

UNIVERSITY OF KWAZULU-NATAL

Violence at the workplace: A study of trends in Durban

By

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Abstract

Employees across a wide variety of organisational backgrounds face varying degrees of violent behaviours, at their equally varying places of work, by perpetrators ranging from their superiors, peers, junior staff and customers. The description of what can be defined as “violence” and what constitutes the boundaries of a “workplace” were established in this study, which allowed for the aim of this study to be addressed. The aim of this study was to gauge the extent of violence at the workplace through a study of trends in Durban, South Africa. In attempting to understand the extent of, reaction to, and propensity to commit violence at work, the research questions were answered, which also allowed for measures to be drafted to pre-empt violence at the workplace. A sample of 214 employees was drawn from commercial areas in Durban with 61.3% from the private sector and 38.7% from the public sector. 9.5% of respondents were from senior management, 20.6% from junior management and 69.9% from non-managerial positions. The mean age of respondents was 37 years, with 61.5% being male and 38.5% female. This quantitative study obtained primary data from a self-completed, paper based, questionnaire which was analysed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). The prevalence and extent of violence at the workplace was confirmed through the findings with some of the salient features being that employees would not commit violence if they were not subjected to violence themselves. Violence in the public sector was more prevalent than in the private sector. A significant association was found between the employee's tendency to blame the employer for the violence experienced where the higher the unfair treatment experienced, the more the employee will reduce their commitment to the employer. Practical and implementable recommendations were proposed to reduce the possibility of violence at the workplace. This study has made a contribution to the presently limited body of knowledge on violence at the workplace in Durban. The information presented in this study provides senior managers and leaders of organisations with facts, figures and evidence of the extent of violence at the workplace and propensity for employees to engage in violent behaviours.

Table of contents

Description	Page
Title page	i
Declaration	ii
Acknowledgements	iii
Abstract	iv
Table of contents	v
List of figures	ix
List of tables	x
List of acronyms	xii

CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

1.1	Introduction	1
1.2	Motivation for the study	2
1.3	Focus of the study	2
1.4	Problem statement	3
1.5	Objectives	3
1.6	Limitations of the study	3
1.7	Summary	5

CHAPTER TWO

Violence at the Workplace: A review of literature

2.1	Introduction	6
2.2	The definition of violence at the workplace	6
2.2.1	Formulating a definition for violence at the workplace	9
2.2.2	Categorizing workplace violence	10
2.3	Nature of violence	11
2.3.1	Emotional violence and the threat of violence	12
2.3.2	Verbal violence	13
2.3.3	Physical violence	13

2.4	The phenomenon of violence at the workplace	13
2.5	The South African experience of workplace violence	16
2.6	Prevalence of violence	19
2.7	Impact on organisational productivity	19
2.8	Preventing violence at the workplace	21
2.8.1	Assessment of risk	22
2.8.2	Developing a violence preventions strategy	23
2.9	The effects of violence at the workplace on work performance	24
2.10	Summary	26

CHAPTER THREE

Research Methodology

3.1	Introduction	27
3.2	Aims and objectives	27
3.3	Sample techniques and data collection strategies	28
3.3.1	Sample technique	28
3.3.2	Data collection strategies	30
3.4	Research design and methods	30
3.4.1	Description and purpose	30
3.4.1.1	Construction of the instrument	31
3.4.1.2	Recruitment of study participants	34
3.4.2	Reliability and validity	35
3.4.3	Administration of the questionnaire	36
3.5	Analysis of the data	37
3.6	Summary	37

CHAPTER FOUR

Analysis, Findings and Discussion of Results

4.1	Introduction	38
4.2	Profile of respondents and reliability	38
4.3	Objective One: The extent to which employees have been subjected to violence at the workplace	42
4.3.1	Crime, unfair treatment and violence at workplace	42

4.3.2	Violence according to gender	44
4.3.3	Employees subjected to verbal, physical and emotional violence at work	47
4.3.4	Violence according to employment sector	49
4.3.5	Violence according to position	51
4.3.6	The extent of crime and violence at the workplace	53
4.4	Objective Two: The reaction of employees to violence at the workplace	54
4.4.1	Fear	54
4.4.2	Reduced commitment to employer	64
4.4.3	Confidence of respondents	69
4.4.4	The effect of crime, violence and unfair treatment on employees	72
4.5	Objective Three: Propensity of employees to engage in violence	73
4.6	Objective four: How management can pre-empt crime and violence at work	77
4.7	Summary of respondents	78
4.8	Summary	79

CHAPTER FIVE

Recommendations and Conclusions

5.1	Introduction	80
5.2	Addressing the aims and objectives	80
5.2.1	Objective one: The extent to which employees have been subjected to violence at the workplace	80
5.2.2	Objective two: The reaction of employees to violence at the workplace	81
5.2.3	Objective three: Propensity of employees to engage in violence	81
5.2.4	Objective four: How management can pre-empt violence at work	81
5.2.5	Decoding the phenomenon of violence at the workplace	82

5.3	Research implications	82
5.4	Recommendations	83
5.5	Recommendations for future research studies	84
5.6	Summary	84

REFERENCES	86
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APPENDICES

Appendix 1	Questionnaire	91
Appendix 2	Ethical clearance	96

List of Figures

Number	Description	Page
Figure 2.1	Maslow's hierarchy of needs model	25
Figure 4.1	Verbal violence experienced by males and females	45
Figure 4.2	Physical violence experienced by males and females	45
Figure 4.3	Emotional violence experienced by male and females	46
Figure 4.4	Means for types of violence and perpetrators	47
Figure 4.5	Means for sectors and perpetrator combinations	50
Figure 4.6	Verbal violence experienced by each employment level	51
Figure 4.7	Physical violence experienced by each employment level	52
Figure 4.8	Emotional violence experienced by each employment level	52
Figure 4.9	Mean victim of crime rating versus age groups	56
Figure 4.10	Mean fear of being a victim of crime versus having been a victim of crime	57
Figure 4.11	Mean fear of being subjected to violence at work versus having been a victim of crime	60
Figure 4.12	Type of fear versus fear rating	62
Figure 4.13	Fear rating versus perpetrator rating per perpetrator	63
Figure 4.14	"Reduction in commitment" mean per perpetrator and perpetrator rating	67
Figure 4.15	"Reduction in commitment" mean per type of violence and perpetrator rating	68
Figure 4.16	Self-confidence versus violence-related reduced commitment	71
Figure 4.17	Mean value per violence related question	78

List of Tables

Number	Description	Page
Table 2.1	Examples of violent behaviors at work	11
Table 2.2	Primary costs of workplace violence	20
Table 2.3	Secondary costs of workplace violence	21
Table 3.1	Probability sampling	29
Table 3.2	Non-probability sampling	29
Table 4.1	Management positions of the respondents	39
Table 4.2	Ages of respondents	39
Table 4.3a	Position versus Age	40
Table 4.3b	Position versus age percentages for employees older than 30 years	40
Table 4.4	Position versus gender	41
Table 4.5	Victims of crime at the workplace	42
Table 4.6	Unfair treatment and violence at the workplace	43
Table 4.7	Workplace violence per gender	44
Table 4.8	Categorical data analysis results for perpetrator, type and gender	46
Table 4.9	Categorical data analysis results for perpetrator and type	47
Table 4.10	Categorical data analysis results for perpetrator, type and sector	49
Table 4.11	Categorical data analysis results for perpetrator, type and position	53
Table 4.12a	Fear of being a victim of crime according to sector of employment	54
Table 4.12b	Fear of being a victim of crime versus position	55
Table 4.12c	Fear of being a victim of crime versus gender	55
Table 4.12d	Fear of being a victim of crime versus age	56
Table 4.12e	Fear of being a victim of crime versus having been a victim of crime	57
Table 4.13a	Fear of being subjected to violence at work versus sector of employment	58

Table 4.13b	Fear of being subjected to violence at work versus position	58
Table 4.13c	Fear of being subjected to violence at work versus gender	59
Table 4.13d	Fear of being subjected to violence at work versus age	59
Table 4.13e	Fear of being subjected to violence at work versus having been a victim of crime	60
Table 4.14	Categorical data analysis of fear rating versus type of fear, type of violence, perpetrator and perpetrator rating	61
Table 4.15	Type of fear versus fear rating	62
Table 4.16	Fear rating versus perpetrator rating per perpetrator	63
Table 4.17	Unfair treatment by employer versus reduced commitment to employer	64
Table 4.18	Blaming employer for violence endured versus violence reducing commitment to employer	64
Table 4.19	Categorical data analysis of reduction in commitment versus perpetrator rating per perpetrator and type of violence	66
Table 4.20	“Reduction in commitment” mean per perpetrator and perpetrator rating	66
Table 4.21	“Reduction in commitment” mean per type of violence and perpetrator rating	67
Table 4.22	Self-confidence versus having been a victim of crime at the workplace	69
Table 4.23	Self-confidence versus fearing being a victim of crime at the work place	70
Table 4.24	Self-confidence versus unfair treatment by employers	70
Table 4.25	Self-confidence versus violence related reduced commitment	71
Table 4.26	Commitment of verbal violence at workplace	73
Table 4.27a	Subjected to versus committed verbal violence: superior	74
Table 4.27b	Subjected to versus committed verbal violence: peer	74
Table 4.27c	Subjected to versus committed verbal violence: junior staff	75
Table 4.27d	Subjected to versus committed verbal violence: customer	75
Table 4.28	Person involved in verbal violence versus strongly disagree/disagree or strongly agree/agree ratings	76

List of Acronyms

Acronym	Description
CCMA	Commission for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration
CEOs	Chief Executive Officers
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
ILO	International Labour Office
LMX	Leader-member exchange
SPSS	Statistical Package for the Social Sciences
UKZN	University of Kwa-Zulu-Natal

CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

1.1 Introduction

Violence at the workplace seems to be on a steady increase according to Van Fleet and Van Fleet (2010). However, the wide range of violent behaviours makes it extremely difficult to define and consequently assess the prevalence, extent and effect of violent behaviours on staff and customers (Kennedy *et al.*, 2011).

The purpose of this study was to develop an acceptable definition of the phenomenon of “violence at the workplace” with the intention of identifying and measuring some of the broad types and levels of violence that exist in the workplace. The study tested and compared the types and levels of various forms of violence such as verbal, physical, emotional and the threat of violence which allowed for a comparison to be made on the extent to which victims and perpetrators were affected by violence at the workplace.

This study confirmed the prevalence and extent of violence at the workplace. In so doing, it showed the extent to which employees have been affected by verbal, physical and emotional violence, and the propensity for employees to engage in violent behaviours themselves.

This chapter elaborated on the motivation for undertaking this study and stated the benefits that stakeholders, who were involved in this study, may derive from it. Furthermore, the focus of the study was presented in order to show the direction that this study took. The problem statement was discussed, which lead on to the questions that this study intended to answer. The study objectives were presented, as well as the limitations of the study.

1.2 Motivation for the study

There appears to be no research undertaken to test the prevalence and extent of violence at the workplace in Durban, South Africa. The general view, in the absence of research, indicates that one's place of work may be a benign environment which is generally free from violence. Furthermore, management may not see or understand that their employees, who may be considered as the lifeblood of the organisation, may actually be a victim or perpetrator of violent behaviours at work.

This study was considered to be necessary for senior managers and CEOs who manage and lead various organisations. Both management, as well as their subordinates, may benefit from this study by understanding how the various forms of violence affect employees in an organisation. The study may enlighten management on patterns that emerge so that they may be better able to identify and manage not only the threat of violence, but also the varying degrees and types of violent behaviour demonstrated in the workplace.

Very little research on this topic had been conducted and therefore limited literature was available to inform this study. For this reason, the motivation for this study primarily revolved around gathering data to assess the prevalence and extent of verbal, physical, emotional and the threat of violence in Durban against employees in the public and private sectors, in order to decode the phenomenon of violence at the workplace. Through the review of the limited literature, application of the research methodology to be discussed later and the quantitative analysis, assessment and interpretation of data, this study contributed to a better understanding and enhanced the knowledge base pertaining to the issue of violence at the workplace in Durban. This exploratory study is original in its field and therefore adds to the scholarship of violence at the workplace.

1.3 Focus of the study

This study focused purely on the nature of, and extent to which violence occurs at the workplace. It did not delve into the nature of the organisations from which respondents were employed or the psychology of respondents.

1.4 Problem statement

Violence has become a major aspect in contemporary life. With numerous reports of violence transpiring in all facets of life, be it in the home, in social spheres as well as in places of learning such as schools and universities, there is a reasonable expectation that violence can also occur in the workplace. Furthermore, as varied as the places that violence can occur, so too are the varied forms of violence that could manifest in the workplace. It would be reasonable to expect that violence, even the threat of violence, would have both direct and indirect bearing on the productivity of employees and also affect employee morale, and if left unattended may have detrimental effects on the success of the organisation. The research problem served to analyse the impact of the various forms of violence that manifest in the workplace such as verbal, physical, emotional, as well as the threat of violence.

1.5 Objectives

The objectives of this study served to set out a broad outline of the areas that was focused on and addressed, in attempting to answer the problem statement as discussed above. The four objectives of this study are as follows:

- To understand the extent to which employees have been subjected to various forms of, including threats of, violence at the workplace at the hands of superiors, peers, junior staff members and customers.
- To understand the reaction of employees to various forms of violence, including the threat of violence at the workplace, at the hands of superiors, peers, junior staff members and customers.
- To assess the propensity of employees to engage in violence at the workplace themselves.
- To determine how management can pre-empt violence at the workplace.

1.6 Limitations of the study

The study intended to examine the experiences of a broad variety of employees from an equally broad and diverse variety of working environments. The respondents of this study were considered to be particularly representative of a

typical organisation. However, there were no respondents from the senior management level who were younger than 30 years of age. Whilst it may be possible for a person younger than 30 years of age to hold a senior management position, even in their own company as an entrepreneur, the sample proved this to be a rare occurrence. Since age and position of respondents were used purely for comparative analysis and did not form a critical component of the objectives of the study, it was not considered important to target further respondents younger than 30 years of age.

Wieser and Mata-Greenwood (2013) found that there was minimal information available on violence at places of work in countries categorized as 'developing'. During the review of literature, this finding proved to be exceptionally true to this study. Furthermore, most research into the study of violence at work was found to relate to specific fraternities such as nursing; even less material was available for workplace violence in Durban or South Africa. This limitation was further compounded by a lack of current or recent material. However, several older works provided sufficient information to gain a better understanding of this topic.

This study asked employees to indicate if they subjected a superior, peer, junior staff or customer to verbal violence. However, due to time constraints of respondents and length of the questionnaire it was decided not to ask if they also subjected a victim to physical, emotional or the threat of violence. Instead, it was decided to infer the finding of this question to ascertain the propensity of employees to commit an act of violence, which adequately served the purpose of the study.

As respondents answered questions on their own, circumstances may have occurred where they did not fully understand the question or rushed through the questionnaire in an attempt to complete it. This may have had a minor bearing on the overall quality of data.

Further investigation is warranted into the response of employees who were victims of workplace violence and still chose to remain at their place of employment or profession. The opportunity to investigate if they would leave their employment or

profession as a result of the threat or occurrence of violence at their workplace, and if not then why would they choose to remain should be explored further.

Empirical work pertaining to the solutions to workplace violence was not undertaken as the research instrument focused primarily on the gathering of data around incidents of workplace violence. This proved to be a limitation to the study.

1.7 Summary

In the daily working life of a typical employee very little attention, if any, is given to the prevalence, extent and ramifications of violence at the workplace. This chapter formulated the incentive to attend to this problem and outlines the overall focus and research objectives that guided the researcher in addressing the problem statement and research questions.

The next chapter will review the literature of violence at the workplace. It will define and explain the nature of this phenomenon, as well as investigate its prevalence and effects on the organisation and its employees.

CHAPTER TWO

Violence at the Workplace – A Review of Literature

2.1. Introduction

According to Van Fleet and Van Fleet (2010), violence at the workplace has increased dramatically from the last quarter of the twentieth century. The broad purpose of this study of violence at the workplace was to obtain insight into the prevalence of some of the different forms of violent behaviour at places of work, within the Durban metropolis. In doing so, the study aimed to identify trends of violent behaviour that have been experienced or inflicted by, or on, a variety of employees. This chapter will discuss the various interpretations of the concepts described as 'violence' and locations addressed as the 'workplace', the nature and causes of violence, various types of violent behaviour, susceptibility to violence, possible preventative measures to curb such violence, and its impact on the employee and the organisation.

Although recent literature on violence at the workplace contains relevant information, a number of older studies also contain valid information that cannot be overlooked as they have significant relevance to this study. Therefore, certain older studies were consulted as a point of reference, due to the significance of their content in relation to the topic of this study. Furthermore, accumulating topical literature posed a significant challenge as most research was found to relate to specific fraternities such as health care, education, police services, and the like. No comparable studies on this specific topic were found, making this research unique in its field.

2.2. The definition of violence at the workplace

For the purpose of this study, the concept of violence at the workplace warrants a proper definition. The main challenge in drafting and adopting a definition lies firstly in the varied nature of violent behaviour itself. Secondly, the place of work can also be varied, ranging from indoor to outdoor, and even mobile and airborne locations. Thirdly the violent behaviour inflicted on a diverse variety of victims can range from

an equally diverse variety of perpetrators. According to Chappell and Di Martino (2006, p. 3), “The face of workplace violence continues to change in our troubled world, with a range of aggressive acts inflicted on workers by diverse perpetrators.” They suggest that “a uniform definition of what constitutes workplace violence remains elusive. Even the definition of a ‘workplace’ is elusive as an increasing number of people earn their living in mobile sites and home-based offices, and via telework”.

A definition offered by Hader (2008), (as cited in Odom-Forren, 2009, p. 69), who concurs with Wilkinson (2001, p. 156) typically consists of the “following four types of workplace violence:

- criminal intent,
- customer/client,
- worker-on-worker, and
- personal relationship.”

However, Kennedy *et al.* (2011) suggest that it becomes very difficult to understand the full extent of violence at the workplace mainly because of the varying ways of defining this phenomenon. Chappell and Di Martino (2006) posit that the phenomenon of workplace violence consists of behaviours that are not only vast, but also vaguely understood. Furthermore, the perception of violence in different cultures and contexts is broadly diverse. They believe that not being able to understand the components and manifestations of violence at the workplace, makes the defining of this phenomenon a significant challenge.

It would therefore seem appropriate to elaborate on some of the existing concepts of ‘violence’ and ‘workplace’ that will allow for a better understanding of this phenomenon, in order to arrive at an acceptable definition that will be applied to this study.

Violence:

Seldena and Downey (2012) suggest that workplace behaviour that can be categorized as harmful is a broad field that may consist of many different characteristics. Barling, Dupre and Kelloway (2009, p. 673) argue that “workplace

violence is similar to workplace aggression, but the behaviour enacted usually is more physical in nature.” Whitaker (2012, p. 115) concurs with this viewpoint and goes further by stating that “Workplace violence is usually considered within the context of physical threats or actions; however, the psychological environment of the workplace can also be a source of violence”. There appears to be a distinct difference between a person who is aggressive and a person who is violent. However, the display of violent behaviour is considered to be aggressive in its most extreme form (Hills & Joyce, 2013). Barling *et al.* (2009, p. 674), through their findings conclude “that although workplace aggression occurs relatively frequently, workplace violence is an infrequent occurrence.”

Einarsen (2000) believes that violence could take the form of harassment in an organization, which may consist of persistent and repeated acts that are aimed to weaken, agonise, or infuriate a person. These repeated acts may ultimately result in the victim feeling uncomfortable, afraid, intimidated or provoked. The Commission for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration (CCMA) in South Africa views harassment as “an incident that has happened to an individual at the workplace that is unwelcome, unwanted and has a destructive effect” (CCMA, 2002, p. 1).

It therefore begins to emerge that the various concepts of violence can present themselves not only in a physical form, such as a physical or verbal assault, but can also consist of non-physical aspects, such as psychological intimidation or threatening actions, as well.

Workplace:

According to Chappell and Di Martino (2006, p. 31) “The definition of work or the workplace is also fraught with problems”. They suggest that data from crime statistics that are normally associated with occupational incidents may be restricted to violent offences that are committed in places such as an office, a commercial building like a bank, school or other types of physical environments. However, this does not take into account occupations that may be geographically diverse such as police services, public transport operators, and journalists, nor does it include employees that need to access individuals’ homes in order to perform their occupational duties such as meter readers, postal services, building contractors, or

individuals that have home-offices. New technologies have begun to make the traditional places of work redundant, while the latter type of workplace has become more prevalent (Chappell & Di Martino, 2006).

According to Bruce and Nowlin (2011, pp. 294-295) the “workplace is defined as any permanent or temporary location where employees perform work-related duties.” This view is echoed in South Africa in the Basic Conditions of Employment Act of 1997 in its simplistic definition of ‘workplace’. They define a workplace as “any place where employees work” (“ACT NO. 75 OF 1997: Basic Conditions of Employment Act,” 1997, p. 7).

2.2.1 Formulating a definition for violence at the workplace

Wieser and Mata-Greenwood (2013) state that no internationally agreed definition on work-related violence has been formulated. As a result, in October 2013 a new definition was introduced at the 19th International Conference of Labour Statisticians, to clearly distinguish between violence that should be included in the concept of work-related violence and other forms such as domestic violence or other crime statistics. The design of this new global definition places emphasis on work-related violence according to the relationship of the victim with the perpetrator. It does not emphasize the place where the act of violence actually occurred, which they define as follows: “Work-related violence includes psychological, physical and sexual acts of violence perpetrated by customers, co-workers and supervisors, even if they occur outside the workplace; and acts of violence perpetrated by strangers only if they occur at the workplace” (Wieser & Mata-Greenwood, 2013, p. 44).

Wieser and Mata-Greenwood (2013, p. 44) further clarify the definition by stating that “a violent act that is a direct result of a relationship fostered at work or of the type of occupation one has will be classified as work-related violence, while an act that is completely unrelated to work would not be included even if it takes place at work”. This succinct definition allows for the identification of all work-related violence as opposed to workplace-specific violence. However, for the purpose of this study a concise definition of violent occurrences, in its varying degrees, that takes place at the workplace, which could consist of a variety of locations, victims and perpetrators, is required.

In 2003, the Governing Body of the International Labour Office (ILO), during a meeting of the experts, adopted the following definition of workplace violence: "Any action, incident or behaviour that departs from reasonable conduct, in which a person is assaulted, threatened, harmed, injured in the course of, or as a direct result of, his or her work" (Chappell & Di Martino, 2006, p. 30).

For the purposes of this study, the abovementioned definition will be used, as it is not only concise and applicable to this study but has also been drafted by a recognized international labour authority, which adds a dimension of credibility to its adoption.

Chappell and Di Martino (2006, p. 30) further elaborate on this definition by explaining that it distinguishes between "internal and external violence":

- "Internal workplace violence" occurs between employees, which includes supervisors and managers within the organisation.
- "External workplace violence" occurs between the employees mentioned above and any other person who may be present at the place of work.

The ILO 2004, (as cited in Chappell & Di Martino, 2006, p. 31) clarifies the relationship between work and violence by stating that, "The reference to a 'direct result [of work]' is to be understood to mean that there is a clear link with work, and that the action, incident or behaviour occurred within a reasonable period afterward."

The ILO 2004, (as cited in Chappell & Di Martino, 2006, p. 31) further clarifies the term 'workplace' to mean "All places where workers need to be or to go by reason of their work and which are under the direct or indirect control of the employer."

2.2.2 Categorizing workplace violence:

According to the University of Iowa's Injury Prevention Research Center (cited in Kennedy & Julie, 2013, p. 2), which concurs with California's branch of the Occupational Safety and Health Administration as cited in Wilkinson (2001, pp. 155-156) the following four distinct categories of workplace violence have been outlined, which are congruent with the adopted definition of this study:

- Type 1: relates to a robbery or some other form of activity of a criminal nature.
- Type 2: is violence inflicted on an employee of the organization by a client, inmate or patient. Typically, violence in this category involves a threat that is verbal or an assault that is nonfatal.
- Type 3: relates to violence inflicted by an employee on a fellow employee. This type is believed to be the most widespread form of assaults or threats in the gamut of violence at the workplace.
- Type 4: relates to violence of a domestic nature, which brings relational disputes to a place of work. However, due to its interpersonal nature it is generally not work related, even though it takes place at work.

2.3. Nature of violence

Leading on from the work of defining workplace violence, it has become apparent that violence can appear in many different forms. Violence at the workplace, in reality, may take any form from a wide variety of behaviours, that often continue or overlap with each other (Chappell & Di Martino, 2006). Table 2.1 identifies some of the different types of violent behaviours as they may appear at the workplace.

Table 2.1 Examples of violent behaviours at work.

Adapted from Chappell & Di Martino (2006, p. 16)

Homicide	Squeezing, pinching & related actions
Rape	Harassment, including sexual & racial abuse
Robbery	Intimidation
Wounding	Threats
Battering	Ostracism
Physical attacks	Leaving offensive messages
Kicking	Aggressive posturing
Biting	Rude gestures
Punching	Interfering with work tools & equipment
Spitting	Hostile behaviour
Scratching	Swearing
Mobbing	Shouting
Stalking	Name-calling
Victimizing	Innuendo
Bullying	Deliberate silence

Further to Table 2.1 the Council for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration (CCMA) (CCMA, 2002, p. 1) identifies the following behaviours which they categorise as harassment at work:

- “spreading malicious rumours, or insulting someone, particularly on gender, race or disability grounds
- ridiculing or degrading someone – picking on them or setting them up to fail
- exclusion
- unfair treatment, for example based on race, gender, sexual orientation, pregnancy, age, disability, religion, HIV status, etc
- overbearing supervision or other misuses of power or position
- unwelcome sexual advances – touching, standing too close and displaying of offensive material
- making threats/comments about job security without foundation
- deliberately undermining a competent worker by overloading and constant criticism
- preventing individuals progressing by intentionally blocking promotion or training opportunities.”

2.3.1 Emotional violence and the threat of violence

According to Taylor and Zeng (2011, p. 62) “no workplace is immune to violence,” so employers need to be in readiness to respond to any form of threat of violence before it occurs in order to reduce or eradicate the possible costs and disruption of work.

According to Wilkinson (2001, p. 157), threats should be considered as a sentinel event that serves as an ‘early warning sign’ of an impending and far more serious form of violence. Most threats, in her experience, almost never progress to a more physical form of violence. However, the main challenge in dealing with threats is the ability to clearly differentiate between casual talk and intent that is more serious in nature.

Idemudia and Mabunda (2012, p. 4322) believe that the general environment in a typical workplace setting demands the overall wellness of an employee in order to

enable him or her to perform at their best, fullest and highest capacity. Any psychological problem may prove to be a hindrance to productivity because it will affect the optimal functioning of the individual and the organisation at large. They suggest that “a high percentage of all disability affecting work is due to emotional and intellectual disability”. Farkas and Tsukayama (2012) suggest that the management and assessment of a threat in the workplace may require an interdisciplinary approach to divert a potentially dangerous situation, client or employee.

2.3.2 Verbal violence

According to Kennedy & Julie (2013, p. 2), and Fredericksen and McCorkle (2013), verbal abuse “refers to the intentional use of language that humiliates, degrades or indicates a lack of respect for the dignity and worth of an individual that creates fear, intimidation and anger.”

2.3.3 Physical violence

Di Martino (cited in Kennedy & Julie, 2013, p. 2) suggests that physical violence manifests in “beating, kicking, slapping, stabbing, shooting, pushing, pinching, scratching and biting that cause physical, sexual or psychological harm to the worker.”

2.4. The phenomenon of violence at the workplace

The typical workplace has traditionally been viewed as being a relatively nonthreatening environment that is generally free from violence; where the routine and daily tasks of workers include a healthy combination of debate and dialogue (Chappell & Di Martino, 2006).

It is important to note that confrontation and the ensuing dialogue usually form part of a normal working environment. Workers are confronted daily with work related problems. They face the concerns and frustrations of their fellow workers, difficulties relating to their organisation, personality clashes, aggressive intruders, and troublesome relations with clients and even the public at large (Chappell & Di Martino, 2000).

However, according to Chappell and Di Martino (2000), there are certain exceptional cases where dialogues between parties fail to develop in a positive way, or where the relationship between management, employees, clientele, or the public at large deteriorate; resulting in the objective of having an efficient work environment and the goal of achieving a productive result being affected. A once benign working environment may turn into a hazardous and hostile situation when violence enters the place of work (Chappell & Di Martino, 2000). Hearn and Parkin (2002) believe that a violent incident that is practiced, structured and repeated over a period of time, may include a prior violent deed or a threat to commit a violent deed in the future, must be considered as a material behaviour that should receive the attention of the senior managers responsible for the affected teams or employees. Therefore such behaviour should always be taken seriously.

Hearn and Parkin (2002) further elaborate that violence not only results in direct damage, it also brings less direct effects, through the memory of previous actual or possible violent incidents. Once an act of violence has taken place, which, in this context, even includes the threat of violence, a certain innocence is lost, resulting in a mere reference to that violent behaviour either by a look, verbally or a minor movement, or some other subtle indication, may be all that is needed to invoke or imply violence. This act therefore results in material behaviour being modified (Hearn & Parkin, 2002). Hearn and Parkin (2002) suggest that a violent occurrence, similar to a violation of a person, exists mainly as a result of the recognition of that violent act. However, Capozzoli and McVey (1996) argue further that there are a variety of causes of violence at the workplace.

By understanding as well as recognising the complexity and variety of the various factors which contribute to violence, an effective anti-violence or control programme can be designed and implemented (Chappell & Di Martino, 2000).

Taylor and Zeng (2011, p. 56) believe that “workplace violence represents the extreme instances of workplace issues that can traumatize individuals and organizations with longstanding personal and professional effects.” The uniqueness of the varying conditions at each workplace means that one magical formula to remedy the situation may not exist. Taking the specifics of each workplace condition

into consideration, and continuously reviewing programmes and policies is required to keep up to date with rapidly or continuously changing situations and circumstances (Chappell & Di Martino, 2000).

Chappell and Di Martino (2006) believe that consensus on a comprehensive definition of workplace violence has emerged. Such consensus includes not only the physical elements, but also the psychological aspects of workplace violence and goes even further to recognize that these forms of violence are:

- a major a problem, even though it may be still under recognized;
- not limited to individual occurrences, but also covers wide variety of seemingly insignificant, but often destructive behaviour;
- a heavy burden on the employee, the organization and society at large;
- not just an occasional or once off problem but rather a fundamental problem that could be deeply entrenched in broader social, organisational, economic, cultural, or gender belief;
- harmful to the operations of the workplace. An integral part of developing a sound organization must incorporate the necessary action taken against the various forms of violence; and
- a serious problem, requiring immediate and urgent action.

The ILO (2012) (as cited in Wieser & Mata-Greenwood, 2013, p. 6) identified major trends in connection with work-related violence. In cases of extreme violence, for example where a person is shot at a place of work, a great deal of attention is now received from the media and members of the public. The repeated act of violence of a psychological nature, for example continual harassment, is being recognized more frequently. The relevant authorities, employees and their employers recognize the importance of controlling violence. There is a progressive approach from the International arena, which seems to be growing in awareness. There is minimal information available on violence at places of work in countries categorized as 'developing'.

2.5. The South African experience of workplace violence

According to Kennedy & Julie (2013, p. 1) “violence in South African society has reached epidemic levels and has permeated the walls of the workplace.”

“Violence that occurs during the course of a labour dispute is frequently overlooked in discussions of workplace violence” (Barling *et al.* 2009, p. 679). For example, on 16 August 2012, the South African police opened fire on platinum miners who were striking in Marikana in North West Province where they shot down one hundred and twelve and killed thirty four miners, which was a culmination of “a vortex of violence” as reported by Davies (2015). Davies (2015) investigated the preceding days of the strike and found that the strike was marred by the following alleged violent acts:

- On Friday, 10 August 2012, the employer’s security guards fired rubber bullets at the strikers seriously injuring two.
- On Saturday, 11 August 2012, some of the strikers were cut, beaten and shot at by some members of the mineworkers union.
- On Sunday, 12 August 2012, one security guard was slashed with a panga and two more hacked to death by striking workers and two miners killed when they tried to go to work at night.
- On Monday, 13 August 2012, police officers hurled teargas and stun grenades toward the striking miners. The miners retaliated and surrounded two police officers who they killed with pangas. The other fleeing strikers were pursued by police who fired several shots, killing three miners.
- On Wednesday, 15 August 2012, the employers were of the opinion that this was no longer a labour dispute and viewed the situation as criminal. In Marikana, later that afternoon, five hundred and fifty police officers gathered with four thousand rounds of live ammunition, which set the scene of the events on the next day.

Faull (2013) notes that on 26 February, 2013 the South African Police handcuffed a Mozambican taxi driver to the back of a police van and drove around for hundreds of meters, dragging him on the road, until they reached the Daveyton police station. Spatters of blood on the walls of the holding cell walls showed evidence that the taxi

driver was severely beaten by the police in the station. The taxi driver was found dead less than two hours later, in the same holding cell.

During April 2015, Ntuli (2015) reported an increase in xenophobic attacks in Durban and its surrounding suburbs, which according to Manda, Ngubane and Dardagan (2015) affected not only foreign owned shops, but local ones as well, when looters began pillaging these business. The looting then spread to other parts of the province, including Pietermaritzburg (Presence, 2015b), and then nationally, affecting certain parts of Johannesburg (Scales & Sanpath, 2015).

According to Gary van Staden of NKC Independent Economists, as cited in Mapenzauswa (2015), "South Africa will be hurt by the developments of (recent) weeks and the consequences may flow for months". Whilst the direct and immediate consequences to businesses from these types of violent acts may be obvious and quantifiable, the indirect and long term costs may be difficult to quantify. South African Tourism, for example, has emerged as one of the fastest growing and flourishing sectors making it the third largest contributor to GDP and supports one in every 12 jobs in the country (Mapenzauswa, 2015). According to Gary van Staden, as cited in Mapenzauswa (2015) "the xenophobic attacks carry grave and dire consequences across several sectors: our businesses operating in Africa, our tourism, our reputation, our investment levels, our ability to borrow money and the safety of our people in other countries".

Violent incidents and protests also seem to affect the normally smooth operations at typically violence free places of work, for example:

- In May 2015, it was alleged that a member of the Democratic Alliance, during a session of parliament, saw a member of the African National Congress mouthing the words "I will f**k you up" at a fellow Democratic Alliance Member of Parliament. This type of verbal threat is considered to be a serious threat, which brings down the "decorum of the house" (Presence, 2015a).
- Teaching activities, lectures and operations during February 2015 were disrupted for almost week at all University of Kwa-Zulu-Natal's (UKZN) campuses following the arrest of ten students after violent protests erupted in

the Westville, Edgewood and Pietermaritzburg campuses over the availability of financial assistance (Mlambo & Dawood, 2015).

- During February 2014, twenty six students were arrested following protests by almost seven hundred students after police and UKZN staff cars were damaged in violent protests regarding registrations and student aid, which resulted in lectures and university operations being disrupted at Howard College (Dzanibe, 2014).

The Department of Labour (2013) emphasises the need to provide adequate safety nets to protect the basic rights of workers that may be vulnerable to violence. It further adds that, despite having progressive employment and labour policies, the level of workplace injuries and incidents in the South African labour market is unacceptably high.

The prevalence of violence in South African workplaces is reportedly on the increase (Schiff, 2010). However, Wieser and Mata-Greenwood (2013) and Chappell and Di Martino (2006) advise that developing countries, like South Africa, have received very little attention on the statistical measurement of violence that is work-related.

According to Jehn, Northcraft and Neale (1999) (as cited in Cunliffe & Mostert, 2012, p. 2), legislation in South Africa is beginning to force organisations to integrate their workforces in order to be more representative of the country's demographics. As a result, diverse workgroups are created who find themselves having to work closely together in order to achieve the goals of their organisations. It is believed that managers seek diverse workgroups in order to obtain solutions to their organisational issues. It is believed that a diverse workgroup, in search of efficiency, will be able to overcome obstacles mainly because of their ability to successfully work together in achieving their goal, thereby increasing morale amongst fellow employees.

“However, no recent studies on the prevalence of workplace bullying in the South African context are available” (Cunliffe & Mostert, 2012, p. 2).

2.6. Prevalence of violence

According to Wilkinson (2001, p. 159) we have seen acts of violence in places of education, on our neighbourhood roads, in the films we watch, and even in relationships. The responsibility of preventing violence at the workplace rests with the measures that the employer, and their workers, can realistically implement “in a world where violence is a reality”. Tobin (2001, p. 91), confirms the prevalence of violence when he mentions that “incidents of violence in the workplace are on the rise”. His comment not only confirms its existence, but also highlights the need to address the growing problem of workplace violence.

Intrinsic factors to specific work situations, such as high crime areas, night shift work, working with cash, law enforcement or working with disturbed people poses an increased risk to organisations operating in such environments. In view of the fact that risks vary among different organisations, and even within similar types of organisations, a significant challenge presents itself in developing preventative measures for violence in the workplace (Wilkinson, 2001, p. 155).

2.7. Impact on organisational productivity

Wieser and Mata-Greenwood (2013) report that policy makers are concerned about the effect that work-related violence has on workers. Workplace bullying, for example, has been found to relate to unusually high absenteeism, high turnover of staff and a hostile environment at work (Cunniff, 2011).

It is apparently clear that in order to minimize any costs that could be associated with poor employee morale, absenteeism, turnover, and any loss of productivity, it becomes necessary for an organization to invest in the psychological and physical health of their employees (Hatch-Maillette & Scalora, 2002).

Wilkinson (2001, p. 156) advises that many experienced Human Resource specialists have seen employees' confidence being undermined when management fails to address all threats faced by them. Mullins (2011, pp. 170-171) suggests that employees may become frustrated by not being able to attain a certain goal that

they desire and the outcome may manifest in varying degrees of aggressive behaviour, or they ultimately become apathetic or resign.

According to Hood (2004) as cited in Cunniff and Mostert (2012) bullying, as an aspect of workplace violence, not only has an overwhelming psychological and physical effect on an employee, but it even has a detrimental effect on the bottom line of an organisation. However, Dillon (2012, p. 15) argues that “the highest cost of workplace violence is its toll on the human resources of the organization.”

According to Schmidtke (2011) as cited in El Ghaziri, Zhu, Lipscomb and Smith (2014, pp. 1-2), the costly burden of violence in the workplace relating to fatal and, even nonfatal incidents, affects not only the organization, but also the victims, amounting to billions in lost wages, medical bills, support bills and legal actions.

Capozzoli and McVey (1996) further suggest that there are primary and secondary costs arising from workplace violence that affect the organisation, which, especially in the case of secondary costs, may not be easily identifiable or quantifiable, as shown in tables 2.2 and 2.3 hereunder:

Table 2.2 Primary costs of workplace violence

Medical costs - relating to injuries, counseling or funerals of victims.
Loss in productivity - as a result of downtime after an incident has occurred.
Damage to property, facilities and equipment after an incident has occurred.
Loss of sales during and after the incident.
Legal fees - arising from any litigation relating to the incident, which may require the organisation to defend or prosecute the matter arising from an incident.

Table 2.3 Secondary costs of workplace violence

Medical costs - relating to any employee suffering from physical or psychological damages which is directly related to the incident although they may not have been involved in the incident directly.
Loss in productivity which affects the efficiencies or the integrity of an operation, which may continue indefinitely into the future as a result of residual negative feelings or animosity between participants of an incident.
Preventative measures - additional staff, equipment, new systems and procedures to avoid a recurrence of the incident.

According to Dillon (2012) aggressive behaviour by the employee toward the organization itself can be very costly. In an attempt to express their anger and frustration, employees sabotage their employer through an intentional and deliberate reduction of productivity and quality of work, damaging company equipment and even stealing.

2.8. Preventing violence at the workplace

Whitmore and Kleiner (1999) argue that violence at the workplace poses a dilemma for employers as they may be sued for actions that could be considered to be too aggressive; or, on the other end of the spectrum, for not taking sufficient precautions to prevent the occurrence of violent behaviour. They caution employers to balance their efforts by using the prevailing laws that protect employee rights in order to create a safe working environment. Taylor and Zeng (2011) further caution that one of the major risks of not doing enough, or at worst doing nothing, to keep all employees comfortable and safe at work is that the best employees in the organization may eventually leave, as no employee wants to work in an environment that is stressful to the point where even physical harm may be a possibility.

According to Wilkinson (2001, p. 155) “for most businesses, a workplace violence–prevention program consists of two elements:

- a physically safe place for employees to work and
- a coherent plan to manage disruptive employees or customers.”

Control forms a significant part of the strategic management of any organisation. Mullins (2011, p. 390) identifies the following characteristics that makes a control system an effective one:

- it must be easily understood by all
- it must fit within the organisations structures and relate to the respective decision centres
- it must quickly report on a deviation from the accepted standard
- it must be able to hone in on areas that are critical to the organisations success
- it should be flexible
- it must be consistent with the applicable activity's objective
- it should point out the best solution for corrective action, and
- it should be reviewed continually to ensure that it is still appropriate to the applicable process or situation.

According to Mayhew and Chappell (2005, p. 347) a violence prevention strategy would ideally incorporate the designing out of all possible risks in such settings and be an multifaceted plan where all employees are consulted when it is being developed. They warn against solely relying on staff training as a prevention of violent incidents.

2.8.1 Assessment of risk

Wilkinson (2001, p. 156) suggest that the assessment of violence related risk factors in a typical workplace setting should review:

- previous experience within the organisation,
- the crime patterns of the neighbourhood,
- the experience of the industry in which the organization operates,
- employee exposure to a specific profile of job, and
- the layout of the work environment

Further to the above factors, Wilkinson (2001) suggests that it may be prudent for managers to understand the risk factors facing a specific profile of job that pose a greater risk of violence, by identifying:

- if employees work at night and/or alone,

- if employees work in a neighbourhood that is generally considered dangerous,
- what possible measures can be implemented to minimize risk,
- if front line employees, like receptionists, are trained to deal with difficult patrons,
- if employees have a clear knowledge of what to do should they feel threatened or uncomfortable.

Furthermore, Wilkinson (2001) suggests that the following factors relating to the layout of the work environment, as well as the security systems in place could have an important influence on preventing violence:

- what level of access to the work environment do non-employees have (such as maintenance contractors),
- does the work environment and building periphery have adequate lighting,
- does the security system allow for safety of late night employees not only at work but also in between work and the parking lot.

2.8.2 Developing a violence prevention strategy

In developing an effective violence control and prevention programme it is vital to understand and recognize the various and complex factors that contribute to workplace violence ("Violence at work - A major problem," 2009).

According to Howard (2008), an organisation must proactively address any workplace violence matters and ensure that all employees are placed on compulsory training in order for everyone in the organisation to understand exactly what workplace violence is made up of, and how to react when it occurs.

Bensimon (1994) suggests that a threat management plan should incorporate a team of people, possibly from the Human Resources, Legal and Security departments, and have a confidential hotline where employees can report any violence related incident as they may not feel comfortable in reporting it to their immediate line manager.

Mayhew and Chappell (2005) advises that the head of the organisation should fully support, participate and encourage the adopted violence prevention policy which may include:

- Showing genuine concern for the employees safety
- Encourage formal reporting of any violent incident, without having bureaucratic forms and processes
- Ensure regular audits of violence vulnerability in the workplace by independent parties, and
- Ensure that previous perpetrators of violent behaviour should be “flagged” as a warning to other employees.

2.9. The effects of violence at the workplace on work performance

Visagie, Havenga, Linde and Botha (2012) advise that an organisation must understand that a fine line exists between a strict type of management style and workplace bullying (as an aspect of violent behaviour). One will result in effectiveness, whilst the other in inefficiency in the organisation. When an employee begins to show general signs of distress, then the line has been crossed.

According to Aytac and Dursun (2012), violent incidents or being exposed to any aspect of violence at work, has a negative effect on the employees’ feelings toward not only their work, but also toward the organisation at large. As a result, the employee’s psychological and physical health can be negatively affected.

Maslow’s Theory:

The Theory of Maslow regarding the needs of people is typically illustrated using a pyramid consisting of five levels where each need is placed according to a hierarchy of importance as shown in Figure 2.1 (Mullins, 2011, p. 174). According to Luthans (2011, p. 164), Maslow’s theory makes “a significant contribution in terms of making management aware of the diverse needs of employees at work.”

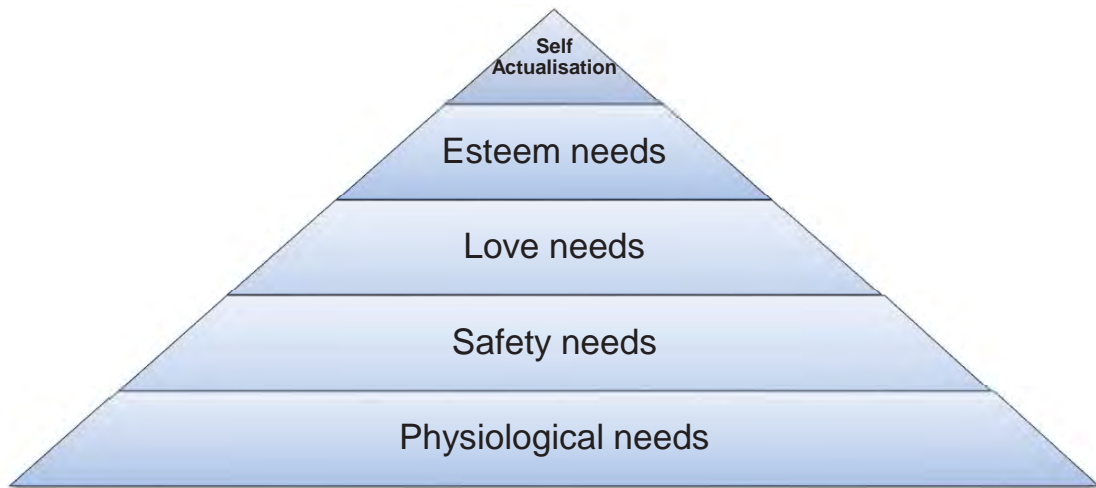


Figure 2.1 Maslow's hierarchy of needs model

Adapted from Mullins (2011)

According to Mullins (2011) as well as Schermerhorn, Osborn, Uhl-Bien and Hunt (2012), Maslow's hierarchy of needs model can be explained as follows:

- Physiological needs: which consist of the basic of human activities made up of things like breathing, eating, drinking, and biological maintenance.
- Safety needs: which includes the need to be safe, secure and free from pain or the threat of any physical attack, as well as the feeling of protection from any form of danger. People have a need for predictable and orderly environments.
- Love (or social) needs: which essentially relates to a person having a sense of belonging, affection, good relationships and where love is given and received.
- Esteem (or ego) needs: where self-respect is sought and the person is held in high regard of others. Here the person seeks a good reputation, to be recognized, receive attention and feel appreciated as well as having a good status.
- Self-actualization needs: varies from person to person. However, it essentially relates to the need of becoming everything that the person is capable of becoming and is realised when a person reaches their full potential.

According to Luthans (2011) the number and titles of this hierarchical concept may not be as important as the fact that employees have a diverse range of needs, which has been supported by experiential and empirical evidence.

Kennedy and Julie (2013) have found that the effect of workplace violence on an employee's performance at work largely includes a change of attitude, which resulted in them choosing to have a limited amount of interaction with the perpetrator by either ignoring or avoiding them. Most employees found that their performance at work was not really affected, citing the attitudinal change as being the most prominent outcome.

2.10. Summary

This chapter focused on the review of literature of violence at the workplace. It was designed around three broad categories. The first part drew on research conducted on the concepts of 'violence' and 'workplace' where an acceptable definition was drafted that would be appropriate to this study. Thereafter, the various forms of violence at the workplace were discussed. The second part elaborated on the phenomenon of violent behaviour at various places of work, which served as a precursor to reviewing certain actual and topical incidents of violence that took place in South Africa, thereby allowing for a discussion on the prevalence of workplace violence. The third part delved into how the concept of workplace violence affects an organisation and its employees in order to better understand the development of preventative strategies and the effect that such strategies have on the employee and the organisation.

The ensuing chapter will discuss the research methodology utilised in this study. It will focus on how the data was obtained and analysed in this study. The merits of the questionnaire, as the instrument of choice in collecting the data, will also be elaborated on.

CHAPTER THREE

Research Methodology

3.1. Introduction

The preceding chapter revealed the prevalence of violent behaviour, in its varying manifestations, at the workplace and concluded by showing the effect that a violent incident has not only on the employees of an organization, but also on the organisation as a whole.

This chapter will describe the research methods utilized in this study. Such methods were used in order to meet the objectives of the study, which are holistically aimed at analyzing the impact of the various forms of violence that manifest in the workplace such as verbal, physical, emotional, as well as the threat of violent behaviour in the workplace.

3.2. Aim and objectives

The aim of this study was to gauge the extent of violence at the workplace in Durban in the private and public sectors.

The objectives of this study are as follows:

- To understand the extent to which employees have been subjected to various forms of, including threats of, violence at the workplace at the hands of superiors, peers, junior staff members and customers.
- To understand the reaction of employees to various forms of violence, including the threat of violence at the workplace, at the hands of superiors, peers, junior staff members and customers.
- To assess the propensity of employees to engage in violence at the workplace themselves.
- To determine how management can pre-empt violence at the workplace.

3.3. Sample technique and data collection strategy

3.3.1 Sample technique

According to White (2000) it is considered almost impossible to interview every single person of the population that is being researched. Even when the government conducts its periodic and statutory census, which covers the entire population, there will always be people who do not participate, making the collection of complete data virtually impossible (Morris, 2003). According to Zikmund, Babin, Carr and Griffin (2013) a population is a group that shares common characteristics, which Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (1997) state is not necessarily limited to people only, but can also include physical items and places as well.

A sample is essentially a subset, portion, or section of a larger population group. Sampling therefore allows for conclusions to be made about an entire population by using only a small portion of the study population (Zikmund *et al.*, 2013). However, Bryman and Bell (2007, p. 203) caution that there is a limitation in using a sample, as any findings may be generalized only to the “population from which that sample was taken”.

This study is based on people who are working within the Durban metropolis and have been exposed to some form of violence at the workplace, through verbal, physical, emotional or the threat of violent behaviour. It is not intended to cover every single employee in Durban, which according to Statistics South Africa (2015) amounts to 1 104 000 people as at the first quarter of 2015. Rather, the intention of specifying ‘Durban’ was to give a geographic boundary to the study, mainly due to time and cost limitations. Extending the survey to other cities or even provinces within South Africa would require a substantial amount of time, resources and money.

According to White (2000), in certain circumstances it may be virtually impossible to accurately ascertain the sampling frame, which, for the purpose of this study, relates to people in Durban who have been exposed to violence at their workplace.

Therefore, given the nature of this study, the sample technique applied was a non-probability method known as Convenience sampling to collect the data. Curwin and Slater (2008) explain that Convenience sampling, as suggested by its name, is where a sample is chosen that allows for fairly easy, immediate and convenient access to respondents and is a fairly low-cost and a quick method. Zikmund *et al.* (2013) advise that Convenience sampling is used to economically and quickly obtain a good number of completed questionnaires. As there is no directory of employed people to contact for this study, the Convenience sampling method seemed to be the most appropriate and applicable to apply. Other probability and non-probability sampling techniques as described by Leedy and Ormond (2013) did not suit the nature of this study because of the following reasons, as tabulated hereunder:

Table 3.1 Probability sampling

Simple random sampling is usually appropriate when dealing with a small and known population.
Stratified random sampling is normally used when dealing with different levels, layers or categories of a population that are generally equal in size.
Proportional stratified sampling is usually applicable when dealing with a population of different levels, and this technique allows for the sample to be proportionate to the population.
Cluster sampling is normally used when dealing with a very large subject area which can then be broken down into smaller clusters from where a sample can be randomly selected.
Systematic sampling is normally applied to a selection of respondents by following a sequence that is predetermined.

Table 3.2 Non-probability sampling

Quota Sampling allows for respondents to be selected in similar proportions as found in the general population.
Purposive sampling is normally applied when sampling for a particular purpose such as forecasting the results of an election.

3.3.2. Data collection strategies

According to Leedy and Ormond (2013), researchers using a quantitative research method, collect data that is specific to one or more variables that they are studying with a view of converting the data into numbers that can be analysed.

Primary data was sourced through the use of a self-completed questionnaire directed at people employed in Durban. Respondents were selected from various public commercial areas within the Durban area simply because these areas contain large numbers of employed people required for this study. Participants were advised that their participation was entirely voluntary and that they could withdraw at any point. They were also advised that their participation and contributions would remain confidential.

3.4 Research design and methods

3.4.1 Description and purpose

According to Zikmund *et al.* (2013, p. 64) “a research design is a master plan that specifies the methods and procedures for collecting and analyzing the needed information.” Leedy and Ormond (2013) advise that in the planning of a research design, it is crucial for the researcher to:

- Choose a research problem that is viable,
- Be cognizant of the variety of data that will be needed to investigate the problem, and
- Be aware of how to collect and interpret the data utilizing reasonable methods.

The research was designed around the cross-sectional concept, which Bryman and Bell (2007) describe as data that is collected at a single point in time from more than one respondent so that a collection of quantifiable or qualitative information can be analysed to see if patterns of association in relation to two or more variables emerge. The other four types of designs, as mentioned by Bryman and Bell (2007), namely, experimental, longitudinal, case study and comparative designs, were found to be unsuitable to the nature of this study. The chosen cross-sectional design, which is also known as the social survey design, suited the purpose of this study as it allows for the aim to be established in relation to the objectives as listed earlier. However,

Zikmund *et al.* (2013, p. 65) argue that “there is no single best research design”, as a researcher has many different options that could be used to achieve the objectives of the research.

According to Saunders *et al.* (1997) a study can be exploratory, descriptive or explanatory. This study is descriptive in nature as it primarily attempts to obtain a better understanding of relationships, if any, between violent behaviour and the various combinations of victims and perpetrators at the workplace.

Bryman and Bell (2007) suggest that it is an expensive exercise to conduct interviews and posit that a self-completed, also referred to as a self-administered, questionnaire has the advantage of being relatively cheap and quick, allowing respondents to complete the questionnaire at their own pace. Furthermore, it allows for no variability or influence on the part of the researcher, as the questions are all structured in the same way.

Due to the extensive reliance on statistics to gauge the extent of violence at the workplace in Durban in relation to the set objectives, this study can be described as quantitative in nature. Zikmund *et al.* (2013) posit that one of the key distinctions between qualitative and quantitative methods is that a quantitative method employs the use of scales, which could furnish a numeric value that can then be used in a statistical calculation in order to draw a conclusion from the output data. This method allowed for the data to be collected and easily analysed in relation to each of the respondents, as compared to a qualitative method where respondents reply in varying degrees of emotion and description of their responses.

3.4.1.1 Construction of the instrument

In order to obtain relevant information to be used as the primary data for this study, the research instrument of choice was a questionnaire.

White (2000, p. 67) advises that it is important for the technique applied in the collection of data to relate to the overall design of the research, which should in turn be applicable to the aim and objectives of the research study.

According to Saunders *et al.* (1997) in a descriptive study, such as this one, it is appropriate to use a questionnaire as it allows the researcher to identify and describe the variability in the different phenomena. Leedy and Ormond (2013) further advise that, in planning for data collection in a descriptive study, the measurement of variables is inevitable. With these views in mind, a questionnaire was selected as an appropriate instrument, which comprised of twenty-six structured questions and four additional questions relating to sector, position, age and gender, using the following guidelines as posited by Zikmund *et al.* (2013) and Morris (2003):

- Keeping both the individual questions and the entire questionnaire short;
- Using a sequence that flows logically;
- Providing for responses that can be codified;
- Providing a neutral option for questions that cannot be answered;
- Avoiding complexity by using a simple and conversational type of language;
- Avoiding loaded and leading questions;
- Avoiding ambiguity by being specific;
- Avoiding questions that are 'double-barreled';
- Avoiding assumptions;
- Avoiding difficult questions that causes a strain on the memory of the respondent;
- Allowing for some questions to generate variance.

Leedy and Ormond (2013) assert that people who participate in a questionnaire may be more truthful, as opposed to participating in a personal interview, especially where questions may be considered to be controversial, personal or sensitive in nature.

The questionnaire was designed to be appropriate for self-completion, which Bryman and Bell (2007) define as being easily completed by the respondent on their own, generally without the need of any form of assistance. As all respondents completed the questionnaire on paper, this was a fairly cost-effective exercise with only the costs of printing and pens being incurred. Other styles of interview administered questionnaires, panel surveys or longitudinal studies, as explained by

Curwin and Slater (2008), were found to be unsuitable to the study as they generally require an expert to undertake the interviews. Furthermore, the results could become highly subjective if the interviewer is not consistent in the explanation or delivery of the questions.

The decision to present the questions in a predominantly closed format was based on the following reasons, as explained by Bryman and Bell (2007) and Zikmund *et al.* (2013), which they refer to as a fixed alternative type of question:

- It allows for a standardized questionnaire to be presented;
- It allows for the responses to be compared;
- It allows for data to be coded, tabulated and eventually interpreted;
- It allows for the respondent to easily identify their response from the given selection;
- It allows for quicker completion as the respondent simply puts an identifiable mark on their selected option.

The alternative, which is referred to as an open-ended response is based on respondents having to respond questions in their own words. This option places added pressure on the respondents as they require more effort and time to respond the questions. It is also very time-consuming for the researcher to code the responses, which can be further complicated by variability in coding, as well as variability in the recording of the responses given during the interview.

Open-ended questions were therefore largely avoided, with the exception of one question requiring the respondent to indicate their position within their organisation. Respondents generally responded to this question with their job title, which is extremely varied, given the variety of organisational backgrounds of respondents. The question was therefore coded, based on the responses, as follows:

- 1: Senior management
- 2: Junior management
- 3: Non managerial

When a certain behaviour or some other matter of interest needs to be evaluated, Leedy and Ormond (2013) advise the use of a rating scale, popularly known as a Likert scale, which was thus utilized in this study. Respondents had to choose from options ranging from 'strongly agree' to 'strongly disagree', allowing the respondent to accurately choose their preferred response, which could then be evaluated and quantified. The alternative checklist method, which gives the respondent a list of various options or characteristics from which they select their response, was intentionally not applied as it was found to be unsuitable to this study as it did not allow the respondents' behaviour and attitudes to be analysed.

Based on the abovementioned factors, deemed appropriate for this study, the use of a questionnaire was found to be most suitable and due to severe time constraints the 214 respondents were found to be sufficient for the purpose of this study.

3.4.1.2 Recruitment of study participants

The participants for this study were largely recruited from public areas within the commercial zones of Durban, including office parks and industrial areas. These places provided a greater concentration of employed people appropriate to the location of this study. It also allowed for the participation of employees from a variety of organisations, ranging from both the public and private sectors. Furthermore, a healthy combination of gender, age and employment levels were available, which afforded a good opportunity for obtaining the necessary variables for this study. This was important to the study as it allowed for comprehensive data to be obtained across a wide variety of respondents, who faced some form of violent behaviour at their workplace, which could then be analysed and compared in meaningful way.

Participants who agreed to complete the questionnaire were advised that confidentiality would be maintained at all times and that their participation was entirely voluntary. The participants were also advised that they could withdraw at any time should they opt to do so and they were informed that the questionnaire would take between five and ten minutes to complete. All respondents signed an informed consent document, which allowed for their responses to be used in this study, with their confidentiality upheld in the processing of the data through the use of coding.

Naturally, a substantial amount of respondents initially appeared apprehensive. However, after assuring them of confidentiality most respondents concerns were dissipated after perusing the researcher's student card, which, to a large extent, served to "legitimize" the study. Some respondents who feared the repercussions of their responses were further assured that no identifiable trace could link them to the questionnaire that they completed.

3.4.2 Reliability and validity

Rugg (2007) explains that reliability essentially indicates if data produces a consistent set of findings, as opposed to validity, which by contrast, relates to the extent that the data shows any relation to reality.

Leedy and Ormond (2013, p. 92) advise that "by increasing the reliability of the research instrument we might also increase its validity". They suggest that the reliability of an instrument can be increased by:

- Ensuring that the instrument is administered from one situation or respondent to another in a consistent manner.
- Drafting a specific set of criteria should a subjective judgment be needed, in order to guide the researcher in recording responses.
- Ensuring that any assistants used in administering the questionnaire are well trained, thus allowing for consistency of data.

The general feedback from respondents indicated that the questions posed in the questionnaire were realistic and fairly easily understood, which was found to adequately address the validity of this study.

Pallant (2006) explains that a scale that may be considered to be reliable shows just how free from random error it is. According to Bryman and Bell (2007) one of the ways to test internal reliability is through the use of Cronbach's alpha. A value of 1 indicates perfect internal reliability, whereas a value of 0 indicates that there is no internal reliability. The rule of thumb for internal reliability to typically be considered as acceptable ranges between 0.70 and 0.80, naturally the higher the better. It is considered ideal in this type of study to achieve a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of above 0.7, as it indicates reliability (Pallant, 2006).

Based on the 26 workplace violence related questions in the questionnaire, Cronbach's alpha = 0.886. This indicates that the scale reliability is comfortably within the acceptable range.

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.886	26

Based on the strong reliability and validity results, the analysis of data without allowing for any sample distortion was undertaken. It may be argued that respondents may have had varying interpretations of what “violence” actually means or their understanding of “workplace violence” may have influenced the responses of each individual respondent. However, it was deemed necessary to analyse the data of all respondents based on the positive reliability and validity results which was further supported by an evidently easily understood and simple questionnaire.

According to Saunders et al. (1997) the use of a pilot study allows for the assessment of the reliability and validity of the questions used in the research instrument. Furthermore, a pilot study allows for insight into the sample's understanding of the meaning of “workplace violence” in the context of this study. A pilot study would therefore allow for the rectification of any ambiguous or problematic areas of the research instrument. Based on the extensive reviewing of the questionnaire through supervision prior to data collection as well as close personal attention paid to respondents reactions to the questionnaire during the data collection, the use of a pilot study was not undertaken. This is further evidenced through the positive results of the reliability test. However, it should be noted that if respondents displayed common misunderstandings, uncertainty or discomfort in completing the questionnaire then a pilot study would certainly be warranted.

3.4.3 Administration of the questionnaire

Saunders *et al.* (1997) posit that data should ideally be coded before it is entered on a computer system for analyzing. In the designing of the questionnaire, the majority of the questions were pre-coded due to their closed-ended nature, which avoided the requirement of coding after the collection of data. The only question that required

coding after the collection of data was the question on the job position of respondents as it was an open-ended question.

After the collection of all completed questionnaires, the data was entered onto a matrix model on Microsoft Excel, and then loaded onto the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) for analysis.

3.5 Analysis of the data

Based on the quantitative nature of this study, extensive use of numeric descriptive statistics was made. Keller and Warrack (2003) explain that numeric descriptive statistics is a type of descriptive statistics that allows for data to be summarized, arranged and presented using numerical techniques.

Various nonparametric tests were performed and applied to the data in order to statistically analyse the variables based on:

- Inferential statistical tests such as the Kruskal-Wallis, Mann-Whitney and the more popular Chi-squared tests (Keller & Warrack, 2003). Inferential statistics allow for a population parameter to be estimated from a random sample and to test hypotheses statistically (Leedy & Ormond, 2013)
- Correlational statistics such as Kendall's tau. If a correlation is found in a set of data it signifies that two variables have an association, as well as the nature of their association (Leedy & Ormond, 2013).

3.6 Summary

This chapter discussed the merits of using a questionnaire as the research instrument of choice in this study, for the collection of the primary data. The research methodology was discussed, which incorporated information on the development of the research instrument. Using the data obtained from the questionnaires, the various methods used to statistically analyse the data were also discussed.

The next chapter will provide a description of the analysed data and the discussion thereof.

CHAPTER FOUR

Analysis, Findings and Discussion of Results

4.1 Introduction

This chapter focuses on the presentation of results based on the application of the research methods, as discussed in the preceding chapter. Data that was collected using the research instrument was analysed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). For ease of reference and convenience of the reader, the findings that will be presented in this chapter will also incorporate a discussion around those findings in relation to the objectives of this study.

Various descriptive tools were applied, such as tables and bar graphs, to graphically present the findings, which were based on inferential and correlational statistical techniques. The use of these techniques allows for the data to be tested and, if any associations are found, the strength (or lack) thereof allows for the findings to be discussed in relation to the research objectives stated earlier.

The questionnaire consisted of twenty-six workplace violence-related questions, two biographical questions (pertaining to age and gender) and two general work-related questions (pertaining to the sector of economy and position).

4.2 Profile of respondents and reliability

It is important to have a good variety of occupational positions, age and gender among respondents, as it will provide a representative number of employees from a broad and diverse background, thereby allowing for meaningful analysis to be undertaken. The reliability, based on Cronbach's alpha of 0.886 as presented in chapter three, is further supported by the profile of respondents as illustrated below. Furthermore, the profile of respondents presented hereunder is intended to lay the foundations to support the findings and discussions thereof in relation to the objectives of this study.

Table 4.1 Management positions of the respondents

Position	Frequency	Percent
Senior management	18	9.5
Junior management	39	20.6
Non-managerial	132	69.9
Total	189	100

Nearly 70% of the respondents are in non-managerial positions. According to Mullins (2011) there is a close relationship between the strategy and the structure of an organisation. In order to achieve the objectives and goals of an organization, some form of structure is required. A variety of factors will influence the structure that an organisation eventually adopts, that could range from a traditional, rigid, hierarchical structure to one that is flexible and fluid. This makes the description of a typical and effective structure particularly challenging. However, in this study, the number of respondents from the three identified structural levels is deemed to be acceptable as they seem to be fairly representative of the broad variety of the workplaces that exist in Durban. The findings could therefore be viewed more favorably, as opposed to 70% of respondents being from a senior management level, which may not be considered a reasonable representation of a typical organisation.

Table 4.2 Ages of respondents

Age	Frequency	Percent
30 or younger	63	30.7
31-40	68	33.2
41-50	53	25.9
51 or older	21	10.2
Total	205	100

The respondents mean age of 37, with a standard deviation age of 9.8, shows that the sample population is fairly representative of employees from a diverse range of work history and experiences.

Table 4.3a Position versus Age

	Age				Total
Position	30 or less	31-40	41-50	51 or more	Number
Senior management	0	8	7	2	17
Percentage	0%	47.06%	41.18%	11.76%	100%
Junior management	1	19	11	5	36
Percentage	2.78%	52.78%	30.55%	13.89%	100%
Non-managerial	55	34	30	10	129
Percentage	42.64%	26.35%	23.26%	7.75%	100%
Total Number	56	61	48	17	182

All but one of the “30 or less” age group are employed in non-managerial positions. For the “older than 30” age groups the breakdown into the 3 position categories is fairly similar, as can be seen from the table below.

Table 4.3b Position versus age percentages for employees older than 30 years

Position/Age	31-40	41-50	51 or more
Senior management	13%	15%	12%
Junior management	31%	23%	29%
Non-managerial	56%	62%	59%
Total	100%	100%	100%

Although it is not impossible for an employee below 30 years of age to be in a position of management, the sample shows this to be a rare occurrence. Nevertheless, the percentage of position versus age allows for a comparable analysis to be performed in relation to the objectives of this study.

Table 4.4 Position versus gender

Position	Gender		Total
	Male	Female	Number
Senior management	11	7	18
Junior management	25	14	39
Non-managerial	38	94	132
Total	74	115	189

The management positions of respondents are dominated by males. Nearly 50% of the males are in either junior or senior management, while the corresponding figure for females is less than 20%.

Variables on gender:

Of the respondents 61.5% are female and 38.5% male. According to Idemudia and Mabunda (2012), males were found to have a higher amount of cumulative adversities during their lifetime and more direct exposure to violence than females. They further found that cumulative adversities and exposure to violence have a strong link to the mental health of an employee, resulting in the predictable poor mental health of an employee who has a high level of cumulative adversities and exposure to violence.

Variables on the sector of employment:

61.3% of the respondents are employed in the private sector and 38.7% in the public sector. For the purpose of this study it was deemed important to obtain data from both sectors of the economy. Certain professions that exist predominantly in the public sector, such as police services and nursing, are generally susceptible to violence at the workplace, which is mainly due to the nature of the work (Wieser & Mata-Greenwood, 2013). It was therefore deemed necessary to obtain data from both sectors to avoid the results being skewed in favour of one sector. It would have been ideal to obtain a fairly equal proportion between sectors. However, the almost 60/40 split is considered to be acceptable for this study.

4.3 Objective One: The extent to which employees have been subjected to violence at the workplace

4.3.1 Crime, unfair treatment and violence at workplace

The tables that follow show the counts for the Likert scale responses to the questions relating to the occurrence of crime in the workplace. The means in all the tables are based on codes of 5, 4, 3, 2 and 1 for 'strongly agree', 'agree', neutral, 'disagree' and 'strongly disagree', respectively.

Table 4.5 Victims of crime at the workplace

Response	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Mean
Count	11	25	21	67	87	2.08
Percentage	5.21%	11.85%	9.95%	31.75%	41.24%	

Out of 211 respondents, the results indicate that 36 respondents (constituting 11 “Strongly agrees” + 25 “Agrees”), which equates to 17% of the respondents, agree that they were victims of crime at the workplace.

However, by including the neutral respondents, 27% (11 “Strongly agrees” + 25 “Agrees” + 21 “Neutrals” = 57 out of 211) do not disagree that they were victims of crime at the workplace. This implies that over a quarter, or one out of every four employees who participated in this survey may have been a victim of crime at their workplace.

It may be argued that the converse may also apply here. Respondents that chose the neutral option may very well have not been a victim of crime at all. However, this scenario is unlikely because, if a respondent was not a victim of crime, they would most likely have chosen either one of the disagree options.

Table 4.6 Unfair treatment and violence at the workplace

Type	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Mean
Been unfairly treated	11	35	45	78	42	2.50
Percentage	5.21%	16.59%	21.33%	36.97%	19.90%	
Workplace violence common in Durban	13	37	70	54	33	2.72
Percentage	6.28%	17.87%	33.82%	26.09%	15.94%	

Chi-square = 11.063 with a p-value of 0.026.

The percentage of respondents who disagree that they are being unfairly treated by their employer is higher (56.9%) than those who disagree that workplace violence is common in Durban (42%). This indicates that although 56.9% of respondents have not been unfairly treated at work, fewer respondents (42%) believe that workplace violence is not common in Durban. This situation could indicate that, whilst respondents may consider themselves to be fairly treated by their employers, certain respondents may have personally seen, heard, or read about violent occurrences at places of work in Durban, including their own workplace.

The percentage of respondents who are neutral about workplace violence being common in Durban is higher than the neutral percentage for unfair treatment (33.8% versus 21.3%). This may indicate that respondents may either be unwilling or uncertain to comment about violent behaviours beyond their domain. It suggests that respondents being reluctant to comment on a question that they are not in direct control of, or on general situations that they are not fully aware of, that take place in the city that they are employed in.

Table 4.7 Workplace violence per gender

Violence rating	Gender		Total
	Male	Female	
5	4	9	13
4	17	20	37
3	26	43	69
2	19	35	54
1	13	20	33
Total	79	127	206
Mean	2.75	2.71	2.72

The Mann-Whitney test shows that there is no difference between the workplace violence ratings of males and females ($z = -0.351$ with a p-value of 0.726). Whilst these tests reveal very similar ratings between males and females, it is believed that the type of violent act inflicted on the different genders will vary. Males were found to be more susceptible to violence of a criminal nature, aggravated assault, and generally acts that are more violent in nature as opposed to females who are more susceptible to sexual assault than males (Fisher & Gunnison, 2001).

4.3.2 Violence according to gender

Although the Mann-Whitney test reveals no significant difference between male and female respondents, it would be interesting to see if there are similarities or differences in the responses to verbal, physical or emotional violence in this study. The means for verbal, physical and emotional violence according to gender are illustrated in the following figures.

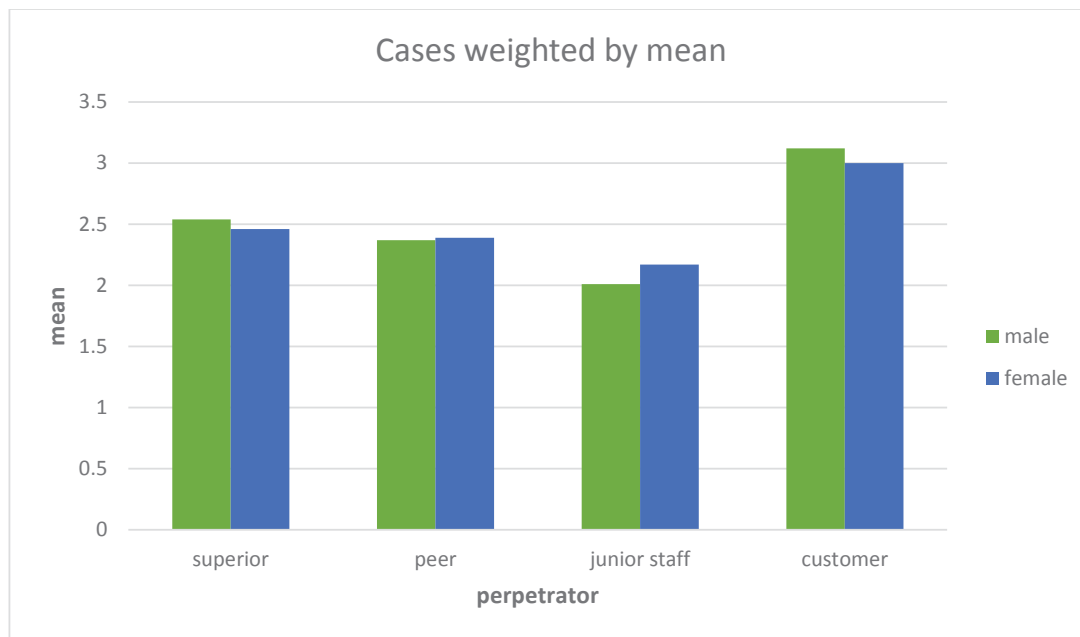


Figure 4.1 Verbal violence experienced by males and females



Figure 4.2 Physical violence experienced by males and females

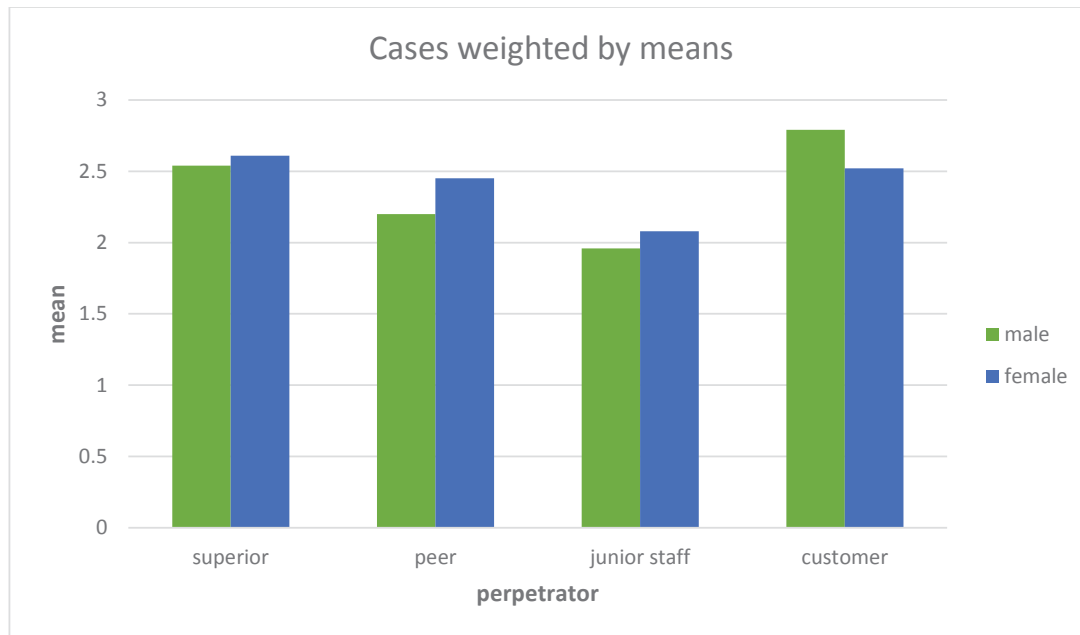


Figure 4.3 Emotional violence experienced by male and females

Table 4.8 Categorical data analysis results for perpetrator, type and gender

Analysis of Variance			
Source	DF	Chi-Square	Pr > ChiSq
Intercept	1	28290.31	<.0001
Gender	1	0.08	0.7729
Perpetrator	3	86.68	<.0001
Type	2	488.22	<.0001
gender*perpetrator	3	4.96	0.1751
gender*type	2	1.22	0.5430
perpetrator*type	6	39.86	<.0001
gender*perpetrator*type	6	2.59	0.8583

None of the effects involving gender is significant. Although the mean for physical violence perpetrators by a customer is higher for male employees than their female counterparts, the general responses from both genders are, interestingly, similar to each other in relation to the various perpetrators of verbal, physical and emotional violence. However, it is interesting to note that the finding of Fisher and Gunnison (2001) is congruent with the finding of this study, which shows males to be more susceptible to violence of a physical nature in the workplace than females.

4.3.3 Employees subjected to verbal, physical and emotional violence at work

The results of a categorical data analysis of the counts of the employees that were subjected to verbal, physical and emotion categories combined, are shown in the table below.

Table 4.9 Categorical data analysis results for perpetrator and type

Analysis of Variance			
Source	DF	Chi-Square	Pr > ChiSq
Intercept	1	30106.66	<.0001
Perpetrator	3	82.67	<.0001
Type	2	540.07	<.0001
perpetrator*type	6	42.00	<.0001

The results show significantly different response patterns for combinations of types of violence and perpetrators. The nature of these differences can be more clearly seen from the graph below.

The respondents who experienced verbal, physical and emotional violence perpetrated by their superior, peers, junior staff or customers were analysed, with the mean under each category of violent behaviour presented in the following figure.

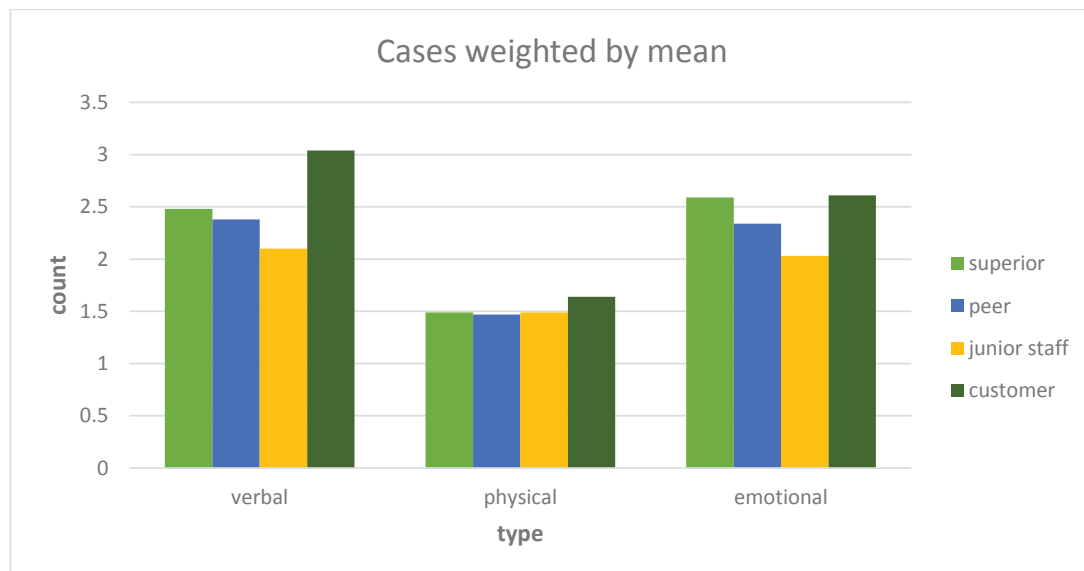


Figure 4.4 Means for types of violence and perpetrators

This indicates that physical violence occurs less than the other two types of violence. The results reflect that customers and superiors are the worst perpetrators of verbal and emotional violence. Furthermore, junior staff are the least perpetrators of the verbal and emotional violence. There appears to be no clear cut worst physical violence perpetrator.

Within a typical organisation there are certain staff who seek advancement in their careers and are highly goal-orientated. These staff may have progressed far enough in their careers to ascend through the hierarchy of the organisation and have a supervisory or management role. They may find that their path to further success lies in the capabilities of their subordinates. Using their delegation of authority, certain employees in a supervisory role may display an aggressive type of communication style in order to achieve their goals. Furthermore, those in supervisory positions may feel entitled to lash out at their subordinates who were unable to meet the expected goals or targets, through a display of various verbal or emotional acts of violent behaviour. These circumstances certainly do not justify violent behaviour. However, it serves to shed light on some of the possible reasons as to why respondents felt the high levels of verbal and emotional violence coming from their superiors, who may sometimes even try to justify their behaviour as a means to motivate their subordinates. Seldena and Downey (2012) partially support the findings by confirming that an employee's superior was generally a greater cause of distress at work than other perpetrators.

It is very interesting to find that customers are the worst perpetrators of all three types of violence. A sense of entitlement may result in situations where customers either justifiably or unjustifiably impose their demands on an employee, having a certain expectation of service or response. When the feedback does not meet their expectation, the customer displays violent tendencies either verbally, physically or emotionally.

4.3.4 Violence according to employment sector

Verbal, physical and emotional violence were analysed according to respondents from the public and private sectors. The categorical data analysis based on the perpetrator and type of violence according to the public and private sectors is presented below.

Table 4.10 Categorical data analysis results for perpetrator, type and sector

Source	Analysis of Variance		
	DF	Chi-Square	Pr > ChiSq
Intercept	1	27739.86	<.0001
Sector	1	11.61	0.0007
Perpetrator	3	68.54	<.0001
Type	2	500.39	<.0001
perpetrator*type	6	35.12	<.0001
sector*perpetrator	3	12.22	0.0067***
sector*type	2	0.97	0.6149
sector*perpetrator*type	6	7.50	0.2769

The only additional significant effect shown in the above table is the sector*perpetrator interaction effect. The figure below shows the mean ratings for each of the sector/perpetrator combinations obtained from a sector/perpetrator table of counts after summing over the type of violence.

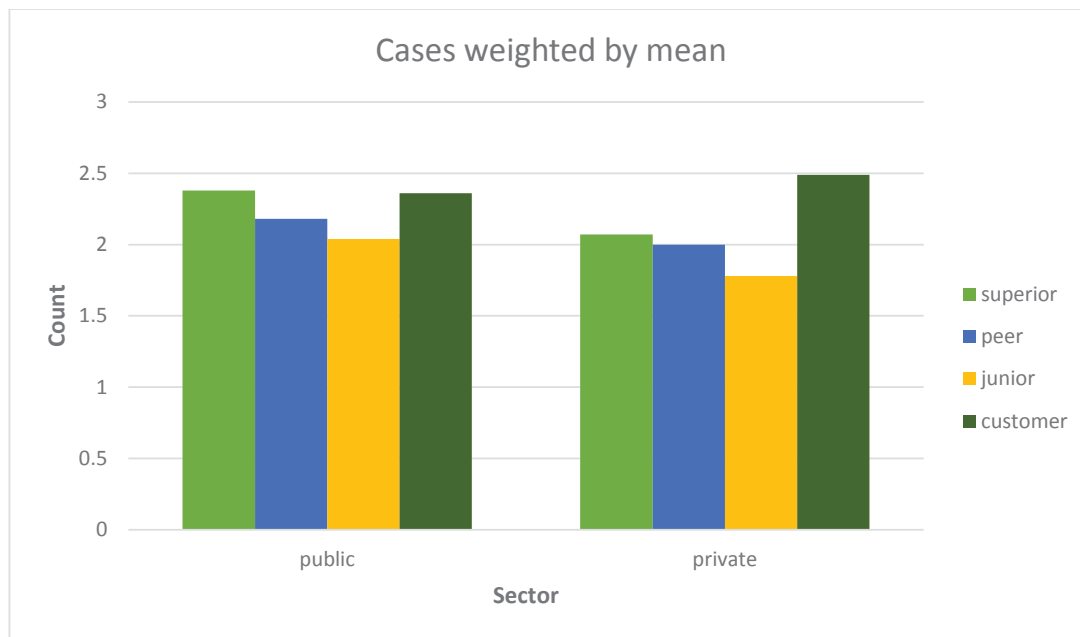


Figure 4.5 Means for sectors and perpetrator combinations

The violence involving a superior, a peer or a junior staff member as perpetrator is significantly higher in the public sector. When the perpetrator is a customer, there appears to be little difference between the violence in the public and private sector.

Whilst there is no known study of violence by superiors, peers, junior staff and customers between the public and private sectors, Wieser and Mata-Greenwood (2013) posit that certain professions, due to their nature, have a high prevalence of violent encounters such as security services and law enforcement officials. They suggest that all jobs that deal with people in general pose a high risk of violent occurrences.

Profit-driven organisations, which exist mainly in the private sector, may be considered to be driven by the need to maximize income, eliminate wastage and achieve both short and long term targets. This can make working in this sector particularly stressful and this is compounded by large workloads, deadlines and other pressures generally not found in public sector employment. It is therefore interesting to find that the response to violent occurrences in the public sector being higher than in the private sector. This could allude to private sector employment

being a more respectful, cultured, and organized environment to work in, despite the pressures that private sector employees face on a daily basis.

4.3.5 Violence according to position

Violent acts perpetrated against employees from senior, junior and non-management backgrounds were analysed. The mean from verbal, physical and emotional violence were tabulated against each of the three employment levels which are graphically presented in the following three bar graphs.

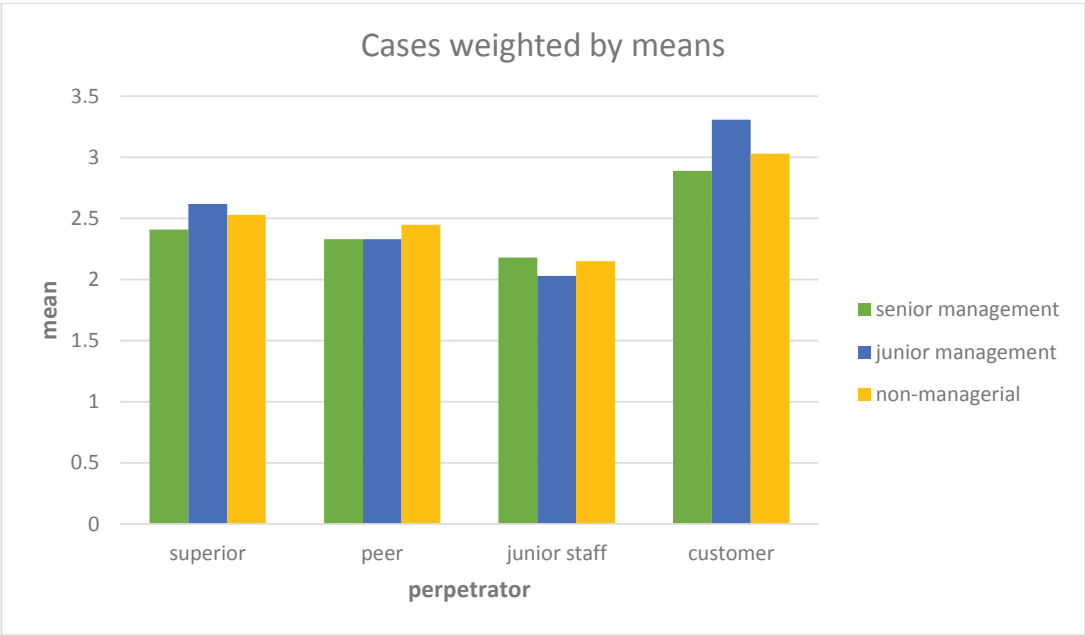


Figure 4.6 Verbal violence experienced by each employment level

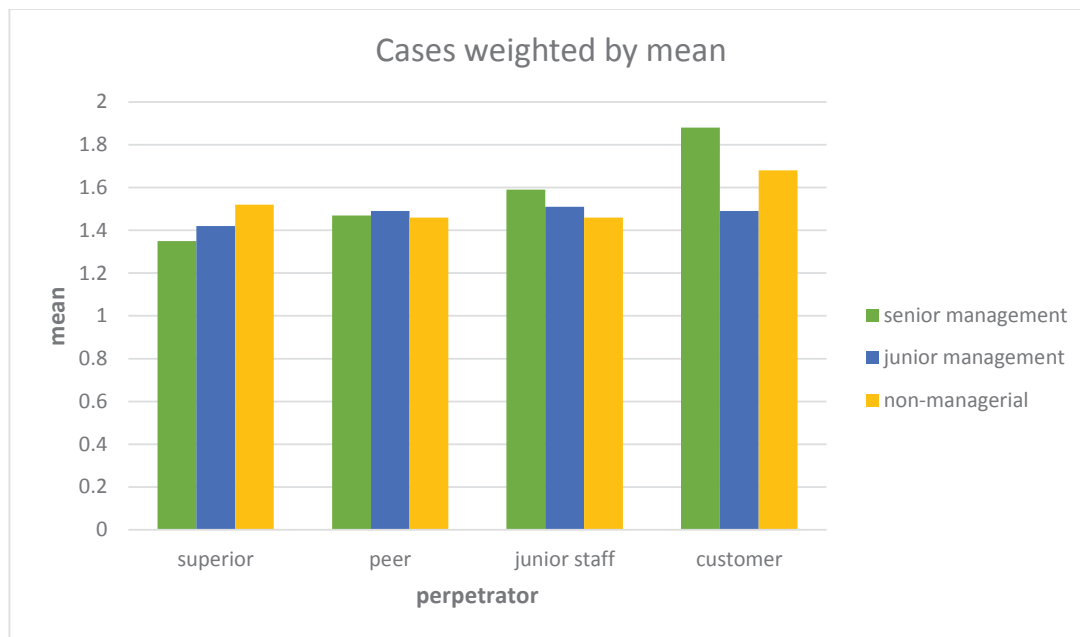


Figure 4.7 Physical violence experienced by each employment level

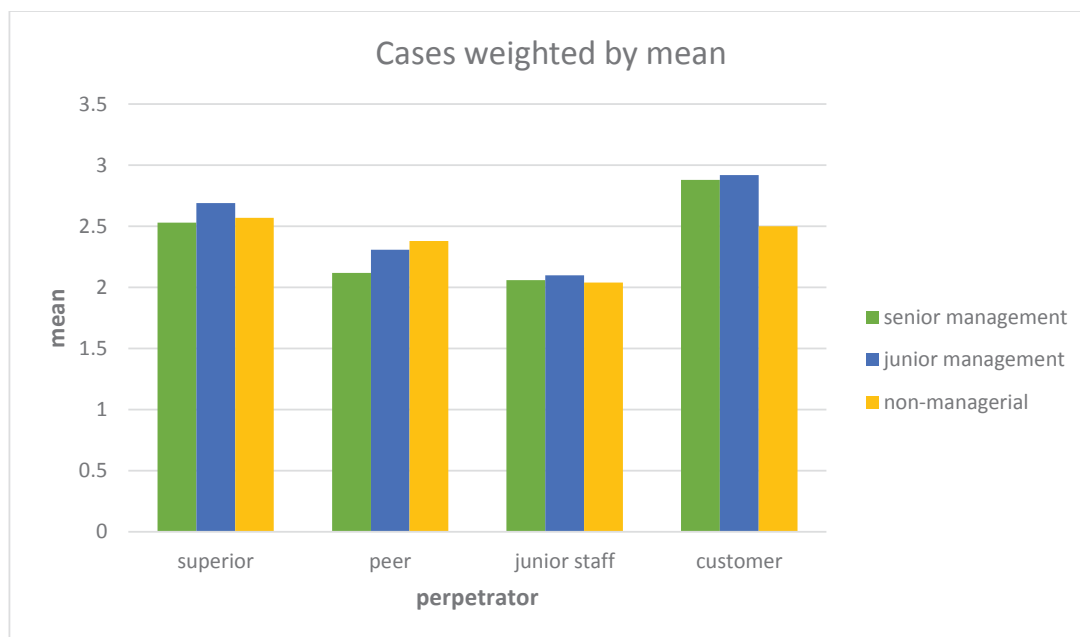


Figure 4.8 Emotional violence experienced by each employment level

Table 4.11 Categorical data analysis results for perpetrator, type and position

Analysis of Variance			
Source	DF	Chi-Square	Pr > ChiSq
Intercept	1	15963.24	<.0001
Position	2	0.47	0.7911
Perpetrator	3	49.02	<.0001
Type	2	265.36	<.0001
position*perpetrator	6	3.68	0.7204
position*type	4	2.90	0.5753
perpetrator*type	6	21.27	0.0016
position*perpetrator*type	12	8.79	0.7206

None of the effects involving position is significant. However, the customer generally seems to be the predominant perpetrator of all three types of violence inflicted on employees.

4.3.6 The extent of crime and violence at the workplace

The findings illustrate that approximately one in four of the respondents were victims of crime at the work place to a greater or lesser extent. About one in six of the respondents strongly agree or agree that they were victims of crime at the work place. The prevalence of violent behaviour at places of work in the Durban metropolis now becomes clearer.

Furthermore, the extent of violent incidents are confirmed where more than 50% of the respondents agree or are neutral, which implies that they do not disagree that workplace violence is common in Durban, while more than 40% agree or are neutral which implies that they do not disagree that they had been unfairly treated at the work place.

About one in four of the respondents strongly agree or agree that workplace violence is common in Durban, while more than one in five strongly agree or agree that they have been unfairly treated at the work place.

The extent to which employees were affected by the threat of violence, as well as their response to the threat of violence will be presented in the ensuing section. The threat of violence was measured through respondent's reactions to questions relating to fear.

4.4 Objective Two: The reaction of employees to violence at the workplace

4.4.1 Fear

Table 4.12a Fear of being a victim of crime according to sector of employment

Rating		Sector		Total
		Public	Private	
	5	22	30	52
	4	23	33	56
	3	13	13	26
	2	12	32	44
	1	11	22	33
Total		81	130	211
Mean		3.41	3.13	3.24

When performing the Mann-Whitney test for equality of means $z = -1.305$ with a p-value of 0.192. There is no significant difference in the mean ratings for public and private sector employees. This implies that employees from both the public and private sectors are more or less equally afraid of being a victim of crime. Naturally, an employee would generally not want to be a victim of crime, in any of its forms, and this has proven to be true, irrespective of the sector of employment.

Table 4.12b Fear of being a victim of crime versus position

Rating	Position			Total
	Senior manager	Junior manager	Non managerial	
5	5	9	30	44
4	6	10	35	51
3	1	6	17	24
2	5	9	25	39
1	1	5	24	30
Total	18	39	131	188
Mean	3.50	3.23	3.17	3.21

When performing the Kruskal-Wallis test for equality of means chi-square = 0.855 with a p-value of 0.652. There is no significant difference in the mean ratings for senior managers, junior managers and non-managerial staff.

Table 4.12c Fear of being a victim of crime versus gender

Rating	Gender		Total
	Male	Female	
5	16	36	52
4	22	34	56
3	13	13	26
2	18	27	45
1	12	21	33
Total	81	131	212
Mean	3.15	3.28	3.22

When performing the Mann-Whitney test for equality of means $z = -0.770$ with a p-value of 0.441. There is no significant difference in the mean ratings for males and females.

Table 4.12d Fear of being a victim of crime versus age

Rating	Age				Total
	30 or less	31-40	41-50	51 or more	
5	13	20	13	3	49
4	8	24	15	7	54
3	11	5	7	2	25
2	14	12	10	7	43
1	17	7	7	2	33
Total	63	68	52	21	204
Mean	2.78	3.56	3.33	3.10	3.21

When performing the Kruskal-Wallis test for equality of means chi-square = 17.683 with a p-value of 0.000. The mean rating for the “30 or less” age group is significantly less than for the other age groups. The reason for this difference is that the “30 or less” age group had been a victim of crime less than other age groups, as can be seen from the graph below. A logical explanation for respondents below 30 years of age may be that they have not been around for as long as the other respondents, naturally making them less affected by crime. Furthermore, being at a younger age, respondents may be more resilient than their elders.

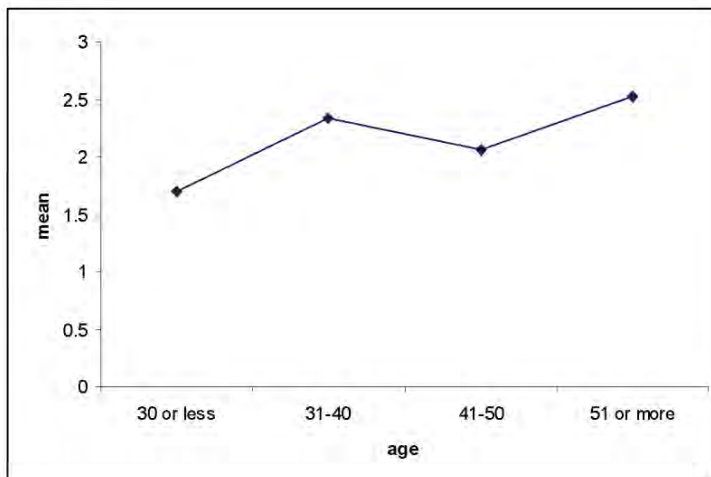


Figure 4.9 Mean victim of crime rating versus age groups

The “30 or less” age group has been a victim of crime less than the other groups and therefore they have a lesser fear of being a victim than the other groups.

Table 4.12e Fear of being a victim of crime versus having been a victim of crime

		Have been a victim					Total
		5	4	3	2	1	
Fear	5	8	8	4	9	23	52
	4	3	11	9	21	12	56
	3	0	1	6	8	10	25
	2	0	4	2	27	11	44
	1	0	0	0	2	31	33
Total		11	24	21	67	87	210
Mean		4.73	3.96	3.71	3.12	2.83	3.24

Kendall-s tau-b = 0.282 with a p-value of 0.000. There is a significant relationship between having been a victim of crime and fearing being a victim of crime at work. It can be seen from the graph below that the higher the rating, the higher the fear.

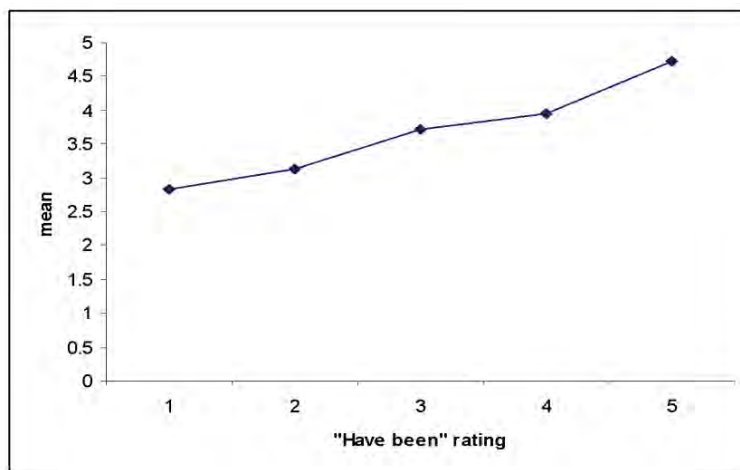


Figure 4.10 Mean fear of being a victim of crime versus having been a victim of crime

Table 4.13a Fear of being subjected to violence at work versus sector of employment

Rating	Sector		Total
	Public	Private	
5	16	15	31
4	22	36	58
3	10	17	27
2	17	30	47
1	16	30	46
Total	81	128	209
Mean	3.06	2.81	2.91

When performing the Mann-Whitney test for equality of means $z = -1.261$ with a p-value of 0.207. There is no significant difference in the mean ratings for the two sectors.

Table 4.13b Fear of being subjected to violence at work versus position

Rating	Position			Total
	Senior manager	Junior manager	Non managerial	
5	3	3	23	29
4	5	10	35	50
3	0	6	20	26
2	3	13	24	40
1	7	7	27	41
Total	18	39	129	186
Mean	2.67	2.72	3.02	2.92

When performing the Kruskal-Wallis test for equality of means chi-square = 1.999 with a p-value of 0.368. There is no significant difference between the means for the position categories.

Table 4.13c Fear of being subjected to violence at work versus gender

Rating	Gender		Total
	Male	Female	
5	6	26	32
4	21	37	58
3	14	13	27
2	20	27	47
1	20	26	46
Total	81	129	210
Mean	2.67	3.08	2.92

When performing the Mann-Whitney test for equality of means $z = -2.083$ with a p-value of 0.037. Females have a higher fear than males of being subjected to violence at work.

Table 4.13d Fear of being subjected to violence at work versus age

Rating	Age				Total
	30 or less	31-40	41-50	51 or more	
5	9	10	10	1	30
4	15	20	17	5	57
3	9	9	6	2	26
2	12	15	11	6	44
1	16	14	9	6	45
Total	61	68	53	20	202
Mean	2.82	2.96	3.15	2.45	2.92

When performing the Kruskal-Wallis test for equality of means chi-square = 4.011 with a p-value of 0.260. There is no significant difference between the means for the age categories.

Table 4.13e Fear of being subjected to violence at work versus having been a victim of crime

		Have been a victim of crime					Total
		5	4	3	2	1	
Fear	5	2	7	4	9	10	32
	4	7	5	7	22	17	58
	3	0	3	3	9	11	26
	2	1	6	3	21	16	47
	1	1	4	4	5	32	46
Total		11	25	21	66	86	209
Mean		3.73	3.20	3.19	3.14	2.5	2.92

Kendall-s tau-b = 0.213 with a p-value of 0.000. There is a significant relationship between having been a victim of crime and fearing being subjected to violence at work.

It can be seen from the graph below that the higher the rating, the higher the fear. This allows for a fear rating to be calculated which will be applied to further analysis below.

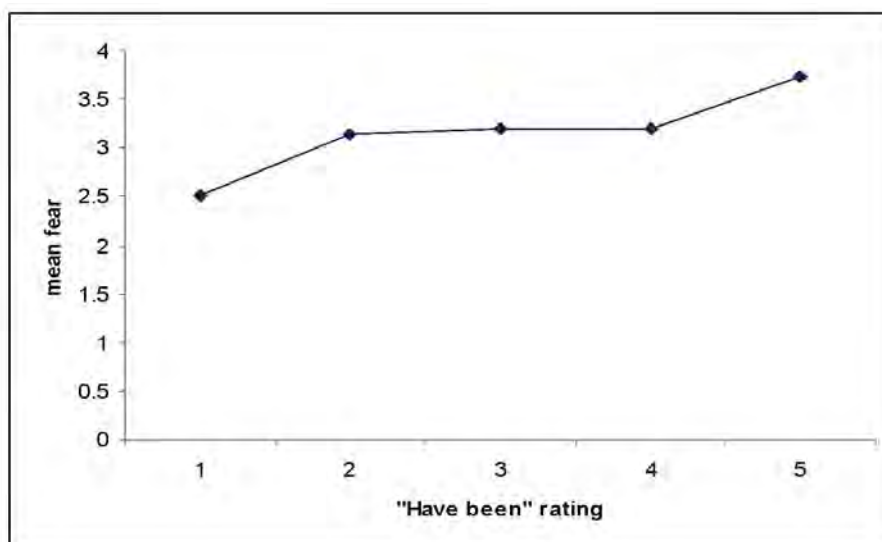


Figure 4.11 Mean fear of being subjected to violence at work versus having been a victim of crime

Table 4.14 Categorical data analysis of fear rating versus type of fear, type of violence, perpetrator and perpetrator rating

Analysis of Variance			
Source	DF	Chi-Square	Pr > ChiSq
Intercept	1	2314.34	<.0001
Typef	1	4.65	0.0311**
Typev	2	0.07	0.9659
typef*typev	2	0.11	0.9458
perpetrator	3	4.67	0.1973
typef*perpetrator	3	0.36	0.9491
typev*perpetrator	6	4.35	0.6293
typef*typev*perpetrator	6	0.67	0.9951
ratingp	4	216.38	<.0001***
typef*ratingp	4	4.58	0.3328
typev*ratingp	8	6.48	0.5936
typef*typev*ratingp	8	2.33	0.9690
perpetrator*ratingp	12	19.06	0.0871*
typef*perpetrator*ratingp	12	4.31	0.9773
typev*perpetrator*ratingp	24	16.04	0.8866
typef*typev*perpe*rating	23*	6.86	0.9995

*** Significant at the 1% level of significance.

** Significant at the 5% level of significance.

* Significant at the 10% level of significance.

The above categorical data analysis is based on respondent's fear of being a victim of crime versus verbal, physical and emotional violence perpetrated by their supervisor, peer, junior staff or customer, as well as respondent's fear of being subjected to violence versus verbal, physical and emotional violence perpetrated by their supervisor, peer, junior staff or customer.

Table 4.15 Type of fear versus fear rating

		Type	
Rating		Victim of crime	Subjected to violence
	strongly disagree	33	46
	disagree	45	47
	neutral	26	27
	agree	56	58
	strongly agree	53	33
Mean		3.24	2.93

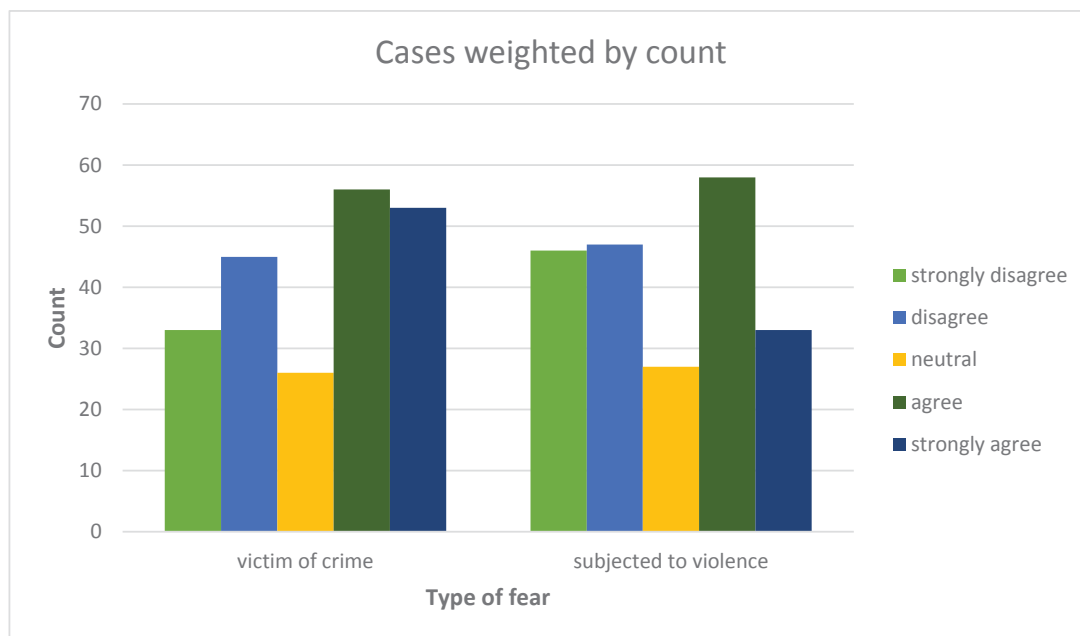


Figure 4.12 Type of fear versus fear rating

The fear for being a victim of crime is significantly greater than that of being subjected to violence.

Table 4.16 Fear rating versus perpetrator rating per perpetrator

Fear Rating/Perpetrator	Superior	Peer	Junior	Customer
Strongly disagree	2.68	2.64	2.68	2.7
Disagree	3.11	3.17	3.24	3.23
Neutral	3.48	3.45	3.52	2.89
Agree	3.41	3.57	3.81	3.31
Strongly agree	3.92	4.1	3.72	3.57

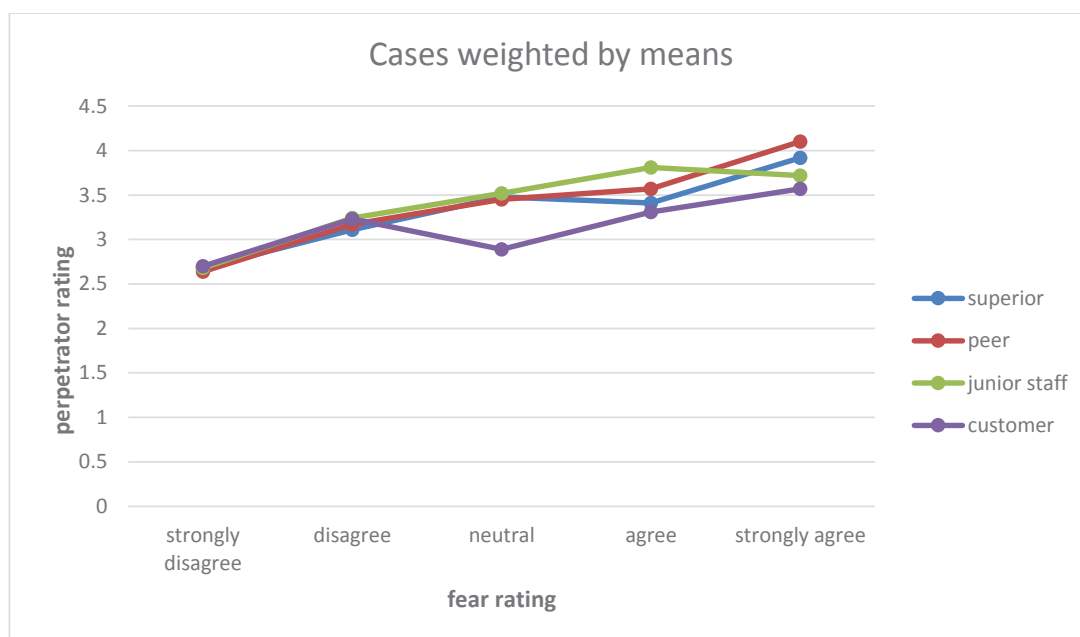


Figure 4.13 Fear rating versus perpetrator rating per perpetrator

The violence rating, as reflected in the above graph, relates to the responses of employees who were subjected to violence perpetrated by a superior, peer, junior staff or customer. It emerged that the higher the fear rating, the higher the violence rating for the perpetrator. At the highest fear rating (strongly agree), peer and superior have the highest violence ratings.

4.4.2 Reduced commitment to employer

Table 4.17 Unfair treatment by employer versus reduced commitment to employer

		Unfair treatment					Total
		5	4	3	2	1	
Reduced commitment	5	6	5	2	1	0	14
	4	0	14	10	5	1	30
	3	0	6	21	8	1	36
	2	0	6	9	42	0	57
	1	4	3	3	9	34	53
Total		10	34	45	65	36	190

Kendall's tau-b = 0.564 with a p-value of 0.000. There is a significant positive association between being unfairly treated by an employer and reduced commitment to the employer, i.e., the less (higher) the unfair treatment the less (higher) the reduced commitment. The cases where respondents strongly agree or agree on unfair treatment and reduced commitment are far less than the number of cases where they strongly disagree or disagree (25 "Strongly agrees" plus "Agrees" versus 85 "Strongly disagrees" plus "Disagrees").

Table 4.18 Blaming employer for violence endured versus violence reducing commitment to employer

		Blaming employer for violence					Total
		5	4	3	2	1	
Reduced commitment	5	4	1	2	0	1	8
	4	2	13	8	5	1	29
	3	0	2	17	8	2	29
	2	0	6	5	48	10	69
	1	1	2	3	1	58	65
Total		7	24	35	62	72	200

Kendall's tau-b = 0.667 with a p-value of 0.000. There is a significant positive association between blaming an employer for violence and reduced commitment to the employer, i.e., the higher the unfair treatment the higher the reduced commitment. The cases where respondents strongly agree or agree on blaming the employer for violence and reduced commitment are far less than the number of cases where they strongly disagree or disagree (20 "Strongly agrees" plus "Agrees" versus 117 "Strongly disagrees" plus "Disagrees").

The theory of leader-member exchange (LMX) has a strong relation to these findings. According to Landy and Conte (2010) the LMX theory relates to a leader who displays a variety of behaviours that specifically relates to an individual employee. The LMX theory therefore allows a leader to adjust leadership styles to support employees who may have endured a violent incident. In so doing the employee feels as though they have been fairly treated and would not reduce their commitment to their employer. The implications of good leader/follower practices are therefore vitally important not only for ethical and responsible leaders who care for their employees but also for the positive effect that a fair leadership style has on the overall commitment that the employee displays toward the organisation.

Respondents who were subjected to verbal, physical and emotional violence versus violence reducing commitment to employer were analysed in relation to the perpetrator, namely, superior, peer, junior staff and customers. In some of the abovementioned analysis, the 'strongly agree' column contains all zeros, which makes categorical data analysis impossible. For this reason, the categorical data analysis is based on recoding the responses into the following categories.

- "Strongly agree" and "agree" responses are combined into a category labeled "agree" and allocated a code of 3.
- "Strongly disagree" and "disagree" responses are combined into a category labeled "disagree" and allocated a code of 1.
- "Neutral" responses are left unchanged, but with a code of 2.

Table 4.19 Categorical data analysis of reduction in commitment versus perpetrator rating per perpetrator and type of violence

Analysis of Variance			
Source	DF	Chi-Square	Pr > ChiSq
Intercept	1	3012.83	<.0001
ratingP	2	161.10	<.0001
perpetrator	3	8.71	0.0333
ratingP*perpetrator	6	14.10	0.0285**
type	2	15.25	0.0005
ratingP*type	4	11.20	0.0244**
perpetrator*type	6	1.53	0.9575
ratingP*perpetrator*type	12	2.76	0.9970

The results in the above table show significant perpetrator rating*perpetrator and perpetrator*type effects.

The reduction in commitment rating counts at each of the combinations of perpetrator and perpetrator rating are shown in the table below. The means shown in the table and plotted in the graph are the mean reduction in commitment rating for each perpetrator rating.

Table 4.20 “Reduction in commitment” mean per perpetrator and perpetrator rating

Perpetrator/Perpetrator rating	Disagree	Neutral	Agree
Superior	1.34	2.06	1.89
Peer	1.38	1.88	1.91
Junior	1.41	1.91	1.94
Customer	1.41	1.72	1.67

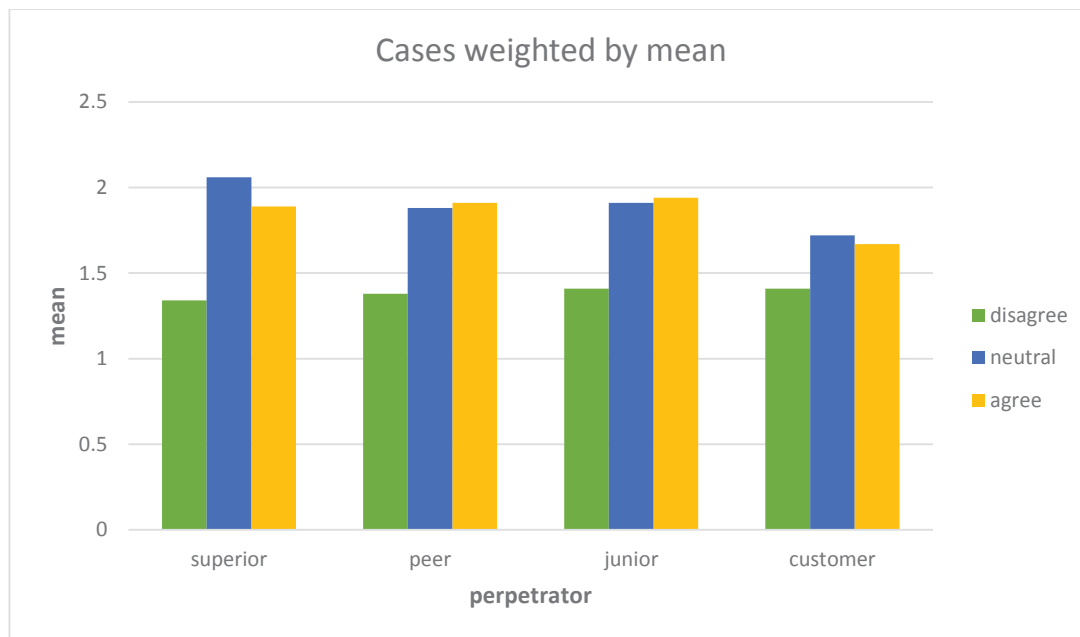


Figure 4.14 “Reduction in commitment” mean per perpetrator and perpetrator rating

For all perpetrators, commitment decreases with an increase in perpetrator ratings of violence. When the perpetrator is the customer, this rate of increase is less than when the perpetrator is a superior, a peer or a junior staff member.

Table 4.21 “Reduction in commitment” mean per type of violence and perpetrator rating

Type of violence/Perpetrator rating	Disagree	Neutral	Agree
Verbal	1.35	1.82	1.75
Physical	1.45	2.22	2.25
Emotional	1.33	1.76	1.85

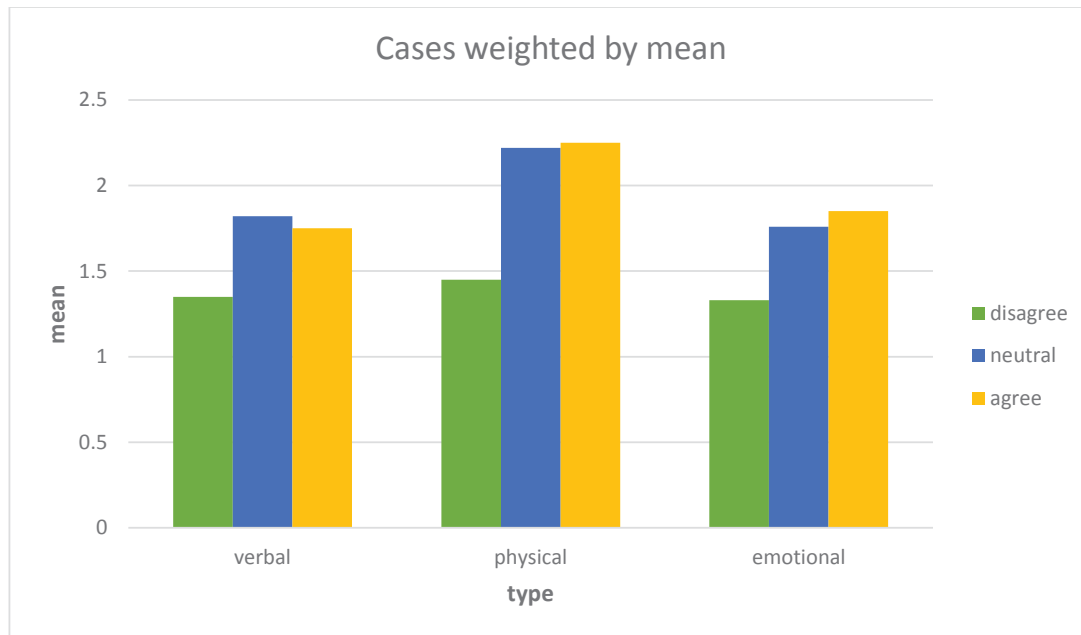


Figure 4.15 “Reduction in commitment” mean per type of violence and perpetrator rating

For all types of violence, the commitment decreases with an increase perpetrator rating of violence. For physical violence this increase is more than for the other two types of violence.

It is interesting to note, at this point, that whilst the occurrence of physical violence is significantly less than verbal and emotional violence as presented earlier, the employee’s tolerance of physical violence is far less than for the other two types. Depending on the type of organisation, this could have severe implications, as the employee who endured violence of a physical nature shows a decrease in their commitment to their employer. This could lead to a decrease in productivity, lack of attention at work and a decrease in interest in the work that an employee is expected to undertake. A further implication, as supported by Aytac and Dursun (2012), points to employees suffering from depression, anxiety and stress. They also concur with the finding of a decrease in commitment as a result of violent behaviours experienced at work. Jobs that require the employee’s full commitment at all times, such as nursing, there could be severe ramifications as a result of a decrease in commitment, as people’s lives may be at stake in this instance.

4.4.3 Confidence of respondents

The concept of self-confidence leads on from the discussion of commitment of an employee. It was deemed necessary to reveal the effect that an incident of violence had on the self-confidence of an employee, as should self-confidence decrease then the impact on employee morale, moods, emotions and work output may also be expected to decrease. This situation can become further compounded by what Schermerhorn *et al.* (2012, p. 58) describe as “emotion and mood contagion” where the mood and emotions of an employee can spill over onto other employees in the organisation. Whilst this can be both good and bad, they found that bad emotions generally travel faster among employees than good ones. It was therefore deemed important to include the effect of self-confidence in this study which will be presented further below.

Table 4.22 Self-confidence versus having been a victim of crime at the workplace

		Victim of crime					Total
		5	4	3	2	1	
Confidence	5	8	12	12	45	64	141
	4	3	9	7	20	17	56
	3	0	2	2	2	3	9
	2	0	1	0	0	1	2
	1	0	1	0	0	2	3
Total		11	25	21	67	87	211

Kendall's tau-b = -0.122 with a p-value of 0.055. There is no linear relationship between having been a victim of crime at the work place and self-confidence.

Table 4.23 Self-confidence versus fearing being a victim of crime at the work place

		Fearing crime					Total
		5	4	3	2	1	
Confidence	5	41	27	22	23	28	141
	4	8	24	4	20	2	58
	3	1	4	0	2	2	9
	2	1	0	0	0	1	2
	1	2	1	0	0	0	3
Total		53	56	26	45	33	213

Kendall's tau-b = -0.015 with a p-value of 0.866. There is no linear relationship between fearing being a victim of crime at the work place and self-confidence.

Table 4.24 Self-confidence versus unfair treatment by employers

		Unfair treatment					Total
		5	4	3	2	1	
Confidence	5	11	22	29	46	32	140
	4	0	12	12	28	5	57
	3	0	0	3	4	2	9
	2	0	0	1	0	1	2
	1	0	1	0	0	2	3
Total		11	35	45	78	42	211

Kendall's tau-b = 0.021 with a p-value of 0.723. There is no linear relationship between unfair treatment by employers and self-confidence.

Table 4.25 Self-confidence versus violence related reduced commitment

		Reduced commitment					Total
		5	4	3	2	1	
Confidence	5	5	16	13	43	51	128
	4	2	11	14	23	8	58
	3	0	1	2	3	3	9
	2	1	0	0	0	1	2
	1	0	1	0	0	2	3
Total		8	29	29	69	65	200

Kendall's tau-b = -0.168 with a p-value of 0.008.

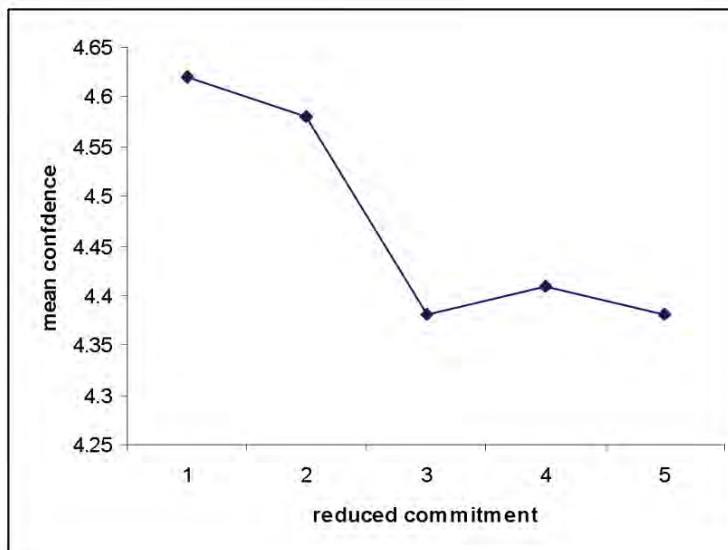


Figure 4.16 Self-confidence versus violence-related reduced commitment

There is some evidence of a weak negative linear relationship between self-confidence and violence-related reduced commitment, i.e., the greater the violence-related reduced commitment, the less the employee's self-confidence will be. This implies that the confidence levels of employees appear to diminish in relation to the decrease in their commitment levels as a result of violence that they have experienced.

4.4.4 The effect of crime, violence and unfair treatment on employees

Leading on from the findings on the effect that crime, violence and unfair treatment has on employees, it has emerged that, despite the fact that crime occurs less than violence at the workplace, employees have a greater fear of crime. This could arise from the fact that the fear of crime at the workplace is positively associated with having been a victim of crime at the work place, which is further supported by a significant positive association between the employee having been a victim of crime and a fear of being a victim of crime. Furthermore, there is a significant positive association between fear of crime or violence and violence by a perpetrator at work.

The fact that employees older than 30 years reveal a greater fear of being victims of crime than those 30 years or younger, could indicate that younger employees are more resilient than their older colleagues. It becomes important for leaders in organisations to be aware of and address this issue as the older an employee is, the more reassurance may be required that the employee's safety at work will be maintained and upheld as far as possible. The employee may feel reassured when they actually see their employer implementing safety and security measures at their workplace. This scenario becomes more evident when the "blame my employer" and "reduced commitment" questions were analysed.

Blaming an employer for violence and reduced commitment responses revealed a significant positive association between the two, where the higher the unfair treatment the higher the reduced commitment. Naturally, the converse of this response could point to employees being more committed to their employee if they feel that they are being treated fairly.

Between verbal, physical and emotional violence, it emerged that physical violence occurs less than the other two types. However, this should not be viewed in isolation. Despite physical violence being less frequent than the other two types, it has a significantly higher impact on the commitment levels of employees, where employees' commitment decreases more with physical violence than with the other two types.

It becomes important for employers to be aware that, if an employee is not subjected to violence, they themselves will not commit violence. This is important because, if unaddressed, violent behaviours will continue within the organization; they may spread among fellow employees who could perpetrate the same type of violent behaviour endured, or worse, on their colleagues and even customers.

In organisations where there is a high level of customer interaction it becomes necessary for the employer to know that customers were found to be slightly worse offenders (than superiors, peers and juniors) in verbal violence. There is no significant difference between the perpetrators as far as physical and emotional violence are concerned.

The effect of violence perpetrated by superiors, peers and junior staff toward employees is higher in the public than in the private sector. This could allude to public sector employees being more service-orientated than their public sector counterparts and having to deal with more colleagues, deadlines and poorer working conditions.

There is some evidence to suggest that having been a victim of crime decreases employees' confidence in South Africa as a whole.

4.5 Objective Three: Propensity of employees to engage in violence

Table 4.26 Commitment of verbal violence at workplace

Towards	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Mean
Superior	3	6	21	79	101	1.72
Peer	3	17	13	80	97	1.80
Junior staff	2	10	16	82	101	1.72
Customer	6	5	20	82	97	1.77

Chi-square = 14.538 with a p-value of 0.268. There is no association between the extent of violence and the group it is aimed at.

The following four tables will be used to determine if an association exists between employees who were subjected to verbal violence also committed verbal violence towards their superiors, peers, junior staff or customers.

Table 4.27a Subjected to versus committed verbal violence: superior

		Commit					Total
		5	4	3	2	1	
Subjected	5	2	0	2	1	11	16
	4	0	3	4	20	15	42
	3	0	1	8	5	5	19
	2	0	1	5	48	23	77
	1	1	1	1	4	46	53
Total		3	6	20	78	100	207

Kendall's tau-b = 0.265 with a p-value of 0.000.

Table 4.27b Subjected to versus committed verbal violence: peer

		Commit					Total
		5	4	3	2	1	
Subjected	5	3	1	1	1	7	13
	4	0	5	3	13	15	36
	3	0	1	4	12	4	21
	2	0	4	5	51	23	83
	1	0	6	0	3	48	57
Total		3	17	13	80	97	210

Kendall's tau-b = 0.278 with a p-value of 0.000.

Table 4.27c Subjected to versus committed verbal violence: junior staff

		Commit					Total
		5	4	3	2	1	
Subjected	5	1	0	1	0	4	6
	4	1	1	4	12	8	26
	3	0	2	5	9	6	22
	2	0	4	4	53	22	83
	1	0	3	2	6	61	72
Total		2	10	16	80	101	209

Kendall's tau-b = 0.381 with a p-value of 0.000.

Table 4.27d Subjected to versus committed verbal violence: customer

		Commit					Total
		5	4	3	2	1	
Subjected	5	4	1	3	10	18	36
	4	2	4	4	30	20	60
	3	0	0	4	11	7	22
	2	0	0	7	30	21	58
	1	0	0	2	1	31	34
Total		6	5	20	82	97	210

Kendall's tau-b = 0.200 with a p-value of 0.001.

All the above tables show a significant positive association between the committing of, and being subjected to, verbal violence. The less an employee is subjected to verbal violence, the less likely the employee is to commit it. In all the tables, the 'strongly disagree' or 'disagree' ratings by far outnumber the 'strongly agree' or 'agree' ratings, as can be seen from the table below. The behaviour of employees seems to be closely linked to a workplace violence theory known as "the frustration-aggression hypothesis". Landy and Conte (2010) explain that this theory means that certain work-related events, such as being subjected to verbal violence, can result in an increase in the employee's stress levels, which thereafter results in

counterproductive or aggressive acts. This then leads to that employee possibly displaying verbal or other forms of violence towards others in the workplace.

Table 4.28 Person involved in verbal violence versus strongly disagree/disagree or strongly agree/agree ratings

Person/ Rating	Strongly disagree/ Disagree	Strongly agree/ Agree
Superior	121	5
Peer	125	9
Junior staff	142	3
Customer	83	11

More strongly agree/ agree ratings for “commitment of” and “subjected to” involve customer and peer more than superior and junior staff.

Although just one type of violent behaviour (verbal violence) was tested in the present study, the strong association between respondents who were subjected to verbal violence and committing verbal violence reflects the propensity of employees to engage in violent behaviour. This finding is further supported by existing workplace theory, such as the “the frustration-aggression hypothesis” as explained above.

Furthermore, the link that has been established from respondents who were subjected to violence, versus those who committed violence, is an important one. It alludes to a much deeper problem that could continue in a downward spiral of violent behaviour and work-related stress, which interestingly is not only the outcome of violent incidents, but also the fuel for committing a future violent act (Hoel, Sparks, & Cooper, 2001). The reference to a “deeper problem” revolves around an unwitting culture of violent behaviours. These violent behaviours grow organically within the organization and if not identified, addressed and curbed early enough it will continue to manifest.

4.6 Objective four: How management can pre-empt crime and violence at work

Based on the analysed findings, the following were identified as possible ways in which management could pre-empt crime and violence at work:

Issue	Action
General approach	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Keep a record of all crime and violence related issues at work, review it regularly and modify pre-empting measures if necessary.2. The emphasis should be more on rewarding compliance with “no crime and no violence” behaviour than on punishing “crime and violent” behaviour.
Crime	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Improve security.2. Make employees more security-conscious.3. Rewards for crime-free workplace.4. Punitive measures for offenders.5. Call on employees for suggestions on how to combat crime.6. Keep record of all occurrences of crime and use this information to improve measures against crime.
Violence	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Draw up a code of conduct for employees and customers.2. Monitor the adherence to the code of conduct.3. Keep a “violence sheet” for each employee, reward consistent good performance and provide counseling to consistent poor performers.4. Provide a customer comment/suggestions book and regularly check and act on (if necessary) their comments/suggestions.
Unfair treatment	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Detailed job description for each employee.2. Create alternative (to direct superior) communication channels for use by employees who feel they have been unfairly treated.3. Use labour relations consultants to handle serious cases of unfair treatment.

4.7 Summary of respondents

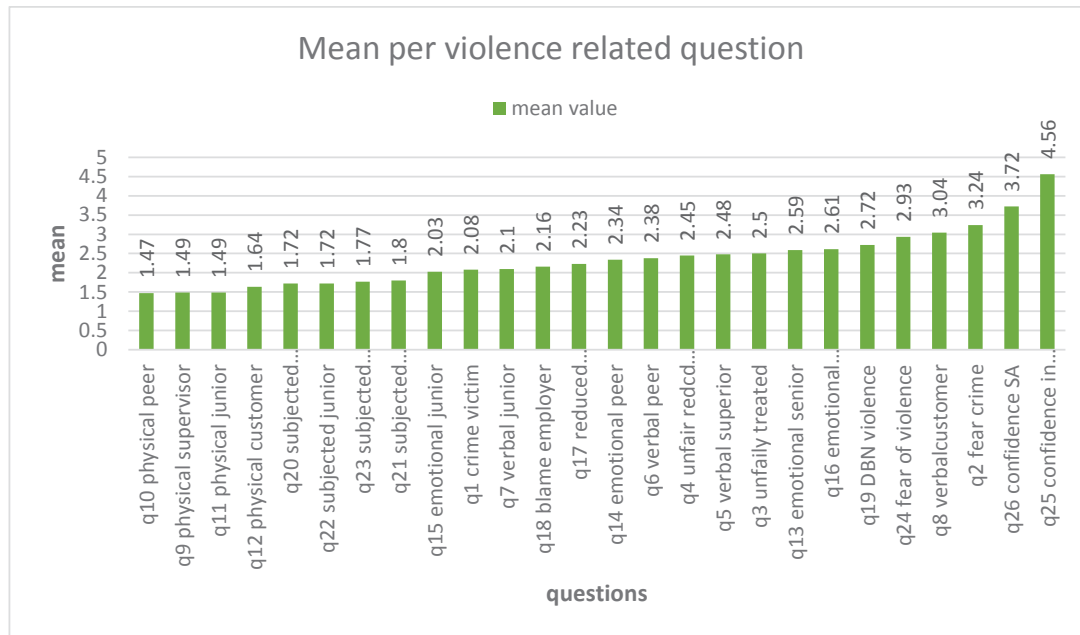


Figure 4.17 Mean value per violence related question

It is interesting, and to a certain extent reassuring, to note that respondents who were subjected to physical violence by all perpetrators rank with the lowest mean. This was found to be interesting because respondents indicated that physical violence, as a specific type of violence in this study, perpetrated by their peer, supervisor, junior staff and customers rank, in that order, with the lowest means of all the other questions posed in this study. It can be considered to be reassuring that this result has emerged as it alludes to the workplace being a safer place to be from physical violence than verbal or emotional violence. Based on Maslow's hierarchy of needs, the need for safety is one of the primary levels of the hierarchy (Mullins, 2011). Having a physically safe place of work allows for an employee to move on to the next level and progress in life. In so doing, the employee is able to fulfill and satisfy their higher needs, as discussed in chapter two.

Furthermore, it is equally fascinating to note that, despite various levels of violent experiences the highest mean reveals respondents who are confident in themselves and the country in comparison to the violence endured and inflicted.

4.8 Summary

This chapter presented the findings of this study, and the discussion thereof, based on the analysis of data obtained using the questionnaire. The analysis and findings were presented using a combination of tables and graphs to visually display the outcomes.

In order for further analysis to be undertaken the profile of respondents allowed for a foundation to be formed at the outset of this chapter. The findings, based on the application of statistical techniques, were broadly categorized in relation to each objective of this study. This allowed for each of the questions in the questionnaire to be analysed and discussed in relation to the stated objectives.

The next chapter will present the recommendations and conclusion to this study.

CHAPTER FIVE

Recommendations and Conclusions

5.1 Introduction

The analysis and findings established from the primary data obtained for this study provided the basis for its interpretation and discussion, which was graphically and descriptively presented in the preceding chapter. This chapter determines if the aims and objectives of this study have been sufficiently addressed. The implications of the research findings on the subjects of this study will also be presented. Suggestions on possible preventative measures to limit, or better, eliminate violence at the workplace will also be discussed. With the intention of increasing the body of knowledge of this phenomenon, certain recommendations will be presented for future studies relating to violence at the workplace.

5.2 Addressing the aims and objectives

The aim of this research was to determine the prevalence and extent of violent behaviours at the workplace in the private and public sectors in Durban.

The objectives of this study served to decode the phenomenon of violence at the workplace in Durban. The study found that violent behaviours were varied and ranged from a subtle indication of a threat, to the extreme opposite end of the spectrum, that being violence that is grossly physical in nature. The individual objectives are addressed below.

5.2.1 Objective one: The extent to which employees have been subjected to violence at the workplace.

The findings presented in chapter four not only confirm that violence exists at the workplace, but also shows that as many as one out of every four respondents was a victim of a crime at work; more than half of the respondents, alluding to violence at work being a common phenomenon in Durban, which confirms the extent of violence at the workplace. It emerged from the findings that, barring customers, the violent behaviours perpetrated by superiors, peers and junior staff members in the

public sector were more prevalent than among those employed in the private sector, with violence perpetrated by customers being fairly comparable between the two sectors.

5.2.2 Objective two: The reaction of employees to violence at the workplace.

It emerged that verbal and emotional violence occurs more frequently than physical violence. However, responses to the threat of violence revealed that respondents were fairly balanced on their views, with an almost equal percentage of respondents agreeing and disagreeing to being afraid of being subjected to violence. It emerged that respondents were more fearful of being a victim of crime, than of being subjected to violence, despite crime occurring less frequently than violence at work.

The customer emerged as the worst perpetrator of verbal, physical and emotional violence, followed by the superior as the next worst perpetrator. Junior staff generally displayed the least tendency of violent behaviour. A significant reaction from respondents revealed that an employee would display a greater reduction in their commitment to their employer if the perpetrator of violence was a superior, peer or junior staff, than when the perpetrator was a customer. Being subjected to a physical type of violence is the largest contributor to a decrease in commitment from an employee, when compared to verbal and emotional violence.

5.2.3 Objective three: Propensity of employees to engage in violence.

It was found that the propensity of an employee to commit or display verbal violence increases when that employee has been a victim of violent behaviours at work. This indicates that an employee may not commit violence at work if they were not subjected to violence at work themselves.

5.2.4 Objective four: How management can pre-empt crime and violence at work.

A combination of the literature review and the findings of this study allowed for guidelines to be drafted, as presented in chapter four (4.6. Objective four: How management can pre-empt crime and violence at work). The guidelines offer practical suggestions of a general nature and also address specific spheres of violence, such as crime, violence and unfair treatment at work.

5.2.5 Decoding the phenomenon of violence at the workplace.

Based on the research and analysed findings of this study the phenomenon of violence at the workplace has been decoded. The prevalence and extent to which violence at the workplace exists in the public and private sectors has been confirmed and presented. Furthermore, the manifestation of the different types of violence inflicted on and perpetrated by employees at their workplaces has been revealed in this study. The aim of this study can therefore be considered to be successfully realised.

5.3 Research implications

The outcomes of this research may be useful to researchers in the field of violence at the workplace, as well as to industrial psychologists and others who study organisational behaviour. It may also offer a benefit to senior managers and leaders of organisations and industry, particularly in their strategic planning, as it allows for insight into the prevalence and impact of violent behaviours across a combination of a variety of sectors, perpetrators, types of violence and outcomes. The research also contributes toward scholarship by demystifying the phenomenon of violence at the workplace through the application of a recognized and appropriate research methodology and the statistical analysis of data.

Senior managers, leaders of organisations and CEOs who are expected to provide the strategic direction of the organisation that they lead can derive a direct benefit from this study as it reveals the repercussions of not addressing violence at the workplace. Furthermore, if violent behaviour becomes a frequent occurrence within the organisation the result can be disastrous for leaders who are unaware of this problem, as it not only has an impact on colleagues, but also on customers and the employee's commitment to their employer, which may ultimately have a negative effect on the bottom-line profits of the organisation.

5.4 Recommendations

With the intention of addressing the research problem through the findings of this study, the following recommendations were proposed to ameliorate the understanding and the avoidance of violence at the workplace.

- The pre-empting of crime and violence at work, as presented in chapter four (4.6. Objective four: How management can pre-empt crime and violence at work), serves as an important and useful starting point for senior managers and leaders of an organisation to consider and implement where necessary.
- Before a candidate is employed, specific questions should be included during the interview process to ascertain violent tendencies and previous violent behaviours. Questions such as 'Have you been a victim of a certain type of violence?' are important to ascertain, as the candidate may be likely to display similar or worse behaviour if he or she has been a victim of such violence, as established in this research. Similar questions may be included during periodic staff assessment and appraisals, or even during disciplinary hearings, in order for management to get to the root of a problem, or if caught early enough, prevent workplace violence from occurring.
- Senior managers and superiors who are responsible for teams or even individual staff need to be made aware of the implications of verbal and emotional violence toward their subordinates. This can be presented in a positive way during teambuilding sessions, motivational meetings or routine staff get-togethers. Although it may not be necessary to address all staff during the same session, it is important for all staff from the highest level of management down to junior management levels to be made aware of this implication.
- Employees should be encouraged to always report verbal abuse from customers, no matter how mild the case may be. This will allow for the employee to decrease the burden of the violent incident and also allow the manager to address the situation with the affected employee.
- An independent and confidential 'complaints person' should be identified within the organisation. This will allow an employee, who may not feel comfortable disclosing a violent incident to their line manager, or who may even be the recipient of a violent act from their line manager, to confidentially share the

violent incident with a responsible person within the organisation. Depending on the nature of the incident the employee may feel better in just 'getting it off their chest' or reassured that the matter will be confidentially addressed. This process is an important one as this study reveals that unfair treatment results in reduced commitment, and the employee may even blame the employer for the violence endured.

5.5 Recommendations for Future Research Studies

The following recommendations for future studies should be considered around the phenomenon of violence at the workplace.

- Due to this study being based in the city of Durban, it would be beneficial to expand this study to include the cities of Johannesburg and Cape Town in order to obtain a more representative view of workplace violence in South Africa as a whole. This would allow for data to be correlated and assessed and similarities or differences to be recognized.
- The cost impact of violence has not been established in this study. Future studies could include the cost of violence at the workplace to both the employee and the employer (or organisation). Factors such as leave (paid or unpaid), medical costs for physical and psychological injuries, downtime due to violent incidents, and reduced commitment in relation to productivity all carry a cost element, which could be quantified.

5.6 Summary

This chapter concludes this study with a discussion of the implications and recommendations surrounding the phenomenon of violence at the workplace. The aims and objectives of this study are considered to have been adequately met. It has been established that violence at the workplace is prevalent and that employees may display violent behaviours if they have been subjected to violence at work, which addresses the research questions of this study.

Based on empirical research and the outcomes of the findings, certain practical and implementable recommendations were proposed. It is envisaged that, should leaders of organisations implement these recommendations, the probability of violent incidents may decrease over time. Whilst it may not be possible to always control the behaviour of colleagues and customers, it benefits the organisation and employees themselves when employees understand how to react to violent incidents in constructive ways rather than perpetuating such violence in the workplace.

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APPENDIX 1 - QUESTIONNAIRE

UNIVERSITY OF KWAZULU-NATAL
GRADUATE SCHOOL OF BUSINESS & LEADERSHIP

Dear Respondent,

Research Project: Violence at the workplace: trends in Durban.
Supervisor: N Singh (031- 260 8718)
Researcher: AR Sanichur (082 - 351 3680)
Research Office: Dr S Singh 031-260 3587

I, Avinash Romesh Sanichur, am a student of the Graduate School of Business & leadership at the University of KwaZulu-Natal. You are invited to participate in a research project entitled **Violence at the workplace: trends in Durban**. The aim of this study is to gauge the extent of violence in the workplace in Durban.

Through your participation I hope to understand how widespread the problem of violence is in the workplaces of Durban, if at all. The results of the survey are intended to contribute to an understanding of where violence in the workplace could originate. Such knowledge could help managers take steps to ameliorate such problems.

Your participation in this project is voluntary. You may refuse to participate or withdraw from the project at any time with no negative consequence. There will be no monetary gain from participating in this survey. Confidentiality and anonymity of records identifying you as a participant will be maintained by the Graduate School of Business, at UKZN.

If you have any questions or concerns about completing the questionnaire or about participating in this study, you may contact me or Nikita Singh, GSB, 031- 260 8718.

The survey should take you about 10 minutes to complete. I hope you will take the time to complete this survey.

Sincerely

Investigator's signature_____ Date_____

This page is to be retained by participant
INFORMED CONSENT DOCUMENT

Dear Respondent,

From Avinash Romesh Sanichur, a student of the Graduate School of Business & Leadership at the University of KwaZulu-Natal.
Tel 031-240 7700.
Cell 082-351 3680.
email: asanichur@gmail.co.za

Thank you for considering being a respondent in my research work. The title of my work is:
Violence at the workplace: a study of trends in Durban. The aim of the project is to gauge the extent of violence at the workplace in Durban in the private and public sectors.

Your name will not be made public. To meet the research ethical requirements of the University of KwaZulu-Natal, please will you give your consent to be part of this research. Without your consent, your response is not valid and I may not use your response. For respondents answering this questionnaire by e-mail, your return e-mail to me will signal your consent to be part of the research project. If you have any queries, please contact Nikita Singh, UKZN GSB, 031-260 8718.

DECLARATION

I.....(full names of participant)
hereby confirm that I understand the contents of this document and the nature of the research project, and I consent to participating in the research project. I understand that I am at liberty to withdraw from the project at any time, should I so desire. My name will not be made public

SIGNATURE OF PARTICIPANT

DATE

.....

Ethical clearance number: HSS/0277/09M

University of KwaZulu-Natal
College of Law and Management Studies
Graduate School of Business & Leadership

Management research project

Voluntary questionnaire on violence at the workplace in Durban.

The questionnaire is intended to be filled in by people at any level in the private and public sectors who have been exposed to violence at the workplace. By design, this is an individual based survey, not a company based survey.

QUESTIONS

Respond to the questions below by marking the sentiment that is closest to your position. If you have no response to a question, please leave the question unmarked. There are 26 questions.

1 I have been the victim of crime at the workplace.

Strongly agree..... agree..... neutral..... disagree..... strongly disagree

2 I fear being the victim of crime at the work place

Strongly agree..... agree..... neutral..... disagree..... strongly disagree

3 I have been seriously unfairly treated by my employers.

Strongly agree..... agree..... neutral..... disagree..... strongly disagree

4 The seriously unfair treatment reduced your commitment to your employer.

Strongly agree..... agree..... neutral..... disagree..... strongly disagree

5 I have been subjected to verbal violence by a superior.

Strongly agree..... agree..... neutral..... disagree..... strongly disagree

6 I have been subjected to verbal violence by a peer.

Strongly agree..... agree..... neutral..... disagree..... strongly disagree

7 I have been subjected to verbal violence by a junior staff member.

Strongly agree..... agree..... neutral..... disagree..... strongly disagree

8 I have been subjected to verbal violence by a customer.

Strongly agree..... agree..... neutral..... disagree..... strongly disagree

9 I have been subjected to physical violence by a superior.

Strongly agree..... agree..... neutral..... disagree..... strongly disagree

- 10 I have been subjected to physical violence by a peer.
Strongly agree..... agree..... neutral..... disagree..... strongly disagree
- 11 I have been subjected to physical violence by a junior staff member.
Strongly agree..... agree..... neutral..... disagree..... strongly disagree
- 12 I have been subjected to physical violence by a customer.
Strongly agree..... agree..... neutral..... disagree..... strongly disagree
- 13 I have been subjected to emotional violence by a superior.
Strongly agree..... agree..... neutral..... disagree..... strongly disagree
- 14 I have been subjected to emotional violence by a peer.
Strongly agree..... agree..... neutral..... disagree..... strongly disagree
- 15 I have been subjected to emotional violence by a junior staff member.
Strongly agree..... agree..... neutral..... disagree..... strongly disagree
- 16 I have been subjected to emotional violence by a customer.
Strongly agree..... agree..... neutral..... disagree..... strongly disagree
- 17 The act of violence reduced my commitment to my employer.
Strongly agree..... agree..... neutral..... disagree..... strongly disagree
- 18 I blame my employer for the violence I endured.
Strongly agree..... agree..... neutral..... disagree..... strongly disagree
- 19 In Durban generally, violence in the workplace is common.
Strongly agree..... agree..... neutral..... disagree..... strongly disagree
- 20 I have subjected a superior to verbal violence.
Strongly agree..... agree..... neutral..... disagree..... strongly disagree
- 21 I have subjected a colleague to verbal violence.
Strongly agree..... agree..... neutral..... disagree..... strongly disagree
- 22 I have subjected a junior staff member to verbal violence.
Strongly agree..... agree..... neutral..... disagree..... strongly disagree
- 23 I have subjected a customer to verbal violence.
Strongly agree..... agree..... neutral..... disagree..... strongly disagree

24 I fear being subjected to verbal, physical or emotional violence at the work place.

Strongly agree..... agree..... neutral..... disagree..... strongly disagree

25 I have confidence in myself?

Strongly agree..... agree..... neutral..... disagree..... strongly disagree

26 I have confidence in South Africa?

Strongly agree..... agree..... neutral..... disagree..... strongly disagree

In what sector of the economy are you employed? PUBLIC PRIVATE.....

What is your position?

Age: <25... 26-30... 31-35... 36-40... 41-45... 46-50... 51-55... 56-60... 61-65... 66>...

Gender: MALE FEMALE.....

Thank you, Avinash Sanichur,

asanichur@gmail.co.za

082-351 3680

APPENDIX 2 – ETHICAL CLEARANCE



25 June 2015

Mr Avinash R Sanichur (202524148)
Graduate School of Business & Leadership
Westville Campus

Dear Mr Sanichur,

Protocol reference number: HSS/0277/09M
Project title: Violence at the workplace: A study of trends in Durban

Approval – Recertification Application

Your request for Recertification dated 24 March 2015 was received.

This letter confirms that you have been granted Recertification Approval for a period of one year from the date of this letter. This approval is based strictly on the research protocol submitted in 2009.

Any alterations to the approved research protocol i.e. Questionnaire/Interview Schedule, Informed Consent Form, Title of the Project, Location of the Study must be reviewed and approved through the amendment /modification prior to its implementation. Please quote the above reference number for all queries relating to this study.

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

Yours faithfully

Dr Shamila Naidoo
On behalf of Dr S Singh (Chair)

/ms

cc Supervisors: Ms Nikita Singh
cc Academic Leader Research: Dr Mohammad Hoque
cc School Administrator: Ms Zarina Bullyraj

Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee

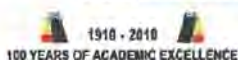
Dr Shenuka Singh (Chair)

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Founding Campuses: Edgewood Howard College Medical School Pietermaritzburg Westville