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# Middle School Teachers and Administrators' Views Concerning the Prevention of School Violence

Carlesia Britt  
*Walden University*

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# Walden University

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has been found to be complete and satisfactory in all respects,  
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2019

Abstract

Middle School Teachers and Administrators' Views Concerning the Prevention of School

Violence

by

Carlesia Britt

Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

Criminal Justice

Walden University

August 2019

## Abstract

Over the years, school violence has gained attention due to an increase of aggressive behaviors and actions within school systems across the United States. As a result, it has prompted school districts to develop plans that address school violence efficiently to promote safe school environments. There is gap in current literature as it pertains to addressing school violence in the middle school setting. The purpose of this study was to explore the views of teachers and administrators concerning effective ways to implement proactive prevention strategies to attain better approaches to preventing school violence. This case study methodology were framed by Bronfenbrenner's ecological theory to determine the association between school violence, students, parents, teachers, administrators, and other middle school staff members. Data were collected through 8 individual, structured, participant interviews with the use of an audio recorder. The resulting data were hand coded to create themes. The results of this study indicated that the middle school administration is failing to administer adequate and proper training to address school violence for their teachers, which has become a major concern. The study findings also indicated that the collaboration of teachers and administrators presented some issues when addressing and managing school violence occurrences. The results of this study could influence positive social change by supplying modernized information concerning the preventions of school violence from the outlook of middle school teachers and administrators.

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## Dedication

Without God and his son, Jesus, I would have not been able to accomplish this major goal in my life. I dedicate this work to my support system, which consists of my wonderful husband, Aaron; my amazing children, Erin, Asiana, and Aaron Jr.; and my step-daughter, Kiara, whom I loved dearly. I always want my children to see their mom as a role model. I would like to give a special thanks to my mom, Cetonia Bailey, and mother-in-law, Lexine Britt, for their support in taking care of my babies. I made a promise to family that I would never give up even though I faced several challenges through this journey. I believed in myself and I conquered.

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## Chapter 1: Introduction to the Study

### **Introduction**

The educational system is a fragment of the society that plays a significant role in the progression of students. When acts of school violence occur, it slowly begins to tarnish the outlooks of schools obtaining a safe environment and interferes with learning. School violence may take place on campus, on a school bus, or merely a child walking from and to school. In 2014, 53 school-related deaths (i.e., 11 suicides, 41 homicides, and one intermediation death) occurred in the United States (Zhang, Musu-Gillette, & Oudekerk, 2016). Though various school acts have been passed, such as the Safe Schools Improvement Act of 2013, Gun Free Zone Act of 1990, and individual schools' disciplinary programs, many have not been useful in preventing or lessening school violence. Schools need to transition to the use of more proactive approaches to combat school violence.

The Center for Disease Control and Prevention (2009) asserted that no one element in separation originates school violence. It is necessary to generate compound prevention approaches that will address the person, associations, the public, and societal aspects that influence the probability of violence. The intent of this study was to stimulate social change by ensuring that students, parents, and families throughout the nation trust that their school is a safe, learning environment if there are effective and substantial school violence prevention protocols in place. The results of this study may prompt middle school districts and city stakeholders to revise or escalate the efficiency of current school violence prevention strategies and policies to assist with deterring middle school

violence. This chapter explored the background of this study, the research problem, and purpose, nature of the study, conceptual terms, assumptions, the scope and delimitations, limitations, and the significance of this study.

### **Background**

Violence in homes, vicinities, and communities can negatively influence the learning and conducts of adolescents while attending school (King, 2016). It is evident that specific factors can affect high school violence. Barthassat (2015) indicated that family conflicts between parents and siblings can have a negative impact on an adolescent, including divorcing of parents, favored siblings, and poor financial stability. Marwick and Boyd (2011) mentioned that adolescents often display specific behaviors through the Internet that originates drama and conflicts between others; typically, the disputes arise on a social media site and then continue on school grounds. Patchin (2016) stated that the acts of bullying can also affect adolescents in various ways that can transpire violent behaviors. The National Crime Prevention Council (2012) specified that the act of cyberbullying is the primary form of bullying displayed by adolescents between 10-19 years of age in today's society.

The Center for Disease and Control Prevention (2009) indicated that school districts need to comprise effective classroom management procedures, encourage supportive educational techniques, and offer instructors with preparation and support to meet the dissimilar necessities of students that will assist with minimizing school violence. Newbury (2010) asserted that one essential component of maintaining a thriving school environment is for teachers to sustain positive relationships with their

students that first begins with a building process. For instance, every teacher should establish a student-teacher relationship with each of their students to know their abilities and disabilities that could affect his or her learning. Widiana et al. (2016) discussed the notion of teachers employing the concept of Garner's multiple intelligences, which can improve students' way of thinking and accomplishments in learning. Teachers establishing a relationship with their students can assist with minimizing behavioral issues and set the tone for a positive classroom environment (Newbury, 2010). Wang et al. (2015) found that middle and high school student's positive relationship with their teacher can mediate their assertiveness towards bullying constructively. McIntosh, Kelm, and Canziel (2016) expressed that positive behavioral intervention and supports (PBIS) is a sufficient school-wide system that constructs a positive school environment through the facet of motivation for students and staff.

School teachers, administrators, and other school officials are primarily responsible for maintaining a safe school environment. Björk et al. (2012) proposed that parent associations with their child's school staff members can contribute to better behaviors and their child's stances regarding education and future ambitions. King (2017) emphasized that school districts need to construct media literacy training regarding school violence prevention for students, parents, and teachers. Rinaldi's (2017) case study revealed that in the United States, 60% of private school K-12 did not have an updated safety plan and no adequate training.

Being proactive is a critical aspect of minimizing school violence. Various schools in the United States have gone to necessary provisions to assist in reducing school



violence. Weiss (2007) discussed that the installation of surveilling techniques can help with quickly responding to matters related to school violence and security. Bosworth et al. (2011) argued that metal detectors are more efficient. After the Sandy Hook shooting incident, a growing number of U.S. school districts ratified more regulations requiring additional safety drills at schools (Shah, 2013). It will take the efforts of everyone to secure safe school environments. In the problem statement, I highlight the related gaps in literature regarding the preventions of middle school violence through traditional school violence methods. This case study was intended to address a gap in current research literature concerning addressing school violence as whole in a middle school setting.

### **Problem Statement**

School violence has continued to gain attention throughout the years with an increase in aggressive behaviors and actions within school systems across the United States. According to Zhang et al. (2016) in 2014, 65% of the U.S. public schools reported violent incidents that had occurred at their school, which resulted in 757,000 crimes. King (2014) emphasized that the classifications of school violence are bullying, fighting, sexual assaults, and students carrying weapons to school, gang activity, and assaults on school staff. Traditional reactive methods, such as out-of-school suspension, school detention, alternative schooling, and zero-tolerance policies, have been ongoing school disciplinary actions for years. The problem was that there is a gap in the current literature that does not address middle school violence as a whole regarding the occurrences. Influences of school violence have to be first recognized by school authorities to create prevention protocols. Goldstein (1990), the originator of the concept of *problem-oriented*

*policing*, affirmed that policing should pertain to modifying the situations that contribute to repetitive crime problems and should not merely concern responding to events as they transpire. Payne et al. (2016) supported Goldstein's notion that the origin of the problem should be first acknowledged and then addressed. In this study, I focused on middle school teachers and administrators enhancing the understanding of how proactive school violence prevention strategies and provisions can possibly affect a school's environment in a positive way when it comes to ensuring safety.

### **Purpose of the Study**

There is gap in current literature as it pertains to addressing school violence as a whole in a middle school setting. Therefore, in this qualitative case study, I explored the views of teachers and administrators concerning effective ways to implement proactive prevention strategies to attain better approaches to preventing school violence as a whole. In this study, I explained and investigated data from individual interviews of teachers and administrators at a middle school in the southeastern United States.

### **Research Questions**

I developed the following research questions to guide this study:

Research Question 1: What are current perspectives of middle school teachers and administrators regarding school violence preventions?

Research Question 2: What concepts can middle school teachers and administrators contribute that may possibly develop effective school violence prevention protocols?

### **Theoretical Framework**

The theoretical basis that was most suitable for this study was Bronfenbrenner's (1994) ecological theory. In this theory, Bronfenbrenner asserted that to comprehend human progress, an individual must study the whole ecological structure in which evolution transpires. Of Bronfenbrenner's proposed systems, the microsystem, mesosystem, and exosystem were the focuses regarding this study. The microsystem refers to the association amongst an emerging individual and the immediate environment (e.g., family, community, and the educational setting; Bronfenbrenner, 1994). The mesosystem is congruent with the microsystem. In addition, the mesosystem can also be adjacent to the microsystem encircling the various connections concerning the atmospheres of the microsystem (Bronfenbrenner, 1994). The exosystem refers to the social perspective that can impact an adolescent directly and indirectly, such as school staff insights on professional development focusing on preventing school violence (Espalage, 2014). Bronfenbrenner's ecological theory was appropriate to use as the theoretical framework because it expressed how constructive or undesirable social and physical settings can motivate youth progression, which facilitates a connection to teachers and school staff professional development regarding school violence prevention.

### **Nature of the Study**

In this study, I employed a qualitative approach. The justification of this choice was based on the methodological features that Creswell (2016) discussed, including: (a) focusing on meaning and understanding, (b) using a theoretical or conceptual lens, (c)

developing holistic accounts, and (d) the researcher being the instrument for data collection and analysis

I used the case study design to examine the perceptions of middle school teachers and administrators on the phenomenon of preventing school violence. This approach addresses the necessity for understanding types of application procedures, making decisions through the research, and organizational variations (Yin, 2009). The case study methodology typically presents a real-life situation of an activity that is usually grounded through discipline (Creswell, 2009). The research location was a middle school in the southeastern United States. This middle school population was around 950 with a combination of sixth-eighth graders. Teachers and administrators were the participants for this study. All participants had at least three or more years of employment at the middle school. All teachers were also state certified. Regarding the methodology, the data consisted of interviews and field notes. The data were coded and characterized by each circumstance. I used content analysis to evaluate the purpose, content, and the utilization of all documents.

### **Definition of Terms**

*School violence*: Forms of violent activities, such as bullying, assaults, operations of weapons, and fighting, that occur in a school setting (Center for Disease Control and Prevention, 2009)

*Proactive prevention*: Constructing or governing circumstances before something occurs rather than reacting to it once it has happens (Sugai & Homer, 2008)

*Problem-oriented strategies:* The strategies that law enforcement use to control crime. However, school officials should take the same initiative to minimize school violence with first being proactive and addressing issues rather than responding to the problems as they happen (Weisburd et al., 2010).

*Adolescent drama:* Conflicts amongst young adolescents that involve gossiping, dishonesty, and instigations that can encourage violence (Boyd, 2011)

*Ecological theory:* Everything in a child and his or her background can affect his or her life progression (Bronfenbrenner, 1994).

### **Assumptions**

My assumptions for this study were related to knowledge regarding the violent behaviors on a middle school ground, particularly regarding how teachers and administrators proactively address school violence. I assumed that students, parents, and the society as a whole mandate safe, middle school environments to promote learning. This premise was significant because the conclusions of this study can arouse a new understanding of the fact that teachers and administrators can be proactive to respond to school violence in ways to promote a safe school climate. Another assumption was that school violence can negatively affect students' lives. It was also assumed that all teachers and administrators have to participate in professional development sessions, seminars, or conferences concerning the prevention of school violence and preserve information given. This assumption was necessary because the data shared can assist with further recommendations regarding school violence prevention. Finally, I assumed that all teacher and administrator participants would answer inquiries with integrity. This premise

was essential because the perceptions of contributors should be valid and added to the trustworthiness of this study. The contributors must be committed to the integrity of the research as well.

### **Scope and Delimitations**

The scope of this case study included teachers and administrators' purpose for and involvement in relations to developing school violence prevention programs and strategies at a middle school in the southeastern United States. The middle school population was around 950 students. The targeted population of the study consisted of 61 teachers and four administrators.

The delimitations of this study additionally narrowed the scope of this scholarship regarding the contributors and time. Data were gathered only between September 2018 and November 2018. As the individual responsible for accumulating all data and performing data analysis procedures, I spent excessive time managing this study.

### **Limitations**

One limitation of this study consisted of some participants not wanting to contribute due to lack of experience involving school violence or having insufficient years teaching at the middle school. This occurrence limited the likelihood of generalization. Another limitation was that the participants may have felt uncomfortable with the unveiling the presence of violence at their school. The next limitation was the correlation to the sample. The sample of this study included a combination of middle school teachers and administrators. The inclusion of school guidance counselors could

have heightened the robustness to the data because the conclusions would have not been solely focused on the perspectives of middle school teachers and administrators.

### **Significance**

The current literature that relates to addressing school violence occurrences in a middle school is inadequate. This study was vital because middle school teachers and administrators gave their first-hand knowledge of how they addressed school violence that could be beneficial to other middle schools' personnel. The results of this study showed that the middle school administration has failed to administer adequate and proper training to address school violence for their teachers. Therefore, the collaboration and relationships between teachers and administrators presented some concerns pertaining to addressing or managing school violence incidents. The current perceptions of middle school teachers and administrators exposed a variety of concerns with the managing of violence within the school. Addressing these concerns may lead to improving the relationships between teachers and administrators, creating effective prevention curriculums for state school districts, and prompting middle school districts and city stakeholders to revise or escalate the efficiency of current school violence prevention strategies and policies to assist with deterring middle school violence.

### **Summary**

In Chapter 1, I presented a synopsis of the background and problem statement, a summary of the purpose of the study, the research inquiries, the research significance, an introduction of the conceptual frameworks that guided the study, and definitions of conceptual terms used throughout this study.

## Chapter 2: Literature Review

### **Introduction**

There is a gap in current literature as it pertains to addressing school violence as a whole in a middle school setting. Therefore, a qualitative case study was utilized to explore the views of teachers and administrators concerning effective ways to implement proactive prevention strategies to attain better approaches to preventing school violence as a whole. To initiate the literature review analysis for this section, I carried out an evaluation of research strategies to find articles for future reference. In this literature analysis, the purpose of the conceptual framework and formative research on the effects of school violence and existing classroom and school prevention strategies are discussed. This evaluation was conducted to arrive at a better understanding of the physical, mental, emotional, and environmental influences of students that commit acts of school violence. Next, a discussion of school and classroom prevention tactics provides insights on how teachers and administrators utilize these strategies in a school or classroom setting. Finally, my review of the problem-oriented policing paradigm provides covers how schools system can positively benefit from employing this concept.

### **Literature Search Strategy**

The purpose of this review of the literature was to examine current research on the facets of middle school violence. I used numerous online databases and books to conduct the literature analysis. The databases consisted of Walden University Library, Google Scholar, ERIC, and ProQuest. In the literature review, I also targeted articles published within the last 5 years. The keyword search terms used were: *school violence*, *prevention*,



*proactive, delinquent behaviors, peer pressure, classroom management, policies, and strategies.* I located around 80 journal articles and 25 books and included 35 journal articles and 15 books for literature review. The lingering literature such as concepts or theories in criminology, social psychology, and ecology were found however, did not support the research focus.

### **Theoretical Framework**

School violence prevention entails an understanding of the aspects that stimulate violent acts on school grounds. Bronfenbrenner's (1994) ecological theory asserted that to comprehend human progress, an individual must study the whole ecological structure in which evolution transpires. In ecological structures, the conclusion of every single progression is the creation of another (Martin et al, 2016). Of the five systems in Bronfenbrenner's theory, the microsystem, mesosystem, and exosystem were the focuses in this study.

#### **Microsystem**

The microsystem system involves adolescent associations, social interfaces, and immediate ambiances (Kohl, 2014). An illustration of this system would be the connection amongst an adolescent and his or her mother, father, or guardian; siblings; or school setting because these facets play a significant role in an adolescent's life. If the relationships are not positive during this progression stage of the ecological system than the adolescent's attitude and behaviors are substantially impacted (Espelage, 2014). Some occurrences can result in young adolescents who lack coping with stress skills, have insufficient family support, and blame others for their stress, leaving them more

vulnerable to exhibiting negative behaviors (Substance Abuse Mental Health Services and Administration, 2014). The breakdown of understanding the configurations within the microsystem will or can eventually reveal the causes of middle school violence so that teachers and administrators can develop effective proactive methods based on the information to reduce middle school violence.

### **Mesosystem**

The mesosystem is contiguous to the microsystem and comprises the unique collaborations between the various aspects of the microsystem (Bronfenbrenner, 1994). For instance, the rapport between the adolescent household and their middle school instructors, administrators, or other staff. Multiple interactions that can be considered as a fragment of the mesosystem must encompass a direct collaboration amongst two characteristics of the microsystem that stimulate the progress of that individual (Madeline, 2015). The mesosystem stage involves adolescents engaging socially with aspects of the microsystem (Bronfenbrenner, 1994). Espelage (2014) emphasized that the mesosystem can be understood as a prospect to form a bridge between diverse settings in that way providing dependability and familiarity in a student's life. For example, teachers developing a supportive relationship with their students, students obtaining positive connections with peers, or successful parent or guardian interactions at school.

### **Exosystem**

The exosystem consists of an environment that does not involve the individual and is external to his or her knowledge but can affect the individual in any way (Bronfenbrenner, 1994). For instance, if an adolescent's neighborhood has a massive

increase in gang activity, that can possibly have an adverse effect on the adolescent's social interactions outside of the home; however, if the parents reside in another area, this may have a positive effect on the adolescent because parents will be able to give their child a sense of safety and security. Similar to the education setting, parents want to feel that same sense of safekeeping for their child. Teachers and administrators are responsible for this action in schools. Teachers and administrators should continue to attend updated professional development seminars, sessions, or conferences regarding the prevention of school violence as a whole.

Understanding the constructions of the ecology theory can assist school system in various ways. First, the physical and environmental setting of the middle school can help with enabling positive relationships amongst students and school staff. Next, students will have the opportunity to explore and adopt instructions on how to deal with manifestations of school violence. For example, a school can offer various lessons, modeling skits, and awareness programs. Teachers and school administrators can also use the theory to develop proactive prevention strategies based on individual circumstances. Most importantly, teachers and administrators can observe students understanding of how to handle various interactions of school violence, hoping to obtain effective results.

### **Literature Review Related to Key Variables and/or Concepts**

#### **The History of School Violence**

School violence is not an innovative notion. It has been occurring since the originations of establishing educational facilities for children to adapt to a different setting for learning. Furlong and Rebelez (2014) defined school violence as a malicious

act that occurs in a school setting that can result in physical harm or death. Events such as the Columbine school shooting in 1999, Virginia Tech shooting in 2007, the Sandy Hook Elementary school massacre in 2012, and others occurring in various school locations around the United States have caused distress amongst the society (Kellner, 2015). There are some apparent motives and roots for school violence. In addition, some elements can intensify why a student is possible to commit a sort of school misconduct. King (2016) indicated that violence in homes, vicinities, and communities negatively influence the learning and conducts of adolescents while attending school.

### **Family Influences**

Barthassat (2015) found that family conflict affects adolescents and children and is the reason why some are more likely to cultivate greater risk behaviors than others. Family conflicts include divorces, neglect from parents, financial issues, and sibling confrontations. Barthassat identified theories, such as the cognitive-contextual framework, the emotional security hypothesis, and the assumptions of destructive behavior, that infer why adolescents and children display annoying behaviors when influenced by family skirmishes.

Grych and Fincham's (1990) cognitive-contextual framework attempted to explicate the connection between the family conflicts and their child's behavior, stating that the youth can be influenced by what they observe. For example, if a teenager always hears his parents arguing and observes them sleeping in separate rooms, the teenager can speculate that something is wrong. That adolescent's behavior may negatively change because he or she does not know how to cope with the situation. They can begin to suffer

academically in school; start to hang out with the wrong crowd of people; and engage in alcohol, drugs, crimes, and sexual activities.

Davies and Cummings's (1994) emotional security theory examined a child's intuition of their relationship with their parent. Children gain an emotional bond with parents, and family conflicts, such as a divorce, can break the bond between their children (Barthassat, 2014). Children go through various emotional stages, demonstrating emotions, such as sadness, depression, or even acting nonchalant concerning the situation (Davies and Cummings, 1994). Reliant on what ways that household skirmishes impact the emotional safekeeping of the adolescent, they may tend to display destructive behaviors towards their parents and others (Barthassat, 2015). Children's harmful behavior includes conduct such as verbal hostility towards the parents, other adults, or even objects; resentment; and patterns of viciousness that threaten the honor of the family (Wang et al., 2012). Barthassat (2015) concluded that battles between fathers and mothers are a common occurrence that can significantly impact children and adolescents in numerous ways.

### **Social Media Influences**

Patton et al. (2014) claimed that youth violence, such as bullying, teenage drama, gang vehemence, and suicide, are gradually moving through social media sites, like Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, and other well-known sites. Marwick and Boyd (2011) specified that adolescents often display specific behaviors through the Internet that originates drama and conflicts between others. They explored relevant items that use terms associated with violence and various social network sites. Patton et al. (2014)

assessed 105 articles during their primary search and only chose 56 to include in their analysis. Through the construction of a table, the Patton et al. (2014) described the peer-reviewed articles and research methods to examine how social media has been linked to the various types of violence. With the use of a survey, Patton et al. (2014) revealed that most of the information contained aspects of violence, such as sexual assaults, school shootings, and domestic violence. The authors also exposed that articles discussing youth suicide were less significant. The authors also concluded that there is insufficient data regarding the processes in which social media sites can be utilized not only to enact but also to overt hostility and aggression.

### **What is Bullying?**

Bullying can be considered one of the most common but undiscovered action that happens in a school setting. Nickerson et al. (2014) defined bullying as recurring violent behaviors projected to cause bodily or emotional harm to an individual who cannot tolerably defend his or herself as an outcome of a power variance. Patchin (2016) affirmed that bullying is a deliberate action that intends to intimidate an individual. In many circumstances, bullying is the predecessor that leads to fighting in educational facilities, which is the most common form of school violence (Bekiari, Pachi, & Hasanages, 2017). In a meta-analysis of 80 studies in the United States, Modecki, Minchin, Harbaugh, Guerra, and Runions (2014) concluded that bullying association proportions (for those who are being bullied and those who are bullying others) for 12–18 year-old students had a mean dominance rate of 35% for customary bullying participation and 15% for cyberbullying participation.

Bullying can be classified into three forms: physical, verbal, and cyberbullying. Wang et al. (2012) indicated that male adolescents are more likely to be all types of bullies than female adolescents. Traditional forms of bullying would be physical and verbal, while the modern form of bullying is cyberbullying. Physical bullying involves aggressors hitting, pushing, spitting, or thrusting an individual to intentionally cause harm (Bell & Willis, 2016). The bully tends to antagonize the victim face-to-face (Wang et al., 2012). Students that are victims of physical bullying may show symptoms of bruising, scratches, or other indications. Students that are victims of physical bullying may demonstrate signs of exclusion, depression, changes in behavior, and possibly take a weapon to school (Waseem & Nickerson, 2017).

Verbal bullying can be just as malicious as well because students can intimidate and bully other students with words. Wang et al. (2012) emphasized that girls engage in verbal bullying more often than boys. Verbal bullying can involve spreading rumors and telling lies about the victim to try to ruin their reputation (Wang et al., 2015). Victims of verbal bullying at school may tend to have a negative attendance record because the student may be too embarrassed to come to school due to the accusations (Wang et al. 2012).

Almost half of adolescents in the United States have been affected by the act of cyberbullying (National Crime Prevention Council, 2012). It is also said to be one of the most consistent approaches to bullying in today's society in adolescents. Cyberbullying can be well-defined as harassing and threatening another individual through the means of cellphones and the Internet (Wang et al., 2012). Cyberbullying can be conveyed in

various ways. For example, a student bullying can post a wrong message on another student's personal Facebook page. Posting that message on that individual's Facebook page may allow for everyone to see the damaging message. Then, that person comes to school, and everyone is staring or laughing because of the message on Facebook. One major problem with cyberbullying is sometimes it is hard to detect the person that is bullying. People can make fake web pages and change their voice while on the phone.

### **Factors that Motivates Bullying**

Understanding what stimulates a school bully's behavior may assist school staff more effectively. There are various influences that motivate school bullying. Adolescents and children present certain behaviors to satisfy their needs, whether it is to be powerful, or the inability to deal with stress. People who bully is likely to enjoy the sensation of controlling or powering others. Bullies never want others to see the sensitive side of them therefore, they desire to be seen as the person in charge. Kentel and McHugh (2015) discussed that bullying is associated with school sports. For example, athletics can bully others to get rid of competition. Bullies may also encounter stressful situations that can be hard to manage therefore as result they lash out. Stubbs-Richardson (2018) study revealed that girls are likely to become bullies rather than boys because they have a hard time dealing with stress or other pressures. Some stressors can possibly be conflicts with family members, school failures, problems with personal relationships with others. Some research expresses that adolescents do not really know how to respond to undesirable stressors and utilize victimizing others as a coping mechanism (Nielson et al., 2015).



## **Current Research on Bullying**

The southeastern United States encompasses anti-bullying laws and policies. For example, in 1999, the Georgia General Assembly ratified bullying legislation to require all school districts (K-12 grades) to adopt policies of prohibiting bullying in the student codes of conduct (Georgia Department of Education, 2015). In 2001, the Georgia General Assembly expanded school bullying policies by focusing more on parent notifications and various consequences if students commit bullying acts. In regards to consequences of committing school bullying offenses, the current law interprets that students can be suspended, go through a tribal process (decide on the severity of the case) or then be expelled from school (Georgia Department of Education, 2015). It depends on the severity of the offense in which the student may be placed under arrest. According to the U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics, School Crime Supplement (SCS - Version 1) to the National Crime Victimization Survey (2016) reported in 2015, 20% of high school students experienced bullying and 30% actually admits to bullying others. In addition to reporting bullying incidents, every state has its own approach to gathering data that can be beneficial to school districts concerning bullying.

Improving school climate is one of Georgia's main goals for all school districts. School climate discusses the value and atmosphere of school environments. In order to investigate and measure a school environment, a school climate survey instrument known as the Georgia Student Health Survey 2.0 is administered annually statewide to all middle and high school (Georgia Department of Education, 2017). The survey is computer-based. Seventy-five percent of each grade level at the particular school must participate in

order to receive a School Climate Star Rating. This survey help recognizes safety and health matters that have an undesirable effect on student attainment and school climate. The GSHS 2.0 survey consists of question in relations topics such as the school safety and security, gangs, harassment, alcohol and drug use, bullying, suicide, and other school related topics. All student assessment data is anonymous. In the 2016-2017, Georgia Student Health Survey 2.0 indicated that 27% of high school students ranging from ninth-twelfth grade have been bullied or threatened more than once within a month by other students; 13% have been physically bullied more than once within a month by other students; and 29% have been bullied verbally more than once within a month by other students (Georgia Department of Education, 2015). Once all results are in, school administrators compare and contrast data from their school to other school in various districts across the state. The conclusions of the GSHS 2.0 are accessible online on the Georgia Department of Education website.

### **The Role of a Middle School Teacher**

A teacher often plays many roles in an educational setting. Arends (2014) stated that the main focus of a classroom teacher is to plan and formulate curriculums to accomplish specific student results. In contrast, Monturo and Lewis (2017) argued that classroom management is an important factor for teachers to obtain in order to promote an effective learning environment. Professional development is an important aspect regarding the progression of an educator. Current and continuing professional development allows teachers to receive up-to-date training and information in relations to curriculums, technology, resources, and prevention measures (Yurtseven & Altun, 2017).

The success of preventing violence in a classroom setting entails for teachers to gain a positive relationships with their students, parents and other staff members, maintain line-sight supervision, and encourage students to discuss conflicts or matters with someone (counselor, administrator, or parent). Teachers who are devoted to students, conscious of the issue of school violence in a schools, and skillful in ways of preventing and reducing vehemence behaviors can have an influential effect on the lives of students.

### **The Role of a Middle School Administrator**

Middle school administrators assist with the operation of the school and handling any disciplinary actions. The ideal achievements for a middle school administrator is to be certain that the school climate is positive and the school environment is safe. When students commit school offenses such as fighting, skipping class, class disruptions or other offenses, administrators are in charge of administering consequences. Bayler et al. (2017) indicated that school administrators are also involve with making decisions, budgeting, and implementing educational frameworks. Yurtseven and Altun (2017) asserted that school administrators are solely responsible for working closely with the teachers. Middle school administrators instruct professional development sessions. They train teachers to be aware of various warning signs, implement strategies to deal with student behaviors, and encourage teachers to have class discussions regarding school violence preventions.

### **School Staff Views Concerning School Violence**

School staff should have good motives to concern themselves with school violence. The anxiety of school violence can disrupt a learning environment in various

ways. One significant aspect of dealing with school violence prevention is to actually investigate individuals who have experienced it in order to address it. The individuals who are closely correlated with incidents of school violence would be school staff members such as teacher and administrators. Bellflower (2010) study indicated that teachers feels as though a student's unstable home environment cause them to present bad or unusual behaviors in school. Stressors such as abuse, neglect, and disconnection can be major indications of why student behave in negative ways. For example, if a student is getting emotionally abused at home, when the teachers speaks in a high or aggressive tone, the student may become offensive or even shut down. Teachers can sometimes identify the way a student's day will go based on their first impression in the morning. It is important for teachers to gain positive relationship with their students to be able to identify unusual behaviors.

Anderson (2016) study revealed that most teachers feel that all school districts should train consistently regarding school violence prevention even if their school has minimum school violence occurrences. It is understood that various school around the United States have very little school violence incidents than others. However, what is the real important factor? The important factor is being able to provide safety to all students regardless of the current climate of their school. The behaviors of school violence are changing, therefore teachers need current and continuous preparations on how to deal with various situations. The American Psychological Association (2015) concurred that teachers also need to understand current research on school violence such hate, racism, sex orientation, socioeconomic status. Ongoing teacher training should be scenario-based

which can assist with deterring school violence. Yurtseven and Altun (2017) confirmed that school administrators are in charge of providing training to teachers.

Chestnut (2016) pointed out most teachers believe that school resource officers help to reduce school violence. Their presence can deter many students from committing school violence acts. School resource officers can handle situations that school administration cannot. However, Wilson (2015) argued that many educators believe that the presence of school officers on campus, opens of the “school to prison pipeline.” American Civil Liberties Union (2015) discussed that this notion is consist of funneling students out of the school systems into the juvenile justice system depending on the severity of the offense. For example, students are being criminalized by the school resource officers regarding minor violations that school administrators can handle, but they choose not to. Chrusiel (2015) study revealed that having armed police officers and teachers present in school is an effective tactic. School shooting incidences like the Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, Florida in February 2018, killing 17 people and injuring many have guaranteed the necessity for armed school police officers. Weisburd et al. (2010) emphasized that the strategy of problem-oriented policing in schools can assist with diminishing manifestations of school violence. The problem oriented policing concept will be discussed later in this literature review.

### **Professional Development Concerning School Violence Prevention**

Professional development is important for teachers in various aspects. Professional involves teachers continuing to fortify their practice during the course of their teaching career. Educators can receive professional development training by

attending seminars, workshops, or conferences hosted by school administrators. Various training consists of support, classroom management, curriculum, testing, safety and security. Some professional development training is mandatory and others are optional (National Education Association, 2015). In certain school districts across the United States, teachers must obtain a certain amount of professional development hours per year or other intervals.

The American Psychological Association (2018) asserted that it is vital for teachers to receive the proper resources to address violent behaviors. Utilizing a progressive approach, violence deterrence and mediation tactics should be instilled throughout professional development training programs for all grade level teachers. The American Psychological Association (2015) emphasized that school districts should focus on training teachers regarding school violence prevention programs such as classroom management strategies, student behavioral development, student-teacher relationships development, and exploring the ecological theory. Professional development training for teachers should involve recognizing or identifying of various behaviors, for example, past behaviors or deviant students. It should also involve scenario-based training for individual classrooms for example, active shooting, fighting, or other serious occurrences. It is imperative that school districts have effective safety plans and that every staff member is aware of all implementations.

### **School Violence Prevention Approaches**

To promote a peaceful school setting, school districts should create, adopt and implement effective violence prevention policies, programs and strategies. For example,

in 1983, the DARE Program was introduced to schools across the nation teaching students to obtain excellent decision-making skills, empowering them to respect others, and installing the necessary components to living a healthy life, free from substance drugs, alcohol, displaying delinquent behaviors, and violence. Birkeland, Graham, and Weiss (2005) study expressed that the D.A.R.E program is beneficial in various aspects fostering student achievement. There are multiple school violence prevention programs and strategies around the United States that endorses the same cause. One significant exploitation is discovering how successful and productive the program is the ways they execute their task. Because the society and times are different, there are substantial themes that are necessary to be addressed to promote the decrease of school violence.

The safety of students and staff is a critical aspect of promoting educational success. The feature of adequate school surveillance can consist of school staff and student observations and surveillance cameras. Ensuring safety involves everyone reporting any illegal action or misconduct. Nemorin (2017) indicated that the intent of surveillance cameras in the entity of the school is to observe and detect what one cannot physically be there to see. However, Nance (2014) argued that school surveillance cameras can violate student and staff privacy. Various school across the nations have acquired metal detectors regarding security measures as well. Bosworth et al. (2011) study concluded that metal detectors system is more efficient than any other security measure. School administrators cannot always provide adequate security and handle violent or criminal altercations with students on campus. Therefore, school resource officers or school police have been designated in schools to assist with various issues.

Johnson (1999) study revealed that the employment of school resource officers does have a positive outcome on school violence and disciplinary violations. It takes a great amount of effort coming from all areas of the community to aid in deterring school violence.

Though it is mostly the responsibility of administrators and school staff to ensure the safety of the students, it is also necessary for students to take initiatives in decreasing school violence as well.

### **Classroom Violence Prevention Approaches**

Teachers are the forefront of school districts and play a significant role in promoting a student's academic achievement. However, it can be quite difficult for teachers to instruct students due to the interruptions of school violence. Rulloda (2011) article explained that to be proactive and prevent the origination of school violence, educators have to develop effective teaching strategies. Furthermore, the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (2009) inferred that school districts need to comprise operative classroom management procedures, encourage supportive educational techniques, and offer instructors with preparation and support to meet the dissimilar necessities of students that will assist with minimizing school violence. The approaches include classroom management, instructional lessons, and gaining personal and positive relationships with students. Rulloda (2011) agreed with teachers obtaining useful classroom management skills they provide a safe learning environment, minimize disruptive behaviors, and enhance learning. Newbury (2010) asserted that one essential component of maintaining a favorable school environment is for teachers to sustain positive relationships with their students in which first begins with a building process. It



is imperative for teachers to get to know his or her students and understand their approaches to learning. Also, classroom management skills are those skills that teachers should have to maintain order in their classroom. For example, students can get a first impression of a teacher based on their conducts on the first week of school. If the teacher is well organized and stern than most likely, he or she will be consistent and would not have many behaviors distractions that they cannot subdue. Rudolla (2011) also implied that teachers should create instructional lessons that target the prevention of school violence. The readings should focus conflict resolutions. Classroom instructions about conflict resolutions can concentrate on students being able to resolve issues among others, understand diversity, learn how to communicate with others, and learn how to cope with their matters.

Students look at educators as role models. It is essential for them to provide students with the essentials to be successful. Constructive interactions between learners and their peers, instructors, coaches, mentors, and relatives can be dangerous effects in stimulating youth's welfare and avoiding school violence (Center for Disease Control and Prevention, 2009). The vital key to adolescents and children gaining many relationships with other is to ensure trust. Rodolla (2011) accentuated that teachers have to get a personal relationship with their students. He also discusses the various strategies that teachers can utilize to get to know their students, their capabilities, and disabilities. The procedures may include student portfolios and journaling. Student portfolios are tools for students to reflect on their education and personal growth. Journaling is comparable to partaking a discussion with someone, exceedingly receptive and insightful individuals

through the means of the manuscript (Davis, 2008). Throughout the school year, teachers can read each student's journal or portfolio to see how well the student is progressing in class.

### **Combating Forms of Bullying**

It is a vital necessity for various high schools to find effective approaches to diminishing the problems of bullying. These efforts not only have to come from teachers, administrators, and other school staff but also, students. First, there must be a clear meaning and understanding of bullying. Bullying and teasing are two different actions. Mahoney (2012) specified that bullying is an act to intentionally physically, mentally, and emotionally harm someone in various ways in the attempt to gain power. Individuals can display the act of bullying directly (hitting, punching or in someone face) or indirectly (through the Internet or over the phone). In contrast, the act of *teasing* is to irritate someone with tenacious distractions or other aggravations. However, the actions of bullying would be a far most dangerous offense in schools (Bell & Willis, 2016).

Second, it is essential for students, teachers, and administrators to look for signs of the bullying and the bully, himself. Cornell et al. (2013) research study conclusions delivered new data that the occurrence of peer victimization in high school is a significant aspect of high school academic achievement. Newbury (2010) conferred that obtaining that effective teacher-student relationship can also be an assistance in regards to teachers recognizing signs of bullying. Teachers have to be proactive in hearing student conversations and observing various behaviors in which the teacher can immediately stop some situations from happening. It is imperative for teachers, administrators, and school

staff to have a line sight of supervising during the changing of classes, lunch breaks, and during Physical education of aware of the indications of bullying.

Lastly, enforcing school rules regarding bullying and recompensing good behavior can assist with minimizing the aspects of bullying. Middle school students should know what behavior is expected. However, some students blatantly disobey school rules. School enforcers can school administer regulations in several ways. For instance, teachers can implement the provisions of bullying in class, signs or posters with rules regarding bullying can be displayed around the school, and schools can host assemblies concerning the prevention of bullying. School systems should implement proactive approaches for outlining, instructing, and supporting different student conducts to construct real school settings. Therefore, a rewarding system like PBIS is a useful program that helps to diminish behavioral issue (McIntosh et al., 2016). Students can be rewarded for good behaviors through the means of incentives like extra credit, field trips, rewards ceremonies or monetary motivations.

### **Utilizing Problem-Oriented Policing Approaches**

The notion of the concept problem-oriented policing established by Herbert Goldstein was that police department first comprehensively identify and examine specific crime and issues within the community before emerging adequate response approaches. The National Criminal Justice Association (2016) explicated the steps of the Scan, Analysis, Respond, Assess model to discover and solve societal crimes and issues:

1. Scan- recognize and define the issue within various communities

2. Analysis- evaluating the individuals involved, determining the causes, and describing the situations
3. Responding- reacting adequately, collaborating with other agencies to assist with solving issues, and obtaining a practical action plan
4. Assessing outcomes- handling and testing the resolutions

The school needs to take the initiative of adopting policing oriented strategies.

Weisburd et al. (2010) suggested that school resources officers need to utilize problem-oriented policing strategies to assist with lessening high school vehemence. The problem-oriented approach would require school districts and city authorities to be proactive in pinpointing essential concerns with adolescent's behaviors in and out of school which can be a significant direction to abolish school violence.

### **Summary and Conclusion**

This first segment of this literature review has analyzed the internal and external causative influences of school violence in a way that can negatively impact middle school adolescents. Family conflicts, Internet social media sites, and bullying are considered transgressions that can stimulate students to react in a vehemence way. The second segment discusses prevention measures that have been adopted by other school districts to assist with minimizing middle school violence. It is imperative for school districts to have school-based preventions strategies (student pat-downs, school resource officer, surveillance), the teacher to have classroom-based prevention strategies (effective student-teacher relationship, violence prevention lessons, and activities, student journaling) and as an entirety focus on contesting bullying. Nadar (2012) affirmed that a

positive school environment can be a significant aspect of school violence prevention. The last segment discusses the concept of problem-oriented policing. This idea explains that school systems should be proactive in combating school violence rather than reactive. Instead of concentrating on the emphasis of administering harsh consequences for the student that engages in school violence, there should be more emphasis on measures prevention the student to get to the point of committing school violence. It is essential for everyone to be involved in the progressions of middle school violence prevention to promote an effective and safe high school environment. In Chapter 3, there will be a comprehensive description of the processes regarding the research method in this research scholarship.

## Chapter 3: Research Method

### **Introduction**

There is a gap in current literature as it pertains to addressing school violence as a whole in a middle school setting; therefore, this qualitative case study explored the views of teachers and administrators concerning effective ways to implement proactive prevention strategies to attain better approaches to preventing school violence. This study gathered data from individual interviews with teachers and administrators at a middle school in the southeastern United States. Chapter 3 contains a summarization of the research method and design used to understand the participants' experiences. This chapter provided the demographics of the participants and the recruitment and sampling processes used in the study. The ethical safeguard of the participants and research, methods for accumulating data and data investigation, and authentication of the findings are also discussed.

### **Research Design and Rationale**

This section presented the research questions for this qualitative case study and discussed the case study design rationale. The intent of this qualitative study was to provide an understanding of the perceptions of teachers and administrators regarding the prevention of middle school violence. O'Sullivan, Rassel, and Berner (2008) indicated that qualitative research is employed to achieve knowledge of essential explanations, views, and drives. In this study, the qualitative method comprised the evaluation of middle school authorities' influences through the analytical lens of the ecological theory.

## **Research Questions**

The following research questions guided this study:

Research Question 1: What are current perspectives of middle school teachers and administrators regarding school violence preventions?

Research Question 2: What concepts can middle school teachers and administrators contribute that may possibly develop effective school violence prevention protocols?

## **Case Study Research Design Rationale**

A case study design consists of the researcher exploring the activities or processes of numerous individuals (Patton, 2015). This design was suitable for exploring the perceptions of teachers and administrators on the multifaceted aspects pertaining to school violence prevention in a middle school setting. A case study methodology is enhanced by various methods of data collection to support the trustworthiness of the study findings (Yin, 2009). I used individual, audio-recorded, structured interviews; an interview guide; and field notes as data collection techniques. Conclusions from this study should assist with increasing the comprehension of the perceptions of teachers and administrators regarding the prevention of middle school violence and may be used to determine approaches and philosophies that can diminish school violence.

## **Role of a Researcher**

It is essential that a researcher commits to a critically instinctive method that helps inspect the influences of his or her rational views about the world, the precise context(s) of their investigation, and the potential of his or her scholarship (Ravith &

Carl, 2016, p. 40). This process involves developing a conceptual framework that provides structure and influences the researcher's way of thinking (Creswell, 2009).

While engaging in research, it was crucial for me to maintain the expectations of writing in a scholarly manner. Understanding the dynamics of a research methodological process and its stages were also essential.

The data collection process was one of the most significant facets of this research study. Interviewing participants, coding data, and documenting findings were the components of this data process. Many studies are pioneer through the qualitative methods of interviewing because they can provide in-depth, individualized, and contextual data (Ravith & Carl, 2016, p. 146). For example, this dissertation was focused on exploring teacher and administrator perceptions of preventing high school violence; therefore, I interviewed teachers and administrators to document their experiences regarding this phenomenon. As the interviewer, I had to be mindful of ethical considerations. For example, persevering confidentiality is essential when dealing with the participants of a study; this is accomplished by making sure that all critical applications relating to participant privacy are followed and never using inappropriate language, misleading the participants, causing subjects to be stressed, or coercing the participants (Turcotte & Sween, 2018). Therefore, I had each participant complete a comprehensive consent form before participating in this study.

### **Methodology**

The intent of case study research is to explore and describe a certain phenomenon that consists of asking questions, like *what*, *when*, *where*, and *how* (Creswell, 2009). This



study explored the traditional approaches of deterring school violence, the experiences of past teachers and administrators, current school violence prevention strategies and provisions, and other school violence prevention professional development. When a researcher seeks to understand how people collaborate within certain type of environments, make certain decisions, and understand the development of processes, a case study is a suitable research method to employ (Yin, 2009).

### **Participant Selection**

The site for this study was a middle school in the southeastern United States. The middle school population was around 950 sixth–eighth grade students. The targeted population of the study consisted of 61 teachers and four administrators. I sent out a mass e-mail containing a participant letter with the attachment of a consent form to the entire target population. Their response to the e-mail consent form was a significant aspect in determining the sample size for this research. I set the sample size for this study as up to 10 participants. Sauders et al. (2017) indicated that a small sample size aims to achieve saturation when it comes to ensuring that the quality and efficiency of the data supports a research study.

Stratified random sampling was the most appropriate sampling method for this research. Stratified random sampling entails splitting the entire population into subgroups in which the overall sample consists of participants from each group, then randomly choosing participants from each subgroup (Patton, 2015). The subgroups for this study contained titles such as teachers and administrators. This form of sampling was most

suitable for this study because it guaranteed that every participant from each subgroup were signified in the sample and provided better precision.

### **Instrumentation**

The instrumentation used in this research study comprised individual, structured interviews with the use of an audio recorder to obtain an understanding of and investigate potential proactive school violence prevention methods as well as converse with participants about his or her experiences. Jacob and Furgerson (2012) explained that a person must provide an effective interviewing protocol. An interview *modus operandi* encompasses the practical level of questioning and comprises a script of components the interviewer will say before and after the interview (Kallio, 2016). The elements of this questionnaire script consist of the interviewer introducing his or herself, sharing some detailed information regarding the study, and explaining all consent notions (Kallio, 2016). I derived the modified interview guide (see Appendix B) for this research from Bellflower's (2010) study, "Examining the Perceptions of School Violence through the Views of Middle School Students, Parents, Teachers and Community Members." Dr. Bellflower gave me permission (see Appendix A) to use material from that study in this research. In the interviews, participants were asked 14 open-ended questions. The following questions associated with Research Question 1 of this study are: 1, 2, 6, and 7,9,10,12,13,14. The following questions associated with Research Question 2 of this study are: 3, 4, and 5,8,11.

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

After obtaining the proper approval and consent from the county school district superintendent and middle school principal, I began to conduct my study. I began recruiting research participants in October 2018. In the second week of October, I contacted the school principal to send out the participant invitation letter along with the consent form through the school staff e-mail system. The school staff e-mail system contains all staff members employed at the school. The principal indicated that my research would be discussed in the next school staff meeting, which was the following week. In Week 4, the principal contacted me stating that the research documentation that was on the e-mail had been forwarded out to teachers and administrators that were selected.

On the second week of November 2018, I received two e-mail responses from potential participants indicating that they would love to participate. For 2 weeks, no one else responded to the e-mail. I reached out to the principal to see if the e-mail regarding participation in the study could be sent out again, and the principal agreed. Between the last week of November 2018 and the first week of December 2018, three participants responded indicating that they would like to participate in the study.

I was not obtaining the participation that I needed for the study; therefore, I decided to change the recruitment procedure by including that a gift certificate would be given to those being interviewed. A change in research form was sent to Walden University's Institutional Review Board for approval. The modification regarding the recruitment was approved by the IRB. I made the necessary changes to the participant

consent form. A week later more potential participants reached out. The recruitment was completed in January 2019 with the following sampling procedure.

I recruited eight participants that consisted of a subgroup of six teachers and a subgroup of two administrators. I identified the participants in subgroups (e.g., Teacher 1, 2, 3 or Administrator 1, 2, 3). I met with each participant on various days before the interview to go over the participant invitation letter, pick up the signed consent forms, and answer any questions they had regarding the research study. I informed the participants about their confidentiality regarding the interviews and that the interview would also be audio documented and transcribed. All interviews were scheduled based on the availability of the participants. All participants were aware of my role as a high school teacher, which was separate from the role of being a student researcher.

Most interviews lasted between 10 and 30 minutes each with the assistance of the interview guide (see Appendix B). I gave each participant a copy of their signed consent form. Each interview started with a brief introduction to gain rapport. All interviews were recorded on an audio cassette tape recorder. I expressed thankfulness to each participant after their interview. I began conducting interviews on January 23, 2019, and they were scheduled to take about 3 weeks. Recordings of the interviews were saved on cassette tapes, which were secured in a locked file cabinet.

I transcribed each interview on paper with the use of my personal computer, which took about 2 weeks to complete all interviews. Each transcript was saved on a password-protected file on the computer and on a flash drive that was secured in a locked file cabinet. For member checking purposes, each participant looked over his or her

transcripts between the weeks of February 20, 2019 and March 1, 2019 to check for accuracy.

### **Data Analysis Plan**

The data analysis designated for this research, defined how the data collection was related to the main phenomenon being investigated. Information that was gathered from the interviews were connected to the research questions regarding teachers and administrators' perceptions of school violence prevention in a middle school setting. I manually transcribe the interview transcripts before thematic coding was utilized. Nowell et al. (2017) indicated that thematic coding is a procedure that can be utilized to discover patterns and themes within qualitative research. I used Microsoft Word document to visually hand code the data. Manuel coding data can be challenging because it requires a researcher to comprehend the peculiarities of various types of coding methods.

### **Issues of Trustworthiness**

Instituting validity or trustworthiness were two relativity concepts that were more suitable for this qualitative research. Creswell and Miller (2000) indicated that validity is one of the significant assets of comprehensive research in which it can establish whether the results are accurate from the standpoint of the researcher, the participant, or the readers of an account. Both ideas described the approaches and procedures to assess the rigor and quality of this research study. It was essential to increase the trustworthiness and decrease the possible threats to credibility regarding this research with using various strategies. The interview guide and the sample group which consisted of middle teachers and administrators enhanced content validity. Ravith and Carl (2016) mentioned that

content validity occurs when the research study provides reasonable analysis of the phenomenon being studied.

Pertaining to conducting this qualitative research, it was essential to triangulate all data collection outcomes. Creswell (2009) defined triangulation as a validity technique where researchers examine multiple and different sources of data to construct themes or sets in a research study. Triangulation for this investigation was accomplished by transcribing structured interviews to look for themes and patterns to construct comprehensible explanations. Enhancing the validity of this research study involved the method of member checking during the interview process. The technique of member checking involved delivering information and interpretations back to the participants of the study so that they can endorse the trustworthiness of the data. (Creswell, 2000). This process occurred during following-up meetings once all participants' audio recorded interviews are transcribed. Ravith and Carl (2016) emphasized that the concepts to assess the consistency in qualitative research are credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability because they assist researchers to hypothesize, participate with, and strategize for numerous facets of validity.

Credibility was the first criterion to be established. For that reason, credibility mainly probed me to evidently connect the exploration's conclusions with authenticity to validate the truth of the exploration's findings. Triangulation and member checks were two critical techniques appropriate to establish creditability. Carter et al. (2014) described triangulation as employing various sources or methods to comprehend the phenomenon of focus. The individual interviews of teachers and administrators participants' interview

guide, and the audit documentation were the data collection techniques used to uphold triangulation in this research study. Maxwell (2005) specified that the process of triangulation during an interview with text evaluations can lessen the effects of the contributor's apparent biases or fabrications. Member checking was also a technique utilized to establish credibility in this research. Ravith and Carl (2016) asserted that member checks allow researchers to "check in" with their research participants in regards to their feelings, concerns, feedbacks, and other aspects of the research progressions (p. 197). Each participant received his or her sealed interview transcript through the school mail by verifying the truthfulness of their statements by reviewing the interview transcripts and will be allowed to ask questions. I also encouraged each participant to provide feedback via e-mail or telephone. The member checks allowed me to evaluate my expectations and conscript contributors into a significant collaborative rapport in which my implications are obtainable for advice and evaluation.

A researcher cannot substantiate that his research study's results will be valid, therefore the process of transferability can provide readers with the indication that the research's finding could be pertinent to other situations. Houghton et al. (2013) discussed that the technique of providing a thick description of the participant's experience during the data collection phrase which can enhance transferability in qualitative research. It is essential to make associations with the cultural and societal perspectives that surround data collection aspects in this research study. Therefore, the audit documentation helped (see Appendix C) offer a more affluent and filled comprehension of the research site. The

information on the audit trail document can assist readers to connect to the research site with the participants and allow others to make the transferability rulings themselves.

My objective was to validate that my study's results were consistent with the data that was gathered. Ravith and Carl (2016) affirmed that the process of establishing dependability aids in the guiding a stable and accurate research scholarship. Miles et al. (2014) indicated dependability involves the researcher having a logical argument regarding the gathering of data and the data were constant with the logical argument. It was necessary that the data was consistent with answering the research inquiries. The techniques for achieving dependability for this research was through the method of transferability and external auditing. The method of transferability for this research entailed having various sources or methods to ratify interpretations, examine claims, and now and then seek conjunctions amongst some approaches to arranging themes in an investigation. Maxwell (2005) specified that the process of triangulation during an interview with text evaluations can lessen the effects of the contributor's apparent biases or fabrications. The research focused on the approach triangulation which means that one process (individual interviews) will be employed, however other strategies will be associated with the interview process. External auditing (also known as peer briefing) will was not a process that I used to enhance dependability in this research. Given (2008) discussed that an external auditor will be someone who is knowledgeable about the procedures of the research study but may not have an expertise of the focus matter in the research scholarship. The auditor would able to review the data, notes, interview transcripts, and other associated materials. The external auditing would assist with



minimizing personal biases that may occur in this research. Also, the external auditor can share their thoughts about the data, provided feedback and further questioning.

The processes of achieving confirmability was similar to the procedures such as transferability and external auditing when also accomplishing dependability in qualitative research. An audit trail was an essential aspect of achieving confirmability. An Audit trail was implemented to preserve a record the actions taken place during this research investigation. Lincoln and Guba (1994) indicated that there is a specific order that audit trial should follow to validate findings:

1. The collection of interview notes and audio
2. Data reduction and exploration products (qualitative summaries and abstract notes)
3. Data analysis procedures (theming, interpretations and conclusions)
4. Procedure transcripts (design, strategies to determine validity and trustworthiness)
5. Other materials relating to research process (research proposal and personal notes)
6. Instrument development info (surveys, and agenda formats)

### **Ethical Procedures**

Understanding how to treat the data collection process, and the analysis and presentation of my results of a research study was fundamental. I was solely responsible for properly conducting research. Ravith and Carl (2016) emphasized that “It is a necessity as a researcher to comprehend, contemplate, and approach all roles of the

research process with humility and prudently consider concerns collaboratively and relationally for research to be ethical.” There are primary ethical considerations for this study that I had to contain knowledgeable approval from the proper school official and proper documentation given to the participants regarding the conclusions of the study. IRB had to approve components of this research covered by the Common Rule (IRB Approval #10-05-18-0587079). These boards are made of university staff faculty member and various organizations that are responsible for overseeing the research which is known as beneficence. Initially, the school principal was given a letter along with a cooperation agreement discussing the foundations of the research study and consent. Once the principal approved the conduction of the research, the next step was to send a letter to the school’s superintendent along with the cooperation agreement form for his authorization as well. Then, all participants was given a consent form to participant in this study. The participants' names was concealed to protect their confidentiality. Participants were described as Teachers 1, 2, 3, and Administrator 1, 2, and 3.

### **Summary**

A qualitative exploration was the selection for this study because it could provide pertinent information from middle school teachers and administrators concerning ways to prevent the occurrences of school violence in a classroom or other areas within a school setting. Data were gathered through individual interviews in which questions were asked relevant to the phenomenon of study being investigated, participants were able to reflect on their experience, which provided an opportunity to validate conclusions. Chapter 4 provide validation of the research’s findings were produced through the data analysis.

Validation consisted of member checking and triangulation. This chapter provided conclusions related to the research inquiries and the basis of the ecological theory.

## Chapter 4: Results

### **Introduction**

There is gap in current literature as it pertains to addressing school violence as whole in a middle school setting; therefore, I conducted this qualitative case study to explore the views of teachers and administrators concerning effective ways to implement proactive prevention strategies to attain better approaches to preventing school violence as a whole. I developed the following research questions to guide this study:

Research Question 1: What are the current perspectives of middle school teachers and administrators regarding school violence preventions?

Research Question 2: What concepts can middle school teachers and administrators contribute that may develop effective school violence prevention protocols?

### **Setting**

I gathered data for this study through individual structured interviews using a stratified sampling process to create two subgroups consisting of teachers and administrators that totaled eight participants. The interviews took place between January 23, 2019 and February 6, 2019 at the study site middle school in the southeastern United States. Participants were interviewed in an area of their choosing. Most interviews were conducted in the teacher's classroom or the administrator's office. All interviews were conducted as scheduled.

### **Demographics**

The target research site for this case study is a Title 1 school. Schools that are named as a Title 1 school comprises a large amount of students with low-income families in which students receive free or reduced lunch and the school itself receives additional funding to meet student's educational needs (Spence 2018). The participants of this study had various educational backgrounds and several years of teaching experience. The teachers instructed various grade levels ranging from sixth to eighth grade and various subjects. Some teachers and all administrators had doctoral degrees.

### **Data Collection**

The recorded interviews involved the use of an interview guide to obtain responses from participants. The interview questions that I asked allowed the teacher and administrator participants to express their opinions concerning: (a) their current perspectives of school violence prevention strategies or policies in the United States and in their school; (b) how less effective school violence prevention strategies or concepts affect the environment of the school; (c) teacher issues with administrators concerning managing school violence incidents; (d) how obtaining various positive relationships with students, parents, other school staff, and stakeholders can assist with minimizing school violence; and (e) recommendations to provide substantial professional development training on school violence prevention. The interviews were documented and lasted between 10 and 30 minutes. I transcribed the interviews and e-mailed each participant a copy of their interview transcript to review and check for accuracy. Then, research data

were organized, tracked, and stored systemically and kept in a confidential and secured place.

### **Data Analysis**

Before I began identifying my codes, I reviewed each participant's transcript. During the development of the coding procedures, I documented notes on small, sticking note pads for each transcript. Saldana (2016) suggested that the researcher should organize their transcripts and, off in the margins of the paper, write codes and notes. I highlighted key words throughout each participant's interview transcript, going through each sentence in every paragraph to discover any patterns linked to my codes. Through thematic coding, I created a list of the codes then categories, followed by the themes for each subgroup of teachers and administrator that were fitting to assist answering the research questions in the study. The codes, categories, and themes for each subgroup are presented in Tables 2 and 3. All of data from the analysis was input into a Microsoft Word document, so I would be able to visually identify detailed themes within the categories I initially created. Using the Microsoft Word document, the data analysis for this study was effectively managed. In addition, I was able to separate any differences within the participants' perceptions in each subgroup. Themes developed during the thematic analysis are discussed in the results segment of this chapter.

Table 2

*Subgroup of Teachers Sample Codes to Categories to Themes*

Codes	Categories	Theme Derived
Consistency	Minimize school violence occurrences	Expectations for disciplinary actions
Disciplining students	Minimize school violence occurrence	Expectations for disciplinary actions
Parent Support	Parent-teacher collaborations	Parent involvement in school violence prevention
Be fair and stern with consequences for students “Put your foot down”	Minimize school violence occurrences Minimize school violence occurrences	Expectations for disciplinary actions Expectations for disciplinary actions
Proactivity with parents	Parent-teacher collaborations	Parent involvement in school violence prevention
Prevention	Parent-teacher collaborations	Parent involvement in school violence prevention
Observe students at all times	Parent-teacher collaborations	Expectations for disciplinary actions
Communicate with parents and guardians	Minimize school violence occurrences Parent-teacher collaborations	Parent involvement of school violence prevention
Talk to students	Be more than a teacher	Love and care for students
Engage in students’ conversations	Get to know your students	Obtaining positive student-teacher relationship
Create interesting lesson plans	Get to know your students	Obtaining positive student-teacher relationships
Know student’s learning style	Get to know your students	Obtaining positive student-teacher relationships
Have class discussions	Get to know your students	Obtaining positive student-teacher relationships
Show compassion for students	Be more than a teacher	Love and care for students
Care for students	Be me than a teacher	Love and care for students
Treat students equal	Be more than a teacher	Love and care for students
Dedication	Be more than a teacher	Love and care for students
Have concern	Be more than a teacher	Love and care for students
Love your job	Be more than a teacher	Love and care for students
Check on students after hours	Get to know your students	Obtaining positive student-teacher relationships

Table 3

*Subgroup of Administrators Sample Codes to Categories to Themes*

Codes	Categories	Theme Derived
Evaluating written referrals	Managing issues	Effectively managing school concerns
Documentation	Managing issues	Effectively managing school concerns
Managing discipline issues	Sense of security	Protection from school staff members
Expectations	Managing issues	Effectively managing school concerns
Security from resource officer	Sense of security	Protection from school staff members
Protection from military staff members	Sense of security	Protection from school staff members
Safe environment	Sense of security	Protection from school staff members
Using technology for protection	Sense of security	Protection from school staff members
Mentoring students	Gain positive relationships	Creating bonds with students and staff members
Communication with parents	Managing issues	Effectively managing school concerns
Positive	Gain positive relationships	Creating bonds with student and staff
Collaboration with other teachers	Gain positive relationships	Creating bonds with students and staff
Gaining trust	Gain positive relationships	Creating bonds with students and staff
Calming students down	Sense of security	Protection from school staff members
Working with the Community	Gain positive relationships	Creating bonds



### **Evidence Trustworthiness**

Throughout this case study, the credibility, transferability, dependability, and conformability were established. The techniques I used to establish credibility in this research consisted of me listening to participants' responses, documentation, and tape recordings. Participants were also able to read his or her interview transcripts that were transcribed by me. The concern of transferability was addressed by providing a thick and substantial description of the setting, participants' responses, and conclusions during the data collection stage. I used an audit trail (see Appendix C) to assist the readers in identifying the connection between the research setting and the participants. The audit trail and triangulation were used to establish dependability in the study. The audit trail maintains all records of meetings and scheduling regarding the interviews and member checking procedures. I also kept my various notes about coding, developing themes, and conclusions in a secured area. Triangulation was accomplished by gathering information from diverse teachers and administrators in various grade levels in the middle school setting. This procedure was completed to authenticate data in order to explain or highlight developing themes. Member checking had a significant part in instituting confirmability. After I transcribed all interviews, participants were given a copy of their transcripts to confirm the accuracy or address any imprecision. During the interview process, I listened to the participants' responses closely and recorded repeated phrases to assist with developing themes.

## **Results**

This section consists of the insights teachers and administrators provided concerning school violence and preventions in their responses to interview questions. The subsection headings were extracted from the interview questions as well. This section is organized into subsections comprising the description of data from the themes that were revealed.

### **Perceptions of Middle School Teachers and Administrators**

All teachers and administrators stated that there were familiar with school violence prevention practices at the middle school. One administrator expressed the following,

We are a PBIS school, and we have a school-wide PBIS expectation, and we have classroom PBIS expectations. Our students are taught and reviewed, and we do a morning announcement reminding them every day. (Administrator 2)

However, one teacher indicated that PBIS might not be implemented correctly (Teacher 5). Therefore, teachers are not consistent with using it. During the interviews, various teachers acknowledged that they utilized their own approaches to minimize or stop behavioral issue in their classroom. One teacher stated, “I try to diffuse the situation by removing one of the students from the setting or getting between students before an altercation occur (Teacher 3).” However, if the situation cannot be broken up and the students begin to fight, it is imperative that you removed all other students away from the area and immediately call for backup. Another teacher used strategies like allowing the student to remove him or herself from the classroom and calm down in the hallway for a

few minutes. Some students need a few minutes to adjust their behavior and attitude during the heat of the moment. Some students can amp up other students that are involved in an altercation and make matters worse. One administrator responded by saying,

The first thing I do when students come to my office after being involved in a conflict or fight, I give them a bottle of water to calm them down. I feel that it is very effective. I spend my own money. I have water available. A bottle of water can do wonders for a child. I'm telling you, it actually works. (Administrator 1)

One teacher indicated that "We just have to be observant" (Teacher 2). This is considered to be the most proactive strategy of them all. Teacher and other staff members have to be active in watching out for students trying to commit school violence acts like bullying, carrying weapons to school, or prefigths. It is important to watch out for different signs. For example, if students are seen migrating to a specific area, it is easy to assume that something is going on or about to happen. Another teacher stated that, "You have to also listen to student's conversations amongst their friends" (Teacher 5). Some conversations may consist of serious or vital information regarding safety measures. All teachers and staff members are mandated reporters; therefore, there is nothing wrong with engaging in conversations with students and asking them questions. Safety is the first priority at the school.

Arming teachers has been one a controversial topic that has gained further attention during the past couple of years based on the Parkland High School shooting and other incidence (Rajan, 2018). Regarding this study, the perceptions amongst the

administrators and teachers varied. All administrators agreed that is not a bad concept but that currently it is not needed at their middle school. Out of the six teachers of the subgroup, one teacher was against the idea and two teachers had mixed emotions. Almost all of the participants indicated that they had a license to carry and they were not allowed to have their weapon on the school premise. One administrator specified that “It would definitely depend on their age, expertise, background, and the right personality to be able to carry in the school setting” (Administrator 1). People that have their concealed weapons test have to go through a series of training, and some teachers expressed that the weapons training for teachers and other staff member needs to be extensive and include a series of psychological tests. One teacher asserted that “Some teachers may not have the courage to pull the trigger if necessary” (Teacher 5). The teachers with mixed emotions expressed that they do not want the responsibility of carrying. One teacher stated, “I trust our school resource officer to protect the school” (Teacher 4). One administrator responded, “Our school is different because we have former military people here. I would feel very comfortable with them carrying a weapon on campus” (Administrator 2).

When asked the question related to placing metal detectors in school, teachers and administrators had various outlooks. One administrator stated that “Anything to protect any child and we can go forward in the right direction, I am all for placing metal detector here” (Administration 2). One teacher asserted that metal detectors need to be at the front doors at every school (Teacher 3). In contrast, another teacher expressed the following,

The use of a metal detector can cause all types of issues. You would need adequate personnel. Who is going to at the students down? Who is going to go

through their stuff? Will, you allowed Transportation Security Administration in the school. Not at all. The other big thing that there will be many districts that would see it as an invasion of privacy. Parents will not be acceptable to their children to be pat down. I wear steel boots. I would set it off every day. Are you going to track me down every day? Like I said, I do not know about metal detectors because I do not know how effectively that could be implemented.

(Teacher 1)

Another teacher agreed as well that metal detectors can become an issue. The teacher gave an example,

We have just over a thousand students at our school and just over a hundred personnel, so you are trying to get 1,100 or 1,200 people through two door ways with metal detectors and that is going to take a long time. Plus you got to have staffed the whole time. It can't be something that you are just going to walk through it and not have anybody there to stop you if it goes off. You got to have somebody there. For example, in the frame of mind of a school shooter who is after mass destruction, he or she don't need to bring the gun in all they have to do is stand outside while that mob of students is trying to get through the door and unload on them. By the time that somebody knows what is going on or somebody can get to the students, can you imagine the destruction that that shooter could have done. (Teacher 5)

All administrators believed that majority of the time, the school's climate is positive. They expressed that feeling safe and having adequate security is the main factor.

This is surrounded by various individuals who have a military background. In addition, the school resource officer supports the teachers as well. However, one teacher indicated that students can make the school climate become negativity in various aspects (Teacher 5). The teacher stated that,

We definitely have a serious problem with bullying and we've noticed a big trend with the bullying getting worse every year as the students are coming out of the Elementary. Our sixth graders have had a bad run of bullying issues this year. For instance, a group of girls were doing what they called the "stink touch." If you remember the *Diary of a Wimpy Kid*, you probably remember the Cheese Touch, where any student who touched the cheese became contaminated. The "stink touch" was similar. There was a group of girls that were playing this "game" towards another female student. The whole thing was that this student stunk and that she would put her smell on them. When this student would come near and of the girls in the group, they would take off running. This "game" began to spread and other students began getting involved. The student was being made fun of to her face, ostracized by other peers. The worst part was that she didn't even seem to understand what was going on and she was "playing" along with them. She thought that it was just a game. We had to sit her down and tell her that this wasn't a game, they're not just playing, and how they were making fun of her (Teacher 5).

Some teachers acknowledged that administrators does primarily well with handling various behavioral issues to maintain a constructive school environment. One administrator specified the following,

I think we are doing fine here. I think that our administration staff take on a very caring attitude towards kids and we tend to track and pinpoint those children. The administration here under the guidance of our Principal shows ways that we care and have frequent contact with those children.

Avoiding school violence has been one of the main initiatives at the middle school. All participants agreed that everyone has to be on board with addressing school violence. One teacher stated that “We have to be proactive and consistent in combating school violence” (Teacher 6). One administrator voiced that,

In order to avoid school violence, we have to educate the students than the parents. We have provided education through Health and P.E classes. Even some of the social studies class, our connection class to show students ways to put something in their toolkit. Educating students concerning school violence can assist with them avoiding trouble or becoming a target (Administrator 2)

One teacher stated the following,

I think we have plenty of school violence practices that could avoid school violence acts. It is a matter of implementing the practices. We received a thick book on how to address school violence with various scenarios in it concerning what to do and how to handle various situations. You have to put things to work.

When you get resources that address school violence, you have to take it in and utilize some resources (Teacher 1)

When asked if there are additional barriers that could affect school violence, almost every participant mentioned aspects of a student's home environment. For example, one teacher voiced that,

We cannot control a student's home life. I mean there are some things that we can do here to help. Most teachers have some part tarts in the morning or something around to help the kids that might not have money to eat. It is essential to show some compassion to especially to those at-risk (Teacher 3)

Also, one teacher indicated that it would be beneficial for parents to communicate with teachers when something is going on at home that could affect a student day at school (Teacher 1). The teacher reasoning was that some students in the morning would come to class with a negative type of impression, primarily actions that are not the norm for them. It is imperative for teachers and parents to communicate especially when it can affect his or her learning progress.

Through the data investigation, I identified four themes from the subgroup of teachers and three themes from the subgroup of administrators.

### **Subgroup of Emergent Teacher Themes**

The following four themes were derived from the subgroup of teachers were:

- Expectations for disciplinary actions
- Obtaining positive teacher-student relationships
- Parent involvement in school violence prevention



- Love and care for students

### **Theme 1: Expectations for Disciplinary Actions**

All teachers agreed that school administrators need to more stern, fair, and consistent when disciplining students. One teacher indicated that students need to be more accountable for what they do. Another teacher expressed when a student is written up on referral for behaviors issues; they should receive consequences that should target deterrence. One of the teachers retorted by saying that,

You will hear a good number of teachers every day complaining about discipline and saying that the discipline here is not what it should be. We have all said and know that there needs to be a clear cut consequence for a behavior, but there isn't. Kids are treated differently and unfortunately the students know this. The kids that are given a "slap on the wrist" for an infraction do not care if they receive a referral to the office, because they know that their punishment will be nothing to worry about. (Teacher 5)

Amstutz (2015) stated that disciplining students teaches responsibility. This study discussed that when students commit such offenses at school, they should receive consequences that display responsibility like cleaning lockers, picking up trash, assisting teachers before or after school, etc., rather than being suspended from school. Skiba and Losen (2016) suggested that schools need to create techniques that focus on strengthening student and teacher's relationships which can reduce discipline measures.

## **Theme 2: Obtaining Positive Student-Teacher Relationships**

Engaging with students emerged as several teachers suggested that teachers should get to know students and have conversations with them. The discussions do not have to be all about their academic progress. However, Wubbles et al. (2016) confirmed that engaging students emotionally might be more precarious for young teenager to exploit their academic enthusiasm. Two teachers stated a simple question, like “How is your day going?” to a student shows initiative of concern. When in a classroom, teachers need to walk around and participate in lessons with students. Also, the lesson have to fun and obtain students' interest. Sitting behind a desk have never been an ineffective method to engage with students. One teacher gave in example by stating the following,

One session during the day we give the students little a free time to run and what not outside. It is during that time where the vast of the majority of the problems happen. The more eyes you can have is important. Teachers should be engaging themselves with students. Teachers should not be on their cellphones and talking amongst each other. You can use this time to get to know other students that are not actually in your class. (Teacher 1)

## **Theme 3: Parent Involvement in School Violence Prevention**

Teachers believed that is it essential to always communicate with parents whether it is good or bad. Having clear lines of communication with parents can keep down misunderstandings and keep them informed. Barthassat (2015) asserted that teachers could learn more about a child's living environment if they have a positive relationship with the parent or guardian. One teacher indicated that parents and teachers have to be

receptive to communication. Another teacher mentioned that only weekly essential e-mail were sent out to parents with information on them related to class, school meetings, and other functions. Also, teachers are allowed to create a class newsletter and make phone calls. Several teachers stated that when students are written up on an academic or discipline referral, parents are notified immediately. With this collaboration, parents can develop more gratitude for the significant role they play in his or her child's education.

#### **Theme 4: Love and Care for Students**

All teachers agreed that you have to connect with students in a positive way. A positive student-teacher relationship can make a class free from behavioral issues. Students want to see and feel that the teachers care about them. A few teachers stated that sometimes they have to go beyond to watch out for their well-being. One teacher gave realistic example, like having to give a student food because he was hungry and he didn't have money to pay for lunch.

#### **Subgroup of Emergent Administrator Themes**

The following themes were derived from the subgroup of administrators:

- Effectively managing school issues
- Protection from military teachers and staff members
- Creating bonds with students and staff

#### **Theme 1: Effectively Managing School Issues**

The administrators of this middle school believed that it is vital for teachers to document all incidents that go on in the classroom and any other settings. One

administrator indicated that they use the *Educator's Handbook* to record minor and major issues. The administrators gave an example:

When I have a child and provide them with a bottle of water. I record it. You have to document it because I think that when it comes down to it, you have to show every little thing you've done. If I had a kid in my office to talk to them and I know that something is going on, I would call their parents. I would log it in my book. (Administrator 1)

Administrators feel that when teachers write referrals, they should not leave out any relevant information concerning the incident with the students. When students are written up in the *Educator's Handbook*, the information is immediately sent to the administrator for the particular grade level. The administrator would then call the parent. The administrator would transfer the information that was on the referral to the parent. One administrator indicated that their guidance counselors play a major role in documenting information as well.

In some cases where mental health issues are presented, guidance counselors are not allowed to show administrators certain aspects about the incident. They can only guide administrators with the use of taking specific notes. In the *Educator's Handbook*, a guidance counselor has their section for only them to see.

## **Theme 2: Protection from Military Teachers and Staff Members**

This middle school is located near one of the major military bases on the United States. When families have to relocate or retire from the military, they sometimes go into the career of teaching. While interviewing all administrators that mention that they feel

safe at their school because they have a variety of military teachers and staff members.

One administrator stated that “We have a teacher on staff who was a former sniper in the marine core and we have a custodian who did 20 years in the military (Administrator 2).”

Another administrator stated that “If they were ever a school violence situation, I trust that they would respond swiftly and protect students and staff (Administrator 2).”

### **Theme 3: Creating Bonds with Students and Staff Members**

All administrators felt that it is essential to build positive relationships with students, parents, staff, school resource officers, and community partners. One administrator stated the following,

Being proactive is very important. Knowing your kids. Developing relationships with those kids and every administrator. I tell my kids, I got the good side, and I got the bad side when I have to discipline you. However, I am only doing this; we follow the rules here. So I have a positive relationship with most student  
(Administrator 1)

One administrator indicated that the idea of PBIS helps build healthy and positive relationships around the school. Whether it is the school resource officer or custodians, they are all a part of making PBIS successful for teachers. The success of a school depends on the various types of relationships that are created. One administrator said,

We have good processes in place for students who have committed an act of a misdemeanor or felony in the community. We have a good process in place I feel that addresses those issues to see if it is safe or not for them to return to school. Our resource officer plays a major factor in that. Communication with our school

resource officer is essential because we only have them when they are here.

Therefore, building a positive relationship with SRO and administrators is very significant (Administrator 2)

### **Summary**

Regarding this case study, I interviewed two subgroups that consisted of teachers and administrators including eight participants overall. All of my participants are certified with three or more years employed at the middle school. The intent was to reveal the perceptions of teachers and administrators concerning effective ways to implement proactive prevention strategies to attain better approaches to preventing school violence as a whole. The teachers mostly provided concepts that they used on an individual basis that was effective for them to minimize or stop various school violence acts. The administrators provided broad school interventions for preventing school violence. I interviewed all teachers in their classroom or an empty teacher classroom close by because their room was occupied at the time. I interviewed in their office or a conference room. Due to the weather, some participants became sick, and I had to reschedule interviews. However, I was able to complete all interviews in the time frame that I had established.

All administrators felt that the proper way of managing school violence issues is a proactive method of managing school violence. Teachers and other staff members should document all information about incidents no matter what. For example, it helps to keep a paper trail on students with behavioral issues. The teachers felt that administrators could not slack on disciplining students for various reasons. They have to be consistent and fair

to all students. All participants were adamant about building a positive relationship with students can assist with preventing school violent acts from occurring. Getting to know teachers and gaining their trust is imperative. Teachers and administrators of this research study have concepts that they used to prevent or provoke school violence acts that can work for everyone. I presented the concepts in Chapter 5.

## Chapter 5: Discussion, Conclusions, and Recommendations

### **Introduction**

There is gap in current literature as it pertains to addressing school violence as whole in a middle school setting. I used a case study design to examine the perceptions of middle school teachers and administrators on the phenomenon of preventing school violence. In previous research studies, I found limited information regarding the views of teachers and administrators on the prevention of school violence as a whole. School violence is a major public health concern. There has not been a simple solution for preventing school violence; however, the results of this study may provide information that could be used to assist with minimizing acts of school violence. All stakeholders need to collaborate to accomplish the goals of decreasing or intercepting school violence.

### **Interpretations of Findings**

My interpretations of the findings in this chapter are structured around the two research questions that guided this study. The findings of this study can possibly assist with filling the gap in literature concerning teacher and administrator perspectives to prevent school violence, such as fighting, bullying, students carrying weapons to school, gang activity, students destroying school property in a violent way, and assaults on students and staff.

Research Question 1: What are current perspectives of middle school teachers and administrators regarding school violence preventions?



Research Question 2: What concepts can middle school teachers and administrators contribute that may develop effective school violence prevention protocols?

The purpose of Research Question 1 was to discover current viewpoints of middle school teachers and administrators concerning school violence prevention. In relation to the current perspectives of administrators, they felt as though that teachers need to have line sight of supervision on students at all times and also maintain classroom management effectively. Teachers feel as though those school administrators are inconsistent with disciplining students. Teachers emphasized that there also needs to be more training in school violence prevention. Administrators believe that effective classroom management can reduce school violence occurrences in a classroom setting. Perspectives on arming teachers or staff member varies. Participants also thought the idea of metal detectors would cause issues.

### **Finding 1: Administrators Believe that Teachers Need to Have a Line Sight of Supervision on Students at All Times**

Administrators emphasized that teachers should be aware of the presence of students at all time. The subgroup of administrations was consistent with this notion during the interviews. They discussed that teachers have assigned areas in the morning and afternoons to observe students arriving at school and leaving from school. One teacher mentioned that issues with students, such as pushing, shoving, or fighting, sometimes originate between the breaks of classes due to the number of students in the hallway at that time. The perspective of administrations in this study was that teachers

should be out in the hallways during the break of classes to have their eyes on students. One administrator stated that teachers should always properly sign hall passes to know where students are going. The hall pass should consist of the time that the student left, the place where the students are going, and the signature of the teacher that administered the hall pass. The hall pass is used for record and security purposes.

Saxena and Kamal (2018) believed that the structure or design of the school is significant when it comes to the ability to observe students at all times. Saxena and Kamal (2018) confirmed that certain areas in the school could stimulate behavior either positively or negatively. For example, schools may have back hallways with minimal lighting, some classes may contain closets, and empty rooms are all assessable areas for students to engage in various acts. Nemorin (2017) indicated the use of surveillance cameras can also be used to physically pinpoint the whereabouts of students. It is imperative for all staff members to know the floorplan of the school to be able to be proactive in observing students.

**Finding 2: Teachers feel as Though Administrators are Inconsistent or Do not Support Teachers When it comes to Disciplining Students**

All teachers mentioned that the support they receive from administrators regarding disciplining students is significant. One teacher stated that “sometimes it is evident that administrators do not support or back teachers up when it comes to disciplining certain students.” For example, a student commits several offenses in one week or day by day, and the consequences of their behavior are lenient. Students may sometimes be allowed back to class during the same class block that the incident occurred

or being passed on to other teachers, and the student may display the same behavior again. A few teachers also indicated that students would tell them that “I do not care if you write me up because I am not going to get in trouble anyway by the administrator.”

Gerlinger and Wo (2016) discussed that schools with imbalanced, vague, and inconsistently imposed rules have major behavior issues. Students should not be allowed to keep committing the same offense, and the consequences do not affect them to make changes to their behavior. One teacher mentioned that when a student is sent to the office on a discipline referral, it is essential to hear the student’s side regarding the incident. One administrator felt that students act out because they are influenced by someone or something and that they may deserve more than one chance to change their behavior. Several teachers thought that the type of punishing or consequence given to students that commit acts of school violence was too merciful. For example, one teacher describes a situation with a Special Education Department student who was written continuously up on discipline referral, stating that the student was fighting, disrespecting teachers, and destroying property. But after out-of-school suspension or in-school suspension the student was still allowed to return to school. Teachers feel that some students should be sent to the alternative school when offenses are too extreme. A few teachers expressed that some administrators show favoritism or reduce consequences towards individual students. Regardless of the relationships that administrators may develop with students, every student should be treated equally and receive fair treatment. Administrators have to uphold the rules and regulations that were created in the *Educator’s Handbook* for students.

### **Finding 3: Teachers Believe That There Needs to be More Professional**

#### **Development on School Violence**

Professional development training is an essential element towards the progression of teachers regarding various factors. The American Psychological Association (2015) expressed that school should not mainly focus on academics when it comes to professional development but that professional development should also entail security and safety protocols, learning how to understand student behaviors, physical tactics, and emergency response. One teacher stated that their school staff meetings have very little on the agenda concerning school violence prevention tactics. Many teacher participants in this study explained that they would love to learn how to deal with diverse situations when it comes to being proactive to prevent school violence from occurring. One teacher felt that some teachers would feel uncomfortable or maybe afraid to deal with individual behavior confrontations. Teachers worry about the safety of themselves and violating students. Some teachers emphasized that they do not want to get hit when there is a fight between students. They also mentioned that some students would falsely say that the teachers touch them inappropriately, leading to a possible civil suit or costing a teacher his or her job. Preparation to deal with fights or students showing violent behavior is essential and should be implemented by an administrator. School security may not always be around to break up fights or remove students when a situation occurs. One administrator indicated that school security and some teachers in the school had done a tremendous job with handling situations of school violence.

**Finding 4: Administrators Believe That Effective Classroom Management is Significant When Being Proactive in Preventing School Violence Occurrences in a Classroom Setting**

Throughout the interview sessions with the subgroup of administrators, they emphasized that teachers have to manage their classroom effectively so that behavior issues would not occur. Burden (2016) suggested that in order for teachers to maintain effective classroom management they must be active, engage with students, and have solid lesson plans. All administrators agreed that the approach to lesson planning is significant to how a classroom will operate. When students are engaged from the beginning to the end of class, there can be minimum distractions or disruptions (Rulloda, 2011). The lesson plans have to include activities that would interest students, such as those that involve group collaborations, kinetic activities, and presentations. One teacher recommended that sometimes arranging the classroom setting in a specific configuration or assigning students their seat can assist with minimizing behavioral issues.

**Finding 5: Administrators and Teachers had Diverse Opinions Regarding Arming Teachers in School**

School shootings in the United States have been ongoing for years. According to Minshew (2018), in 2018, there were two shootings at elementary, middle, and high school campuses in the United States that resulted in deaths and serious injuries. When asked the question, “What is your perspective on teachers being allowed to carry,” 50% of the administrators agreed that it would be a good idea but not necessary for their school. They have trust in their school resource officers to protect the school

environment. One administrator indicated that numerous staff members are or were a part of the armed forces; therefore, the sense of security and protection was already established at the school. However, a majority of the teachers agreed that they would carry. They also mentioned that they currently had licenses to carry and had gone through a training module. One teacher stated that if the education state legislation would ever pass, certain teachers should not be allowed to carry due to their temperament. Just like students, some teachers may have a “hot head” and cannot handle certain situations. Teachers would need to go through various trainings similar to law enforcement. For example, teachers would be given a psychological test and a lie detector test to verify his or her mental status. One teacher felt that some teachers would not have the courage to actually pull the trigger. Several teachers expressed that individual school districts in high crime areas around the United States need this type of school prevention protocol. According to Rajan and Branas (2018), there is little research around the United States that identifies school districts that approved of the arming teacher proposal; therefore, there is minimal evidence to prove if the school violence prevention mechanism is effective or not.

#### **Finding 6: Metal Detectors can Cause Many Issues**

Many schools across the United States have depended on technology to make their school safe. One example is the use of metal detectors to detect weapons, drugs, or any other items. According to Gastic and Johnson (2015), the effectiveness of metal detectors being placed in schools continues to be questioned. One teacher specified that the idea of putting metal detectors at their middle would not be a good idea. One

administrator stated that 5 years ago, the school only had one incident where a student brought a knife to school. Therefore, with trust in the school resource officer, metal detectors would be less needed. Some teachers emphasized that inserting metal detectors would take up too much time. Due to the substantial amounts of students and staff members, the mornings would also be hectic because everyone would have to go through the process of being searched. Students would be late to class or the lines could move slowly. One teacher mentioned that students and staff would feel violated and that can lead to another issue.

In contrast, several teachers expressed that the notion of placing metal detectors at their middle school would be a necessary approach. When students are arriving at school, school staff do not know what students are bringing with them. In some cases, students are being caught with weapons because they actually tell someone or show someone. One teacher stated the best approach to stopping students from entering the schools with firearms is to be proactive with the use of searching or metal detectors but that this approach was only needed at specific schools. The middle school study site had not encountered any issues with a student carrying a weapon to school in 5 years.

The purpose of Research Question 2 was to identify concepts from teachers and administrators that could be used to develop a school violence protocol. Teachers felt as though “setting the tone” on the first day of school would make students aware of school rules and consequences. Another concept that several teachers discussed was various afterschool mentorship clubs. An additional concept was awarding students based on their

behavior through the concept of PBIS. Both subgroups of participants in this study discussed their concerns when effectively managing disciplinary issues with students.

**Finding 7: “Set the Tone”**

It is essential for students to know and comprehend school rules and regulations in the initial days of attending school. The administrator indicates that teachers have their own rules and expectations posted up in the classroom for students. Most teachers’ rules correspond to the school rules as a whole. One teacher explained that if a student commits an offense during the first couple of days of school, the punishment should be a deterrence for others. Other students will then perceive the notion that there will be immediate consequences to their actions, beforehand. In most schools, during the first week of school, administrators would meet with all grade levels to introduce the Principal, other administrators, school resource officer(s), and other staff members. During this meeting, the administrator would discuss school protocols, rules, and expectations. Also, students will be given information that they can take home to their parents or guardians. One asserted that if we be stern with students on the initial days of school that could cut down specific behavioral issues for the remaining of the school year.

**Finding 8: *Educator’s Handbook***

All administrators spoke highly of a tool called the *Educator’s Handbook* that is utilized for various means at their middle school. The *Educator’s Handbook* is a software utilized to document referrals and minor incidents (Educator handbook.com, 2019). The private company is located in Tallahassee, Florida. The school’s information technician



sets up the software system for each administrator and teachers. Every student in the entire school name and student number is placed in the system. Several teachers expressed how effective it is. One teacher stated that the system is great because when you write a referral, the administrators will get it immediately. One administrator indicated when the referral is written, they can immediately call for the student and assign the punishment in the system. The teacher immediately gets confirmation once the administrator has met with the student. For example, if a student has to have a tribunal due to committing a significant school offense, the administrator can print out all documents regarding prior and current referrals and then can discuss them in the meeting. Parents are also able to receive information regarding their child from *Educators' Handbook* via e-mail or a handout. One teacher suggested that every school national wide should obtain the *Educator's Handbook* because it is paperless and not time-consuming.

### **Finding 9: Sign in and Sign out Sheet Discipline Sheet**

There was the only one teacher during the interviews that mentioned the concept of the “sign in and sign out discipline sheet.” When students commit offenses in a classroom setting, the teacher would give the student a discipline sheet with his or signature on it and then pass the student on to the next teacher across the hallway or close by. The discipline sheet consists of questions for the student to complete in the class that he or she was passed to in the 30-minute time out sessions. The sign in and sign out discipline sheet entails questions such as:

- What did you do?
- Why did you do it?

- Why you are not going to do it again?
- What did you do wrong?

Once the student has completed the questions and the 30 minutes is up, the teacher then signs the sheet, and the student returns to their initial class. The discipline sheet is collected by the teacher. A student can obtain more than one discipline sheet in a day. If a student receives two or more discipline sheets, then he or she would be assigned lunch detention. One teacher also expressed that students sometimes would take advantage of the discipline sheet because of several factors. The reasons may include: wanting to go to another teacher's room because their friends are there; do not like the initial teacher, or they do not want to do the classroom assignments. One teacher stated that the sign in and sign out discipline procedure needs some revisions.

### **Finding 10: PBIS**

All participants of the study talked about a concept called PBIS, however different views stimulated. PBIS is a program that school districts nationwide have implemented in their school systems. The objective of PBIS is to construct a positive school environment for learning and progression. In addition, the system is intended to lessen behavior problems. Gomez (2017) indicated that the notion of PBIS focuses on supporting positive deeds by rewarding students. One administrator said that PBIS is very effective at their school. At this middle school, when students exhibit a good deed or display good behavior they can be rewarded gift cards, candy, trophies, and certificates.

Some teachers do not feel as though PBIS was effective. One teacher stated that PBIS is not effective because it is not consistent. The teacher went on to say that when

the PBIS was first introduced to the school staff, everyone was on board, however throughout the school year certain teachers were participating. Another teacher felt as though PBIS needs some revision such as teachers knowing how to manage disruptions utilizing PBIS. One teacher stated, “To be honest there is a lack of training about PBIS.” According to PBIS Rewards (2019), an effective PBIS structure depends on the commitment from the entire school staff.

### **Finding 11: Mentoring**

Almost every participant in the research study emphasized the importance of mentoring students. Lindt and Blair (2017) stated that mentoring relationships can help students transition through middle school during adolescence. One administrator discussed how individual teachers are appointed to mentor students with behavioral or personal issues. Students meet up with their selected teacher after school to discuss any concerns or issues. A huge aspect of mentoring students is gaining trust from students. Students have to feel comfortable with discussing specific issues with that particular teacher. However, students have to be aware that teachers have to report any major concerns that are detrimental or may cause harm to the student or others.

One teacher expressed that their middle school have several mentoring programs for students that are benefiting in various ways. For example, there is a mentoring program for girls that focus on life lessons, relationships, self-esteem, and academics. One administrator discussed a program called the *zero period* that was established in 2017. During the zero periods, teachers are available 30 minutes before school start for students to come in to be tutored or mentored. During this time, the teacher can gain a

positive relationship with students. Some students come every day or others if necessary. Another administrator mentioned another mentoring program at the middle school called the *Sources of Strength*. This platform was developed 1998 (Schtz, 2018). The *Sources of Strength* is a project within the school that is steered by a teacher advisor that focuses on changing unhealthy relationships, preventing bullying, alcohol and drug abuse, and suicide, involving students. A teacher is recommended by the school principal in which he or she has to go through training to become a Sources of Strength peer advisor. One administrator mentioned that the students would meet with their peer advisors after school. During the group meetings, students would engage in forums, critical thinking activities, role playing, and games. One teacher expressed that *Sources of Strength* is an excellent program for the students and the school as a whole.

### **Study Limitations**

The limitations of this research study contain the small sample size of teachers and administrators who have the involvement with students that have committed school violence acts that include fighting, assaults on school staff, carrying weapons to school and other acts. The sample was not likely to be the ideal model for generalization, but a way of gathering data for the research. The sample included teachers and administrators that had various perspectives that provided unique outlooks and conclusions. Another limitation involved the rescheduling of interviews. When time to conduct the interviews, several teachers became sick due to the weather. Therefore, I had to rearrange my schedule to be to travel back to the county after rescheduling the interviews.

## **Recommendations**

The recommendations for this study are highlighted on the strength of the literature review. The first recommendation is based on the findings of this study which will benefitting to develop a school violence prevention protocol plan. None of the teachers could call to mind professional developing that they have received regarding school violence prevention school that consists of fighting, assaults on students and staff, and other school violence acts. A middle school in the surrounding county could be the trial school. The school violence prevention protocol plan would consist of strategies that participants in the study utilized and confirmed to be effective. The school violence prevention plan should be implemented through professional development training by administrators. All staff members would be placed in groups to meet twice a school semester regarding follow up. An administrator and a lead teacher would be in charge of the training. The administrators of the groups should meet one a month to discuss the school violence prevention plan and other essential elements. The plan should be tested for one school year.

The second recommendation is to conduct a quantitative study based on the number of school violence incidences during the school year that involved the testing of the school violence prevention protocol plan at the selected middle school. The study would combine all grade levels. All disciplinary referrals would be included. The referrals would be separated based on incidences such as fighting; students carry a weapon to school, violent, or disruptive behaviors. The results of the study would be shared and discussed in school staff meeting. The conclusions of the study would

determine if the school violence prevention plan that was established for that school year was effective. It can also provide essential data to make revisions to the plan.

### **Implications**

This research study constructed a positive social change by supplying modernized information on the concern of preventing school violence from the outlook of middle school teachers and administrators. Being on one accord as a school district as far as preventing school violence acts is essential. Every teacher and administrator have their unique way on how to handle student behaviors. Therefore, this research will enlighten other school staff members on effective school violence prevention techniques that may not only work for the individual but the entire school district as well. The positive social modification can also exist if teachers and administrators gain positive relationships with students. This includes listening, emphasizing, and showing concern in their personal lives. There is a possibility that the results in student's behaviors may lessen incidents of school violence. The total meaningful social change is the professional development and training of school staff regarding the abilities to be proactive to lessening school violence occurrences. With school staff from various districts around the United States learning how to recognize various acts and behaviors of the student, various school crimes may not have a chance to occur. A depreciation in school violence will constitute safer school environments.

### **Conclusion**

Bronfenbrenner's ecological theory (1994) indicated that certain aspects that affect an individual's progress and growth has a significant impact on how their life will

transpire. From an infant to an adolescent, individuals develop certain behaviors that he or she observed. During these periods, individuals acquire the understanding of feelings and emotions. School violence does not occur unless there is something that affects a student negatively, for example, aspects concerning social media and family issues. Detections of certain behaviors of students are critical in preventing school violence. Therefore, it will take a collective effort to prevent school violence from occurring.

This research study is aiming to promote social change within middle schools and possibly other levels of educational facilities around the United States by contributing to effective means of preventing school violence to ensure safe environments. The conclusions of this research study suggested that it is significant to have proactive prevention protocols in place to provide a safe, learning environment. Ultimately, it will definitely take the collaboration of teachers and administrations around the United States to create effective prevention methods because they are so tightly integrated with students. School violence prevention nationwide epidemic. Teachers spend more time with students on a regular school day. Teachers obtain unique relationships with students. Teachers can comprehend the negativity impact of various school violence acts such as fighting, assaults on staff members and bullying on other students. Teachers have to immediately respond to the incidences and convey the encounter to a resolution managed by the school administrator. Based on teacher's perspectives from this study, administrators have to be less lenient on students when it comes to disciplining them due to various school violence acts. Teachers want to know that administrators have their back as well. Teachers also believe that not all students deserve numerous chances.

However, if they are given several chances, the consequences have to be more active so that the student wants to continue to commit offenses.

While students are away from school, parents or guardians need to be more engaged in their child's life and aware of friends and associates. Parent communication and effective relationships with school authorities are essential as well. School safety is the number one priority for all students and staff. The continuance of professional development specific security measures to be put in place to ensure safety then what is necessary has to be established.



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## Appendix A: Permission to Copyright

Subject: Regarding Your Dissertation "*Examining the Perceptions of School Violence through Views of Middle School Students, Parents, Teachers and Community Members*"

Date/Time: Thu, Jan 25, 2017 at 9:43 A.M.

From: Carlesia Britt <XXXXXXXXXX>

To: Teresa Bellflower <XXXXXXXXXX>

Dear Dr. Teresa Bellflower,

My name is Carlesia Britt. I am a Walden University Criminal Justice Doctoral student. I am in the process of preparing a dissertation for publication. The title of my dissertation is "*Middle School, Teachers and Administrators' Views Concerning the Prevention of School Violence.*" I really enjoyed reading your dissertation, "*Examining the Perceptions of School Violence through the Views of Middle School Students, Parents, Teachers and Community Members*" that was published in 2010, and feel that is a vital artifact that is beneficial in today's time.

I am seeking permission to include your material in my publication. The work will be used in the following manner: Modifying your interview questions in your dissertation to align with my research questions to be utilized as the Interview Guide. I have attached the modified document. If given permission, you will be mentioned in the methodology section in my dissertation.

Please indicate your approval of this request by completing the information below though email. This will confirm that you own the copyright to the above-described material. Looking forward in hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Carlesia D. Britt  
XXXXXXXXXX

For copyright owner use:

PERMISSION GRANTED FOR THE USE REQUESTED ABOVE:

By:

Title:

Date:

Subject: Re: Regarding Your Dissertation ““*Examining the Perceptions of School Violence through the Views of Middle School Students, Parents, Teachers and Community Members*”

Date/Time: Thu, Jan 28, 2017 at 7:17 P.M.

From: Teresa Bellflower <XXXXXXXXXX>

To: Carlesia Britt <XXXXXXXXXX>

I received your email. I have no objections to you modifying my interview questions and using in your dissertation.

Subject: Re: Permission

Date/Time: Sun, Jan 28, 2017 at 2:44 P.M.

From: Teresa Bellflower <XXXXXXXXXX>

To: Carlesia Britt <XXXXXXXXXX>

For copyright owner use:

PERMISSION GRANTED FOR THE USE REQUESTED ABOVE:

By: Teresa Bellflower

Title: “Examining the Perceptions of School Violence through the Views of Middle School Students, Parents, Teachers and Community Members

Date: 1/28/2018

## Appendix B: Interview Guide for Teachers and Administrators

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Time: \_\_\_\_\_

Location: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Interviewee: \_\_\_\_\_

1. Are you familiar with school violence prevention practices at your school that have or could affect student behavior?
2. Do you feel that schools need more or less practices that address school violence?
3. What are some current school violence prevention strategies in your school?
4. What are the most effective school violence prevention strategies you have used in the past?
5. What are the least effective school violence prevention strategies you have used in the past?
6. What is your perspective on teachers carrying firearms to school?
7. What is your perspective of metal detectors being placed in schools?
8. What types of communication concerning rules and school violence prevention do you think would be beneficial?
9. To what extent, if any, do you think that the climate of the school affects school violence prevention? How?
10. What do you believe about school violence in schools and the impact that it has on students?
11. How can the various acts of school violence be avoided?



12. How relevant is record-keeping (data support system) for managing school violence issues?
13. Do you feel that there are any additional barriers to effective school violence that we have not discussed yet? If so, what are they?
14. Do you have anything else you like to contribute that I did not mention?

I appreciate you taking the time to contribute to my study. As stated earlier, your name will be confidential. Also, the information that you shared will only be utilized for the research study.

## Appendix C: Audit Trail

Date	Party	Content
8/30/2018	<i>Middle Principal</i>	Receive consent form from Principal
9/10/2018	<i>County School Superintendent</i>	Receive consent form from School Superintendent
10/5/2018	<i>Middle School Principal</i>	Email Participants letter and consent form through staff email by Principal
10/15/2018	<i>Researcher/Participants</i>	Recruitment Begin
12/13/2018	<i>Researcher</i>	Change Recruitment Procedure
1/10/2019	<i>Researcher/participants</i>	Recruitment ended
1/13-15/2019	<i>Researcher</i>	Sampling
1/23/2019	<i>Researcher and Participants</i>	Interviews Begin
2/6/2019	<i>Researcher and Participants</i>	Interviews Ended
1/24-2/15/19	<i>Researcher</i>	Transcribe interviews
2/20-28/2019	<i>Researcher and Participants</i>	Member-Checking
3/1/2019	<i>Researcher</i>	Secured all information once data analyses complete