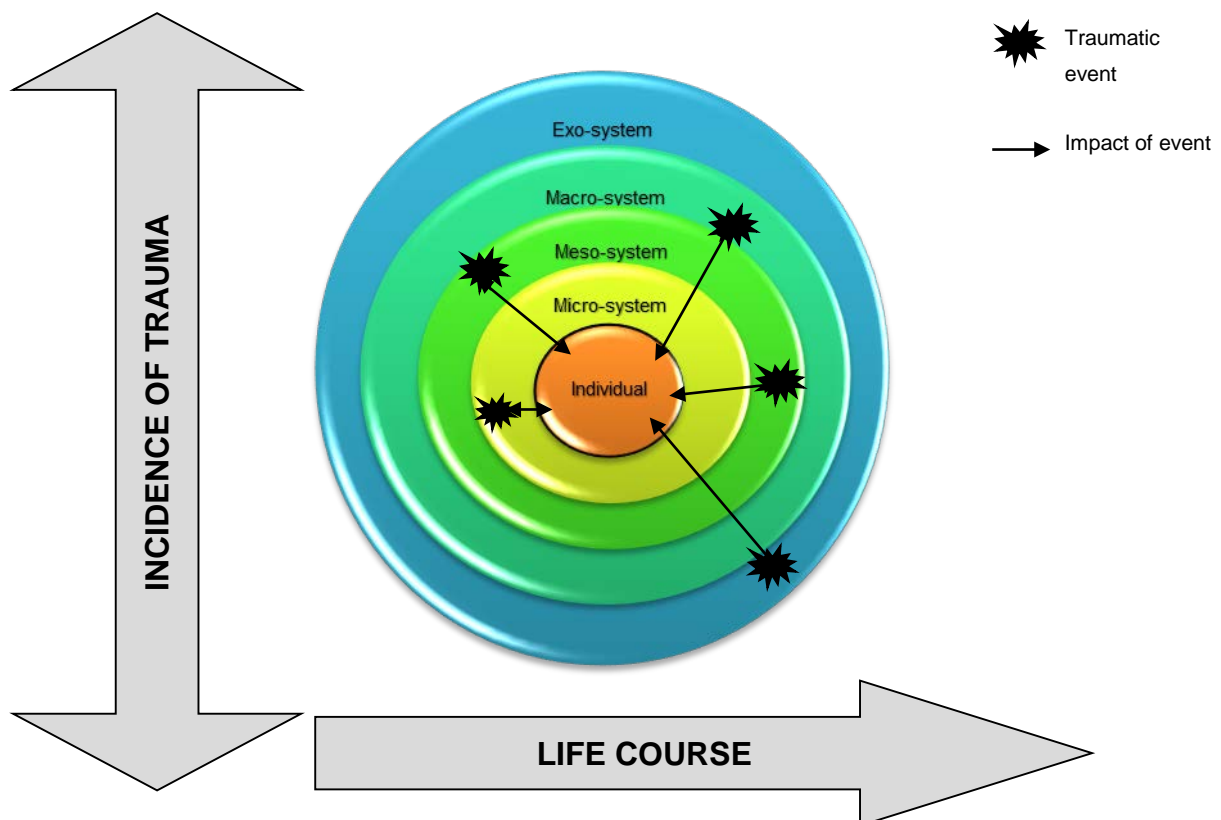


Figure 3-1: The ecosystemic framework and the impact of a traumatic event (adapted from Hoffman & Kruczek, 2011).

Hoffman and Kruczek (2011) explain that the ecosystemic system approach is most commonly used in the fields of social work, education and human development. Therefore, this approach allows for a greater understanding of how a single event may

influence a learner and his or her behaviour. Figure 3-1 illustrates the complexities associated with the impact of a traumatic event.

The diagram above illustrates how one traumatic event influences multiple systems simultaneously. Learners' reactions are not based on a single event but a number of events. As previously explained, during the latency stage of development, learners develop deductive reasoning; therefore it can be assumed that learners (with some exceptions) have not yet mastered the skill of logically separating emotion from a situation. This may lead to changes in behaviour, such as learners who act out or completely change the way they react.

3.3 Aggression in middle childhood

Mahdi and Al-Dera (2013) state that the first aspect that needs attention when attempting to understand aggression in middle childhood is the fact that there are differences in how aggression presents itself. These types range from mild to hard aggression among children, resulting from personal inadequacies, failure, poverty, and so forth. A school-based violence study conducted by the South African Council for Educators (SACE) in 2011 states that 1.8 million learners have experienced some form of violence while at school; this amounts to 15.3% of the learners in South Africa. The above-mentioned number is alarmingly high. A report from the University of California in Los Angeles, called *Conduct and Behaviour Problems: Intervention and Resources for School-Aged Youth* (revised 2015), explains that, unfortunately, many people see punishment as the only recourse when dealing with misbehaviour. Punishment holds many negative consequences, including negative associations with the school and teachers. These negative attitudes may lead to more behavioural and developmental problems. Therefore, this study was aimed at equipping educators in dealing with misbehaviour, more specifically aggression due to a traumatic experience.

3.3.1 Introduction to aggression in middle childhood

Kolo and Yaroson (2004) state that "a typical reaction to frustration by many children of primary school age is aggression". Aggression is, regardless of the presentation, harmful, not only to the individual, but to those around the individual as well. For adults, in this case educators, it is a challenging and draining task to deal with learners

demonstrating aggressive behaviour. The goal of the educator should in no way repress or destroy the feelings of the learner, but guide him or her to deal with and accept these feelings (Anderson *et al.*, 1994).

The history of South Africa shows that aggression and violence are an undeniable part of the social interaction among its people and have a negative influence on those exposed to these actions (Bester & Du Plessis, 2010; Bushman & Huesmann, 2010; Muthukrishna, 2011; SACE, 2011). Bushman and Huesmann (2010) explain that aggression directly influences and intrudes on a person's basic human needs of safety and security. According to Tremblay *et al.*, (1993), a broad definition of aggression is vents that lead to a set of behaviour that can range from atypical and maladapted to typical and flexible behaviour.

3.3.2 Definition of aggression

Pearce (1989) explains the origin of the word "aggression" as follows: aggression comes from the Latin *aggredi*, which loosely translates to "to attack". With this, Pearce (1989) implies that an aggressive individual is willing to force his or her will on another, even if physical or psychological trauma can be caused thereby. For behaviour to be identified as aggressive, the actions must be conducted with the intent to harm another being, whether the harm is physical, verbal or psychological (Berkowitz, 1993:11; Botha, 2006; Fiske, 2010; Louw & Louw, 2007).

Van den Aardweg and Van den Aardweg (1993) explain aggressive behaviour to be degrading or hurtful, even if the behaviour is not focused on human beings, but on animals or other objects. According to Berkowitz (1993:11), aggression can be defined based on the behaviour of an individual. However, it is important to differentiate between the various types of aggression and to explain what each type entails (Botha, 2012; Kassin *et al.*, 2011).

3.3.3 Influence of various factors on aggressive reactions

The most widely accepted definition for aggression is the following: "An aggressive act is any form of behaviour designed to harm or injure a living being who is motivated to avoid such treatment" (Dodge *et al.*, 2006). Shaffer and Kipp (2014) explain that there are two categories for aggressive behaviour: instrumental aggression and hostile

aggression. Instrumental aggression is described as situations where a person is harmed as a means to an end, while hostile aggression is behaviour ultimately focused on harming the victim.

3.3.3.1 Developmental trends in aggression

A study conducted by the NICHDE Early Childhood Care Research Network in 2004 sought to characterise developmental change across the early lifespan from toddler to middle childhood. That study found that most children (70%) were rated at low aggression across the entire study, 27% of the children showed moderate signs of physical aggression and, finally, only 3% of the children displayed stable elevated levels of physical aggression from the age of two to nine years of age (NICHD Early Childhood Care Research Network, 2004). From this study, the following conclusion has been drawn: physical aggression in early toddlerhood is normal; however, for most children, this level of aggressive behaviour is rare in middle childhood (Alink *et al.*, 2006; Baillargeon *et al.*, 2007).

3.3.3.2 Cultural and sub-cultural influences on aggression

Cross-cultural studies and ethnographic studies consistently indicate there is a direct correlation between cultural influence and the behaviour (aggressive or peaceful) of those involved (Gorer, 1968). Tolan *et al.*, (2003) state that children from the lower socio-economic strata, particularly male children, exhibit more aggressive behaviour than those in the same age group of the middle class. No matter how one looks at culture and economic status, there is a definite correlation between the way a child behaves and the environment the child knows. As Figure 3-2 demonstrates, the behaviour of a person is directly influenced by his or her past, present and future. The interaction between the learner's behaviour is influenced by not only internal factors, but his or her environment, community and habits as well.

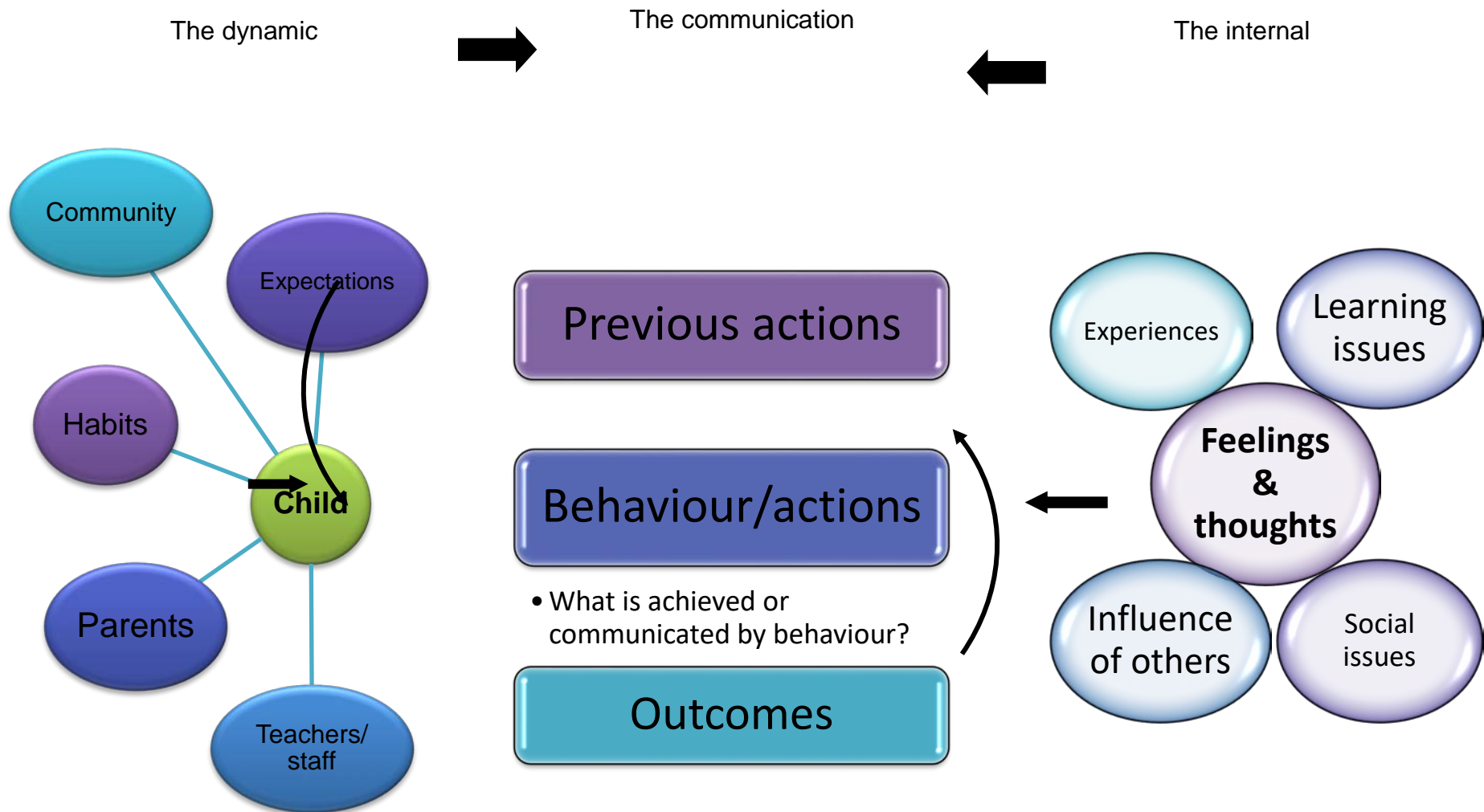


Figure 3-2: Influence of various factors on the reactions of learners (adapted from Shelton, 2004).

3.3.4 Types of aggression

There are many definitions of aggression. Accordingly, there is a diversity of classifications of aggression. Kulesza (2015) places aggression in three different dimensions. Aggression can be categorised according to the moral content of behaviour, aggression inflicted and the character of the person.

3.3.5 Forms of learner aggression

Aggression can be categorised into a variety of different forms, namely physical, verbal, bullying and active and passive aggression.

3.3.5.1 Physical aggression

Physical aggression involves actions or behaviour with the sole purpose to inflict pain on others (Berkowitz, 1993; Bushman & Huesmann, 2010; Fiske, 2010). Physical aggression can include various forms, for example shoving, hitting and slapping, including the use of weapons such as knives, guns, scissors and bottles, which are used to physically disadvantage or hurt others.

3.3.5.2 Verbal aggression

Verbal aggression includes name-calling, shouting, the use of cuss words and gossip (Berkowitz, 1993; Botha, 2006; Bushman & Huesmann, 2010; Fiske, 2010).

3.3.5.3 Bullying

Fiske (2010) states that bullying is behaviour intended to destroy the target's friendships or feeling of belonging to his or her peer group by using exclusion, gossiping or manipulation. Bushman and Huesmann (2010) refer to bullying as the "silent treatment", where an individual intentionally ignores others and does not talk to them. A universal definition for bullying, composed by Crick and Werner (1998:710), is as follows:

Relational aggression generally describes deliberate attempts to inflict harm on peers through manipulation and damaging peer relationships. Common forms of relational aggression involve giving peers the silent treatment, excluding peers from a social group, telling lies and spreading rumours about a peer to incite rejection, imposing conditions for friendships or refusing to select a peer as part of a school project.

A more contemporary view is that of Shoulberg *et al.*, (2011), namely that bullying is a purposeful use of aggressive behaviour in the form of a confrontation strategy and impairing inter-individual and social relationships. These strategies include malicious gossip, ignoring others, threatening to end a friendship and striving to control, manipulate or taunt.

3.3.6 Potential causes of aggression

The aggression-frustration-hypothesis theory explains why an individual acts aggressively or shows aggressive behaviour (Myburgh & Poggenpoel, 2009). The causes of particular intrapersonal experiences, which lead to aggression, are as follows:

- Negative feelings – anger, rage and humiliation
- Negative perceptions – helplessness, loss of opportunities and a negative self-concept
- Negative ideas – suicidal thoughts and weakened boundaries

Unpleasant events can lead to aggressive tendencies (rage) or escaping tendencies (fear). In the case of escaping tendencies, an individual will avoid or flee a situation because of fear (Berkowitz, 1993). Breet *et al.*, (2010) state that aggression is usually dependent on internal factors (emotional and cognitive problems or weakened social skills) as well as external factors (familial problems, abuse or neglect).

3.3.7 Potential effects of aggression

The influence of the causes and effects of aggression has immense importance in understanding this phenomenon. Jefthas and Artz (2007) show that the South African youth, who are exposed to elevated levels of aggression, are more prone to depression, PTSD or rage than the youth of other countries.

Denefil *et al.*, (2015) state that there is a possible correlation between aggressive behaviour and PTSD. PTSD is linked to physical aggression and a constant depressed mood, which elevates the risk of aggression. Denefil *et al.*, (2015) believe that symptoms of depression enhance the correlation between PTSD and several types of aggression. This statement is supported by Angkaw *et al.*, (2013), who mention that

symptoms of depression indirectly reinforce the correlation between PTSD and two forms of aggression, namely verbal and physical aggression towards oneself.

3.3.8 Children's emotional processing

According to Schultz *et al.*, (2004), there are three types of emotional processing that relate to aggression, namely emotional attribution accuracy, emotional attribution bias and empathy.

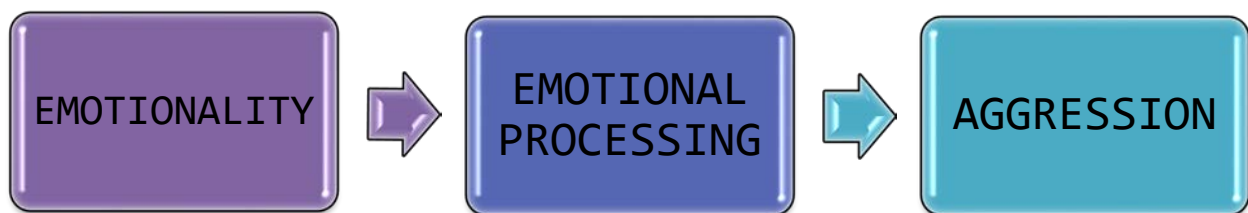


Figure 3-3: A causal model linking emotionality, emotional processing and aggression (adapted from Schultz *et al.*, 2004).

This diagram explains the emotional processing of a child in a simplistic way. Children with the tendency to experience anger more often than others are classified as aggressive (Crockenberg & Langrock, 2001). However, in contrast to the above-mentioned figure that implies that emotional children will resort to aggression, a recent line of research, conducted by Arsenio and team, suggest that happy children may have a greater tolerance for frustration (Arsenio *et al.*, 2000). They argue that positive emotionality may protect children from interacting aggressively in particular situations.

There is growing evidence to suggest that aggressive children tend to process emotional information differently than the way other children do. According to Schultz *et al.*, (2004), two initial studies have found that hostile and aggressive children tend to attribute their anger to others. Aggressive children have shown lower levels of empathy and empathic arousal in these studies than their peers.

3.3.9 Causes of aggressive behaviour in South African schools

International researchers Thomas and Bierman (2006) found mounting evidence that school environments promote aggression in children. School violence and

uncontrolled aggression among learners were closely investigated by Ocetkiewicz (2008). Ocetkiewicz (2008) points out that the difficult stage of education (and understanding the behaviour of the learners) is in middle school. He indicates that aggression is a frequent phenomenon in primary school; up to 75% of learners show aggressive behaviour in their reaction, regardless of the environment where the school is situated. In an attempt to understand the reason for violent and aggressive behaviour in South Africa, one must explore the problem from multiple perspectives, considering the variety of dynamics that may have an influence on an individual. According to Burton (2007:12), there is no single cause for violence; there is, however, “a series of interrelated factors impacting on young people and society in general”. Du Plessis (2008) explains the importance of understanding that a person and his or her environment are interdependent units with dynamic interactions.

Farr *et al.*, (2003) explain, in the report of the Children’s Institute on youth violence and peace education programmes in South Africa, that the causes of violent and aggressive behaviour are complex and include individual, familial, community and cultural components. Figure 3-4 explains the relationships among the variables and the influence they have on children and their behaviour. It outlines the influence direct and indirect variables have on the development of antisocial behaviour, more specifically violence and aggression, on children. The figure also shows the interrelated impact of each on the others, ultimately leading to the antisocial behaviour mentioned.

Taking these variables into consideration, it can be concluded that finding an ideal way to deal with these learners will make the control of aggressive behaviour easier.

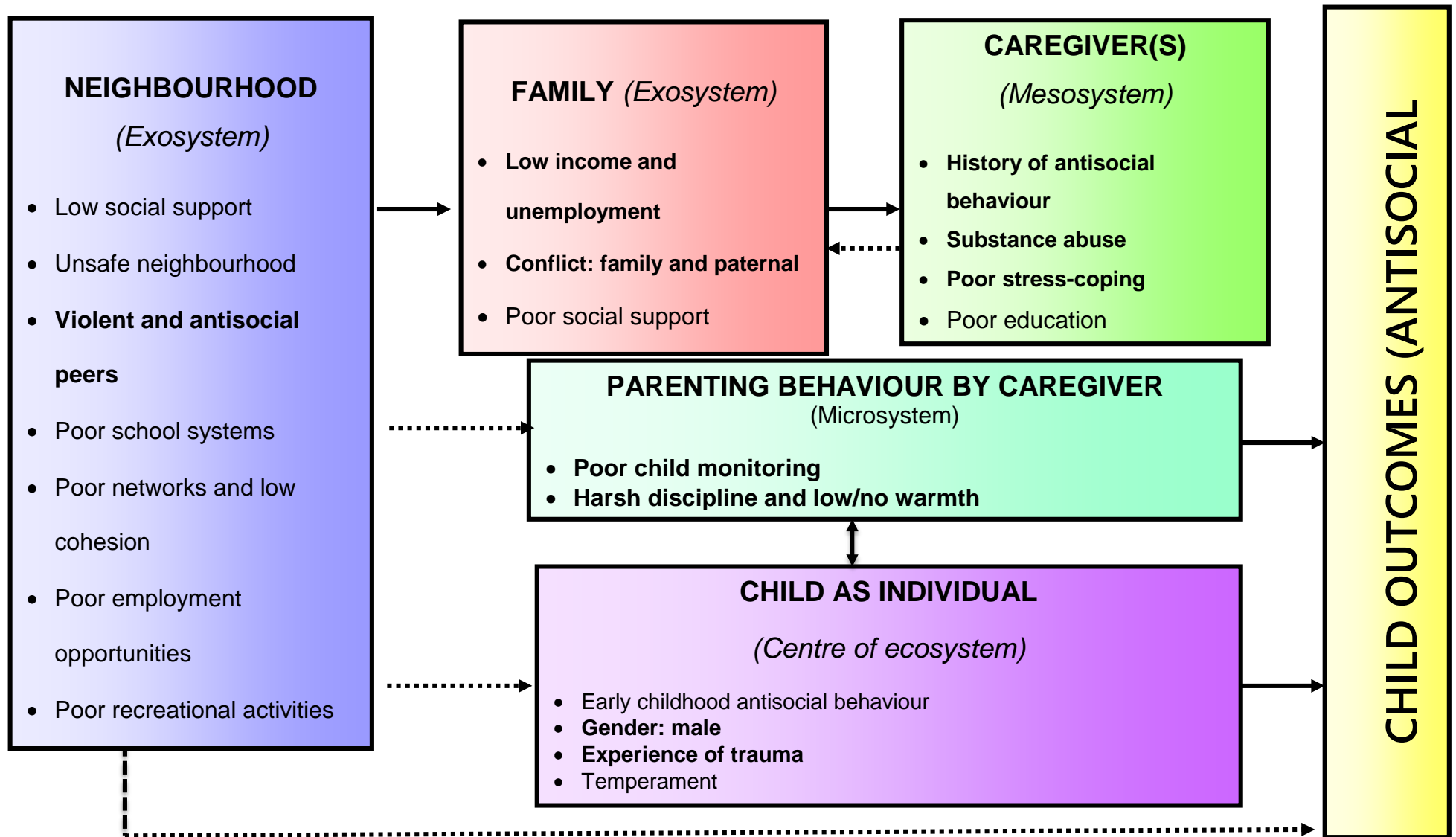


Figure 3-4: Possible influences that may cause aggressive behaviour in middle childhood (adapted from Farr *et al.*, 2003).

3.3.10 Process of controlling aggression

According to Mahdi and Al-Dera (2013), Freud proposed that a way to control aggression would be to channel the aggressive emotions into socially approved activities, for example painting or competitive sports. In some cases, an individual has trouble dealing with trauma, and as an effect of PTSD, the individual shows trouble controlling emotions, more specifically aggression.

Aggression is a complex reaction. One cannot isolate aggressive behaviour as a single incident or cause. Understanding human behaviour can also be based on Newton's third law of motion: every reaction has an opposite and equal reaction. If a learner is going through much pressure or pain, there is bound to be a reaction. However, in order for those involved to understand this reaction and support the learner, the source of the behaviour needs to be determined. In an attempt to understand the source of this behaviour, an in-depth look at psychological trauma will allow for a better understanding thereof.

3.4 Psychological trauma in middle childhood

Adverse childhood experiences and stressful life events, and the impact these events have on the development of childhood, are crucial in the understanding of trauma and the impact of these events on children (Lu *et al.*, 2013).

3.4.1 Introduction to psychological trauma in middle childhood

Trauma is a shocking experience that leaves permanent emotional scars. Victims should be supported and guided in the debriefing cycle to prevent the development of PTSD, which could lead to unpredictable reactions and behaviour (De Vos, 1999). Trauma will be defined and explained in detail to provide a clear understanding of what it entails and what possible consequences there may be if trauma is not dealt with.

3.4.2 Definition of psychological trauma

Trauma has a variety of definitions. According to the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Service Administration (2014), harmful or life-threatening events or circumstances that have a lasting impact on the mental, physical, emotional or social well-being are seen as trauma. The Australian Early Childhood Mental Health Initiative

(AECMHI, 2003) describes trauma as being much more than a minor upset or finding oneself in an emergent situation for a brief period of time. Many people believe trauma is an unexpected tragic event that is quite rare and only influences a select few. However, numerous people are affected by trauma throughout the course of their lives at one stage or another (AECMHI, 2013).

A traumatic experience is an incident that is so terrifying that the experience influences and overwhelms the individual's ability to handle it and cope with it. The individual's coping techniques are weakened and he or she feels helpless (AECMHI, 2013). According to the AECMHI (2013), traumatic events include situations that put an individual's life in danger or when severe injury is sustained, for example a car accident, an operation or being the victim of a crime.

Trauma can be described as a situation where the individuals involved are exposed to grave danger. According to Roos *et al.*, (2002), trauma refers to events where injury or death is possible. These events do not form part of the normal progression of life. Retief (2004:18) describes the definition of trauma by the Institute of Traumatology as follows:

An individual has been exposed to a trauma if he or she is exposed to events that has [sic] to do with his or her life circumstances or life cycles and lead to the individual's normal coping abilities being weakened – and at least one of the following should be present: (1) There is an element of latency, (2) there is a deep, almost undeniable change in the basic life view, (3) There is a serious overload in the individual's normal coping ability. However, if an individual has experienced an acute upsetting event, but does not meet the above-mentioned definition, that individual is experiencing a crisis.

Tessa van Wijk, the trauma centre manager at the University of Johannesburg, defines trauma in Roux (2005) as a shocking experience that leaves spiritual scars. Victims should be supported to “debrief” in order to avoid the development of PTSD, which can lead to unpredictable behaviour. They should have the opportunity to let go of their rage, frustration and helplessness, after which they should be assisted in creating something positive from a negative event.

In accordance with the DSM-V (American Psychiatric Association, 2013), trauma refers to an event that entails death or the possibility of death or an event that leads to severe injury or other physical threats. In contrast to this, stress is a state of reaction to particular stressors, which lead to psychological decline or dysfunction (Selye,

1956). Traumatic events or the exposure to trauma refer to the events themselves, for example accidents, assaults, abuse or natural disasters (D'Andrea *et al.*, 2011).

Australian psychiatrists, Lisa McCann and Laurie Anne Pearlman, who specialise in sexual trauma, say that trauma develops when individuals are exposed to highly upsetting events (McCann & Pearlman, 1990). Roux (2005) states that trauma comes in various forms, in addition to trauma being experienced in multiple situations, whether it is because of shortening the life span of the individual for a medical reason, a shooting incident or the loss of a limb.

Wink (1986) explains that trauma can affect various levels of an individual's humanity and can influence an individual on any of these levels: physical, emotional, spiritual, psychological and social. Endres (2008) refers to trauma as the weakening of individuals and their emotions, as well as their spirit, self-esteem and their worldview.

3.4.3 Elements that contribute to events being traumatic

A specialist in psychological trauma, Eve Carlson (1997), states that traumatic events mainly differ from one another with regard to timeframe, intensity, frequency, meaning and other factors. There are particular specific elements that make events traumatic (Carlson, 1997). According to Endres (2008), there are three elements that should be present for an event to be traumatic, and all three are influenced by an individual's perceptions and experiences of the effect of the event.

3.4.3.1 Negative perceptions

Traumatic events can have an extremely negative valence when physical pain or injury is involved, when the event is emotionally painful or when the possibility of death exists (Endres, 2008). Hans Selye (1907-1987), known as the "father of stress", wrote about the stress syndrome.

3.4.3.2 Sudden and unexpected events

A sudden or unexpected facet is a key element in determining whether an event is traumatic or not. Events that hold sudden and immediate threat are more likely to cause overwhelming fear than events that bring forth gradual pain and danger (Endres, 2008).

3.4.3.3 Lack of manageability

The third element is the inability of the individual involved to manage or control events and the threat to the individual's physical safety and psychological integrity. For example, if an individual witnesses an accident and sees someone bleeding, the moment the individual realises that there is nothing that he or she can do to help or that he or she does not have the medical skills to avoid death, the individual can be traumatised because of the sudden and extremely negative irreversible events. Therefore, a key element of trauma is that there is a negative perception and an experience of helplessness by the victim. In addition, the occurrence is sudden and unforeseen, and the event cannot be managed by the individual involved.

3.4.4 Different types of trauma

Kessler *et al.*, (1995) state that the three most common types of trauma experienced are as follows: witnessing another individual being severely injured or murdered; being involved in a fire, a flood or a natural disaster; or being involved in a life-threatening accident. Distinct types of trauma are also identified, namely acute trauma, chronic trauma and secondary trauma (Endres, 2008), which are briefly explained below.

3.4.4.1 Acute trauma

Acute trauma is a single event that usually has a fleeting time span and involves a once-off crisis, such as a natural disaster, hijacking, a farm attack, armed robbery or rape. Mostly, acute trauma is unexpected. Herman (1992) describes acute trauma as an awful event experienced, witnessed or heard of by the individual involved, especially if the event is life-threatening or causes physical harm. According to Miller (1998), acute trauma is unexpected and cannot be controlled. This type of experience can lead to death, physical injury, a serious threat or fright. The above-mentioned trauma has so much power and force that it is impossible for the individual to have an effective coping mechanism. Recovering after acute trauma is usually faster than after having experienced chronic trauma (Armfield, 1994).

3.4.4.2 Chronic trauma

Events that are recurrent and experienced over and over again, such as neglect, abuse or molestation, are categorised as chronic trauma (Terr, 1988). Initially all trauma is acute; however, as soon as there is recurrence of the event, the trauma is classified as chronic. Garbarino and Associates (1992) state that distinguishing between single events and chronic trauma is more theoretical than realistic. Single events can also lead to a chronic result; re-traumatisation occurs when a single episode is relived several times. Re-traumatisation can occur in numerous ways, for instance anniversaries of the event, medical procedures or flashbacks (Garbarino & Associates, 1992). Individuals who experience acute trauma usually remember the event in detail, while those who experience chronic trauma are more likely to develop symptoms of PTSD, including dissociation and numbness towards others (Terr, 1988).

3.4.4.3 Secondary trauma

During a natural disaster, not only one individual is affected by the events; the event also affects family, friends and, in some cases, the population. According to Retief (2004), secondary trauma can have a greater impact on the body than when trauma is experienced first-hand, because trauma causes a flight, freeze or fight reaction. Only witnessing a traumatic incident can suffice for an individual to develop symptoms of PTSD. However, what one person perceives as traumatic may have no impact on another.

3.4.5 Phases of trauma

Miller (1998) identifies five phases in the cycle an individual goes through after trauma has been experienced. These phases are the impact phase, the reaction phase, the avoidance phase, the integration phase and the posttraumatic stress phase.

3.4.5.1 Impact phase

The impact phase is while the trauma is occurring or directly after the event. The traumatised individual is forced to a halt and, biologically, he or she turns cold (Retief, 2004). During the event, an individual will experience a feeling of disbelief and it will take a while before he or she realises the reality of the situation (Retief, 2004). During

the impact phase, a variety of emotions can be experienced, including shock, denial and physical and emotional numbness.

3.4.5.2 Reaction phase

The moment the affected individual find him- or herself in the reaction phase, the renal gland produces a large amount of adrenalin, followed by signs of fight, freeze or flight reactions (Retief, 2004). Retief (2004) explains that during this phase of trauma, an individual is capable of actions he or she would not be capable of in a different scenario. The feelings that have been suppressed during the impact cycle will now start to show, leading to mixed feelings by the traumatised individual.

3.4.5.3 Avoidance phase

During the avoidance phase, cortisol is released with the adrenaline (Retief, 2004). The individual tries to avoid all people, places and situations that might remind him or her of the event. However, as explained by Retief (2004), these attempts are never truly successful, because there will always be reminders of the event. As soon as the traumatised individual experiences or relives the reminder, the trauma is relived and as clear as the first experience or encounter; this experience then is as intense as if the event were reoccurring.

3.4.5.4 Integration phase

During the integration phase, the traumatised individual gradually returns to his or her normal functioning (D'Andrea *et al.*, 2011). Thus the stress hormone levels and bodily and brain functions also return to normal (Endres, 2008). Retief (2004) explains that the experience fades and becomes part of the individual's life story – just one of the aspects that forms part of the individual's experiences. Several researchers are of the opinion that it is necessary to process the traumatic information for an individual to recover after the trauma (Horowitz, 1986).

3.4.5.5 Posttraumatic stress phase

In some cases, the traumatised individual does not return to normal functioning, but remains stuck in the previous phase. Although this individual tries to recover from the incident and avoids memories of the event, it stays in his or her sub-consciousness.

The body is constantly flooded with stress hormones, due to the possible reliving of the event, which is a sign of posttraumatic stress (Endres, 2008). This state occurs when an individual is not capable of processing the traumatic experience (Retief, 2004).

3.4.6 Symptoms of trauma

Understanding trauma is not a simple task, and identifying an individual exposed to psychological trauma is even more complex. However, trauma presents with a number of identifiable symptoms. Characteristically, three symptoms of PTSD are avoidance, isolation and withdrawal symptoms, such as sleeping disorders and irritation, and recurring flashbacks (David *et al.*, 1997).

The postmodern approach to trauma is that trauma has multiple causes (Endres, 2008). According to this approach, trauma cannot be associated with any single cause and effect. According to the postmodern approach, trauma is to be understood as circular and holistic, in the context the event occurred, and not linear. The consequences of the traumatic event or experience, regarding the emotional and behavioural reaction to it of no two people will be the same. The individuals will constantly be influenced by various values and contexts in which these individuals function (Joseph *et al.*, 1997).

It is important to investigate the process of trauma holistically to truly understand the symptoms following the traumatic event, such as the “fight-or-flight” reaction that is present with trauma through psychological, social, moral, cognitive and physical factors. These factors and the influence thereof will vary from one individual to another (Van der Kolk, 1987). Van der Kolk (1987) identifies five common factors that have an influence on the reaction to sudden, unmanageable, negative events. These factors are as follows:

- biological factors
- the grimness of the trauma
- the developmental cycle of the individual during the trauma
- the social context of the individual
- previous and following life events

In general, the above-mentioned factors have an impact on the trauma reaction because those involved are influenced either by the perception of unmanageability or the level at which the event is experienced as negative (Van der Kolk, 1987).

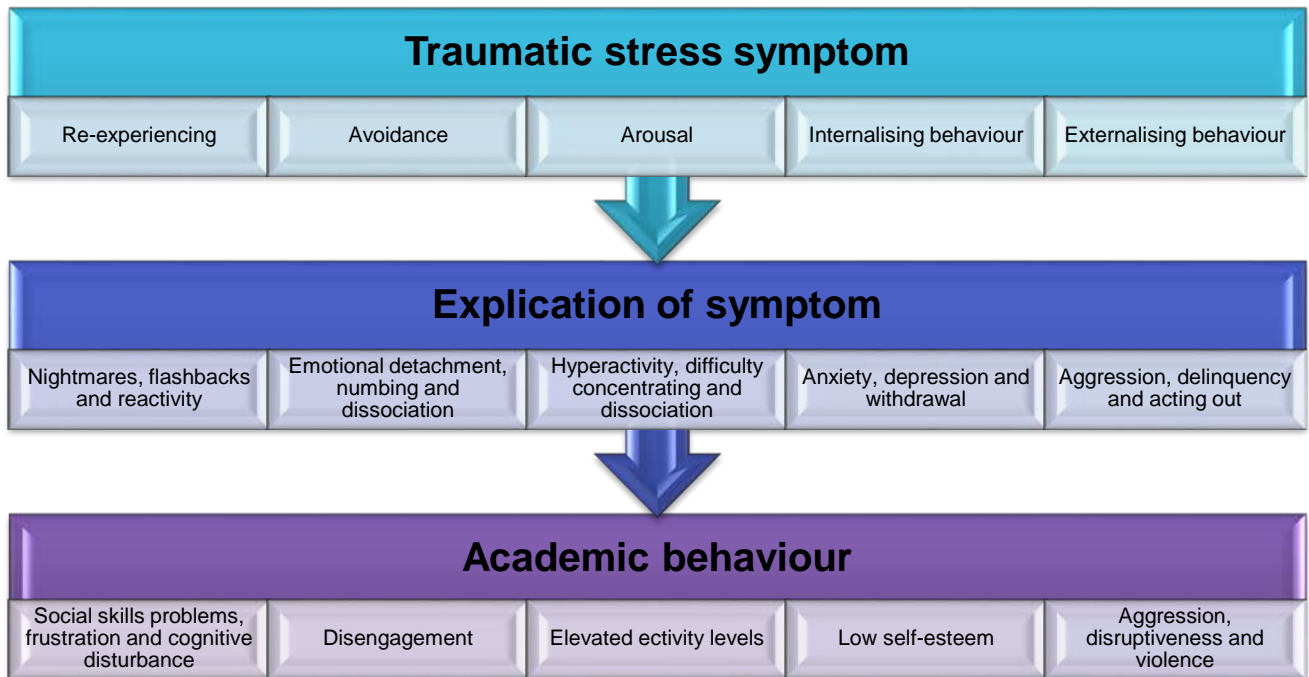


Figure 3-5: Symptoms of traumatic stress behaviour shown in primary school learners (adapted from Goodman & West-Olatunji, 2009).

The above figure shows the correlation between traumatic stress symptoms, the explication of the symptoms and the academic behaviour displayed by the learner. According to Goodman and West-Olatunji (2009), there are visible and distinctive differences in the symptoms and behaviour exhibited by individuals, who may show various reactions to trauma.

3.4.7 Individuals' reaction to trauma

According to the postmodern approach, there is no simple cause-and-effect relationship between trauma and the psychological consequences that follow (Scott & Copping, 2010). If two people are exposed to the same experience, both will have different reactions thereto (Carlson, 1997). Reactions to trauma include complex processes and influence the deepest part of the inner self (McCann & Pearlman, 1990). Roux (2005) states that trauma influences an individual – body, mind and soul.

Scott and Copping (2010) claim that studies consequently show that children with a warm and loving relationship with their parents show fewer negative symptoms after trauma than children who receive less support from their caretakers (Adams-Tucker, 1982).

3.4.8 Memory during and after trauma

Scientists accept that there are four cycles of the memory, namely the intake cycle, storage cycle, recalling cycle and unlocking cycle. The difference between traumatic memories and other memories is the way in which they are stored in the brain (Stein, 2004). According to Kalat (2006), there is evidence to explain that trauma is stored in the limbic system, where sensation and emotions are aroused, but not language. Therefore, it is possible for individuals who have experienced trauma to have memories of rage or to experience anxiety or heartache; however, they may have little or no explicit memories to verbalise their feelings.

3.4.9 Survival techniques

In order to survive after experiencing trauma, an individual develops particular techniques (Endres, 2008). In some instances, it appears that the techniques form part of the person's personality, because the individual refuses to let go of these techniques after the trauma has subsided. According to Freud (as quoted in Endres, 2008), the ego is trapped between the id, the superego and the claims made by reality. As a result of this conflict, anxiety develops. If the ego can no longer handle the conflict, and because the individual cannot cope with prolonged anxiety, defence mechanisms develop to keep anxiety at bay. In the case where personality development is in a way in which the ego is weakened, there will be more defence mechanisms to reduce the anxiety. Freud (as quoted in Endres, 2008) states that survival techniques are characterised by two qualities: firstly, falsifying the reality and, secondly, the defence mechanisms functioning subconsciously. During and after traumatic events, survival techniques include rage and aggression, passivity or dissociation (Newman & Newman, 1999).

3.4.9.1 Denial

Freud (as quoted in Endres, 2008) explains that the moment anxiety presents a serious threat, it may lead to denial. Denial develops when the threat cannot be avoided or eliminated. Some victims of trauma use this psychological mechanism, which allows them to deny that anything has ever happened. Stone (1980) states that denial can last for years after the event; after all, denial is the most common reaction to trauma. Retief (2004) explains that even the death of loved ones can be denied by children and adolescents. He elaborates by explaining that denial defence mechanisms of children and adolescents differ from those of adults. Adults react mostly logically and analytically after trauma, and after a period, they grasp the situation and adjust accordingly. In contrast to adults, denial will last much longer for children and adolescents, who have a tendency to hold on to their existence before the trauma (Retief, 2004).

3.4.9.2 Dissociation

Dissociation is one of the most effective ways for a person to handle overwhelming trauma. The neuro-transmitters and neuro-hormonal systems in the brain change due to trauma (Endres, 2008). The change in the above-mentioned systems causes a change in the coding of the traumatic information and fragmentation of the traumatic memory. This occurrence is called “dissociation” (Calhoun & Atkison, 1982). Benedek (1985) states that traumatised individuals need not remember what has happened, because their pain is buried deep in their subconscious. Children and adolescents who are exposed to death dissociate themselves from the experience and choose to believe that it has happened to someone else (Wickham & West, 2002). Wickham and West (2002) conclude that the frequency and the type of trauma, as well as the age of the victim, play a significant role in the individual's reaction to trauma.

3.4.9.3 Insensitivity

According to Hodgkinsin and Stewart (1991), insensitivity is a defence mechanism that prevents the traumatised individual from experiencing destruction and death. This mechanism suppresses rage and prevents the individual from experiencing too much pain at once. The manifestation thereof happens only after the initial impact. The

individual may appear as if he or she is in control, but, in fact, the individual has not yet shown an emotional reaction to the trauma.

3.4.9.4 Repression

This defence mechanism of Freud (as quoted in Endres, 2008) refers to the process where particular thoughts, memories or feelings are made subconscious or are suppressed to the subconscious due to the “allow-ability”. However, repression is different than merely forgetting (Terr, 1994). Repression of suppression is an active process that allows for the suppression of an event more than once.

3.4.10 Children’s responses to trauma

Lewis (2009) explains that children’s reactions to trauma and stress are complex. Responses to trauma include behavioural, cognitive, emotional, spiritual and physical responses (Perrin *et al.*, 2000). Husain *et al.*, (2008) explain that the responses shown by primary school learners after experiencing trauma have a significant interference with interaction and learning, including their critical developmental transitions, as well as developmental milestones (Pynoos *et al.*, 1996). All of the above need to be considered, as well as the developmental levels when an educator intends to assess and understand childhood trauma. When guiding a learner in the complex and challenging time after trauma, an educator uses the above theory as a starting point; however, experience with learners and their reactions may be helpful as well. The educator is expected to understand that learners may react differently towards traumatic experiences.

3.5 Reactions to traumatic experiences

Depending on the pattern and type of trauma, 27% to 100% of children and adolescents, especially those exposed to sudden, unexpected violence created or caused by another individual, will develop symptoms of posttraumatic stress (Sack, 1993).

3.5.1 Introduction to posttraumatic stress disorder in middle childhood

According to Goenjian *et al.*, (1997), the literature indicates serious long-lasting consequences among young people after having experienced man-made or natural

disasters. Taking this into account, as well as the high rates of child abuse and school-based violence in South Africa, Burton (2006) explains that many young South Africans are at risk of being exposed to trauma across multiple settings.

3.5.2 Definition of posttraumatic stress disorder

Since 1980, the term “posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD)” has been used in psychological literature (Endres, 2008). Before this term was brought into use in the 1980s, the effect of trauma on psychological well-being was described by using a wide variety of terms, for example “Combat Stress Reaction” (Parry-Jones & Parry-Jones, 1994), “Rape Trauma Syndrome” (Mott, 1919) and “trauma neuroses” and “anxiety neuroses” (Freud, as quoted in Endres, 2008).

According to the DSM-V (American Psychiatric Association, 2013), PTSD is defined as follows:

The essential feature of Posttraumatic Stress Disorder is the development of characteristic symptoms following exposure to an extreme traumatic stressor involving direct personal experience of an event that involves actual or threatened death or serious injury, or other threat to one’s physical integrity; or witnessing an event that involves death, injury, or a threat to the physical integrity of another individual, or learning about unexpected or violent death, serious harm, or threat of death or injury experienced by a family member or other close associate (Criterion A1.) The individual’s response to the event must involve intense fear, helplessness, or horror (or in children, the response must involve disorganized or agitated behaviour) (Criteria A2).

Coetzee (2013) describes PTSD as the result of overwhelming exposure to stressful events or a series of events, for instance war, rape or molestation. PTSD is, however, a normal reaction of normal people to an abnormal situation (Schiraldi, 2001). Usually, the traumatic event that leads to PTSD is so extraordinary or intense that it would upset almost any individual. These events are usually sudden and can be dangerous for all involved. In addition, the results of this type of traumatic event can overwhelm an individual’s ability to react in a normal and appropriate way. Goelitz and Stewart-Kahn (2013) define PTSD as a disorder that develops after having been exposed to a traumatic event. However, the disorder requires that the following symptoms are present for at least a month: emotional reactions and fear, helplessness, flashbacks or nightmares of the event, avoiding situations that can hold memories of the event and hyperarousal.

3.5.3 Types of posttraumatic stress disorder

Even though PTSD is commonly known as a single condition, after extensive studies have been conducted, the types of PTSD can be classified as follows:

3.5.3.1 Complex posttraumatic stress disorder

Posttraumatic stress has been adapted to include complex PTSD as a possible type of PTSD. A proposal to include complex PTSD in the DSM-V has been submitted to a revision panel (Herman *et al.*, 2009). Included in the proposal are some diagnostic criteria. It is stated that changes in the following are to be observed:

- regulation of effected impulses
- attention and awareness
- self-perception
- relationships with others
- somatic and medical problems

3.5.3.2 Developmental trauma disorder

Extensive clinical research has shown that the exposure to trauma in an individual's childhood can have a negative effect on not only the psychological functioning of the child but also the child's psychological and personality development (Ford, 2005). Under the leadership of Van der Kolk (2005) and some other researchers, the diagnosis for developmental trauma disorder in middle childhood has been developed. The diagnostic criteria suggested (Ford, 2011) are the inability to regulate emotions, somatic processes and attention-seeking behaviour.

Developmental trauma disorder is mostly apparent in children who experience long-term posttraumatic consequences (Ford, 2005).

3.5.4 Symptoms of posttraumatic stress disorder

Sue *et al.* (as quoted in Roux, 2005) identify the following three symptoms as a prerequisite for the diagnosis of PTSD:

- The reliving of the events in dreams or disturbing memories.
- Being emotionally blunted or avoidance of stimuli that are related to the trauma.

- Heightened autonomous excitement (that can broadly be explained as self-preservation).

Denefil *et al.*, (2015) elaborate further on the clinical symptoms of PTSD that can be observed:

- Unfounded arousal: An individual always keeps tabs on his or her surroundings, as if the individual is constantly in danger.
- Explosive reaction: An individual reacts radically to the faintest surprise.
- Emotionally blunted: An individual does not possess the skills to fully or partially regulate emotions.
- Aggression: An individual tends to feel empowered in the establishment of dominance. Although this mostly refers to physical forms of aggression, it can also include emotional and verbal aggression.
- Weak memory and problems with concentration: An individual has problems with concentration or recalling thoughts.
- Depression: In the conditions of posttraumatic stress, depression can manifest and everything seems hopeless.

Taking the above-mentioned into account, it can be concluded that individuals with PTSD display the following symptoms: lack of sleep, anxiety, depression and heightened aggression. Aggressive behaviour can also be associated with PTSD (Flanagan *et al.*, 2014).

3.5.5 Psychological trauma and posttraumatic stress disorder in the South African context

Jackson *et al.*, (2005:471) state the following:

If we are to truly understand trauma and its impact on the lives of victims of violence, we must begin to understand trauma as a complex issue of multiple traumatic experiences, where the single incident is only a major traumatic event along a continuum of traumatic experience within the lives of victims of violence.

The above-mentioned quote is supported by Benjamin and Crawford-Brown (2010) in their research regarding the limitations of existing diagnostic frameworks. Current and past traumatic experiences, as well as community violence, will inevitably influence those involved. Benjamin and Crawford-Brown (2010) argue that the four core criteria

presented by the DSM-V are not adequate with regard to the impact of traumatic situations on people in South Africa. Perry (2001) explains that the relationship between trauma and violence does not only take place at an individual level, but is also conceptualised at individual, interpersonal and community levels.

According to the NCTSN (2008) in the United States of America, trauma can be described as follows from a psychological perspective: It involves the experience of an emotionally painful or difficult event, which often leads to the development of traumatic symptoms that have a lasting mental and physical impact. Children (learners) can be exposed to traumatic events in various ways, including neglect by parents (emotional or physical) and abuse, whether physically, sexually or emotionally, as well as exposure to violence (Collin-Vezina *et al.*, 2011).

3.6 Conclusion

South African research on the psychosocial impact of trauma has grown in recent years. However, there is a lack of local data on risk and protective factors of trauma, developmental aspects of trauma and effective intervention strategies. South Africa has a high rate of various violent behaviours, namely sexual abuse, physical abuse, criminal victimisation, assault and school-based violence, in addition to a high number of accidental injury within and outside the home. For most children living in such circumstances, trauma can be described as a condition rather than an event.

Learners' academic performance and holistic development (physical, emotional and social) are highly dependent on the management of learner aggression in the school system. A clear understanding of contributory factors and forms of learner aggression is important to manage learner aggression. The reactions and actions of learners are unique and differ among individuals. Particular reactions have an impact on a learner in the classroom and, by effect, also the educators involved. In the study, I aimed to include educators in the process of compiling guidelines as to dealing with learners who show aggressive behaviour after a traumatic experience. The following chapter will explain the methodology used in the research. In layman's terms, I shall explain the worldviews, methods and procedures used to compile adequate data to compile guidelines for the educators involved and to ensure that these guidelines can be

implemented in the various and diverse socio-economic communities throughout South Africa.

CHAPTER 4 RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

4.1 Introduction

As mentioned in Chapter 3, trauma symptoms and aggressive behaviour portrayed by learners after experiencing trauma are complex phenomena that cannot only be analysed according to the behaviour one would expect. In order to compile guidelines that are both effective and practical for educators who deal with learner aggression, it was of the utmost importance that the voice of educators be clearly heard in the research process. The inclusion of their opinions and experiences has allowed me to mould the guidelines and ensure that the guidelines do not only have theoretical value but practical value as well. PALAR was viewed as an appropriate point of departure for the research.

4.2 Research paradigm

Creswell (2014) states that social constructivists are of the opinion that individuals seek understanding of their world. However, individuals develop subjective meanings and compile their own interpretations of their experiences. The constructivist worldview will be used to combine the subjective meanings of the educators with the historical and cultural norms of each of the individuals.

Johnson (2009:449) shares that for research in the field of education, “educational research needs multiple thoughtful perspectives”. For the purpose of this study, both the interpretivist paradigm and the transformative paradigms have been used in combination with one another. This has allowed for an understanding of the reality of the educators’ daily struggles as well as to empower those involved and lead to radical changes in society.

An interpretivist paradigm is often used in combination with constructivism (Creswell, 2014). As Creswell (2014) states, researchers recognise that their own background shape their interpretation of a situation, and their position in the research is determined by the acknowledgement of their interpretation that will flow from their historical, cultural and personal experiences. The researchers’ interpretation of a situation or experience will be influenced by their background. The aim of interpretivism is the description, understanding and interpretation of reality that is multiple, realistic and

context-bound (Merriam, 2009). However, in order to ensure that the study is actively growing and adding to the community, this study combines the interpretivist paradigm with the transformative paradigm.

Mertens (2009) explains that the transformative paradigm leads to research that can be influenced by a variety of philosophies and theories with the common theme of emancipation and transformation of communities, through group action. Combining these two paradigms ensures that the educators will form part of the team attempting to alter their environment.

The emphasis on involving educators of schools at grassroots levels who deal with learner aggression directly (as against e.g. the principal and the school management team), was of grave importance to obtain rich data and participation within the PALAR approach. Joubert *et al.*, (2016) mention that action research has shown to empower educators in the attempt to sustain change in schools, and in addition to the empowerment of educators, action research has a lasting impact on the lives of learners. Action research (*cf.* Koshy, 2005) was used, as this form of research aims to democratise the knowledge creation process, to address inequality, to limit social conflict and to stress the importance that educators be involved with actions that are intended to change or adapt the education system.

Reeves and Hedberg (2003) explain that by using an interpretivist paradigm, one is allowed to place the analysis in a particular context. Using an interpretivist paradigm in combination with transformative paradigm, I have been permitted to inquire regarding the particular social phenomenon of learner aggression associated with psychological trauma. These paradigms rely on both the trained researcher and the human subject (in this case educators) as instruments to conduct research and understand the phenomenon described. In this research, the educators have been used for the observation of learners and the behaviour they portray, as well as sharing their views regarding the best way to handle these behaviours in conjunction with the educators. I conducted the various research cycles sharing in the discussion and reflections with the educators to fully understand the behaviour shown by the learners.

4.3 Research approach

A researcher is offered three research approach options: quantitative research, which generates data, objective measurements and numerical polls, using questionnaires and surveys (Gray, 2014); qualitative research, which allows researchers to collect data in the participants' natural setting (Creswell, 2014); and a mixed-method approach, which includes at least one quantitative and one qualitative method (Gray, 2014). To ensure that the views and contributions of an individual are understood and add value to a study, a qualitative research approach is most appropriate for the aim of this study.

According to Leedy and Ormrod (2010), qualitative research involves the examining of characteristics that cannot easily be measured in numerical values and is used as a research design that focuses on the study of social and human problems (Creswell, 2007). Creswell (2014) refers to common agreements regarding the core characteristics of qualitative research. Creswell (2014) explains that there are various sources, such as Hatch (2002) and Marshall and Rossman (2011), which agree on the characteristics that define qualitative research. To ensure that a complex picture and understanding of the problem or issue are developed, qualitative research is used. A *holistic account* of the phenomenon is created by reporting various perspectives, identifying the many factors involved in the phenomenon and creating a larger picture using all the information gathered.

In the case of this study, I have conducted the research at the school, where educators develop a good understanding of the impact the situation has, through first-hand experience, as well as what knowledge is necessary to equip themselves in dealing with daily challenges that include dealing with the above-mentioned learners. Taking this into account, a qualitative research approach was deemed the most appropriate for the purpose of this study. A qualitative research design has enabled me to act as a key instrument in gathering the participants' views regarding the phenomenon by using the opinions, experiences and knowledge of educators in their *natural setting* (where they feel most comfortable) to develop *holistic* guidelines for educators in dealing with learner aggression associated with psychological trauma by joining hands with the educators.

4.4 Research design and methodology

4.4.1 Research design

Three primary schools in a district, from different quintiles, were asked to take part in the study. According to Leedy and Ormrod (2010), qualitative research involves the examining of characteristics that cannot easily be measured in numerical values. Qualitative research is used as a research design that focuses on the study of social and human problems (Creswell, 2007).

This design gave me the ability to interpret and make sense, as well as develop a critical understanding, of a specific phenomenon (*cf.* Leedy & Ormrod, 2010). Koshy (2005) explains action research as a constructive investigation during which a researcher or a participant uses his or her knowledge to (re)construct particular issues on the basis of their own experiences. PALAR is an endless learning cycle during which the participants, and I generated new knowledge and drew from the newly generated knowledge to enable sustainable and relevant social change for the community (*cf.* Koshy, 2005). The data collection strategies chosen were used as a combination to effectively compile guidelines for primary school educators dealing with learner aggression associated with psychological trauma.

Kearney *et al.*, (2013) explain that PALAR has the potential to promote learning and development of the participants and the researcher, to encourage an abundance of learning and knowledge to those in the community, and to help create relevant, useful and contextualised knowledge. Furthermore, they state that PALAR focuses on a smaller number of people in the community who will actively engage themselves in addressing a complex and important issue because they are directly affected by both the problem and the solution.

4.4.2 Research questions

One cannot only have a paradigm, a research method or a research design. The aim of research is not maintained by the design or method chosen, but by the research question the researcher aims to answer. All studies are compiled of various parts, and questions and answers to these questions form part of all known studies. In order for

me to remain focused and work with a specific goal in mind, clear research questions were formulated to use as guidelines.

4.4.2.1 Primary research question

The following primary research question has been formulated for the purpose of the research:

What guidelines are needed to capacitate primary school educators in dealing with learner aggression, when associated with psychological trauma?

4.4.2.2 Secondary research questions

Underlying the primary research question, the following secondary research questions have been formulated:

- What are the experiences of primary school educators regarding learner aggression associated with psychological trauma?
- How do primary school learners react when exposed to trauma?
- What are the various contributory factors to aggressive behaviour shown by primary school learners?
- What knowledge do primary school educators require to support primary school learners showing aggression associated with psychological trauma?

By answering these questions, I aim to compile guidelines for primary school educators that are both useful and practical.

4.4.3 Research methodology

A qualitative research approach with a methodology based on action research from a joint interpretivist and transformative research paradigm allowed for the development of guidelines for primary school educators when dealing with learner aggression associated with psychological trauma.

According to Dick (2004), the two aims of action research are to take planned action in order to improve situations and research the change in order to enhance one's understanding. Kearney *et al.*, (2013) identified three components of PALAR that guide the process. The components are, as explained above, action research

methodology, that is, the functional plan that links the development of relationships that are democratic, supportive and trusting, continues critical reflection in a learning context and provides all participants with the deserved recognition.

Action research methods and procedures were used to obtain a reliable and valid body of data to conclude opinions and formulate innovative ideas. Therefore, the research paradigm, research design and research methodology were deliberately designed to meet the requirements of this research. As supported by Joubert *et al.*, (2016), the researcher is encouraged to experience the world through the eyes of the participant to ensure that meaning is related to the experiences and views of the participants. The use of PALAR is to democratise the knowledge creation process, limit social conflict, address inequality and stress the importance that all educators should be involved in the actions that are intended to change or adapt the education system.

4.4.3.1 Participant recruitment

The participants in educational research rely on knowledge, perceptions, experiences or beliefs as source of information (Joubert *et al.*, 2016). Depending on the nature of the research, the research results are often obtained from a representative sample of the population (Strydom, 2012). As the total accessible population can be considered potential stakeholders in a research project, and not everyone can necessarily be accommodated, a decision should be made about sampling methods (Joubert *et al.*, 2016). The selection of both the schools and participants was done by different sampling methods.

4.4.3.1.1 Sampling of schools

According to Leedy and Ormrod (2010), when a researcher deliberately selects and uses his or her data sources, it is called non-probability sampling. I deliberately selected the schools in the study. Convenience and quota sampling were used in combination to select the schools for the research. McMillan and Schumacher (2014) state that convenience sampling can mainly be based on the availability of cases or elements to be included in a study. The reliability of the research results is supported by a detailed description of a sample taken in this way (Joubert *et al.*, 2016).

Convenience and quota-sampling were used in conjunction with one another. When using quota-sampling, the researcher identifies categories of people and the required number (quota) in the identified categories. Sampling was done by means of convenience sampling until the quota had been reached (*cf.* Maree, 2010). More specifically non-proportional quota sampling (sampling that is done until a minimum number in a sub-population has been reached) was done, regardless of what the proportions in the population were (*cf.* Maree, 2010).

Eligible schools were identified in my region. I obtained a list from the Department of Education of the various quintiles in which the schools in my district had been classified. I made contact with schools in the bottom two quintiles, the third quintile and the top quintiles. I discussed the aim of the research with the principal and explained the process.

School 1 – quintile 1 – was very eager to take part in the study and to obtain all help available. However, this school is affected by many external influences or obstacles, such as transport being late that leads to school only starting at 10 o'clock, learners taking care of younger siblings, and so forth. This made it difficult to stick to a fixed arrangement with both the principal and the educators.

School 2 – quintile 4 – assured me upon the initial discussion that there were educators interested in taking part in the study. On returning the following week for a final decision, I noticed the attention paid to and effort made for the learners in both of the participants' classrooms.

The selection of **School 3** – quintile 3 – proved more difficult. I approached two schools who declined to be a part of the research process. The third school contacted was intrigued by the explanation and asked to discuss the option with the educators. I received feedback within a couple of days, and the educators and the principal were very positive regarding the research as well as what they would be able to gain in the process.

4.4.3.1.2 Biographical information of selected participants

The following data represents the biographical information, teaching experience and qualifications of the participants.

Table 4-1: Biographical information of selected participants

GENDER	
Male	1
Female	10
AGE	
20 – 29	3
30 – 39	3
40 – 49	2
50 – 59	3
60+	
YEARS TEACHING EXPERIENCE	
0 – 5 years	5
6 – 10 years	1
11 – 15 years	1
16 – 20 years	
21 – 25 years	2
26 – 30 years	2
HIGHEST QUALIFICATION	
Teaching diploma	3
Teaching degree	2
Degree and diploma	3
Honours degree	3
Master's degree	
Doctorate	
Other – please indicate	
POST LEVEL	
Teacher	10
Head of department	
Deputy principal	
Principal	1
PHASES(S) YOU ARE TEACHING	
Foundation phase	3
Intermediate phase	8
Senior phase	

4.4.3.1.3 Sampling of participants

Purposive sampling was used for the sampling of the participants (educators) in the selected schools. Purposive sampling is used in particular situations where sampling is done with a specific purpose in mind (Maree, 2010).

The principals of the schools involved discussed the possibility of the research with the educators and inquired about their opinions. The principal then arranged for those of the educators who required more information or those who were interested to meet with me. During this process, I explained the research, the aim of the study and the criteria for participation to the educators. The participants who were interested all met the required criteria and could take part in the study.

4.4.3.2 Data generation

Preceding the data collection in the research process, I obtained the consent of the district office or director of the Kenneth Kaunda education district of the North-West Province (**Addendum B**), the principal of the school involved as well as the educators who took part in the study. I ensured that all ethical conditions were met before data collection took place (see **Addendum C**).

This schematic representation of the data collection process briefly explains the PALAR process. Following the schematic representation is a detailed explanation of the data collection process.

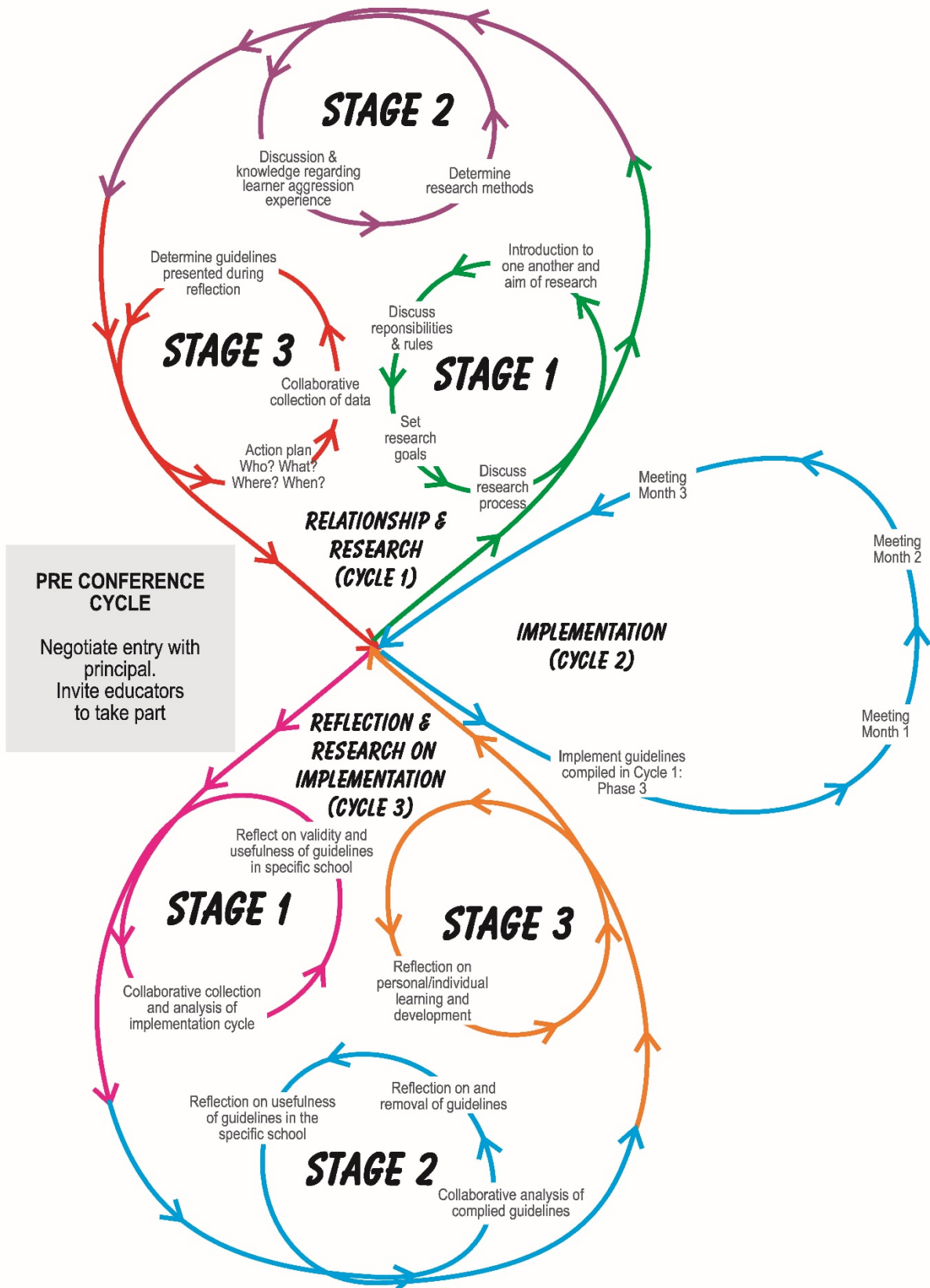


Figure 4-1: Data collection process in the PALAR research process (adapted from Zuber-Skerritt, 2002).

In qualitative research, the researcher is the primary tool in the identification and data collection process. Mayan (2001) therefore says that the researcher has direct access to the world through his or her own interpretations. The way in which data have been obtained (or generated) is discussed in terms of the variety of strategies used in this study. A qualitative research approach was used in the study. Leedy and Ormrod (2010) motivate the use of qualitative research as a research design. Joubert *et al.*, (2016) state that the researcher has to decide the type of data required for this study, as well as the site demarcated where data are collected. Mills (2007) argues that action researchers usually follow one of three approaches to collect data: experience, inquiries and testing or evaluation.

For the purpose of this study, all three of the above-mentioned approaches were used. The experiences of the participants were used, as well as inquiries about their knowledge, perceptions and experiences. After the above-mentioned approaches had been completed, testing or evaluation of what had been compiled and gathered was done. The data collection in the study was divided into cycles that were divided into stages (as briefly explained in Chapter 1). Data collection in the study was done in cycles, as explained below.

Pre-conference cycle

Three schools were chosen using a combination of convenience and quota sampling.

- Schools in the district close to me were used in the study (**convenience sampling**).
- Three schools in the district were selected: each from different group quintiles – a school from quintile one and two, and a school from quintile four (**quota sampling**).

After having selected a school, I asked the principal of the selected school for goodwill permission and discussed the research with the principal. I asked the principal if he or she felt that the school, including the educators and learners, would benefit from the study. If the research could add value to the school, that school would be included. If the principal did not feel that his or her school was in need of these guidelines, a different school from that quintile group was selected.

Purposive sampling was used to select educators per school to take part in the study. As previously mentioned, the participants had to adhere to the following criteria:

- have an accredited teaching qualification
- have a minimum of three years' experience
- be primary school educators only
- have experience with learners who have experienced traumatic events and show signs of aggressive behaviour

Cycle 1

Stage 1 – Introduction

The introduction to the study included compiling shared objectives and the purpose of the study to the participants. I discussed the proposed process of the research with the participants. They gave their input on the proposal and we decided on a mutually beneficial process and aim.

Stage 2 – One-on-one action learning set

During the one-on-one action learning set, I asked the participants questions related to their biographic information, teaching experience and knowledge and experiences of learners who displayed aggression that might be related to traumatic experiences.

Stage 3 – Group action learning set

The group action learning set took place per school with all of the participants. During these discussions, the participants and I informally discussed opinions, experiences and ideas regarding possible guidelines needed in dealing with learner aggression associated with psychological trauma. This would give insight into the understanding and perspectives of those involved (*cf.* Hesse-Biber, 2010).

Cycle 2

Stage 1 – Implementation of guidelines (trial cycle)

During this stage of the research, the participants implemented the guidelines compiled during the group action learning set in Cycle 1: Stage 3. During this stage, I was in contact with the participants once a month. This ensured that the action

research process was or stayed valuable to the educators as well as the learners. I took time with the participants to discuss the implementation of the guidelines compiled. The participants and I met in the set timeframe, and by using the discussions, I could ensure that the input given would be useful.

Cycle 3

Stage 1 – Group action learning set reflecting on the guidelines per school

Collaboration, collection and analysis were used to gather information on Cycle 2: Stage 1 (implementation of guidelines). Collaboration, collection and analysis were conducted separately at each school, including all participants of that specific school. This was used to determine the perceptions and opinions of the participants regarding the gap or gaps in the guidelines or possible amendments or changes that needed to be made.

This action learning set is focused on clearly formulated goals (Joubert *et al.*, 2016). This was used to gather information on Cycle 2: Stage 1 (implementation of guidelines). Each learning set was conducted separately at each school, including all participants of that specific school. This set was used to put together the perceptions and opinions of the participants regarding the gap or gaps in the guidelines or possible amendments or changes that needed to be made.

I used the information accumulated from the various participants, including all information from all three participating schools, to compile a list of guidelines appropriate for use in different quintile schools. After compiling the guidelines, the research moved on to Stage 2.

* The participant received a list of all guidelines prior to **Stage 2** to ensure that the participants had enough time to go through the guidelines and comment where they felt a guideline was not valuable or if a guideline needed to be amended.

Stage 2 – Group action learning set reflecting on final guidelines

The final guidelines compiled from reflections received from participants from the various schools were discussed with the participants as a group (to ensure that the guidelines were appropriate for the specific context of each individual school). The

participants were allowed to easily and spontaneously add their final input (pointing out the guidelines that would work or would not work in their respective schools).

Stage 3 – One-on-one action learning set reflecting on the research process

Individual discussion and reflections of the participants on their knowledge and skill development were done to gather any and all individual input that participants might not want to share with a group of colleagues.

After this, I took all the data (including opinions and experiences of participants) into account, and the final guidelines that were appropriate for schools in all quintiles were developed.

4.4.3.3 Data analysis

According to Creswell (2007:167) qualitative data analysis entails:

... classifying things, persons, and event and the properties which characterize them and the seeking to identify and describe patterns and themes in an attempt to understand and explain these patterns and themes.

Data analysis can be described as the process of making sense of the data that have been gathered, in order to answer the set research questions. According to Creswell (2007), the data analysis and interpretation process is intuitive and relative. Due to this, the qualitative researcher depends on sights, intuition and perception in the analysis of data.

Leedy and Ormrod (2010) explain that the goal of content analysis is to use participants' comments and opinions about a particular phenomenon to identify general themes or in this case guidelines; therefore in the case of this study, content analysis was used. The qualitative data that were gathered during the study were the following:

- **Cycle 1: Stage 3** – The opinions, experiences and ideas of the participants regarding possible guidelines.
- **Cycle 2: Stage 1** – The reflective individual interviews of the participants during the implementation of guidelines stage.

- **Cycle 3: Stage 1** – The perceptions and opinions of guidelines the participants wanted to add or eliminate, as well as input from the participants regarding the final set of guidelines.

The central focus of content analysis, according to Leedy and Ormrod (2010), is to identify themes in participants' communications. Based on the analysis of the different categories in terms of similarities and differences, the data segments were categorised and concomitant to several themes. The themes were regarded as the findings of the inquiry.

Data analysis was done in three cycles, as recommended by Wellington (2000):

- Data reduction: Data are gathered, summarised and categorised.
- Data representations: Ordered data are graphically illustrated or visually represented.
- Conclusion: Data are interpreted and meaning is given thereto. The researcher identifies themes and makes assumptions.

All interviews conducted were recorded by me to make transcribing possible (*cf.* Henning *et al.*, 2004). All the unprocessed data were read carefully, analysed according to the categorisation (tagging) and then interpreted regarding general themes. An in-depth discussion of the analysis of the data gathered is found in Chapter 5.

4.5 Role of the researcher

As the researcher, one has many roles to fulfil. Primarily, my role as researcher was to facilitate the practical and theoretical implementation of the guidelines. My focus was on understanding and compiling guidelines, through a process, to ensure that the educators find the guidelines practical and useful. Throughout the entire process, my role was mainly to negotiate among the educators of various schools. To ensure this, I captured the viewpoints and contributions of all those involved. I recorded the interviews and made additional notes to ensure that nothing was lost. Throughout the entire research process, I ensured that both the educators involved and I followed the ethical standards and regulations as stipulated by the Department of Basic Education

as well as the North-West University. The following steps were followed throughout each cycle of the research:

Pre-conference cycle

- I decided on the research design and selected the participants.
- I compiled invitations or introductory material after receiving approval from the education district.

Cycle 1 – Stage 1: Introductory

- Introduction to groups.
- I reviewed the objectives and purposes as well as the process of research.
- Scan the issue: place the research problem in context.

Cycle 1 – Stage 2: Individual semi-structured interviews

- I posed questions to the participants (adaptable).

Cycle 1 – Stage 3: Open-ended focus group interview

- I took part in the discussion.
- I mediated the opinions and discussions of the participants.
- I compiled a list of guidelines the participants had decided on.

Cycle 2 – Stage 1: Implementation of guidelines (semi-structured interviews)

- I was in contact with the participants once every two to three weeks to monitor and note any or all ideas and opinions the participants might have.
- I took time with the participants to discuss the implementation of the guidelines compiled. The participants and I met on the set timeframe, and by using the discussions, I could ensure that the input given would be useful. This ensured that the PALAR process was valuable to the educators as well as to the learners.

Cycle 3 – Stage 1: Focus group interviews

- I gathered the perceptions and opinions of the guidelines used in Cycle 2: Stage 1.

Cycle 3 – Stage 2: Focus group semi-structured interviews

- I identified guidelines the participants wanted to add or guidelines that possibly needed to be eliminated.

** I compiled guidelines from information gathered from various schools to create a set of guidelines.*

- I discussed the final guidelines from information gathered from various schools with the participants.
- I compiled the final input from the participants.

Cycle 3 – Stage 3: Structured individual interviews

- I conducted structured interviews to get more insight into the individual perceptions and opinions of the participants if there were aspects the participants were not comfortable with sharing in front of the other participants.

4.6 Ethical considerations and trustworthiness of the study

The expectation is that the researcher's morally and ethically responsible behaviour is of enormous value and a necessity. The researcher is executed to conduct research ethically and to behave ethically towards each participant. The study was carried out based on the following ethical considerations:

- Consent was obtained from the Department of Basic Education in the district. **(Addendum B)**
- Informed consent: The participants were approached in their private capacity to voluntarily participate in the research. **(Addendum C)**
- Oral and written information was provided to each participant on the nature and purpose of the research as well as each participant's involvement.
- The voluntary nature of participants' participation was emphasised and it explicitly stated that a participant can withdraw from the research at any stage (without giving a reason or any fear of prejudice).

- The confidentiality of participants' communications was guaranteed, as well as confidentiality regarding the identity of participants. For the group interviews, anonymity of the participants could not be guaranteed, but confidentiality was requested from group members. No other persons or institutions were or would be made public by the research.

Only participants that signed the confidentiality agreement were allowed to take part in the study. The raw data were and would at all times be locked and electronically protected by a password. All data that were gathered were anonymised at all times. The conversations between the participants and me took place in a private place. There was or would be no names or identification on any data whatsoever and no data or reports were lying around during the research period. I stressed the importance of privacy at the beginning of the research. I also explained to the participants that their privacy would be respected at all times.

Confidentiality ensures that appropriate measures are implemented to prevent disclosure of information that might identify the participant either during the course of the research or afterwards, for example anonymising data or pooling results. No names or identification were or would be put on the data. When the data were gathered, all parties involved signed confidentiality agreements. The data were and will be properly locked away at all times. No participants' or institutions' names were or would be disclosed, as the importance of confidentiality was stressed. I called an "ethics meeting" (in the introductory stage) to explain to all parties involved the importance thereof to keep any and all information disclosed during the process confidential and that the information should, for no reason, be discussed outside of the group. As a registered psychologist, I had the skill and connections to provide emotional support to any participant should the need arise.

4.7 Conclusion

This chapter provided a detailed explanation of the research methodology used in the study. To compile guidelines for primary school educators in dealing with learner aggression associated with psychological trauma, a qualitative research approach was chosen to support the PALAR design that was chosen. The research relied greatly on the knowledge and experience of the educators for this form of research. The

various sections in this chapter explained the methods used to generate data and to analyse the data. In the following chapter, the analysis of the data collected will be explained. Chapter 5 will allow an exploration of the process and the interviews to support the guidelines compiled with the assistance of the educators.

CHAPTER 5 FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

5.1 Introduction

As mentioned in Chapter 4, the aim of the research was to compile guidelines that were both effective and practical for educators who deal with learner aggression in the primary school classroom. In order to ensure this, it was of the utmost importance to include the educators' contributions. In order to examine the data holistically and to ensure that the true picture was sketched, data from all three participating schools were combined. The educators who took part in this research process were from various schools (all in different quintiles), different genders and races, as well as a wide variety of age groups with a combined experience of over 110 years in the education system. This not only allows one to see the gap in knowledge educators have, as a whole, but also allows for the guidelines to be relevant and useful to schools in different quintiles and learners with various backgrounds. Throughout the chapter, these schools are referred to as School 1 (quintile 1), School 2 (quintile 4) and School 3 (quintile 3) to ensure privacy and confidentiality.

5.2 Findings Cycle 1

All the participants of a participating school attended meetings. During this stage, the participants and I could informally discuss their opinions, ideas and experiences regarding possible guidelines needed by primary school educators in dealing with learner aggression associated with psychological trauma. The main aim was to have preliminary guidelines compiled at the end of the interview. After the discussions at all three participating schools, I combined the guidelines, removing duplicate guidelines and determining where repetitive data had been gathered.

The questions asked during this stage and the responses to them are presented below.

5.2.1 Reactions of primary school learners in participating schools towards psychological trauma

Question 1 was as follows:

In your experience, how do primary school learners react when exposed to psychological trauma? (See Addendum H.)

The reactions of the participants were as follows:

Some learners withdraw completely and keep to themselves. They struggle to share their feelings and thoughts. Other learners lose track and stop being the responsible, good, hardworking learners they were. (Participant 1)

They perform very bad in the classroom, and they are always negative, reserved and confused. (Participant 2)

The learners react in different ways, but most learners become very quiet and reserved. They don't like to play with other learners anymore. They feel much safer when they are in their corner alone and most of the time when you try to talk to them they will just keep quiet and some will cry. (Participant 3)

Well, some learners struggle to adapt after such trauma. They withdraw and completely shut down. Other learners take action into their own hands and start to do wrong activities, such as drinking, smoking and bullying. (Participant 4)

They become aggressive and full of anger all the time. (Participant 5)

Primary school learners are emotionally immature and trauma experiences are handled as such. Most learners will overreact through anger. Where others will close themselves off. I think that because of the emotional immaturity they would do anything else but face the actual feelings of being exposed to psychological trauma. Learners are so unique from each other, it is difficult to distinguish which learners are reacting to which situation. I think learners struggle to understand – why and what now – of a psychological trauma. (Participant 6)

The learner does not always change in behaviour. He or she would casually tell a friend; then the friend would come forward and inform me. Some act quietly, but most of the time they do not change. You wouldn't tell that something is wrong if you don't know the details. (Participant 7)

They tend to show anti-social signs; they do not interact much and hardly speak. The learners become very withdrawn. (Participant 8)

In my experience, some learners withdraw from their friends and any extra-mural activities which they participated in. They find an excuse as to why they want to stay in break times or they say they are unwell to lay in the sick bay. Other learners become louder, they make themselves noticeable, either by fighting or bullying or being disruptive in class. They are absent from school; they leave the house in uniform, but they do not get to school. (Participant 9)

Learners differ. Some are very aggressive, some learners withdraw themselves and some learners want all your attention. (Participant 10)

Children who have experienced trauma react in different ways. A sign of trauma usually show in their work – it is incomplete or not done. It is also accompanied by emotional outburst; sometimes they can become aggressive and hurt others. They are hurting and want others to feel their pain. Some become withdrawing and refuse to communicate. (Participant 11)

From the reaction of the participants, the following themes were identified in all three schools. The reactions of primary school learners exposed to psychological trauma can be viewed as follows: 1) emotional overreaction; 2) anti-social, 3) emotional-avoidant and withdrawn behaviour; 4) refusal to communicate; 5) reckless negative and reserved emotional and aggressive behaviour – drinking, smoking, bullying; 6) poor scholastic performance; 7) aggressive outbursts; 8) high absenteeism; and 9) attention-seeking behaviour.

The literature supports what educators observe on a daily basis as well as conclusions made by the research. During the traumatic event, an individual experiences a feeling of disbelief and it takes a while before the individual realises the reality of the situation (Retief, 2004).

Retief (2004) also explains that during this phase of trauma, an individual is capable of actions which he or she would not be able to apply in a different scenario. The individual tries to avoid all people, places and situations that might remind him or her of the event. However, as explained by Retief (2004), these attempts are never truly successful, because there are always reminders of the event. The body is constantly flooded with stress hormones, due to the possible reliving of the event; this is a sign of posttraumatic stress (Endres, 2008). This state occurs when an individual is not capable of processing the traumatic experience (Retief, 2004). Characteristically, the three symptoms of PTSD are avoidance, isolation and withdrawal symptoms, such as sleeping disorders and irritation, and recurring flashbacks (David *et al.*, 1997).

Based on the above-mentioned, the following findings became apparent:

Primary school learners exposed to psychological trauma react in various ways. These reactions mostly include, among others, anti-social, emotional-avoidant and withdrawn behaviour or aggressive emotional outbursts. Learners present a refusal to communicate, as well as negative and reserved emotional and aggressive behaviour that includes drinking, smoking, bullying. The educators observed that poor scholastic

performance was evident in most cases, and according to them, high absenteeism seemed to have a significant influence on the poor performance of learners.

5.2.2 Contributory factors towards aggressive behaviour of primary school learners in participating schools

Question 2 was as follows:

What are the various contributory factors to aggressive behaviour shown by primary school learners? (See Addendum H.)

The reactions of some of the participants were as follows:

Parents drinking at home and beating learners, then they act the same at school. Parents are not involved in learners' education, so learners don't care about education, and when confronted, they get aggressive. (Participant 1)

I do not know. (Participant 2)

The learners who have aggressive behaviour, some of them I due [*sic*] to what happens at home. My father did this to my mom and now I am going to do the same to other people. They think that is the only way to solve a problem or release their anger. (Participant 3)

(Participant lists on fingers)

1. Parents are not involved in the children's lives.
2. Learners that are exposed to drinking and smoking by their parents and others.
3. Children being abused by their parents or other family members.
4. Children being bullied by others.
5. Children having to take responsibility for their younger brothers and sisters because of the absence of their parents (Participant 4).

They fight with others the whole time. Or they just insult each other. (Participant 5)

There are a few – no discipline because of an absent father or mother or parents work late in the evenings. Learners can do what they want at home. Behaves aggressive[ly] to discipline due to the fact that [the] learner is not used to [it]. Then some learners are over-disciplined. The learner is physically disciplined and reacts aggressively because that is what the learner is used to, because they follow guardians' example. Some learners are not able to deal with emotional things (basic everyday interactions) so the first reaction is anger (name calling, hitting, bullying, etc.). Reacting aggressively is like second nature to our children in our school; it's the reaction they see from parents, guardians and role models and thus they think it is appropriate. (Participant 6)

Most of the learners who act aggressive[ly] are those who perform poorly in their school work. The fact that they don't know the answer and can't keep up with the workload makes them aggressive. Most of these learners do not have a support structure at home. (Participant 7)

Various aspects of abuse, like abuse by parents and bullying in the school, also largely contribute to aggression. (Participant 8)

I think mainly, the loss of a parent. Learners who have lost their parents feel very alone. Even if they live with a loving guardian, they feel the void. And some of the learners who still have their parents are being abused in one way or another. These learners normally don't know how to ask for help or how to share what is happening to them. (Participant 9)

Uhm, I would say divorce, death and friends and hormones. (Participant 10)

Changes in the home environment. Changes in the child's immediate frame of references. Divorce and death of apparent make them feel angry; they don't have measures in place to cope with the anger and it becomes a means of feeling better if they can hurt someone else. An inside emotion is expressed outwardly. Moving to a new school. (Participant 11)

From the reaction of the participants, the following themes were identified in all three schools. Contributory factors towards aggressive behaviour of learners in participating schools are as follows: changes in the immediate frame of reference (drastic, e.g. divorce or death, or less significant, e.g. moving); parental abuse (physical or emotional) and neglect or the lack of a support structure; siblings taking on the parental role; lack of ability to ask for help; and lastly, being emotionally unequipped or struggling to deal with emotional interactions, which leads to attention-seeking behaviour – mostly aggressive and revengeful reactions.

Based on the above-mentioned, the following findings became apparent:

There are a variety of factors that influence a learner's behaviour; however, during the study, the participants shared the most apparent factors in the primary school classroom. Learners exposed to changes in their immediate frame of references, which can be drastic changes such as divorce or death or less significant changes such as moving, are extremely likely to show aggressive behaviour. Parental abuse (physical or emotional) and neglect or the lack of a support structure influence the learning of the child to a large extent. Due to absent parents or parental neglect, siblings take on the parental role. This puts an extreme burden on learners, a burden most primary school learners are not emotionally ready for. Most learners who show

aggressive behaviour lack the ability to ask for help; this, in turn, leads to learners feeling frustrated. According to participants, most primary school learners are emotionally unequipped to deal with emotional interactions, and this may lead to attention-seeking behaviour, mostly in the form of aggressive and revengeful reactions.

5.2.3 Participating educators' experience regarding learners who were exposed to psychological trauma

Question 3.1 was as follows:

Have you experienced aggressive behaviour of learners that can be traced to psychological trauma? (See Addendum H.)

All of the participants involved in the study have experienced learners with aggressive behaviour due to psychological trauma.

Question 3.2 was as follows:

How would you describe these experiences? (See Addendum H.)

The reactions of the participants were as follows:

After his mother passed away, he went to live with his grandmother. The learner is very aggressive whenever he is confronted. He runs away and starts kicking and screaming and bites. (Participant 1)

The learner undermines teachers and parent. They abuse other learners. (Participant 2)

The learner was aggressive and I could see that she was full of anger. The thing[s] that were the causes of this was abuse and anger at home. The anger was building up. There was a learner who was very angry and her father abandoned her. She will fight with anger and she will make up [sic] victims feel the physical pain. She dealt with her anger. (Participant 3)

Learners that experience trauma are very short-tempered. Sometimes learners can make a joke with them, but they take it very personally. They are very sensitive about matters at home. They will fright[en] and hit each other without any second thoughts [sic]. The main cause of the trauma remains a secret. When parents is [sic] called for meetings, they are surprised to hear about these kinds of behaviour. (Participant 4)

The learners often bully other learners and they show no respect to the other learners in their class. (Participant 5)

The learner's mother passed away while he was in Grade 3. Now he has changed a lot. He shows aggressive behaviour towards teachers and learners. He feels more comfortable disturbing others. He doesn't want to come to school; he is lazy. The father beats him like a man when he doesn't obey. (Participant 6)

If learners are abused or bullied, they tend to lash out; they bully other learners in retaliation. Learners also tend to react aggressively when they are reprimanded in class. (Participant 7)

[The] learner lost her mother when she was only 14 days old. She is very aggressive towards other learners. Learners may say or do a simple thing[s] and she would physically attack them, and she is hard to get off other learners. (Participant 8)

The learner's parents divorced. The parents, especially the father, spoke to the mother and the children as if they were worth nothing. So the learner started talking that way at school and with the other learners. He became a verbal bully with a very short temper. (Participant 9)

A learner who was physically abused, but also mildly mentally impaired was the scariest outburst that I have ever seen. She would grab anything to use as a weapon to hit or hurt anyone who dares to mess with her. I saw her hit a boy with an umbrella. She was so physically strong during those outbursts and hard to control. I used to have to physically remove her from the class and I would take her away to cool off in a time-out zone. (Participant 10)

From the reaction of the participants, the following final themes were identified in all three schools. The participants agreed that they faced the following in the primary school classroom: disrespectful, aggressive behaviour without regard to consequences (learner becomes a verbal bully); being very short-tempered; learners modelling aggressive reactions of parents, guardians and role models; learners undermining authority and showing aggressive behaviour towards discipline; and scholastic underperformance leading to aggressive behaviour. However, the intensity and the duration of these types of behaviour are different with each learner in his or her specific situation.

The participants deal with a wide variety of issues in the classroom. Focusing on learners who are exposed to psychological trauma, the participants deal with some learners who indulge in disrespectful, aggressive behaviour without regard for the consequences. In these cases, a learner becomes a verbal bully with a very short temper. Other learners model aggressive reaction of parents, guardians and role models, which is portrayed in the behaviour in the classroom and on the playground.

Learners undermine authority and indulge in aggressive behaviour towards discipline.
Scholastic underperformance leads to aggressive behaviour.

5.2.4 How participating educators deal with learner aggression prior to implementation of guidelines

Question 4 was as follows:

How do you normally handle learner aggression when associated with trauma? (See Addendum H.)

The reactions of the participants were as follows:

I talk to the learner and try to establish trust. I tell them that their behaviour is not how they normally are and that I am there for them if they need to talk or want advice. (Participant 1)

By talking to them, encouraging them towards positive behaviour. I tell them to associate with people who are always good. And I refer them to the social worker to deal with. (Participant 2)

I try to talk to the learner and get them to trust me, I try to get them to open up to me. It might take time, but when you finally win his or her trust, they will talk to you. (Participant 3)

Methods are different from learner to learner. With smaller learners, I normally try to calm them down. I sit down and talk to them, but the language is a barrier. Bigger learners are more difficult. They don't give you time to talk. Some just don't open up to you. They speak in their mother tongue, which makes it difficult to help or understand them. (Participant 4)

I talk to them politely and try to figure out the nature and cause of the problem. (Participant 5)

I try to stay calm as possible. Most of the time, we as teachers have no idea what trauma a learner has been through or if there is any trauma. When a learner does confide in you (which very seldom happens since they don't want to share or talk about it), it is confidential and other teachers don't know or understand the child's behaviour. But whenever a learner acts aggressively towards him- or herself or another learner, I am calm and try to talk to the learner later on about the situation and let them speak about why they were so angry. I try to get the learner to understand that they could have handled it better and [there are] consequences to their actions, and kind words get a lot further. (Participant 6)

I would ask the learner to come see me privately, then I would talk about his or her good characteristics. Then I would ask why they are acting negatively. (Participant 7)

I try to be understanding and empathetic. I would normally talk to the learner privately and not reprimand in front of others. (Participant 8)

I try to have personal one-on-one sessions with learners. Speak to them and try to find out what the issue is and why they are acting in this specific way. I am very patient, but persistent when speaking to the learner. I also pay close attention to them, I will move them closer to my desk – almost away from other learners, but still include them in activities and discussions. (Participant 9)

I always try to have sympathy for the learner, and ignore the aggression as far as possible. Every now and again the learner will act totally unacceptable and you as teacher has [*sic*] to take charge. I would talk to the learner alone at first, but if the behaviour continuous, I will address them in the class. (Participant 10)

I try to isolate what causes the outburst. I usually remove the student out of the group and talk to them on their level. I try to remain calm and discuss the incident and not attack the child's character. It normally comes out as to what is bothering them and why they react the way they do. They normally admit they were wrong and can't understand why they do it. I usually discuss it with parents and I always advise counselling. (Participant 11)

From the reaction of the participants (**see all responses in Addendum E**), the following themes were identified in all three schools. The participants seemed to use one or more of the following as guidelines for dealing with learner aggression associated with trauma prior to the participation of the study:

- Face-to-face verbal communication with the learner privately.
- Referral to social worker.
- Establish trust with the learner.
- Be understanding and empathetic.
- Sympathetic reactions towards learners
- Encourage positive behaviour from the learner.
- Pay close attention to learners.
- Discuss issues with parents and advise counselling.
- Avoid drastic reactions by ignoring the aggression as far as possible.
- Isolate causes of aggressive outbursts.
- Remove the learner from the group.

However, the participants were still applying a variety of methods in dealing with learners. From three schools, in different quintiles, the above-mentioned were used by most of the educators according to their responses.

5.2.5 Identified gaps in the knowledge of the participating educators in dealing with learner aggression associated with psychological trauma

Question 5 was as follows:

What knowledge do you, as educator, feel will empower you adequately to support primary school learners showing aggression associated with psychological trauma?

(See Addendum H.)

The reactions of the participants were as follows:

Can I give you a list? Uhm, no just joking. I would like to know what the symptoms are of learners who show aggression because of trauma. How do I approach learners is somewhat difficult ... and who to contact that will help that does not include the social worker, because that is no use. (Participant 1)

How to teach them positive behaviour and show them they can be better people in the future if they focus on their schoolwork. How to encourage them to participate in school activities. (Participant 2)

The knowledge of how to handle these learners. We are dealing with learners from different backgrounds, so it is difficult. (Participant 3)

Being able to understand the learner will be a big asset, but I know that is not something you can help with. To know how to handle learners who experienced different types of trauma would help. Sexual and physical abuse might have different strategies as to how to approach the situation or the learner. Overall it is difficult to build a trust relationship with the learners in our school. (Participant 4)

To be able to know how to identify learners exposed to different types of trauma. I would like to know where we can get professional help, like a social worker. I would like to know how to support these learners in the class as well. (Participant 5)

Sometimes I feel that we as teachers all need a degree in psychology to be able to help the learners properly, but that is impossible to expect. I would like to have more knowledge through a course or a programme. I would like to have knowledge on 1) how to identify a child with psychological trauma, 2) what to say and how to react if a child tells you about his or her trauma, 3) how can I help or what can I do, 4) who can I contact to help and 5) what coping mechanisms can I give a child who confides in me. (Participant 6)

The school does have a social worker who comes in once a week, but I think it does not help a lot. We need more social workers. The school is a double-medium school that consists of ±1 800 learners. We need someone who can be at the school daily. So if the learner shows aggression, then if who [sic] immediately be referred for help. (Participant 7)

I would like to know the effects of a trauma on a child – mentally, socially and academically. I would also want to be able to help learners overcome those effects in a positive way. (Participant 8)

I think a better understanding of what they are going through. Most of the things that they are experiencing. I have not experienced or dealt with all of the issues learners have to deal with. This makes it difficult to completely understand and which approach to take when helping a learner. (Participant 9)

I don't think there can only be set knowledge to support you. You have to have a relationship with the learners and they need to know that even if you reprimand them that you still love them. (Participant 10)

I think my experience over time helps a lot. I feel I lack the necessary knowledge needed, at times to help a child. I always refer as this is not my area of expertise, and I feel that any school should have a counsellor or psychologist from the Department, who is solely available to assist the learners and teachers. (Participant 11)

From the reaction of the participants, the following themes were identified in the participating schools. The participants experienced during their education process that they were guided and trained in assisting and supporting learners with scholastic issues. However, learners present with issues that are difficult to deal with without knowledge. The participating educators felt that the following were gaps in their knowledge:

- Not knowing what symptoms after psychological trauma are.
- Not knowing how to:
 - identify learners exposed to psychological trauma;
 - build a relationship with the learner and teach learners positive behaviour;
 - approach learners;
 - build a trust relationship with learners; and
 - support learners in the classroom.
- Not knowing who to contact for help with the learners.
- Not knowing what the effects of trauma on a child are – mentally, socially and academically.

In addition, they felt that:

- any school should have a counsellor or psychologist from the department;
- gathering more detailed knowledge through a course or programme was required; and

- they needed to know which corrective reaction towards a child while sharing about trauma was the best.

Based on the themes gathered during the study, there is a clear gap in the knowledge of primary school educators in dealing with learners who show aggression after experiencing psychological trauma. It is possible to fill the gap in knowledge of these educators using a set of guidelines aimed to be compiled during this study.

5.3 Findings Cycle 2

During this cycle the participating educators applied the guidelines created in each school. During this phase there was no concrete data gathered, however the researcher was in contact with the participant ensuring that the participants were coping and that there were no issues with the process. **(See Addendum H.)**

5.4 Findings Cycle 3

Each stage was conducted separately at each school, including all participants of that specific school. During the reflections, I put together the perceptions and opinions of the participants regarding the gap or gaps in the guidelines or possible amendments or changes that needed to be made. In order to ensure that the participants had ample time to read through and formulate opinions regarding the guidelines, they received a list of all guidelines prior to the interview to go through and were requested to comment where they felt a guideline was not valuable or needed to be amended.

5.4.1 Participating educators' reflection on the implementation of compiled guidelines

Question 1 was as follows:

*If you reflect on the trial implementation cycle, were the guidelines effective in supporting you in dealing with learner aggression associated with psychological trauma? **(See Addendum H.)***

The participants of all three participating schools agreed that the guidelines were effective in supporting them in dealing with learner aggression; however, some of the

participants stated that some amendments needed to be made to the guidelines to ensure optimal effectivity.

5.4.2 Participating educator contribution to proposed guidelines that need to be removed

Question 2 was as follows:

Are there any of the guidelines that were a part of the trial cycle that you as educator feel the need to be removed? (See Addendum H.)

The participants of **School 1** stated that spending time with their learners would be problematic due to the fact that many of their learners used public transport. One of these participants felt that no exceptions needed to be made for learners. The participants of **School 2** stated that no guidelines had to be amended or removed. The participants of **School 3** stated that some of the guidelines had to be amended in order to ensure full effectivity in their school environment.

5.4.3 Participating educator opinion regarding proposed guidelines that need to be removed

Question 3 was as follows:

Taking the guidelines suggested to be removed, what are your opinions as educators regarding these specific guidelines? (Did you find them to be unnecessary or effective?) (See Addendum H.)

Only the participants of **School 1** disagreed with one another. In compliance with the proposed guidelines, the other participants of the school felt that a softer approach was needed after a bad incident.

5.4.4 Participating educator opinions regarding possible gaps in the proposed guidelines

Question 4 was as follows:

Are there guidelines that should be added to the list? Why do you feel that adding these guidelines will improve the experience? (See Addendum H.)

The participants of all three participating schools agreed that the guidelines were useful; however, in some cases, adjustments were needed regarding these guidelines. A participant from **School 2** was of the opinion that educators needed to be trained on how to effectively implement these guidelines. These guidelines are given below in table format to illustrate the percentage of participants who agreed or disagreed with the guidelines, as well as the reasons to support their answers.

Table 5-1: Cycle 3: Stage 2

Guidelines compiled and submitted for review

Guidelines	Yes, it will work	No, it will not work or has to be amended	Participants' reactions during reflection	Reason why it will not work / how the guideline needs to be amended
1. Maintain usual routines. A return to "normalcy" will assure the child that he/she is safe and life will go on after the event.	100%		<i>The involvement of a parent or a guardian is of great importance. We cannot fight a battle alone.</i>	
2. The problems of the learner should under no circumstances be discussed with learners or educators.	36%	64%		All educators involved in the education or interaction with the learner have to be informed of the situation to ensure support. Learners involved do not need detail regarding the learner.
3. Firm limits should be set, and logical (rather than punitive) consequences should be set for inappropriate behaviour.	100%			
4. Provide the learner with a safe place to talk to him or her. A designate time and place for sharing should be set.	82%	18%	<i>And the guideline of spending time with learners after school will be a problem, a lot of our learners make use of transport.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Taking time constraints into account. • Depending on what kind of problem it is (a child being abused at home)

Guidelines	Yes, it will work	No, it will not work or has to be amended	Participants' reactions during reflection	Reason why it will not work / how the guideline needs to be amended
5. Explain to the other learners in the class what is going on with the learner in their class.	64%	36%		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Confidentiality is the most important element; no confidentiality should be broken without a learner's permission. Even though a little understanding from peers could help. • Avoid exposing young learners to too much information.
6. Questions about the traumatic event should be answered simply and realistically, clarifying misconceptions and distortions. If the learner asks these questions at a time or place that is not appropriate, give the learner a time and place when you will answer the questions.	100%			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learners use school transport; no time or place to talk after school. • Time and transport have an influence on spending time with learners. • Time is very limited.
7. Situations may be reminders of the traumatic event(s); provide additional support to learners; e.g. for the child who does not like being alone, provide him/her with a	100%			

Guidelines	Yes, it will work	No, it will not work or has to be amended	Participants' reactions during reflection	Reason why it will not work / how the guideline needs to be amended
partner to accompany him/her.				
8. Once or twice a week, spend one-on-one time with the learner.	55%	45%		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This may be difficult due to the lack of free time. Most learners need this one-on-one talk, but it is sometimes impossible to help them. • The learner then becomes too dependent on the support and if he/she changes grades, it is like a setback.
9. Warn the learner if you will be doing something out of the ordinary, such as making sudden loud noises or turning off the lights.	82%	18%		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This may be difficult to anticipate (loud noises, shouting). This eliminates the element of surprise and you do not receive the true reaction. • The educator must sympathise with the learner.
10. Be aware of other children's reaction to the traumatised learner and to the information shared. Protect the traumatised learner from peers' curiosity and protect classmates from details of the learner's trauma.	100%			

Guidelines	Yes, it will work	No, it will not work or has to be amended	Participants' reactions during reflection	Reason why it will not work / how the guideline needs to be amended
11. No exceptions should be made for learners. Learners should be handled exactly the same.	45%	55%	<p><i>The department requires evaluations for any concessions or any special treatment. I feel there can be no exceptions. No matter what happened to them they should be treated the same. I totally disagree. You need to have a softer approach after a bad incident.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Even though each learner should be treated the same, some cases do need individual attention. In case of trauma, soft words, etc. • Depending on the learner's situation, some exceptions may need to be made. • All learners' circumstances and situations are different. • The Department of Education has its own programme to support these learners – required to give permission for all learners if they have extra time.

In order to ensure that all of the participants had shared all of their ideas and opinions regarding the research, and that no one felt pressured or intimidated, I conducted final individual reflective discussions with all of them. This provided the individuals with the opportunity to share input that they might not have wanted to share with a group of colleagues.

5.4.5 Participants' experiences regarding learner aggression during the implementation of the proposed guidelines

Question 1 was as follows:

What were your experiences as educator regarding learner aggression associated with psychological trauma during the implementation of the proposed guidelines? (See Addendum G.)

The reactions of the participants were as follows:

Hopefully, there was a lot of improvement and seeing some progress on handling that kind of situation. I think this really helped a lot. (Participant 1)

I still feel lost at times, but the guidelines help to feel more in control. (Participant 2)

I have realised that during the implementation of the guidelines there were things I didn't do right in the past and the guidelines helped a lot. (Participant 3)

The proposed guidelines were effective but some were not. What I have also experienced is that learners also liked to be approached with sympathy. However, my knowledge or approach has really changed now that I know how to approach learners. (Participant 4)

They were mostly positive. For the first time in a long time I feel there is hope with these kids. (Participant 5)

That all children don't act in the same way and that finding what works may take time. (Participant 6)

I still [feel] the same as at the beginning. You should always win the learner's trust. You should handle every learner with love. (Participant 7)

Learners would normally act out because they want you to notice that something is wrong, like their cry for help. Some do it without even knowing that they are giving the impression that something is wrong. (Participant 8)

As a teacher I have a lot of experience of learner aggression associated with psychological trauma. One of my learners left school because he couldn't

handle the loss of his mother. His behaviour became uncontrolled, disrespectful. He does not want to listen to elders, even at home. (Participant 9)

Trauma may spark aggression in learners. Through the implementation of the guidelines I have come to find that if these learners are handled in an appropriate manner, with the additional support and assistance. They will be able to cope much better (academically and socially). (Participant 10)

Not all children react in the same way. When implementing the proposed guidelines you have to first tend to the individual need of the learner in particular and then choose a plan of action that is going to be implemented. You can't follow these exact guidelines as proposed, because you have to think of the individual. (Participant 11)

From the reaction of the participants, the following final themes were identified in all three schools. The participants' views had changed during the implementation of the proposed guidelines in the following ways: a realisation of wrongful approaches in the past as well as changes in approaches; guidelines empowered educators to feel more in control in these situations; and lastly, educators realise that learners' reaction to psychological trauma will vary; however, these guidelines allow educators to adapt their approach towards issues encountered.

Based on the above-mentioned, the following findings became apparent:

The educators involved realised they had a gap in their knowledge and felt that the guidelines empowered them to handle this sensitive matter in the correct way. The research had brought to the attention of the educators that all learners were unique, including the way in which they reacted and which approach worked for an individual.

5.4.6 Participants' view on the support provided by the proposed guidelines

Question 2.1 was as follows:

Did the implementation of these guidelines give you a clear idea on how to support learners showing aggressive behaviour due to psychological trauma? (See Addendum G.)

All the participants from all three schools agreed that the guidelines had provided them with a clear understanding of how to support learners showing aggressive behaviour due to psychological trauma.

Question 2.2 during the individual interview, was as follows:

If so, please elaborate. (See Addendum G.)

Yes. It did, because we now know exactly what to do and where to start and how these learners should be treated. (Participant 1)

Yes. I didn't have prior knowledge on how to identify or support learners that has [sic] experienced trauma. (Participant 2)

Yes. It gave me an idea of how to support those learners showing aggressive behaviour due to trauma. (Participant 3)

Yes. The guidelines also makes identifying learners who are going through a difficult [situation] possible. (Participant 4)

Yes. I now think about learner behaviour and my reactions completely differently. (Participant 5)

Yes. It served as a reminder to see each case individually and to respond with calmness. (Participant 6)

Yes. There is definitely something that can be used to apply to each learner. (Participant 7)

Yes. One realises that learners go through so much more than we know. They deal with situations that we may never have dealt with. So the guidelines gives you a perspective that we don't know. It prepares you so that you may have to dig deeper insight [sic] as to help these learners. (Participant 8)

Yes. Learners would come freely to talk about something that has happened. They understand that there is help when they feel the need to talk to someone. These learners who are open to discuss their situations were feeling much better after talking. (Participant 9)

Yes, it did. The guidelines were truly enlightening as it provided me with supporting information on how to handle a learner who has been through a psychological trauma and how to help that learner overcome his or her challenges. (Participant 10)

Yes. [It] definitely gave a clear idea on how to support the learner in such a situation. Once again, not all the learners are the same, and you need to analyse the situation first before you can choose a method of handling it. The guidelines give well thought-out plans of what can be done. (Participant 11)

From the reaction of the participants, the following final themes were identified in all three schools. The educators felt that the guidelines provided the following: knowledge of where to start and how learners should be treated; an understanding that learner behaviour involves more than just one incident; understanding how to support those learners showing aggressive behaviour due to trauma; identifying learners who are

going through a difficult process; and universal use. The guidelines can be applied to all learners who face this phenomenon.

Based on the above-mentioned, one can come to the conclusion that these guidelines provided all the educators in the study with the knowledge and skills they need (or might lack) in order to support a learner in need. The participants implemented these guidelines during a three-month trial cycle, ensuring that the information was not only theoretically correct but carried practical value as well.

5.4.7 Participants' view on the change in understanding, skills and knowledge of the phenomenon during the implementation cycle

Question 3.1 was as follows:

When comparing your knowledge and understanding of the phenomenon before and after the implementation cycle, was the implementation cycle successful according to you or not? (See Addendum G.)

All of the participants from the various participating schools agreed that the implementation had been successful. It was found that not one of the participants disagreed on the success of the implementation cycle.

Question 4 during the individual interview, was as follows:

Did the implementation of the guidelines change the knowledge and skills you as educators have to support primary school learners showing aggression associated with psychological trauma? (See Addendum G.)

The participants unanimously acknowledged that their knowledge and skills had been altered and improved by the implementation of these guidelines, with the exception of one participant from **School 3**.

Question 4.2 during the individual interview, was as follows:

If so, in which way? (See Addendum G.)

The participants declared that the reasons for their believing that the implementation was successful were that the guidelines provided the following (supported by verbatim transcriptions):

Yes. It changed the knowledge and skills as there are already signs of progress. (Participant 1)

Yes. Learner behaviour can be identified because of trauma. Now educators can understand that learners are not just naughty; there might be something more to it. (Participant 2)

I now have more knowledge and skills that I can implement at school and in my class. (Participant 3)

Yes. At first I did not know what to look for, but now I can identify that particular behaviour and know how to speak to them. (Participant 4)

Yes. They helped me to gain knowledge on how to handle certain situations. (Participant 5)

No. I think it only expanded my knowledge. (Participant 6)

Every learner is unique and handle trauma differently. Every learner will be handled differently. (Participant 7)

Yes. Primary school learners are more open about their experiences. But they are more delicate and fragile when dealing with issues. One has to be more sensitive when dealing with them. (Participant 8)

Not really, because I've studied learner support. Out of that I already could take action or handle a learner who needs support. (Participant 9)

Yes. I am much better equipped with the knowledge on how to handle these types of learners. The guidelines provide solid support and assistance in this area. (Participant 10)

Yes, it gave me a clear guideline on a plan of action. Before the guidelines you kind of felt lost in these cases. (Participant 11)

Taking the above-mentioned into account, the following was identified as a way in which the implementation changed the knowledge and skills of the educators:

- Changes in approach towards the learner:
 - Actions to secure learners.
 - Simple instructions on how learners should or should not be treated.
 - Practical ways in which learners should be treated differently.

It changed the knowledge and skills as there are already signs of progress. (Participant 1)

I didn't have prior knowledge on how to identify or support learners that has [sic] experienced trauma. (Participant 2)

Having knowledge helps to identify the situation and guidelines help to handle the situation better. (Participant 4)

I now have more knowledge and skills that I can implement at school and in my class. (Participant 3)

The following was identified as a way in which the implementation changed the knowledge and skills of the educators:

- Knowledge and understanding of dealing with these situations:
 - Visible changes in the behaviour of the learner.
 - Ability to identify red flags.
 - Allow the educator to identify changes in the behaviour of a learner sooner and more accurately.
 - Prevent basic mistakes which may aggravate the affected learner's aggressive state.

I have never been someone to totally see an incident resolved. I always referred to a psychologist or counsellor to deal with an episode. (Participant 6)

One realises that learners go through so much more than we know. They deal with situations that we may never have dealt with. So the guidelines gives [sic] you a perspective that we don't know. It prepares you so that you may have to dig [sic] deeper insight as to help these learners. (Participant 10)

Taking the above-mentioned into account, the following was identified as a way in which the implementation changed the knowledge and skills of the educators:

- Prevention of the wrong approach of behaviour towards a learner:
 - An incident (learner's behaviour) was resolved.

5.4.8 Participants' views on guidelines they disagreed with

Question 5 was as follows:

Which of the guidelines, if any, do you disagree with? Please motivate why. (See Addendum G.)

The participants did not believe that any of the guidelines should be removed; however one of the five participants from **School 1** as well as one of the four participants from **School 3** felt that some amendments were needed.

5.4.9 Opinions, views or ideas the participants were comfortable with sharing during the group interviews

Question 6 during the individual interview was as follows:

Is there anything you want to share that you did not feel comfortable with sharing in the group interviews? (See Addendum G.)

None of the participants was of the opinion that there was an issue that they could not share in the group; nevertheless, one participant from **School 2** stressed the fact that the school was in need of a counsellor on a permanent basis.

5.5 Conclusion

The data gathered during the study allowed me to compare the reactions and behaviour of learners exposed to trauma in the participating schools. By comparing the reactions and behaviour, I ensured that a broad spectrum of reactions was covered. The data gathered during the study made it possible to identify contributory factors towards aggressive behaviour shown by learners in the participating schools. The data determined what the experiences of primary school educators were regarding learner aggression associated with psychological trauma – an important factor in determining the necessity of the study. The data allowed me to identify the gap in the skills and knowledge of educators in supporting and dealing with aggressive behaviour due to psychological trauma. By identifying this gap, research can strive to fill it. In accomplishing this, I obtained a comprehensive understanding and was sufficiently informed regarding the needs of primary school educators when dealing with learner aggression associated with psychological trauma.

CHAPTER 6 CONCLUSION

6.1 Introduction

Educators, regardless of the socio-economic or geographic setting of their school, share a huge responsibility in helping learners deal with everyday problems, regardless of the nature thereof. Educators and their valuable contributions and input were the foundation of the study. By using PALAR, I was able to gather the information required from the educators involved and combined them to illustrate how various educators, in different settings, experienced this issue. As I worked with the educators to ensure that they were comfortable and agreed with what the findings stated, the result was that all of those involved shared knowledge and skills to achieve the best possible result.

6.2 Conclusions of the study

The research was conducted at three schools, all in different quintiles. Using the findings from all three schools in conjunction with one another allowed me to form a clear holistic view of issues and challenges faced by primary school educators regarding aggressive behaviour of primary school learners caused by psychological trauma.

6.2.1 Conclusions regarding the secondary research questions

6.2.1.1 What are the experiences of primary school educators regarding learner aggression associated with psychological trauma?

According to the information gathered, the educators experienced a great variety of aggressive behaviour in their primary school classrooms after learners were exposed to psychological trauma. Learners start being disrespectful towards the educator, as well as presenting aggressive behaviour without regard for the consequences. This places a great responsibility on the shoulders of these educators when dealing with these learners, as the educator realises that the learner is acting out due to the exposure to trauma, the educators are still required to protect themselves and other learners in the classroom. The challenge that the learners who were exposed to trauma will undermine authority and show aggressive behaviour when confronted with

discipline places enormous pressure on the educator. These learners require a great deal of support and understanding, however with the pressure educators experience from various systems it is a challenging task for educators to juggle all that is required of them. Even more so behaviour presented by learners after being exposed to psychological trauma. The anti-social withdrawn behaviour leads to conflict between learners, as other learners do not understand why someone who they regard as a friend's behaviour changes drastically. Which in turn comes back to the educator to deal with. Primary school learners exposed to psychological trauma react in various ways. These reactions could also include, among others, a refusal to communicate, as well as negative and reserved emotional and aggressive behaviour that includes drinking, smoking, bullying. The educators observed that poor scholastic performance was evident in most cases, and according to them, high absenteeism seemed to have a significant influence on the poor performance of learners. All of the above mentioned factors impact the educator directly.

As mentioned in Chapter 3, a school-based violence study conducted by SACE in 2011 states that 1.8 million learners experienced some form of violence while at school; this amounts to 15.3% of the learners in South Africa. The research supports the views and opinions of participants regarding the alarmingly high number of violent outbursts of learners. Breet *et al.*, (2010) state that aggression is mainly dependent on internal factors (emotional and cognitive problems or weakened social skills), as well as external factors (familial problems, abuse or neglect). Denefil *et al.*, (2015) state there is a possible correlation between aggressive behaviour and PTSD. The above-mentioned statement is supported by Angkaw *et al.*, (2013), when they mention that symptoms of depression indirectly reinforce the correlation between PTSD and two forms of aggression, namely verbal and physical aggression.

The experiences of the participants (educators) were of major importance in the attempt to compile the guidelines for educators. Even though the educators were from various schools, all in different quintiles and a variety of socio-economic settings, there was a substantial overlap in their contributions. Educators deal with many challenges in the classroom. Research shows an alarmingly high incidence of violence in South African schools. However, the research and educators agree that these violent and aggressive outbursts stem from deep within the learners. After exposure to trauma,

studies found that learners experience PTSD (Goenjian *et al.*, 1997). The reactions of learners seen by educators support this theory; from the study it became clear that educators indeed experience a variety of types of aggressive behaviour by learners.

6.2.1.2 How do primary school learners react when exposed to trauma?

Some learners withdraw completely and keep to themselves. They struggle to share their feelings and thoughts. Other learners lose track and stop being the responsible, good, hardworking learners they were. They become more socially involved with activities they didn't normally do and stop doing homework and school work. (Participant 1)

The learners react in different ways, but most learners become very quiet and reserved. They don't like to play with other learners anymore. They feel much safer when they are in their corner alone and most of the time when you try to talk to them, they will just keep quiet and some will cry. (Participant 2)

Well, some learners struggle to adapt after such trauma. They withdraw and completely shut down. Other learners take action into their own hands and start to do wrong activities, such as drinking, smoking and bullying. (Participant 4)

A human being is a complex and multifaceted individual. No person will react exactly the same in any situation as explained in Chapter 3 by using Personology. This is supported in the findings as the educators stressed the fact that primary school learners exposed to psychological trauma react in various ways, depending on the learner. I have found that the reactions of learners include, among others, anti-social, emotional-avoidant and withdrawn behaviour or aggressive emotional outbursts. Some learners withdraw completely and keep to themselves. They struggle to share their feelings and thoughts with anyone – including family friends and teachers. Poor scholastic performance is evident in most cases, and the high level of absenteeism has a major influence on the poor performance of learners. In this case there is referred to high performing learners, as well as lower performing learners. Instead of focusing on their scholastic performants, they are involved with activities they did not associate with before exposure to this event. A refusal to communicate, as well as recklessly negative and reserved emotional and aggressive behaviour, which includes drinking, smoking and bullying, is at the order of the day according to those involved.

As discussed in Chapter 3, learners in middle childhood will react towards trauma in a complex and unique manner. Perrin *et al.*, (2000) explain that responses towards trauma can include behavioural, cognitive, emotional, spiritual and physical responses. However, the research of Sack (1993) suggests that depending on the type of trauma, 27% to 100% of learners in this age group will develop symptoms of PTSD. Denefil *et al.*, (2015) explain that clinical symptoms of PTSD that can be observed are as follows: unfounded arousal; explosive reactions in which learners react radically to the faintest surprise; being emotionally blunted as the individual does not have the skills to fully regulate emotions; aggression, when the individual tends to feel empowered in the establishment of power; weak memory and problems with concentration; and depression.

Most of the reactions shared by the participants can be categorised according to the symptoms discussed by Denefil *et al.*, (2015), such as being emotionally blunted and displaying aggressive behaviour, which includes anti-social, emotional-avoidant and withdrawn behaviour or aggressive emotional outbursts. Weak memory and problems with concentration causing poor scholastic performance are evident in most cases, and the high level of absenteeism has a significant influence on the poor performance. Depression is shown by a refusal to communicate as well as recklessly negative and reserved emotional and aggressive behaviour, which includes drinking, smoking and bullying.

6.2.1.3 What are the various contributory factors to aggressive behaviour shown by primary school learners?

As Bronfenbrenner's theory in Chapter 3 clearly explains, no individual can be seen as independent of his or her surroundings. As the ecosystemic theory explains, an individual is directly influenced from any and all systems they are in contact with. Taking this into consideration, the contributory factors towards aggressive behaviour of learners in participating schools could range from an intrinsic factor or factors within any of the other systems. According to what the participants have identified as possible contributing factors, the factors may include the following: changes in the immediate frame of references (drastic, e.g. divorce or death, or less significant, e.g. moving); parental abuse (physical or emotional) and neglect or the lack of a support structure; siblings taking on the parental role; a lack of the ability to ask for help; and lastly, being

emotionally unequipped to deal with emotional interactions, which leads to attention-seeking behaviour, causing mostly aggressive and revengeful reactions.

As mentioned in Chapter 3, the aggression-frustration-hypothesis theory explains why an individual will act aggressively or show aggressive behaviour (Myburgh & Poggenpoel, 2009). This includes negative feelings (anger, rage and humiliation), negative perceptions (helplessness, loss of opportunities and a negative self-concept) and negative ideas (suicidal thoughts and weakened boundaries).

There is a variety of influences and causes of particular behaviour. However, there have been some contributory factors that the participants felt had a much greater impact on the behaviour of primary school learners; these factors fit into the findings of Myburgh and Poggenpoel (2009). Negative feelings caused by parental abuse, physical or emotional, and neglect or the lack of a support structure influence a learner to a large extent. Due to absent parents or parental neglect, siblings take on the parental role. Negative perceptions and a feeling of helplessness, by exposure to changes in their immediate frame of references, occur. These can be drastic changes such as divorce or death or less significant changes such as moving, where children are extremely likely to show aggressive behaviour. Learners who lack the ability to ask for help may lead to their feeling frustrated. Negative ideas are formed, and according to participants, the reason for this is that most primary school learners are emotionally unequipped to deal with emotional interactions, which in turn, leads to attention-seeking behaviour and mostly aggressive and revengeful reactions.

6.2.1.4 What knowledge do primary school educators require to support primary school learners showing aggression associated with psychological trauma?

The participants experienced that during their pre-service training, they were guided and trained in helping and supporting learners with scholastic issues. However, learners present with issues that are difficult to deal with without knowledge. Educators feel empowered and equipped to deal with scholastic issues a learner may present. Although it is clear that they would welcome the skills to deal with learners presenting with behavioural issues, the educators realise that they have an immense gap in skill when it comes to facing these issues. According to the participants, obtaining the necessary tools in dealing with a learner who experiences a difficult phase is of

enormous value. The participants shared that they would like to know how to identify learners exposed to trauma, build a relationship with them and teach them positive behaviour, approach them, build a trust relationship with them and support them in the classroom. The participants also shared a need to know who to contact for learners in need of help, and they proposed that any school should have a counsellor or psychologist from the Department of Education.

A detailed discussion regarding the education system of South Africa as well as the impact on the educator was presented in Chapter 2. As explained one major question regarding South African schools is, where learners with different needs fit in (UNESCO, 1994). The importance of education can in no way be diminished or seen as of less value because the learner has different needs, whether physical, emotional or psychological. Educators were required to adapt and change their classroom environment for any and all learners who expect them to do so. Inclusion was theoretically possible according to the South African Schools Act (84 of 1996) in all South African schools (Department of Education, 1996). In 1996, the Minister of Education requested detailed research to be done regarding inclusive education and that recommendations regarding special needs and support system services in the line of education and training. Based on this, the policy for inclusive education, of which the goal is to address the problem of exclusion, to transform the educational process and to ensure that all learners have access to the education curriculum (Laauwen, 2004), was set in use (Department of Education, 2001). The major problem with this, according to the participants, is that there is a focus on inclusion for learners with, for example, impaired sight or hearing, but as is clear throughout the entire study, there is little focus on psychological issues than need to be included in the classroom. South Africa is a unique and complex country with a large number of religions, cultures and views to take into account. All of these factors have an influence on the way learners react to a situation. Educators feel that they face this struggle with little or no knowledge of how to handle learners during or after a traumatic event.

6.2.2 Conclusions regarding the primary research question

The recommendations regarding the manner in which educators should deal with primary school learners are presented as the guidelines compiled by all the educators from the various schools, following in this chapter.

The motivation behind these guidelines is that educators who have limited knowledge with regard to educational psychology or counselling will be able to read through the guidelines and implement them without major training or workshops. These guidelines are presented in a more compact manner in an attempt for educators to have them on hand and be able to go through them if needed in a quick and easy manner.

6.3 Guidelines for primary school educators in dealing with learner aggression associated with psychological trauma

Maintain classroom routines

Maintain usual classroom routines as far as possible. A return to “normalcy” will assure the child that he or she is safe and life will go on after the event.

Set firm limits

Firm limits should be set, and logical (rather than punitive) consequences should be incorporated for inappropriate behaviour. It is important that the learner has boundaries and knows what will happen if he or she behaves in a particular manner.

Create a safe space

Provide the learner with a safe place to talk. A designated time and place for sharing or support should be set with the learner if he or she asks for this. Under all circumstances this should be honoured by the educator involved. Taking time constraints into account in the classroom, it should preferably be done during assembly, break or after school.

Provide additional support

Situations may be reminders of the traumatic event or events. Provide additional support for learners; for example, the child who does not like being alone could be provided with a partner to accompany him or her.

Answer questions

Answer questions regarding the traumatic event simply and realistically, clarifying misconceptions and distortions for the learner. If the learner asks these questions at a time or place that is not appropriate, give the learner a time and place when or where you will answer the questions (refer to guideline 1.3).

Give a fair warning

Warn the learner as far as possible when you are planning to do something out of the ordinary, such as making sudden loud noises or turning off the lights. The educator should have empathy for the learner.

Keep an eye on the other learners

Be aware of other children's reaction to the traumatised learner and to the information shared. Protect the traumatised learner from peers' curiosity and protect classmates from details of the learner's trauma.

Sharing information with other learners

This should never be done without discussing your intentions with the learner beforehand. Confidentiality is the most important element; confidentiality should never be broken. If the educator feels that the support and understanding of the classmates would be valuable, explain to the other learners in the class what is going on with the learner, but avoid exposing young learners to too much information.

Provide fair individual attention

Learners should be treated the same; however, some cases do need individual attention. Depending on the learner's situation, some exceptions may need to be made, for example in the case of trauma, revert to speaking softly instead of shouting. All learners' circumstances and situations are different.

6.4 Recommendations

6.4.1 Recommendations regarding educators dealing with learner aggression associated with psychological trauma

The guidelines were compiled by taking all of the comments and amendments of the educators (from all three schools) into account. By doing this, an attempt was made to provide primary school educators with guidance in dealing with learners who experienced psychological trauma. During this process, we did not only make possible recommendations in an attempt to support educators, but the educators themselves felt that they should have the necessary knowledge and experience to recommend how this issue could be successfully addressed.

6.4.2 Recommendations regarding primary school educator actions and knowledge

As the action research has allowed me to come to a new conclusion with the participants involved, all recommendations are made as a result of what I have learnt from this process. The study sketches South Africa as a country with a variety of religions, cultures and worldviews that one has to take into account. The religion, culture and worldview of an individual has a direct impact on his or her reactions to situations. All of these factors have an influence on the way learners react to a situation. As explained in Chapter 2, one major question regarding South African schools is where learners with different needs fit in (UNESCO, 1994).

Educators are required to adapt and change their classroom environment for every learner who needs them to do so. During the research process, the participants have shared their thoughts regarding the struggle they face regarding learners who react aggressively due to psychological trauma and the limited knowledge they possess about dealing with these learners. Educators are guided and trained in supporting learners with a large variety of scholastic issues. However, the participants have indicated that primary school educators deal with various issues that are difficult to deal with without knowledge.

I found that reactions of learners include, among others, anti-social, emotional-avoidant and withdrawn behaviour or aggressive emotional outbursts. Poor scholastic

performance is evident in most cases, and the high level of absenteeism has a major influence on the poor performance of learners. A refusal to communicate, as well as recklessly negative and reserved emotional and aggressive behaviour that includes drinking, smoking and bullying. This makes the work of the educators very difficult. Chapter 3 explain that children in middle childhood react towards trauma in a complex and unique manner. There are various influences and causes for particular behaviour. However, there have also been some contributory factors that the participants felt had a much greater impact on the behaviour of primary school learners; these factors fit into the findings of Myburgh and Poggenpoel (2009).

Adaptations made to the education process of educators will greatly improve the knowledge needed by South African educators. In addition to supporting learners scholastically, educators indicate they lack the knowledge needed in dealing with learners. The educators indicated that they required more guidance and knowledge regarding identification of learners in need, building relationships with learners and providing emotional support to learners in the classroom. This is addressed in the final guidelines presented in this chapter.

6.5 Recommendations for further study

From my interpretation of the findings, the following aspects for further study will truly be beneficial for all current and future primary school educators:

- Research regarding the possibility of minimising or eliminating contributory factors towards aggressive behaviour of learners.
- Research regarding the effect educators' personal development has on their classroom and the way they deal with learners.
- Research on the influence of the educator-learner relationship and how this affects the learner's willingness to share difficult emotions.
- Research as to the value of adding a basic counselling component to the educator's training.
- Research as to improvement and support that can be provided by assigning a counsellor to each school.

I believe these recommendations will be beneficial, not only for educators but to learners as well, in their attempts to deal with and support one another in a country where trauma and disruption are a fact of life.

6.6 Limitations of this study

The study aimed to compile guidelines for primary school educators in dealing with learner aggression associated with psychological trauma. The possible limitations of the study are that, although I went to great lengths to ensure the inclusion of schools of different quintiles in an attempt to ensure that the guidelines would be applicable to most or even all schools, the fact that all of the schools included were in the same district might have an effect on the effectiveness of the guidelines in the same quintile school in a different district. In my attempt to include as large a number of educators as possible it might be the case that not all the participants were as open and direct with their views and opinions as they would have been in a smaller group.

6.7 Final conclusion

The study provides insight into the daily lives of primary school educators. The research shows that more primary school educators are exposed to learner aggression than initially thought.

The main concern of the participants and me was that the trauma experienced by learners in their classroom caused the learners to be treated in a different way and to react in a different way than before the trauma. The study provides guidelines for successfully supporting and dealing with these learners. However, I strongly feel that the words of Bernie Geary can be included in the education process of any and all educators.

Focusing on relationships and connection plants us firmly in the social world and reduces the tendency to isolate, individualise and pathologize traumatised children and their families – Bernie Geary

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ANNEXURES

ADDENDUM A – ETICAL CERTIFICATE: NORTH WEST UNIVERSITY



ETHICS APPROVAL CERTIFICATE OF STUDY

Based on approval by the Ethics Committee of the Faculty of Education Sciences (ESREC) on 30/03/2017 after being reviewed at the meeting held on 23/03/2017, the North-West University Institutional Research Ethics Regulatory Committee (NWU-IRERC) hereby approves your study as indicated below. This implies that the NWU-IRERC grants its permission that, provided the special conditions specified below are met and pending any other authorisation that may be necessary, the study may be initiated, using the ethics number below.

Study title: Guidelines for primary school educators dealing with learner aggression associated with psychological trauma.			
Project head: Prof JF Hay			
Project team: N Botha			
Ethics number:	N W U - 0 0 3 8 9 - 1 7 - A 2		
	<small>Institution</small>	<small>Study Number</small>	<small>Year</small>
	<small>Subseq. S = Submission, R = Re-Submission, P = Provisional Authorisation, A = Authorisation</small>		
Application Type: N/A	Expiry date: 2018-03-30	Risk:	N/A
Commencement date: 2017-03-30			

Special conditions of the approval (if applicable):

- Translation of the informed consent document to the languages applicable to the study participants should be submitted to the ESREC (if applicable).
- Any research at governmental or private institutions, permission must still be obtained from relevant authorities and provided to the ESREC. Ethics approval is required BEFORE approval can be obtained from these authorities.

<p>General conditions:</p> <p>While this ethics approval is subject to all declarations, undertakings and agreements incorporated and signed in the application form, please note the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The study leader (principle investigator) must report in the prescribed format to the NWU-IRERC via ESREC: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - annually (or as otherwise requested) on the progress of the study, and upon completion of the project - without any delay in case of any adverse event (or any matter that interrupts sound ethical principles) during the course of the project. - Annually a number of projects may be randomly selected for an external audit. • The approval applies strictly to the proposal as stipulated in the application form. Would any changes to the proposal be deemed necessary during the course of the study, the study leader must apply for approval of these changes at the ESREC. Would there be deviation from the study proposal without the necessary approval of such changes, the ethics approval is immediately and automatically forfeited. • The date of approval indicates the first date that the project may be started. Would the project have to continue after the expiry date, a new application must be made to the NWU-IRERC via ESREC and new approval received before or on the expiry date. • In the interest of ethical responsibility the NWU-IRERC and ESREC retains the right to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - request access to any information or data at any time during the course or after completion of the study; - to ask further questions, seek additional information, require further modification or monitor the conduct of your research or the informed consent process. - withdraw or postpone approval if: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - any unethical principles or practices of the project are revealed or suspected, - it becomes apparent that any relevant information was withheld from the ESREC or that information has been false or misrepresented, - the required annual report and reporting of adverse events was not done timely and accurately, - new institutional rules, national legislation or international conventions deem it necessary. • ESREC can be contacted for further information or any report templates via Ethics@nwu.ac.za or 018 259 4558

The IRERC would like to remain at your service as scientist and researcher, and wishes you well with your project. Please do not hesitate to contact the IRERC or ESREC for any further enquiries or requests for assistance.

Yours sincerely
Prof LA Du Plessis
 Digitally signed by Prof LA Du Plessis
 Date: 2017.04.03 08:13:19 +02'00'
 Prof Linda du Plessis
 Chair NWU Institutional Research Ethics Regulatory Committee (IRERC)

ADDENDUM B – LETTER OF PERMISSION: DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Dear Mr. Motara

School of Education Studies

Tel: 018 285 2026

E-mail:

Johnnie.Hay@nwu.ac.za

Private Bag X6001, Potchefstroom
South Africa, 2520

Tel: 018 299-1111/2222

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

The Circuit Manager

North-West Department of

Education

Dr Kenneth Kaunda District

Tlokwe Circuit

8 O.R. Tambo Street

Permission to conduct research: Miss N Botha (Student Number: 23389699)

Miss Botha is a registered MEd student at the Potchefstroom Campus of the NWU. The title of her dissertation is: *Guidelines for primary school educators dealing with learner aggression associated with psychological trauma.*

Different quintiles in Tlokwe Circuit, as well as work with these teachers to create guidelines that will be useful in dealing with learner aggression associated with psychological trauma. The data will be collected by means of individual and focus group interviews with teachers who will voluntarily participate. These interviews will be conducted after school hours and will not impact on the teaching programme of the school at all.

The identity of the participants, the school, parents and learners will not be made public in any research report or further publications. The research will also adhere to the ethical guidelines of the Ethics Committee of the NWU and ethical clearance will be obtained from this committee.

I am a registered Educational and Clinical Psychologist with the Health Professions Council of South Africa (HPCSA) and as supervisor of the study, I will ensure that the research will also adhere to the ethical guidelines of the Professional Board of Psychology.

Should you need more information about the research, you are very welcome to contact me. Miss Botha can also furnish you with more information about the research. Her contact details are as follows: 081 024 8632 or email: nbotha06@gmail.com.

Thank you in anticipation for considering this request.

Yours faithfully.

Prof JF Hay

ADDENDUM C – LETTER OF INFORMED CONCENT: PARTICIPANTS

Private Bag X6001, Potchefstroom
South Africa, 2520

Tel: 018 299-1111/2222
Web: <http://www.nwu.ac.za>

School for Education Studies

Tel: 018 285 2026

E-mail:

(This will be inserted as soon as schools are willing to take part in the research)

Potchefstroom

Dear *(Insert principal name here)*

Permission to conduct research: Miss N Botha (Student Number: 23389699)

Miss Botha is a registered MEd student at the Potchefstroom Campus of the NWU. The title of her dissertation is: *Guidelines for primary school educators dealing with learner aggression associated with psychological trauma.*

For the purposes of her research she needs to collect data from teachers at your school, as well as work with these teacher to create guidelines that will be useful in dealing with learner aggression associated with psychological trauma. The data will be collected by means of individual and focus group interviews with teachers who will voluntary participate. These interviews will be conducted after school hours and will not impact on the teaching programme of the school at all.

The identity of the participants, the school, parents and learners will not be made public in any research report or further publications. The research will also adhere to the ethical guidelines of the Ethics Committee of the NWU and ethical clearance will be obtained from this committee.

I am a registered Educational and Clinical Psychologist with the Health Professions Council of South Africa (HPCSA) and as supervisor of the study, I will ensure that the

research will also adhere to the ethical guidelines of the Professional Board of Psychology.

Should you need more information about the research you are very welcome to contact me. Miss Botha can also furnish you with more information about the research. Her contact details are as follows: 081 024 8632 or email: nbotha06@gmail.com.

Thank you in anticipation for considering this request.

Yours faithfully.

Prof JF Hay

Subject Group Educational Psychology and Learner Support

Dear participant

Please carefully read Sections 1 and 2, before signing the consent form.

Section 1: Information regarding the research project

Miss N Botha is a registered student for the MEd-degree in Educational Psychology at the North-West University (Potchefstroom Campus). The title of her dissertation is: **Guidelines for primary school educators dealing with learner aggression associated with psychological trauma**. Her project leader is Prof JF Hay, and you are welcome to contact him at 018 285 2026, or at Johnnie.Hay@nwu.ac.za if you require more information regarding the research.

Permission has been granted to conduct the study by the Department of Education of the Dr. Kenneth Kaunda District, the governing body of (*school's name will be inserted*) as well as the principal of (*Insert school name*). Ethical clearance to conduct the research has been granted by the Research committee of the North-West University (*pending approval*). Focus group and individual interviews will be conducted with the teachers of (*Insert school's name*) who are voluntarily willing to take part in the research. With your consent, all interviews will be recorded.

Section 2: Ethical considerations

I, _____ (*Full name and surname*):

read the information regarding Miss Botha's research project, as set out in Section 1 above, and I have attended the information session regarding the research. I declare that I understand what the research project entails and what my role as participant entails. I have had the opportunity to discuss all relevant aspects of the research with Miss Botha. I hereby declare that I willingly take part in the research. I also understand that I may withdraw from the research at any time without being prejudiced – and that confidentiality will be and needs to be maintained at all times.

Signature

Date

ADDENDUM D – INTERVIEW SCHEDULES (Cycle 1 – 3)

CYCLE 1: Stage 2

COMPLETE THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION BY MARKING THE APPLICABLE BLOCK WITH AN X

GENDER

Male	
Female	

AGE

20 – 29	
30 - 39	
40 – 49	
50 – 59	
60+	

YEARS TEACHING EXPERIENCE

0 – 5 YEARS	
6 – 10 YEARS	
11 – 15 YEARS	
16 – 20 YEARS	
21 – 25 YEARS	
26 – 30 YEARS	
31 – 35 YEARS	
36 – 40 YEARS	

HIGHEST QUALIFICATION

Teaching diploma	
Teaching degree	
Degree + diploma	
Honours degree	
Master's degree	
Doctorate	
None of the above – please indicate	

POST LEVEL

Teacher	
Head of Department	
Deputy-principal	
Principal	

CYCLE(s) THAT YOU ARE TEACHING

Foundation cycle	
Intermediate cycle	
Senior cycle	

CYCLE 1: Stage 2

1. In your experience, how do primary school learners react when exposed to psychological trauma? Please describe in full.
2. What are the various contributory factors to aggressive behaviour shown by primary school learners? Please elaborate in detail.
3. Have you experienced aggressive behaviour of learners that can be traced to psychological trauma? If so, how would you describe these experiences? E.g. what type of psychological trauma was involved and how did the aggressive behaviour come to the fore?
4. How do you normally handle learner aggression when associated with trauma? Please discuss in detail.
5. What knowledge do you, as educator, feel will empower you adequately to support primary school learners showing aggression associated with psychological trauma?

THANKS FOR YOUR TIME AND INPUTS!

CYCLE 3: Stage 1

1. In your opinion as educators, if you reflect on the trial implementation cycle, were the guidelines effective in supporting you in dealing with learner aggression associated with psychological trauma?
2. Are there any of the guidelines that were a part of the trial cycle that you as educator feel the need to be removed?
3. Taking the guidelines suggested to be removed – what are your opinions as educators regarding these specific guidelines? (Did you find them to be unnecessary/effective?)

4. In your opinion are there guidelines that should be added to the list? Why do you feel that adding these guidelines will improve the experience?

CYCLE 3: Stage 2

1. After looking at the guidelines compiled (gathered and compiled from all the various participating schools), are there any of the guidelines on the list that you do not think will work in the context of your school?
2. Do the rest of you as educators of this school agree/disagree with this? If so/not please motivate.
3. Are there any other inputs to be given regarding the guidelines?
4. Are there any other inputs to be given regarding the guidelines?

CYCLE 3: Stage 3

1. What were your experiences as educator, regarding learner aggression associated with psychological trauma, during the implementation of the proposed guidelines?
2. Did the implementation of these guidelines give you a clear idea on how to support learners showing aggressive behaviour due to psychological trauma? If so/not – please elaborate.
3. When comparing your knowledge and understanding of the phenomenon before and after the implementation cycle, was the implementation cycle successful according to you or not? Why?
4. Did the implementation of the guidelines change the knowledge and skills you as educators have to support primary school learners showing aggression associated with psychological trauma? If so, in which way?
5. Which of the guidelines – if any – do you disagree with? Please motivate why.

6. Is there anything you want to share that you did not feel comfortable with sharing in the group interviews?

ADDENDUM E – VERBATIM TRANSCRIPTIONS

CYCLE 1: Stage 2

SCHOOL 1:

Participant 1

Researcher:

Good morning. Thank you for allowing me to speak with you. There are a few snacks if you are hungry.

Participant:

Hi. Thank you, it looks tasty.

Researcher:

I have a few questions I would like to ask you, feel free to answer them any way you see fit. Are you ready to start?

Participant:

Yes.

Researcher:

In your experience, how do primary school learners react when exposed to psychological trauma?

Participant:

Some learners withdraw completely and keep to themselves. They struggle to share their feelings and thoughts. Other learners lose track and stop being the responsible, good, hardworking learners they were.

Researcher:

What do you mean lose track of who they were?

Participant:

They become more socially involved with activities they didn't normally do and stop doing homework and school work.

Researcher:

What are the various contributory factors to aggressive behaviour shown by learners?

Participant:

Well, I think in our case parent play a big role.

Researcher:

Would you please explain what you mean?

Participant:

Parents drinking at home and beating learners, then they act the same at school. Parents are not involved in learners' education, so learners don't care about education, and when confronted they get aggressive.

Researcher:

You mean the learner gets aggressive?

Participant:

Yes. Learners who are being physically abused at home, and when someone at school hurts them they over react. Especially learners who are bullied, eventually turn into bullies themselves.

Researcher:

Have you experienced aggressive behaviour of learners that can be traced to psychological trauma?

Participant:

Yes I have.

Researcher:

How would you describe these experiences? For example what type of psychological trauma was involved and how did the aggressive behaviour come to the fore?

Participant:

After his mother passed away, he went to live with his grandmother. The learner is very aggressive whenever he is confronted. He runs away and starts kicking and screaming and bites.

Researcher:

That must be very challenging?

Participant:

It is, but I have to say whenever he is treated calmly he responds well.

Researcher:

How do you normally handle learner aggression when associated with trauma?

Participant:

I talk to the learner and try to establish trust. I tell them that their behaviour is not how they normally are and that I am there for them if they need to talk or want advice.

Researcher:

I am sure they appreciate knowing that you are there. What knowledge do you feel will empower you to support learners showing aggression associated with psychological trauma?

Participant:

Can I give you a list? Uhm, no just joking. I would like to know what the symptoms are of learners who show aggression because of trauma. How do I approach learners is somewhat difficult, and who to contact that will help that does not include the social worker, because that is no use.

Researcher:

Thank you very much for your time and input. You were very helpful. I will contact you for the next meeting.

Participant:

Thank you for helping us to understand or try to understand these kids.

Participant 2:

Researcher:

Good morning. Thank you for allowing me to speak with you. There are a few snacks if you are hungry.

Participant:

Hello. No thank you.

Researcher:

I have a few questions I would like to ask you, feel free to answer them any way you see fit. Are you ready to start?

Participant:

Yes.

Researcher:

In your experience, how do primary school learners react when exposed to psychological trauma?

Participant:

They perform very bad in the classroom, and they are always negative, reserved and confused.

Researcher:

What are the various contributory factors to aggressive behaviour shown by primary school learners?

Participant:

I do not know.

Researcher:

Have you experienced aggressive behaviour of learners that can be traced to psychological trauma?

Participant:

Yes.

Researcher:

How would you describe these experiences? E.g. what type of psychological trauma was involved and how did the aggressive behaviour come to the fore?

Participant:

The learner undermines teachers and parent[s]. They abuse other learners.

Researcher:

How do they abuse the learners?

Participant:

By threatening or beating other learners inside and outside the classroom.

Researcher:

How do you normally handle learner aggression when associated with trauma?

Participant:

By talking to them, encouraging them towards positive behaviour. I tell them to associate with people who are always good. And I refer them to the social worker to deal with.

Researcher:

What knowledge do you feel will empower you to support learners showing aggression associated with psychological trauma?

Participant:

How to teach them positive behaviour and show them they can be better people in the future if they focus on their schoolwork. How to encourage them to participate in school activities.

Researcher:

Thank you very much for your time and input. You were very helpful. I will contact you for the next meeting.

Participant:

Bye.

Participant 3:

Researcher:

Good morning. Thank you for allowing me to speak with you. There are a few snacks if you are hungry.

Participant:

Hi. It is my pleasure.

Researcher:

I have a few questions I would like to ask you, feel free to answer them any way you see fit. Are you ready to start?

Participant:

Let's go.

Researcher:

In your experience, how do primary school learners react when exposed to psychological trauma?

Participant:

The learners react in different ways, but most learners become very quiet and reserved. They don't like to play with other learners anymore. They feel much safer when they are in their corner alone and most of the time when you try to talk to them they will just keep quiet and some will cry.

Researcher:

What are the various contributory factors to aggressive behaviour shown by primary school learners?

Participant:

The learners who have aggressive behaviour some of them I due to what happens at home. My father did this to my mom and now I am going to do the same to other people. They think that is the only way to solve a problem or release their anger.

Researcher:

How do the learners show this reaction?

Participant:

By living in an abusive home the learner becomes a bully. If a learner is bullied, he or she becomes aggressive and revengeful. Some learners do this because they seek attention.

Researcher:

Have you experienced aggressive behaviour of learners that can be traced to psychological trauma?

Participant:

Yes.

Researcher:

How would you describe these experiences? E.g. what type of psychological trauma was involved and how did the aggressive behaviour come to the fore?

Participant:

The learner was aggressive and I could see that she was full of anger. The thing[s] that were the causes of this was abuse and anger at home. The anger was building up. There was a learner who was very angry and her father abandoned her. She will fight with anger and she will make up victims feel the physical pain. She dealt with her anger.

Researcher:

How do you normally handle learner aggression when associated with trauma?

Participant:

I try to talk to the learner and get them to trust me, I try to get them to open up to me. It might take time, but when you finally win his/her trust they will talk to you.

Researcher:

What knowledge do you feel will empower you to support learners showing aggression associated with psychological trauma?

Participant:

The knowledge of how to handle these learners. We are dealing with learners from different backgrounds, so it is difficult.

Researcher:

Thank you very much for taking the time to talk to me. I will contact you for our next meeting.

Participant:

Have a nice day.

Participant 4:

Researcher:

Good morning. Thank you for allowing me to speak with you. There are a few snacks if you are hungry.

Participant:

It is good to see! Thank you that will be nice.

Researcher:

I have a few questions I would like to ask you, feel free to answer them any way you see fit. Are you ready to start?

Participant:

Yes, go ahead.

Researcher:

In your experience, how do primary school learners react when exposed to psychological trauma?

Participant:

Well, some learners struggle to adapt after such trauma. They withdraw and completely shut down. Other learners take action into their own hands and start to do wrong activities, such as drinking, smoking and bullying.

Researcher:

What are the various contributory factors to aggressive behaviour shown by primary school learners?

Participant:

(Participant lists on fingers)

6. Parents are not involved in the children's lives.
7. Learners that are exposed to drinking and smoking by their parents and others.
8. Children being abused by their parents or other family members.
9. Children being bullied by others.
10. Children having to take responsibility for their younger brothers and sisters, because of the absence of their parents.

Researcher:

Have you experienced aggressive behaviour of learners that can be traced to psychological trauma?

Participant:

Yes.

Researcher:

How would you describe these experiences? E.g. what type of psychological trauma was involved and how did the aggressive behaviour come to the fore?

Participant:

Learners that experience trauma are very short-tempered. Sometimes learners can make a joke with them, but they take it very personally. They are very sensitive about matters at home. They will fight and hit each other without any second thoughts. The main cause of the trauma remains a secret. When parents is called for meetings they are surprised to hear about these kinds of behaviour.

Researcher:

How do you normally handle learner aggression when associated with trauma?

Participant:

Methods are different from learner to learner. With smaller learners I normally try to calm them down. I sit down and talk to them, but the language is a barrier. Bigger learners are more difficult. They don't give you time to talk. Some just don't open up to you. They speak in their mother tongue, which makes it difficult to help or understand them.

Researcher:

What knowledge do you feel will empower you to support learners showing aggression associated with psychological trauma?

Participant:

Being able to understand the learner will be a big asset, but I know that is not something you can help with. To know how to handle learners who experienced different types of trauma would help. Sexual and physical abuse might have different strategies as to how to approach the situation or the learner. Overall it is difficult to build a trust relationship with the learners in our school.

Researcher:

Thank you very much for taking the time to talk to me. I will contact you for our next meeting.

Participant:

Thank you for trying to help. Have a nice day.

Participant 5:

Researcher:

Good morning. Thank you for allowing me to speak with you. There are a few snacks if you are hungry.

Participant:

Good morning. It is my pleasure. Oh, yes I would love to.

Researcher:

I have a few questions I would like to ask you, feel free to answer them any way you see fit. Are you ready to start?

Participant:

Okay let's start.

Researcher:

In your experience, how do primary school learners react when exposed to psychological trauma?

Participant:

They become aggressive and full of anger all the time.

Researcher:

What are the various contributory factors to aggressive behaviour shown by primary school learners?

Participant:

They fight with others the whole time. Or they just insult each other

Researcher:

Have you experienced aggressive behaviour of learners that can be traced to psychological trauma?

Participant:

Yes.

Researcher:

How would you describe these experiences? E.g. what type of psychological trauma was involved and how did the aggressive behaviour come to the fore?

Participant:

The learners often bully other learners and they show no respect to the other learners in their class.

Researcher:

How do you normally handle learner aggression when associated with trauma?

Participant:

I talk to the politely and try to figure out the nature and cause of the problem.

Researcher:

What knowledge do you feel will empower you to support learners showing aggression associated with psychological trauma?

Participant:

To be able to know how to identify learners exposed to different types of trauma. I would like to know where we can get professional help, like a social worker. I would like to know how to support these learners in the class as well.

Researcher:

Thank you very much for taking the time to talk to me. I will contact you for our next meeting.

Participant:

Goodbye.

SCHOOL 2:

Participant 6

Researcher:

Good morning. Thank you for allowing me to speak with you. There are a few snacks if you are hungry.

Participant:

Good morning to you to. It is nice to see you again. Thanks you, this baby is quiet hungry.

Researcher:

I have a few questions I would like to ask you, feel free to answer them any way you see fit. Are you ready to start?

Participant:

Yes, let me just sit down.

Researcher:

In your experience, how do primary school learners react when exposed to psychological trauma?

Participant:

Primary school learners are emotionally immature and trauma experiences are handled as such. Most learners will overreact through anger. Where others will “close” themselves off. I think that because of the emotional immaturity they would do anything else but face the actual feelings of being exposed to psychological trauma. Learners are so unique from each other, it is difficult to distinguish which learners are reacting to which situation. I think learners struggle to understand – why and what now – of a psychological trauma.

Researcher:

Wow, thank you for the detailed answer. What are the various contributory factors to aggressive behaviour shown by learners?

Participant:

There are a few – no discipline because of an absent father or mother or parents work late in the evenings. Learners can do what they want at home. Behaves aggressive[ly] to discipline due to the fact that learner is not used to. Then some learners are over disciplined. The learners is physically disciplined and reacts aggressively because that is what the learner is used to, because they follow guardians' example. Some learners are not able to deal with emotional things (basic everyday interactions) so the first reaction is anger (name calling, hitting, bullying, etc.). Reacting aggressively is like second nature to our children in our school it's the reaction they see from parents, guardians and role models and thus they think it is appropriate.

Researcher:

Have you experienced aggressive behaviour of learners that can be traced to psychological trauma?

Participant:

Yes.

Researcher:

What type of psychological trauma was involved and how did the aggressive behaviour come to the fore?

Participant:

A learner strangled another learner for an R 2. This specific learner does not react well to discipline, on a previous occasion he threw his table and chair over, because of mathematics homework that wasn't finished and punishment was double the homework. He felt that was unfair that he was punished even though he was not the only one. Because of his previous aggressive behaviour, it helped me to react calmly in the situation where he strangled his friend for the R 2.

Researcher:

That must be very challenging?

Participant:

You don't even know the half of it.

Researcher:

How do you normally handle learner aggression when associated with trauma?

Participant:

I try to stay [as] calm as possible. Most of the time we as teachers have no idea what trauma a learner has been through or if there is any trauma. When a learner does confide in you (which very seldom happens since they don't want to share/talk about it). It is confidential and other teachers don't know or understand the child's behaviour. But whenever a learner acts aggressively towards him/herself or another learner. I am calm and try to talk to the learner later on about the situation and let them speak about why they were so angry. I try to get the learner to understand that they could have handled it better and consequences to their actions and kind words get a lot further.

Researcher:

I am sure they appreciate knowing that you are there. What knowledge do you feel will empower you to support learners showing aggression associated with psychological trauma?

Participant:

Sometimes I feel that we as teachers all need a degree in psychology to be able to help the learners properly, but that is impossible to expect. I would like to have more knowledge through a course or a program. I would like to have knowledge on, 1) how to identify a child with psychological trauma, 2) what to say and how to react if a child tells you about his/her trauma, 3) how can I help/what can I do, 4) who can I contact to help and 5) what coping mechanisms can I give a child who confides in me.

Researcher:

Thank you very much for your time and input. You were very helpful. I will contact you for the next meeting.

Participant:

Thank you so much for your help. I feel all schools need this.

Participant 7

Researcher:

Good morning. Thank you for allowing me to speak with you. There are a few snacks if you are hungry.

Participant:

Morning. Can we please make this quick, I left my class with a student.

Researcher:

Sure, we will be as quick as possible. I have a few questions I would like to ask you, feel free to answer them any way you see fit. Are you ready to start?

Participant:

Yeah.

Researcher:

In your experience, how do primary school learners react when exposed to psychological trauma?

Participant:

The learner usually does not change in behaviour He/she would casually tell a friend then the friend would come forward and inform me. Some act quietly, but most of the time they do not change. You wouldn't tell that something is wrong if you don't know the details.

Researcher:

What are the various contributory factors to aggressive behaviour shown by learners?

Participant:

Most of the learners who act aggressive, are those who perform poorly in their school work. The fact that they don't know the answer and can't keep up with the workload makes them aggressive. Most of these learners do not have a support structure at home.

Researcher:

Have you experienced aggressive behaviour of learners that can be traced to psychological trauma?

Participant:

Yes!

Researcher:

How would you describe these experiences? For example what type of psychological trauma was involved and how did the aggressive behaviour come to the fore?

Participant:

The learner's mother passed away while he was in Gr 3. Now he has changed a lot. He shows aggressive behaviour towards teachers and learners. He feels more comfortable disturbing others. He doesn't want to come to school, he is lazy. The father beats him like a man, when he doesn't obey.

Researcher:

How do you normally handle learner aggression when associated with trauma?

Participant:

I would ask the learner to come see me privately, then I would talk about his/her good characteristics. Then I would ask, why they are acting negatively.

Researcher:

I am sure they appreciate knowing that you are there. What knowledge do you feel will empower you to support learners showing aggression associated with psychological trauma?

Participant:

The school does have a social worker who comes in once a week, but I think it does not help a lot. We need more social workers. The school is a double medium school that consists of ± 1800 learners. We need someone who can be at the school daily. So if the learner shows aggression then if who immediately be referred for help.

Researcher:

Thank you very much for you time and input. You were very helpful. I will contact you for the next meeting.

Participant:

Thank you. I have to run. Bye.

Participant 8

Researcher:

Good morning. Thank you for allowing me to speak with you. There are a few snacks if you are hungry.

Participant:

Good morning. Thank you, this is going to be nice.

Researcher:

I have a few questions I would like to ask you, feel free to answer them any way you see fit. Are you ready to start?

Participant:

Yes I am.

Researcher:

In your experience, how do primary school learners react when exposed to psychological trauma?

Participant:

They tend to show anti-social signs, they do not interact much and hardly speak. The learners become very withdrawn.

Researcher:

What are the various contributory factors to aggressive behaviour shown by learners?

Participant:

Various aspects of abuse, like abuse by parents and bullying in the school also largely contribute to aggression.

Researcher:

Have you experienced aggressive behaviour of learners that can be traced to psychological trauma?

Participant:

Yes.

Researcher:

How would you describe these experiences? For example what type of psychological trauma was involved and how did the aggressive behaviour come to the fore?

Participant:

If learners are abused or bullied, they tend to lash out; they bully other learners in retaliation. Learners also tend to react aggressively when they are reprimanded in class.

Researcher:

How do you normally handle learner aggression when associated with trauma?

Participant:

I try to be understanding and empathetic. I would normally talk to the learner privately and not reprimanded in front of others.

Researcher:

What knowledge do you feel will empower you to support learners showing aggression associated with psychological trauma?

Participant:

I would like to know the effects of a trauma on a child – mentally, socially and academically. I would also want to be able to help learners overcome those effects in a positive way.

Researcher:

Thank you very much for you time and input. You were very helpful. I will contact you for the next meeting.

Participant:

Thank you very much for your help and trying to make our lives easier.

Participant 9

Researcher:

Good morning. Thank you for allowing me to speak with you. There are a few snacks if you are hungry.

Participant:

Hallo again, thanks I will get some later.

Researcher:

I have a few questions I would like to ask you, feel free to answer them any way you see fit. Are you ready to start?

Participant:

Yes, I am.

Researcher:

In your experience, how do primary school learners react when exposed to psychological trauma?

Participant:

In my experience, some learners withdraw from their friends and any extra mural activities which they participated in. They find an excuse as to why they want to stay in break times or they say they unwell to lay in the sick bay. Other learners become louder, they make themselves noticeable, either by fighting or bullying or being disruptive in class. They are absent form school – they leave the house in uniform, but they do not get to school.

Researcher:

What are the various contributory factors to aggressive behaviour shown by learners?

Participant:

I think mainly, the loss of a parent. Learners who have lost their parents feel very alone. Even if they live with a loving guardian they feel the void. And some of the learners who still have their parents are being abused in one way or another. These learners normally don't know how to ask for help or how to share what is happening to them.

Researcher:

Have you experienced aggressive behaviour of learners that can be traced to psychological trauma?

Participant:

Oh yes I have.

Researcher:

How would you describe these experiences? For example what type of psychological trauma was involved and how did the aggressive behaviour come to the fore?

Participant:

Learner lost her mother when she was only 14 days old. She is very aggressive toward other learners. Learners may say or do a simple thing and she would physically attract them and she is hard to get off other learners.

Researcher:

How do you normally handle learner aggression when associated with trauma?

Participant:

I try to have personal one-on-one sessions with learners. Speak to them and try to find out what the issue is and why they are acting in this specific way. I am very patient, but persistent when speaking to the learner. I also pay close attention to them, I will move them closer to my desk – almost away from other learners, but still include them in activities and discussions.

Researcher:

I am sure they appreciate knowing that you are there. What knowledge do you feel will empower you to support learners showing aggression associated with psychological trauma?

Participant:

I think a better understanding of what they are going through. Most of the things that they are experiencing. I have not experienced or dealt with all of the issues learners have to deal with. This makes it difficult to completely understand and which approach to take when helping a learner.

Researcher:

Thank you very much for you time and input. You were very helpful. I will contact you for the next meeting.

Participant:

Good luck!!

SCHOOL 3:

Participant 10

Researcher:

Good morning. Thank you for allowing me to speak with you. There are a few snacks if you are hungry.

Participant:

Morning. Thanks I will finish my coffee first.

Researcher:

I have a few questions I would like to ask you, feel free to answer them any way you see fit. Are you ready to start?

Participant:

Yes I am.

Researcher:

In your experience, how do primary school learners react when exposed to psychological trauma?

Participant:

Learners differ. Some are very aggressive, some learners withdraw themselves and some learners want all you attention.

Researcher:

What are the various contributory factors to aggressive behaviour shown by learners?

Participant:

Uhm I would say divorce, death and friends and hormones.

Researcher:

Have you experienced aggressive behaviour of learners that can be traced to psychological trauma?

Participant:

Yes!!

Researcher:

How would you describe these experiences? For example what type of psychological trauma was involved and how did the aggressive behaviour come to the fore?

Participant:

The learner's parent divorced. The parents, especially the father spoke to the mother and the children as if they were worth nothing. So the learner started talking that way at school and with the other learners. He became a verbal bully with a very short temper.

Researcher:

That must be very challenging?

Participant:

Yes I was so tired.

Researcher:

How do you normally handle learner aggression when associated with trauma?

Participant:

I always try to have sympathy for the learner, and ignore the aggression as far as possible. Every now and again the learner will act totally unacceptable and you as teacher has to take charge. I would talk to the learner alone at first, but if the behaviour continuous I will address hem in the class.

Researcher:

What knowledge do you feel will empower you to support learners showing aggression associated with psychological trauma?

Participant:

I don't think there can only be set knowledge to support you. You have to have a relationship with the learners and they need to know that even if you reprimand them that you still love them.

Researcher:

Thank you very much for you time and input. You were very helpful. I will contact you for the next meeting.

Participant:

That was quick. Thanks.

Participant 11

Researcher:

Good morning. Thank you for allowing me to speak with you. There are a few snacks if you are hungry.

Participant:

Oh no thanks. I am trying to watch my figure.

Researcher:

I have a few questions I would like to ask you, feel free to answer them any way you see fit. Are you ready to start?

Participant:

Yeah.

Researcher:

In your experience, how do primary school learners react when exposed to psychological trauma?

Participant:

Children who have experienced trauma react in different ways. A sign of trauma usually show in their work, it is incomplete or not done. It is also accompanied by emotional outburst, sometimes they can become aggressive and hurt others. They are hurting and want others to feel their pain. Some become withdrawing and refuse to communicate.

Researcher:

What are the various contributory factors to aggressive behaviour shown by learners?

Participant:

Changes in the home environment. Changes in the child's immediate frame of references. Divorce and death of apparent make them feel angry, they don't have measures in place to cope with the anger and it becomes a means of feeling better if they can hurt someone else. An inside emotion is expressed outwardly. Moving to a new school.

Researcher:

Have you experienced aggressive behaviour of learners that can be traced to psychological trauma?

Participant:

Yes I have seen a few in my years.

Researcher:

How would you describe these experiences? For example what type of psychological trauma was involved and how did the aggressive behaviour come to the fore?

Participant:

A learner who was physically abused, but also mildly mentally impaired was the scariest outburst that I have ever seen. She would grab anything to use as a weapon to hit or hurt anyone who dares to mess with her. I saw her hit a boy with an umbrella. She was so physically strong during those outbursts and hard to control. I used to have to physically remove her from the class and I would take her away to cool off in a time out zone.

Researcher:

That must be very challenging?

Participant:

Well it kept me on my toes.

Researcher:

How do you normally handle learner aggression when associated with trauma?

Participant:

I try to isolate what causes the outburst. I usually remove the student out of the group and talk to them on their level. I try to remain calm and discuss the incident and not attack the child's character. It normally comes out as to what is bothering them and why they react the way they do. They normally admit they were wrong and can't understand why they do it. I usually discuss it with parents and I always advise counselling.

Researcher:

I am sure they appreciate knowing that you are there. What knowledge do you feel will empower you to support learners showing aggression associated with psychological trauma?

Participant:

I think my experience over time helps a lot. I feel I lack the necessary knowledge needed, at times to help a child. I always refer as this is not my area of expertise, and I feel that any school should have a counsellor/psychologist from the department – who is solely available to assist the learners and teachers.

Researcher:

Thank you very much for your time and input. You were very helpful. I will contact you for the next meeting.

Participant:

Thank you so much for listening. I look forward to working with you.

CYCLE 3: Stage 1

SCHOOL 1:

Researcher:

Good morning everyone I would like to start by thanking all of you for taking time to participate in this study. In your opinion as educators, if you reflect on the trial implementation cycle, were the guidelines effective in supporting you in dealing with learner aggression associated with psychological trauma?

Participant 3:

Yes, definitely.

Participant 1:

Yes, but some of them will be a problem.

Researcher:

Can you please explain where you think there would be a problem?

Participant 1:

The department requires evaluations for any concessions or any special treatment.

Participant 2:

And the guideline of spending time with learners after school will be a problem, a lot of our learners make use of transport.

Researcher:

Are there any of the guidelines that were a part of the trial cycle that you as educator feel the need to be removed?

Participant 2:

Yes, I feel there can be no exceptions. No matter what happened to them they should be treated the same.

Participant 3:

I totally disagree. You need to have a softer approach after a bad incident.

Researcher:

What are your opinions as educators regarding these specific guidelines? Did you find them to be unnecessary/effective?

Participant 3:

NO! I think all of the guidelines work, there are a few that need to be adapted, but we wrote that down.

Researcher:

In your opinion are there guidelines that should be added to the list? Why do you feel that adding these guidelines will improve the experience?

Participants:

No we just feel there should be a few adjustments.

Researcher:

Thank you all for you time and input. Please take a set of guidelines on the table and remember to comment your opinion please. I will arrange the follow meeting with you.

SCHOOL 2:

Researcher:

Good morning everyone I would like to start by thanking all of you for taking time to participate in this study. In your opinion as educators, if you reflect on the trial implementation cycle, were the guidelines effective in supporting you in dealing with learner aggression associated with psychological trauma?

Participant 7:

There were no extreme situations during the trial cycle in my classroom. But I used the guidelines on less severe incidents and they worked.

Participant 6:

Yes they did.

Researcher:

Are there any of the guidelines that were a part of the trial cycle that you as educator feel the need to be removed?

Participant 6:

All of the guidelines have to stay.

Researcher:

What are your opinions as educators regarding these specific guidelines? Did you find them to be unnecessary/effective?

Participant 6:

No, I think we both agree nothing should be removed.

Researcher:

In your opinion are there guidelines that should be added to the list? Why do you feel that adding these guidelines will improve the experience?

Participant 6:

I think we have to add something regarding training for teachers.

Participant 7:

I feel the guidelines can work, but teacher will have to receive training or be presented with a workshop on how these guidelines should be applied.

Researcher:

Thank you all for your time and input. Please take a set of guidelines on the table and remember to comment your opinion please. I will arrange the follow meeting with you.

SCHOOL 3:

Researcher:

Good morning everyone I would like to start by thanking all of you for taking time to participate in this study.

Researcher:

In your opinion as educators, if you reflect on the trial implementation cycle, were the guidelines effective in supporting you in dealing with learner aggression associated with psychological trauma?

Participant 3:

Yes I think extremely so.

Participant 1:

Yes.

Participant 4:

Definitely.

Researcher:

Are there any of the guidelines that were a part of the trial cycle that you as educator feel the need to be removed?

Participant:

No, just a few that need to be adjusted.

Researcher:

In your opinion are there guidelines that should be added to the list? Why do you feel that adding these guidelines will improve the experience?

Participant:

The involvement of a parent or a guardian is of great importance. We cannot fight a battle alone.

Researcher:

Thank you all for your time and input. Please take a set of guidelines on the table and remember to comment your opinion please. I will arrange the follow meeting with you.

SCHOOL 1:

Participant 1

Researcher:

What were your experiences as educator, regarding learner aggression associated with psychological trauma, during the implementation of the proposed guidelines?

Participant:

Hopefully there was a lot of improvement and seeing some progress on handling that kind of situation. I think this really helped a lot.

Researcher:

Did the implementation of these guidelines give you a clear idea on how to support learners showing aggressive behaviour due to psychological trauma? If so/not – please elaborate.

Participant:

Yes. It did, because we now know exactly what to do and where to start and how these learners should be treated.

Researcher:

When comparing your knowledge and understanding of the phenomenon before and after the implementation cycle, was the implementation cycle successful according to you or not? Why?

Participant:

The implementation was successful, because at first we were doing thing hazardously without any knowledge and understanding, but now we have a clue on how to deal with these situations.

Researcher:

Did the implementation of the guidelines change the knowledge and skills you as educators have to support primary school learners showing aggression associated with psychological trauma? If so, in which way?

Participant:

Yes. It changed the knowledge and skills as there are already signs of progress.

Researcher:

Which of the guidelines – if any – do you disagree with? Please motivate why.

Participant:

I don't disagree with any of the. I just think there are a few that need to be changed. I wrote all of that down on the guidelines you gave us.

Researcher:

Is there anything you want to share that you did not feel comfortable with sharing in the group interviews?

Participant:

No. I appreciate everything you are trying to do. You are most welcome here. Thank you.

Researcher:

I truly appreciate you saying that. I will try my best to help even more.

Participant 2

Researcher:

What were your experiences as educator, regarding learner aggression associated with psychological trauma, during the implementation of the proposed guidelines?

Participant:

I still feel lost at times, but the guidelines help to feel more in control.

Researcher:

Did the implementation of these guidelines give you a clear idea on how to support learners showing aggressive behaviour due to psychological trauma? If so/not – please elaborate.

Participant:

Yes. I didn't have prior knowledge on how to identify or support learners that has experienced trauma.

Researcher:

When comparing your knowledge and understanding of the phenomenon before and after the implementation cycle, was the implementation cycle successful according to you or not? Why?

Participant:

Yes. Having knowledge helps to identify the situation and guidelines help to handle the situation better.

Researcher:

Did the implementation of the guidelines change the knowledge and skills you as educators have to support primary school learners showing aggression associated with psychological trauma? If so, in which way?

Participant:

Yes. Learner behaviour can be identified because of trauma. Now educators can understand that learners are not just naughty, there might be something more to it.

Researcher:

Which of the guidelines – if any – do you disagree with? Please motivate why.

Participant:

No, all of them work. We just need some changes to a few. I wrote all of them down for you.

Researcher:

Is there anything you want to share that you did not feel comfortable with sharing in the group interviews?

Participant:

No I think as you know I was very verbal during the interviews.

Participant 3

Researcher:

What were your experiences as educator, regarding learner aggression associated with psychological trauma, during the implementation of the proposed guidelines?

Participant:

I have realised that during the implementation of the guidelines there were things I didn't do right in the past and the guidelines helped a lot.

Researcher:

Did the implementation of these guidelines give you a clear idea on how to support learners showing aggressive behaviour due to psychological trauma? If so/not – please elaborate.

Participant:

Yes. It gave me an idea of how to support those learners showing aggressive behaviour due to trauma.

Researcher:

When comparing your knowledge and understanding of the phenomenon before and after the implementation cycle, was the implementation cycle successful according to you or not? Why?

Participant:

It was successful cause I managed to get learners to open up to me and they trusted me. That was a great feeling.

Researcher:

Did the implementation of the guidelines change the knowledge and skills you as educators have to support primary school learners showing aggression associated with psychological trauma? If so, in which way?

Participant:

I now have more knowledge and skills that I can implement at school and in my class.

Researcher:

Which of the guidelines – if any – do you disagree with? Please motivate why.

Participant:

None of them.

Researcher:

Is there anything you want to share that you did not feel comfortable with sharing in the group interviews?

Participant:

Not at all.

Participant 4

Researcher:

What were your experiences as educator, regarding learner aggression associated with psychological trauma, during the implementation of the proposed guidelines?

Participant:

The proposed guidelines were effective but some were not. What I have also experienced is that learners also liked to be approached with sympathy. However, my knowledge or approach has really changed now that I know how to approach learners.

Researcher:

Did the implementation of these guidelines give you a clear idea on how to support learners showing aggressive behaviour due to psychological trauma? If so/not – please elaborate.

Participant:

Yes. The guidelines also makes identifying learners who are going through a difficult possible.

Researcher:

When comparing your knowledge and understanding of the phenomenon before and after the implementation cycle, was the implementation cycle successful according to you or not? Why?

Participant:

It was successful because I could see some changes from the learners' side.

Researcher:

Did the implementation of the guidelines change the knowledge and skills you as educators have to support primary school learners showing aggression associated with psychological trauma? If so, in which way?

Participant:

Yes. At first I did not know what to look for, but now I can identify that particular behaviour and know how to speak to them.

Researcher:

Is there anything you want to share that you did not feel comfortable with sharing in the group interviews?

Participant:

No thank you.

Participant 5

Researcher:

What were your experiences as educator, regarding learner aggression associated with psychological trauma, during the implementation of the proposed guidelines?

Participant:

They were mostly positive. For the first time in a long time I feel there is hope with these kids.

Researcher:

Did the implementation of these guidelines give you a clear idea on how to support learners showing aggressive behaviour due to psychological trauma? If so/not – please elaborate.

Participant:

Yes. I now think about learner behaviour and my reactions completely differently.

Researcher:

When comparing your knowledge and understanding of the phenomenon before and after the implementation cycle, was the implementation cycle successful according to you or not? Why?

Participant:

The implementation cycle gave new strategies on how to approach learners during traumatic times. Not all learners are the same, so you have to treat them differently – the guidelines help with this.

Researcher:

Did the implementation of the guidelines change the knowledge and skills you as educators have to support primary school learners showing aggression associated with psychological trauma? If so, in which way?

Participant:

Yes. They helped me to gain knowledge on how to handle certain situations.

Researcher:

Which of the guidelines – if any – do you disagree with? Please motivate why.

Participant:

I think only adaptations are needed.

Researcher:

Is there anything you want to share that you did not feel comfortable with sharing in the group interviews?

Participant:

Not at all.

SCHOOL 2:

Participant 6

Researcher:

What were your experiences as educator, regarding learner aggression associated with psychological trauma, during the implementation of the proposed guidelines?

Participant:

That all children don't act in the same way and that finding what works may take time.

Researcher:

Did the implementation of these guidelines give you a clear idea on how to support learners showing aggressive behaviour due to psychological trauma? If so/not – please elaborate.

Participant:

Yes. It served as a reminder to see each case individually and to respond with calmness.

Researcher:

When comparing your knowledge and understanding of the phenomenon before and after the implementation cycle, was the implementation cycle successful according to you or not? Why?

Participant:

I have never been someone to totally see and incident resolved. I always referred to a psychologist/counsellor to deal with an episode.

Researcher:

Did the implementation of the guidelines change the knowledge and skills you as educators have to support primary school learners showing aggression associated with psychological trauma? If so, in which way?

Participant:

No. I think it only expanded my knowledge.

Researcher:

Which of the guidelines – if any – do you disagree with? Please motivate why.

Participant:

All have merit and could be used successfully in helping a traumatised child.

Researcher:

Is there anything you want to share that you did not feel comfortable with sharing in the group interviews?

Participant:

I still feel counsellors should be assigned permanently to schools.

Participant 2

Researcher:

What were your experiences as educator, regarding learner aggression associated with psychological trauma, during the implementation of the proposed guidelines?

Participant:

I still the same as at the beginning. You should always win the learner's trust. You should handle every learner with love.

Researcher:

Did the implementation of these guidelines give you a clear idea on how to support learners showing aggressive behaviour due to psychological trauma? If so/not – please elaborate.

Participant:

Yes. There is definitely something that can be used to apply to each learner.

Researcher:

When comparing your knowledge and understanding of the phenomenon before and after the implementation cycle, was the implementation cycle successful according to you or not? Why?

Participant:

Yes. Especially for a teacher just starting out.

Researcher:

Did the implementation of the guidelines change the knowledge and skills you as educators have to support primary school learners showing aggression associated with psychological trauma? If so, in which way?

Participant:

Every learner is unique and handle trauma differently. Every learner will be handled differently.

Researcher:

Which of the guidelines – if any – do you disagree with? Please motivate why.

Participant:

None of them.

Researcher:

Is there anything you want to share that you did not feel comfortable with sharing in the group interviews?

Participant:

No thank you. I said everything I wanted to.

SCHOOL 3:

Participant 10

Researcher:

What were your experiences as educator, regarding learner aggression associated with psychological trauma, during the implementation of the proposed guidelines?

Participant:

Learners would normally act out because they want you to notice that something is wrong, like their cry for help. Some do it without even knowing that they are giving the impression that something is wrong.

Researcher:

Did the implementation of these guidelines give you a clear idea on how to support learners showing aggressive behaviour due to psychological trauma? If so/not – please elaborate.

Participant:

Yes. One realises that learners go through so much more than we know. They deal with situations that we may never have dealt with. So the guidelines gives you a perspective that we don't know. It prepares you so that you may have to dig deeper insight as to help these learners.

Researcher:

When comparing your knowledge and understanding of the phenomenon before and after the implementation cycle, was the implementation cycle successful according to you or not? Why?

Participant:

Yes. It makes me understand more. It makes me more aware of my learners, so I am able to pick up when the behaviour changes.

Researcher:

Did the implementation of the guidelines change the knowledge and skills you as educators have to support primary school learners showing aggression associated with psychological trauma? If so, in which way?

Participant:

Yes. Primary school learners are more open about their experiences. But they are more delicate and fragile when dealing with issues. One has to be more sensitive when dealing with them.

Researcher:

Which of the guidelines – if any – do you disagree with? Please motivate why.

Participant:

I do not disagree with any of the guidelines. I find them quite resourceful. Definitely something I could apply in my classroom

Researcher:

Is there anything you want to share that you did not feel comfortable with sharing in the group interviews?

Participant:

No thank you.

Participant 11

Researcher:

What were your experiences as educator, regarding learner aggression associated with psychological trauma, during the implementation of the proposed guidelines?

Participant:

As a teacher I have a lot of experience of learner aggression associated with psychological trauma. One of my learners left school because he couldn't handle the loss of his mother. His behaviour became uncontrolled, disrespectful. He does not want to listen to elders – even at home.

Researcher:

Did the implementation of these guidelines give you a clear idea on how to support learners showing aggressive behaviour due to psychological trauma? If so/not – please elaborate.

Participant:

Yes. Learners would come freely to talk about something that has happened. They understand that there is help when they feel the need to talk to someone. These learners who are open to discuss their situations were feeling much better after talking.

Researcher:

When comparing your knowledge and understanding of the phenomenon before and after the implementation cycle, was the implementation cycle successful according to you or not? Why?

Participant:

Yes. Our school does need these guidelines. Daily are a lot of things happening in our kids' lives. We as teachers must take these guidelines into actions to secure our learners.

Researcher:

Did the implementation of the guidelines change the knowledge and skills you as educators have to support primary school learners showing aggression associated with psychological trauma? If so, in which way?

Participant:

Not really, because I've studied learner support. Out of that I already could take action or handle a learner who needs support.

Researcher:

Which of the guidelines – if any – do you disagree with? Please motivate why.

Participant:

None of the guidelines. I just don't agree that we should discuss the problem with other learners. Kids are sensitive. Other classmates would make a joke about that problem, which can cause more problems.

Researcher:

Is there anything you want to share that you did not feel comfortable with sharing in the group interviews?

Participant:

No thank you.

Participant 12

Researcher:

What were your experiences as educator, regarding learner aggression associated with psychological trauma, during the implementation of the proposed guidelines?

Participant:

Trauma may spark aggression in learners, through the implementation of the guidelines I have come to find that if these learners are handled in an appropriate manner, with the additional support and assistance. They will be able to cope much better (academically and socially).

Researcher:

Did the implementation of these guidelines give you a clear idea on how to support learners showing aggressive behaviour due to psychological trauma? If so/not – please elaborate.

Participant:

Yes it did. The guidelines were truly enlightening as it provided me with supporting information on how to handle a learner who has been through a psychological trauma; and how to help that learners overcome his/her challenges.

Researcher:

When comparing your knowledge and understanding of the phenomenon before and after the implementation cycle, was the implementation cycle successful according to you or not? Why?

Participant:

Yes. The implementation was successful as it provided the simple do's and don'ts of handling such a situation. It guided me and prevented me from making basic mistakes which may aggravate the affected learner's aggressive state.

Researcher:

Did the implementation of the guidelines change the knowledge and skills you as educators have to support primary school learners showing aggression associated with psychological trauma? If so, in which way?

Participant:

Yes. I am much better equipped with the knowledge on how to handle these types of learners. The guidelines provide solid support and assistance in this area.

Researcher:

Which of the guidelines – if any – do you disagree with? Please motivate why.

Participant:

No just a few amendments. I wrote all of them down for you.

Researcher:

Is there anything you want to share that you did not feel comfortable with sharing in the group interviews?

Participant:

No thank you.

Participant 4

Researcher:

What were your experiences as educator, regarding learner aggression associated with psychological trauma, during the implementation of the proposed guidelines?

Participant:

Not all children react in the same way. When implementing the proposed guidelines you have to first tend to the individual need of the learner in particular and then choose a plan of action that is going to be implemented. You can't follow these exact guidelines as proposed, because you have to think of the individual.

Researcher:

Did the implementation of these guidelines give you a clear idea on how to support learners showing aggressive behaviour due to psychological trauma? If so/not – please elaborate.

Participant:

Yes. Definitely gave a clear idea on how to support the learner in such a situation. Once again not all the learners are the same and you need to analyse the situation first before you can choose a method of handling it. The guidelines give well thought out plans of what can be done.

Researcher:

When comparing your knowledge and understanding of the phenomenon before and after the implementation cycle, was the implementation cycle successful according to you or not? Why?

Participant:

I think that I learnt a lot during the implementation cycle. Because usually I am quite unclear on how to handle these types of situations. The guidelines at least gave us a few ideas on how to start at least.

Researcher:

Did the implementation of the guidelines change the knowledge and skills you as educators have to support primary school learners showing aggression associated with psychological trauma? If so, in which way?

Participant:

Yes, it gave me a clear guideline on a plan of action. Before the guidelines you kind of felt lost in these cases.

Researcher:

Which of the guidelines – if any – do you disagree with? Please motivate why.

Participant:

I wrote the guidelines I feel need to be changed on the form.

Researcher:

Is there anything you want to share that you did not feel comfortable with sharing in the group interviews?

Participant:

No thank you, we discussed everything in the group interview.

ADDENDUM F – PROCESSING DATA INTO DATA SEGMENTS

CYCLE 1: Stage 3

QUESTION 1:

In your experience, how do primary school learners react when exposed to psychological trauma?

SCHOOL 1	SCHOOL 2	SCHOOL 3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Withdraw. • Struggle sharing feelings and thoughts. • Feel safe alone. • Struggle to adapt. • Stop being the responsible. • Stop doing homework and school work. • Weak performance in the classroom. • Negative, reserved and confused. • Drinking, smoking and bullying. • Aggressive. • React in different ways. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overreact through anger. • “Close” themselves off. • Act quietly. • Show anti-social signs - do not interact much and hardly speak. • Does not change in behaviour. • Would casually tell a friend. • Make themselves noticeable - fighting or bullying or being disruptive in class. • Absent form school. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Withdraw themselves. • Refuse to communicate. • Emotional outburst. • Aggressive and hurt others. • Very aggressive. • Some want all your attention. • Work is incomplete or not done.

QUESTION 2:

What are the various contributory factors to aggressive behaviour shown by primary school learners?

SCHOOL 1	SCHOOL 2	SCHOOL 3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alcohol abuse by parent • Parents beat learners. • Physical abused at home. • Parents not involved in education. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Over disciplined. • Physically disciplined - reacts aggressively is what they are used to. • No support structure at home. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Changes in home environment. • Changes in immediate frame of references. • Divorce and death. • New school.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Don't care about education. • Bullied - become aggressive and revengeful. • Abused. • Bullied by others. • Seek attention. • I do not know. • If hurt they over react. • Parents not involved. • Exposed to drinking + smoking. • Responsibility for younger sibling - absence of their parents. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Abuse. • The loss of a parent. • Perform poorly - aggressive. • Don't know how to ask for help. • Can't deal with basic emotional interactions - first reaction is anger (name calling, hitting, bullying, etc.). • Do what they want at home. • Aggressive to discipline - not used to it. • No discipline - absent parents (work late). 	
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QUESTION 3.1:

Have you experienced aggressive behaviour of learners that can be traced to psychological trauma?

SCHOOL 1	SCHOOL 2	SCHOOL 3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes. • Yes. • Yes. • Yes • Yes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes. • Yes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes. • Yes. • Yes. • Yes.

QUESTION 3.2:

If so, how would you describe these experiences?

SCHOOL 1	SCHOOL 2	SCHOOL 3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aggressive when confronted. • Runs away, kicks and screams and bites. • Abuse other learners - threatening or beating. • Make others feel physical pain. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No discipline - absent parent. • Parents work late in the evenings. • Can do what they want at home. • Aggressive to discipline – learner is not used to. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parent divorced. • The parents spoke as if they were worth nothing. • Learner verbal bully - very short temper. • Use anything as a weapon - hurt anyone.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fright & hit each other. • Bully others • Show no respect to the other learners. • Undermine teachers and parent. • Mother passed away – live with grandmother. • The main cause of the trauma remains a secret. • Very short-tempered. • Very sensitive about matters at home. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aggression. • The loss of a parent – feel the void. • Don't know how to ask for help or to share what is happening to them. • Aggressive reaction see from parents, guardians and role models. • Then some learners are over disciplined. • Perform poorly in their school work - becomes aggressive. 	
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QUESTION 4:

How do you normally handle learner aggression when associated with trauma?

SCHOOL 1	SCHOOL 2	SCHOOL 3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refer them to the social worker. • Try to calm them down. • I talk to the politely and try to figure. • Try to establish trust. • Encourage positive behaviour. • I am there for them. • Methods are different from learner to learner. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stay as calm as possible. • Talk to the learner. • Don't reprimanded in front of others. • Personal one-on-one sessions with learners. • Most of the time no idea when there is any trauma. • Confidential – teachers don't know or understand the child's behaviour. • Be understanding and empathetic. • Pay close attention to them. • Move them closer to my desk. • Ask to come see my privately. • Very patient, but persistent when speaking to the learner. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Talk to the learner alone. • Discuss the incident and not attack the child's character. • Always have sympathy for the learner. • Ignore the aggression as far as possible. • If behaviour continuous - address them in the class. • Discuss it with parents. • Advise counselling. • Isolate what causes the outburst. • Talk to them on their level.

QUESTION 5:

What knowledge do you, as educator, feel will empower you adequately to support primary school learners showing aggression associated with psychological trauma?

SCHOOL 1	SCHOOL 2	SCHOOL 3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How do I approach learners is somewhat difficult. • The knowledge of how to handle these learners. • How to handle learners who experienced different types of trauma would help. • What the symptoms are of learners who show aggression because of trauma. • How to teach them positive behaviour. • How to encourage them to participate in school activities. • Being able to understand the learner will be a big asset. • How to identify learners exposed to different types of trauma. • Who to contact that will help that does not include the social worker. • How to build a trust relationship. • How to support these learners in the class. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More knowledge through a course or a program. • How to identify a child with psychological trauma. • What to say and how to react if a child tells you about his/her trauma. • How can I help/what can I do. • Who can I contact to help. • What coping mechanisms can I give a child who confides in me. • Know the effects of trauma on a child – mentally, socially and academically. • Help learners overcome those effects in a positive way. • Understanding of what they are going through. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How to build a relationship with the learners. • Experience over time helps a lot. • Any school should have a counsellor/psychologist from the department.

CYCLE 3: Stage 1

QUESTION 1:

If you reflect on the trial implementation cycle, were the guidelines effective in supporting you in dealing with learner aggression associated with psychological trauma?

SCHOOL 1	SCHOOL 2	SCHOOL 3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes, definitely. • Yes, but some of them will be a problem. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They worked. • Yes they did. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes I think extremely so. • Yes. • Definitely.

QUESTION 2:

Are there any of the guidelines that were a part of the trial cycle that you as educator feel the need to be removed?

SCHOOL 1	SCHOOL 2	SCHOOL 3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The department requires evaluations for any concessions or any special treatment. • Guideline of spending time with learners after school will be a problem, a lot of our learners make use of transport. • I feel there can be no exceptions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All of the guidelines have to stay. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No, just a few that need to be adjusted.

QUESTION 3:

Taking the guidelines suggested to be removed – what are your opinions as educators regarding these specific guidelines? (Did you find them to be unnecessary/effective?)

SCHOOL 1	SCHOOL 2	SCHOOL 3

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I totally disagree. You need to have a softer approach after a bad incident. • The guidelines work, there are a few that need to be adapted, but we wrote that down. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No, nothing should be removed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No guidelines should be remove, only adapted.
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QUESTION 4:

Are there guidelines that should be added to the list? Why do you feel that adding these guidelines will improve the experience?

SCHOOL 1	SCHOOL 2	SCHOOL 3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No, we just feel there should be a few adjustments. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I think we have to add something regarding training for teachers. • Teacher training on how these guidelines should be applied. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The involvement of a parent or a guardian is of great importance. We cannot fight a battle alone.

CYCLE 3: Stage 2

Guidelines compiled and submitted for review

Guidelines	Yes it will work	No it will not work or has to be amended	Reason why it will not who/how the guideline needs to be amended.
1. Maintain usual routines. A return to "normalcy" will assure the child that he/she is safe and life will go on after the event.	X X X X X X X X X X X		
2. The problems of the learner should under no circumstances be discussed with learner or teachers.	X X X X	X X X X X X X	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All teachers have to be informed of situation. Learners don't need detail. • Educators need to know exactly what is

			<p>happening so that they can be able to help.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Educators need to know what is happening in the learner's life so that he/she will be able to handle the child properly. • Discussion with other teachers, because they may have the same problem as you. • Mostly other teachers should also know what is going on with the learner.
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Other teachers may need to be made aware of situation to accommodate the learner. • Discuss it with other teachers, so they can understand why learners' behaviour has changed. • Learner may be acting out in some cases, but only feel comfortable talking to one. So share so that the other teacher can understand.
3. Firm limits should be set, and logical (rather than punitive) consequences should be set for inappropriate behaviour.	<p>X X X X X X X X X X</p>		
4. Provide the learner with a safe place to talk to. A designated time and place for sharing should be set.	<p>X X X X X X X X</p>	X	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Time constraints. Knowledge on how to handle the situation is sometimes limited.

<p>5. Explain to the other learners in the class what is going on with the learner in their class.</p>	<p>X X X X X X X</p>	<p>X X X X</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • But do not give much personal info. • It will depend on what kind of problem it is (a child being abused at home) <hr/> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Confidentiality even though a little understanding from peers could help. • Other learners may make the learner feel excluded and targeted. • Not all learners in the lower grade classes will understand how serious a situation is and will make a joke about it. • Learners have a tendency of teasing each other. Although the teacher may mean well, learners will see it as a way to tease the learner.
<p>6. Questions about the traumatic event should be answered simple and realistic – clarifying misconceptions and distortions. If the learner asks these questions at a time or place that is not appropriate – give the learner a time and place when you will answer the questions.</p>	<p>X X X X X X X X X X X</p>		
<p>7. Situations may be reminders of the traumatic event/s, provide additional support to learners. E.g. For the child who doesn't like being alone, provide them with a partner to accompany them.</p>	<p>X X X X X X X X X X</p>		
<p>8. At once or twice a week, spend one-on-one time with the learner.</p>	<p>X X X X X X</p>	<p>X X X X X</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learners use school transport, no time or place to talk after school.

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No time as learners are using common transport. • Time and transport have an influence on spending time with learners. • Time is very limited.
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This may be difficult due to the lack of free periods and time. • Time is a big issue. Most learners need this one-on-one talk, but it is sometimes impossible to help them. If it is one or two of them then I is fine, but we sit with a lot of trauma cases. • Learner then becomes too dependent on the support and if they change grades, it is like a setback.
9. Warn learner if you will be doing something out of the ordinary, like making sudden loud noises or turning off the lights.	X X X X X X X X	X X X	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not always possible when you give class – you go with the lesson if differ from big class. • This may be difficult to anticipate (loud noises, shouting). • This eliminates the element of surprise and you don' receive the true reaction.
10. Be aware of other children's reaction to the traumatised learner and to the information shared. Protect the traumatised learner from peer's curiosity and protect classmates from details of the learner's trauma.	X X X X X X X X X X X		

<p>11. No exceptions should be made for learners. Learners should be handled exactly the same.</p>	<p>X X X X X</p>	<p>X X X X X</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not for the first while after trauma. • The educator must sympathise with the learner. <hr/> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Even though each learner should be treated the same, some cases do need individual attention. In case of trauma, soft words, etc. • Depending on the learner's situation, some exceptions may need to be made. • All learners' circumstances and situations are different.
<p>12. Consider making accommodations and modifications to academic work for a brief time – shorten assignments, allow additional time to complete assignments and provide additional support.</p>	<p>X X X X X X</p>	<p>X X X X X</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not allowed by department. • This will not work due to departmental issues. • Department of education has their own program to support these learners. • Departmental regulation. <hr/> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If the department allows it. • Department is required to give permission for all learners if they have extra time.

CYCLE 3: Stage 3

QUESTION 1

What were your experiences as educator, regarding learner aggression associated with psychological trauma, during the implementation of the proposed guidelines?

SCHOOL 1	SCHOOL 2	SCHOOL 3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A lot of improvement and some progress on handling that kind of situation. • This really helped a lot. • I still feel lost at times. • Guidelines help to feel more in control. • I realised there were things I didn't do right - the guidelines helped a lot. • The proposed guidelines were effective but some were not. • My knowledge or approach has really changed now that I know how to approach learners. • They were mostly positive. • For the first time in a long time I feel there is hope. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That all children don't act in the same way and that finding what works may take time. • You should always win the learner's trust. You should handle every learner with love. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • These guidelines helped. • An appropriate manner, with the additional support and assistance. • First tend to the individual need of the learner in particular.

QUESTION 2

Did the implementation of these guidelines give you a clear idea on how to support learners showing aggressive behaviour due to psychological trauma?

SCHOOL 1	SCHOOL 2	SCHOOL 3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes • Yes • Yes • Yes • Yes • Yes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes • Yes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes • Yes • Yes • Yes

If so/not – please elaborate.

SCHOOL 1	SCHOOL 2	SCHOOL 3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Now know exactly what to do and where to start and how these learners should be treated. • I didn't have prior knowledge on how to identify or support learners that has experienced trauma. • Can be identified because of trauma. Now educators can understand that learners are not just naughty, there might be something more to it. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It served as a reminder to see each case individually and to respond with calmness. • There is definitely something that can be used to apply to each learner. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One realises that learners go through so much more than we know. • It prepares you so that you may have to dig deeper insight as to help these learners. • The guidelines were truly enlightening as it provided me with supporting information on how to handle a learner who has been through a psychological trauma.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It gave me an idea of how to support those learners showing aggressive behaviour due to trauma. • The guidelines also make identifying learners who are going through a difficult possible. • I now think about learner behaviour and my reactions completely differently. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Definitely gave a clear idea on how to support the learner in such a situation.
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QUESTION 3

When comparing your knowledge and understanding of the phenomenon before and after the implementation cycle, was the implementation cycle successful according to you or not?

SCHOOL 1	SCHOOL 2	SCHOOL 3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The implementation was successful • Yes. • It was successful • It was successful 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes • Yes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes. • Yes. • Yes. • I think that I learnt a lot

Why?

SCHOOL 1	SCHOOL 2	SCHOOL 3
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge and understanding, but now we have a clue on how to deal with these situations. • Having knowledge helps to identify the situation and guidelines help to handle the situation better. • I managed to get learners to open up to me and they trusted me. That was a great feeling. • I could see some changes from the learners' side. • On how to approach learners during traumatic times. • Not all learners are the same, so you have to treat them differently – the guidelines help with this. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I have never been someone to totally see and incident resolved. Especially for a teacher just starting out. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It makes me understand more. It makes me more aware of my learners, so I am able to pick up when the behaviour changes. • Take these guidelines into actions to secure our learners. • Simple do's and don'ts. • It guided me and prevented me from making basic mistakes which may aggravate the affected learner's aggressive state. • The guidelines at least gave us a few ideas on how to start at least.
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QUESTION 4

Did the implementation of the guidelines change the knowledge and skills you as educators have to support primary school learners showing aggression associated with psychological trauma?

SCHOOL 1	SCHOOL 2	SCHOOL 3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes. • Yes. • I now have more knowledge and skills. • Yes. • Yes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It only expanded. • Yes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes. • Not really. • Yes • Yes.

If so, in which way?

SCHOOL 1	SCHOOL 2	SCHOOL 3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Learners are not just naughty, there might be something more to it. I did not know what to look for, but now I can identify. I now think about learner behaviour and my reactions completely differently. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Every learner is unique and handle trauma differently. Every learner will be handled differently. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Delicate and fragile when dealing with issues. Knowledge on how to handle these types of learners.

QUESTION 5

Which of the guidelines – if any – do you disagree with? Please motivate why.

SCHOOL 1	SCHOOL 2	SCHOOL 3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I don't disagree with any of them. I just think there are a few that need to be changed. No, all of them work. We just need some changes to a few. None of them. I think only adaptations are needed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All have merit and could be used successfully. None of them. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I do not disagree with any of the guidelines. None of the guidelines. No just a few amendments. I feel need to be changed on the form.

QUESTION 6

Is there anything you want to share that you did not feel comfortable with sharing in the group interviews?

SCHOOL 1	SCHOOL 2	SCHOOL 3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No. I appreciate everything you are trying to do. You are most welcome here. Thank you. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I still feel counsellors should be assigned permanently to schools. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No thank you. No thank you. No thank you. No thank you we discussed

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No I think as you know I was very verbal during the interviews. • Not at all. • No thank you. • Not at all. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No thank you. I said everything I wanted to. 	<p>everything in the group interview.</p>
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ADDENDUM G – PROCESSING DATA SEGMENTS INTO CATEGORIES

CYCLE 1: Stage 3

QUESTION 1:

In your experience, how do primary school learners react when exposed to psychological trauma?

SCHOOL 1	SCHOOL 2	SCHOOL 3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Struggle to share - feelings and thoughts. • Feel safer alone – withdraw. • Struggle to adapt. • Stop being responsible. • Stop doing homework and school work. • Bad scholastic performance. • Negative, reserved and confused. • Destructive behaviour - drinking, smoking and bullying. • Become aggressive. • React in different ways. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overreact through anger. • “Close” themselves off. • Anti-social signs – silent. • Withdrawn. • Avoid others. • Make themselves noticeable – fighting/ bullying/disruptive. • Does not change. • Tell a friend.. • Absent form school. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Withdraw themselves. • Refuse to communicate. • Very aggressive. • Emotional outburst. • Some want all you attention. • Work is incomplete or not done.

QUESTION 2:

What are the various contributory factors to aggressive behaviour shown by primary school learners?

SCHOOL 1	SCHOOL 2	SCHOOL 3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parents drinking at home. • Parents beating learners, then they act the same at school. • Physical abused at home. • Abusive home causes learner to become bully. • Parents not involved in education. • Don't care about education when confronted they get aggressive. • If hurt they over react. • Parents not involved. • Exposed to drinking and smoking. • Children take responsibility for younger sibling - absence of their parents • If bullied, turn into bullies. • Bullied - become aggressive and revengeful. • Abused. • Bullied by others. • I do not know. • Bully - seek attention. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Over disciplined. • Physically disciplined - reacts aggressively is what they are used to. • No support structure at home. • Abuse. • The loss of a parent. • Perform poorly - aggressive. • Don't know how to ask for help or how to share what is happening to them. • No discipline - absent parents (work late). • Aggressive to discipline - not used to it. • Can't deal with emotional things (basic everyday interactions) - first reaction is anger (name calling, hitting, bullying, etc.). • Do what they want at home. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Changes in home environment. • Divorce and death. • Changes in immediate frame of references. • New school.

QUESTION 3.1:

Have you experienced aggressive behaviour of learners that can be traced to psychological trauma?

SCHOOL 1	SCHOOL 2	SCHOOL 3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes. • Yes. • Yes. • Yes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes. • Yes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes. • Yes. • Yes. • Yes.

• Yes.		
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QUESTION 3.2:

If so, how would you describe these experiences?

SCHOOL 1	SCHOOL 2	SCHOOL 3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aggressive when confronted. • Runs away, kicks and screams and bites. • Fright & hit each other without second thoughts. • Abuse other learners – threatening or beating. • Make up victims feel the physical pain. • Bully others • Show no respect to the other learners. • Undermine teachers and parent. • Father abandoned her. • Mother passed away – lives with grandmother. • The main cause of the trauma remains a secret. • Very short-tempered. • Very sensitive about matters at home. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No discipline - absent parent. • Parents work late in the evenings. • Can do what they want at home. • Aggressive to discipline due to the fact that learner is not used to. • Most do not have a support structure at home. • Abuse contributes to aggression. • The loss of a parent - feel the void. • Don't know how to ask for help or to share what is happening to them. • Not able to deal with emotional things (basic everyday interactions) - first reaction is anger 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parent divorced. • The parents spoke as if they were worth nothing. • Learner verbal bully – very short temper. • Use anything as a weapon - hurt anyone.

	<p>(name calling, hitting, bullying, etc.).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Then some learners are over disciplined. • Aggressive reaction see from parents, guardians and role models. • Those who perform poorly in their school work - don't know the answer and can't keep up with the workload makes them aggressive. 	
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QUESTION 4:

How do you normally handle learner aggression when associated with trauma?

SCHOOL 1	SCHOOL 2	SCHOOL 3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I talk to the learner. • By talking to them. • Refer them to the social worker to deal with. • I try to talk to the learner. • Try to calm them down. I sit down and talk to them, but the language is a barrier. • I talk to the politely and try to figure. • Try to establish trust. • Get them to trust me, I try to get them to open up to me. • Encourage them towards positive behaviour. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Try to talk to the learner later on. • Let them speak about why they were so angry. • Talk to the learner privately. • Don't reprimanded in front of others. • Personal one-on-one sessions with learners. • Speak to them and try to find out what the issue is. • Ask to come see me privately. • Try to stay as calm as possible. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Always have sympathy for the learner. • Talk to the learner alone. • Isolate what causes the outburst. • Remove the student out of the group. • Talk to them on their level. • Discuss the incident and not attack the child's character. • If behaviour continuous - address them in the class. • Ignore the aggression as far as possible. • Try to remain calm.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I am there for them. If they need to talk or want advice. Methods are different from learner to learner. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Most of the time no idea when there is any trauma. Usually confidential and other teachers don't know or understand the child's behaviour. Try to be understanding and empathetic. Understand they could handle it better and consequences to their actions. Pay close attention to them. Move them closer to my desk. Very patient, but persistent when speaking to the learner. I am calm 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Usually discuss it with parents. Always advise counselling.
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QUESTION 5:

What knowledge do you, as educator, feel will empower you adequately to support primary school learners showing aggression associated with psychological trauma?

SCHOOL 1	SCHOOL 2	SCHOOL 3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What the symptoms are of learners who show aggression because of trauma. How to identify learners exposed to different types of trauma. Being able to understand the learner will be a big asset. How to teach them positive behaviour. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> More knowledge through a course or a program. What to say and how to react if a child tells you about his/her trauma. How to identify a child with psychological trauma. How can I help/what can I do. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How to build a relationship with the learners. Experience over time helps a lot. Any school should have a counsellor/psychologist from the department.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How to encourage them to participate in school activities. • How do I approach learners is somewhat difficult. • The knowledge of how to handle these learners. • How to handle learners who experienced different types of trauma would help. • Who to contact that will help that does not include the social worker. • How to build a trust relationship. • How to support these learners in the class. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Know the effects of trauma on a child – mentally, socially and academically. • Who can I contact to help. • What coping mechanisms can I give a child who confides in me. • Help learners overcome those effects in a positive way. • Understanding of what they are going through. 	
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CYCLE 3: Stage 1

QUESTION 1:

If you reflect on the trial implementation cycle, were the guidelines effective in supporting you in dealing with learner aggression associated with psychological trauma?

SCHOOL 1	SCHOOL 2	SCHOOL 3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes, definitely. • Yes, but some of them will be a problem. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They worked. • Yes they did. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes I think extremely so. • Yes. • Definitely.

QUESTION 2:

Are there any of the guidelines that were a part of the trial cycle that you as educator feel the need to be removed?

SCHOOL 1	SCHOOL 2	SCHOOL 3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The department requires evaluations for any concessions or any special treatment. • Guideline of spending time with learners after school will be a problem, a lot of our learners make use of transport. • I feel there can be no exceptions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All of the guidelines have to stay. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No, just a few that need to be adjusted.

QUESTION 3:

Taking the guidelines suggested to be removed – what are your opinions as educators regarding these specific guidelines? (Did you find them to be unnecessary/effective?)

SCHOOL 1	SCHOOL 2	SCHOOL 3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I totally disagree. You need to have a softer approach after a bad incident. • The guidelines work, there are a few that need to be adapted, but we wrote that down. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No, nothing should be removed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No guidelines should be remove, only adapted.

QUESTION 4:

Are there guidelines that should be added to the list? Why do you feel that adding these guidelines will improve the experience?

SCHOOL 1	SCHOOL 2	SCHOOL 3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No, we just feel there should be a few adjustments. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I think we have to add something regarding training for teachers. • Teacher training on how these guidelines should be applied. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The involvement of a parent or a guardian is of great importance. We cannot fight a battle alone.

CYCLE 3: Stage 2

Guidelines compiled and submitted for review

Guidelines	Yes it will work	No it will not work or has to be amended	Reason why it will not who/how the guideline needs to be amended.
13. Maintain usual routines. A return to “normalcy” will assure the child that he/she is safe and life will go on after the event.	11/11		
14. The problems of the learner should under no circumstances be discussed with learner or teachers.	4/11	7/11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All teachers have to be informed of situation. Learners don't need detail. • Educators need to know exactly what is happening so that they can be able to help. • Educators need to know what is happening in the learner's life so that he/she will be able to handle the child properly. • Discussion with other teachers, because they may have the same problem as you. • Mostly other teachers should also

			<p>know what is going on with the learner.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Other teachers may need to be made aware of situation to accommodate the learner. •Discuss it with other teachers, so they can understand why learners' behaviour has changed. •Learner may be acting out in some cases, but only feel comfortable taking to one. So share so that the other teacher can understand.
15. Firm limits should be set, and logical (rather than punitive) consequences should be set for inappropriate behaviour.	11/11		
16. Provide the learner with a safe place to talk to. A designate time and place for sharing should be set.	8/11	1/11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Time constraints. Knowledge on how to handle the situation is sometimes limited.
17. Explain to the other learners in the class what is going on with the learner in their class.	7/11	4/11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •But do not give much personal info. •It will depend on what kind of problem it is (a child being abused at home) •Confidentiality even though a little understanding from peers could help. •Other learners may make the learner feel excluded and targeted.

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not all learners in the lower grade classes will understand how serious a situation is and will make a joke about it. • Learners have a tendency of teasing each other. Although the teacher may mean ell, learners will see it as a way to tease the learner.
18. Questions about the traumatic event should be answered simple and realistic – clarifying misconceptions and distortions. If the learner asks these questions at a time or place that is not appropriate – give the learner a time and place when you will answer the questions.	11/11		
19. Situations may be reminders of the traumatic event/s, provide additional support to learners. E.g. For the child who doesn't like being alone, provide them with a partner to accompany them.	11/11		
20. At once or twice a week, spend one-on-one time with the learner.	6/11	5/11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learners use school transport, no time or place to talk after school. • No time as learners are using common transport. • Time and transport have an influence on spending time with learners. • Time is very limited. <hr/> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This may be difficult due to the lack of free periods and time. • Time is a big issue. Most learners need

			<p>this one-on-one talk, but it is sometimes impossible to help them. If it is one or two of them then I is fine, but we sit with a lot of trauma cases.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Learner then becomes too dependent on the support and if they change grades, it is like a setback.
<p>21. Warn learner if you will be doing something out of the ordinary, like making sudden loud noises or turning off the lights.</p>	<p>X X X X X X X X</p>	<p>X X X</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Not always possible when you give class – you go with the lesson if differ from big class. •This may be difficult to anticipate (loud noises, shouting). •This eliminates the element of surprise and you don’ receive the true reaction.
<p>22. Be aware of other children’s reaction to the traumatised learner and to the information shared. Protect the traumatised learner from peer’s curiosity and protect classmates from details of the learner’s trauma.</p>	<p>X X X X X X X X X X X</p>		
<p>23. No exceptions should be made for learners. Learners should be handled exactly the same.</p>	<p>X X X X X</p>	<p>X X X X X</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Not for the first while after trauma. •The educator must sympathise with the learner. •Even though each learner should be treated the same, some cases do need individual attention. In case of trauma, soft words, etc. •Depending on the learner’s situation, some exceptions

			<p>may need to be made.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All learners' circumstances and situations are different.
<p>24. Consider making accommodations and modifications to academic work for a brief time – shorten assignments, allow additional time to complete assignments and provide additional support.</p>	<p>X X X X X X</p>	<p>X X X X X</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not allowed by department. • This will not work due to departmental issues. • Department of education has their own program to support these learners. • Departmental regulation.
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If the department allows it. • Department is required to give permission for all learners if they have extra time.

CYCLE 3: Stage 3

QUESTION 1

What were your experiences as educator, regarding learner aggression associated with psychological trauma, during the implementation of the proposed guidelines?

SCHOOL 1	SCHOOL 2	SCHOOL 3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I still feel lost at times. • I realised there were things I didn't do right - • Guidelines help to feel more in control. • the guidelines helped a lot. • A lot of improvement and some progress on 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That all children don't act in the same way and that finding what works may take time. • You should always win the learner's trust. You should handle every learner with love. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • These guidelines helped. • An appropriate manner, with the additional support and assistance. • First tend to the individual need of the learner in particular.

<p>handling that kind of situation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • My knowledge or approach has really changed now that I know how to approach learners. • They were mostly positive. • For the first time in a long time I feel there is hope. • This really helped a lot The proposed guidelines were effective but some were not. 		
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QUESTION 2

Did the implementation of these guidelines give you a clear idea on how to support learners showing aggressive behaviour due to psychological trauma?

SCHOOL 1	SCHOOL 2	SCHOOL 3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes • Yes • Yes • Yes • Yes • Yes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes • Yes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes • Yes • Yes • Yes

If so/not – please elaborate.

SCHOOL 1	SCHOOL 2	SCHOOL 3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Now know exactly what to do and where to start and how these learners should be treated. • I didn't have prior knowledge on how to identify or support learners that has experienced trauma. • Can be identified because of trauma. Now educators can understand that 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It served as a reminder to see each case individually and to respond with calmness. • There is definitely something that can be used to apply to each learner. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One realises that learners go through so much more than we know. • It prepares you so that you may have to dig deeper insight as to help these learners. • The guidelines were truly enlightening as it provided me with supporting information

<p>learners are not just naughty, there might be something more to it.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It gave me an idea of how to support those learners showing aggressive behaviour due to trauma. • The guidelines also make identifying learners who are going through a difficult possible. • I now think about learner behaviour and my reactions completely differently. 		<p>on how to handle a learner who has been through a psychological trauma.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Definitely gave a clear idea on how to support the learner in such a situation.
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QUESTION 3

When comparing your knowledge and understanding of the phenomenon before and after the implementation cycle, was the implementation cycle successful according to you or not?

SCHOOL 1	SCHOOL 2	SCHOOL 3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The implementation was successful • Yes. • It was successful • It was successful 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes • Yes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes. • Yes. • Yes. • I think that I learnt a lot

Why?

SCHOOL 1	SCHOOL 2	SCHOOL 3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge and understanding, but now we have a clue on how to deal with these situations. • Having knowledge helps to identify the situation and guidelines 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I have never been someone to totally see and incident resolved. Especially for a teacher just starting out. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It makes me understand more. It makes me more aware of my learners, so I am able to pick up when the behaviour changes. • Take these guidelines into actions to secure our learners.

<p>help to handle the situation better.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I managed to get learners to open up to me and they trusted me. That was a great feeling. • I could see some changes from the learners' side. • On how to approach learners during traumatic times. • Not all learners are the same, so you have to treat them differently – the guidelines help with this. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Simple do's and don'ts. • It guided me and prevented me from making basic mistakes which may aggravate the affected learner's aggressive state. • The guidelines at least gave us a few ideas on how to start at least.
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QUESTION 4

Did the implementation of the guidelines change the knowledge and skills you as educators have to support primary school learners showing aggression associated with psychological trauma?

SCHOOL 1	SCHOOL 2	SCHOOL 3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes. • Yes. • I now have more knowledge and skills. • Yes. • Yes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It only expanded. • Yes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes. • Not really. • Yes • Yes.

If so, in which way?

SCHOOL 1	SCHOOL 2	SCHOOL 3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learners are not just naughty, there might be something more to it. • I did not know what to look for, but now I can identify. • I now think about learner behaviour and 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Every learner is unique and handle trauma differently. Every learner will be handled differently. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delicate and fragile when dealing with issues. • Knowledge on how to handle these types of learners.

my reactions completely differently.		
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QUESTION 5

Which of the guidelines – if any – do you disagree with? Please motivate why.

SCHOOL 1	SCHOOL 2	SCHOOL 3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I don't disagree with any of them. I just think there are a few that need to be changed. • No, all of them work. We just need some changes to a few. • None of them. • I think only adaptations are needed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All have merit and could be used successfully. • None of them. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I do not disagree with any of the guidelines. • None of the guidelines. • No just a few amendments. • I feel need to be changed on the form.

QUESTION 6

Is there anything you want to share that you did not feel comfortable with sharing in the group interviews?

SCHOOL 1	SCHOOL 2	SCHOOL 3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No. I appreciate everything you are trying to do. You are most welcome here. Thank you. • No I think as you know I was very verbal during the interviews. • Not at all. • No thank you. • Not at all. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I still feel counsellors should be assigned permanently to schools. • No thank you. I said everything I wanted to. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No thank you. • No thank you. • No thank you. • No thank you we discussed everything in the group interview.

ADDENDUM H – PROCESSING CATEGORIES INTO THEMES

CYCLE 1: Stage 3

QUESTION 1:

In your experience, how do primary school learners react when exposed to psychological trauma?

SCHOOL 1	SCHOOL 2	SCHOOL 3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Emotionally distant. Rigid. Reckless and aggressive behaviour – drinking, smoking, bullying. Poor scholastic performance. Negative and reserved emotional behaviour. Various reactions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Emotional overreaction. Anti-social, avoidant and withdrawn behaviour. Reckless and aggressive behaviour – fighting/ bullying. Confide in a friend. High absentee number. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Emotionally withdraw. Refuse to communicate. Emotional aggressive outbursts. Poor scholastic performance. Attention-seeking behaviour.

QUESTION 2:

What are the various contributory factors to aggressive behaviour shown by primary school learners?

SCHOOL 1	SCHOOL 2	SCHOOL 3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parental abuse and neglect. Abusive home leads to bullying. Parents absent. Reckless scholastic behaviour. Aggressive reaction towards confrontation. Emotionally overreaction. Siblings taking on the parental role. Victims become aggressive and revengeful. Attention-seeking behaviour. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Over disciplined. Physically abused. Lack of support structure. Abusive households. Lack of ability to ask for help. Parental absents. Aggressive towards discipline. Emotionally unequipped for daily emotional interaction. No parental guidance. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Changes in home environment. Divorce and death. Changes in immediate frame of references.

QUESTION 3.1:

Have you experienced aggressive behaviour of learners that can be traced to psychological trauma?

SCHOOL 1	SCHOOL 2	SCHOOL 3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes – 100%. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes– 100%. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes – 100%.

QUESTION 3.2:

If so, how would you describe these experiences?

SCHOOL 1	SCHOOL 2	SCHOOL 3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aggressive behaviour without regard to consequences. • Disrespectful towards others. • Undermines authority. • Parental neglect or abandonment. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parental neglect. • Aggressive behaviour towards discipline. • Lack of support structure. • Abuse contributes to aggression. • Model aggressive reaction of parents, guardians and role models. • Scholastic underperformance leads to aggressive behaviour. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parental neglect or abuse. • Learner verbal bully – very short temper.

QUESTION 4:

How do you normally handle learner aggression when associated with trauma?

SCHOOL 1	SCHOOL 2	SCHOOL 3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Verbal communication. • Referral to social worker. • Establish trust. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Verbal communication. • Don't reprimanded learner in front of others. • Face-to-face time with learners. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sympathetic reactions towards learners. • Spend face-to-face time with learner. • Isolate what causes the outburst.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage positive behaviour. • Methods differ from learner to learner. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Address issues privately. • Avoid drastic reactions. • Mostly confidential – teachers are not notified of the issues. • Be understanding and empathetic. • Pay close attention to learners. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Remove the student from the group. • Talk to them on their level. • Discuss the incident and not attack the child's character. • Ignore the aggression as far as possible. • Remain calm. • Discuss issues with parents. • Advise counselling.
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QUESTION 5:

What knowledge do you, as educator, feel will empower you adequately to support primary school learners showing aggression associated with psychological trauma?

SCHOOL 1	SCHOOL 2	SCHOOL 3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aggressive symptoms after trauma. • Identify learners. • Ability to understand the learner. • Teaching learners positive behaviour. • Encourage participation in school activities. • Approaching learners. • How to handle learners. • Who to contact for help. • How to build a trust relationship. • How to support these learners in the class. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More knowledge – course/program. • Correction reaction towards a child while sharing regarding trauma. • Identify a child with psychological trauma. • Effects of trauma on a child – mentally, socially and academically. • Coping mechanisms to teach the learner • Help learners overcome those effects in a positive way. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build a relationship with the learners. • Experience over time helps a lot. • Any school should have a counsellor/psychologist from the department.

CYCLE 3: Stage 1

QUESTION 1:

If you reflect on the trial implementation cycle, were the guidelines effective in supporting you in dealing with learner aggression associated with psychological trauma?

SCHOOL 1	SCHOOL 2	SCHOOL 3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes. • Some amendments needed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes.. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes.

QUESTION 2:

Are there any of the guidelines that were a part of the trial cycle that you as educator feel the need to be removed?

SCHOOL 1	SCHOOL 2	SCHOOL 3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Department requires evaluations for concessions/special treatment. • After school time with learners problematic. • No exceptions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All of the guidelines have to stay. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A few need to be adjusted.

QUESTION 3:

Taking the guidelines suggested to be removed – what are your opinions as educators regarding these specific guidelines? (Did you find them to be unnecessary/effective?)

SCHOOL 1	SCHOOL 2	SCHOOL 3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Softer approach needed after a bad incident. • Some need to be adapted. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No, nothing should be removed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No guidelines should be remove, only adapted.

QUESTION 4:

Are there guidelines that should be added to the list? Why do you feel that adding these guidelines will improve the experience?

SCHOOL 1	SCHOOL 2	SCHOOL 3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adjustments. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Add regarding training for teachers. Teacher training on how these guidelines should be applied. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parental involvement is of great importance.

CYCLE 3: Stage 2

Guidelines compiled and submitted for review

Guidelines	Yes it will work	No it will not work or has to be amended	Reason why it will not who/how the guideline needs to be amended.
12. Maintain usual routines. A return to “normalcy” will assure the child that he/she is safe and life will go on after the event.	100%		
13. The problems of the learner should under no circumstances be discussed with learner or teachers.	36%	64%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All educators involved in the education or interaction with the learner have to be informed of the situation, to ensure support. Learners involved do not need detail regarding the learner.
14. Firm limits should be set, and logical (rather than punitive) consequences should be set for inappropriate behaviour.	100%		
15. Provide the learner with a safe place to talk to. A designate time and place for sharing should be set.	82%	18%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Taking time constraints into account. Depending on what kind of problem it is

			(a child being abused at home)
16. Explain to the other learners in the class what is going on with the learner in their class.	64%	36%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Confidentiality is the most important element – no confidentiality should be broken without learner's permission. Even though a little understanding from peers could help. •Avoid exposing young learners to too much information.
17. Questions about the traumatic event should be answered simple and realistic – clarifying misconceptions and distortions. If the learner asks these questions at a time or place that is not appropriate – give the learner a time and place when you will answer the questions.	100%		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Learners use school transport, no time or place to talk after school. •Time and transport have an influence on spending time with learners. Time is very limited.
18. Situations may be reminders of the traumatic event/s, provide additional support to learners. E.g. For the child who doesn't like being alone, provide them with a partner to accompany them.	100%		
19. At once or twice a week, spend one-on-one time with the learner.	55%	45%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •This may be difficult due to the lack of free time. Most learners need this one-on-one talk, but it is sometimes impossible to help them. •Learner then becomes too dependent on the support and if they change grades, it is like a setback.

<p>20. Warn learner if you will be doing something out of the ordinary, like making sudden loud noises or turning off the lights.</p>	<p>82%</p>	<p>18%</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This may be difficult to anticipate (loud noises, shouting). This eliminates the element of surprise and you don't receive the true reaction. • The educator must sympathise with the learner.
<p>21. Be aware of other children's reaction to the traumatised learner and to the information shared. Protect the traumatised learner from peer's curiosity and protect classmates from details of the learner's trauma.</p>	<p>100%</p>		
<p>22. No exceptions should be made for learners. Learners should be handled exactly the same.</p>	<p>45%</p>	<p>55%</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Even though each learner should be treated the same, some cases do need individual attention. In case of trauma, soft words, etc. • Depending on the learner's situation, some exceptions may need to be made. • All learners' circumstances and situations are different. • Department of education has their own program to support these learners - required to give permission for all learners if they have extra time.

CYCLE 3: Stage 3

QUESTION 1

What were your experiences as educator, regarding learner aggression associated with psychological trauma, during the implementation of the proposed guidelines?

SCHOOL 1	SCHOOL 2	SCHOOL 3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Things I didn't do right. • Guidelines help to feel more in control. • Approach has really changed. • Mostly positive. • There is hope. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learners' reaction vary. • Handle every learner with love. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Guidelines helped. • An appropriate manner, with the additional support and assistance. • First tend to the individual need of the learner in particular.

QUESTION 2

Did the implementation of these guidelines give you a clear idea on how to support learners showing aggressive behaviour due to psychological trauma?

SCHOOL 1	SCHOOL 2	SCHOOL 3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes – 100%. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes – 100%. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes – 100%.

If so/not – please elaborate.

SCHOOL 1	SCHOOL 2	SCHOOL 3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge on where to start and how learners should be treated. • Educators can understand that learner behaviour involves more than just one incident. • How to support those learners showing aggressive behaviour due to trauma. • Make identifying learners who are going through a difficult possible. • I now think about learner behaviour and my reactions completely differently. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • See each case individually. • Respond with calmness. • Can be used to apply to each learner. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provided me with supporting information on handling a learner who has been through a psychological trauma. • Definitely gave a clear idea on how to support the learner in such a situation.

QUESTION 3

When comparing your knowledge and understanding of the phenomenon before and after the implementation cycle, was the implementation cycle successful according to you or not?

SCHOOL 1	SCHOOL 2	SCHOOL 3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implementation 100% successful 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implementation 100% successful 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implementation 100% successful

Why?

SCHOOL 1	SCHOOL 2	SCHOOL 3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Knowledge and understanding regarding how to deal with these situations. Managed to get learners to open up to me and trusted me. Changes from the learners' side. Approaching learners during traumatic times. Treat learners differently – the guidelines help with this. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> First time to see an incident resolved. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Makes me more aware of my learners, so I am able to pick up when the behaviour changes. Take these guidelines into actions to secure our learners. Simple do's and don'ts. Prevent basic mistakes which may aggravate the affected learner's aggressive state. Ideas on how to start.

QUESTION 4

Did the implementation of the guidelines change the knowledge and skills you as educators have to support primary school learners showing aggression associated with psychological trauma?

SCHOOL 1	SCHOOL 2	SCHOOL 3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Yes - more knowledge and skills. (100%) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expanded knowledge. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Yes (75%) Not really (1 educator)

If so, in which way?

SCHOOL 1	SCHOOL 2	SCHOOL 3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Learner behaviour should not be seen as individual incidents. Ability to identify red flags. Thoughts regarding learner behaviour changed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Every learner is unique and handle trauma differently. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Delicate and fragile when dealing with issues. Knowledge on how to handle these types of learners.

QUESTION 5

Which of the guidelines – if any – do you disagree with? Please motivate why.

SCHOOL 1	SCHOOL 2	SCHOOL 3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Do not disagree with any of them (4 out of 5) Only adaptations are needed (1 out of 5). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All have merit and could be used successfully (2 out of 2). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Do not disagree with any of them (3 out of 4) Only adaptations are needed (1 out of 4).

QUESTION 6

Is there anything you want to share that you did not feel comfortable with sharing in the group interviews?

SCHOOL 1	SCHOOL 2	SCHOOL 3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No – 100%. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Counsellors should be assigned permanently to schools – 50%. No – 50%. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No – 100%

ADDENDUM I – PROOF OF LANGUAGE EDITING

PROOF OF LANGUAGE EDITING

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DECLARATION

To whom it may concern

I hereby confirm that I have proofread and edited the language of the following dissertation, including the references.

Title of dissertation

Guidelines for primary school educators dealing with learner aggression associated with psychological trauma

Candidate

Natasha Botha



Lariza Hoffman

Kroonstad

25 November 2019