

Law and Order Setback: Usage of Police to Eliminate School-based Violence in South Africa

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ABSTRACT This paper is based on a qualitative national study conducted in South African schools to obtain insight and understanding of the reasons for the prevalence of violence in schools and how this can be eliminated. Data were collected by means of semi-structured interviews, focus group interviews and observations with teachers, learners, principals, support staff and School Governing Bodies. The study also employed a quantitative research approach; therefore questionnaires were administered across six provinces in South Africa. Some of the findings suggest that the role of the police in assisting with violence in schools can be perceived as positive although it is also haphazard and inconsistent and in some cases non-existent. There is a need for the Department of Basic Education to develop new guidelines on the implementation of violence reduction strategies to consider the disruption that the random search and seizures may cause to teaching and learning processes. New strategies that are less disruptive should be developed.