



**UNIVERSITY OF  
KWAZULU-NATAL**

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**INYUVESI  
YAKWAZULU-NATALI**

**An exploration of police killings in Durban, KwaZulu-Natal**

**by**

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of Master of Social Science in Criminology**

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## **DECLARATION**

I, Nomasiza Noxhaka declare that:

- (i) The research reported in this dissertation, except where otherwise indicated, is my work.
- (ii) This research has not been submitted for any degree or examination at any other university.
- (iii) The sources have been properly referenced in the text and in the reference section.

Signature: .....

Date: .....

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Psalms 37:4 “Delight in the Lord and He will give you the desires of your heart”. This verse has ministered to me at times when I felt like giving up. I give God all my praises and honour in His son, Lord Jesus Christ.

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## DEDICATION

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## **ABBREVIATIONS**

**NDP-National Development Plan**

**SAPU-South African Police Union**

**SAPS-South African Police Services**

**KZN-Kwazulu-Natal**

**POPCRU-Police and Prison Civil Rights Union**

**CFS-Community Policing Forum**

**NGO-Non-Governmental Organisation**

**SABC- South African Broadcasting Council**

**COPS-Concern of Police Survivors**

**UN-united Nations**

**IRR-Institute of Race Relations**

**UK-United Kingdom**

## **ABSTRACT**

This research aimed to explore police killings in selected areas (Kwamakhutha, Amanzimtoti, Durban central and Point police station) in Durban, KwaZulu-Natal Province, South Africa. The motivation for the study was to generate in-depth understanding of police killings by eliciting detailed, authentic data from selected interviewed participants. It is envisaged that the findings, after appropriate dissemination, will enable the South African Police Services to understand the conditions of such in order to devise preventive strategies to curb the killing of police officials, whether they are on or off duty. The information on police killings should provide the management of the South African Police Service (SAPS) with a better and more holistic understanding of situations where police officials are at risk.

In ensuring that the goals of this study would be achieved, a qualitative approach was used that assisted the researcher to focus on conditions that instigate police killings while they are on duty and executing their duties, or when they are off duty. The causes of police killings during these conditions were thus analyzed and the effects of this constant threat under which they live were explored. A set of pre-determined questions enabled the researcher to generate data in order to explore particular themes that emerged from the participants' responses. To analyse data, the Thematic Analysis (TA) method was utilized. The interviews were voice recorded and transcribed. The researcher then familiarized herself with the data for in-depth and perceptive analyses. In this process, common threads that occurred in the various responses allowed patterns to emerge that elucidated common causes for the killing of police officers as well as commonalities in the experiences and views of the interview participants. The main findings highlighted the need for preventative measures to curb and eventually eradicate police killings in KZN Province. Some measures that have been used are the wearing of bulletproof vests and being vigilant at all times; however, these have not been efficient as police killings are still escalating. Contributing factors for these killings were found to be the ready availability of police firearms, police officials' presence in inappropriate places such as taverns, and the shortage of backups in high-risk areas. Criminals' motives for the killing of police officers were found to be the desire to obtain firearms, to hijack police officials' private vehicles, to escape arrest, and to procure police uniforms that are worn as a disguise in the execution of more crime

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# **CHAPTER ONE**

## **GENERAL ORIENTATION AND PROBLEM FORMULATION**

### **1.1 Introduction**

This research study explored the extent of and the reasons for police killings in KZN Province by focusing on two types of police killing: killing of the police during the commission of a robbery, and killing of police officers simply because they are members of the police who are in the wrong place at the wrong time either when they are on or off duty. The discourse commences with a basic orientation of key concepts such as definitions of various important terms that will be operationalised for the purposes of this dissertation. A literature review was conducted that underpinned the problem formulation and the rationale for the study is presented with reference to the specific aim and objectives that gave impetus to the study. An outline of the dissertation is provided at the end of this chapter.

### **1.2 Conceptualisation**

For the purpose of basic orientation to the topic, as well as to provide the context in which concepts will be used, an introduction to some terms is necessary. This section thus operationalises relevant concepts and definitions that occur in this study. A concept is defined as “an idea that is illustrative of something; it may be property or else a phenomenon. The aim of conceptualization is to safeguard meaningful communication (Welman, Kruger & Mitchell, 2005:20). For the purpose of this study, the following concepts are clarified to benefit readers and future researchers.

#### **1.2.1 Crime**

According to the Oxford Dictionary (2012), crime is defined as an act that is illegal and can be punished by law. Moreover, the non-legal definition of crime is an “act that violates socially accepted rules of human, ethical, or moral behavior” (Ahmadi, Sharifi, & Valadan, 2003:5). The Criminal Law Consolidation Act 1935 of 2017 describes crime as an offence that merits community condemnation and punishment, usually by way of a fine or imprisonment.

### **1.2.2 Killing**

According to the Oxford Dictionary (2012), killing is an act of causing death. According to the researcher, killing is an unlawful murder of a human by another without justification or valid excuse.

### **1.2.3 On-and Off-duty killings**

On-duty killing refers to the killing of a serving member/reservist of the SAPS who was killed while executing official duties. This means that the official was on duty at the time of his/her death and that the killing occurred as a consequence of him/her being in the service of the SAPS (SAPS 1998, in Moyane, 2008:30).

According to Bruce (2016:08), most members of the police force who were killed off duty were victims of crime. According to the researcher, off-duty killing refers to the killing of a police officer while he/she is on leave or off duty. These killings may occur because of a family dispute or may be perpetrated by people that are acquainted with the police official. These murders occur for various personal, social, familial, economic or political reasons.

### **1.2.4 Police**

Police is an institution that is responsible for specific policing activities (Johnston & Shearing, 2003, in Paterson & Pollock, 2011:21). The roles and functions of the police are the prevention of crime, the protection of life and property, and the preservation of public tranquility. According to the researcher, a police officer is a civil officer that is mandated with the responsibility of preventing and detecting criminals to maintain public order.

### **1.2.5 Robbery**

The South African Criminal Procedure Act No. 51 of 1977, section 1(b), defines robbery as “theft of property by unlawfully and intentionally using violence to take property from someone or using threats of violence to induce the possessor of the property to submit to the taking thereof (Snyman, 2008:517). Burchell and Milton (2007:817) hold that the crime of robbery possesses a double element of fear, namely fear of losing one`s property and fear of losing one`s life.

### **1.3 Background to the Study**

Brinks (2007:3) states that the term police killings refer “to the conflict which begins when the victims forcefully claim ownership of right and it ends with the ultimate negation of the right, therefore police are more accountable challenge the existing order of police-suspect relationship”. The researcher is of the opinion that police killings can be regarded, “as a contact crime”, because “it is an unlawful act” towards human beings. Police nowadays are victims of crime and police killings are escalating in South Africa after democracy. Police killing is associated with violent crime since it is a contact crime: prevention of violence in South Africa will decrease killing of police officials.

Killing a police officer can be regarded as a contact crime because it is an unlawful act that takes the life of a human being. It is undeniable that the police have become targeted victims of the worst crime and that police killings are escalating in South Africa, even after the advent of democracy in this country. Police killings are associated with violent crimes and only by curbing all acts of violence in South Africa will the killing of police officials be curbed.

Violence is defined as “the application or threat of physical force against a person, which can give rise to criminal or civil liability. Such violence may be associated with ultimate violations of the person or the potential to cause serious physical pain, injury or death” (Bruce, 2016). The President of the South African Police Union (SAPU), Mpho Kwiniba (2016), argues that police killing is a category of murder and that such killings are neither serious organized crime, a serious corruption, nor a serious commercial crime. He thus suggests that criminals generally do not plan to kill a police member, but they are killed in the execution of their duties when criminals break the law. Thus the sharp increase of violence in South Africa in the last decade or so has resulted in an increase in the killing of police officers. Bruce (2016) asserts that the killing of police officers is not the largest category of unnatural deaths in the country, but that it is the category of death that tends to raise the most concern.

The death of a loved one has a traumatic effect on the family. According to Moyane (2008:1), the death of a male breadwinner in a family has a great impact on a stay-at-home spouse and mother who depended entirely on her late spouse for a living. The bereaved mother is now left alone while she is expected to readjust and to be a sole parent for her children, all of whom suffer from the agonizing blow of a father’s death. The change in the family brought

about by the death of a parent requires the reversal of roles and the construction of new stories and history within the family, as each member has to adapt their internal working model to fit the altered circumstances. The death of a spouse therefore fundamentally threatens the sense of being of the surviving spouse. It wipes out many assumptions about the future and shakes the permanence of the bereaved spouse's relationships. To a greater or lesser extent, parental identity is destroyed by a spouse's death and this, in turn, diminishes the self (Riches & Dawson, 2000, in Moyane, 2008:2). It was against this backdrop that the researcher concentrated on the killing of police officers during robberies and while they were off or on duty. The study was conducted in selected police stations in Durban, KZN Province.

Police killings do not only affect the family but the colleagues of the deceased police official as well (Minnar 2003, in Moyane, 2008:2). The recent high level of police killings has seriously affected the morale of surviving colleagues while also traumatizing those who witnessed the killing or who were particularly close to the deceased. The researchers is of the opinion that police killings might lead to police survivors leaving the profession and getting jobs that will not expose them to life-threatening danger.

Recent studies on the subject of on- and off-duty police killings included incidences where officers committed suicide. Swanepoel (2003:50) conducted a study on police coping strategies and suicide ideation in the South African Police Service (SAPS) and recommends that support services in the profession should become more visible to all police members. More regular visitations to police stations and area offices are also suggested. Lectures regarding stress, conflict and suicide prevention (warning signs, methods, and intervention and helping skills) should be conducted at various police stations. Awareness regarding firearms and the commander's role in the lives of his officials should be emphasized. It is noteworthy that, during a suicide prevention awareness workshop, a police Ccommander wrote that he had no idea that his behaviour had such an influence on his subordinates (South African Police Service, 2001). Police training in general should be advanced and reviewed every two years. It was also recommended that the impact of current suicide prevention awareness workshops should be reviewed and improved. Suicide prevention projects should investigate international and national means of addressing suicide in the police services. Swanepoel (2003:50) argues that the project has to be allied with other projects and programmes in the SAPS such as stress management, debriefing, life skills, and colleague sensitivity to have the necessary impact.

Such projects should be presented as a comprehensive life skills package and should be attended by every police official.

According to Bitterner (1974) and Walker (1999, in Stein, 2008:41), traditionally police training, performance evaluation and promotion reinforced members' orientation towards law enforcement. Currently, the police are still required to handle situations on the street that encompass all three roles. However, ambiguity arises for officers from the fact that supervisors expect their subordinates to handle all police functions on the street equally. Leggett (2011:1) adds that police work on the street requires a high state of awareness at all times. This state is essential for members' safety and has been assumed to be possible to maintain for about 12 hours. However, field observations have suggested that many members are able to focus for only eight (or fewer) of the 12-hour requirement, and it has been argued that an 8-hour shift should be introduced Leggett (2011:1). The danger they experience and the coercive authority that is prevalent in police officers' occupational environment create stress and anxiety among them. The way in which police officers cope with stress and strain is part of what is generally termed 'police culture' (Steyn, 2008:41).

The values entrenched in police culture have been derived from the hazards inherent to police work and police officers seek to minimize these hazards in order to protect themselves (Brown, 1988, in Steyn, 2008). It is these coping mechanisms that help officers regulate their occupational world. Two widely cited coping mechanisms are suspiciousness (Kappeler et al., 1998; Skolnick, 1994; Reiner, 1995; Reuss-Lanni, 1983; Rubin, 1973; Wesley, 1970) and 'maintaining the wedge' (Brown, 1988; Reuss-Lanni, 1983; Van Maanen, 1973; Rubinstein, 1973, in Steyn, 2008:41). Another coping mechanism is strict adherence to the crime fighter image. In an attempt to reduce or control the uncertainty associated with a dangerous occupational environment, officers are thus said to be suspicious actors. In this regard, (Skolnick 1994, in Steyn, 2008:42) points out that it is the nature of the policeman that his conception of order emphasizes regularity and predictability. It is therefore a conception that is shaped by persistent suspicion.

In this researcher's view, SAPS management has not addressed the recommendations by Swanepoel (2003) because the killing of police officials has escalated recently and has remained a topic of great interest both locally and internationally. According to Leggett



(2003:1), police killings in South Africa occur as a result of a violent society, uncurbed robberies, and an inexperienced police force.

### **1.3.1 A Violent Society**

With a murder rate of murders as 48 per 100 000 in 2001/2 the average south African citizen is nearly five times more likely to be killed than the average American police member. Comparing police on-duty murder rates to murder rates of the general population for both South Africa and America revealed that the risk incurred by enlisting in the police force in this South Africa is slightly less than in the United States (US) (Leggett 2003:1). However, dealing with the high rate of violent crime encountered in South Africa's street is clearly a risky business, and thus it is remarkable that the average SAPS members are more likely to be killed while off duty than when they are on duty. Leggett (2003) states that the 2003 figures released at a national summit suggested that 65% of police murder victims had been killed while off duty. Former SAPS Commissioner, Jackie Selebi, stated that 60% of off-duty casualties were members who had put themselves on duty by responding to crimes in progress. In this researcher's view, when a police member puts him-/herself on duty, it is highly risky because there is no backup to come to the rescue if the situation becomes threatening. Thus the only solution for improving everyone's safety is to support efforts within the law that are aimed at reducing violent crimes and professionalizing the police.

### **1.3.2 Killings during robberies**

According to an SAPU Newsletter (2016:12), even when the police were victims of robberies it did not necessarily involve the theft of their fire-arms. For example, on a SAPS National Commemoration Day a police officer was killed on his way to report for duty at Fort Beaufort in the Eastern Cape in what appeared to be a vehicle hijacking. The official's firearm and watch were found nearby. The initial reports therefore suggested that the police officer had been attacked not because he was a police officer, but because he had a car. Another example is of an incident that was broadcasted on 21 April 2018 at eleven o'clock on radio news. This bulletin announced that police officials had been shot dead at Engcobo Police Station in the Eastern Cape while on duty. Five police officials and one former South African National Defence Force (SANDF) member died in the attack. The suspects escaped, and shocked community members mentioned that this had been the second tragedy at the police station in Engcobo in 2018. Citizens in the area lived in fear of their lives, particularly as police weapons had been taken during the attack. A South African Broadcasting Corporation (SABC)

journalist, Fundiswa Mhleku (2018, February 20), mentioned that community members had been pleading with Fikile Mbalula, the former Minister of Police, to put more police on duty during late hours because most police killings occurred at night in the Engcobo area.

The likelihood of a homicide during a robbery is enhanced by resistance and lack of cooperation by the victims. Possibly, because of their occupational identity and their associated machismo image, police victims of robberies may tend to resist attacks by their assailants and, in so doing, increase the risk of a violent death. On-duty police killings thus generally occur during interventions in robberies or when the police are pursuing robbery suspects. The researcher is of the view that the recent substantial increase of violent crimes such as armed robberies has resulted in higher murder rates not only among the police, but among the entire South African citizen.

### **1.3.3 Inexperience**

Inexperience of police officials may be a factor that contributes to attacks on police officials, according to the research presented by Groenewald Commissioner Groenewald at a national SAPS summit, 15% of the murdered police officers in 2002 were constables (Leggert 2003:2). Leggert (2003:2) concurs that constables made up of only 7% of the workforce at the beginning of 2002, but this portion has been increasing due to a recent recruitment drive. Steyn (2008:42) argues that the police are not only suspicious of the public, but that they also approach new occupational members with suspicion. In the eyes of established officers, new recruits represent an additional danger which potentially leads to a breakdown in group cohesion. Thus being new to a job in the SAPS can also pose danger and increase the risk of being killed. Moreover, lack of training may pose a real risk to the lives of police officers.

This researcher is of the opinion that the inexperience of police members endangers their lives and should be addressed as it seems to be a major factor that impacts police vulnerability. More attention should thus be given to the specialized training of constables, particularly in terms of firearm handling. Also, police officers who respond to crime scenes should always be fully equipped with bulletproof vests and backup.

## 1.4 Problem Statement

As was mentioned earlier, the police officers who were attacked by robbers at the Engcobo police station in February 2018 was the second time that officers there had come under attack. In March 2017, a Hollywood-style hold-up took place just after midnight in this Eastern Cape Town. An estimated 15 armed robbers had drilled their way into a Standard Bank in Ngcobo and shot at the police, the police station and houses nearby. The robbers allegedly tied up a security guard and got into the bank by cutting open an ATM with angle grinders. Police said the robbers had taken up position all over the town and started firing at the police in a police vehicle when they approached the scene. The police returned fire and, for a while, only the rattling of firearms was heard. One police officer was wounded and rushed to hospital. The robbers raced off in high performance vehicles including an Audi, a BMW, a Toyota Fortuner, and a Toyota Hilux. The police officials were traumatized by the attack and were assured by the authorities that social workers would be sent to debrief them (Eastern Cape attack on police not the first time (Seven O'clock South African Broadcasting Council (SABC) 1 News, in February 2018).

This incident heralded new awareness of the fragile position of police officers in this country (South Africa). Before this, police killings had ostensibly not been taken too seriously by politicians in Parliament who, in contrast to politicians in overseas countries, had rarely discussed this matter or called for parliamentary bodies to investigate police killings. The phenomenon appeared not to be important to them, and it was noted that police deaths hardly reached front page news whereas, in America, the police are called “our finest” (Minnar, 2003:1). However, police killings in South Africa have become a matter of concern for SAPS Management and the phenomenon has also been rigorously debated in the media. It is therefore crucial to understand police killings and to develop strategies and approaches to curb this scourge which has now become a national crisis.

Major Thulani Zwane, spokesperson for the KZN SAPS, stated that “when criminals attack, police officials must defend themselves. They must always react with the same force shown to them” (Cowan, 2016:n.p.).

Police officials have for a long time been viewed as the “dirty workers” of the criminal justice system who, if necessary, are allowed by the elite to use deadly force to protect the interests of law-abiding segments of society (Jobs & Britt, 1979, in Chamlin, 2011). Smit et al. (2005:60)

concur with this view and elaborate that “policing was previously perceived by citizens as ‘dirty work’”. Therefore, the application of deadly force by using firearms has been proposed as the “last resort” in protecting the lives of police officers. In the US, the Police Executive Forum developed a Last Resort Model which states: “As a last resort in the defence of oneself when the officer reasonably believes that he or she is in imminent danger of great bodily harm, a weapon should be fired” (Davies 2005:27). Furthermore, all agencies allow the use of deadly force to protect an officer or another person against death or serious bodily harm.

In terms of when police killings occur, Bruce (2016:11) argues that the majority of police officers are killed off duty than on duty. The average on-duty death rate over a period from 2010/2015 was 34 for KZN, which was second to Gauteng Province in terms of the highest death rate due to police killings in this period (Bruce 2016:11). Most non-natural deaths of SAPS members were caused by vehicle accidents. This rate was 102 in 2014-2015 which was a steep decline from the 2012-2013 figure, and 165 (70%) in 2012/2015 with 272 out of 389 off-duty deaths. Police killings over 2010/2015 period across South Africa fluctuated between 93% (2010/2011), 77% (2013/2014), and 86% (2014/2015). Thus the police killed between 2010/2015 increased which is shown by the above percentages. The majority of these police killings occurred while the SAPS officials were off duty; this was statistically demarcated as follows:

- 59% of all killings occurred when they were off-duty in 2014-2015; and
- 60% off-duty killings occurred in the 5-year period of 2010-2015.

Other accidents that resulted in death were 52 in the period 2013-2016 (on average 14 per annum) (Bruce, 2016:11).

The rate of off-duty police killings versus on-duty killings in (2010/2011-2014/2015) in KZN was 62% (55 out of 89) (Bruce, 2016:11), and this made KZN the province with the second highest rate of off-duty police killings in South Africa at the time.

**Table 1.1: Rates of South African Police killings in the period 2013-2016: Comparison of on- and off-duty killings and killings during robberies in KwaZulu-Natal Province**

<b>When killings occurred</b>	<b>2013/2014</b>	<b>2014/2015</b>	<b>2015/2016</b>	<b>Total</b>
On-duty killings	77	63	34	174
Off-duty killings	81	86	52	219
No. of killings during robberies (in progress or pursuing robbery suspects)	8	39	13	60

Source: Bruce, 2016:11

Table 1.1 indicates that the rates of off-duty killings were higher (219) than on-duty killings (174) and the total number of killings during robberies (in progress or pursuing robbery suspects) amounted to 60 from 2013 to 2016.

Nationally, the SAPS is concerned about the large number of its officers who have come under attack. In the 2016/2017 financial year, SAPS statistics showed that 57 police officers had lost their lives while off duty, with 28 being killed while on duty. This means that fewer were killed while on-duty. Over a 20-year review period, the rate at which police officers were murdered fell significantly, according to the latest South Africa Survey that was published by the South African Institute of Race Relations (IRR) in (SAPS Crime Statistics 2017/2018). The survey found that the rate of police murders fell by 80%: from 252 per 100 000 in 1994 to 51 in 2014. In 2018, 12 police officers were killed in South Africa up to state 11 September 2018 (South Africa Crime Statistics, 2018). According to SA News (June 27 2019), in September 2018, 28 police officers were killed and 26 have been killed since the beginning of 2019. The most recent incidences involved Sergeant Zephania Dladla, Constable Nomasonto Mhlanga, and Constable Nhlamulo Vukeya.

Addressing a post-Cabinet media briefing in Pretoria on Thursday, SA News (27 June 2019), Minister in the Presidency, Jackson Mthembu, extended on behalf of the Cabinet his deepest condolences to their families, friends and colleagues:

*“Cabinet condemns in the strongest possible terms these attacks. Police officers risk their lives to protect our communities. We all have to work together with law-enforcement agencies to ensure that perpetrators of these heinous crimes are arrested and face the full might of the law. Cabinet commends the justice system that has resulted in nine perpetrators of these crimes being handed life sentences, in this year alone.”*

However, despite the reported drop in police murders, the IRR notes that South Africa remains a relatively dangerous country in which to conduct police work. In comparison, the United Kingdom (UK) has fewer than four police murders per year, Germany has six per year, and France has five per year. Even the United States (US) reported only 50 police murders per year – a modest figure in contrast to South Africa, particularly given that the population figure of the United States far exceeds South Africa’s (Eastern Cape attack on police not the first time 2018: n.p.).

However, the IRR figures are controversial as a University of KwaZulu-Natal (UKZN) policing expert, Prof. Jean Steyn (2008) told a *Sunday Tribune* reporter that, over a 20-year period prior to 2019, more than 160 police officers had been killed annually. He believed that attacks on the police were an attack on the morality of South Africa. “It is a sad day for South Africa that we have so many attacks on police officers and this should neither be condoned nor normalised,” he said. His comments followed the killing of five police officials when gunmen raided the Ngcobo police station in the Eastern Cape and stole ten guns. An ex-soldier was also killed in the attack. In a worse scenario, seven suspects were killed in a bloody exchange of gunfire with the police on the Friday following the attack in a churchyard in Nyanga village near Ngcobo. Some suspects escaped, ten were arrested, and one police officer was wounded and rushed to hospital. In responding to this tragedy, the former Minister of Police, Fikile Mbalula, said that “this tragedy will remain one of the worst moments of our democracy when protectors of our democracy and people were under attack. What happened at Ngcobo must never happen again in our Republic” (Eastern Cape attacks on the police not the first time 2018: n.p.). Such attacks had occurred before. For example, in 2015, on-duty police officials were

brutally murdered at Inanda in Durban and their uniforms and guns were stolen by the perpetrators. In this incident, the motive was to procure police guns and uniforms with the probable intention of committing further crimes. Another incident was when a Warrant Officer was shot and killed at Empangeni by a suspect attempting to evade capture on 14 November 2015 (Cowan, 2016: n.p.).

Attacks on police stations in 2017 included the following notable cases:

- March 2017: Thirty weapons were stolen from the Peddie police station. Eight firearms were recovered after police had arrested suspects the following month. The gang broke into the police station's strong room through the roof to steal the firearms, which included R5 assault rifles, handguns and shotguns.
- June 2017: A sergeant at the Lingeletu West police station in Khayelitsha, Cape Town, was shot in the face in the early hours of the morning by attackers who entered the police station under the pretext of reporting a robbery. The officer survived.
- June 2017: Two constables were shot dead at the Koffiefontein police station in the Free State.
- August 2017: Suspects broke into the Kimberley police station but only got away with clothing.
- November 2017: A police officer was shot during an attempted robbery at the Elandslaagte police station near Vryheid in KwaZulu-Natal (Twelve police officers killed since the start of 2018, 2018: n.p.).

According to an SAPS presentation to a parliamentary committee (PC) on 28 August 2015 (Bruce, 2016), an analysis of such incidents indicated that “most SAPS officials are killed on duty while responding to complaints or performing policing functions, such as searches and arrest (evading arrests and retaliation) and most members killed off-duty are victims of crime”. This analysis revealed a consistent pattern. However, although the killing of SAPS members has been identified as a key concern since the late 1990s, the SAPS does not have detailed information on situations where police are at risk (Bruce, 2016).

Because police killings do not only affect the family but the colleagues of the deceased police officials as well, the morale of their colleagues are impacted negatively and colleagues who witnessed such killings are traumatized (Minnar, 2003:2). It is undeniable that the impact of police killings will ultimately lead to attrition and that police killings will have a negative

impact on young people because they will lose interest in becoming police officials. This means that South Africa's citizenry will continue to bear the brunt of police killings which foreshadows an escalating national crisis.

## **1.5 Study Objectives**

According to Struwig and Stead (2011:35), objectives describe the scope of the research effort and specify what information needs to be addressed by the research process. It is stated by De Vos, Strydom, Fouché and Delport (2011:94) that the term 'objective' denotes the more concrete, measurable and more speedily attainable conception of a research plan to do or achieve and steps one has to take in order to achieve the goal". Thus objectives are the steps or tasks that the researcher has to follow in order to reach the goal of the research study.

The objectives of the current study were:

- To explain the concept of police killings:
- To determine when and in what manner (i.e., under what conditions) police killings occurred in the study area in Durban, KZN;
- To analyse the causes of police killings in the study area in Durban, KZN; and
- To explore the effects of police killings on other SAPS members, the SAPS, and peripherally the families of the deceased members in the study area in Durban, KZN.

## **1.6 Chapter Outline**

Chapter 2-Empirical Perspective - (Literature review on police killings) and Theoretical perspectives.

This chapter will provide a discussion on the literature that is relevant to the study being conducted. The literature review will provide a background to the study on duty and off duty. Existing literature will be reviewed and provide an indication as to where the research fits into the existing body of knowledge. This chapter will also outline the theoretical model. The theoretical model will demonstrate an understanding of different models and concepts that are relevant to this research. An introduction and description of the conditions, causes of police



killings and strategies to curb police killings will attempt to elucidate on why the research problem under study is pertinent.

### Chapter 3- Research Design

An in depth description of the research methodology and various research techniques that are to be used in the study will be presented in this chapter. Furthermore an in-depth explanation of the data collection instruments to be utilized will be conducted.

### Chapter 4- Analysis of data

This chapter will provide an interpretation of the results collected in light of the aims and overall objectives of the research.

### Chapter 5- Recommendations and conclusion

This chapter will provide recommendations and suggestions for further research on police killings.

## **1.7 Justification for Conducting the Study**

This study is of importance for the following reasons:

- The provision of in-depth information on police killings will provide SAPS Management with a better understanding of situations where and times when police members are most at risk.
- This study will illuminate to what extent off- and on-duty police killings, with special reference to robberies, impacted police officials and the SAPS in KZN Province.
- This study elicited valuable information on common ways of police killings as well as the causes of and the effects associated with this scourge on police officials.
- Information elicited from the literature review will be corroborated and augmented, and criminals' motives for police killings will be further elucidated.
- It is an undeniable fact that police killings not only impact affected family members, but the colleagues of the deceased police official as well. According to Minnar (2003:2), the high level of police killings seriously impacts the morale of surviving colleagues while it also traumatizes those who witnessed such a death. This study explored these impacts and

could offer insights that will assist police counselors to mitigate the traumatic effects and thus stem the attrition rate of police officials who leave the force because of fear or trauma.

- The importance of this study is that it will contribute to the pool of knowledge of police killings by providing detailed data that will enable the South African Police Service to analyse and understand the manner (conditions) of police killings, the times police killings are most likely to occur, and the causes of this phenomenon, so that the organization may devise preventive strategies that may aid in curbing the killing of police officials, whether they are off or on duty.

## **1.8 Description of the Study Location**

This study was conducted among SAPS members employed in the Durban provincial cluster of the KZN South Africa. The provincial cluster office is situated in the central business district (CBD) of Durban. At the time of the study, KZN had seven of these clusters, 185 police stations, 136 SAPS units, and 23 539 SAPS officials.

This study was conducted among selected SAPS members in four selected police stations under the auspices of the SAPS provincial cluster of KZN in Durban. The researcher interviewed 21 police officials in total who were from Kwamakhutha, Amanzimtoti, Durban Central, and Point police stations. The researcher additionally conducted a focus group discussion with 5 police officials at Point police station from the total of 21.

## **1.9 Research Design and Methodology**

### **1.9.1 Research design**

Babbie (2007:12) defines research design as “a set of decisions regarding what topic is to be studied, among what population, with what research methods, and for what reason”. According to De Vos et al. (2007:57), research design is “the actual plan in terms of which you obtain research participants or subjects and collect data from them. The researcher follows the steps sequentially by first choosing the topic of the research, then formulating the problem, and collecting data, among others”.

The research design is thus the overall plan for conducting the entire research study. This can refer to all the decisions the researcher makes in planning the research study such as the design to be used, the sampling methods, data collection procedures, and data analysis plans. The most suitable design or strategy for this research project was to follow a phenomenological approach. This strategy enabled the researcher to understand and interpret the impact that the topic (the killing of police officials when they were on and off duty and particularly during robberies) had in terms of the experiences of police officials.

According to De Vos et al. (2011:304), a phenomenological study is a study “that attempts to understand people’s perceptions, perspectives and understanding of a particular situation”. The phenomenological researcher goes into the field with a framework of what will be studied and how this will be done. The current researcher thus engaged in field work by conducting interviews and a focus group discussion with selected participants (police officials), and their contributions helped the researcher to gain in-depth understanding of their perceptions and experiences regarding police killings. An exploratory research design was used to explore police killings in selected police stations in Durban.

### **1.9.2 Research approach**

This study adopted a qualitative research approach. This approach is typically used to answer questions about the complex nature of phenomena, and the purpose is often to describe and understand a phenomenon from participants’ point of view. The qualitative approach is also referred to as “the interpretative or constructivist, or the post-positivist approach” (Leedy & Ormrod, 2005:94). The qualitative research approach was thus used in order to gain understanding of police killings in the study area. Comprehensive data were collected to identify and explore the actual perceptions, attitudes and experiences regarding police killings of members of the SAPS in the study area of KZN Province.

## **1.10 Population and Sampling**

### **1.10.1 Study population**

According to Neumann (2006:224), population is “an abstract idea of a large group of many cases from which a research draw [sic] a sample and to which results from the sampled area are generalized”. According to De Vos et al. (2011:223) population is the term that sets

boundaries on the study units. It refers to the individuals in the universe who possesses specific characteristics that are relevant to the study. Bachman and Schutt (2011:111) argue that the population of a study is the aggregation of elements that the researcher actually focuses on and samples from, not some larger aggregation that the researcher really wishes he could have studied. The researcher of the current study thus obtained a sample directly from the population of interest. The ideal population for the current study would have comprised of family members, community leaders, faith-based organizations, police officers and the police union, but due to its limited scope and a challenging time frame, the sample consisted of a subset of 21 SAPS officials only.

### **1.10.2 Sample size and sampling procedure**

According to Neuman (2010:19), a sample is “a subset of the elements of the population that is obtained by some process for the purpose of being studied”. Bachman and Schutt (2011:482) elaborate as follows: “A sample is the subset of people or other entities selected for a study from some larger population”. According to Brick and Green (2016:11), sample sizes are typically small in qualitative work. One way of identifying how many people (or participants) need to be interviewed until nothing further is elicited from the data, is to determine that saturation has been reached. Thus a sample is a small number of people that the researcher selects from among a large population. However, the researcher cannot simply select any person; people who have had experience of the topic under study need to be selected because such people will offer good, rich information and will be able to talk about something they know or have experienced.

Bless and Higson-Smith (1995:83) highlight that sampling is defined as “a technical accounting device to rationalize the collection of information, to choose in an appropriate way the restricted set of objects, persons, events, and so forth, from which the actual information will be drawn”. Due to various constraints such as a very large population and time and financial constraints, the researcher could not include the entire SAPS population in the study, therefore a sample as a subset of the population was drawn. Eventually 21 SAPS officials agreed to participate in the study. These participants were selected with the help of station commanders of police stations in the selected study area. These station commanders were requested to select participants based on their knowledge of police killings in the KZN Province. The researcher conducted one-on-one semi-structured interviews with 16 SAPS members from KwaMakhutha, Amanzimtoti, and Durban Central and conducted a focus group discussion

with five police officials from Point police station (thus a total of 21 participants). The sampling methods of choice were simple random and purposive sampling, but only purposive sampling was eventually utilized.

According to Neumann (2006:224), purposive sampling is “the non-random sample in which the researcher uses a wide range of methods to locate all possible cases of a high specific and difficult to reach population”. Thus purposive sampling was used as the researcher used her own judgments and intended to handpick participants from the target population for inclusion in the study. However, with the assistance of the station commanders, participants were selected who would possess rich information and first-hand experience of the phenomenon to be researched. It was expected that they would provide detailed and suitable answers to the questions that would be posed by the researcher.

Prior to the actual sampling process, the researcher informally visited these four police stations and communicated the purpose of the study to the station commanders, who agreed to comply with the request and to identify suitable participants. After the purposive selection of 21 police officials, saturation had been reached and it was envisaged that these selected participants would have the required information to address the research questions and objectives.

The selection of these four police stations was justified as none of them was immune to police killings. For instance, the participants mentioned that when they heard on the media that a police officer had been killed or injured, they became scared and lived in fear that they might be next. The fact is women and men in blue are victims of being killed by criminals. Moreover, the researcher had easy access to these police stations as a relative that lived in the area provided transport to these stations. At the time of the study, the researcher was a full-time student who had not received any funding and was unemployed. A challenge was encountered at KwaMakhutha police station as the aim was to interview five police officials, but only three could be interviewed as the other two members were off sick on the day of the final scheduled interview.

According to Bayens and Roberson (2011:130), simple random sampling is a form of probability sampling that gives all members of a population an equal chance of being selected and is the standard against which other methods are sometimes evaluated because it is most representative of an entire population and least likely to result in bias. They further state that

this form of sampling allows a researcher to make inferences about a population based on results obtained from a sample. Unfortunately, due to the fact that the researcher had to rely on information and the selection of appropriate participants with the help of the station commanders, simple random sampling could not be employed in this study. The researcher thus adhered to the decisions and rules of the station commanders to show respect and to allow for the smooth flow of data collection.

The sample had to adhere to the following inclusion characteristics:

- They had to be official police members in the study area in Durban;
- They had to speak both IsiZulu and English;
- They had to have policing experience.

No police officer was excluded as a participant on the grounds of race, gender, unit of operation, or rank.

## **1.11 Methods of Data Collection**

The data from the document analysis, one-on-one interviews and the focus group discussion were collected by the researcher. Thus no additional fieldworkers were required because the participants could all speak either English or IsiZulu or both and the researcher is proficient in both these languages.

### **1.11.1 Document analysis**

Data collection can be done through social interaction with participants, field studies, participant observation, and semi-structured interviews (Maree, 2010:70). De Vos et al. (2011:360) state that two kinds of interviews can be conducted for information collection during qualitative research, namely one-on-one semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions, which were both employed to elicit valuable and thick information from the participants. These interviews served as a means to gain insight and knowledge from the participants on police killings.

### **1.11.2 Semi-structured one-on-one interviews**

One-on-one interviews were conducted with the aid of a semi-structured interview schedule to elicit rich responses from the participants. De Vos et al. (2011:351) point out that semi-

structured interviews are used by researchers to gain a detailed picture of a variety of participants' beliefs about, or perceptions or accounts, of a particular topic. The method gives the researcher and participants' considerable flexibility as open-ended questions are asked to which the respondents may reply without fear of wrong answers. The researcher is also able to follow up particular interesting avenues that emerge in the interview and the participants thus give a fuller picture. Semi-structured interviews are especially suitable when one is immersed in a complex process or when the issue under discussion is controversial and personal. Berg (1995, in Struwig & Stead, 2011:98) adds the following about the semi-structured interview:

[It] is a combination of structured and unstructured interviews. Predetermined questions are posed to each participant in a systematic and consistent manner but the participants are also given the opportunity to discuss issues beyond the questions' confines.

Using semi-structured interviews, the researcher had a set of pre-determined questions in an interview schedule, but the interviews were guided rather than dictated by the schedule (De Vos et al., 2011:352). In this situation the participants were perceived as the experts on the subject and the researcher was the observer and facilitator. Each interview took about 45-60 minutes and interviews were conducted with 16 police officials from Amanzimtoti, KwaMakhutha and Durban Central police station. The researcher informed each participant that participation would be anonymous and confidential. An informed consent letter was given to each participant to sign and they all agreed to participate voluntarily.

### **1.11.3 Focus group discussions**

Kruger (1990, in De Vos et al., 2011:361) defines a focus group discussion as “a carefully planned discussion designed to obtain perceptions on a defined area of interest in a permissive non-threatening environment”. Morgan (s.a., in De Vos et al., 2011) describes a focus group discussion as “a research technique that collects data through group interaction on a topic determined by the researcher. This is a more group- oriented method than a one-on-one method”. One focus group discussion was conducted to collect data for this study. The group comprised police officials for the purpose of exploring police killings and the effects of this phenomenon on surviving police officials. The inclusion criteria were similar those that were required for the one-on-one interviews. With the assistance of the station commander, only five officials working at the Point police station were selected to participate in the focus group

discussion due to SAPS workload and to the station commander's instructions but the researcher's aim was to have 10 police officials in the focus group.

## **1.12 Method of Data Analysis**

Exploratory data were generated by means of the administration of the semi-structure interview schedule. The data were analyzed according to the thematic analysis. The researcher adhered to the six steps of thematic analysis as proposed by Braun and Clarke (2006, in Maguire & Delahunt, 2017). Thus the data were sifted into categories that formed the basis for emerging stories of police killings in the study area. The steps were as follows:

- Familiarization with the data: The effectiveness of thematic analysis was derived from the fact that the researcher familiarized herself with the data. This was possible because a voice recorder had been used during the interviews that were transcribed as soon as possible after each interview. This allowed the researcher to familiarize herself with the data for insightful analysis.
- General initial codes: The researcher started to organize the data into a meaningful segment. Code names were used for the participants. The researcher coded each segment of data that was relevant to the research topic. Each transcript was coded separately at first.
- Searching for themes: According to Maree (2006:123), themes are the central ideas, explored ideas, or ideas explored through a literature review. To gain a better understanding of police killings and the effect of this phenomenon SAPS members, emerging themes were identified.
- Reviewing the themes: The researcher used a cut and paste method to put similar topics together.
- Defining and naming themes: The researcher started presenting the research findings by confirming what emerged with relevant findings in the literature.
- Producing the report: The researcher produced this report in which the themes that emerged are presented and discussed.

### **1.12.1 Method to Ensure Trustworthiness**

According to Kumar (2011:184), one of the areas of difference between quantitative and qualitative research is in the use of and the importance given to the concepts of validity and reliability. There are some attempts to define and establish validity and reliability in qualitative research which are referred to as 'trustworthiness' and 'authenticity'. According to Guba and



Lincoln (in Kumar, 2011:184), trustworthiness in a qualitative study is determined by four indicators: credibility, transferability, dependability and conformability, and it is these four indicators that reflect validity and reliability in qualitative research.

### **1.12.2 Credibility**

According to Trochim and Donnelley (in Kumar, 2011:185), credibility involves establishing that the results of qualitative research are credible or believable from the perspective of the participants in the research. Because qualitative research studies explore the perceptions, experiences, feelings and beliefs of people, it is believed that the respondents are the best judge to determine whether or not the research findings reflect their opinions and feelings correctly. According to De Vos et al. (2011:419), credibility is an alternative to internal validity, in which the goal is to demonstrate that the enquiry was conducted in such a manner that it ensures that the subject has been accurately identified and described.

In order to ensure credibility, the researcher used an interview schedule for the one-on-one semi-structured interviews and the focus group discussion. The participants were asked open-ended questions aided by the interview guide.

### **1.12.3 Transferability**

Transferability refers to the degree to which the results of qualitative research can be generalized or transferred to other contexts or settings (Trochim & Donnelley, in Kumar, 2011:185). Shurink, Fouché and De Vos (in De Vos et al., 2011:420) explain that the researcher must question whether the findings that the research produced can be transferred from a specific situation to another. This is viewed as an alternative to external validity or generalizability.

In this study, the researcher placed emphasis on recording and describing the data and observations using rich, detailed information based on the participants' views. These were considered relevant in an exploration of police killings in Durban, KZN and other settings facing similar situations, and this will ensure that the study is transferable in explorations of the prevention of police killings in KZN or any other setting.

#### **1.12.4 Dependability**

Dependability is very similar to the concept of reliability in qualitative research. According to Trochim and Donnelley (in Kumar, 2011:185), it is concerned with whether one would obtain the same results if one observed the same thing twice. De Vos et al. (2011:420) explain that the researcher must ask whether the process is presented logically and if it is well documented. Dependability is noted as an alternative to reliability, whereby the researcher attempts to account for changing conditions in the phenomenon under study.

In this study, a detailed research design and scientifically endorsed methods of data collection, data analysis and sampling were adhered to throughout.

#### **1.12.5 Conformability**

Conformability refers to the degree to which the results could be confirmed or corroborated by others (Trochim & Donnelley, in Kumar, 2011:185). Conformability is also similar to reliability in quantitative research. It is only possible for the results to be compared if both researchers follow the process in an identical manner (Kumar, 2011:185). Lincoln and Guba (1999, in De Vos et al., 2011:421) stress the need to ask whether another could confirm the findings of the study. By doing so, they remove evaluation from some inherent characteristics of the researcher (objectives) and place it squarely on the data themselves. The question is whether the researcher provides evidence that corroborates the findings and interpretations by means of auditing.

The data were thus vigorously and consistently interpreted so that the raw data and the meanings that the participants attached to their experiences of police killings may be regarded as dependable and consistent. The researcher confirmed the findings and audited the entire research process by utilizing the insights of her supervisor.

### **1.13 Ethical Considerations**

#### **1.13.1 Ethical considerations pertaining to the South African Police Service (SAPS)**

Ethical issues form an integral part of any research project. For the purpose of this study gatekeeper's permission was granted by the South African Police Services; The researcher adhered to all the ethical requirements as stipulated by the SAPS National Instructions 1/ 2006 and was granted an approval to conduct research in among members of the SAPS.

### 1.13.2 Ethical Guidelines of the Social Research Association (2003)

This document identifies four overlapping societal policies in terms of research as follows: Society in general, researches participants, research sponsors, funders, colleagues, and the profession.

- **Obligation to society**

Researchers have a general responsibility to undertake research that will contribute to the public good and to ensure that their research is appropriately applied and disseminated. The research study addresses a need in society and in the SAPS in particular and selected information will be disseminated in appropriate formats.

- **Obligation to research participants**

All researchers are obliged to ensure that individuals who participate in a research study freely give their consent and that their participation does not expose them to avoidable harm. If participation in research does expose participants to the possibility of harm, it is important that they understand the potential of that harm when giving their consent. The researcher thus explained the nature and purpose of the study in detail to the participants and assured them that their names would not be used to avoid any fear of harm.

- **Informed consent**

Negotiating participants' consent entails communicating information such as the purpose of the study; the anticipated consequences of the research; the identity of funders and sponsors; anticipated uses of the data; possible harm or discomfort that might affect participants; issues relating to data storage and security; and the degree of anonymity and confidentiality of the participants that may be affected when technical data-gathering devices such as audio/visual recorders and photographs are used. Participants should be made aware of the capacity of such devices and that they are free to reject their use.

The researcher asked and obtained the participants' permission for their participation in the research project. She explained to them that their participation was voluntary and that they were not forced in any way to take part in this project. Their decision to participate or withdraw at any time would not affect them in any way at any time.

- **Right to confidentiality and anonymity**

Information provided in the context of a research study should be treated as confidential. Care should be taken at all stages of the research process not to compromise that

confidentiality and anonymity. Informants and other research participants should have the right to remain anonymous and to have their right to privacy and confidentiality respected. However, privacy and confidentiality present researchers with particularly difficult problems given the cultural and legal variations among societies and the various ways in which the real interest or the research role of the ethnographer may not fully be realised by some or all of the participants.

To ensure the anonymity and confidentiality of the participants, their real names were not used. Instead, the ranks of the participants were used to identify them in this dissertation. The tape recordings and notes identifying the participants will be erased for their protection.

- **Provision of information about support services**

Participation in a research project may be disturbing or may cause distress. Researchers should anticipate this and consider whether it is appropriate, under some circumstances, to offer information about relevant support services.

The researcher informed the participants that the information that they shared that left them feeling emotionally upset or anxious was understood. She therefore informed them of a counsellor for debriefing or counselling should they require help to address traumatic events. Thus a doctor, psychologist and a social worker were on stand-by should any participant require their services.

- **Sharing research findings with participants**

Research should ensure the inclusion of research participants in the dissemination of the findings through material that is especially produced for them. Consideration should be given to the most appropriate media through which to do this. However, the research findings will not be shared with the participants because the data were elicited purely for academic purposes.

- **Storage of data**

All research data should be stored in a secure and protected manner, which may include the encryption of data. This relates to electronic data (for example data sets SPSS files, transcripts, etc.) as well as data that are stored in paper format.

The voice recorder and the transcription of each interview will be kept in a locked file cabinet in the personal possession of the researcher and supervisor. The recordings on the voice recorder will be erased and each transcription will be burnt after five years of storage.

- **Obligation to the subject and to colleagues**

Society policy researchers have important ethical responsibilities to social policy as a field of study and to the colleagues with whom they work. They have a responsibility to promote intellectual and professional freedoms and to disseminate knowledge. The work that they do should thus contribute a significant proportion of the research to social policy. Social policy researchers in secure employment have important responsibilities to promote the interests of colleagues who are in a less secure position. Respect for others is essential, even where there is disagreement over which theory, methods or personal approach to follow.

In adhering to all research ethics, the researcher showed great respect towards the subject and avoided making empty promises. She also took responsibility for honouring any promises that she made in connection with the study.

## **1.14 Limitations of the Study and Challenges Experienced**

### **1.14.1 Limitations**

#### **Small sample size**

The small sample size was a distinct limitation as it means that the study findings may not be generalized to all police stations and officers across the study area in Durban, KZN South Africa. However, the reliability of the study and the trustworthiness of the data ensure the credibility of the study and the findings.

Another limitation was that the researcher could not employ the simple random sampling technique to select the participants as the station commanders took it upon themselves to allocate staff to participate in the study. However, the participants that were selected were knowledgeable and experienced and in no way limited the data that were elicited.

### **1.14.2 Challenges**

#### ***1.14.2.1 Permission to conduct this study***

One of the first and most frustrating challenges that the researcher experienced was the process of obtaining ethical clearance from the university to conduct the study. This took a long and daunting five months. Obtaining SAPS gatekeepers' permission letters was also not easy, as this took approximately eight months.

#### ***1.14.2.2 The study participants***

Initially the researcher had hoped to interview 25 SAPS officials from the four police stations, but a smaller sample of 21 participants was finally generated using purposive sampling with the assistance of the station commanders. One particular challenge was that three participants at KwaMakhutha police station had booked off sick. The station commander mentioned that they had rich information, but only two participants were eventually interviewed at this site. In addition, some members agreed to be recorded while others did not want to. Some participants suggested that the researcher should go to police stations in KwaMashu and Inanda where a large number of police officials had been killed, according to them. This form of sampling, referred to as snowball sampling, would have been useful, but time and resources prevented this from being realized.

### **1.15 Scope of the Study**

Few people understand that police officers are also victims that are vulnerable. The popular image of police officers is that they are strong, skilled, and invulnerable. However, in reality police officers are human like any other person, and they have weaknesses, lack some skills, and are often under attack. Klyner (1987, in Moyane, 2008:53) argue that 80% of the day-to-day routine of a police officer is devoted to helping people with various problems. The bulk of this 80% consists of four call areas that are the following:

- Dispute management (among family members, between landlords and tenants, within businesses);
- Victim management/citizen assistance;
- Handling mentally ill or suicidal individuals; and
- Managing angry/hostile people.

It is apparent that the modern police officer is frequently called upon to be a human problem solver. Dussick (2003, in Moyane, 2008:53) provides that there are various groups of people who experience high levels of victimization due to their high level of vulnerability. Examples are persons who live in vulnerable locations such as barrios, ghettos or shanty towns, or who work in isolation in all-night convenience stores, or are lonely travelers on trains or buses, who belong to various ethnic groups, or who have a reduced ability to react to danger. Thus the nature of the work done by the police on a daily basis and the risks that they take make them vulnerable.

This risk is often lethal, as is evidenced by statistics on police killings. It was against this background that this research study aimed to furnish SAPS Management with information about police work risks as it is a fact that the nature of the work done by the police is risky and this fact cannot be disputed. Police are heroes and heroines who are always prepared to risk their lives in order to save the life and protect the property of someone else. They are the kind of people who commit to a courageous action without considering the consequences (Moyane, 2008:53). Police officers are the kind of people without whom the whole country could not survive as they are the protectors of the nation.

In addition, police officers that have been injured on duty may express anxiety about returning to work, or they may not be able to return at all due to psychological distress. The law enforcement department's response to spouses of injured or deceased personnel is also important. Appropriate departmental response to the death of a police officer has been shown to reduce post-traumatic stress in bereaved spouses and studies in the USA have indicated that good integration between bereaved spouses and police support groups lowers psychological distress more effectively than contact with other groups outside the police setting (Moyane, 2008:59). Moyane (2008:59) concur and suggested that police agencies and personnel may help the families of injured police officers and officers who witnessed the death of a colleague. Policies should thus be formulated or adapted to provide long-term contact with and assistance for bereaved or traumatized police officers and their families.

## **1.16 Summary**

This chapter presented an overview of and the background to the study. The methodology that was used to conduct the study was discussed and the nature of the study, its setting, the ethical considerations that were adhered to, and the limitations were expounded. It was logically argued that the study has value in terms of information sharing with SAPS Management and further research and that it may inform faith-based organisation, community members and family members of deceased and traumatised police officials once the findings have been appropriately disseminated. In light of the information presented above, it can be concluded that the study was executed within the framework of a sound and appropriate methodology to fulfil its aim and objectives and to address the research questions.

## CHAPTER TWO

# REVIEW OF LITERATURE ON POLICE KILLINGS

## 2.1 Introduction

It is fundamentally pertinent to any research undertaken to find out what others have already learned about an issue before one addresses it. A literature review serves as an integral part of any research project. According to Neuman (2011:124) “a literature review builds on the idea that knowledge accumulates and that one can learn from and build on what others have done. In view of escalating national attention to police killings as well as political and judicial activity centering on this phenomenon, this research study investigated police killings in selected police stations in KwaZulu-Natal Province. This chapter will examine the literature and will indicate where the research fits into the existing body of knowledge with regard to conditions and effects of police killings in South Africa. The aim of this study was to explore police killings with particular reference to the vulnerability of police officers:

- during robberies (when they respond to a crime); and
- When they are on or off duty.

South African law enforcement acknowledges the importance of crime prevention in promoting the safety and security of all citizens and property as well as the need to nurture and support a framework to guide and assist the roles and functions of the many partners needed to make crime prevention a reality. Community Safety Forums (CSF) create a space to address challenges and are achieving some results by involving all three spheres of government as well as communities in crime prevention at local level. Therefore, to curb criminal activities among law-abiding communities, the police need information. Also, while regular training and shooting practice will sharpen the skills of police members to enable them to engage perpetrators, it is always the last resort (Kwiniba, 2016).

Policing is an inherently stressful occupation as it often results in both physical (e.g., cardiovascular, gastrointestinal, musculoskeletal) problems and psychological trauma (increased depression, anxiety, post-traumatic stress disorder) (Berg et al., 2006, in Maguel, Metzler, Maccaslin, Inslicht, Henn-Haase, Neylar & Marmar, 2009:1). The nature of police



work includes regular and on-going exposure to confrontation, violence and potential harm. Exposure to potentially traumatic experiences on a regular basis sets the stage for a series of mental health complications that often result in posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD). Factors such as prior trauma history, negative life events, and routine work environmental stress can also increase the risk of PTSD symptoms. Thus the effects of police killings on SAPS officers were examined as one of the objectives of the current study.

## **2.2 Conceptual Analysis of Police Killings**

(International Training Committee, 1994, in Steyn, De Vries & Meyer, 2004:1) Policing systems are often the most visible and symbolic representatives of the fundamental values of societies as expressed through their governmental values and institutions. This is most certainly true of policing in democratic South Africa. For example, fundamental changes in the way of performing their duties were expected from police service officials, their advisors, academics, and the general public when the old apartheid-style South African Police (SAP) was replaced in 1994 by the SAPS. Not only do the Police Service Act No. 68 of 1995 and the White Paper on Safety and Security (1998) require the SAPS to shift in emphasis from crime investigation to crime prevention, but they also require a very new approach with regard to the implementation of these changes. These changes were to be facilitated by means of in-house training in the SAPS as well as through expert assistance from non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and overseas countries such as the UK (International Training Committee, 1994, in Steyn, De Vries & Meyer, 2004:1).

Police officials have thus been exposed to new concepts and partial theories on, inter alia, democratic and community policing, sector policing, and a demilitarized approach to safety and security. The International Committee on South African Policing Training, which is an advisory committee that was appointed in 1992 by the minister responsible for policing, summarized the requirements for new democratically orientated police officials as follows:

The police officer will act as the facilitator...[and] officers [will be] provided with the knowledge, skills and tools to deal with the social causes of the crime phenomenon rather than act only in terms of its consequences... [and] police officers [need to] win the respect and trust of the community (International Training Committee, 1994, in Steyn et al., 2004:1).

One of the most debated security and safety issues in recent times has been the killing (or murder) of police officials which is a phenomenon that does not occur in South Africa only. In fact, a study that was conducted by (Violanti, 2008:20) defines murder as “the wilful killing of a person with the intent to kill or cause grievous bodily harm”. However, this definition does not for example include the unlawful killing of a person as a result of dangerous or negligent driving without the intent to kill. This is an offence that has a maximum penalty of 14 years in prison. The murder of police officers falls into this category as it can be termed a homicide.

Moreover, police killing is a violent crime because it is a contact crime, and the prevention of violence in South Africa will decrease only if the killing of police officials is curbed. According to Bruce (2016:11), violence (or violent crime) can be defined as follows:

[It is] the application or threat of physical force against a person which can give rise to criminal or civil liability. Such violence may be associated with the ultimate violation of a person or the potential to cause serious physical pain, injury or death.

The South African Police Union (SAPU) President, Mpho Kwiniba, is quoted in a SAPU News Letter (2016) as stating that police killing falls under the category of murder and that it is neither a serious organized crime, serious corruption, nor a serious commercial crime. This suggests that, in general, criminals do not plan to kill police members but that they are killed when criminals break the law; thus police officials are law enforcement officers who are present at the crime scene or who are killed in pursuit of perpetrators. There are, of course exceptions to this argument.

In the study that was conducted in US. by Blair, Fowler, Betz and Baumgardner (2016:194) argue that violence against law enforcement officers takes an adverse toll on these officers and their families, colleagues, departments, the law enforcement profession in general and on communities. Although the number of homicides involving law enforcement officers in the US decreased in 2014, officers were still at risk.

Furthermore, Schatmeier (2012, in Wooton, 2015:12-13) contends that one means by which the perception of excessive force might be improved is by creating a better understanding of deadly force. She argues that a society that blames training and law enforcement policy for the attacks on law enforcement officers is not likely to move in the direction of positive change.

The majority of society blames training and policy and assumes that improving these aspects will create positive change. However, by exploring the use and perceptions of excessive force more comprehensively, society may alter its understanding and perhaps come to the realization that law enforcement culture and attitude have to be examined and improved. Thus improving training programs and policies is not the final answer to the issue of excessive force. Frazier (2012) proposes ten factors that affect excessive force on law enforcement officers:

- The environment in which officers work and officers' perception of the environment in which they work;
- Analysis and application of information;
- Policy, procedure, law, and legal opinions;
- The culture of the agency;
- Leadership and supervision;
- Selection and training of police officers;
- Responses to crime, particularly the use of less-than-lethal force;
- Public trust, including assessing prior reaction to deadly force situations and media response;
- Internal and external follow-up to deadly force incidents; and
- Fear.

In an exploration of the variables that exacerbate attacks on law enforcement officials that was conducted in the US., Guffey, Larson and Kelso (2009:13) exposed seven control variables that were correlates of homicide. These were: the percentage of African-American persons, the percentage of a population aged 18 to 24, the percentage of female-headed households, the percentage of the population living below the poverty line, per-capita income, the percentage of the population living alone, and the prison population. These variables were derived from commonly accepted criminological theories namely the strain/deprivation theory, the social disorganization theory, and the opportunity/routine activities theory.

The importance of the study referred to above was in the fact that it recommended further research to examine the effects of the three-strikes laws in the 24 states that had adopted them as explained in chapter one as the Government Law of the US.. In their arguments, the authors are critical of politicians, arguing that they often do not look at the long-term effects of the laws

they pass, perhaps with the exception of their fiscal impact, yet they are supposed to implement the policies they champion during their campaigns. Stricter laws aimed at fighting crime are often among the promises they make. However, ‘collateral damage’ such as increased workloads on law enforcement officers, the courts and correctional services is often overlooked due to time constraints, lack of staff to delve into the unintended consequences of tough crime legislation, and the influence of special interest groups and lobbyists who tell them only one side of the story. Another of the potential collateral damages, according to pundits who attack three-strike laws, is the increased danger to law enforcement personnel. A primary limitation of this study was the inability of the researchers to control possible rival causal factors. In a nutshell, the authors examined the UCR panel data for police officer murders by state for the period 1987 to 2007. By using simple regression analysis, the authors looked for statistically significant increases in police officer murders after the passage of the three-strikes laws. Significant findings were assumed to be due to three-strike legislation; however, they admitted that other factors could cause a spike in police murders such as poor training that would make the officer more vulnerable, more handguns or lethal weapons in the hands of dangerous parolees, or increased violence in general due to social factors (Guffey et al., 2009: 11). The null hypothesis for this study was that there was a positive correlation between the passage of the three-strike laws in 24 states and the number of police officer murders in those states. In other words, parolees who had two prior convictions for felony crimes and who might face life in prison if captured would resort to murdering a police officer to avoid capture, whereas they might not do so if there were no three-strike law.

Still in the US, Stedman (1997) and Austin et al. (1999, in Guffey et al., 2009:9) interviewed prisoners and gave examples of prisoners’ claims that they might be more likely to kill officers because of the laws. In a study of homicide in general and its possible relation to the three-strikes laws, (Marvell and Moody (2001) in Guffey et al., 2009:9) found that this law increased overall homicide rates substantially. Their reasoning is that criminals, fearing three-strike penalties, will murder witnesses and others, including police officers, in a desperate attempt to escape detection and capture. “Everything else being the same, when the penalties for a crime and for an exacerbated version of that crime are similar, the criminal can be expected to commit the exacerbated version if that reduces the chances of apprehension and conviction” (Guffey et al., 2009:13-14. (Johnson and Saint-Germain 2005, in Guffey et al., 2009:13-14) examined the effect of California’s 1994 three-strikes laws on front-line law enforcement personnel, focusing on whether they faced a greater risk of injury by criminal suspects resisting arrest and contact

with law enforcement due to these laws. More specifically, they collected and evaluated data from six major police agencies and district attorneys' offices. The data included total arrests, resisting arrest charges, assault on a peace officer, officer injuries or deaths, use of force incidents, officer-involved shootings, vehicle pursuits, and three-strike case filings. In (Guffey et al., 2009:12), the finding shows an estimated impact of 44% more murders in the years following the three-strikes laws. In the average state there were 1.2 police murders per year in the 1990s; so the typical three-strikes laws leads to an additional police murder [in each three-strike state] roughly every other year (Moody et al., 2002, Guffey et al., 2009:12). Other researchers have examined the possibility of increased police officer murders after the passage of three-strike laws.

With reference to South Africa, the researcher's opinion is that the three strike-laws can be compared to the shoot to kill which has been passed by the South African Minister of Police Bheki Cele. The bringing back of death penalty to the criminals that kill felons.

To conclude this sections, it must be stated that democracy, as it exists in South Africa and in most first world countries such as the US, ostensibly has the goal and law-making power to treat everyone equally regardless of wealth and social standing. These countries have the capacity to exercise lethal control, or any other attribute beyond citizenship. The transition to democracy, as it occurred in South Africa, can therefore be expected to shift some measure of law-making power to new actors, thus producing new legal rights that clash with entrenched patterns of power (Brinks, 2007:4). However, in many of the electoral democracies of the developing world, the commitment to universal citizenship right is less than universally held. The right to be free from arbitrary police violence is one of these (uneasy) rights, as the

researcher is of the opinion that democracy itself has contributed to an increase in the scourge of police killings because citizens with legal and personal rights claim these rights when they are brought to book for the killing of the protectors of the nation.

### **2.2.1 Police killings and safety**

Bruce (2001:16) argues that evidence that has emerged is that the bulk of the killings of SAPS members may either be linked to attempts to evade arrest or to resist police intervention, and to attacks for the purpose of robbery or in the execution of a robbery. The primary explanation for these deaths may be found in the general societal factors currently contributing to high

levels of crime and violence in South Africa. This means that the key components of the current police safety strategy, namely education, tactical training, improving the equipment provided to the police, and building community relations, are appropriate. Tactical training may also attempt to address what may be a problem of over-hasty actions by the police that unnecessarily escalate levels of violence in some confrontations. Reckless and irresponsible behaviour by SAPS members off duty should also be examined in more detail as a factor contributing to the killings of police. In this regard, it needs to be stated that the carrying of firearms by SAPS members aggravates the problem of violence against the police. As was mentioned before, it may be that SAPS members are targeted by offenders intending to steal their firearms.

Giduck (2005, in Dino, 2009:36) argues that, to ensure police safety, they must act more like a military unit than a municipal police department. It is thus argued that the police have to be trained to think of crime sites as a battle ground rather than a crime scene. Police must be trained to attack first and with the maximum level of violence in order to take control of a bad situation, thereby saving lives. In addition, Dino (2009:48) stipulates that police executives have to understand that officers must be tactically trained to be able to make a difference and to save their own and others' lives as well. Violence can happen anywhere and if the police are not prepared for it, there is the potential that many lives may be lost. The fact that the police are armed also increases the possibility of a violent response in confrontational situations as confrontations can occur in any circumstance, be it occupational, domestic, or recreational.

However, the former arguments are highly contentious in democratic contexts and therefore, while in South Africa there has been no argument for the general disarmament of the police, there is a need to pay greater attention to questions concerning the possession and use of firearms by SAPS members, particularly where some members may show signs of emotional instability and are prone to alcohol abuse. Furthermore, there may be value in providing greater clarity to SAPS members around the responsibility to place themselves on duty when they are officially off duty, and to what extent this necessitates that they carry firearms when they are off duty. It is noteworthy that, while police-community relations have improved in the last decade, hostility towards the police is likely to persist among many of those who inhabit the criminal sub-stratum of the South African society, ((Wooton, 2015:11). Therefore, when members of the police service act brutally and unlawfully in dealing with suspects, they may feed the hostility towards the police in general and contribute to beliefs that surrendering to the police is never an option.

Moreover, the media may fuel negative public perceptions by failing to inform the public of the extensive training officers receive. The training of a potential law enforcement officer includes the use of deadly force as well as the investigation of the use of deadly force. Law enforcement departments should continue to equip officers with the knowledge and skills to use weapons and utilize the resources available to them effectively. On average, potential recruits receive twelve weeks of training in the police academy, two weeks in-service training, and one year in-service probation. Experienced officers are required to complete 40 hours of training per year and 52 hours of emergency response team training per year (Uniform Crime Report, 2013). Officers are also trained to use proper discretion when using their weapons. Society demands this type of training in order to ensure that law enforcement officers possess the proper skills and knowledge when involved in violent incidents (Wooton, 2015:11).

According to an Amnesty International Executive Summary Report (2015:3), the use of lethal force by law enforcement officers in the US is contentious, and thus an overall change in the approach to all aspects of the use of force by law enforcement officers is needed. At present, police consider the use of force to be a normal part of policing operations rather than the exception. International standards clearly require that law enforcement officials should not use force unless there are no other means available that are likely to achieve the legitimate objective. If the use of force is unavoidable, it must be the minimum amount of force necessary to achieve the objective, and the use of lethal force should only be used as a last resort. If the use of force is unavoidable, the affected officer should minimize damage and injury and ensure that those who have been affected receive prompt medical and other assistance. International standards also emphasize the need for law enforcement to use other means before resorting to the use of force, and to be trained in alternatives to the use of force such as the peaceful settlement of conflicts, understanding crowd behaviour, and the development of skills in persuasion, negotiation and mediation, (Amnesty International Executive Summary Report 2015:3).

In terms of the role of the media, Bruce (2016:11) argues that press headlines that portray police killings is a form of “fight back speech”. However, at an SAPS National Commemoration Day former President Jacob Zuma (in Bruce 2016:11) urged the police to “defend yourselves with everything at your disposal if you are attacked”, but he moderated this call with the requirement



that this should happen “within the confines of the law”. He also said made the following statement:

South Africa’s laws allow the police to fight back decisively when their lives or those of the public are threatened. Criminals must know that our police officers are not sitting ducks. They will fight back when their lives or those of the public are in danger. [But...] the police must act within the law at all times and avoid using excessive force.

Despite their rhetorical tone, these statements are, in essence, appropriate. South African legislation does allow the police and others to use force, even lethal force, if it is necessary to protect themselves against a threat to their lives within legal parameters. However, press reports have indicated that there were some departures from this requirement as it was suggested that the former President believed that the law imposed inappropriate restrictions on the police and that more could be achieved with more liberal use of force. According to one report, Zuma allegedly said there was a need to “review legal structures” and he was also reported to have said that “the debate must include where you draw the line”, (Bruce 2016:11). These statements were somewhat different and uttered by a more cautious former President Zuma who, in April 2008, defended Susan Shabangu’s “shoot the bastards” statement and who, after his appointment as President in 2009, gave the stamp of approval to the call for forceful policing as espoused by Police Minister Nathi Mthethwa and National Police Commissioner Bheki Cele (Bruce, 2016:11.)

In examining statistics about police killings, it is important to remember that, although police officials may serve the state, they are also South African citizens and many of them die just like ordinary South Africans do. It is a fact that most murders in South Africa occur due to arguments or disputes between people who are often known to each other. For example, in August 2015 the *Sunday Times* reported that four of five female police killed that year had been killed by their romantic partners (Bruce, 2016:12). In each of these cases the assailant subsequently committed suicide, and two of them were police constables. This suggests that women in the police are at more risk from their romantic partners, including romantic partners in the police, than from other criminal assailants.

However, not only female police were killed in arguments. For instance, a 1998 report on the killing of police found that off-duty killings occurred due to ‘arguments’ (29%) and ‘love



triangles' (6%). Of the deceased, 16% "had to some degree been intoxicated when the murders occurred". The perpetrators were found to be other police members in 6–9% of cases *Sapu News Letter*, (Bruce 2016:12).

Apart from those who were killed in arguments, many off-duty police were 'ordinary' victims of crime. It has been frequently asserted, including by the SAPS itself, that the police are deliberately targeted for their firearms. However, a report dealing with the killing of police in the late 1990s found that firearms had been stolen in only 15% of all on- and off-duty incidences. In comparison, a *Sunday Times* article in August 2015 indicated that, according to the SAPS, only 4 out of 55 (7%) of the police who had been killed up to that point had been killed for their firearms (Bruce 2016:12). It was also found that, even when police officers were victims of a robbery, this did not necessarily involve the theft of their firearms. For example, as was referred to in Chapter One, on the SAPS National Commemoration Day a police officer, Sergeant Xola Sowambi, was killed on his way to report for duty at Fort Beaufort in the Eastern Cape in what appeared to be a vehicle hijacking, and his official firearm and watch were found nearby. The initial report therefore suggested that Officer Sowambi had been attacked not because he was a police officer carrying a firearm, but because he had a car.

Another suggestion is that, rather than being targeted because they are police officers, off-duty police may be prone to attacks because they are part of a group of people who are relatively affluent due to a stable income. They also live and work in high-crime areas and are thus at high risk of robbery and other crimes. The likelihood of being a victim of a homicide during a robbery is enhanced by resistance and lack of cooperation on the part of the victim. Possibly related to their occupational identity and associated machismo image, police victims of robbery may tend to resist their assailants and, in so doing, increase their risk of violent death (Bruce, 2016:12.). Moreover, the circumstances of being killed on or off duty are not necessarily mutually exclusive. For example, police members may die in arguments while on duty. A case that illustrates this is that of Major Thomas Moetlo, one of four victims in an incident at Alexandra police station in June 2016. Moetlo was assisting the girlfriend of another police officer to open a case of domestic violence when the police officer, Constable Ronnie Masie, charged into the police station and killed Moetlo, his girlfriend and two others. Masie was then killed in an exchange of fire with other police. Some police who are killed on duty may therefore be inadvertent victims of arguments or robberies. However, most on-duty killings occur due to interventions during robberies or when the police are pursuing robbery suspects.

Police members were also killed in other situations such as vehicle stops and even during interventions in domestic or other disputes (Bruce 2016:12).

Off-duty police officers may also be killed when intervening in crimes that are taking place. This speaks to the fact that the risk of police killings in South Africa is exacerbated by the fact that the police are subjected to a vaguely defined '24-hour rule'. In terms of this 'rule' there is an expectation that police who are off duty and who encounter crimes in progress should intervene. The SAPS describes this as situations where off-duty police "place themselves on duty" (Bruce, 2016:12). Many police departments in the US in fact warn police against interventions of this kind. According to William Geller and Michael Scott, two American authorities on the use of force by police, the police are often at a tactical disadvantage while off duty (Sapu News Letter, 2016:12). Amongst the reasons for this are that police are out of radio contact with other officers, and most likely not wearing bulletproof vests. These were in fact also identified as reasons for the vulnerability of off-duty police in the 2009 SAPS Annual Report. Because of the disadvantages that they face when intervening while off duty, many police agencies in the US advise their members to take a far more prudent approach to crimes that they encounter in progress. Where it appears unlikely that the police officer will be able to deal with the situation, he or she should rather see his or her obligation as, where possible, to call in support. However, although these interventions may be ill advised, in the SAPS itself the merits of the 24-hour rule have never been questioned and the SAPS encourages police to intervene in situations of this kind (Bruce, 2016:12.).

Referring back to former President Zuma's speech, it does not in any way acknowledge the complexities of the issue of police killings. Instead, the realities of the issue are subordinated to mobilising police loyalty to the state using the idea of reciprocal duties between them. "The callous murder of your loved ones was an attack not only on them, but on the state itself", Zuma (in Bruce 2016:11) said. "The police represent the authority of the state. They form the bulwark between order and anarchy. The police require the support of the state to ensure that they are strengthened and fortified to be able to respond to crime head on, to protect not only themselves but the nation as a whole." In concluding his speech, Zuma said to the families of deceased police officers: "Your loved ones have paid a supreme price for peace and stability. Their contribution to building a safer South Africa will always be remembered by all your compatriots." Zuma's address thus relied on a mythology in which the killing of police officers was above all a story of those who had made the 'ultimate sacrifice' while fighting crime. However, there are countless other deceased people who are worthy of being honored in South

Africa. Bruce (2016:12) argues that it is indeed appropriate to reserve a special place for police members who were killed in the line of duty, but states that “addressing the killing of police will require a willingness to move beyond this one-dimensional narrative and to allow for greater complexity in our understanding of the issue” (Bruce, 2015:n.p.).

However, the SAPS has continuously appealed to the public to work with them and not against them to ensure a safe environment for all. Fikile Mbalula, former Minister of Police, stated in a news bulletin on Monday 24 October 2017: “Police in uniform must be respected. It does not matter what their nationality is, those who promote crime in South Africa will be run down”.

In responding to the scourge of police killings, former Acting National Police Commissioner, Lieutenant-General Khomotso Phahlane, urged communities to continue to support the SAPS by condemning the callous attacks on and murders of police officers (Phahlane, 2017). This followed the murder of two officers in Gauteng. In the first incident, an officer was fatally wounded on duty by unknown gunmen in Soshanguve, Pretoria. Phahlane (2017) stated:

At the time of the incident the deceased and his colleague were conducting stop-and-search crime-prevention duties as part of Operation Paseka when they were attacked and shot, resulting in one of us [the police] paying the highest price in the execution of his duties. His colleague was wounded and is recovering in a local hospital... We call upon all communities to work with law-enforcement agencies, in particular the SAPS, in the fight against crime and the creation of safer communities. Every police officer killed leaves the community more vulnerable; together we must take a firm stand against police killings.

In a separate incident, an off-duty police officer was shot dead in Soweto. Phahlane (2017) offered his condolences as follows: “As the SAPS we wish to express our deepest condolences to the families, friends and colleagues of the deceased members.” Anyone with information that could assist the SAPS in apprehending those responsible for the attacks and murders was encouraged to come forward. Anyone with information could anonymously call the Crime Stop hotline on 08600-10111 or SMS Crime Line anonymously on 32211. “We must all work together to prevent, combat and ensure a thorough investigation of these and all other serious and violent crimes” (Ibid.). Gauteng Police Commissioner Lieutenant-General Deliwe de

Lange and her team were also investigating two cases of murder and one of attempted murder at the time.

The South African Government Gazette (2015:41-42) envisaged that the transition to democracy in South Africa would be met with the promise of a society that would embrace all races and cultures and ensure equal protection of all citizens under the law. A new vision for safety and security in South Africa was shaped by the desire to curb crime and its associated impact through a transformed and effective criminal justice system, and enhancing social crime prevention interventions. This new paradigm for safety and security in the country was underpinned by a focus on engendering a culture of joint planning and delivery across all spheres of government targeted at undercutting the root causes of crime. As the practice and understanding of crime prevention have developed in the country over the past 20 years, it is accepted that dealing with the many interrelated causal factors that impact crime and safety is a shared responsibility. This is predicated on the sustained implementation of a multifaceted approach that draws in role players from across the criminal justice sector, communities, civil society and business. Building on the recommendations of the National Development Plan (NDP), the (South African Government Gazette, 2015:41-42) provides a framework for effectively addressing the cross-cutting roles and responsibilities of all departments across the cluster and ensuring an intergovernmental approach. Essentially, the development of targeted strategies must take cognizance of the interrelated, causal relationship among the range of factors (i.e., social and environmental), that impact safety and security.

### **2.2.2 The facets of police killings**

The researcher concentrated on police killings when they were on and off duty as well as police killings associated with robberies.

Conradie (2001) asserts that the murdering of police officials in South Africa has become endemic during the 1900s. Furthermore, the continuous killing of police officials since the inauguration of the democratic political dispensation in South Africa does not make sense at all. Before the new democratic dispensation one could have argued, as many did, that police officials were the strong arm of the oppressive government. One has to agree with Chapman (1998, in Conradie, 2001) that attacks on police officers were in fact attacks on governmental authority because they were visible and accessible representatives of the government, which meant that police officials were seen as the government. More recently the killing of a police

officer was also seen as an attack on governmental authority, when the Western Cape Police Chief Lamoer (2015) stated on *SABC News* that an attack on a law enforcement official was “an attack on the state”. However, with mounting public distrust in the police, some may argue that an attack on a law enforcement official is an attack on the SAPS per se.

Hoods (2011) refers to police work as a dangerous job, stating that South Africa is one of the most violent countries on the globe. With around 50 murders, 100 rapes, nearly 400 armed burglaries, and over 500 violent assaults recorded every day, it is not surprising that as many as eight out of ten South Africans feel unsafe walking in their own districts after dark. Since the abolishment of apartheid in 1994, statistics have shown that the murder rate has fallen by half to 34 per 100 000 inhabitants every year. That is still seven times higher than America and 27 times higher than Britain. It is perhaps no coincidence that South Africa ranks among the world's top 20 countries for gun possession.

According to Blair et al. (2016:188), law enforcement is a high-stress occupation that involves exposure to potentially dangerous and violent situations such as conducting criminal investigations, responding to crimes in progress, conducting patrols, apprehending criminals, managing escalating hostile encounters such as disturbance calls including domestic disturbance calls, working late at night or during early morning hours, pursuing fleeing or speeding motorists, and conducting traffic stops. LEOs are exposed to violence, suffering and death as an inherent part of their profession. As a result of exposure to these situations, LEOs are also at an increased occupational risk for homicide. For example, in 1992–2002 the occupational homicide rate among LEOs in the US was 5.6 per 100 000. This study focuses on two elements of police killings: on and off duty murders and murders as results of robberies.

### **2.2.2.1 Robbery**

Robbery, whether in progress or when a police officer pursues robbery suspects, is defined as “the unlawful, intentional, violent taking of another’s moveable property without the consent of the lawful owner, and the appropriation of it. The act involves violence against the person or the threat of violence” (Louw, Van Heerden & Smith, 1978, in Cloete & Stevens, 1990:153). The authors also state that robbery is an economic crime that is characterized by violence.

According to a SAPU newsletter (2016:12), even when police are victims of robbery this does not necessarily involve the theft of firearms, as was mentioned before in an incident at Fort Beaufort in the Eastern Cape. The likelihood of the commission of a homicide during a robbery is also enhanced by resistance and a lack of cooperation by the victim/s. Police who were victims of robbery probably resisted their assailants and, in so doing, increased the risk of violent death. However, police on-duty killings generally occurred when they intervened during robberies or when they pursued robbery suspects. Bruce (2001) states that attacks on police members occurred both when they were on and off duty and when they were in and out of uniform. Thus some killings may have been related to the fact that the victim was a police officer and that he or she was targeted as such, or a specific individual could have been targeted, or it could simply have been a random act of crime.

#### ***2.2.2.2 Police officers***

A police officer is “any sworn member of a state, country, city/municipal police department [who is] empowered to uphold law and order with the power to arrest offenders for crimes, misdemeanors, and infractions of law” (Dino, 2009:9).

Many members of the police have been killed during the commission of a robbery or while responding to a crime scene. The former Chairperson of the Police and Prisons Civic Rights Union (POPCRU) Mpho (Kwiniba, 2011), stated that bombing, hijacking and business robberies were the most dangerous forms of violent crime and that perpetrators would not hesitate to shoot to kill. Criminals are armed with automatic weapons, are organized and seem to have some form of military training. Leggett (2003) raises the question whether the police are being killed for their firearms. Former Police Commissioner, Jackie Selebi, argued that because only 20% of the victims’ guns had been taken, this could not be a primary reason for people attacking police officials. Nevertheless, in interviews with 478 police members who survived attacks, 58% said that they thought the motive for the attack was robbery (particularly of their cars), and 46% said the object of this robbery was their firearm. This suggests that police officials perceived that they had been attacked for their firearms and cars.

Blair et al. (2016:193-194) argue that 90% of LEOs were killed with a firearm. As firearms contribute to such a large proportion of deaths among LEOs, previous researchers suggested that efforts were needed to examine the impact of access to firearms and service weapons and how they affect LEO homicides. Blair et al. (2016:194) concur that domestic calls also pose a

significant threat to LEOs' safety and they agree that such calls result in more assaults and injuries than any other type of assignment or circumstance. In the US for instance, in 2014, 31% of the 48 315 assaults on LEOs occurred during disturbance calls (Ibid).

Bruce (2002:15) cites a killer who suggested that the police exacerbated the level of violence against him by the manner in which they entered into the situation: "The police shoot too quickly as they arrive [at the scene of a crime]. They just begin shooting. The police die from their mistakes. If they shoot, I will shoot back". One of the killers also indicated that his actions had been motivated by the perception that the police would not act in a lawful manner: "I was scared that he would shoot me because he asked me to come closer". An alleged armed robber indicated that he was willing to surrender to the police but that he feared for his life if he would do so. Discussing this issue in the US, Geller and Scott (SA) (in Bruce, 2002:15) stated that another possible explanation for long-term downward trends in shootings of police might be the possibility that at least some potential police assailants were afraid that the police would administer 'street justice' with a nightstick or lethal weapon, and hence they were less likely to shoot an officer to protect themselves. Reasonable or not, there can be little doubt that some of those who assaulted police did so in the belief that the officers were looking for an excuse to harm them and would do so unless prevented.

Swigert and Farrell (1976, in Wooton, 2015:17) contend that interactions involving conflict between officers and society may result in negative perceptions of law enforcement officers and the use of excessive force. These negative interactions and the excessive force they use tend to have different effects based on race. For example, African Americans and Hispanics tend to have stronger and more long-term negative perceptions of law enforcement officers. Weitzer and Tuch (2004, in Wooton, 2015:17) agree that it is very likely for African Americans or Hispanic individuals to be angry following an encounter with law enforcement officers in addition to feeling that they were treated unfairly. This suggests that criminals may tend to respond violently and kill the police to defend themselves because they know that police officers will use deadly force if they run away. They thus defend themselves by shooting the police officer first before they are shot.



### ***2.2.2.3 Police killings when they are on and off duty***

The research study that was conducted by Bruce (2016) found that most members of the police were killed while off-duty. These deaths occurred when they responded to complaints or were performing typical police functions such as searches and arrests. The average figures for on-duty deaths per province over a five-year period in South Africa are that a total of 167 police officers were killed while on duty. Of these, 34% (56) were killed in Gauteng, 20% (34) in KZN Province, 14% (24) in the Eastern Cape, 12% (20) in Western Cape (of whom 14 were killed in a two-year period), 5% (9) each in the Free State and Mpumalanga, 3% (5) each in Limpopo and at Head Office, and 2% (3) in the Northern Cape (Bruce, 2016). These averages reveal that KZN Province was second to Gauteng in the number of police killings. It was reported that most police officials had been killed during crime prevention operations, during patrols, and when engaged in a car chase in their normal line of duty. Dussick (2003, in Moyane, 2008:2) concurs and states that police victimization results in direct injury or death of an officer while on duty. It is undeniable that being a witness to the injury or death of another officer or a non-officer is very traumatic.

The killing of police officials while on duty in South Africa is a serious and persistent problem. According to Newhan (2011), an SAPS Annual Report of 2001 and 2010 released the names of 107 police officials who had been killed on duty, 130 police officials were killed between January and the end of June and in 2011, 39 police officials were killed. The research done by Ruble (2015) revealed that, in 2014, a sharp annual increase in police official killings occurred, and on average 64 officials had been killed each year for the previous 24 years, with figures indicating that back in 1980 police officials were brutally killed while on duty.

It is a travesty that police officials, who are expected to serve the community, are killed by the very people they are protecting. This is an unfortunate occupational hazard that should be addressed as they risk their lives every day to protect the citizens who, most often, do not appreciate them.

Thus police may be killed during interventions when they are on duty, although it may also occur in situations when they are off duty and place themselves on duty according to the '24-hour rule' when off-duty police put themselves on duty or exercise the powers of ordinary



civilians to act in private defence and effect citizens' arrests. The SAPS refers to this as off-duty police who 'place themselves on duty'.

#### **2.2.2.4 Risk factors associated with off-duty police killings**

- At times, police officers expose themselves to danger while in public places and render themselves vulnerable; for example, they exhibit aggressive and provocative behaviour when visiting taverns.
- While off duty, members react to a crime being commissioned in public places. However, being off duty, they do not have the same level of readiness and preparedness as they would when being on duty – for example, they do not wear bulletproof vests, carry rifles, call backup, etc., and they are therefore very vulnerable.
- Members draw their firearms (which they may still have in their possession when off duty) too readily and thus place themselves at risk (Chetty, 2016:20).

Chetty (2016:21) states that these risk factors are as follows:

- Being drunk in public places police members at risk. Drinking in taverns where there is high potential for violence places members at even higher risk.
- Persons whom the members might have arrested before find them vulnerable in a tavern, and these members become soft targets of revenge.
- Members carry firearms into taverns and sometimes behave in a boastful manner, or may even be unnecessarily aggressive. For example, at Margate, police officer who was off duty told a tavern patron not to urinate close to the tavern premises and was killed in that encounter.
- Some members have visit taverns as a stress reliever, but this exacerbates their vulnerability.

To address this issue, the following recommendations should be considered:

- The SAPS must hold proper parades when members come on and go off duty. Checks must be conducted for bulletproof vests, firearms and it must be ensured that members are sober.
- Members must resist rushing into situations and rather wait for backup. They must not demonstrate bravado but approach all suspects with caution.
- Members must be vigilant on duty and off duty. On arrival at a complaint, they must ascertain if there are firearms involved. They must always be aware of the risks posed by their own firearms – both in terms of unexpected attacks and robbery.
- Members must be physically fit and mentally prepared at all times. Becoming inebriated while off duty is therefore extremely risky.
- While off duty, members must remain vigilant and cautious in public places. They must remain aware of their surroundings and be on the alert for suspicious persons and vehicles.
- Members must stay away from high-risk environments, for example taverns and rather take a drink at home or at another member's home. Socialize in safe places.
- Training should not be conducted on members' off days.
- Advanced driver training should be conducted.
- Police stations should be better protected.

#### ***2.2.2.5 Risks involved in on-duty police work***

Blair et al. (2016:191) refer to National Violent Death Reporting System (NVDRS) data to examine homicides of LEOs in the US. The study was undertaken between 2003-2013. They

argue that the causes of this epidemic are complex and the results are traumatic. In the South African context, SAPS members are in the front line of the fight against crime with many injuries and deaths occur among serving officers.

Due to the high risk of police officers fighting against or trying to prevent crime while on duty, the following factors need to be taken into consideration when officers are injured or killed: The place where the injury occurred; whether the victim (LEO) died at the scene; the primary cause of the fatal injury; wound or injury location; the time of day; and the day of the week when the injury occurred. Blair et al. (2016) revealed the following data of homicides in the US:

- The LEO victims were working alone in 39.1% of the cases but were accompanied by other law enforcement personnel in 43.8% of the cases.
- Most homicides occurred on highways, streets/roads and in automobiles (46.1%), but also in homes/apartments/yards/driveways (31.3%).
- Officers died at the scene in 10.9% of the homicides.
- However, information as to whether an LEO died at the scene was unavailable or unknown 31.3% of the cases.
- The vast majority of LEO homicides (91.4%) was committed with firearms.
- Most officers had injuries to the thorax (44.9%) and head (39.8%).
- Most LEO homicides occurred between the hours of 16h00 to 24h00 (35.9%) and 8:01am to 4:00pm (30.5%). The most common day of the week that officers were victims of homicide was Thursday (20.3%) (Blair et al., 2016:191).

The researcher used the US data because there is a limited research study on police killings in South Africa. Every police is posed to police killings since they are in the same profession.

## **2.3 Causes of Police Killings**

### **2.3.1 Social ill and poverty**

Chamlin (1989:354-355) mentions that “social conditions that bring civilians and police into conflict appear to be of paramount importance in understanding police killings”. Consistent with the conflict theory, Pieterse and Bailey’s (1988, in Chamlin, 1989:355) analysis suggests that the racial and economic composition of states has a significant impact on the average rate of police killings and that the percentages of families below poverty level and of the black population are both positively related to police killings. This suggests that police killings are caused by deprivation and poverty due to unemployment. In the South Africa context as a developing country, high levels of unemployment among the population, and particularly among the youth, are commonplace, and the migration of people from African countries to seek employment here has become an important factor in the population composition in many areas. This influx of people increases opportunities for crime and often results in the murder of police officials in South Africa.

Smit et al. (2004:77) contend that ready access to alcohol and firearms is an important factor that contributes to the commission of crimes and often leads to police killings. These are commonly referred to as ‘facilitators of crime’. The causes lie deep in the social problems of our society, like poverty. Chamlin (1989:355) agrees with the fact that police killings are often caused by deprivation (families living below the poverty line) and social ills (the high divorce rate being one). Moreover, Chetty (2016) also argues that the easy access to firearms and substances, alcohol in particular, is a contributing factor which needs to be taken into account in the prevention of police killings. Chetty (2016) asserts that communities must identify and report drug dealers and that communities must guide young people towards more positive behaviour in this regard.

Hoods (2017: n.p.) cites an incident when men arrived at a crime scene and attacked the police with broken bottles, leaving six officers seriously injured. Mbalula (24 October 2015) commented: "I get very sad when I see police officers being kicked. Never again will such a thing happen in our country. When we grew up, we knew that police in uniform must be respected." Some of the attackers fled to Hillbrow in Johannesburg and to Kempton Park. When traced, one of the men was deported to Nigeria. With reference to the deportation, Mbalula (24 October 2015) stated:

Our target is not nationality. Our target is to maintain law and order in this particular area. In the majority of the cases that we are following up on, Nigerian citizens are involved. That is a very serious concern for us.

Newhan (2015: n.p.) states that police on duty are most at risk when they try to make an arrest. Premeditated attacks occur when criminals ambush police officials to steal their firearms or to assist in the escape of a person from police custody. It is recognized internationally that situational and societal crime prevention strategies require commitment and concerted operations. It is thus necessary to acknowledge that different types of crime have different causes and occur under different circumstances. For example, the police are in a difficult position when it comes to illegal shebeens, as it is difficult to pin-point the perpetrators.

Furthermore, police are legal citizens of the country and they were recruited from the community. However, the public tends to see the police as different from the community, which strengthens the 'us and them' syndrome (Smith et al., 2004:7). In the researcher's view, if the community can see the police as people who protect the nation and work in partnership with them, crime may decrease and the police may no longer be viewed as the enemy. Society is increasingly exposed to violence and police officers must respond to more and different types of violent situations on a daily basis. Moreover, as commonplace as they may have become, police killings can be prevented, and curbing police violence really does not require rocket science as this may be achieved when departments and police officials are committed to making it happen (Dino, 2016).

### **2.3.2 Hatred and anger**

According to Bruce (2002:16), hatred and anger are factors that suggest that police killings may be related to residual hostility on the part of community members towards members of the police, which is partly linked to the role played by the police in enforcing apartheid. But while this may be a contributing factor, research has not shown that this is a prominent motive for police killings. Thus, while only two of 26 police killers who were interviewed in the study by Bruce (2002) indicated that the killings were related to political motives (some had been involved in killings prior to 1994), none of the respondents appeared to place any major emphasis on hostility towards the police. In one case where a negative attitude towards the

police was mentioned, the interviewee suggested that this might be motivated by the manner in which the police handle suspects:

When they arrest suspects they must not hit the suspects or cause them injury. And it can happen that when they arrest that suspect after a time and hit him and he is outside on the street again he sees the police as the enemy.

Yet although the risks that the police face are real, their training may cause them to overestimate the threats they face for, as Stoughton points out, police officers interact with civilians about 63 000 000 times a year and are assaulted in 0.09% of all interactions, injured in 0.02%, and killed in 0.000008%. The task of good police training is thus to “help officers put these risks in perspective” (Karabele 2016).

### **2.3.3 Arguments and alcohol**

The literature suggests that one of the three major categories of the causes of police killings is conflict that arises from arguments or disputes in domestic or recreational circumstances. Nel and Conradie’s (1998) report (in Bruce, 2001:16) reveals that off-duty killings included ‘arguments’ in 29% of the cases and ‘love triangles’ in 6% of the cases. Of those who had were killed, 16% “had to some degree been intoxicated when the murders occurred”. One of the risk factors for police may be their alcohol use or their proximity to members of the public who become unstable from alcohol use. Nel and Conradie (1998) (in Bruce, 2001:16) point out that in 9% of the 385 cases in their sample were “perpetrators [who] were...other SAPS members”. Moreover, Minnar (2004), in Bruce, 2002:16) indicates that of the 1 364 cases of police killings during 1994 to 1999, the perpetrator was a colleague in 81% of those cases (6% of the total). In these circumstances, the factor of self-defence features as a possible motive for some killings. One of the police killers who was interviewed was a former policeman who said that he had acted in self-defence in an attack in his own house by an intoxicated police member.

### **2.3.4 Firearm-related fatalities**

According to the US National Law Enforcement Officers’ Memorial Fund (2016), firearm-related fatalities in this country spiked in 2016 with 64 officers killed in that year. This was up to 56% from 41 in 2015. Handguns were the leading type of firearm used in fatal shootings of law enforcement officers. However, there was a marked increase in officers being killed with

rifles. Of the 64 firearm-related fatalities, 34 (53%) of the officers was shot and killed with a handgun. Twenty-five officers were killed with a rifle in 2016 compared to five in 2015. Two officers were killed with a shotgun, and the type of firearm used in three of the cases was unknown. Of the 64 firearm-related fatalities in 2016, 21 officers were shot and killed without warning in ambush-style shootings. This number was 163% higher than the 2015 number when eight officers were shot and killed in ambush-style attacks. Multiple-shooting deaths claimed the lives of 20 officers in 2016, which was the highest total of any year since 1932. Those incidents included five officers killed in ambush-style attacks in Dallas (Texas) and three in Baton Rouge (LA) spanning ten days in July. Domestic disturbance calls accounted for 14 officer fatalities and domestic disturbance was the underlying circumstance that led to the death of ambushed officers. Thirteen officers were killed while investigating suspicious persons or vehicles, and nine officers were killed while attempting to arrest a suspect. Firearm-related fatalities peaked in 1973 when 156 officers were shot and killed. Since then, the average number of officers killed by gunfire has decreased from 127 per year in the 1970s to 57 per year in the 2000s. This is the fact in South Africa as well where police officials are being killed.

**Table 2.1: Police Murder Country Wide (SA)**

<b>Province</b>	<b>1994</b>	<b>1995</b>	<b>1996</b>	<b>1997</b>	<b>1998</b>	<b>Total</b>
Gauteng	136	108	85	82	52	463
KZN	77	69	59	68	33	463
North West	4	69	59	68	33	306
N/province	0	8	6	9	2	25
Mpumalanga	6	11	6	15	4	42
Eastern cape	17	12	20	36	12	97
Free state	8	10	14	11	3	46
Northern Cape	3	0	5	1	1	10

Western Cape	14	13	13	14	8	62
Total	265	240	221	244	120	1090

**Extract: Sowetan, 18 May 1999(in Moyane 2008:58)**

From the above table KZN Province shows the second highest death of police officials in South Africa. This is characterized by the increased of violence in South Africa after the democratic elected Government (Sowetan, 18 May 1999 in Moyane 2008:58)

In the South African context, De Villiers (2017:n.p.) states that the SAPS condemns the killing of police officers. He based this comment of the 57 officers who died in the 2016/2017 financial year. Ousted Acting Police Commissioner Khomotso Phahlane (2017) said in a statement at the time that the perpetrators would be held accountable: “The fact that our members are attacked in the line of duty, serves as a harsh reminder of the challenges our officers are faced with daily to ensure that South Africans are, and feel, safe. An attack on one officer is an attack on all.” During the 2015/2016 financial year, 79 police officers died, 40 of them in the line of duty. In one incident, a Johannesburg Metro Police Department officer and a police officer were shot and wounded in Johannesburg North. In response, the SAPS stated that they wished to express their deepest condolences to the family, friends and colleagues of the deceased member. “[We] view the murder of police officials as a serious matter of concern; our members are our most valuable asset in the fight against crime,” the issued statement read in part.

According to Petersen (2017:n.d.), South Africa remains a relatively dangerous country in which to serve as a police officer, despite a 52% drop in the rate of police killings over the past decade. These figures were cited by Petersen with reference to a study by the South African Institute of Race Relations (SAIRR). Its latest South African survey found a significant decrease in murders over the past 20 years. For example, between 1994 and 2004, 1 970 police officers were killed, while between 2005 and 2014, 945 police officers lost their lives. Killings decreased from 252 per 100 000 in 1994 to 51 in 2014 – an 80% drop. Kerwin Lebone (in Petersen, 2017:n.p.), a crime analyst for the IRR, said that before 1994 the primary role of the police was seen as "defending the government of the day", making them “a ‘legitimate’ target for political attacks”. It was a concern, he continued, that 46% had been killed while attending to complaints, possibly indicating a "sloppy attitude among officers when approaching potential crime scenes”. This crime analyst compared the country’s police murder rate to those



of other countries. For example, the UK had less than four murders per annum, Germany had six, and France five. The US had 50 police murders per year, which he describes as a modest figure given that its population far exceeds South Africa's. The Institute's report stated it could be deduced that police killings had decreased as the country's murder rate had declined. Private security also became the first respondednt in many areas, and communities increasingly started to "catch their own criminals" before handing them over to the authorities. Cited by Petersen (2017:n.p.), a Police and Prisons Civil Rights Union (POPCRU) spokesperson, Richard Mamabolo, said that in the past the SAPS had shown no clear initiative to deal with the attacks on its members. His statement is cited by Petersen (2017: n.p.) as follows:

There was no clear plan for the police officers on the ground and no strategy to deal with it, police complained over a lack of officers, support, resources and not enough backup. Now, through proper leadership unfolding, we are able to try to resolve these issues. It is not enough to tell an officer to be cautious of their surroundings. There needs to be a better relationship between our communities and the police. It is important that relations are improved, as the public would be more willing to report whatever information they have to a service they trust.

Hyman (2016: n.p.) also cites statistics and states that a police officer is murdered every four days in South Africa. He states that 712 were attacked in 2016 - 81% of them while on duty. He cites SAPS statistics that revealed that 37 police officers had been killed between 1 January and 3 pm Statistics SA (2015). Most attacks occurred in the Western Cape where 274 officers had been attacked. Gauteng and KZN reported the highest number of murders at 10 each. It was also reported that The Hawks, a special police unit, mainly for organized crime and high profiled cases, were waging war on those targeting officers. On April 2017 in Cape Town, specialized police units swooped on suspected police killers in raids across the city. For example, Mhlangabezi Mqulo and Luyanda Thafeni appeared in the Athlone Magistrate's Court for the murder of Constable Lindekile Sikade in April 2017. Sikade had been ambushed on his way to work in Grassy Park and the suspects fled with his service pistol. Siphamandela Gqongweni, 22, was arrested for the murder of Constable Luntu Side Nkabi in April 2017. Nkabi, 38, was driving while off duty in Delft when a car blocked the road. When he got out he was shot at close range and killed. Police spokesman Brigadier Vishnu Naidoo (Hyman, 2016:n.p) reportedly said it was devastating for police morale when officers were murdered. Memorial services were equally traumatising for members. Naidoo said:

It's highly emotional. You spend most of your time at work. In most cases you spend 12 hours of the day with your colleagues. You go home and spend a minimum amount of time with family and then you go to sleep. Most of your waking moments are with your colleagues.

Hawks spokesman Lloyd Ramovha (Hyman, 2016: n.p.) said that they treated attacks on police officers as “attacks against the state” and continued:

Police officers are part of the community and have the task of protecting the community they serve. Each time there's a police murder the community is left vulnerable. We shall continue to work closely with communities to ensure that acts of lawlessness are curbed.

### **2.3.5 Traffic-related fatalities**

According to the National Law Enforcement Officers' Memorial Fund (2016) in the US, in 2016 as many as 53 officers died as a result of traffic related incidents, which was a 10% increase from the 48 traffic-related deaths the previous year. Twenty-eight officers were killed in automobile crashes which were an 18% decrease from the 34 who had been killed in 2015. Fifteen officers were struck and killed outside their vehicles in 2015, which was a 50% increase from 2014 when 10 officers were struck and killed. In 2016, 10 officers were killed in motorcycle crashes, which was an increase of 150% from the four in 2015. Seven of the traffic-related deaths were the result of an impaired driver. Of the 28 automobile crashes in 2016 in the US, seventeen were multiple-vehicle crashes and 11 were single-vehicle crashes. However, traffic-related fatalities decreased from the previous decade (2000-2009), and since 2011 they had fallen to the lowest levels since the 1950s. However, prior to 2016, traffic-related fatalities had been the leading cause of death for officers in 15 of the previous 20 years. Other causes of officer deaths were multiple-vehicle accidents, being struck outside a vehicle, and single-vehicle motorcycle crashes. Eighteen officers died from other causes in 2016, including 11 who died from job-related illnesses—mostly heart attacks—while performing their duties. Also included among that number were two officers who died of an illness contracted as a result of rescue and recovery work following the 11 September 2001 terrorist attacks. Also, three officers were beaten to death, one officer died from a fall, one officer drowned, one officer was stabbed, and one officer died in an aircraft crash.

**Table 2.2: Circumstances of traffic-related fatalities from 2014 to 2016 in the US**

<b>Incidents</b>	<b>2014</b>	<b>2015</b>	<b>2016</b>	<b>Total</b>
Motorcycle crashes	6	6	10	22
Single-vehicle crashes	4	17	11	32
Struck outside vehicles	10	11	15	36
Multiple-vehicle crashes	5	18	17	40

Source: National Law Enforcement Officers' Memorial Fund, 2016

Table 2.2 above indicates that that most police members in the US in the period 2014 to 2016 were killed due to multiple vehicle crashes. This indicates the vulnerability of the police who are killed on duty and the high risk involved in their work.

Although these statistics reflect the situation in the US, they clearly indicate the causes of police killings and the risks involved in police work that are applicable to the South African context as well. These causes are naturally a matter of concern in South Africa as well, and it was against this backdrop that this study was the first of its kind in South Africa to analyse the risks that police officials are exposed to during the discharge of their duties, particularly when they investigate robberies and even when they are off duty.

### **2.3.6 Additional data of police officer fatalities in the US**

According to the US National Law Enforcement Officers' Memorial Fund (2016), the deadliest month in 2016 was November with 20 fatalities. April had the fewest fatalities with two deaths. In 2016, six female officers and 129 male officers were killed in the line of duty. The average age of a fallen officer was 40 years, with an average length of service of 13 years. On average, a fallen officer had two children. Seventy-two municipal and country officers were killed in the line of duty in 2016, along with 33 who worked in Sheriffs' offices, 17 who worked for State law enforcement agencies, and six federal, four territorial, two Universities and one tribal officer. Also, 129 male and 6 female officers were killed.

According to the above data, most police officers who were killed were males. This suggests the vulnerability of male police officers and the high risks involved in the work of the police.

### **2.3.7 Calls for response to attacks on police officers**

Minnar (2003, in Moyane, 2008:2) argues that the targeting of police members while off duty inevitably increases their feeling of insecurity. Moreover, this sense of insecurity is exacerbated as police officials are targeted whether they are in or out of uniform.

In consideration of the many concerns pertaining to police killings and the high risks involved in the nature of police work, the South African Police Union (2016:8) voiced their concerns as follows in a newsletter:

The police represent a blue line between the community and criminals. They serve as a buffer between law-abiding community and criminals. When this line is solid and strong, the community is safer. When it is weak and broken, the happier are the criminals. Every attack on a police official is an attempt to access the community under protection. Each attack is therefore an attack on the community itself. This raises these questions: Can you imagine a life without a police official? How can people walk on the streets, shop in a mall and sleep peacefully without our protectors? It is society's last line of defence. The SAPU calls for the establishment of a homicide unit to ensure constant focus on murder in general.

## **2.4 Challenges in Responding to Police Killings**

The history of South Africa, which is characterized by the violence that occurred during the apartheid regime, has left an unfortunate legacy. Thus combating contact and violent crime is crucial as violence in post-democratic South Africa demonstrably cuts across social status and the safety of individuals. Violence is a threat not only in public places, but also in domestic settings. This is distressing as its outcomes impact directly on the quality of life of every individual and the health and well-being of families, communities, social cohesion and, ultimately, the functioning of the country (Crime Statistics South Africa, 2014-2015). Therefore, Smith (2004:107) argues that understanding crime is crucial for its prevention.

Maguen, Metzler, MacCastin, Inslicht and Henn-Haase (2009:2) argue that, although previous research has suggested that critical incidents are the driving force behind the development of PTSD, more recent research has highlighted that routine work environment stressors may play

an important role in the development and maintenance of psychological distress in police officers. For example, Collins and Gibbs (2003, in Maguen et al., 2009:2), found that the most highly ranked stressors among police were not related to critical incidents, but rather to concerns with the work environment, including a lack of consultation and communication, lack of control over workload, inadequate support, and general excessive workloads.

During a Police Summit that was held at Pretoria in 2016 (South African Police Service, 2016), members admitted that stress levels in the SAPS were high. These high stress levels were believed to be spilling over into the domestic environment to the detriment of relationships. There is a fair amount of extra-marital activity involving SAPS members, although it cannot be determined whether the levels among SAPS members are higher than for other groups and professions. These relationships account for the love triangle deaths that occurred and also lead to general relationship tension and discord. There is also financial stress among police members. It was mentioned that police officers need to be alert at all times when responding to crime scenes and thus ensure that their physical and psychological well-being remains crucial.

As stated earlier that debriefing of members is utmost importance, (Dino, 2009:15) thus proposes that debriefing sessions could look at the results of missions as, in the truest sense, the mission of the South African Police Service is to protect the nation. Moyane (2008:7) argues that an organization known as Concerns of Police Survivors (COPS) addresses the effects of police killings on spouses, officers, civilian personnel, dispatchers and those close to the scene of the murder. Therefore, the current study explored the impact of the death of an officer on other police officials, with special focus on killings in a selected area in KZN. Minnar (2003, in Moyane, 2008:2) elaborates that police killings do not only affect the family, but the colleagues of the deceased police official as well, and that the high level of police killings seriously affects and impacts the morale of their colleagues while also traumatising those who witnessed the killing. In many instances, surviving police officials left or changed their profession and found jobs that will not expose them to danger.

Clearly, police killings seriously affect and traumatize all police members and the families of the deceased as well. In the final analysis, police killings will have a negative impact on young people who will lose interest in joining the police. This means that South Africa will not be a safe place where people can be free as continued police killings will become a national crisis.

According to Mitchell (2000, in Ortiz, 2016:8), police officials who witnessed the killing of a colleague suffer psychological trauma and this trauma can manifest itself in many ways such as stress, anxiety, fear, distrust, insomnia, and depression. Psychological stress often consumes many areas of life, including job performance, the ability to sustain employment, and everyday interaction with family and people in the community (Ibid.).

Moreover, the family of the deceased police officer often suffer psychological effects as well (Moyane, 2008:2). The death of the spouse for both children and adults is accompanied by elements of grief that bring about traumatic changes as relationships once relied on have been destroyed by a violent and unexpected death. Trust in the world is shaken, and mental energy is expended in trying to adjusting to this loss. There is a sense of personal isolation and the impression that nothing can ever be the same again. Moyane (2008:3) drew from his experiences as a chaplain counselling the widow or widower of a spouse who was killed, arguing that their emotional state was due to the following problems and concerns:

- Lack of income, which resulted in widows being evicted from their houses, police barracks, and married quarters;
- Delays in pension pay-outs or non-recovery of these pay-outs;
- The placing of children being contested between wives or sometimes between the spouse and the parents of the deceased; and
- Pension and/or life insurance payments being contested between wives or sometimes between the spouse and the parents of the deceased.

#### **2.4.1 Job performance**

A study that was done by the Centre of Criminology of the Western Cape University between 2002-2014, (12 October 2017) asserts that violence in South Africa has received considerable attention from media sources, academics, governments and NGOs alike. However, it concludes that violence against the police has remained relatively unexplored. Therefore, although South Africa has one of the highest rates of police murder in the developing world, it is under researched with the last empirical research aimed at understanding these incidents being over a decade old. The project's aim was to explore the connections between risk, danger, police

culture and the policing environment to determine how these factors influenced the formal and informal responses of South Africa's police officers, and the South African Police Service as an organization, to the violent killing of their colleagues.

The Centre of Criminology (12 October 2017) argues that fatal forms of violence used against the police are often perceived as an occupational hazard and, consequently, the idea of officers being victims of such violence may be difficult to contextualize, especially in discussions of police murders. This has particular relevance in the South African context, where some reports have stated that the murder of off-duty police officers exceeds the number of those murdered while on duty. In addition to this, consideration also has to be given to the extent to which the police court danger through their own actions, which can of course result in their own deaths. This may become a challenge to the surviving members of the SAPS who experience stress. Moreover, according to Crank and Caldero (1991, in Meyer, Rothman & Piennar, 2003:865), police stress is "conceptualized as any condition that has adverse consequences for a police officer's well-being and can be linked to negative emotional outcomes such as [high] divorce rates, suicidal behaviour and alcoholism". Physical disorders such as hypertension, gastric and duodenal ulcers, and kidney and cardiovascular diseases also have been attributed to stress among police personnel.

#### **2.4.2 Ability to sustain employment (occupational functioning) and PTSD**

There has been on-going debate about which variables are most closely associated with PTSD symptoms in police officers and other first respondent, especially given that most are resilient in the face of on-going potentially traumatic events. Critical incidents have been examined as an important source of mental health symptoms among police officers. A critical incident is a potentially traumatic event which may cause a given individual's emotional resources to become overtaxed, resulting in a spectrum of reactions from exhaustion to increased and unrelenting mental health symptomatology. Critical incidents often include a component of life threat and may range from being threatened (with a knife or gun) to direct exposure and/or injury (accidental or intentional). Critical incidents may impact individual police officers in different ways, with some returning to normal functioning in the immediate aftermath, whereas others require more intensive mental health intervention. There is clear evidence that critical incidents play an important role in the development of PTSD in police officers and other first respondent (Carlier et al., 1997; Ward et al., 2006, in Maguen et al., 2009:1), with incidents that are perceived as highly threatening having the largest impact on levels of distress. In

addition to critical incident exposures, police officers face a number of other stressors, including "...negotiation of an inherently complex work environment that contributes to daily and on-going stress" (Maguel et al., 2009:1).

Another consequence of crime victimization is the ability to obtain and maintain gainful employment. PTSD in police officials may affect their occupational functioning as they tend to lose their job morale or interest. This might cause them to resign or change their job and seek an occupation that is not as dangerous as policing. Policing is undeniably dangerous work, and the danger lurks not on the streets alone. A study that was done by Violanti (2008) under the University at Buffalo found the pressures of law enforcement put officers at risk of high blood pressure, insomnia, increased levels of destructive stress hormones, heart problems, post-traumatic stress disorder, and suicide.

### **2.4.3 The policing environment**

Since the seminal ethnographic work of William Wesley in the late 1940s, descriptions of a 'single police culture' have focused on 'coping mechanisms' that are said to insulate group members from hazards that originate in the two policing work environments that police officers find themselves in. One of the environments that officers work in is the occupational environment, which consists of his or her relationship with the general society (i.e., citizens). One of the most widely cited elements of this environment is the presence or potential for danger (Barker 1999; Skolnick, 1994; Sparrow, Moore & Kennedy, 1990; Brown, 1988; Reiner, 1985; Cullen, Link, Travis & Lemming, 1983; Van Maanen, 1974; Westley, 1970, in Steyn, 2008:40). Steyn (2008:40) argues that studies conducted on the police have noted that officers perceive their working environment to be laden with danger or the risk of danger. Officers have often been described as being 'preoccupied' with the danger and violence that surround them, always anticipating both. Skolnick (1994, in Steyn, 2008:40) notes that "the element of danger is so integral to officers that explicit recognition might induce emotional barriers to police work". Danger has a unifying effect on officers and works to separate them from the chief source of danger, the public. In addition to danger, the coercive authority that the police wield is another component of officers' occupational environment. Police are unique



in that they have been granted the legitimate use of coercion or “a licence to threaten drastic harm to others”.

In relation to the work environment, police officers also face a number of other stressors, including negotiation of an inherently complex work environment that contributes to daily and on-going stress. Theoretical models of work environment stressors often contain components such as organizational constraints (e.g., problems with equipment); co-worker factors (e.g., inequitable workload, unsuitable partners); supervision (e.g., lack of feedback, unequal treatment); work content (e.g., unclear roles); and temporal factors (e.g., shift work) (Hurrell et al., 1998, in Maguen et al., 2009:2). Others have divided the work environment into organizational stressors (i.e., poor equipment, excessive paperwork, lack of recognition) and operational stressors (i.e., hoax calls, missing meals, dealing with the public) (Brough, 2004, in Maguen et al., 2009:2). Steyn (2008:40) elaborates that the danger and coercive force authority that are prevalent in an officer’s occupational environment, as well as the scrutiny from supervisors and the role of ambiguity emanating from the organizational environment, create stress and anxiety for officers. The way in which police officers cope with these stresses and strain can be found in the prescriptions of police culture.

Strict laws aimed at fighting crime are often among the premises; however, ‘collateral damage’ such as increased workloads, the courts, and correctional services are often overlooked due to the time constraints of tough crime legislation and the influence of special interest groups and lobbyists who tell them only one side of the story. Another potential collateral damage is increased danger to law enforcement personnel (Guffey et al., 2009:9).

According to Anshel (2000, in Meyer et al., 2003:897), male and female police officers experience different sources of stress and use different coping strategies. Consistent with this finding, female police officers obtained higher scores on emotional support and problem-focused coping in the latter study. However, it was also found that female police officers tended to make more use of passive coping strategies (Ibid.). It could be deduced from the results that coping responses are dependent on a police officer’s gender. These results also confirmed findings by Fain and McCormick (1988) who determined that coping responses were independent of a police officer’s marital status and rank, because no significant correlations were found between these variables. These results confirmed findings by Biggam et al. (1997) namely that, regardless of the fact that police work offers the potential for the introduction of

traumatic stress syndrome, the most salient stressors are found within the organization itself. Furthermore, Meyer et al. (2003:898) confirm that excessive paper work, insufficient manpower, fellow officers not doing their job, inadequate or poor quality equipment, inadequate salary, and the courts' leniency with criminals were among the stressors that occurred most frequently within the police force. Inadequate supervision and shift-work also showed a high intensity but did not occur on a regular basis. Furthermore, a significant negative relationship was found between stress because of job demands, lack of resources and police-specific demands on the one hand, and job satisfaction on the other (Cooper, Kirkcaldy & Brown, 1994, in Meyer et al., 2003:898). Job stress is therefore undeniably related to low job satisfaction.

#### **2.4.4 Social functioning: Everyday interaction with family members and people in the community**

Crime victimization can cause severe disruption in social activities and impaired functioning in social relationships. Moyane (2008:2) stated that if the spouse is the wife, she has to learn to adapt and to play two roles in the family: the role of a mother and that of a father. This is a difficult time for the surviving spouse and very challenging if the spouse is unemployed and the deceased was the only breadwinner.

Events occurring outside of the work environment can cause the development of PTSD symptoms. Mikkelsen and Burke (2004, in Maguen et al., 2009:4) found that, in a large sample of police officers, negative life events such as work-family conflict were predictive of poorer psychological health. The association between negative life events and PTSD was also demonstrated by King et al. (1998). Similarly, with reference to Operation Desert Storm, negative life events in the year prior to deployment were associated with anxiety, depression, and PTSD symptoms. More recently, in a study on military personnel involved in Operation Iraqi Freedom, negative life events prior to deployment were associated with PTSD symptoms (Maguen et al., 2008, in Maguen et al., 2009:4).

Biggam et al. (1997, in Meyer et al., 2003:886) state that there are important reasons why police stress should warrant serious consideration. The police play an important role in the maintenance of society and to fulfil this duty successfully, the workforce must be effective. Stress potentially undermines the efficiency of the police service, and the effects of police stress

may have an adverse effect on the development and maintenance of working relationships with the public. Also, on a more individual basis, it is possible that officers under stress may pose a real threat to their own safety and that of others.

#### **2.4.5 Impact on the economy of South Africa**

Police killings have a negative impact on the economy of South Africa. The current study was undertaken in Durban in KZN Province, which is a tourist attraction as the city known as the ‘warmest place to be’ and people flock here in large numbers during holidays because of the beaches and attractive resorts. These people invest in the economy of South Africa. However, the violent death of police members will fill potential visitors with a sense of danger and unease and they will lose interest in spending holidays here. Police officers are the kind of people without whom the country cannot survive. Smit et al. (2004:73) agree with the fact that South Africa has “an alarmingly high crime rate - an unacceptable fact that not only impacts negatively on the quality of citizens, but also on the much-needed economic-growth and development of the country”.

Moreover, the researcher is of the opinion that the current and future overcrowding of our prisons will cause the government to task taxpayers to pay for additional prisons, and this will put a heavy burden on citizens who will need to fork out funds that could have been used for the improvement of education or housing. Citizens will resent this and turn against the government.

It is also a fact that SAPS Management should budget and provide officers with protective equipment. When an officer dies, the cost to the government is enormous both financially and in terms of a life that has been lost unnecessarily and untimely. Money can never pay for the loss of a life, but it is needed by loved ones in the family for survival.

### **2.5 Summary**

Police agencies have come to realize that, because of the complex and diverse nature of crime, and because of their limited resources, they alone are not capable of implementing crime-prevention strategies. Therefore, an international trend in policing is a shift towards the increasing involvement of communities and other government agencies in partnership relationships as part of a more holistic and effective approach to crime prevention. In South Africa, the importance of crime prevention in promoting safety and security needs to be

recognized, as is the need to nurture and support a framework to guide and assist the roles and functions of the many partners needed to make crime prevention a reality. The CSF is a space to learn from past challenges and is achieving key results involving all three spheres of government as well as communities in the development of crime prevention strategies at local level. Therefore, to get rid of criminals in law-abiding communities, the police need information. While regular training and shooting practice will sharpen the skills of members to enable them to confront perpetrators, SAPS officials should also work together with the community and should be visible at all times. We cannot curb police killings if violence is not stemmed, as it is the catalyst for police killings.

The next chapter will present a discussion of two theories that constituted the theoretical framework that underpinned this study, namely Merton's anomie theory and the radical theory of Marx.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

#### **3.1 Introduction**

This chapter outlines the theoretical framework that underpinned the study. The discourse on the theoretical framework will demonstrate an understanding of theories and concepts that were relevant to this research.

According to Barker (2011, in De Vos et al., 2011:37), a theory is defined as “a set of interrelated hypotheses, concepts, constructs, definitions and propositions that present a systematic view of a phenomenon based on facts and observations, with the purpose of explaining and predicting the phenomenon”.

For the purpose of this study, the following theories were adopted: Merton’s anomie theory; and the radical theory of Marx. These theories were deemed appropriate for the study as both are linked to the phenomenon of police killings.

#### **3.2 Merton’s Anomie Theory**

As a member of the American Society of Criminology and the Academy of Criminal Justice Science’s Criminology and Criminal Justice Oral History Project, Robert Merton developed various theories of criminology (American Society of Criminology, 2004). Robert Merton’s theory first appeared in 1938 in an article entitled “Social Structure and Anomie”. Modifying Durkheim’s original concept, Merton (1957) formulated his views on anomie as a condition that occurs when discrepancies exist between societal goals and the means available for their achievement. This discrepancy (or strain) between aspirations and achievement has resulted in Merton’s conception being referred to as ‘the strain theory’. According to this theory, society is firm in judging people’s societal worth on the basis of their apparent material success. Society also preaches that success is available to all who work hard and take advantage of available opportunities.

Thus, according to Merton’s theory of anomie, antisocial behaviour (that results in crime) is produced by the values of society itself, as the desire to attain these values engenders high material aspirations as a sign of individual success without adequately providing approved

means for all to reach these goals. This discrepancy between goals and means results in strain and “produces various modes of personality adaptation and different combinations of behaviour in accepting or rejecting the means and goals” (Hagan, 2011:148). Individuals may thus seek alternate means of accomplishing society’s goals. One of the essential premises of this approach is that organization and disorganization in society are not mutually exclusive, but rather that many cultural values that have desired consequences often contain within them, or produce, undesirable consequences (Hagan, 2011:148).

Merton describes five possible models of personality adoption that represent types of adjustments to societal means and goals: the conformist, the innovator, the ritualistic, the retreatist, and the rebel. All these models imply deviant responses, except that of the conformist. Conformists accept the goal of success in society and society approves his means of achieving this status such as through hard work, education, deferred gratification, and the like. Acceptance of the goals does not indicate that satisfactory ends have been achieved, but that they have faith in the system.

Anomie, as defined by Bachman and Schutt (2011:87), is defined as “a weakening in the normative regulation of behaviour”. The anomie theory posits that diminished normative regulation results from an overemphasis on cultural goals (such as wealth and prestige) relative to the legitimate means of achieving them (such as the achievement of a college education or a high status job) or from the differential distribution of opportunities to achieve highly valued goals (some groups in society may not have the same opportunity to achieve these goals as others). According to Messer and Rosenfeld (in Hagan, 2011:148), there are four cultural values within American society that contribute to anomie and therefore to crime in general: achievements, individualism, universalism, and materialism.

### **3.2.1 Emile Durkheim’s perceptions on the anomie theory**

The term ‘anomie’ appeared in the English language as early as 1591 and generally refers to a disregard for the law (Fox, 1976). Anomie, from the Greek word *anomie* (without norms) as used by the French sociologist Emile Durkheim, involves a moral malaise, which suggests a lack of clear-cut norms with which to guide human conduct (i.e., normlessness). It may occur as a pervasive condition in society because of the failure of individuals to internalize the norms of society, their inability to adjust to changing norms, or even conflict within the norms themselves. Durkheim viewed anomie in modern society as produced by individuals’

aspirations and ambitions and the search for new pleasures and sensations that are beyond their reach even in times of prosperity (Durkheim, 1951, in Hagan, 2011:147).

### **3.2.2 Criticism of Merton's theory**

Merton's theory, which has generally been well received in sociology and in criminology, became the basis of a number of sub-cultural theories of delinquency. Criticism of the theory, according to (Hagan, 2011:149), includes the following:

- His assumptions of uniform commitment to materialistic goals ignores the plural of heterogeneous nature of cultural values (particularly in the US).
- The theory appears to dwell in lower-class criminality, and thus it fails to consider law breaking among the elite. Taylor, Walton and Young (1973) express this point: "Anomie theory stands accused of predictions of too little bourgeois criminality and too much proletarian criminality."
- The theory is primarily orientated towards explaining monetary or materialistically oriented crime and does not address violent criminal activity.
- If Merton is correct, why does the United States now have lower property crime rates than many other developed countries?

While many writers (Hirshi, 1967; Johnson, 1979; Kornhauser, 1978, in Hagan, 2011:149) concur that Merton's theory does not hold empirically, more recent research by Farnworth and (Liebert 198, in Hagan: 2019:49) argues in favour of its durability. They indicate that the strain or anomie theory combines psychological and structural components.

This researcher views anomie as a condition whereby people reject their living conditions and try to satisfy their needs wrongfully by breaking the law. The anomie theory is thus a perspective that argues that individuals may seek alternate means of accomplishing their desired goals when their original efforts were unsuccessful. This theory was of importance in this study as it guided the researcher to properly understand the causes of the high prevalence of police killings in South Africa and criminals' motives for committing this crime. The anomie

theory also emphasizes that people commit crime because they want pleasure or to satisfy needs that are unreachable due to financial instability. In relation to police killings in the study area in KZN Province, Merton's anomie theory was thus appropriate and useful.

### **3.2.3 Modes of personality adaptations**

Merton (1961, in Hagan, 2011:148) describes five possible modes of personality adaptations that represent types of adjustments to social means and goals:

- The conformist: The conformist accepts the goal of success and also society's approved means of achieving this status, such as through hard work, education, deferred gratitude, and the like. Acceptance of the goals does not indicate that all actually achieve them satisfactorily, but they have faith in the system.
- The innovator: Accepts the goal of success but rejects or seeks legitimate or illegitimate alternatives to the means of achieving these aims.
- The ritualist: This individual will compulsively persist in going through the motions with little hope of successful achievement of the goals.
- The retreatist: Rejects society's approved means of achieving goals. For example, chronic drug addicts may eventually reject social standards of jobs and success and choose the goal of 'getting high' by means of begging, borrowing or stealing.
- The rebel: Rejects both means and goals and seeks alternatives that reflect new (often wayward) goals as well as new methods of achieving them, such as through revolutionary activities aimed at introducing change in the existing order outside normal, societally approved channels.

The lasting solution that this theory posits is that people need to learn to work towards their goals. They need to try to be better people because breaking the law is not a solution to their problems. Instead, their actions may put themselves, society and the state in danger.

The researcher also adopted the radical theory.



### **3.3 Marx's radical theory as adapted by Quinney**

The foremost spokesperson for radical criminology is the same Richard Quinney who was at one time a moderate conflict theorist and who is now a peacemaker. For Quinney, an orthodox Marxist, crime is the result of capitalism, and the crime problem could be resolved by the establishment of a socialist state (Quinney, 1977, in Hagan, 2011:190). In his critical theory of crime control in the US, he provides the following propositions:

- US society is based on an advanced capitalist economy.
- The state is organised to serve the interests of the dominant economic class i.e., the capitalist ruling class.
- Criminal law is an instrument of the state and the ruling class maintains and perpetuates the existing social and economic order.
- Crime control in capitalist society is accomplished through a variety of institutions and agencies established and administered by a government elite who sustains ruling class interests for the purpose of establishing domestic order.
- The contradictions of advanced capitalism, the dysfunction between existence and essence, require that the subordinate.
- Only with the collapse of the capitalist society and the creation of a new society based on socialist principals will there be a solution to the crime problem.

According to Quinney (1974 & 1975, in Hagan, 2011:181) and other Marxist criminologists, crime is a necessary outcome of inequality in capitalistic societies. They argue that criminal law originates in conflict of interests in which the most powerful ruling class (i.e., capitalists) makes the laws and controls the criminal justice machinery. Marxist criminology often rejects the positivistic tradition of analyzing crime causation through objectives and empirical analysis. Instead, it advocates an ideological commitment to Marxist philosophy where the task is to provide description and analytical examples to serve as evidence for a reconfirmed social reality that capital causes crime (Quinney, 1974 & 1975, in Hagan, 2011:181).

William Chambliss' contributions to the radical approach to crime also need to be considered. According to Platt (1977, in Hagan, 2011:181), radical criminologists argue that, by concentrating on the crimes of the poor rather than on racism, imperialism, and inequality, criminologists become conservative handmaidens of state repression. Advanced industrial capital creates 'surplus people' (Spitzer, 1975), and this creates an 'underclass' that is unneeded in the system of production. Among William Chambliss (1975) later views regarding capitalism and crime are the following points:

- As capitalist societies industrialize and the gap between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat widens, penal law will expand in an effort to coerce the proletariat into submission.
- Crime diverts the lower class's attention from the exploitation they experience and directs it towards other members of their own class rather than towards the capitalist class or the economic system.
- Crime is a reality that exists only as it is created by those in the society whose interests are served by its presence.
- Crime is a reaction to life conditions of persons' social class.
- Socialist societies should have much lower rates of crime because the less intense class struggle in this system should reduce the forces that lead to the commission of crime.

Similar perspectives have been enunciated by many other scholars, including Gordon (1973), Krisberg (1975), and Taylor, Walton and Young (1975) (in Hagan, 2011:181). In postulating the principles of *critical criminology*, Taylor, Walton and Young (1975) call for the use of Marxism as the method of analysis in a 'materialistic criminology' whose purpose is to expose the basis of social control in capitalistic societies. The tenets of Marxist theory, rather than representing a subject for empirical analysis, now become a foregone conclusion, and ideologically dictates the requirement of illustration rather than proof. Something was wrong in the quote so I tried to edit. Please check and fix if I did not get it.

Radical or Marxist criminologists view praxis (practical critical action) as more important than the objective analysis of their theoretical formulation. They view 'intellectualism' as a negative quality due to the 'academic repression' and 'elitism' associated with intellectuals. Supporters of this theory thus argue that a capitalistic economic system causes crime and that the working class is the victims of crime.

However, various researchers have argued that radicalism has a negative impact on the economy of a country as it engenders deviant behaviour, especially among young people. Furthermore, people commit crime due to unemployment. In South Africa, the increasing number of unemployed youth has led to an increase in crime rates as well as the killing of police officials.

### **3.4 Summary**

The two theories that were discussed helped to conceptualize and explore police killings in the study area in KZN Province. Because the importance of this study is vested in the contribution it will make to in-depth understandings of police killings through detailed data, it will provide SAPS Management with information to analyse and understand the causes of police killings so as to come up with preventive strategies for the protection of police officers, whether they are off or on duty. This information will lead to a better understanding of situations where police officers are at risk. The theories elucidated the reasons for police killings by explaining that stress caused by unemployment and societal issues that force criminals to commit crimes are the catalysts for this phenomenon.

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS**

#### **4.1 Introduction**

This chapter focuses on reporting and analyzing the data that were obtained by means of one-on-one, semi-structured interviews. The findings are discussed and evaluated. For the sake of authenticity, the verbatim statements of the respondents are presented in italics. In keeping with the policy of anonymity, the participants are not identified by name. While many of the themes overlap, the discussion is clustered with reference to the objectives and research questions as outlined in Chapter one. Eight themes emerged from the data that were derived from the eight interview questions that had been asked by the researcher during the focus group discussion and the semi-structured interviews. These themes are presented in sub-headings under the heading in section 4.2.

#### **4.2 Police Killings in KwaZulu-Natal Province**

The researcher concentrated on robbery and the killing of police officials when they were both on and off duty. The perception of the participants was that police killings had increased noticeably in recent time. The police officers offered their views on this phenomenon by referring to what they had seen and heard through the media (radio, television and newspapers) and the statistics they were aware of. The participants had been acquainted with or had worked in proximity to police officers who were killed in only a limited number of instances, therefore first-hand experience of police killings was a limitation. However, the respondents were trained police officers with a range of years of experience of situations and conditions within the SAPS. The abbreviations FGD and SSI refer to focus group discussion and semi-structured interview respectively.

##### **4.2.1 A notable increase in police killings in KZN in the last five years**

The majority of the participants agreed that police killings had increased in KZN Province.

*“My experience is based on what I read from newspapers and television. There have been recent police killings in our neighbouring station; members were killed whilst on and off duty” (FGD-Lt. Colonel).*

*“I am not too sure as I only hear [on the radio] or read in a newspaper about police killings. Where I work at Point we are still lucky as there have been no police killings (FGD- Sergeant).*

*“Yes, it has increased from the statistics of South Africa, it has been noted” (FGD-Lt. Colonel).*

*“From the reports as per crime statistics and newspaper and television, police killings have increased in KZN” (FGD-Captain).*

*“Slightly increased in the last five years and in 2016 to 2017” (SSI-Warrant Officer).*

*“I would say yes, elaborating through media such as news, television and newspapers” (SSI-Captain).*

*“Yes, it has increased, because criminals are not afraid of police officials. I could say they become brave and violence has increased in the country” (SSI-Warrant Officer).*

*“Increasing. Every year police killings are increasing and [new] police are employed every year and criminals have firearms” (SSI-Constable).*

As was stated earlier, on average the provincial share of the national figure of police killings over a five-year period was 20% (34) for KZN (Bruce, 2016). KZN had the second highest number of police killings following Gauteng Province, which suggests that preventive measures to curb police killings in KZN should urgently be devised.

#### **4.2.2 Understanding police killings**

The escalation of violence in South Africa has resulted in an increase in police killings. Bruce (2016) asserts that the killing of police officers is not the largest category of deaths in the country, but it is the category that raises the most concern. The provincial figure for the killing of off-duty police officers over a 5-year period (2010/2011-2014/2015) in KZN was 62% (55 out of 89), making KZN the third highest province that experienced off-duty police killings

(Bruce 2016). These statistics generated a question that required the participants' understanding of police killings.

The majority of the participants had a clear understanding of the concept of police killings as they generally outlined police killing as the brutal killing of police officials when they were in uniform or even when they were not wearing uniform (i.e., off duty). Some participants mentioned that these killings were unlawful and referred to the killing of municipal police officers as well.

*“[It is the] unlawful killing of a police official whilst the perpetrator knows that the person is a police official” (FGD-Lt. Colonel).*

*“To me it means attack on police on or off duty, where police end up losing their lives and firearms” (FGD-Sergeant) and (SSI-Warrant Officer).*

*“Killing is the intention of murdering officials of the South African Police Service as well as municipal police” (FGD-Captain).*

*“It is the unlawful killing of police members whether on or off duty” (FGD-Lt. Colonel).*

The participants were of the view that the police are attacked when responding to complaints and executing their duties. Others felt that criminals hate the police as they tend to disturb them in achieving their nefarious goals.

*“When police officials respond to complaints of crime and criminals respond or fight back, therefore killing the police” (SSI-Constable).*

*“The killing of a state and also hatred” (FGD-Lt. Colonel).*

*“We as police officials disturb the criminals in achieving their goals of committing crimes”. (FDG-Captain)*

In the above responses the participants highlighted the point that the killing of a police official is an attack on the state itself as the police work for the state. They thus die while executing their duties in the service of the state.

*“Many police are killed during their line of- duty, especially those who are wearing uniform and driving marked vehicles” (SSI-Sergeant).*

*“...when criminals ambush police and catch them unawares, killing the police and taking their firearms and ammunition” (SSI-Constable).*

An analysis of the above comments revealed that the participants understood the phenomenon of police killings. They understood that, in essence, the killing of a police officer is an attack on the state. The concept of ambushing police officers as they are caught unawares while driving marked vehicles was also raised. These comments underscore the fact that police work is risky as the participants suggested that they were primarily killed when responding to crime scenes – thus while they are on duty. The next question required information on the participants’ knowledge and perceptions about the most common conditions of police killings in KZN Province.

#### **4.2.3 Common types of police killings in KZN**

Common types of police killings in South Africa such as murder, armed robberies and cash-in-transit robberies involve physical contact that is usually of a violent and intimidating nature. Such crimes normally cause serious trauma for victims or bereaved families and the effects often linger and are sometimes permanent physically and psychologically. Some encounters leave lifelong scars on the victims and impact the country’s economic well-being as well (South African Police Service, 2009)

##### **4.2.3.1 Robberies**

Bruce (2001) states that robberies and other attacks include attacks on members who are on duty and members who are off duty, and when they are both in and out of uniform. Killings may be related to the fact that the victims are police officers, or perpetrators could target a specific individual for a specific purpose, or the death of an officer could occur simply as a random act of crime.

*“Normally we get robbed of our service firearms. House invasion is the new term for house robbery [burglary] now. If you resist giving them your firearm they kill you, especially if they know you. They don’t want to be caught... Recently, about two weeks back, they came to my colleague’s house. Luckily he missed a shot and he was in full*

*uniform. The case was opened and it happened here in our police station” (SSI-Warrant Officer).*

*“Main cause [is] suspects wanting firearms to use for further crimes and cash-in-transit and hijacking” (SSI-Warrant Officer).*

*“Cash-in-transit heists and armed robberies” (SSI-Constable).*

*“Cash-in-transit, ATM robberies, false complaints are given to police officers by criminals and they are ambushed by criminals; for example they call the emergency number which is 10111 and give false information” (SSI-Sergeant).*

*“Robberies when police are being robbed of their service pistols” (FGD-Lt. Colonel).*

*“Robbery of a state firearm while at a bus stop. Killed at their residences for being known as police officials” (ISS-Sergeant).*

*“House robberies at members’ houses and enroute to work and home” (FGD-Captain).*

The participants understood that police officers were attacked and killed for a variety of reasons and in different places. They suggested that criminals’ intention is primarily to rob them of their service firearms so that these perpetrators could commit more crimes such as cash-in-transit heists. The latter seemed to be a primary motive for attacks on the police.

*“Heist shootings need firearms, so that is what they require” (SSI-Constable).*

The manner of the attacks that caused killings was succinctly expressed by a participant as:

*“Gun-shot and stabbed by knife” (SSI-Sergeant).*

Thus the manners in which police officers were killed required lethal weapons such as guns and knives. Although knives are readily available to criminals with nefarious intentions, it is the procurement of guns that makes police officers the most vulnerable targets, as it is common



knowledge among South African citizens that they are armed and carry their weapons on their person, even sometimes when they are off duty.

#### **4.2.3.2 Ambush**

The fact that the police are armed thus increases the possibility of a violent response in confrontational situations. A Lt. Colonel in the SAPS listed the vulnerability of the police as follows:

*“Members are caught unawares, ambush style. Too few individuals [police officers] attend to serious crimes. Poor visible policing. Lack of resources like unmarked vehicles for patrols” (FGD-Lt. Colonel).*

Other participants echoed his comments, particularly in terms of ambush-style attacks:

*“Attacks of police whilst on duty by criminals by means of ambush when they want firearms. Another case was when police disturbed criminal activities and were caught in cross-fire. When a member is killed in a case of a love triangle” (SSI- Sergeant).*

*“Killing of a police official while responding to a complaint or by a person known to him and the killing of a police official by another member of the police” (FGD-Lt. Colonel).*

Upon analyzing the above data, it became evident that the police officials believed that they and their colleagues were vulnerable because they were caught unawares, ambushed, caught in cross-fire, and killed during love triangles. The participants mentioned that another common type of killing occurred when a member was an asset to a family (i.e., the member had savings or a life insurance policy).

*“Family issues for example when you are an assets or in love triangles, you get killed so they can benefit from the estate [the will]” (SSI-Constable).*

During a police summit that was held in Pretoria (South African Police Services, 2016), it was postulated that members’ stress levels were very high and that these high stress levels spilled over into their domestic environment to the detriment of relationships. There is a fair amount

of extra-marital activity involving SAPS members, although it cannot be determined whether the levels among SAPS members are higher than among other groups and professions.

The researcher also had anecdotal evidence of domestic reasons for murdering a police officer. In an informal conversation with a police official who had escaped death, her sisters and her son had made arrangements to kill her with the intention of receiving money from the state and also from her insurance policies. It was disheartening to learn that police officials were not only killed by unknown criminals, but also by their loved ones and family members for greed.

#### **4.2.3.3 On- and off-duty killings**

Minnar (2003, in Moyane, 2008:2) mentions that targeting police members while off duty inevitably increases their sense of danger and insecurity. Moreover, the police are targeted whether they wear their uniform or not. A majority of the participants stated that police killings occurred when they were inebriated in public places where they were at high risk. It was thus understood that members were killed when attending to a complaint (on-duty) and when accosted in public spaces such as taverns and shebeens (off-duty). In the latter context, alcohol use and abuse seemed to be important drivers of attacks on police.

*“On duty while attending to complaints and when off-duty members are at taverns or shebeens” (FGD-Captain).*

Personal security and retaliation for being arrested also emerged as reasons for the killing of police officers.

*“In a case against a suspect, seeing that the case might put the suspect in jail so they kill the investigator to destroy evidence” (FGD-Lt. Colonel).*

Self-defence or, as Minnar (2004, in Bruce, 2002:15) classifies it, “resisting arrest”, also provokes police killings.

*“The most common type is when you are **off-duty**; you don’t have a backup and you cannot defend yourself” (SSI-Captain).*

*“**On-duty**: when attending a complaint or serving a protection order. For example, at Inanda two police officials went to serve a protection order and were ambushed by*

*criminals. Police officials were robbed of their service pistols and uniforms. The male policeman was shot and died while the female official survived but was left injured. And when **off-duty**: attending to domestic cases” (SSI-Sergeant).*

*“**On-duty**: whilst attending to complaints. **Off-duty**: while members are at taverns or shebeens, or enroute to work and home. [Also during] house robberies at members’ homes” (FGD-Captain).*

*“Many are **off-duty**: when they arrive home, or **on-duty**. A fair balance depends on statistics, that’s my opinion” (SSI-Warrant Officer).*

*“Most times when you are **off-duty**. And around here [it happens] when they are performing their duties they are being robbed of their firearms” (SSI-Warrant Officer).*

*“**On-duty**: most of the time when you are at work attending to people’s [complaints]. **Off-duty**: when you walk and you don’t have a car and you have to use public transport and at your house during a house robbery” (SSI-Constable).*

*“Lack of private transport to and from work places. No safe routes. No transportation to members’ homes. Lack of supervision by some station commanders, politics, and members involved in criminal activities themselves or in taxi industries” (FGD-Captain).*

The above responses revealed that the participants knew that police officials are killed both off and on duty for various reasons. Lack of private transport emerged as a particular danger. Chetty (2016:20) confirms this, stating that: “While off duty, members react to crime in public places. However, being off duty, they do not have the same level of readiness and preparedness as they would when being on duty – for example, [no] bulletproof vests, [carrying their] rifles, [no] backup, etc., and they therefore become vulnerable”.

#### **4.2.4 Factors contributing to police killings in the study area in KNZ Province**

Powerful drivers of police killings as understood by the participants seemed to be deprivation and poverty due to unemployment. It is a known fact that South Africa as a developing country is experiencing high levels of unemployment, particularly among the youth, and that the migration of people from African countries to seek employment here is an additional financial burden on the country. The high unemployment rate link with anomie theory as the contributing factor of police killings. These were factors that were well understood by the participants.

*“High unemployment rate, socio economic factors and poverty” (SSI-Sergeant).*

It was understood that the influx of foreign refugees and employment seekers increased opportunities for crime and the consequent murder of police officials in the study area. One reason for the high number of police killings that stood out was that criminals want firearms to commit crimes. The majority of the participants highlighted that the desire to obtain firearms was the biggest facilitator of police killings, while another was the lack of safe transport to and from home.

*“One of the main contributing factors is to retrieve state issued firearms and ammunition” (SSI-Constable).*

The participants highlighted the weakening of the criminal justice system as another major contributor, and reiterated factors such as insufficient equipment, police members visiting taverns, and the high crime rate. The expansion of informal settlements in KZN was also seen as another contributing factor. A disturbing finding was that the police felt that they were not regarded as human beings by criminals, but as expendable objects that stood in their way of achieving their nefarious goals.

*“Criminals are in possession of illegal firearms and the criminal justice system has become very weak” (SSI-Constable).*

*“Sometimes police get killed in taverns or shebeens whilst drunk. They get killed while at a bus stop or taxi rank waiting for transport and while attending crime in progress and they get killed by a jealous lover” (SSI-Sergeant).*

*“Insufficient equipment such as quality bulletproof vests to cover the head and no alarmed vehicles available to stations to be used to respond to armed robberies. There are a lot of armed robberies and most of these criminals are very violent. There are a lot of informal settlements in KwaZulu-Natal Province and there is no easy access to those areas and police are easily ambushed” (FGD-Lt. Colonel).*

*“Being in the wrong place with a firearm, for example in a mall where there are robberies and you happen to be there and the criminal shoots you. High crime rate and police members are not taken as human beings by community members. Killed for the case they are investigating and corruption” (SSI-Sergeant).*

*“To destroy evidence, especially by killing investigating officers” (FGD-Lt. Colonel).*

*“Ma’am, I just want to be honest with you, sometimes members do not carry the right equipment, for example we are called out to Galleria Mall, and the police members have a small pistol and criminals carry AK-47s which are big firearms and [the police are] not using bulletproof vests at all times” (SSI-Captain).*

*“To take firearms to commit crimes. Sometimes as a form of revenge and people’s frustrations because people do not get services that they want and they think killing a police official is a solution. They even burned one of our satellite police stations. Maybe they sent a message that they were not satisfied. High school drop-outs. Violence and the unemployment of young people” (SSI-Warrant Officer).*

*“Carrying of our service firearms, not being alert enough, and insufficient training of police officers. The fact is unemployment, poverty, a violent society and they kill police officers because they want firearms so they can go get money” (SSI-Warrant Officer).*

Some participants were of the opinion that some police officers were themselves corrupt and did not respect community members.

*“We as police officers, our behaviour is sometime terrible and we do not respect the community whereas we want to be respected by them. Community members do not like a police officer that always arrests them, so they plan and kill that police official. Police do contribute to police killings since they are corrupt themselves; for example, some police officers work together with criminals and come back and tell their colleagues to go and arrest the criminals. When the suspect asks the corrupt police official how the other police official knew that they got a dagger or had a firearm, they pretend as if they knew nothing about the arrest. The same dagga they took from the criminals, they take and sell it to make extra cash for themselves” (SSI-Constable).*

The above data highlight that some police officials themselves are corrupt individuals and engage in criminal activities to make extra cash.

#### **4.2.5 The negative impact of police killings on their colleagues**

The majority of the respondents agreed that the killing of police members is extremely traumatizing. It was also outlined that such killings have negative effects such as post-traumatic stress disorder, substance abuse, absenteeism, and domestic violence. The participants were also aware that such killings occurred in their areas and in KZN as a whole. A captain from the Crime Prevention Unit in Point police station responded as follows:

*“Emotional trauma, post-traumatic stress disorder in the person who was in attendance at the incident, negative attitude towards the public and commanders, psychological trauma, substance abuse and domestic violence increase. I had a personal experience of a shooting at work and I do suffer from PTSD and am bi-polar. I am seeking medical boarding from the state. The state did not even refer me for any debriefing and I have to seek help on my own and use my own expenses and as I am telling you, I am attending a phycologist” (FGD-Captain).*

The traumatic impact of police killings leave many surviving police officers with PTSD and other disorders. Some thus want to take early pension or be medically boarded as they feel unfit to continue in their career. They are scared because they experienced police work as dangerous and life-threatening.

Thus police killings traumatize members in a big way because it leads to losing interest in their job. Police killings do not only affect victims' colleagues, but their families as well. According to Minnar (2003:2), the high level of police killings seriously affects and impacts the morale of surviving colleagues as they are left traumatized. Thus police officers leave the profession and find jobs that will not expose them to danger. Some comments in this regard were the following:

*“Trauma and loss of job morale” (FGD-Lt. Colonel).*

*“Other officials become demotivated and depressed. Absenteeism increases due to lack of resources” (FGD- Lt. Colonel).*

*“When a member is killed, we feel bad and we feel that police members are not protected by our organization. Sometimes this causes a delay when we have to attend to places which are called no-go areas” (SSI- Sergeant).*

*“It is very traumatizing even to hear that a police officer has been shot and killed and it is a problem. I feel sad, traumatized and scared since we even leave our homes very early while it is still dark, especially during winter. It is very scary because criminals can ambush us. We start work here at our police station by 05:45 and finish at 18:00. Although it has not happened here at our station, the other day I heard on the radio that at Khayelitsha police station in Cape Town, a member was killed. I felt very sad and traumatized” (SSI-Sergeant).*

*“It does affect us emotionally and we become aggressive towards other people. My colleague was killed in Gauteng Province; we were angry and very upset. The criminals robbed somebody of her phone and the case was reported to us immediately and we went to catch the suspect. The suspect hid behind a tree and when we were passing by, the suspect opened fire and shot our colleague once and he died instantly. It is not nice to see your colleague grieving and dying in front of you. Sadly, we were not even asked by commanders how we felt or referred for any debriefing after the incident” (SSI-Captain).*

*“It makes us fear for our lives. Sadness. And I think that maybe I am going to be next. It disturbs my mind and when I leave home I pray every day and move around my house and ask God for protection because I don’t know if I will be back again. I don’t have a positive job morale that I am a police officer and I am going to work. There was an incident that happened not long ago to our Warrant Officer who resides in Newlands here in Durban. He heard a noise at night in his son’s room and when the Warrant opened the door, the suspect stabbed his son immediately and my colleague shot the suspect. Imagine, two dead bodies at the same time. The sad part is that my colleague is traumatized by the death of his child but was asked why he did not put the firearm in the safe and was put into a cell. He is attending court cases even now, meaning the state does not worry about us at all, but puts the rights of criminals first. This is very traumatizing, even to us as his colleagues” (SSI-Sergeant).*

*“This makes us very emotional when a member was killed by criminals. Some members become very scared to do their work accordingly as they fear for their lives” (SSI-Constable).*

The analysis of the above data revealed that the participants were aware of police killings that had occurred not only in KZN Province, but in other provinces Gauteng and the Western Cape as well. Some participants mentioned that police killings in other provinces also caused trauma and loss of morale. The lack of support by means of debriefings and counselling is noteworthy, and it is a travesty that surviving officers and even victims such as the father whose son was killed during the invasion of his private property never received assistance. It was particularly the participants who had been close to the victims who had been killed who felt traumatized, but the effects were noted in those who had only heard of such incidents as well. Against this backdrop, it was important to determine if the participants were aware of or had been exposed to preventive measures taken by SAPS Management to curb the scourge of police killings and to protect them as officers of the law.

#### **4.2.6 Preventive measures taken by SAPS Management**

Former Minister of Police, Fikile Mbalula, implemented a policy that encouraged the use of deadly force, terming it a ‘shoot to kill’ strategy. He argued that, when criminals kill the police, it is tantamount to killing the nation (Mbalula, 2017). Major Thulani Zwane, spokesperson for the KZN SAPS, agrees with this view: “When criminals attack, police officials must defend



themselves. They must always react with the same force shown to them” (Cowan, 2016:n.p.). The participants were aware of this policy and commented that certain measures had been put in place to execute it.

*“Yes, regular training has been introduced and some members have been issued with bulletproof vests” (FGD-Lt. Colonel).*

*“Yes, there are preventive measures in conjunction with the Department of Justice to bring back the life sentence” (FGD-Lt. Colonel).*

*“Yes, training has been introduced and regular fitness programmes [are conducted]” (FGD-Lt. Colonel).*

*“Yes, members are issued with protective gear. Education of members on safety measures. Operations held to flush out criminals and communication with the media. But trauma counselling and debriefing need to be implemented soonest” (SDG-Captain).*

*“Management has tried to issue bulletproof vests which is not totally a solution not to get killed and members are not supported with transport as most members get killed whilst on their way to/from work” (FGD-Sergeant).*

*“They are, but are not enough. We are told to put bulletproof vests on which are very heavy, especially when you walk a distance and the head and feet are not covered. At college we were told to be alert, do not relax, be vigilant and we attend small parades where we are briefed” (SSI-Sergeant).*

*“We are taught to be careful when we approach criminals, we go for shooting training and attend refresher courses, but it’s not often since we go once in a year and that is not enough for us” (SSI-Sergeant).*

*“Yes, station lectures have been implemented” (SSI-Sergeant).*

*“I have heard about unions but to tell you the truth, I have not heard anyone saying the union helps. I don’t know when it works to protect us as police officials” (SSI-Sergeant).*

*“More training is done in tactical skills to deal with violent situations, so that when the police get [into a shooting conflict] it must not be the police who are killed. We are not saying the criminals should be the ones [to die], but there should be fewer incidents of police killings and we should try to eliminate police killings” (SSI-Sergeant).*

*“Members are being urged to...be on guard/attentive and always wear a bulletproof vest, for example Eastern Cape SAPS police were ambushed” (SSI-Constable).*

*“We have been given the correct equipment to secure ourselves and are also taken on tactical courses, but unfortunately not every member attends those tactical courses” (SSI-Constable).*

*“Synthesis, bulletproof vests, not visiting taverns and to be cautious at all times” (SSI-Captain).*

*“Yes, there is continuous training on the safety of police, standard orders, national instructions and police safety is always emphasized. Police barracks [i.e., police are encouraged to live in barracks as only police officials live there]. Barracks are normally safe and are for singles and couples who are normally safe there” (SSI-Warrant Officer).*

The above responses revealed that preventive measures were undoubtedly in place to curb police killings in the selected area in KZN Province. These measures included continuous training in safety and security, the encouragement of police officials to use police barracks, the use of bulletproof vests, not to visit inappropriate places such as taverns, community crime awareness programmes, and lectures at station level.

The following theme that emerged was the challenges experienced in addressing police killings.

#### 4.2.7 Challenges in addressing police killings

Chetty (2016) argues that some police officers tend to become involved in protection rackets as they protect one criminal group (e.g., drug dealers or taxi operators) and victimize another for financial gain. As a result, they may be killed by rival groups or criminal syndicates to whom they may pose a threat.

*“Politicians give community members empty promises which tend to turn to violence when police are called and they get killed” (SSI-Warrant).*

*“Heavy sentences for such killings [presumably such as those referred to above] and quick prosecution of offenders are not put in place; that’s my opinion” (FGD-Lt. Colonel).*

The majority of the participants argued that some police members were corrupt as they collaborated with criminals and some were also drug dealers. Such officers are naturally vulnerable as they run the risk of getting killed by criminals. Moreover, they are a threat to rival groups because they carry firearms that are targeted by criminals. In many instances, members of the public take the law into their own hands and retaliate against corruption within the police, which was a point that was highlighted by some participants.

Poverty exists as a result of high unemployment and desperate people then revert to criminal activities as a means of ensuring their survival. It was in light of this fact that the respondents commented that socioeconomic conditions were also a major factor in the killing of police officers.

*“Police are involved in corruption and work together with criminals. Members of the public take the law into their own hands; this means criminals do not respect the criminal justice system. The socioeconomic issues [that lead to crime] begin in the community” (SSI-Warrant Officer).*

*“Criminals are more powerful than us. Members do not listen when they are told to wear bulletproof vests. Another thing is, corruption among police officials who work together with drug dealers” (SSI-Warrant Officer).*

*“We do not think alike, as we hear from the radio that police commit crimes themselves” (SSI-Constable).*

*“The challenges of police killings are that some members of the public take the law into their own hands when they are not satisfied with the work of the police” (SSI-Sergeant).*

*“It is not easy. We do not use bulletproof vests as we are told. Others do not want to as they [the vests] are heavy. Most SAPS management members are in their offices and do not know about police work” (FGD- SSI-Sergeant).*

The above comments reiterated the fact that, despite regular communications about safety precautions to members at all levels of the force in the province, members are still attacked and/or killed when on or off duty in situations that could have been avoided. One of the main reasons is the non-compliance with national and provincial instructions. The participants commented that, in certain instances, members of the SAPS expose themselves unnecessarily to attackers by disregarding factors that adversely affect their safety.

*“Police are seen as cowards because they carry firearms every day and the community is not responding sympathetically to police killings. The law in the country is too lenient. I am not saying police officers must go shoot people. But we arrest criminals and tomorrow they are out and they come and say to us: ‘You arrested me but ha, I am out!’ We can bring them to jail and they get a lawyer and they are out. They come and swear at us and talk about having rights...Students who stay in residences are so disrespectful and talk about knowing their rights” (SSI-Captain).*

Some participants opined that management was ignorant of the challenges involved in field work. They argued that, if these managers were more involved in the reality of dealing with criminals, they might try to do something more drastic about police killings such as providing the right equipment like radios and phones with airtime for easy communication to call for backup when needed.

*“We, as we work on the ground, know what happens on the ground but management does not know about [the dangers of] field work. Another thing is that people were influenced during the apartheid era. When you attend to a complaint without a communicator radio and you arrive at the scene, you do not have airtime [and you cannot] call for backup. In Cape Town where I worked before we had such equipment but here in KZN we do not have communicator radios. National instructions seem as if they come from people who do not understand police work. We lack resources and blue lights should not be used as criminals run away quickly or hide when they see it because they know it is a police van” (SS-Sergeant).*

Two noteworthy comments were that criminals had more rights than the police and that the union that was supposed to be the guardian of police rights was ineffective:

*“Criminals have more rights than police officials. Criminals use these right wrongfully. I have heard about the Police Union but I have never heard of any member getting helped from them” (SSI-Sergeant).*

The difference between police management and officers on the ground was also highlighted more than once, and so was the need for a closer relationship between police officials and community members. One officer’s comments were particularly noteworthy in this regard:

*There is no clear plan for police officers on the ground and no strategy to deal with it. Police have complained about a lack of officers, support, resources and not enough backup. Now, through proper leadership unfolding, we are able to try to resolve these issues. It is not enough to tell an officer to be cautious of their surroundings. There needs to be a better relationship between our communities and the police. It is important that relations are improved, as the public will be more willing to report whatever information they have to a service they trust” (FGD-Captain).*

Clearly, police killing is a big challenge in KZN Province because the police are a stumbling block for criminals. They are seen as the enemy and therefore police in uniform are at risk of being killed. The lack of appropriate equipment was also cited as a major barrier to efficient policing. These points that were raised corroborated the views of Police and Prisons Civil

Rights Union (POPCRU) spokesperson Richard Mamabolo, who stated that the SAPS showed no clear initiative in dealing with attacks on its members (Petersen, 2017:n.p.).

The final theme, namely the effectiveness of the responses to police killings in KZN Province, elicited various noteworthy comments.

#### **4.2.8 Effectiveness of responses to police killings in KZN Province**

One critique that suggested that the response to police killings was not effective was that criminals were not treated harshly enough:

*“Harsher or stiffer sentences for criminals who killed police officials will be a lesson to others that killing a police [officer] is unacceptable.”*

It was felt that harsher sentences would assist the police in better protecting their members against attacks and that it would deter criminals from murdering officers. Thus it was felt that stiffer sentences for police murderers should be instituted, and that bringing back the death penalty could possibly curb this crime.

The majority of the respondents commented that more task teams needed to be formed as backup for members in crime-stricken areas and hot-spots. Thus stiffer sentences, the reinstatement of the death penalty, and the establishment and utilization of CPFs were seen as possible solutions. Another comment was that traditional chiefs should be to the eyes and ears of the police as they might have the power to help reduce crime. The deployment of more members at grass roots level was also a suggestion.

*“More special task teams to be formed to back up members in crime-stricken areas and hot-spots. Criminals must be given harsher sentences or the death sentence. CPFs, chiefs and indunas must be used as the eyes and ears of the police in reducing crime” (FGD-Lt. Colonel).*

*“Although the answer is directed at KZN Province, I believe that it is nationwide. More resources, adequate education and positive motivation by management for people on the ground. Criminals should be killed themselves because when they kill a police [member] they are killing the state. Interaction with politicians or CPFs and*

*the police on a daily basis [is necessary], not only when an incident occurred” (FGD-Captain).*

*“Crime prevention forum (CPF) structures [involving indunas and chiefs] and police departments have to team up to spread the joint gospel that the killing of a police official must stop and to have a strong bond to stop criminality. Members have to be encouraged to go for counselling when they have personal problems because some police officers commit homicide due to stress or love triangle quarrels. Lectures need to be improved as well and we need to be able to express our views on what we are not happy about in the execution of our duties” (SSI-Warrant Officer).*

Some participants in the FGD raised the idea that the SAPS has to employ more members at grass roots level, especially in terms of vehicle and foot patrols so that community members may be protected.

*“I will say the organization must try to employ more members at grass roots [level] as most members are needed for patrols. It may be vehicle patrols or foot beats. In South Africa it is very rare to see a Bobby on the beat. This kind of patrol must be brought back for the community to feel protected” (FGD-Sergeant).*

The institution and effective employment of CPFs, indunas and chiefs was recommended as they could be the eyes and ears of the police. Should such partnerships be forged, violence might decrease and the police would no longer be viewed as the enemy but as a partner in safeguarding the community. The deployment of task teams as backup in crime-stricken areas and the use of more vehicle and foot patrols (such as the ‘Bobbies’ in the UK) were strongly supported by the participants. They also felt strongly about reinstating the death penalty for the murderers of police officials in particular.

*“The death penalty should be brought back for suspects that murdered police officials as this has a negative impact in the community” (FGD-Lt. Colonel).*

*“The law needs to provide harsher punishments for criminals who are found guilty of police killings” (SSI-Constable).*

*“If only the justice system can be very strict when it comes to criminals who kill police and they should be given life sentences” (SSI-Sergeant).*

*“Awareness campaigns [are necessary] so that the community can be aware that the police are also human beings. Respect for the police should be maintained” (SSI-Sergeant).*

*“We as members need to stay vigilant at all times because there are so many days when we are called to attend to complaints. Some complaints are so dangerous; for example, we are sometimes called when the domestic [worker] complains about a husband fighting with his wife and we are called” (SSI-Sergeant).*

*“Increase salaries to stop police corruption. Hold workshops to motivate police officials...and the employment of more police officials” (SSI-Warrant Officer).*

The last comment is noteworthy as corruption among police officers because of greed and the need to augment their income was often mentioned.

### **4.3 Summary**

The data revealed the need for the implementation of harsher punishments for criminals who killed police officers. So strongly did some participants feel about this that they even recommended the reinstatement of the death penalty for police killers. The comments also corroborated the literature in terms of the traumatic impact that police killing have on the deceased's colleagues and families. A noteworthy finding was that police officials felt that they also had rights, particularly because they fight on the side of the law. However, many felt that criminals' rights came first because many police killers were granted bail by the courts even if they were guilty of first-degree murder. Most also felt strongly about stiffer sentences and the reinstatement of the death penalty.



The lack of personnel was a point that was raised strongly by all the participants. As officers in the field, some argued that more task teams need to be formed as backup for their colleagues in crime-stricken and hot-spot areas. A noteworthy comment was that CPFs and chiefs should be utilized as the eyes and ears of the police in areas where crime is rife and where their influence is strong. The deployment of more vehicle and foot patrols was also a strong suggestion. The community should work hand in hand with the police to eradicate crime in communities.

The aim of the study was to investigate police killings when police officers were on and off duty, with special reference to robberies. The data revealed that the participants understood police killings to occur when police officers were both on and off duty. However, a quantitative comparison of the extent of these killings was beyond the scope of this study, and therefore it was not determined definitively whether the killing of police officers occurred predominantly when they were on or off duty. Also, the participants were not in possession of accurate data at the time of the interviews and the focus group discussion, and therefore the data that were obtained predominantly reflected the opinions and ‘second-hand’ information (i.e., news reports and anecdotal information) of the participants only. In only a limited number of instances did the participants refer to their factual knowledge of an officer or officers who had been killed.

However, what could be determined was that the theft of police firearms was a contributing factor to police killings in the study area. These robberies seemed to occur indiscriminately and opportunistically when officers were both on and off duty, and a determining factor seemed to be the fact that the police officer who was targeted was present at an opportune place and time. It was also elucidated that the high unemployment rate motivated criminals to kill police officials for their service pistols with the probable intention of committing more crimes.

In terms of the security and safety of police officials in the study area, it was evident that they had been issued protective equipment such as bulletproof vests and firearms; however, these vests were apparently not protective enough as the police were loath to wear them and police killings were believed to be escalating regardless of this measure. Moreover, it is common knowledge that the police tend not to wear these vests when they are off duty and they are thus vulnerable targets at these times, and particularly when they travel to and from work in the absence of safe transport or visit a tavern to relax and socialize. Ironically, they have become

vulnerable as easy targets in such venues. Bus stops, taxi ranks and even private homes were noted as particular hot-spots for police killings.

Some participants admitted that they had been exposed to awareness campaigns and warned to be vigilant at all times, but these efforts appeared not to be sufficient as police killings still occur. The killing of police officials notably impacted other police officials negatively and caused them to lose morale, as was admitted by three participants in particular who had lost a friend or colleague in an attack. It also generated increased absenteeism. The participants were in agreement that police officials were exposed to danger, particularly when they travelled by public transport. They were aware of police officials generally being ambushed en-route to and from work.

In conclusion, the commitment and dedication of the participants were undeniable and commendable. The data clearly revealed that they worked under severe strain and pressure and many admitted to being afraid and having low morale.

The following chapter will provide a more detailed summary of the findings with specific reference to the aim and objectives mentioned in Chapter one. Recommendations and suggestions for further research on police killings will also be provided.

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **5.1 Introduction**

The aim of the study was to explore police killings by interviewing SAPS members who were sampled from a selected SAPS cluster in KZN Province. The investigation focused on robbery and the killing of police officers when they were either on or off duty. The objectives that guided the study were to:

- Explain the concept of police killings:
- Determine when and in what manner (i.e., conditions of) police killings occurred in KZN Province;
- Analyse the causes of police killings in KZN Province; and
- Explore the effects of police killings on surviving SAPS members and the SAPS, with peripheral reference to the families of deceased police members in the study area.

By rigorous adherence to a scientific study design for the collection and exploration of the data, the objectives were achieved. Recommendations for future research pertaining to off and on duty police killings that are based on the findings will also be presented.

#### **5.2 Salient Findings**

The following discussion pertains to the conclusions derived from the results of the findings and are based on the achievement of the objectives that gave direction and impetus to the study with the express purpose of achieving the aim of this project.

##### **5.2.1 The concept of police killings**

Data that were relevant to the objectives of the study were elicited by means of semi-structured interviews and a focus group discussion that were conducted with police official participants from four police stations in the study area. The first objective of the study was achieved as the

participants clearly and unambiguously shared their understanding of the concept of police killings and it was evident that they had in-depth, although often not first-hand, understanding of this phenomenon. Although the majority of the participants had not been exposed directly to the death of a colleague (see Chapter four), it was evident that the SAPS officials understood police killing as the unlawful killing of police members, whether they were on or off duty. Many stated that the killing of a police official occurred regardless of the fact that the perpetrator knew that the person under attack was a police official. In such attacks police officers generally lose their lives and their firearms, although some killings are for other reasons such as revenge, as was the case in an incident in Fort Beaufort in the Eastern Cape where the firearm of the victim had not been taken. Some participants went further by stating that such killings included members of the Metro Police.

### **5.2.2 When and in what manner police killings occur in KZN Province**

The second objective was to determine when and in what manner police killings commonly occur in KZN.

Police officials are commonly under threat when they respond to complaints of crime and criminals then respond by fighting back. Police officers are consequently killed as they are directly in the line fire. Thus the trend is that police officers are killed during the execution of their duties, and those wearing uniforms and/or driving marked vehicles are special targets. When criminals ambush police and catch them unawares, they take their firearms and ammunition.

Police killings also commonly occur during armed robberies and cash-in-transit heists. A particular strategy is to ambush the police. Police killings involve physical or violent contact that usually occurs as a result of a violent altercation between the criminals and their victim/s. It was also found that police officials are particularly vulnerable when they do not have access to safe transport and thus have to use public transport. Police officials carry their handguns on their person when they are in uniform and are thus highly visible and identifiable at bus stops, taxi ranks and even train stations and the participants mentioned these as hot-spots where the police are deliberately or opportunistically targeted.

It was also mentioned that police officials are targeted at home, with the primary motive of robbery. However, when a policeman intervenes and draws a weapon, the chances are good

that the perpetrator will fire first and kill the policemen, as the perpetrator is on the alert and has the advantage of not being surprised. One such incident was cited by a respondent. The tragic aftermath of this incident was that the policemen was viewed as a criminal and subjected to due processes of the law.

Another common location where police officials are vulnerable is in taverns or pubs. The threatening situation in these venues is exacerbated when the patrons become inebriated and altercations erupt. The police official, who is most probably not wearing a uniform and is off duty, may still draw a weapon, or another patron with nefarious intentions may draw a weapon, and the police official may be shot or knifed and killed.

It was also stated that police officials are killed in public places such as a mall. The motive for such attacks clearly is robbery of an extensive nature. In such instances the attack may have been well planned and may be executed with assault rifles, as one participant cited.

Police murders are also associated with a love triangle when one partner seeks out the delinquent other, sometimes in a public place, and kills that person execution style.

It was revealed that the two most common types of weapons used to kill police officers are knives and handguns. However, it was also eluded that assault rifles are used during heists, extensive robberies or vehicle searches.

In terms of the time when police officials are predominantly under attack, the study found that the shooting or ambushing of police officials occur both while they are on duty and off duty. However, as quantitative and statistical data had not been obtained for the study area in particular, it could not be definitively determined if these killings are perpetrated predominantly while police officers are on or off duty. Respondents who commented that police killings occurred at a particular time period or under a particular condition voiced their opinions that were not based on statistical data.

### **5.2.3 The causes of police killings**

Factors contributing to police killings are deprivation and poverty due to unemployment, and South Africa as a developing country is experiencing high levels of unemployment particularly among the youth. Moreover, the migration of people from African countries to seek employment also places heavy burdens on the economy. Although the participants did not refer

predominantly to conflict with foreign nationals who have migrated to South Africa, their comments alluded to the point that their presence is an extra burden and a threat to the lives of the police.

Thus high unemployment rates, socio economic factors and poverty take a heavy toll on the lives of police officers. Poverty-stricken citizens revert to crime for their survival and want firearms to commit these crimes. The majority of the participants highlighted the fact that firearms are the predominant weapon used in police killings, followed by lack of transport to and from home. They also highlighted the weakening of the criminal justice system as a major contributor as well as insufficient equipment and police officers visiting taverns and getting inebriated. The expansion of informal settlements in KZN Province was also seen as a contributing factor as these areas have become the bubbling cauldrons of crime. Moreover, police officers are not regarded as human beings by criminals, and this disrespect is a catalyst that provokes violent attacks on members of the SAPS.

Criminals manage to procure and are thus in possession of illegal firearms. Moreover, the criminal justice system is riddled with problems that have rendered the prosecution and incarceration of guilty criminals problematic. Many respondents lamented the fact that criminals walk the streets again soon after their arrest because the CJS was unable to process their case efficiently.

Moreover, insufficient and outdated equipment is lacking. In particular, a lack of quality bulletproof vests to cover the head and no alarmed vehicles for use to respond to armed robberies was highlighted. Armed robberies are rife and the perpetrators are very violent. Police are also very easily ambushed in urban and rural areas. It would therefore be prudent to establish satellite and mobile police units in high-risk and informal settlement areas where the best trained police officers should be deployed to execute military-style operations in the quest to curb criminal activities and thus prevent the murder of police officials.

#### **5.2.4 The effects of police killings**

The killing of police officers has a negative impact on the SAPS as well as on their families. Psychological effects such as post-traumatic stress disorder, substance abuse, absenteeism and domestic violence have become common in traumatized police households. It was tragic to hear that the state had not supported a traumatized father who had killed an invader in defence

of his son. Instead, he was treated as a common criminal. Other traumatized officers also admitted that they had received no support and had to seek help at their own expense.

The findings thus revealed the real threat of unnecessary attrition from the SAPS due to stress and trauma. However, if management refers traumatized and affected members for debriefing and counselling as soon as the incident happened, trauma might be contained and the officer might be fit for the execution of his/her duties in good time.

The majority of the respondents highlighted the fact that police killings cause loss of job interest. Trauma and stress also cause a lack of self-image resulting in the abuse of substances and increasing absenteeism. Moreover, the colleagues of targeted police officers are adversely impacted by the death of a well-known colleague and friend. According to Minnar (2003:2), a high level of police killings seriously impacts the morale of colleagues while it also traumatizes those who witnessed such killings. This undeniably leads to police members resigning from the force to find a less stressful and dangerous job. These findings clearly suggest that SAPS Management should look after their employees as they play a significant role in keeping the peace in society and vulnerable communities cannot survive without them.

Police killings were shown to cause serious and often lingering and permanent physical, psychological and material damage, often leaving scars that impact victim families and colleagues for a very long time.

## **5.3 Recommendations**

### **5.3.1 General recommendations**

Attacks on and the murder of police officials, whether they are on or off duty at police stations or in high-risk areas, should be treated as a matter of grave concern by SAPS Management. Due to the nature of their work and the areas where they perform their duties, police officers are constantly at risk. Thus the safety and well-being of all members of the SAPS should receive first priority in the organization.

- Station commanders should make sure that each police official abides by the requirement to wear a bulletproof vest without complaint.

- Human resources and equipment shortages during specific shifts must be timeously reported and resolved by station and cluster commanders or responsible officers and the poor provision of equipment should be immediately addressed.
- Station commanders must ensure that additional members are called up to address shortages left by absent or sick personnel. This should particularly apply when shortages of staff occur when units are deployed on patrols. The availability of backups at all times is also vital.
- The CJS should be reviewed so that criminals who are found guilty of the murder of police officers are jailed for life. Harsh sentences should be imposed to demonstrate that killing a police officer is tantamount to a crime against the state.
- The incarceration of and harsh treatment meted out to killers of police officers should be widely publicized to assure communities that such criminals will be brought to book and severely punished.
- Corruption among police officers should be exposed and whistle blowers should be rewarded and not shunned.

### **5.3.2 Recommendations for future studies**

- Future research should consider the possibility of reinstating the death penalty for criminals who killed police officials. Criminals who kill police officers exacerbate violence as they do not want peace in the country. Such people should be removed from society and pay the highest possible price for their crime.
- Researchers should also consider available data on police killings and conduct studies of a larger scope to determine the conditions under which police officers are at risk in more detail. Both qualitative and quantitative studies should elicit comparative data to determine definitively under what conditions and in what areas police officers are most at risk, and these findings should be utilized in policies and guidelines that will safeguard police officials in the execution of their duties to, as a matter of urgency, save their lives.



## 5.4 Concluding Remarks

- Due to the nature of the duties of members of the SAPS, there is the real possibility that they might be attacked. It is thus imperative that members ensure that all measures to prevent getting harmed, on and off duty, are implemented and adhered to.
- The safety and well-being of all members in the South African Police Service should be a priority for the government and the criminal justice system. This concern should filter through to the citizenry who should be encouraged to trust and respect the men and women in blue who are their first line of defence against the tide of violence that threatens to overwhelm our society.
- Despite regular communications and safety precaution information, it has been noted that members of the SAPS are still attacked and/or killed either when they are on or off duty in situations that could have been avoided. One of the main reasons for this phenomenon is often members' non-compliance with existing national and provincial instructions. In certain instances, members of the SAPS expose themselves unnecessarily to attacks by disregarding factors that may adversely affect their safety.
- The findings suggest that police agencies and personnel should do more to help the families of injured/killed police officers as well as police officers who witnessed the death of a colleague and friend. Policy should be formulated to provide long-term contact and assistance for these officers and families.
- SAPS officials should collaborate with communities and their leaders and should be visible at all times. We cannot curb police killings if violence in general is not addressed, as violence that is rife in the South African society is a catalyst for police killings.

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## **APPENDIX One**

### **INTERVIEW QUESTIONS**

1. Has police killings increased in the last five (5) years in the Durban KZN Province?  
(Elaborate your answer).
2. What does the concept “police killings” entails?
3. What are the common types of police killings in KZN?
4. What are the contributing factors to police killings in KZN?
5. Based from your experience, what are the effects of police killings on other officials in KZN?
6. Are there any preventive measures that have been taken by SAPS Management to curb this scourge? (Elaborate your answer).
7. In your own opinion, what are the challenges of addressing police killings in KZN Province?
8. Anything to add on effectively responding to police killings in KZN Province?

## APPENDIX Two

*South African Police Service*

*South African Police Service*

Enquiries	Private	Telephone	(012) 959 128
Private Bag 904	0001	Fax No	

South African Police Service

My reference: My reference: 3/34/2

THE DIVISIONAL COMMISSIONER: RESEARCH  
SOUTH AFRICAN POLICE SERVICE  
PRETORIA  
0001

Enquiries Name: Lt Col Joubert  
AC Thenga  
Tel: (012) 393 3118  
Email: JoubertG@saps.gov.za

Ms N Noxhaka  
UNIVERSITY OF KWAZULU-NATAL

**RE: PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN SAPS: AN EXPLORATION OF POLICE KILLINGS IN KWAZULU-NATAL PROVINCE: UNIVERSITY OF KWAZULU-NATAL: MASTERS DEGREE: RESEARCHER: N NOXHAKA**

The above subject matter refers.

You are hereby granted approval for your research study on the above mentioned topic in terms of National Instruction 1 of 2006.

Further arrangements regarding the research study may be made with the following office:

The Provincial Commissioner: KwaZulu-Natal:

- **Contact Person:** Col Van der Linde
- **Contact Details:** (013) 325 4841 / 082 496 1142
- **Email Address:** vanderLinde@saps.gov.za

Kindly adhere to paragraph 6 of our Attached letter signed on the **2018-04-11** with the same above reference number.

  
LIEUTENANT GENERAL  
DIVISIONAL COMMISSIONER: RESEARCH  
DR BM ZULU

DATE: 2018/07/05



## APPENDIX Three



20 September 2017

Ms Nomasiza Noxhaka (217078814)  
School of Applied Human Sciences – Criminology & Forensic Studies  
Howard College Campus

Dear Ms Noxhaka,

Protocol Reference Number: HSS/1843 017M  
Project title: An exploration of police killings in KwaZulu-Natal Province

### Full Approval – Full Committee Reviewed Protocol

In response to your application received 15 November 2017, the Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee has considered the abovementioned application and the protocol has been granted **FULL APPROVAL**.

Any alteration/s to the approved research protocol i.e. Questionnaire/Interview Schedule, Informed Consent Form, Title of the Project, Location of the Study, Research Approach and Methods must be reviewed and approved through the amendment /modification prior to its implementation. In case you have further queries, please quote the above reference number.

**PLEASE NOTE:** Research data should be securely stored in the discipline/department for a period of 5 years.

The ethical clearance certificate is only valid for a period of 3 years from the date of issue. Thereafter Recertification must be applied for on an annual basis.

I take this opportunity of wishing you everything of the best with your study.

Yours faithfully

Dr Ronicka Mudaky (Deputy Chair)  
Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee

/pm

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Cc Academic Leader Research: Dr Jean Steyn  
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