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## The Meaning of Violence, Justice, Training, and Administrative Support for Teachers

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# Walden University

College of Psychology and Community Services

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Walden University  
2022

Abstract

The Meaning of Violence, Justice, Training, and Administrative Support for Teachers

by

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MA, Capella University, 2011

BS, Edward Waters University, 1995

Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

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## Abstract

Teachers are experiencing violence at work at an alarming rate. Violence against teachers has become a national and international issue. However, there has been little discussion on the issue. The research questions pertained to how teachers experienced justice and violence at work and if they received training or adequate support before and after the violent incident. The research used a social constructivist conceptual model, and organizational justice was used as a theoretical framework. An inductive thematic analysis was used to analyze the semantic data. The data were analyzed using inductive thematic analysis, which created semantic data that were coded at the latent level. The research revealed information that coincides with the research's literature review, such as, teachers that experience violence at school suffer emotional and psychological stress, teachers perform poorly, with higher levels of stress when they perceive unjust treatment at work. Also, the data revealed teachers felt anxiety, fear, and isolation when the administration did not support them or blamed them for the violent incident. Limited studies use organizational justice as a framework in elementary education research; more research illuminating the voices of teachers and their experiences with violence at school decreases violence at school by promoting a more positive school climate.

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## Chapter 1: Introduction to the Study

### **Introduction**

This research addressed K-5 teachers' perceptions of justice, violence, training, and administrative support they received to prevent or halt violence at school.

Researchers have not given this topic proper attention; however, violence directed at teachers has grave implications, such as lack of teacher-student trust, early teacher retirement, and lasting teacher trauma effects (Mertoglu, 2015; Will, 2018).

Organizational justice was imperative to study along with the perception of teachers' violence because it is linked to employee retention (Chetty, 2018); additionally, research about teachers' perception of violence and organizational justice was highly limited (Koc et al., 2016).

### **Background**

Violence directed at teachers has had a significant impact on schools and educators (Reddy, 2014; Will, 2018). Limited attention had focused on threats and violence against teachers (Continuing Corner Education, 2013; Mertoglu, 2015; Reddy, 2014) and the training and administrative support they receive to prevent abuse at school (Finley, 2003; Reddy, 2014). Violence against teachers is a significant issue that has been linked to school safety (Mertoglu, 2015). However, school safety discussions are void of this topic of violence against teachers (Reddy, 2014). Teachers experience various forms of violence daily (Will, 2018). Teachers can play a pivotal part in deescalating violence at school (Lokmić et al., 2013; Mertoglu, 2015). Unresolved, violence against teachers can impact teacher retention and overall performance for American Schools (Reddy, 2014).

McMahon et al. (2017) support this stance indicating that violence against teachers can impact the quality of teacher availability in American schools.

Will (2018) suggested that students might sense that teachers are unable to defend themselves, and students are shielded from any serious consequences. Will's review suggested that students and teachers should receive training for common law privilege of self-defense. McMahon et al. (2017) support this position, suggesting the need for protocols and training specific to the topic of violence against teachers.

When teachers encounter violence, a lack of administrative support has notable negative consequences: it affects teachers' emotional and behavioral functions, as well as the rate of teacher retention (Berg & Cornell, 2016; McMahon et al., 2017). Therefore, administrative support is included in the discussion of violence against teachers (McMahon et al., 2017). Neglecting the issue of violence against teachers assists with the escalation of said violence (Lokmić et al., 2013). Also, inattention to the issue creates feelings of injustice (Cropanzano et al., 2007).

Research has offered insight on the teachers who have suffered attacks and the long-term effects of those attacks, such as lack of student trust, negative job performance, and decreased teacher retention (Will, 2018). However, research had not captured the voices of teachers that experience this violence directly nor their perceptions of the effectiveness of the training and administrative support they receive (Berg & Cornell, 2016). Current research on this topic has suggested violence against teachers causes burn out and anxiety (Reddy, 2014; Will, 2018), and it is imperative that teacher-directed violence required further investigation (Berg & Cornell, 2016). Reddy et al. (2018)

suggested that the scarcity of research on the topic of violence against teachers is both undeniable and an underreported issue.

Organizational justice is the individuals' or groups' perception of fairness and treatment received from an organization or a school (Chetty, 2018). Organizational justice theory (OJT) has been used in studies of violence in school, job satisfaction, and higher education. OJT is imperative to an organization because OJT creates harmony in the workplace, a positive working environment, and when practiced, supervisors and subordinates work better toward organizational goals (Chetty, 2018). The research determined the perception of teachers concerning violence at school, justice, administrative support, and training using an organizational justice framework to analyze the data for this study. The research used the three components of justice (distributive, procedural, and interactional) as a framework to analyze the research questions. For my research, justice is ensuring that all involved have equal rights (Koç et al., 2016).

For this research study, distributive justice refers to how the allocation of resources affects outcomes for teachers (Cropanzano et al., 2007). For instance, it describes how violent students are allocated to classroom teachers. How were salaries allocated to teachers that have violent students? Procedural justice refers to how the organization establishes procedures and how those procedures are carried out (Cropanzano et al., 2007). For example, it indicates what policies are in place to protect teachers from violence, or what training teachers received to prevent or deescalate violence. Was restorative justice or a preventive violence program in place and conducted with fidelity? Interactional justice refers to how teachers perceive administrators as being

fair or just (Cropanzano et al., 2007). For instance, it signifies how the administration responds to a reported violent act. How did the administration follow policies and procedures when a violent act had been reported by a teacher? How was teacher relationship with coworkers and administration impacted by violence? For this study, OJT and violence against teachers were studied together using a social constructivist conceptual model and the OJT.

This understudied topic deserved systematic collection and documentation through research efforts (Reddy, 2014). McMahon et al. (2017) concluded that more qualitative studies that focus on in-depth interviews would assist with the development of a measurement scale. Insufficient scales that gauge violence against teachers leave a gap in school-based measures (Reddy, 2014). I aspired to illuminate the voices of teachers through qualitative research that adds to the existing body of knowledge on the topic, assist with the development of a measurement scale (McMahon et al., 2017; Reddy, 2014), and further advance the topic of violence against teachers.

### **Problem Statement**

Violence directed towards teachers is a principle issue for educators. In the United States, approximately 253,100, or 7%, of teachers are threatened with injury each year (American Psychological Association [APA], 2016). Despite these statistics, this topic has acquired little attention (Anderman et al., 2018; Mertoglu, 2015; Reddy, 2014; Will, 2018). One of the greatest threats to teacher retention and school safety is school violence (Mertoglu, 2015; Will, 2018).

Past and current research suggests that teachers are not safe at school, and the issue needs investigation. Many states have developed policies that are designed to protect teachers from violence in the classroom. However, these policies are often ignored and seldom used (Nelson, 2016). Additionally, teachers rarely defend themselves when violence occurs on the job (Nelson, 2016; Will, 2018). The violence perpetrated against teachers is rarely a topic of discussion unless the abuse is brutal (Nelson, 2016; Will, 2018). Research from both Lokmić et al. (2013) and Berg and Cornell (2016) suggested that the more years of service a teacher has, the more strategies they have learned to control their students. Experts recommend emphasizing policies that prevent violence before it starts (McMahon et al., 2017; Reddy, 2014).

Current research suggested that mainstream teachers rarely receive training for ending violence once it starts in the classroom (Devries et al., 2017; Will, 2018). Research on violence against teachers has focused on the educators' perceptions of violence against teachers, the policies designed to protect teachers, school climate, and the lasting effects of violence against teachers. However, the research to date has not included the voices and lived experiences of those who have encountered this violence (Finley, 2003; McMahon et al., 2017; Reddy, 2014). Additionally, teachers have not had an opportunity to express their perceptions about the violence prevention training and administrative support they had received.

The majority of research on this topic is quantitative, which does not allow the lived experience of the participants' voices to be illuminated. More research is needed to assess what types of violence teachers experience in class, to determine how they

interpret the aggression, and to gauge their level of confidence in the training and administrative support they receive to respond to violence (Anderman et al., 2018; McMahon et al., 2017; Will, 2018). Teachers are on the front line of the topic of violence against teachers (Devries et al., 2017; Lokmić et al., 2013; McMahon et al., 2017; Will, 2018) because they directly experience violence in the classroom. By conducting a series of in-depth and open-ended conversations, a researcher can gain multiple perceptions. Using this qualitative data, one can start to infer patterns of the first-hand experiences of those who have lived the phenomena.

To date, phenomenological qualitative studies that elucidate the voices of novice and experienced K-5 teachers that have lived through violence at school and how teachers perceive justice in their organization are limited (Koç et al., 2016). I chose novice and experienced K-5 public school teachers because there is a minimal amount of information on the topic of violence against teachers using the organizational justice model at the primary or K-5 level (Koç et al., 2016). The research suggested that secondary teachers experience the most violence at work (Koç et al., 2016). As a result, research (Dzuka & Dalbert, 2007; Finley, 2003; Lokmić et al., 2013) at the secondary level is more plentiful. Research conducted by Koç et al. (2016) as well as Dzuka and Dalbert (2007) suggested that novice teachers experienced more violence than experienced teachers.

As a result, teachers were included in my research to analyze whether the data revealed the previous findings (Dzuka & Dalbert, 2007). Therefore, the target population for this research was public school teachers. Past research had focused on violence



perpetrated by students on students, and not violence perpetrated against teachers (McMahon et al., 2017). A dearth of information also existed on teachers' perceptions of violence and organizational justice (Koç et al., 2016).

### **Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this research was to seek the perceptions of K-5 teachers about their experience of violence, justice, training, and administrative support they receive at school to stop or prevent violence. The research used qualitative phenomenology to explore teachers' lived experience and provided a platform for teachers to report their experience of violence in the classroom, their perception of justice, as well as their reflections on violence prevention training and educational policies. Qualitative studies are designed to understand, examine, and describe the experience of the participants (Haskins et al., 2013). Open-ended questions allow the researcher to interpret and present the world as it is seen and experienced by participants without predetermining those standpoints (Yilmaz, 2013). Minimal studies had been conducted on the topic of violence against teachers (Anderman et al., 2018; Mertoglu, 2014; Nelson, 2016; Reddy, 2014; Will, 2018), and most had been quantitative. Fewer studies had been conducted that acquired teachers' perceptions of organizational justice and violence (Koç et al., 2016).

### **Research Questions**

Central Question: How do teachers describe violence, organizational justice, training, and administrative support at school? Violence directed at teachers has had grave social implications for educators, such as burnout, anxiety, depression, lower levels of efficacy, and emotional and mental stress (Anderman et al., 2018; Reddy, 2014; Will,

2018). Teachers would benefit from training that teaches violence de-escalation strategies (McMahon et al., 2017; Reddy, 2014; Will, 2018).

In 2018, Safety and Health Magazine surveyed 3,403 teachers, of which 2,505 had experienced some form of violence at school, such as verbal and physical assaults. However, 20% of these teachers did not inform administration, 14 % did not tell a co-worker, and 24% did not disclose the violence to their families. Berg and Cornell's (2016) and McMahon et al.'s (2017) research suggested that a lack of administrative support assists with the violence that teachers experience. Most teachers described the lack of administrative support as feeling like another level of violent abuse (McMahon et al., 2017). Positive perceptions of organizational justice are linked to more efficiently run organizations, less job stress, and highly productive workers (Rupp & Cropanzano, 2002). Therefore, organizational justice was appropriate to study, with violence against teachers.

RQ1: How do K-5 teachers experience violence at school?

RQ2: How do K-5 teachers experience justice at school?

RQ3: How do K-5 public school teachers experience the training they receive about violence at school?

RQ4: How do K-5 public school teachers experience administrative support regarding violence against teachers?

With this research, I sought various perceptions from participants that had experienced direct violence at school and to acquire teachers' perceptions of justice. Therefore, the social constructivism (interpretivism; Denzin & Lincoln, 2011; Mertens,

2010) worldview was used (Creswell, 2013). The social constructivism worldview allows individuals to construct meaning from the world they live in (Galbin, 2014). The topic of violence against teachers is in its infancy, and at this point, few studies had researched the specific issue of direct violence against teachers (Anderman et al., 2018; Reddy, 2014; Will, 2018).

### **Conceptual Framework**

The approach considered the lived experience of teachers, which revealed the meaning of the teachers' experience with violence at school and their perceptions of justice as well as the training and administrative support they receive. Organizational justice focuses on the essence of employee and employer relationships (Yang & Cho, 2017). There are two paths for organizational justice; both involve fairness, justice of the organizational policies, and regulations (Yang & Cho, 2017). One type focuses on the components (Yang & Cho, 2017), and the other focuses on the members' perception of the components (Koç et al., 2016). Organizational justice is used to understand why individuals view some events and the consequences as just (Cropanzano et al., 2007). Regarding justice in this manner allowed justice to be a descriptive and subjective concept because it does not capture what is correct or a morally prescriptive code (Cropanzano et al., 2007). Organizational justice captures what individuals believe is correct or just (Cropanzano et al., 2007). A teacher's perception of justice affects the teacher's job performance and creates stress (Koç et al., 2016).

This approach aligned with the qualitative phenomenological method. Phenomenological research focuses on describing and understanding the phenomenon

through open-ended questions and the participant's own words (Yilmaz, 2013). The phenomenological approach allowed teachers a voice on the topic "Violence Against Teachers" to be heard. Finley's (2003) research suggested teachers are eager to have their voices heard and embraced. Reddy (2014) and Will (2018) supported my stance on the topic.

More research considering teachers' experience with direct violence is needed because the topic is highly understudied (Anderman et al., 2018; Gregory et al., 2012; Hurjui, 2016; Reddy, 2014; Will, 2018). Additionally, research on the topic contributed data to the field of study. Qualitative research has gained recognition over the last 45 years and is attributed to the analysis and output of verbal text (Rennie, 2012). The spoken text revealed information from novice and experienced teachers that a quantitative study cannot.

Violence against teachers is at an unprecedented level (Anderman et al., 2018). Violence and threats against teachers have warranted insignificant attention (Continuing Education Corner, 2013). This understudied phenomenon has serious extended consequences for teachers, schools, and students (Anderman et al., 2018). The APA (2016) have concluded that violence against teachers is at an all-time epidemic high (Anderman et al., 2018), and the findings had substantial implications affecting teacher function, retention and recruitment, and student performance. Despite these findings, the topic of violence against teachers had not been studied via documentation and systematic collection of first-hand data (Anderman et al., 2018). More research is needed to understand better what causes teacher victimization, and what factors correlate to teacher

victimization (Berg & Cornell, 2016; Continuing Education Corner, 2013; Will, 2018).

Phenomenology was derived from the social constructivist perception and used to describe the very nature and essence of an experience (Patton, 2002).

Social constructivism was derived from constructivism. Constructivism is a theory of knowledge that implies individuals create meaning and understanding through interaction by connecting their ideas and experiences (Mogasha, 2014). Constructivism has been used in research on educational policies about teaching and learning, which involves certain aspects such as culture, personal experience, and interpretation of reality (Mogasha, 2014). Amineh and Asl (2015) noted that social constructivism is based on specific assumptions about reality, knowledge, and learning. Social constructivism theory assumes individuals gain an understanding of the world in combination with other individuals and that individuals cannot construct a reality without interaction with others (Amineh & Asl, 2015). Also, social constructivism suggested human understanding and thinking is dependent on understanding an individual's social experience and the cognitive process that is developed from the social experience (Amineh & Asl, 2015).

The research employed the social constructivist conceptual model (Mogasha, 2014) and organizational justice theoretical framework (Cropanzano et al., 2007) to describe teachers' perceptions of their experience of violence, justice, training, and administrative support they receive to stop or deter violence at school. The collective perceptions of teachers' experiences of violence at school will add to the scarcity of information on teachers' perception of organizational justice (Koç et al., 2016) and violence directed at teachers (McMahon et al., 2017).

### **Nature of the Study**

The nature of this research was phenomenological qualitative. Qualitative research was consistent with acquiring the essence of a teacher's experience with justice and violence at school. Qualitative research focuses on the voice of the participants' experiences with violence against teachers. Qualitative research was most appropriate for my research because this information cannot be acquired through quantitative methods. Haskins et al. (2013) found that "Qualitative inquiry is a focus of research exploration that seeks to understand, examine, and describe the experiences of the participants under investigation" (p. 164). However, quantitative methods focus on pre-determined response categories or a pre-constructed standardized instrument, which are supposed to be suitable for participants' responses and perceptions (Yilmaz, 2013). Quantitative methods explain a phenomenon that analyzes numerical data and require large randomized samples to generate quantitative findings (Yilmaz, 2013). Numerical data cannot illuminate the voices (Yilmaz, 2013) of teachers that have experienced violence.

Qualitative research also focuses on the process, interpretation, and understanding through inductive reasoning (Yilmaz, 2013). Qualitative research is used to understand what social experience is and how individuals give meaning to social experiences (Yilmaz, 2013). Thus, the essence of the teacher's experience with violence can only be acquired through qualitative methods. Therefore, qualitative methods were best suited for my study.

The research used phenomenological qualitative methods. Because I am an educator who has experienced violence in the classroom, it was essential to bracket

personal experiences and feelings to mitigate biases in the study. The participants were asked to participate of their own free will. Then, participants were selected. Lastly, the consent forms were signed via e-mail “I consent.” The research employed a series of open-ended conversational interview questions that were conducted online using Zoom and transcribed by Otter i.e., The data were then gathered and examined, and themes and categories were developed.

### **Definitions**

The following key terms in the study are defined in this section:

*Administrative support:* Support from administration of school rules that is fair and consistently applied equally, and adult assistance is available when needed (Berg & Cornell, 2016).

*Distributive justice:* Employees’ perceptions related to whether the acquisitions and rewards are shared equitably, and whether acquisitions of employees are evaluated correctly and realistically based on the performance (Koç et al., 2016).

*Interactional justice:* How one person in an organization treats others in the organization, shares information, displays dignity towards others, and refrains from rude or cruel remarks (Cropanzano et al., 2007).

*Organizational justice:* The individuals’ perceptions of justice about the practices in their organizations (Koç et al., 2016).

*Procedural justice:* Certain principles and procedures are established, specifying and governing the roles of participants within the decision-making process (Cropanzano et al., 2007).

*Training:* Tactics and skills that are taught by an expert and teachers can use to reduce violence at school (Reddy, 2014; Will, 2018) that are taught by an expert (Reddy, 2014).

*Violence:* Damaging school property, physical and emotional acts with intent to harm the opposite party (Mertoglu, 2015).

### **Assumptions**

There were various assumptions associated with this research. It was assumed that participants would be willing to participate in the study. It was assumed that participants would share their experience of the violence they have encountered at their job without hesitation. In addition, it was assumed that the participants would answer all the interview questions. It was also assumed that the schools are structured similarly and allow for generalizations. It was assumed that the findings of the study would reflect the general population within the district. It was assumed that K-5 teachers would retell their experience in a way that allows the results of the study to retell their story.

### **Scope and Delimitations**

I aspired to acquire the perceptions of K-5 teachers that have experienced violence at school, justice, training, and the administrative support that teachers receive to prevent or stop violence at school. This topic was chosen because organizational justice and violence directed at teachers was an understudied topic and violence against teachers occurs at an unprecedented rate (Mertoglu, 2015; Will, 2018). Past and current research has not captured the essence of the teachers' perception of organizational justice,



violence at school, nor the training they receive. The population was K-5 public school teachers from Florida.

The study did not include private school teachers' perceptions of violence because studies have shown that violence happens twice as much at public schools (Mertoglu, 2015; Will, 2018). Also, school climate and poverty were not addressed, which studies have shown are closely related to violence at schools (Berg & Cornell, 2016; Gregory et al., 2012). These factors were not investigated due to the focus of my research.

### **Limitations**

There were limitations in my study that were beyond the researcher's control. One limitation was some participants may not reveal their true experience for fear of retaliation from the organization they work for. Another limitation was that teachers may not remember or articulate their experience with violence accurately. Also, generalization possibilities for the study were limited because qualitative studies use small sample sizes. A fourth limitation was that cultural differences in the sample population may affect generalization of views. Finally, the study was limited to K-5 public school teachers, and the findings of the study were not generalizable for all K-5 teachers, such as private school teachers.

### **Significance**

The research captured the perceptions of organizational justice of teachers that have experienced violence in the workplace. Organizational justice was included because it relates to the positive development of educational organizations (Colquitt et al., 2001). Most of the research conducted on violence against teachers had focused on what

teachers and schools can do to prevent violence against teachers. The voice of teachers was profoundly absent from the data. Threats and violence committed against teachers affect teacher-student trust, as well as teacher performance (Will, 2018).

The current study can provide psychologists, researchers, school boards, and administrators an opportunity to hear the voices of teachers. Teachers could provide resolutions for violence against teachers based on their lived experiences (Berg & Cornell, 2016; Reddy, 2014; Will, 2018). This study may contribute more information that teachers, school staff, psychologist, school boards, and policymakers could use to manage and reduce violence against teachers and to develop policies that will better protect teachers. This research added to the existing body of knowledge regarding violence against teachers (McMahon et al., 2017; Reddy, 2014).

### **Summary**

In conclusion, the research used the social constructivist conceptual framework and OJT to acquire the perceptions of public-school K-5 teachers that had experienced direct violence, training, and administrative support at school. The level of violence against teachers, as well as the training teachers receive to stop or prevent abuse at school, needs further investigations (Continuing Corner Education, 2013). Past and current research had highlighted the short- and long-term effects of such attacks and the associated cost to society (Anderman et al., 2018; Nelson, 2016; Will, 2018). The current study used qualitative research to acquire the essence of the teachers' perceptions of violence at school.

## Chapter 2: Literature Review

### Introduction

Students on teacher attacks have increased exponentially (Hurjui, 2016); however, research on this topic has not grown at the same rate (Hurjui, 2016; Mertoglu, 2015). Violence against teachers has been linked to burnout (Berg & Cornell, 2016), reduced teacher performance (Will, 2018), and reduced teacher retention (Anderman et al., 2018). Past and current studies suggested this topic needed attention (Anderman et al., 2018; Finley, 2003). Reddy (2014) suggested violence against teachers is a significant yet under-investigated problem. The lack of information on violence against teachers prevents this issue from coming to public attention (National Education Association [NEA], 2021). Future research could be enhanced by including more representation from teachers (Anderman et al., 2018). Finley (2003) suggested that teachers' perceptions of school violence have been understudied. The literature on the topic demonstrates the need for further understanding of violence towards teachers and the factors that could reduce its occurrences, such as teacher perceptions of violence (Berg & Cornell, 2016), and organizational justice (Koç et al., 2016).

Current research has suggested more studies that provide teachers' perceptions of the direct violence they encounter and the training and administrative support they receive are needed (Berg & Cornell, 2016; McMahon et al., 2017; Reddy, 2014). According to an analysis conducted by Anderman et al. (2018), one out of five teachers did not inform their administrators of violent incidents due to a lack of support (Safe & Healthy Magazine, 2018). This claim is supported by Lokmić et al. (2013), who

suggested teachers often did not report violent incidents to administration. Teachers could greatly benefit from training to address violence in the classroom (McMahon et al., 2017; Mertoglu, 2015; Reddy, 2014). My research acquired teachers' perceptions of violence, justice, training, and administrative support through qualitative measures.

### **Literature Search Strategy**

A comprehensive literature search was conducted using the keywords “school,” “elementary,” “training,” “trauma,” “turnover,” “burnout,” “safety,” “teacher,” “educator,” “attacks,” “violence,” “qualitative,” “perception,” “perspectives,” “job satisfaction,” “administration,” “policies,” “training,” “organization” “justice,” “critical theory,” “social justice,” leadership,” “climate,” school satisfaction,” and “perspective” via Google Star, Exp.waldenlibrary.org, Chrome, A.P.A.org, Ebscohost.org, Dogpile.com., and Psych Info search engines. The literature acquired from the search included peer-reviewed journal publications, books, and news articles. The criterion “direct violence against teachers” was considered, and articles that met the criteria were retained for the study. Initially, 133 studies were reviewed, and 69 articles were rejected based on the abstracts, problem statement, purpose, and methodology.

To better understand subjects related to the topic of violence against teachers, past and current research on school policies, school satisfaction, parent participation, school policies, safety, climate, and satisfaction were reviewed. The review revealed a shortage of information on the topic violence against teachers.

### **Theoretical Foundation**

One way to gain a teacher's perception of violence was through the lens of OJT. Traditionally, OJT had been used in research topics such as occupational stress and education. Perceptions of organizational justice are imperative, as research relates the concept to job satisfaction, turnover, leadership, organizational citizenship, organizational commitment, and job performance (Cohen-Charash & Spector, 2001). OJT proposed that a group's perception of an organization as being fair helps to direct the group's behavioral reactions (Chetty, 2018). OJT was derived from the social exchange theory, which details the equitable distribution of rewards and resources for members of an organization (Yang & Cho, 2017). OJT has three broad categories: procedural, distributive, and interactive justice (Koç et al., 2016).

Koç et al. (2016) were the first to combine OJT and violence in schools in a mixed-methods study. The authors acknowledged that the concepts had been studied separately, but never together. Koç et al.'s research on OJT and teachers' perception of violence claimed that teachers who work in schools with minimal levels of violence were more likely to conduct fair practices in the classroom. Teachers that had more experience were more likely to perceive justice. The study also revealed perceptions of justice were controlled by administrators' relationships with teachers and administrators' responses to violent behavior (Koç et al., 2016). The absence of justice can be problematic for administration; for example, employees that perceive a lack of justice perform a lower quality of work and retaliate against the organization (Cropanzano et al., 2007). Koç et al.'s study of teacher's perception of justice suggested further research is needed to

understand the gap between novice and experienced teachers' perceptions of violence and justice.

For the current qualitative study, distributive justice (student allocation and workload) referred to the differentiated distribution of outcomes in the workplace: for example, how violent students are allocated to classroom teachers and how salaries are allocated to teachers that have violent students. Procedural justice (training and policy) referred to how the members of an organization perceive that established procedures are being carried out (Koç et al., 2016) and whether procedural outcomes are well defined and clear (Chetty, 2018): for example, the policies in place to protect teachers from violence at school, and the training teachers receive to prevent or deescalate violence. Were restorative justice or a preventive violence program in place and conducted with fidelity? Interactional justice (administrative support) referred to how members of an organization perceive administration as being fair and just (Koç et al., 2016). Interactional justice also views the relationship between co-workers as a sign of established standards of conduct by the administration (Chetty, 2018): for example, how administration responded to reported violent acts, how administration followed through procedures when a teacher reports a violent act, and how teacher relationships with coworkers and administration were impacted by violence.

Violence was included with OJT in this study because violence affects job performance and creates stress. Stress is one leading cause of professional burnout and occurs when teachers feel endangered in their work environment (Lokmić et al., 2013). Violence referred to occurrences of behaviors that interrupt the objectives or expectations

of the school's environment (Koç et al., 2016). Critical qualitative research informs social education through a lens that ensures the investigation of issues connected to power and privilege (Roberts, 2014). Many great educators, theorists, and philosophers served as the foundation for critical qualitative research through a social education perception, such as discussed in Marx and Dewey's research (White, 2015).

The current study advanced the understanding of school violence, justice, training, and administrative support by examining organizational justice at three levels, distributive, procedural, and interactional, via a social constructivist model. Furthermore, the principles of critical theory had been applied in a wide range of qualitative studies such as race, orientation, education, subordinates, and disabilities.

### **Literature Review**

The phenomena under investigation were violence against teachers at school and their perception of violence and justice. Research had indicated a significant increase in the occurrence of violence directed at teachers (Finley, 2003; Hurjui, 2016; Mertoglu, 2015). Studies on this phenomenon suggested teachers do not feel safe (Will, 2018), teachers had not received appropriate training (Berg & Cornell, 2016), and teachers had not been included in the discussion (Anderman et al., 2018; Continuing Education Corner, 2013; Reddy, 2014). These studies are few, as the topic is still in its early stages, and the topic required more investigation (Anderman et al., 2018; Reddy, 2014). Additional studies were also needed to gain a better understanding of how teachers perceive the violence they experience and the training and administrative support they receive (Berg & Cornell, 2016). This study also included perceptions of organizational

justice because positive attitudes of justice create environments in which employees flourish, enabling better work production and less stress (Cohen et al., 2001). As noted earlier, teacher-directed violence is a significant cause of stress for teachers (Lokmić et al., 2013).

### **Organizational Justice**

Justice in an organization is important because members of an organization work together more efficiently when they perceive justice in the organization; they feel moral propriety of their job-related treatment (Cropanzano et al., 2007). Injustice in an organization can be problematic for the organization and its workers (Cropanzano et al., 2007). Organizations that provide justice have stronger employee commitments, allowing administration to make difficult choices easier, which promotes overall strength for the organization (Cropanzano et al., 2007). Sparrowe et al. (2003) conducted a study on the organizational justice of manufacturing workers. The study found that workers tailored their organizational citizen behaviors according to fair and unfair treatment and according to equitable and inequitable procedural factors. Injustice effects can be mitigated if one component of justice is well maintained (Cropanzano et al., 2007). Studies show when supervisors displayed interactional justice, the resulting relationship is of a higher quality, which motivated employees to perform more effectively (Rupp & Cropanzano, 2002). Teachers that had experienced direct violence and a lack of administrative support were more likely to feel a sense of injustice. Therefore, organizations such as schools run less problematically, and teachers work better when they feel a sense of justice.



## **Violence Against Teachers**

Research implied violence against teachers has occurred in many forms and can have a lasting negative impact on teachers (Will, 2018; Devries et al., 2017). Violence included physical and verbal assaults, theft, property damage, threats, and physical attacks (NEA, 2013). Will's (2018) study provided information about the potentially lasting effects that violence has on teachers. The study concluded that violence against teachers could impact a teacher's performance, confidence, trust, and willingness to continue working in the profession.

Studies show that violence is highly prevalent in schools. A study conducted by Lokmić et al. (2013) that took place in Zagreb, Croatia and that included 175 teachers from five secondary and five primary schools found that 74.3% of those teachers experienced violence from their students that year. Violence at school costs loss of wages, loss of instructional time, and medical and psychological care for those victimized at school (APA, 2016). State statistical data showed an escalation in bullying in New York City as violence rose 23% from 2013 to 2014. Experts agree that overall violence is decreasing; however, incidents such as bullying appear to be on the rise. According to the Indicators of School Crime and Safety report, 16% of students indicated bullying incidents, and 5% reported verbal abuse directed at teachers (Brodsky, 2016). This research suggested that violence against teachers is on the rise.

Violence against teachers is not an isolated American issue; research indicates this is a global problem. There was evidence that school violence is increasing nationally and internationally. Portugal reported a 14% increase in violence from 1995 to 1998. A

nationwide study conducted across the Netherlands found that 22% of students had experienced sexual harassment, and 43% had experienced property damage (Cremin & Guilherme, 2016). This indicates that violence is prevalent in different cultures around the world (Koç et al., 2016; Lokmić et al., 2013). Additionally, research had indicated some teachers experience more violence and stress at school; research tells us that teachers experience more violence in urban schools (Brodsky, 2014). In urban schools, teachers are working in high stakes, high-stress environments with limited resources (Ouellette et al., 2018).

### **Emotional and Psychological Stress and Trauma**

Teachers that experience violence at school suffer emotional and psychological stress (Dzuka & Dalbert, 2007; Lokmić et al., 2013; Will, 2018). When teachers experienced violence at school in any form such as verbal, physical, emotional, direct, or indirect, their self-esteem and confidence were compromised. Violent school-based incidents have lasting adverse effects on teachers (Lokmić et al., 2013). There is prevalent research that indicates that violence against teachers is a public health crisis that has not been given appropriate attention (Anderman et al., 2018). The effect of teachers that experience violence can potentially affect the physical health, mental health, and stability of educators (Anderman et al., 2018). Previous and present research indicates that fear and mental health issues are foremost byproducts of violence at schools for teachers.

In Wilson et al.'s (2011) study on violence against teachers, violence was a significant predictor of fear. Additionally, women reported more physical and emotional

negative symptoms than men. Wilson et al. recommended that healthcare could be used following violent events at school to provide security and stability to the educational setting. Hall (2005) suggested that constant abuse destroys the teacher's confidence professionally and personally, which can lead to depression, insomnia, migraines, weight fluctuation, digestive disorders, and anxiety disorders. Also, when teachers experience violence from administration, it can cause clinical depression, which leads to ulcers, high blood pressure, isolation, and feelings of inadequacy (Hall, 2005).

### ***Lost Wages***

The cost of workman's comp increases when teachers experience violence at school because of traumas associated with psychological distress and injury (Espelage et al., 2013). Wilson et al. (2011) suggested that teachers that experience violence were at risk of having more absenteeism from school. Hall (2005) indicated that teachers that suffer abuse at school have approximately 70% higher insurance premiums because of depression.

### ***Teacher Job Performance***

The association between violence and teacher-related job performance may have dire consequences for school systems, such as the teacher's ability to perform, resulting in unstable classrooms (Wilson et al., 2011). Hall (2005) suggested when teachers are bullied at work, it leads to a host of physical issues such as nightmares, insomnia, and back problems that could impact a teacher's job performance. Furthermore, consistent violence erodes one's self-confidence professionally and personally, creating depression and other anxiety disorders that may affect teachers' ability to perform properly on the

job. Teacher violence has profound effects on a teacher's ability to function, such as depression and lower levels of efficacy (Reddy, 2014).

### ***Turnover and Burnout***

Violence against teachers is linked to teachers exiting the field early (Reddy, 2014). Garcia Torres' (2019) study on distributed leadership and job satisfaction concluded a positive relationship between the two suggested that the teacher turnover rate could be improved through positive professional relationships (Garcia Torres, 2019). Yang et al.'s (2019) research on the development of a multi-dimensional teacher victimization scale revealed a significant link between teacher violence and burnout. Male and female teachers reported different levels of teacher violence. However, the levels of intensity for males and females in middle school were similar. Yang et al. found different results than previous studies.

Although previous researchers had indicated emotional exhaustion as being the first symptom of burnout, Yang et al. (2019)'s study showed lower levels of significance. Also, cyberbullying was not significantly correlated with physical victimization and sexual harassment as was indicated in previous research. Yang et al. suggested that violence against teachers had a more significant impact on teacher burnout than cyberbullying, feelings of sexual harassment, and physical victimization. Researchers have indicated that school safety and supportive climates are linked (Berg & Cornell, 2016; Cornell, Fan, & Gregory, 2012; Payne, 2003). Teachers' feelings of distress may cause teachers to seek employment in other schools that have more supportive climates (Berg & Cornell, 2016).

Effects of consistent violence in the classroom can cause stress that may lead to professional burnout and high turnover rates (McCormick & Barnett, 2011). Schools in urban areas have the most significant percentage of turnover rates, which created more significant challenges for these students to receive qualified teachers. Consistent teachers' turnover created resource waste due to the cost of training new teachers in schools in urban areas. This is a problem because urban schools are already under sourced (Garcia Torres, 2019). Working conditions such as the quality of leadership, and professional collaboration are some of the highest contributors to teacher turnover.

### ***Job Satisfaction***

Teachers that experience violence often have low job satisfaction and have difficulty creating a positive environment thus becomes a hindrance in improving their job performance (Lokmić et al., 2013). Violence also decreases a teacher's motivation and job satisfaction, which teachers need to deliver high-quality instruction to students (Lokmić et al., 2013). Garcia Torres (2019) studied about teacher job satisfaction and professional collaboration and found that teachers may be satisfied with their job but dissatisfied with the site in which they work. Furthermore, Garcia Torres concluded that job satisfaction and organizational commitment were significantly connected to professional collaboration. Garcia Torres suggested future research should focus on the difference in the perception of principals and teachers. In Garcia Torres's (2019) study, professional commitment referred to the teacher's commitment to teaching. Garcia Torres found a significant predictor of professional commitment when teachers were included in the school's decision-making process. This finding indicates that teachers are more

committed to their job when they perceive inclusion in the school's decision-making process.

In Dzuka and Dalbert's (2007) study on violence against teachers and Belief in a Just World (BJW), they found that the more violence a teacher experienced at school, the less satisfied they were with life. Also, teachers reported the more violence they experienced, the more their belief in a just world was negatively impacted (Dzuka & Dalbert, 2007). Dzuka and Dalbert (2007) suggested that the more violence a teacher was exposed to at school, the less they feel they live in a just world. This feeling of injustice could impact the teacher's quality of life, leading to emotional, psychological, physical illness, and exit of the profession.

### **School Climate and Violence in School**

The link between school climate and student and faculty safety had substantial implications for school improvement (Gregory et al., 2012). Continuing Education Corner (2013) suggested that student violence can be predicted and is more prevalent where the school climate has an overall stance of victimization. Positive social climates aid in the reduction of school stress and act as protective factors for students at risk (Baker, 1998). Thapa et al. (2013) suggested that caring school climates, where students feel supported, experience less violence. Studies show that effective classroom management can reduce violence at school (APA, 2016). The research of Gregory et al. (2012) and Berg and Cornell (2016) focused on the school climate as a significant cause of teacher violence. These articles concentrated on disciplinary structures in classrooms and schools and administrative support. The studies used the Authoritative Discipline

Theory (Gregory et al., 2007) and the Authoritarian School Climate Theory, which was derived from Baumrind's 1968 model of authoritarian parenting (Berg & Cornell, 2016).

Students respond best to discipline when they deem it to be strict, fair, and appropriate (Berg & Cornell, 2016). Principles of schools that exhibit authoritative school climates can serve as a guide and consultant for teachers. Policy efforts are needed to focus on developing structured and supportive schools, as this may have a tremendous potential impact on teachers and students (Berg & Cornell, 2016).

### ***Improving School Climate***

Collaboration between teachers and administration, high perception of school relationships, and a sense of administrative support substantially increases the likelihood of implementation of violence prevention programs for many years beyond the initial application and increases the probability of a more positive school climate (Curry, 2018). Gregory et al. (2007) found that teachers trust their administrators' intentions to sustain and implement new programs with more fidelity. Collectively, the school's climate is significantly linked to the implementation of violent prevention psychological programs (Gregory et al., 2007). Which suggested that when school administration included the voice of the teacher, the teacher was more willing to implement the prevention program with more fidelity and the program was more sustainable.

Curry's (2018) report on school violence suggested that violence at school can be reduced by fostering a positive school environment. Curry (2018) indicated increased security measures must be established to prevent violence at school. Curry suggested lowering levels of bullying by implementing community preventive programs and

tracking the data through threat assessment measures. Curry also suggested increasing the school climate, which is defined by the relationship between adults and students in the schools. The school's approach to discipline, availability of school counselors and social workers, and a social-emotional curriculum all play vital roles in creating a positive school environment (Curry, 2018). This research suggests the importance of school climate and its role in reducing violence at school.

### ***Parental Involvement***

Parent involvement in schools can increase the positive interactions between schools and students. deFur (2012) suggested schools that involve parents as partners created a healthier school environment and more engaged parents. Schools that develop a student and family-centered environment are culturally responsive, caring, and committed. They also solve problems, make connections, and allows those involved to act and reflect and celebrate accomplishments (deFur, 2012). Research suggests that when parents were involved in their child's education, a range of negative behaviors can be mitigated, such as an increase in engagement in school activities, higher graduation rates, and more exceptional academic achievement (Yan & Lin, 2005). A significant step to increase school involvement is to build a meaningful partnership by creating a welcoming climate for parents (Park & Holloway, 2013). Also, school and community economic development programs and training for parents could strengthen the communities and reduce violence at school (Continuing Education Corner, 2013). Therefore, teachers could experience less violence at work.



### ***School Satisfaction***

School satisfaction has been linked to school climate (Baker, 1998; Hampden-Thompson & Galindo, 2017; Huebner et al., 2001). There are specific variables and concepts associated with school satisfaction, such as psychological stress, self-concept (Baker, 1998), and locus of control (Huebner et al., 2001). St. John (2017) claimed that family and community engagement were primary indicators of parent satisfaction in their child's school. Baker et al. (2003) found that school satisfaction is fostered when appropriate school practices are present at schools. Methods such as, positive teacher-peer relationships, enhanced activities that foster self-regulation, and promotion of self-direction and autonomy are used.

### **Administrative Support and Teachers**

Many attacks on teachers go unreported (McMahon et al., 2017). A lack of administrative support impacts teachers on multiple levels, which includes teacher trust, addressing violence at school, and educational policy (McMahon et al., 2017). Research on the topic suggested that teachers who displayed authoritative style discipline in the classroom; and school systems that implemented a systematic discipline plan that supports teachers, reported less violence against teachers and school personnel (Gregory et al., 2012; Berg & Cornell, 2016). Both researchers also concurred that a lack of administrative support created more distress for victimized teachers. A lack of organizational support can compound the damage for teachers that have experienced violence (Berg & Cornell, 2016; Reddy, 2014; Will, 2018). At least 20% of teachers surveyed in a nationwide study conducted by APA (2016) responded that they did not

report the incident to administration because they felt they would not receive support (NEA, 2013).

### ***Administrative and Management Bullies***

According to Hall (2005), management that employs bullying techniques is often compensating for their managerial inadequacies. Management bullying creates an unhealthy and hostile environment. The longer the bullying prevails, the more employees take on a helpless persona. Managerial bullies target employees that are most confident and proficient in their skills (Hall, 2005). Teachers that are bullied suffer far longer than other occupations, which on average is 23 months. This study suggests that teachers that experience consistent bullying will suffer far longer than those in other professions.

### ***Authoritative Theory***

Authoritative school climates are responsive, supportive, structured, and student expectations are fair and transparent (Berg & Cornell, 2016). The distress that teachers experience after a violent attack at school can be counteracted when teachers feel supported by school leadership and coworkers in authoritative climates (Berg & Cornell, 2016). Research has claimed that teachers experience less student aggression and more feelings of safety at schools with an authoritative climate (Berg & Cornell, 2016; Gregory et al., 2012).

### ***Distributive Leadership Style***

Garcia Torres (2019) revealed a significant link between distributed leadership and teacher satisfaction. Teachers that work in collaborative school environments where there is distributed leadership feel more supported and committed to their jobs (Garcia

Torres, 2019). Furthermore, Garcia Torres suggested that a shift in leadership style could improve teacher's attitudes and, in turn, promote better student learning. Leadership style research suggested greater job commitment leads to higher levels of self-efficacy, which may also shape the teacher's job satisfaction. Teacher job satisfaction has been linked to a reduction of violence in schools (Garcia Torres, 2019).

### *Administrative Support*

Reddy's (2014) research on violence against teachers suggested teachers perceived that the administration overlooks or ignores their issue, and there is no clear path to reporting these issues. Schools need a step-by-step well-established plan to respond to violent students (Continuing Education Corner, 2013). Reddy (2014) supported the development of a comprehensive teacher school safety assessment that will advise local school judgments. Principals, superintendents, and school board members should have a vested interest in any allegation of violence against a teacher. School leaders should conduct thorough investigations into any incidents involving violence against teachers (Espelage et al., 2013). Although, policies that protect teachers have been created administration, principals, school boards, and superintendents rarely utilize these policies with violent students (Ricketts, 2007).

Teachers who had experienced violence and who were not supported by administration were likely to experience more episodes of violence (Lokmić et al., 2013; NEA, 2013). Administrative support is crucial to preventing violence against teachers (Will, 2018). Supporting teachers' psychological needs will demonstrate that school administration cares and supports staff, which in turn will support psychological healing

(Espelage et al., 2013). Teachers suffer physically and psychologically after violent incidents at school and require support and services following violent incidents (Wilson et al., 2011).

### **Education Policies**

Reddy (2014) and Will (2018) suggested that the level of violence perpetrated against teachers is at an alarming, unprecedented level. New policies concerning violence against teachers remain insufficient (Reddy, 2014). State legislators have used results from research to create bills to promote teacher safety. Some of those policies focus on punitive measures against students; for example, there are cases where an alert will be sent to teachers if a student has committed a violent offense elsewhere (Will, 2018). Based on current studies and policies, some policymakers are concerned that these measures will unfairly target particular students (Nelson, 2016), contributing to the school-to-prison pipeline (Will, 2018). African American students are affected differently by school policies, for example, Superville's (2015) research suggested African Americans experience high levels of suspension, expulsion, and exclusion. The research of Sue and Sue (2008) and Skiba (2013) supported this claim suggesting that African American students are two to three times more likely to be suspended than other student populations. Teachers could benefit from more research on teacher-directed violence to help inform policy (Anderman et al., 2018).

The state of Florida has two statutes that focus on violence against teachers. The statutes detail the systematic order in which teachers should handle violence against teachers, administrators, district personnel, the superintendent, and the districts. Florida

Statute 1003.32 provides teachers the right to remove disruptive students and to defend themselves against violence (F. S. 1003.32, 2001). Florida Statute 1006.07 provides guidelines that support the school, school employee, teacher, and administrative safety against violence (F.S. 1006.07, 2009). Although these policies exist, they are rarely used by administrators (Reddy, 2014). Possibly, teachers and administration fear the loss of their job if they use them (Mertoglu, 2015; Will, 2018). Nelson (2016) and Berg and Cornell (2016) concluded that more studies acquiring teachers' perceptions of violence are needed as they are missing from the data. Nelson suggested understanding teachers' perceptions of violence could add to resolving the problem. Gaining teachers' perceptions of violence and policies will reduce the scarcity of existing information on the topic (Anderman et al., 2018; Reddy, 2014). Wilson et al.'s (2011) and Anderman et al.'s (2018) suggested that future research should investigate the effectiveness of violence against teacher policies as well as prevention programs.

### **Educational Preventions Programs and Interventions**

Research told us that programs to prevent violence against teachers are implemented in schools; however, research is needed to test the effectiveness of these programs. Mertoglu's (2015) study on violence prevention revealed many variables affect teacher and student behavior, and they cannot be tested simultaneously. Violence can be learned from the environment, and teachers and administrators can effectively decrease violence through training. Teachers that implemented effective management were positioned to have better control over the class, thereby reducing violence (Continuing Education Corner, 2013). Lokmić et al. (2013) suggested that the teachers approach

affected the reaction of students. Nelson (2016) suggested educating students on common law rights for both teachers and students could decrease teacher-directed violence. Berg and Cornell (2016) proposed that a strategic focus on the factors of teacher turn-over would reinforce whole school intervention efforts. Research from Continuing Education Corner (2013) supported this stance and recommended a multi-leveled system that provided strategies at the teacher level, classroom level, and school level. Implementing systematic change takes consistent effort and support (Muscott et al., 2008).

Research suggested that adequately implementing preventative violence programs can reduce violence against teachers. Implementing violence prevention programs often rely on teacher implementation. Implementing a continuous school-wide violence prevention program can be a challenge when the teacher turnover rate is high; usually, this is the case in inner-city schools (Berg & Cornell, 2016). Efforts that focus on factors that lead to teacher turn-over could assist with creating better teaching conditions for teachers (Berg & Cornell, 2016).

Some preventative programs are gaining momentum, for instance, there was evidence that restorative justice is a useful tool to utilize to reduce violence; however, there were only a few studies that support this claim (Brodsky, 2016). The restorative justice program brings the victim and perpetrator together in discussions and meetings (Brodsky, 2016). Chicago Public School system had seen a significant reduction of violence since adopting the program. Student suspension is down 23% from 2008-2009 to 2013-14 (Brodsky, 2016). Schools were utilizing social reform programs such as restorative justice; however, some teachers have complained that there is not enough

training and resources available to correctly implement this system (Brodsky, 2016).

Brodsky (2016) suggested that education researchers recommended carefully designed studies need to be conducted to prove restorative justice is sufficient.

### **Limitations of Interventions**

Implementing school-wide violence prevention programs can be difficult and may have limitations such as cost and time (Wanchek, 2011). Ableser (2003) conducted research investigating perceptions of teachers regarding non-violent curriculums.

Violence prevention programs have a variety of range from the subject- approach to infused models.

Ableser's (2003) research focused on the Second Step Program, which is a subject approach program. Ableser's (2003) study revealed that educators were concerned about the language and situation examples that were used in the program. Educators felt that the program's materials were culturally irrelevant to their population of students. The values in the Second Step program were middle-class values, and their students did not live in a middle-class world. Some educators felt as though the program did not address cultural differences and was not suited for their students.

Ableser's (2003) research also revealed isolation was an issue. Educators felt many of the components of the Second Step program, such as topics and lessons, were being taught in isolation or separated from the mandated curriculum. Educators felt they needed direct access to the second step curriculum and to additional training to implement the program more efficiently. Consultants were isolated from educators and had minimal communications together, and the second step lessons were separated from

the daily routines of the school. Educators suggested more training and access to second step kits. Finally, Ableser's (2003) concluded violence is a multi-tiered issue that cannot be resolved with a single program, teacher, or curriculum. However, appropriate violence prevention programs and implementation are a part of the resolution.

Cunningham et al. (2016) conducted an exploration of anti-bullying programs that acquired the perspectives of educators regarding the limitations of anti-bullying programs. Cunningham et al. revealed that the material is too dry and above the students' level of comprehension. The language of the program is too sophisticated for them. Past research (Ableser, 2003) supports this finding. The language of the program also appeared to be talking at the students instead of to them. The program's language barriers created the disengagement of students from the program. Educators in sixteen of the nineteen groups also noted age-linked reduction in the effectiveness of anti-bullying programs. Educators explained that the program appeared to be more effective for younger students; however, the older groups displayed less efficiency.

Another factor that educators revealed was the lack of evidence supporting the effectiveness of non-violent programs, such as statistics or data that anti-bullying programs were assisting with the reduction of violence. Teachers suggested finding another way to track the behavior of students in the program other than observation. Additionally, time restraints were imposed on implementing the anti-bullying program due to the existing mandated curriculum, which leaves little time for implementation of anti-bullying programs. Also, with a constant rotation of new programs, for instance, educators felt once they learned how to implement one anti-bullying program,



administrators would change to another program, not allowing enough time for the program to show effectiveness. Educators also added constant switching of violence reduction programs interrupted and did not allow teachers to implement the program with fidelity.

In their study about limits of anti-bullying programs, Cunningham et al. (2016) found that weaknesses in time, training, and support available impacted the teacher's fidelity to proceed with the program. The absence of training and support for the program caused teachers to disengage from the program. Cunningham et al. (2016) suggested that students' misbehavior exhausts teachers, and teachers reported that more extensive training, more allotted time, and enhanced monitoring procedures would assist with more effective implementation of the program by teachers.

### **Teacher Training**

Mertoglu (2015) suggested that adequate training and support assisted in an increase of teachers' and administrators' more positive attitudes. In their study on violence school against teachers and students, Devries et al. (2017) offered a toolkit to assist with reducing violence against students and teachers and suggested that teachers can benefit from training to deescalate violence directed at them. The research by Devries et al. (2017) and Mertoglu (2015) concluded that teacher and staff training could assist with the reduction of violence against teachers. The article "Safe, Not Sorry," written by Wanchek (2011), provided information that focused on safety training for school employees. The study explained the restraints of training, such as cost ineffectiveness and time-consumption, and provided digital solutions to resolve training issues for safety

mandated training sessions. Utilizing available digital resources could assist school districts in efficiently providing training for teachers to prevent or deescalate violence at school. McMahon et al. (2017) and Reddy (2014) suggested that general education teachers could benefit greatly from training to resolve the violence in the classroom. School leaders must provide on-going training for teachers to ensure policies and procedures are effectively executed (Espelage et al., 2013).

Research data had exhibited that attacks against teachers were increasing (Anderman et al., 2018; Finley, 2003; McMahon et al., 2017; Will, 2014). Studies had provided elucidating information about school climate, school policy, student victimization, and lack of teacher support and training (Berg & Cornell, 2016; Devries et al., 2017; Reddy, 2014; Will, 2018). Past research had focused mainly on students as the victims (McMahon et al., 2017). However, current research has emphasized the need for more studies on the topic (Anderman et al., 2018; Hurjui, 2016; Finley 2003). More studies that seek the perception of teachers concerning violence at work are needed (Berg & Cornell, 2016; Reddy, 2014). The qualitative methodology was best suited to acquire more knowledge about teachers' perceptions of violence, justice, training, and administrative support.

Implementing school-wide violence prevention programs can be difficult and may have limitations such as cost and time (Wanchek, 2011). Ableser (2003) conducted research investigating perceptions of teachers regarding non-violent curriculums. Violence prevention programs have a variety of range from the subject- approach to infused models.

## **Summary and Conclusions**

### **What we Know About Teacher-Directed Violence and Perceptions of Organizational Justice**

Conclusively, direct teacher attacks were increasing in intensity. These attacks were causing poor teacher performance (Will, 2018) and early exiting from the field (Anderman et al., 2018). This topic was massively understudied and in need of further research (Berg & Cornell, 2016; NEA, 2013; Will, 2018). Existing research, primarily quantitative, had not captured the essence of teachers' perceptions concerning justice, direct violence, training, and administrative support they receive (Anderman et al., 2018; Berg & Cornell, 2016). From the literature, there was evidence connecting school climate and administrative support as well as linking violence and school climate (NEA, 2013).

Studies had offered strategies to de-escalate violence and increase safety in the classroom (Gregory et al., 2012; Berg & Cornell, 2016). The literature on organizational justice implied that when employees perceived that their administration employed interactional justice, they experienced stronger relationships, and employees were motivated to perform at a higher level (Cropanzano et al., 2002). Research also indicated the teacher's perception of justice affected their work habits, and novice teachers perceived less justice than experienced teachers (Koç et al., 2016).

### **What we Want to Know More About Violence Against Teachers**

The current research investigated teachers' perceptions of justice, violence, training, and administrative support utilizing a social constructivist framework and organizational theory. A qualitative study provided information about the topic that

quantitative could not, such as examining the context that influenced interactions and the meaning people ascribe to their experience (Yilmaz, 2013).

The research study acquired information about how human resources are allocated for teachers with violent students, such as including the use of guidance counselors, security guards, and teacher's assistants: for example, how teachers perceive the policies that were in place to protect them from violence. How teachers perceived the training they received to prevent or deescalate violence, and how teachers perceived restorative justice or a preventive violence program and conducted with fidelity. Furthermore, the current research study research added to the limited body of existing literature on the topic of violence against teachers and teachers' perception of violence and justice at school.

## Chapter 3: Research Method

### **Introduction**

I sought K-5 public school teachers' perception of violence, organizational justice, training, and the administrative support they receive concerning violence. Violence against teachers is a pervasive issue that is growing nationally and internationally (Koç et al., 2016; Lokmić et al., 2013). The research used qualitative phenomenological methods, purposeful sampling, and in-depth hour interviews. I used qualitative research to understand teachers' perceptions of violence at school and the training and administrative support they received. Qualitative research provided a better understanding of teachers' experience and perceptions of violence in the classroom and how violence impacted their perceptions of organizational justice, training, and administrative support they receive at school.

### **Research Design and Rationale**

The research was designed to acquire teachers' perceptions of the violence and justice they experienced at school and the training and administrative support they received to prevent or deescalate violence in the workplace. Qualitative research was used to describe and understand the phenomenon by capturing participants' experiences using the participants' words (Yilmaz, 2013). Quantitative methods could not acquire the essence of a phenomenon (Giorgi, 2012; Yilmaz, 2013). Qualitative research focuses on the phenomenon being studied by communicating the experience of the participants using their words and thorough observations to describe and understand the phenomenon (Giorgi, 2012; Yilmaz, 2013). Qualitative research acquires a complex, detailed

understanding of a phenomenon or issue that needs clarification (Creswell, 2013). I conducted qualitative research to empower the voices of individuals and to hear and share their voices, elucidating elaborate details that can only be achieved by talking directly to participants (Creswell, 2013).

Qualitative research has several different approaches; however, these approaches were inadequate for this study. For example, ethnographic researchers study a culture-sharing group and the written product of the resulting research (Creswell, 2013). In qualitative case studies, researchers explore real-life, bounded systems, or multiple bounded systems over time, using multiple in-depth data collection methods (Creswell, 2013). Case studies are best suited for researchers that focus on one or multiple selected bound cases to illustrate an issue or phenomenon (Creswell, 2013). Grounded theory focuses on moving beyond a description of a phenomenon into the development of a new theory (Creswell, 2013). Grounded theory works best when the researcher aims to generate a new theory.

Qualitative research supported illuminating social phenomena because social phenomena are complex and intertwined, and they cannot be isolated into variables (Yilmaz, 2013). Phenomenology was chosen because I aspired to describe and illuminate the voices of teachers that have experienced violence at school. Phenomenology research design can assist with understanding the human factors involved in an experience (Burkholder et al., 2016). A thorough understanding of the teachers' perceptions of the violence they experienced at school was necessary. Qualitative phenomenological

research allowed for in-depth detailed interviews (Yilmaz, 2013) with participants to answer the following central research question.

RQ1- How do K-5 teachers experience violence, justice, training, and administrative support at school?

### **Role of the Researcher**

The role as the researcher varies and is imperative to research studies because the researcher must gather, organize, and analyze information acquired from participants. For transcendental phenomenological research, the researcher must engage in epoché, which is a disciplined, systematic effort that sets aside prejudgments about the phenomenon under study (Moustakas, 1994). Epoché or bracketing is vital in qualitative research because, during the interview process, the researcher's gestures and facial expressions may affect the way participants answer question (Burkholder et al., 2016).

I employed protocols to ensure that data were thoroughly collected and free of bias, such as pre-assembled prompts for questioning (Berg & Lune, 2012). I also made certain that the research remained focused on the meaning that participants had experienced about the phenomenon (Creswell, 2013). Then, participants' responses were transcribed by Otter i.e., a reputable on-line transcribing company that transcribes sound to print.

### **Methodology**

#### **Participant Selection Logic**

The population for this study was all the public school teachers in Florida. The sample population for the current study consisted of public school teachers that have

experienced verbal or physical violence at work. I sought the lived experience of K-5 teachers that had experienced violence at work, which was the focus and determined the sample population.

### **Participant Criteria**

The following were pre-determined criteria for participation in the current research study. Participants had currently instructed at a public elementary school in Florida for at least 1 year. Participants had personally experienced direct or indirect physical or verbal violence at school. In this study, violence was defined as “damaging school property, [or] physical and emotional acts with intent to harm the opposite party” (Mertoglu, 2015).

### **Sampling Procedures**

The sample size depended on the type of qualitative research conducted. Phenomenology ranges from three to ten participants (Creswell, 2013). The sample size for this study was 10 participants. I sent invitations to all teachers via two Facebook groups. The invitation explained the purpose of the research. The criteria were teachers that had experienced physical, verbal, emotional violence in any way at school. Additionally, the criteria included teachers that currently taught at least 1 full year at a Florida public elementary school in grades K-5.

The research used purposeful criterion sampling. Criterion purposeful sampling was chosen because phenomenological research required participants that had shared the same experiences. Creswell (2013) suggested criterion sampling was the best method for participants that have experienced the same phenomenon under study. Criterion sampling



works well when all individuals studied represent people who have experienced the same phenomenon (Creswell, 2013).

The research was designed to gain a better understanding of each participant's common or shared experiences of violence at school. The participants were K-5 public school teachers that work at Florida schools. The participants were my peers, so there was no power over participants' issues. A \$10 incentive gift card was offered in exchange for participants' time.

### **Interview/Instrument Protocol**

The instrument was created based on the organizational justice theoretical model. The instrument was adapted and modified for this study based on Cropanzano et al.'s (2007) model of organizational justice. Also, the instrument used findings from various studies on the impact of violence against teachers, such as those by Anderman et al. (2018), Cropanzano et al. (2007), Huruji (2016), Koç et al. (2016), Mertoglu (2015), Reddy (2014), and Will (2018). The instrument was critiqued by my chair and co-chairpersons and was field-tested (See Appendix A).

### **Procedures for Pilot Study**

Pilot studies are essential for research; they are used to clarify any issue or bias that may arise with the study or the data instrument, and they also provide additional validity for the study (Creswell, 2013). The pilot study allowed me to test and refine the research and prompting questions (Creswell, 2013). The pilot study consisted of two participants selected from the main study. The pilot study followed all protocols of the main study.

### **Procedures for Recruitment, Participation, and Data Collection**

For data collection, I conducted interviews and debriefings via Zoom, given recent events such as the COVID-19 pandemic. Then, participants responded to the invitations through my inbox agreeing to participate in the study. Then, consent forms were sent to participants asking them to respond “I agree” if they wanted to be in the study. Next, participants were notified, and the interviews were scheduled. The research used purposeful sampling. Next, the participants’ available interview dates were checked and scheduled. Then, 1-hour in-depth interviews were conducted via Zoom, using open-ended questions (Giorgi, 2012; Yilmaz, 2013). The interviews were recorded on Zoom vocals only.

I reviewed the collected data. Follow up questioning took place via Zoom or phone call, whichever was more convenient for participants. Member’s checking was conducted after themes emerge and coding began. A second interview was set up for member’s checking. The research employed phenomenological psychology.

Phenomenological research acquired a collective meaning from several individual perceptions, and focus was given to the description of each participant’s experience (Creswell, 2013), which allowed participants to describe their knowledge in their own words by answering open-ended questions (Yilmaz, 2013). From these descriptions, a universal meaning of the phenomenon was derived (Moustakas, 1994).

I examined the data, analyzed the data using inductive thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006), and prepared the data for presentation through themes, chapters, and tables. The sample size of the study was 10 participants or until saturation has been

achieved. Finally, the participants were contacted via e-mail or by phone, inviting participants to hear the study's findings.

### **Data Analysis Plan**

The data used inductive thematic analysis at the semantic level (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Inductive thematic analysis consists of six phases. In Phase 1, I became familiar with my data set through immersion. Immersion involved reading the data in its entirety at least once, and then repetitive intentional reading of the data to acquire initial meaning and patterns from the data (Braun & Clarke, 2006). During the immersion process, I compared the written transcript with the verbal transcript to check for accuracy and take notes that assisted with the coding process (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Phase 2 required me to start generating codes. I used the notes from Phase 1 and began creating detailed specific codes.

Phase 3 required me to create themes from the data that were coded. The development of themes used semantic level coding (explicitly from the data). The coded data were sorted by looking for patterns among coded data, which were then placed into initial themes (Braun & Clarke, 2006). The analysis process also involved open coding to strengthen the reliability of the analysis. In Phase 4, I reviewed the themes that had emerged to ensure that they created a coherent pattern, this phase involved two levels (Braun & Clarke, 2006). The first level in Phase 4 was to reevaluate the candidate theme assessing with the chosen text or the theme itself. After this process, a thematic map emerged. The next level in Step 4 involved evaluating the entire thematic data set results, checking for the validity of individual themes (Braun & Clarke, 2006). In Level 2, new

themes and editing occurred, which resulted in more reliable themes that were coherent and told the overall story of the data set (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

In Phase 5, I began defining and refining themes. I reviewed the extracted data that represented each theme and organized the themes into coherent accounts that were accompanied by a narrative. Next, I identified the essence of each theme to identify what aspect of the data each theme captured (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Next, a detailed analysis was written for each theme, and I considered how each theme aligned with the overall story. Then, I searched the data specifically looking for themes that were large and complex (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Phase 6 began once the research had a complete, coherent set of themes. Next, the research was composed into a detailed written of the data's story (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Then, the research used vivid examples that demonstrate sufficient evidence of the theme and overall story. The report included data extracts and was written using non-repetitive concise, coherent language that told the story of the data (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

The data set was coded using inductive thematic analysis coding. Inductive thematic analysis coding (data-driven) consists of reading the data several times and locating information related to the research questions (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Inductive coding also allowed for extensive coding and can rely on previously coded research on the topic (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Then, the collected data were developed at the semantic level. Research at the semantic level involved development of themes within the explicitness of the data set. Next, I organized the themes to display patterns of semantic

content at the latent level, and then the data were summarized and interpreted (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

### **Issues of Trustworthiness**

Trustworthiness is typically a strategy that improves the validity and reliability of research or evaluation of findings (Golafshani, 2015). Various perspectives were proposed for trustworthiness in qualitative research. To establish trustworthiness, the research used several strategies. Validity for the research was obtained because accepted strategies to document the accuracy of my study were used (Creswell, 2013). To establish validity, the research used members checking. This process allowed participants to view major themes and findings and verify that the unified descriptions of the data are accurate (Creswell, 2013). Another strategy the research used was providing a narrative of how my background experiences could possibly influence my interpretation of the data, which is known as reflectivity (Creswell, 2013). To establish transferability, a detailed, thick description was written that allowed results to be similar and relatable to established situations (Patton, 2002).

To provide reliability, the research employed open coding, which had four steps.

Step 1: I asked the data a specific and consistent set of questions. For Step 1, I focused on the research question and began coding using statements of principles, expectations, or general notions of human nuances inside the text.

Step 2: I analyzed the data minutely. In Step 2, I rereviewed the literature, keeping in mind this was the first review of the literature, creating broad categories, interactions, and incidents.

Step 3: Coding was frequently interrupted to write theoretical notes. During Step 3, I took notes that revealed the ideas, concepts, or categories that conveyed the same elements that supported the theory, research question, or hypothesis.

Step 4: The analytic relevance of any traditional variable such as age, sex, social class, and so on was not considered relevant until the data showed it to be relevant. In Step 4, I did not make assumptions about variables traditionally associated with the research topic, and I returned to the data and created codes according to what the data revealed (Berg & Lune, 2012).

### **Ethical Procedures**

Regarding conditions for recruitment of participants in the study, I foresaw no ethical concerns. I designed invitation letters that requested participation in the study. Then, I sent a letter of consent via email. Participants were asked to respond to the letter of consent with “I consent”. Then, participants interviews were set up at their convenience.

Regarding participation in the study, I alerted potential participants I am a mandated reporter. A \$10 gift certificate was given to participants for their time and participation in the study.

In the case that recalling the violent experience created discomfort for the participants of the study, and they experience flashbacks, depression, or physiological affects the following hotlines were placed on the consent form for participants to use if any discomfort was caused from reliving the violent experience:

PTSD Foundation of America: 1-888-777- 4443, Text: 7873, open 9:00 a.m.--  
9:00 p.m.

NAMI: 1-800-950-NAMI, Text: 741741, open 24/7

National Hope Line: 1-800-442- HOPE, Text 4673, open every day, all day.

All data were stored on an external hard drive, which was locked in a metal file cabinet in my private office. Electronic files were stored on my secure password-protected external hard drive. Electronic files include transcripts, tape recordings, research question responses, and results. Storage consists of transcripts, video vocal recordings, research question responses, and research results. The data will be held under lock and key for 5 years and then destroyed by shredding and burning. The participants' names were coded with numbers to protect their names. A separate ledger was created for the participant's identities. The transcribing company Otter, i.e. and me were the only ones with access to the data.

### **Summary**

Chapter 3 provided information about the methodology for the research. The chapter included research design and rationale, the role of the researcher, and methodology. I used inductive thematic analysis to analyze the data and reveal the data's story.

The use of qualitative phenomenological research approach allowed me to acquire and illuminate the voices of teachers about their experience with violence. The use of qualitative research data enabled the essence of phenomena to be revealed in a way that quantitative data could not. Purposeful criteria sampling was well suited for qualitative

research. I was responsible for ethical issues, data, collection, storage, trustworthiness, and analysis. To ensure trustworthiness, the strategies members checking, full detailed description, and researcher narrative were used in the study. I was a crucial component as the safeguard of ethical treatment and as the data collector and protector.

The rationale for the current research was the limited amount of information that existed at the qualitative level pertaining to “Violence Against Teachers” and organizational justice (Bowen et al., 2007). I sought teachers’ perceptions of violence, justice, administrative support, and training at school. I used Organizational Justice (Cropanzano et al., 2007) as a theoretical lens to analyze the data. The research study was used to illuminate the voices of teachers and add to the dearth of information that existed on the topic (Reddy, 2014).



## Chapter 4: Results

### Introduction

The purpose of this research is to describe K-5 teachers' perceptions of violence, justice, training, and administrative support in school. The research questions were,

RQ1: How do K-5 teachers experience violence at school?

RQ2: How do K-5 teachers experience justice at school?

RQ3: How do K-5 public school teachers experience the training they receive about violence at school?

RQ4: How do K-5 public school teachers experience administrative support regarding violence against teachers?

Chapter 4 details the procedures used to explore and support the research topic, such as a pilot study, purposeful sampling, 1-hour semi-structured interviews, thematic analysis, latent thematic coding, member's check, bracketing, and a rich, thick description of the data analysis is provided. Also, Chapter 4 describes the setting, demographics of participants, data collection process, data analysis, and the findings of my research.

The themes in Chapter 4 were developed using an organizational justice framework and social constructivist conceptual world view. The social constructivist worldview ascertains that individual's knowledge is constructed by the meaning they derive from the world around them (Galbin, 2014). Therefore, the research's theme analysis reported the semantic data's sociocultural contexts and structural conditions

(Braun & Clarke, 2006) at the latent level. The data revealed two themes: violence and injustice.

### **Pilot Study**

The pilot study was analyzed in order to find evidence that the instrument meaning was relevant and synonymous to all participants (Pearson, 2012). The pilot study revealed the need to ask more probing questions because the pilot interviews were not quite an hour. The pilot study also made me reflect on the order of the questions. One interview question was moved to the end of the interview questions, and during the member's check process, the interviewee's transcript was included for reference. Also, probing questions such as "Can you tell me more about that" were included with every interview question.

### **Setting**

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, all interviews were conducted via Zoom and transcribed by Otter, i.e. The research questions were semi-structured, and the interviews were 1 hour long and audio-only.

### **Demographics**

The study included nine elementary teachers. The teachers had been teaching between 2 and 24 years. Many of the teachers had only taught elementary school, except for three teachers that had also taught middle school. Three teachers worked at the same elementary school, and six worked at different elementary schools in Florida. All participants worked in the state of Florida. As well, all the teachers worked at title one urban schools.

The pandemic has affected the way teachers teach. Some teachers are virtual, and others are brick and mortar. Eight of the participants teach in a brick-and-mortar setting, and one participant teaches virtually. Initial contact was through e-mail. The second contact was by phone to schedule an interview at the participants convince. During the early stages of the analysis, the members' checks were conducted via Zoom, 30-minute interviews. Participants were thanked for being in the study and mailed a \$10 gift card.

All participants of this study worked in urban or inner-city schools, which according to Ouellette et al. (2018), have more incidents of violence. All participants had experienced some form of physical and emotional violence. The violence some participants experienced impacted their abilities after the workday. Two of the participants that participated in this research resigned after the 2020 - 2021 school year ended. Both participants cited the lack of support from the administration and the violence they experienced at school from parents, students, and administration as the catalyst in their decision to resign.

### **Data Collection**

The data collection process began with invitations sent on two Facebook groups. Interested parties were instructed to e-mail the researcher "I'm interested." Initial contact with participants ensured that they met the criteria. If a participant met the criteria, a consent form was issued to the potential participant. Once consent forms were signed, the participants were scheduled for an interview; a date was set for the interview through phone and text.

The data were collected from nine participants. The data were collected in 1-hour semi-structured interview questions via Zoom and transcribed by Otter, i.e. (see Appendix K). The research used Otter, i.e., to transcribe the data instead of Transcribe me due to the united connectivity between Otter, i.e., and Zoom. After the interview, the data were analyzed through inductive thematic analysis at the latent level. Participants were contacted for a second 30-minute member's check interview during the analysis process.

The interviews were deleted from Zoom and Otter after the research was complete. All digital and hard copies of consent forms, text messages, interviews, data, charts, and analysis were stored on a zip drive, and hard copies were placed in a metal locked cabinet for 5 years and then will be destroyed.

### **Data Analysis**

The research used a social constructivist conceptual model, which proposes individuals cannot construct a reality without interaction with others (Aminah & Asl, 2015). Organizational justice was used as a theoretical framework to understand how individuals perceive events or consequences as just (Cropanzano et al., 2007). An inductive thematic analysis was used to analyze the semantic data.

The data were analyzed using inductive thematic analysis, which created semantic data that was coded at the latent level. The inductive thematic analysis consisted of six phases: immersion, generate codes, search for themes, review themes, define and name themes, and produce reports. During Phase 1 immersion, the data and audio were read and listened to several times entirely. Next, the written and oral data were compared for

accuracy. Then, the interview and research questions were used as a guide, and phrases were placed underneath each interview question (see Appendix B). In Phase 2, comparisons, notes, and highlighting were used to create the first initial codes, which were violence, impact on teaching, physiological impact, administrative support, relationship with the administration, causes of violence against teachers, state policies, district policies, advanced procedures, intervention, and training. Also, after Phase 2, the second interviews were scheduled (member's check) to clarify the analysis of the data (see Appendix C). Phase 3 involved identifying themes across the data set by sorting the codes into possible themes. In this phase, codes were observed and statements were extracted, then extracts were rearranged to best fit under specific codes. Also, the data were revisited to ensure the most pertinent data were extracted. Two themes emerged during Phase 3: violence at school and injustice. The collapsed and combined codes that emerged under the theme of Violence were violence at school, impact on teachers, physiological impact, causes of violence, interventions, and training. The codes that emerged under the theme of Injustice were lack of justice and administrative support, impact on the relationship with the administration, lack of district, state, and administrative policies (see Appendix D).

During Phase 4, developed themes were reviewed to ensure that there was enough data and relevance to support the theme. The themes Violence and Injustice were retained, and some phrases were adjusted and collapsed under five codes for each theme. The theme Violence was coded for violence at school, impact on teaching, physiological impact, causes of violence, interventions, and training. The theme of injustice was coded

for lack of administrative support, relationship with the administration, district policies, state policies, advanced procedures. Then, the themes were closely observed during the revising process to check for further code combining (see Appendix E & F).

In Phase 5, the final themes, violence and injustice, were retained. The codes under each theme were observed, the data were revisited, and codes were merged under each theme. The theme Violence was coded for the impact of violence, which had sub-codes which were code was physical violence, emotional violence, and loss of instructional time. The theme of violence was also coded for lack of consequences and needed training. The theme of injustice was coded for lack of administrative support, relationship with the administration, and district, state, and administrative policies (see Appendix (G & H)).

During Phase 6, the data were thoroughly observed and analyzed in relation to the research questions. The research used notes from participants that were collected during the second interview (members check) to analyze and assist with the interpretation of the data. The analysis also used existing research on the topic to support the analysis resulting in an analyzed description of the data. At the latent level, themes are interpreted during the analysis process, and the description is already theorized (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

### **Evidence of Trustworthiness**

#### **Credibility**

The pilot study was conducted in the same manner as the main study to demonstrate the quality of the research instrument. Credibility for research instruments is

essential and can be acquired by ensuring the content of the research instrument is aligned to answer the research question (Cope, 2014). Invitations were sent using the Facebook groups Research in Language Education and Florida Teachers Unite. Teachers that met the criteria and responded “I’m interested” were sent a letter of consent. If teachers met the criteria and agreed to be in the study, a date was set for an interview. After the interviews, the data were analyzed using inductive thematic analysis, and thematic semantic coding was applied during the coding process. Then, participants were contacted for a second 30-minute interview during Phase 3 of the data analysis. The second interview was a member’s check. The purpose of the member’s check was to clarify the analysis of the data.

### **Transferability**

The research used a rich, thick description in the analysis that detailed the steps of the analysis process. Developing a rich, thick description allowed the research findings to be like existing situations (Creswell, 2013).

### **Dependability**

The research acquired reliability by employing open ending coding. After Phase 2 of conducting the thematic analysis of the data, I used open ending coding simultaneously with semantic thematic coding to code the data. Open ending coding consisted of four steps. In Step 1, the data were closely observed with a focus on the research questions and thematic analysis. During Step 2, the data were revisited, and broad themes rose from the data. During Step 3, the data were observed with a focus on the research’s conceptual model, which was social constructivism, and theoretical framework, which was

organizational justice. Notes were taken and saved on the last page of the research's emerging themes document. Finally, during Step 4, the data were reexamined to ensure the themes and codes were developing according to what the data revealed (Creswell, 2013).

### **Confirmability**

The research used member checking as a strategy that supports trustworthiness. Participants were interviewed a second time to establish the trustworthiness of the interpretation of the data. The data collected during member's checking were factored into the data analysis and the findings.

Another strategy the research used to increase trustworthiness was reflectivity (Berg & Lune, 2012). Reflectivity was used to explain how my background experiences as a teacher might have influenced the data's interpretation.

### **Results**

I was interested in capturing the essence of teachers' perceptions concerning violence, justice, training, and administrative support they receive at school. The research questions answered were,

RQ1: How do K-5 public school teachers experience violence at school?

RQ2: How do K-5 public school teachers experience justice at school?

RQ 3: How do K-5 teachers experience the training they receive about violence at school?

RQ 4: How do K-5 public school teachers experience administrative support regarding violence against teachers?



The research analysis of the data were organized by themes. The data revealed two themes: Violence and Injustice. These themes were developed using inductive thematic analysis. The codes were developed using inductive thematic analysis at the latent level. A depiction of the multiple effects of violence ran throughout all participants' responses. The depiction of "Violence" was found across the data in areas such as effects of violence and needed training. Another theme, "Injustice," was also depicted across the data set in areas such as lack of protection and support from administration, needed creation and implementation of district and state policies, and a lack of justice for teachers. It should be noted that the thematic data analysis was organized by themes; therefore, the research questions are not aligned in sequential order in the data analysis.

Next was an example of how the construct of violence was manifested in the participants' responses, which were coded as the impact of violence, which manifested three sub-codes: physical violence, emotional violence, and loss of instructional time. Causes of violence and Needed training, which were the second and third codes, coded under the theme Violence. The theme Violence at School provided sufficient evidence in the semantic data to answer Research Question 1: How do K-5 public school teachers experience violence at school?

### **Theme 1: Violence**

#### ***Impact of Violence***

**Physical Violence.** Participants 4, 5, 7, and 8 vocalized the many forms of physical violence to which they had been subjected to at work. Teachers are experiencing

incidents of physical violence directly and indirectly. This violence interfered with effectively delivering instructions. Teachers expressed these were not isolated incidents. These are daily ongoing situations involving physical violence.

- P4: “I have a large bookshelf with a whole bunch of different books, and he took all he threw off all the shelves and threw the books all over the floor. And on his way to doing this, he slipped over all the chairs—round table in the bac” of my classroom. So, when this happened, I, of course had to remove my kids, you know, move kids away from the situation.” (p. 3)
- P5: “Um, he proceeded to get up from the desk, kick the desk over, went to the computers that there are four computers in the computer area, turn the two of those chairs over in the process of him opening the door, pushing it up against the wall, where you will hear a really loud noise.” (p. 16)
- P7: “I did have a parent threaten threatened to kill me.” (p. 2)
- P8: “She was actually backing up from the student trying to get away from the female student and a female student, you know, kept at her in at her until she got to her and started violently just attacking the teacher.” (p. 2)

Participant 6 expressed how the duration of her violent experience lasted for several months with no resolution. These constant violent outbursts have been linked to emotional stress for the students and the teacher. Violence against teachers occurs in many forms and can have a lasting negative impact on teachers (Devries et al., 2017; Will, 2018).

- P6: “I have this kid in here causing havoc, throwing books, pushing chairs, hitting kids, hitting me, kicking me, and I don't have any hope. This went on for probably like, two, three good months.” (p. 2)
- P6: “I'm sitting there talking, Whoa, this girl, she's kicking me, hitting me, like trying to make me let her go. But I didn't want to do that because that's going to endanger all the other students. So, you know, this was just an ongoing thing.” (p. 1)

Some participants reported receiving violence from the principal or other teachers in the form of bullying. Participants 3, 5, and 7 suggested the negative interactions caused increased stress for teachers. Participants expressed feelings of embarrassment and intimidation as the result of administrations' comments and demeanor.

- P3: “And I had a situation where the entire school came against me; there was a teacher who would actually duct tape the student inside of a closet. And they wanted me to lie and say that that didn't happen.” (p. 1)
- P5: “As I entered the door of the meeting, in the conference room, the principal started to yell at me without giving me an opportunity to clear the airway. And it was almost like she was asking me questions in a violent tone while the parent was on the phone.” (p. 4)
- P7: “Embarrassing comments. And it wasn't just in front of me, you know, in front of the kids and sometimes in front of staff.” (p. 20)

Participants also expressed their concern for their safety and the safety of their other students with violent students in the classroom. Some participants such as

Participants 3, 4, and 7 expressed that some students would target other students as well as the teacher.

- P3: “There was a teacher who would actually duct tape the student inside of a closet. And they wanted me to lie and say that that didn't happen.” (p. 1)
- P3: “So that was three incidents in which I'm going to say, Caucasian, white teachers, who had done an injustice to minority students, black in particular.” (p. 2)
- P3: “It allowed me to see what the students were dealing with when we were talking about the people who teach our children.” (p. 6)
- P4: “My students would be physically harmed by him. I had to often walk with him holding my hand, separately from the classroom, because I could not keep my back turned to him, without him doing something towards somebody or him just doing something that was not appropriate behavior for that time.” (p. 9)
- P7: “He jumps from table to table, throws chairs, tried to tip over the table, and would poop several times under my table. Tear stuff off my wall, go around, and hit kids in the head. Punch kids and stuff, like randomly hit kids.” (p. 29)

**Emotional Violence.** Participants 4, 6, 7, and 9 also expressed the emotional violence they endured. Emotional violence has a negative impact on the teacher's emotional and psychological state of mind, causing extreme stress and exhaustion.

- P4: “It was exhausting. It was physically draining to me because I had dry erase markers thrown at me while I was trying to hold a math instruction. And I had a pencil thrown at me, as well as an eraser he had thrown at me during instruction. And emotionally, again, having a student in my classroom who is constantly interrupting instruction as well as physically hurting me. And it's not fair. I'm the person who is supposed to be in, you know, in charge, and this child is looking like he's owning me kind of, but not really.” (p. 10)
- P6: “Every single day. I was exhausted.” (p. 4)
- P7: “Um, everything from mad and angry and frustrated, too tired, exhausted.” (p. 14)
- P9: “And it also breaks down the teachers because we're exhausted, we're tired of having to deal with behavior and also teach them you know, it takes a lot mentally to do that is very stressful on the on the mind and the heart honestly to have to do both.” (p. 5)

Teachers expressed how the emotional stress from school was related to non-functionality at home, anxiety, fear, and a loss of sleep. Participants 4 and 7 stated their exhaustion from work affected their abilities to perform at home. Wilson et al. (2011) suggested that violence against teachers was a significant predictor of fear.

- P4: “I was exhausted from my school day. So, my boyfriend noticed you know, I was bringing emotional baggage from school, home.” (p. 25)

- P4: “And it was exhausting. I had a lack of sleep. I found myself wanting to go to bed knowing that I needed to, but not wanting to go to bed because the next day would be coming, the next day would arrive.” (p. 14)
- P7: “It was more exhausting. So, when I went home, I only had energy to shower at times, so it was exhausting. And then sometimes I felt too tired to do anything.” (p. 19)

Participants 3 and 7 also expressed feelings of frustration, worry, unsafe, and feelings of inadequacy.

- P3: “Well, I didn't feel safe with that student anymore.” (p. 10)
- P7: “There was nothing physically wrong, but it was a lot of emotional toll.” (p. 20)

**Loss of Instructional Time.** The violence that teachers experienced lead to emotional stress, which impacted the teacher's ability to perform effectively in the classroom. Participants 4, 5, 6, 7, and 8 responded that the violence they experienced included throwing erasers, dry erasers, markers, turning desks and chairs over, kicking, and beating on the desk.

- P4: “I would have to stop instruction room, move my children away from the child, I would have to call down to the office who often would say to call home which would then interrupt even more instruction time. And usually, those phone calls are being sent down to the office, and he would be still in the classroom, he would be able to return to the class or, you know, be able to come back.” (p. 10)

- P5: “The student was loud, cursing, just totally disrespectful. And just violent.” (p. 16)
- P6: “This can't be every day. I said, like, I literally can't even teach my class.” (p. 2)
- P7: “It was hard to teach at all. Just because, you know, he was one and I had like 23 students.” (p. 13)
- P8: “So, it mentally affected me from teaching the rest of the day because now I have to calm the class down. Now I have two referrals to write. And you have to be very detailed when you write in referrals.” (p. 8)

**Causes of Violence.** Participants 4, 6, 7, and 8 suggested the violence teachers experience is the result of a lack of consequences from the administration for aggressive and violent student behavior and the environment from which they come. Participants expressed a significant component related to violence is a lack of consequences and parental responsibility.

- P4: “I also think, just the parental involvement, and, you know, the discipline, the disciplinary actions from the parents, some parents, or excuse me, this child. They had a hard time disciplining. He was entitled entitlement.” (p. 6)
- P6: “But, as I said because she saw no consequences.” (p. 12)
- P7: “A lack of home support and they also have home and other emotional issues going on at home and the lack of support from administration.” (p. 15)
- P8: “Yes, there are no consequences.” (p. 13)

Participants 6 and 7 expressed that the lack of parental environment and accountability creates more episodes of violence at school. Participants also expressed those controlling personalities play a role in the violence they experience at school.

- P6: “For this situation, it just was a matter of him not getting his way.” (p. 19)
- P7: “Um, controlling personalities.” (p. 23)

Several participants such as 3, 4, and 8 responded that a significant component related to violence against teachers is students lacking medicine, the skillset to achieve the task, and principals’ reluctance to process referrals because their bonuses are negatively affected by referral rate.

- P3: “Students not having the skill set to do the assignments, that the teachers have been deemed to teach the standards, not having the skills not coming to us with that knowledge. And so, as a result, they wreak havoc in the classroom.” (p. 11)
- P4: “Sorry, one, is medication, at least many of my kids who, you know, have shown violence towards me, they were on medication and the non-consistent, you know definitely led to them, you know, having these showing these behaviors more so than others.” (p. 6)
- P8: “I found out a few years ago that the administration gets a bonus based on the number of referrals they have in the system. So, the more referrals teachers write, it cuts down on principals’ bonuses; so far, referrals every week, I am going to be looked at like, you don’t have classroom management. While you are writing these referrals, instead of managing your class.” (p. 13)



Participant 3 responded that the violence she and some students experienced was initiated because of her race and the students' race.

- P3: “I would say it was racially motivated.” (p. 6)
- P3: “Let's say some teachers can curse students out, slam them indoors, spit in their face, and nothing happens to them.” (p. 6)

The theme Violence at School provided sufficient evidence in the semantic data to answer research question three, which was Research Question 3: How do K-5 teachers experience the training they receive about violence at school?

**Needed Training.** Participants 3, 5, 6, and 7 expressed the training that they have received to stop or prevent violence. However, participants expressed the training was not sufficient to address the issues they experience in the classroom. School leaders must provide ongoing training for teachers to ensure policies and procedures are effectively stabilized (Espelage et al., 2013).

- P3: “When you have that camaraderie, and you can discuss if you're doing it the right way.” (p. 14)
- P5: “Conflict resolution which would include having the pert the student at hand that has been that has had some misconduct or behavior issues or violence in the in the classroom or any other area to actually get with or have a meeting with the student.” (p. 14)
- P6: “I did go to tough kids training.” (p. 10)
- P7: “We've had the crisis training and the alert training.” (p. 7)

Many participants such as Participants 4, 5, 6, and 9 were unable to recall any training they received to stop or prevent violence at school.

- P4: “I have not received any training.” (p. 8)
- P4: “I don't know of any programs in place.” (p. 16)
- P5: “Not offering enough training when it comes to even administrators and or parents, um, and or parents, anybody that comes into the school district or school board that is hired.” (p. 6)
- P6: “I didn't receive any training.” (p. 10)
- P9: “I'm not sure if that either, honestly. And I think that is probably something I'm not sure if that's something that's even gone over during training, where at least the training that I've had thus far, I don't even think that's something that's been covered”. (p. 6)

Participants 4 and 5 expressed a need and desire for different types of training that will assist them with the frequent violence they experience at school. Participants also detailed training they think would improve the teacher's ability to stop or prevent violence in the classroom. McMahon et al. (2017) and Reddy (2014) suggested that general education teachers could benefit greatly from training to resolve the violence in the classroom.

- P4: “I think there would be less outbreaks and disruptions, and the teacher will feel more comfortable, you know, being able to handle things and hopefully administration's, you know, involvement will ease the stress on the teacher.” (p. 9)

- P5: “Another thing I think would be a great tool or asset as far as training is motivational interviewing. Now a lot of people would think when you think of motivational interviewing.” (p. 14)
- P5: “They need to have training that would allow administration and upper management to switch the roles of a teacher or an instructor or an educator, if not just for one day, to see what a teacher has to deal with on a day-to-day basis, and how overwhelming it can be, especially when you're a new teacher.” (p. 15)

Participant 6 also suggested training would benefit regular education teachers because they service exceptional education students as well.

- P6: “But I feel like honestly, whatever training the teachers and parents get in the pride unit for those students who are like, emotionally disturbed and you know, have physical exceptions, or whatever, I feel like every teacher should have that training.” (p. 11)

Participants 4, 6, and 9 expressed how not receiving training to prevent violence in the classroom impacts their effectiveness in the school and creates exhaustion.

- P4: “It's draining because there is no training.” (p. 8)
- P6: “Because is, it's hard when you don't get that training, and you get a kid that's kind of off the wall or, you know, hitting, kicking, screaming, cursing, or whatever, and you don't know what to do, you know, like, you don't want to lose your license trying to like shield other students or try to stop this student

from doing XYZ by you know, holding them back or put your hands on them.” (p. 11)

- P9: “They rarely talk about violence against teachers, um, and in any aspect of it, it's always the other way around, as far as how we treat students and how we carry ourselves around students, but they really talk about the ladder, unfortunately.” (p. 6)

One participant expressed that the individuals that run training for school districts are out of touch with the reality of the teacher's experience in the classroom.

- P8: “Because a lot of you know that, you know, people that run through training have been in the classroom 15 years. They're so disconnected from the classroom; they don't remember what it was like to be a teacher in a classroom.” (p. 5)

The same participant also expressed that teacher could receive many training sessions, but it will come down to the moment a teacher is faced with violence in the classroom.

- P8: “You can be trained, and we can go to 900 training sessions. But once you step into your classroom, any one of those situations that you have been in training for will happen and how you react to it. You are going to react to it the way you were trained. Are you just human and going to act as a teacher, female Mother, you know, what is your reaction from the training?” (pp. 4-5)

## Theme 2: Injustice

A depiction of injustice was frequented across participants' responses. This depiction of injustice was found across the data in coded areas such as lack of protection and support from administration, needed district and state policies, and lack of justice. Next is an example of how the construct injustice was manifested in the data's coded responses (a) lack of justice and administrative support, (b) relationship with administration, and (c) lack of district, state, and administrative policies. The theme injustice provided sufficient evidence in the semantic data to answer research question two, which was, Research Question 2: How do K-5 public school teachers experience justice at school?

**Lack of Justice and Administrative Support.** Participants 3, 5, 6, 7, and 8 identified the support they receive from administrations as grossly insufficient. Participants linked a lack of consequences from the administration for students that frequently displayed violent behaviors in class. The lack of administrative support is connected to feelings of injustice.

- P3: "I can tell you that I no longer had trust. It's almost like when we think about justice... is it justice or just us." (p. 5)
- P5: "They just did not help. They didn't help with abating the problem. I wanted to really quit last year because I didn't feel supported by him at all." (p. 18)
- P6: "But there will be some days that I can remember where like, nobody would come, I would call up to the front office, they would say, Oh, he's not

available, and then nobody from the admin team will come to try to help me.”

(p. 17).

- P7: “But as far as support that year with that particular child, I did not get it from admin. I was told, what were you doing, what were you doing wrong?”  
(p. 11)
- P8: “Because I do remember an incident when I went against the principal. And I felt like since that incident; I was always targeted. pop up in my classroom, anytime, you know, doing an informal observation. Leaving me a note like two things right, but six things wrong. Really. All of this started because I didn't play your game. And I insist on, you know, handling this situation, the way I think it should go and not the way you were trying to persuade me to go with it. So now, I must deal with you. Because I didn't play your game.” (p. 11)

Participants 3, 6, and 8 responded that the administration worked to resolve their violent experiences.

- P3: “Somewhat in that situation where that student was removed when I felt no longer unsafe.” (p. 14)
- P6: “And, the principal suggested the mom, you know, like stay in the classroom with us for a couple of days. But the mom says she wasn't able to do that.” (p. 5)

- P8: “The child ended up getting suspended, they gave him three days suspension. And they took him out of my classroom, you know, that was going to happen.” (p. 11)

Participants 4, 5 and 6 expressed a link between a lack of administrative support and their exhaustion and fatigue.

- P4: “Again, it was emotionally exhausting because I didn't know what to expect, I could plan for a day, but I could not have planned for this child's random behavior, you know. It was emotionally exhausting, because they also, again, to show that my students were taken care of. They were scared, you know, always thinking he was going to do something to them. And it was, it was a big headache.” (p. 5)
- P5: “Just physically, still just draining the energy out of me each and every time something like this happens? emotionally, constantly building up like you're stacking up blocks, constantly building those blocks higher and higher and higher.” (p. 18)
- P5: “I'm emotionally damaged by the process of being a teacher, and no one being able to support you, especially when you have violent episodes that go on in your classroom, such as stated before.” (p. 18).
- P6: “I wanted to really quit last year because I didn't feel supported by him at all.” (p. 6)

**Impact on Relationships with Administration.** Relationships with the administration become strained when teachers feel as though they are not being

supported. Teachers suggested that a lack of administrative support creates feelings of helplessness and uncaringness. Studies show when supervisors display interactional justice, the resulting relationship is of a higher quality, which motivates employees to perform more effectively (Rupp & Cropanzano, 2002). The theme injustice provided sufficient evidence in the semantic data to answer research question four, which was Research Question 4: How do K-5 public school teachers experience administrative support regarding violence against teachers?

- P4: “They hurt me. I was sad, you know, the lack of support, you know, and then not providing resources to help with this child just made every day challenging. I mean, again, you know, it brought anxiety, you know, in like, a weekend. How having outbursts or going home at the end of the day, it was draining, you know, had trouble sometimes sleeping, because I was thinking, you know, what's going to happen tomorrow?” (p. 13)
- P5: “It made me feel as though I needed to try to question Is this where the career that I want to be in? Is this really worth going through”. (p. 7)
- P5: “And it makes it harder as an educator or a teacher trying to go in and teach twenty-two kids at a time when you do not have the support, it is mentally draining emotionally and physically is draining.” (p. 7)
- P7: “Yeah, it was very unhealthy. And at a time, I felt like I'm, um, I was being bullied in a sense.” (p. 22)



- P9: “I don't feel supported with the administration; I feel as if they just push teachers out there to the wolves. And you know, they're just there to wipe the blood off our faces when the war is over.” (p. 10)
- P9: “The admin is supposed to be our middleman, you know, they're supposed to protect us from the lashings of the angry parents, and they don't do that.” (p. 10)

Participants 3 and 8 expressed how they were targeted by administration after asking for assistance with the violence they experienced in the classroom.

- P3: “It didn't matter because administration was a part of the violent experience. In my opinion, in my strong opinion, I knew they were coming from my feelings and my emotions. She orchestrated the entire thing.” (p. 4)
- P8: “Because I do remember an incident when I went against the principal, and I felt like, since that incident, I was always targeted. She would pop up in my classroom, anytime, you know, doing an informal observation. Let me turn to things right, but six things wrong. Really. All of this started because I didn't play your game. And I insist on, you know, handling this situation, the way I think it should go and not the way you were trying to persuade me to go with it. So now I must deal with you. Because I didn't play your game.” (p. 11)

Participants 4 and 8 also expressed how a lack of administrative support was linked to their job performance.

- P4: “I didn't want to come to work, you know, if I don't have administration behind me, it makes me not want to come to work.” (p. 5)
- P4: “And emotionally, again, having a student in my classroom who is constantly interrupting instruction as well as physically hurting me. And it's not fair.” (p. 10)
- P4: “Emotionally, it's exhausting, physically exhausting because I lose sleep over it. And I do not want to go to school. I don't even want to have to deal with administration because it usually ends up being my fault. Rather than me, student who is causing the issues?” (p. 20)
- P8: “Then I am going to come in when I should at 7:50, and I'm going to leave when I should at 3:50. That's all you're going to get out of me for the rest of this year.” (p. 13)

**Lack of District, State, and Administrative Policies.** The data revealed that most teachers are unaware of any policies or procedures that are in place to protect teachers from violence in the classroom. This sentiment is expressed by Participants 4, 5, 6, and 9.

- P4: “I am unaware of any advanced procedures because I have been teaching for a few years, and I still haven't received any.” (p. 6)
- P4: “Again, it's frustrating because the district, I don't know. As far as I know, there are no procedures in place. And so, therefore, it has put back on to me that, you know, it is because of my classroom management that these issues are. It's time-consuming.” (p. 15)

- P4: “And the weakness is not having any policies in place. So, therefore, things can't be put in place to help.” (p. 6)
- P5: “I am not clear on what the State offers.” (p. 12)
- P5: “Let us see this particular student. Was there any, was there any pre-warning?” (p. 19)
- P6: “I'm not sure, I don't know, off the top of my head.” (p. 10)
- P9: “That I'm not sure of, I would definitely love to, to hear some of those some of the policies that the state has, but as of right now, I have no clue at all.” (pp. 5-6)

One teacher was aware of a procedure in place to protect teachers from violence.

- P3: “But, according to our teacher contract, we are to have that child removed and sent into another teacher's class. And for the remainder of the year, if we are unsafe, we have that right.” (p. 13)

Participants 4 and 6 expressed concerns for their safety due to a lack of policies and procedures to protect teachers. Teachers that experience direct violence and a lack of administrative support are more likely to feel a sense of injustice. Therefore, organizations like schools run less problematically, and teachers produce at their maximum when they feel a sense of justice (Koç et al., 2016).

- P4: “Can get hurt because there are no policies in place.” (p. 7)
- P6: “I mean, well, not being warned that a child is violent, you know, like it puts other students in danger.” (p. 15)

## **Conclusion**

A socio-science shift is emerging, producing more research on violence against teachers. Researchers such as (Anderman et al., 2018; Finley 2003; Reddy, 2014) have called attention to the issue of violence against teachers. Wilson et al. (2011) research suggested that for teachers, violence is a significant predictor for fear, and research conducted by (Hall, 2005) suggested teachers' consistent exposure to daily violence erodes their confidence. Socio-culturally, teachers' voices are excluded from most of the research on the topic of violence against teachers (Anderman et al., 2018; Mertoglu, 2015). Therefore, the topic has not received the attention needed to resolve the issues teachers have experienced with violence at school. Violence against teachers was also an international issue (Cremin & Guilherme, 2016) and, if not given attention, could result in devastating consequences such as teacher burnout, high turnover rates (Lokmić et al., 2013; Will, 2018), lack of quality education, and feelings of injustice (Koç et al., 2016).

The absence of justice creates multiple issues for organizations like schools (Koç et al., 2016). Employees that perceived injustice at work were more susceptible to retaliate against their employer (Bowen et al., 2007). The impact that teachers have on society is insurmountable, and attention and resolution must be given to their plight against violence (Anderman et al., 2018; Finley, 2003; Garcia Torres, 2019; Will, 2018). The data revealed that violence has become a common part of teacher's daily and weekly experience at school. All teachers reported violent experiences that impacted their ability to teach. The violent experiences also had an impact of teacher's relationship with

administration and their feeling of safety in the classroom. Many teachers felt that districts and state policy could be created to assist with the violence teachers endured.

### **Summary**

The current qualitative phenomenological research study sought the perception of K-5 public school teachers experience of violence, justice, training, and administrative support at school. Chapter 4 provided the demographics, setting, and data collection method of this study. The data were collected from utilizing zoom in 1-hour semi-structure interviews and a second 30-minute interview was conducted for a member's check. Chapter 4 also included the data analysis, evidence of trustworthiness, credibility, reliability, and transferability.

The thematic analysis was conducted at the latent level. Teachers' responses about their experience with violence were significantly linked to the socio-cultural research on the topic. The violence that teachers are experiencing daily is increasing. Teachers are experiencing fear, abandonment, Violence against teachers is an international issue in need of a resolution (Devries et al., 2017; Koç et al., 2016; Lokmić et al., 2013). The latent thematic analysis worked from a social constructivist level, which provided description and analysis simultaneously. The contextual analysis structure provided concluding findings for each of my research questions.

RQ1: How do K-5 public school teachers experience violence at school?

Violence at school is affecting teachers' physical, emotional, and mental health. The data revealed teachers are experiencing violence from students and administration daily, and their lives outside of work were greatly impacted. The data analysis revealed

how the violence teachers experienced violence at work was linked to after-work activities such as sleeplessness, anxiety, inability to function at home. Some teachers experienced violence from administration in the form of yelling, embarrassing comments in front of peers and students, and harassment. The data showed that teachers that experienced violence from administration expressed depressive feelings because of their violent experience with administration. Teachers that experience violence at school suffer emotional and psychological stress (Dzuka & Dalbert, 2007; Lokmić et al., 2013; Will, 2018).

The analysis linked violence to teachers' emotional and physical exhaustion, which is linked to teacher burnout. Also, the data revealed teacher's ability to deliver instructions is impacted in many ways, such as exhaustion from frequent violent student episodes, disruptions to the class such as throwing pencils, erasers, etc., delays in instruction due to writing referrals, or settling the violent incident, fear the child will have another violent episode, a lack of consequences for student's violent behavior, and fear for their own safety and the safety of other students.

RQ2: How do K-5 public school teachers experience justice at school?

Participants expressed the lack of justice concerning resolutions for the violence they experienced. The data revealed teachers are unaware of policies and procedures that are created to keep teachers safe. Many teachers want training that will assist them with violent students they encounter daily. Teachers perceive administrations' response training and policies and procedures for the violence they experience as grossly unjust. As in the OJT, when employees perceive policies, distribution of resources, and

administration as unfair, they are more likely to feel injustice. Employees who view their employer as unfair or unjust are more likely to have stress and a lack of peak performance. Teachers are more likely to perform poorly and have a higher stress level when they perceive that they are being treated unjustly at work (Koç et al., 2016).

RQ3: How do K-5 teachers experience the training they receive about violence at school?

The analysis also indicated that teachers are unaware of state, district, and administrative policies and procedures that were created or implemented to protect them from violence they experienced at school. All the teachers, except for one, did not know any policies designed to assist teachers with violence at school. Teachers desire tools that will assist with reducing or deterring the violence they experience at school. McMahon et al., (2017) and Reddy (2014) suggested that general education teachers could benefit greatly from training to resolve the violence in the classroom.

RQ4: How do K-5 public school teachers experience administrative support regarding violence against teachers?

As well, the data indicated teachers are not receiving the support they need when they are faced with a violent incident. Teachers reported hostile relationships with the administration after they reported a violent incident, which affected their ability to function well at home and work. The data also revealed teachers felt anxiety, fear, and isolation when the administration did not support them or blamed them for the violent incident (McMahon et al., 2017).

In conclusion, the analysis focused on two overarching themes Violence and Injustice. Violence and injustice were expressed throughout the participants' responses. The effects of violence are evidenced in participants' responses about the physical and emotional violence they experience daily. The effects of violence on instruction were evidenced in the data through participant responses detailing how instruction was impacted. Participants expressed a desire for training that will assist with stopping or preventing violence at school. The participants recommended many programs and interventions they deemed necessary for teacher training to prevent violence. The data revealed teachers' relationships with administration become toxic when teachers experience violence in the classroom, and the administration does nothing to assist with the violence. Participants responded that a lack of support creates anxiety, sleepless nights, insecurities, and exhaustion. When the administration displays a lack of response to resolve or prevent the violence against teachers, teachers feel a sense of injustice. Chapter 5 will provide an interpretation of the research's findings.



## Chapter 5: Discussion, Conclusions, and Recommendations

### **Introduction**

The purpose of this qualitative phenomenological research was to seek the perception of how teachers experienced violence, justice, training, and administrative support at school. Minimal studies exist on the topic violence against teachers, and fewer exist illuminating the voices of teachers that have experienced violence in the classroom (McMahon et al., 2017; Mertoglu, 2015; Reddy, 2014). Therefore, I sought to illuminate the voices of teachers and add to existing knowledge on the topic. Chapter 5 will provide an interpretation of the research's findings. Also, Chapter 5 will provide limitations, offer recommendations, discuss implications, and provide a conclusion of the research.

This section will present the findings following the research's literature review from Chapter 2. Chapter 2's literature review of past and current research on the topic revealed teachers are experiencing physical, emotional, and psychological violence at school (Dzuka & Dalbert, 2007; Will, 2018). Emotional violence can affect a teacher's confidence, ability to perform in class, and mental health (Anderman et al., 2018), which creates health problems such as headaches, exhaustion, and frustration. In a study conducted by Yang et al. (2019), exhaustion is linked to high turnover rates. Past and current research suggested the topic violence against teachers is an understudied topic. Voices of teachers should be included in the discussion of violence against teachers (Anderman et al., 2018; Finley, 2003; Reddy, 2014). Therefore, the research was developed to add to the body of knowledge on the topic violence against teachers, from the teachers' perspective.

## Interpretation of the Findings

### Theme 1: Violence

#### *RQ1: How do K-5 public school teachers experience violence at school?*

The social constructivist world view purports that individuals acquire meaning from the interaction that they experience with others, which forms their reality (Mogasha, 2014). Therefore, teachers are affected by their daily interactions at work, and teachers derive their reality from their interactions with others at work. The research data revealed that teachers had experienced violence at high frequencies. For some teachers, the violence persisted for months or the entire year. Current studies demonstrated a direct link between the violence teachers experienced and teacher burnout (Fredrick et al., 2019). Teachers have experienced physical violence from students, such as erasers, pencils, and markers hurled at them during instruction. Teachers are being hit, kicked, and punched by students. Also, teachers have experienced emotional and physiological violence; past and current research (Dzuka & Dalbert, 2007; Will, 2018) suggested that when teachers experience constant violence in the classroom, it can be linked to their performance away from school, such as inability to function at home, sleepless nights, and severe anxiety. Lokmić et al.'s (2003) research suggested when teachers experience school-based violence, the impact can have adverse and long-lasting effects.

Also, under the theme violence, various types of violent incidents were described by participants. The sub-themes for violence were the impact of violence, emotional violence, loss of instructional time, causes of violence, and needed training. Most participants responded that the impact of violence is far reaching beyond the workplace.

Experiencing consistent violence can have an extended negative impact on a teacher's physical and mental health (Will, 2018). Many participants reported physical violence such as hitting, biting, kicking, and throwing. Several teachers reported that the violent incidents were daily and sometimes lasted for months or all school year.

The daily stress created feelings of fear, and some participants reported they did not want to go to work. This is supported by research conducted by Wilson et al. (2011) that suggested that teachers that experience daily violence are more likely to miss work. The physical violence then led to a loss of instructional time, which affected the other students and the teacher. The participants expressed that the class experienced a loss of instructional time during and after violent events.

Participants reported that when a violent incident had occurred in class, it created stress, embarrassment, fatigue, and a cluttered brain. After the violent experience, many participants reported an inability to resume instructions immediately. Wilson et al. (2011) suggested teachers that experience consistent violence at work can impact the teacher's ability to effectively manage the class. Participants responded that part of the reason was their exhaustion, referral writing, and the class's reaction after a violent experience had occurred.

Participants reported that the constant violent experiences at school created fear for themselves and their students, because sometimes the violence would be directed at the teacher and the students. Wilson et al. (2011) reported that violence was a number one predictor of fear. The fear participants experienced led to emotional instability.

Anderman et al.'s (2018) research suggested that teachers' mental health, physical health, and stability can be greatly impacted when they experience violence at work.

Participants also reported how they were affected by the emotional violence they experienced. Several participants expressed how the stress from the violence they endure at school affected their emotional and psychological state of mind. The stress of violence at work caused them to experience fatigue, anxiety, and exhaustion. Most teachers reported feeling completely exhausted after a violent encounter at work. The level of exhaustion participants experienced affected their ability to function once they were home, which led to feelings of fear and a loss of sleep. Reddy's (2014) research supported these findings and suggested when teachers experience violence, their ability to function and their efficacy is negatively impacted.

***RQ4: How do K-5 public school teachers experience training at school?***

In addition, under the theme of violence, the participants expressed the needed training they had not received to stop or prevent the violence they experienced daily. All except one participant expressed that they had not received any form of training to prevent or stop violence even after they had experienced a violent event in the classroom. Participants also suggested several training sessions they felt would assist with the violence they encountered at school. Previous literature suggested that teachers could play a vital role in the prevention of violent events at school if given an opportunity, such as training (Mertoglu, 2015).

In addition, previous literature suggested teachers can benefit from adequate training designed to prevent or stop violence directed at them at school (McMahon et al.,

2017). Cunningham et al.'s (2016) research reported training and intervention were more effective when they were applied with fidelity by all parties involved. Also, Cunningham et al.'s research suggested trainings needed to be more intensive, more time needs to be allotted, and monitoring procedures should be revised to create more effectiveness with implementation of trainings and interventions. Effectiveness of interventions or training could increase teachers and administrative attitudes (Mertoglu, 2015), which was suggested to improve school climate (Berg & Cornell, 2016). Improving school climate was significantly connected to reducing violence at school in research conducted (Curry, 2018).

## **Theme 2: Injustice**

### ***RQ2: How do K-5 public school teachers experience justice at school?***

The literature review of the concept of organizational justice suggested when employees felt as though they had been mistreated, they developed a sense of injustice (Koç et al., 2016). The thematic analysis revealed that when teachers felt they had not received appropriate support, they felt a sense of injustice. When teachers had experienced violence and administration did not resolve the teacher's issues, the employee's work ethics and their loyalty to their jobs were impacted (Bowen et al., 2007). In the theme justice, participants expressed that their experiences with violence were coupled with feelings of exhaustion and fear, and that teachers had experienced a lack of support from the administration, which exasperated the violence they experienced in the classroom.

The sub themes under the theme justice were administrative support, impact on relationship with administration, and lack of district, state, and administrative policies. Participants expressed how a lack of administrative support during and after a violent event at school caused mistrust and strained relationships between teachers and administration (Cropanzano et al., 2007; Koç et al., 2016). Participants also expressed how administrations' lack of response made them feel that they did not received justice for the violence they had experienced (Chetty, 2018). Many participants responded that the lack of injustice they endured made them not want to come to work or perform at the minimum capacity (Chetty, 2018; Koç et al., 2016). Some participants expressed extreme fear when thinking about work. Participant 4 reported feeling afraid to go to work due to the daily violence she had experienced.

***RQ3: How do K-5 public school teachers experience administrative support at school?***

Under the sub theme administrative support, all the participants described their support from administration during and after a violent offense as insufficient. Participants expressed feelings of injustice, fear, and exhaustion. All participants except one were unsatisfied with the outcome of their violent experience. Some teachers responded they never received support during a violent incident or that help came well after the incident was over. Administration is essential to preventing violence against teachers (Will, 2018).

Most participants stated that the levels of exhaustion they experienced were due to a lack of support from administration. Participant 5 stated, "I am emotionally damaged from the process of being a teacher." Most of the participants responded that a lack of support and consequences for students damaged their relationship with administration.

The OJT states that stress is created when an employee perceived administration to be unfair (Koç et al., 2016). Therefore, employees that felt as though administration had been unfair began to feel a sense of injustice about their job (Bowen et al., 2007; Koç et al., 2016). Current research found that teachers rarely receive support during and after a violent event has occurred at school (Nelson, 2016; Will, 2018).

Also, under the sub-theme impact on their relationship with administration, all the participants described how the deterioration of the relationship with administration led to feelings of injustice, which led to feelings of fatigue and exhaustion. Research conducted by Berg and Cornell (2016) and McMahon et al. (2017) suggested that when teachers experienced violence at work, stress and exhaustion was created.

In addition, under the sub-theme lack of district, state, and administrative policies, all except one teacher were able to identify any district, state, or administrative policies that protected teachers relating to violence. However, policies exist, but administrators rarely use them (Reddy, 2014; Will, 2018). Participants expressed a need for systematic steps to resolve violence issues before, during, and after they occur. Also, research by Devries et al. (2017) suggested teachers rarely, if ever, receive assistance from administration for violent incidents.

### **Limitations of the Study**

The research study provided valuable information that will add to the existing body of literature on violence against teachers; however, all research has limitations. First, a limitation of the research was all except one participant worked in the same county, Duval. Second, a limitation of the research was all the teachers worked in urban

schools, which limited the participants' responses to the urban school experience of violence. Third, the small sample size of nine participants was a limitation; however, saturation was achieved in the research. A fourth potential limitation was researcher's bias. My employment background may have influenced the research's findings.

I have taught elementary school for 23 years, and I experienced violence at school. The credibility of the research was exemplified by reflexivity in recognizing that individual's backgrounds and personal experiences can influence the outcome of the analysis.

### **Recommendations**

The research focused on teachers' perception of the violence, justice, training, and administrative help they received at school. The topic violence against teachers has a shortage of research conducted on elementary students that uses the perceptions of teachers on this topic (McMahon et al., 2017; Reddy, 2014). The research filled a gap by illuminating the voices of teachers on the topic of violence against teachers, adding to the body of knowledge topic. The research acquired the perceptions of nine teachers through semi-structured 1-hour interviews and 30-minute member's check interviews.

The research criteria limited the research's participants to public school K-5 teachers that had experienced violence at school, taught 1 full year, and work in Florida. Due to the public-school criteria, private school teachers were not included in the research. Therefore, more research can be conducted on private K-5 schoolteachers' perception of violence at school to improve school climate and job satisfaction. Mertoglu (2015) and Will (2018) purported that public schools have more incidents of violence.



Also, studying private and public-school teachers together would have conceptual relevance for school climate and job satisfaction research, identifying possible significant differences in perceptions of violence at school.

Also, teachers reported perceptions of injustice when they experienced violence at school, and the administration did not assist. Additional organizational framework studies of teacher's perceptions of justice at school with a focus on interactional justice would be relevant for improving the performance of teachers, through improving the relationship between administration and teachers. Limited studies exist on elementary school teachers that utilize organizational justice (Chetty, 2018). Additionally, more research illuminating the voices of teachers and their experiences with violence at school could provide appropriate attention to the phenomenon and promote more positive school climate, which decreases violence at school (Berg & Cornell, 2016). More attention to the topic could lead to state, district, and administrative policies that address the issue, leading to better working conditions for teachers and students.

### **Implications**

#### **Positive Social Change**

The findings of this qualitative phenomenological research may create positive change for teachers, districts, and policymakers. The insights gathered from the perception of teachers, sheds light on how teachers are experiencing violence, justice, training, and administrative support at school. The study was helpful in implicating an exponential need for states, districts, and administrators to prevent or protect teachers from violence at school. The data revealed teachers could benefit from protocols if states,

districts, and administrators develop concise steps for teachers to resolve violent incidents at school.

Therefore, one implication for social change is for states, districts, and administrators to consider creating systematic steps to prevent or stop violence so that teachers can handle the violence they experience at school more effectively. There is no measurement scale for violence against teachers currently (McMahon et al., 2017; Reddy, 2014). Ablesser's (2003) concluded violence is a multi-tiered issue that cannot be resolved with a single program, teacher, or curriculum. However, appropriate violence prevention programs and implementation are a part of the resolution.

Additionally, a systematic approach could reduce or prevent the level of violence teachers experience at school; therefore, possibly reducing exhaustion, fear, fatigue, physical and emotional stress associated with violence at school (Anderman et al., 2018; Gregory et al., 2012). High levels of stress and exhaustion at school was linked to teacher burnout and teacher turnover rate (Gregory et al., 2012; Garcia Torres, 2019). Therefore, reducing the level of violence that teachers experience at school could lead to more teachers staying in the field, creating more stable school environments (Berg & Cornell, 2016).

### **Theoretical Implications**

The OJT as proposed by Koç et al. (2016) study on teacher violence at school, which claims a teacher's perception of justice affects the teacher's performance and creates stress. Organizational justice theory purports that when individuals perceive their

work environment as unfair, their relationship with the administration, work performance, and job satisfaction is negatively affected (Rupp & Cropanzano, 2002).

Previous studies on organizational justice have demonstrated that when the component interactional justice is maintained, higher-quality relationships between employer and employee occur (Bowen, 2007). These higher quality relationships can assist with creating employees with higher level of job satisfaction and positive interactional justice, because employees that have a higher levels of job satisfaction perform at higher levels of production, this is supported by Reddy's (2014) research, which suggested teachers that had experienced violence on the job had lower levels of efficacy. When interactional justice is perceived by employees as fair, the other factors of organizational justice can be maintained, which creates more effective employees. Previous studies on the components of organizational justice have mainly been conducted at the higher education level (Chetty, 2018). However, this study focused on elementary teachers that teach at public elementary schools. As well as add to the data on the topic and conversation of violence against teachers.

Thus, the implication for this research was to describe the perception of elementary teachers about violence at school through the lens of organizational justice. The participants in this study reported feelings of stress, anger, frustration, and injustice because of a lack of support from the administration; therefore, affecting their job performance. The findings of this research support finding from past (Cropanzano et al., 2007; Rupp & Cropanzano, 2002) and present (Koç et al., 2016) organizational justice research. The present research could add to existing knowledge on the theory

organizational justice that could increase safety for teacher, increase job performance and increase job satisfaction for educators in elementary schools, and reduce turnover rates.

### **Conclusion**

Teachers have experienced high volumes of violence daily and the phenomenon deserved immediate attention (Anderman et al., 2018; Reddy, 2014). McMahons et al.'s (2017) and Will's (2018) research concluded, additional research on the topic was needed. The violence teachers encountered had a lasting impact on them; and created stress, anxiety, non-functionality, fear, and sleeplessness (Hall, 2005). Also, teachers have experienced physical and emotional violence, which resulted in the loss of class time (Will, 2018). As well, the research indicated teachers are tasked with multiple types of violence such as physical, psychological, and emotional violence such as fear (Wilson et al., 2011). The violence that teachers have experienced at school is linked to teacher burnout, high turnover, and lack of job satisfaction (Garcia Torres, 2019). The analysis revealed a need for states, districts, and administration to develop step-by-step plan or policies and procedures for teachers to follow before, during, and after a violent experience.

During this study, one teacher resigned, and two others resigned at the end of the school year. All the teachers indicated they were leaving the field of education because of the lack of support from the administration and state policies. Teacher retention and school safety are negatively impacted by violence at school (Mertoglu, 2015; Will, 2018). An indication that policies and procedures are critically needed to protect teachers from violence at school. Policymakers should consider the development of a system that

supports teachers who experience violence at school because a trusted relationship between administration and teacher was crucial. Positive relationships between employer and employee were linked to teacher retention and teacher burnout.

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## Appendix A: Interview Questions

1. Can you describe a violent incident that you experienced at school?
2. How did administration respond to the violent incident you experienced?
3. Did administration's response to the violent incident affect your relationship with administration?
4. In your experience what contributes to violence against teachers?
5. Is there another violent incident that you would like to share?
6. What advance procedures are typical when a student with a history of violent behavior is placed in a teacher's classroom?
7. What are the state's policies and procedures to protect teachers from violence?
8. Were these policies applied to your experience with violence?
9. What is the district in which you work policies and procedures to protect teachers against violence?
10. What intervention programs are in place to assist teachers with violent students?
11. What type of training have you received to stop or prevent violence at school?
12. In your experience, what types of training would benefit teachers and prevent violence?

## Appendix B: Phase One of Thematic Analysis

- P3- “I can remember being at middle school. And I can say the name Kirby Smith. And I had a situation where the entire school came against me, there was a teacher who would duct tape the student inside of a closet. And they wanted me to lie and say that that didn't happen.” (p.1)
- P4- “I felt threatened coming to work. Because I didn't know if he was out. To you know, hurting me the other part up, you know, I couldn't turn my back to him because, you know, he would, whether it'd be hands on another student.” (p.3)
- P4- “I have a large bookshelf with a whole bunch of different books, and he took all he threw off all the shelves and threw the books all over the floor. And on his way to doing this, he slipped over all the chairs. Round table in the back of my classroom. So, when this happened, I of course had to remove my kids, you know, move kids away from the situation.” (p.3)
- P4- “Yes, I had another student, his name is Joseph. And he too, would have violent outbursts in class, he would throw things during the middle of my instruction. And I actually, a few times had been hit by dry erase markers, erasers, and pencils. My students would be physically harmed by him. I had to often walk with him holding my hand, separately from the classroom, because I could not keep my back turned to him, without him doing something towards somebody or him just doing something that was not appropriate behavior for that time.” (p.9)
- P5- “As I entered into the door of the meeting, in the conference room, the principal started to yell at me, without giving me an opportunity to clear the airway. And it was almost like she was asking me questions in a valid tone while the parent was on the phone.” (p.4)
- P6- “I'm sitting there talking Whoa, this girl, she's kicking me hitting me, like trying to make me let her go. But I didn't want to do that because that's going to endanger all the other students. So, you know, this was just an ongoing thing.” (p.1)
- P7- “I did have a parent threaten threatened to kill me.” (p.2)

## Appendix C: Phase Two of Thematic Analysis

- P3- "I can remember being at middle school. And I can say the name Kirby Smith. And I had a situation where the entire school came against me, there was a teacher who would duct tape the student inside of a closet. And they wanted me to lie and say that that didn't happen." (p.1)
- P4- "I felt threatened coming to work. Because I didn't know if he was out. To you know, hurting me the other part up, you know, I couldn't turn my back to him because, you know, he would, whether it'd be hands on another student." (p.3)
- P4- "I have a large bookshelf with a whole bunch of different books, and he took all he threw off all the shelves and threw the books all over the floor. And on his way to doing this, he slipped over all the chairs. Round table in the back of my classroom. So, when this happened, I of course had to remove my kids, you know, move kids away from the situation." (p.3)
- P6- "I'm sitting there talking Whoa, this girl, she's kicking me hitting me, like trying to make me let her go. But I didn't want to do that, because that's going to endanger all the other students. So, you know, this was just an ongoing thing." (p.1)
- P6- "I have this kid in here causing havoc, throwing books, pushing chairs, hitting kids hit me kicking me, and I don't have any hope. This went on for probably like, 2, 3 good months." (p.2)
- P7- "Embarrassing comments. And it wasn't just in front of me, you know, in front of the kids and sometimes in front of staff." (p.20)

## Appendix D: Phase Three of Thematic Analysis

**THEME: Violence****Code: Violence at school**

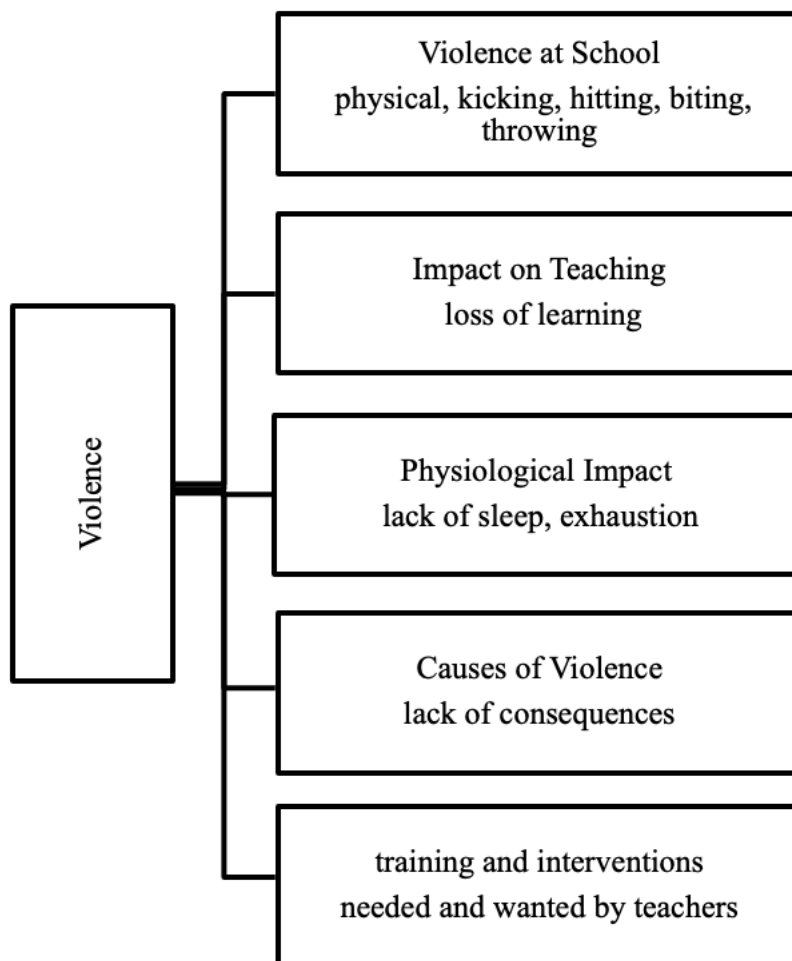
- P4- “I felt threatened coming to work. Because I didn’t know if he was out. To you know, hurting me the other part up, you know, I couldn’t turn my back to him because, you know, he would, whether it’d be hands on another student.” (p.3)
- P4- “I have a large bookshelf with a whole bunch of different books, and he took all he threw off all the shelves and threw the books all over the floor. And on his way to doing this, he slipped over all of the chairs. Round table in the back of my classroom. So, when this happened, I of course had to remove my kids, you know, move kids away from the situation.” (p.3)
- P5- “As I entered into the door of the meeting, in the conference room, the principal started to yell at me, without giving me an opportunity to clear the airway. And it was almost like she was asking me questions in a valid tone while the parent was on the phone.” (p.4)
- P6- “I’m sitting there talking Whoa, this girl, she’s kicking me hitting me, like trying to make me let her go. But I didn’t want to do that, because that’s going to endanger all the other students. So, you know, this was just an ongoing thing.” (p.1)
- P6- “I have this kid in here causing havoc, throwing books, pushing chairs, hitting kids hit me kicking me, and I don’t have any hope. This went on for probably like, 2, 3 good months.” (p.2)

## Appendix E: Phase Four of Thematic Analysis

**Theme I Violence****Code: Impact of violence at school**

- P4- “I felt threatened coming to work. Because I didn’t know if he was out. To you know, hurting me the other part up, you know, I couldn’t turn my back to him because, you know, he would, whether it’d be hands on another student.” (p.3)
- P4- “Yes, I had another student, his name is Joseph. And he too, would have violent outbursts in class, he would throw things during the middle of my instruction. And I actually, a few times had been hit by dry erase markers, erasers, and pencils. My students would be physically harmed by him. I had to often walk with him holding my hand, separately from the classroom, because I could not keep my back turned to him, without him doing something towards somebody or him just doing something that was not appropriate behavior for that time.” (p.9)
- P5- “As I entered into the door of the meeting, in the conference room, the principal started to yell at me, without giving me an opportunity to clear the airway. And it was almost like she was asking me questions in a valid tone while the parent was on the phone.” (p.4)
- P6- “I’m sitting there talking Whoa, this girl, she’s kicking me hitting me, like trying to make me let her go. But I didn’t want to do that, because that’s going to endanger all the other students. So, you know, this was just an ongoing thing.” (p.1)
- P6- “I have this kid in here causing havoc, throwing books, pushing chairs, hitting kids hit me kicking me, and I don’t have any hope. This went on for probably like, 2, 3 good months.” (p.2)

## Appendix F: Phase Four Thematic Analysis and Codes



## Appendix G: Phase Five Thematic Analysis

*(a) Physical violence*

Teachers expressed these were not isolated incidents, these are daily ongoing situations involving physical violence. Participant teachers vocalized the physical violence in which they had been subjected to at school such as,

- P4: “And he too, would have violent outbursts in class, he would throw things during the middle of my instruction. And I actually, a few times had been hit by dry erase markers, erasers, and pencils.” (p. 9)
- P5: “He began to make start beating on the desk by he was beating drums and I said, “You know, I cannot teach over your beating drums, I’ve asked you to stop beating the drum.” So, from that point, it went from there to a temper tantrum kicking and scooting down in his desk, from standing up.” (p. 16)
- P5: “Um, he proceeded to get up from the desk, kick the desk over, went to the computers that there are four computers in the computer area, turn the two of those chairs over in the process of him opening the door, pushing it up against the wall, where you will hear a really loud noise.” (p. 16)
- P7: “Like all my stuff that like, you know, you purchase stuff in a classroom, I had everything tore up and broken and all that.” (p. 13)
- P8: “She was actually backing up from the student trying to get away from the female student and a female student, you know, kept at her in at her until she got to her and started violently just attacking the teacher.” (p. 2)

## Appendix H: Phase Five Thematic Analysis and Codes

