

Parental Aspirations On the Safety of Learners in Rural Primary Schools

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Abstract

The safety of learners in schools has received strong attention globally and is now considered a serious issue in South Africa. Schools as areas of teaching and learning can convey their educational mandate freely from any harm to learners, crimes and violence. The safety of learners in school is therefore essential. Parents have greater concerns as they wish learners to be in a safe environment where teaching and learning can take place freely without disruptions. This study investigated parental aspirations on the safety of learners in rural primary schools in the Vhembe East District in the Limpopo Province. Purposive sampling was used to select circuit managers, principals of primary schools, school management team members, educators and parents to form the study sample. Data was collected through face to face and telephone interviews and analyzed thematically. The results show that parents aspire a safe school learning environment for their children. However, safety in schools is compromised and learners' lives in danger, resulting in teaching and learning in rural primary schools in the Vhembe East District adversely affected. Parents do not acknowledge the efforts made by the DBE to make schools a safer place for learners for successful teaching and learning because of their unfulfilled promises. The study recommends that the government must make sure that basic services are offered in rural primary schools. Results suggest that parents think that the provision of clean running water and security guards may contribute to a conducive learning environment. Learner transport services must be made available for all needy learners in the rural areas. Parental involvement and collaboration with professional organizations can enhance the safety of learners in rural primary schools.

Keywords: parental aspiration, security, safe school environment, School Safety Survey, learner