Perceptions of administrators, counselors, teachers, and students concerning school safety and violence in selected secondary schools in north Louisiana

Sharilynn Duckworth-Loche
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PERCEPTIONS OF ADMINISTRATORS, COUNSELORS, TEACHERS, AND
STUDENTS CONCERNING SCHOOL SAFETY AND VIOLENCE IN
SELECTED SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN NORTH LOUISIANA

by

Sharilynn Loche, B.S., M.Ed., Ed.S.

A Dissertation Presented in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Doctor of Education

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We hereby recommend that the dissertation prepared under our supervision by Sharilynn Loche, entitled "Perceptions of Administrators, Counselors, Teachers, and Students Concerning School Safety and Violence in Selected Secondary Schools in North Louisiana" be accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Education.

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ABSTRACT

The primary purposes of this study were to determine the perceptions of administrators, counselors, teachers, and students, regarding levels of school safety and violence in selected secondary schools in north Louisiana; the types of violence that had the greatest impact on safety; and strategies that were currently being used to address violence in the schools. The secondary purpose was to determine the differences in perceptions of school safety and violence of administrators, counselors, and teachers by ethnic background, gender and years of experience. A tertiary purpose was to determine the perceptions of students by ethnic background, gender, age, and grade level. Additionally, this study investigated how the level of violence in the selected schools has changed, the differences in perceptions based on size of schools, the differences in perceptions by all group members, and the professional development activities that have been offered to address school safety and violence. The sample consisted of 581 school members from 11 schools. Data were analyzed using descriptive and statistical analysis.

While administrators perceived their schools to be less safe than counselors, students perceived their schools to be less safe than teachers and counselors. Physical attacks/fights among students, vandalism, and verbal abuse of teachers had the greatest impact on school safety as perceived by administrators and counselors. Vandalism, verbal abuse of teachers, and student possession, distribution, and use of drugs had the greatest impact on school safety.
as perceived by teachers and students. All four groups perceived that incidents of violence had remained the same or decreased. Principals indicated that teachers monitoring the halls, closed campuses, and the use of visitor passes/registration were the most popular violence prevention methods being used. The most popular types of workshop attended by school personnel were on gang violence, school violence, drug education, and conflict resolution. Regardless of the variables of ethnicity, gender, or years of experience, administrators, counselors, and teachers seemed to possess similar perceptions toward levels of school safety and violence. Regardless of the variables of ethnicity, gender, age, and grade level, students seemed to possess similar perceptions toward levels of school safety and violence.
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And, to my husband, Howard Loche, and son, Howard Loche, II, I cannot find the words to express my appreciation for their love, patience, and support throughout this process.
Violence in schools has reached an all time high. In schools across the country, both urban and suburban, public and private, students and school personnel feel unsafe. A school shooting that occurred at Columbine High School on April 20, 1999, which was categorized as the worst in U.S. history, happened at a small suburban city in Littleton, Colorado. Two students, dressed in black trench coats and armed with guns and bombs, opened fire at the students in the school. Twelve students and one teacher were killed. Approximately 21 people were injured in the incident. After killing their victims, the two teens committed suicide (“High School Massacre,” 1999). When connected with the school shootings at Thurston High School in Springfield, Oregon, and the Westside Middle School in Jonesboro, Arkansas, the massacre in Littleton appears to be part of a growing trend of homicides in suburban schools (“How could,” 1999). The concern by educators, parents, students, and community has resulted in national and state legislation to prevent violence and promote safety. The adoption of the National Education Goals in 1990 reflected the concern for school safety. Goal Six states that, by the year 2000, every school in America will be free of drugs and violence and will offer a disciplined environment conducive to learning (General Accounting Office, 1995). The Safe Schools Act of 1994 authorized the Secretary of Education to make grants to local school districts which had high rates of youth
violence. Schools could use the grant money to provide educational activities in to reduce violence. The Safe and Drug-Free Schools and Communities Act of 1994, which was formerly the Drug-Free Schools and Communities Act of 1984, was expanded to include violence-prevention as a major program element. This act authorized the Secretary of Education to make grants to states to reduce violence and deter the use of illegal drugs and alcohol. Grants could be approved for activities such as violence-prevention and education programs for students, technical assistance and training, and the development of violence and drug prevention programs that involved parents and community agencies. Approximately 482 million dollars were appropriated for this program for the fiscal year 1995. In 1994, Congress passed the Family and Community Endeavor Schools Act and the Community Schools Youth Services and Supervision Grant Program. This act authorized the Department of Education and Health and Human Services to provide grants to improve the development of at-risk children in areas where there were large amounts of poverty and violent crime (General Accounting Office, 1995).

Early in the Clinton administration plans were made to designate a team of prosecutors to assist local and state law enforcement agencies with the use of sting and surveillance operations, wiretaps, and investigative grand juries to develop cases against gangs. This initiative, which also called for the creation of mobile special-response teams, operated under the U.S. Department of Justice. This program called for an increase in the federal government’s role in prosecuting violent crimes, a job which previously was largely reserved for the states (Jones, 1994).
The U.S. Department of Education offered grants to train disadvantaged students in violence counseling. The program, The Training in Early Childhood Education and Violence Counseling Program, was authorized by the Higher Education Act of 1992. The amendments of this act required higher education grant recipients to develop a course of study leading to a two-year certificate or degree in violence counseling. Participants in the program were also required to obtain a significant amount of field experience in this area (Jones, 1994).

According to a report by the National School Boards Association, the two most frequent types of school violence are student assaults on students and use of weapons in the classroom. The next most frequent acts of violence included attacks on teachers by students, ethnic and racial violence, and gang-related violence. Each year approximately three million crimes occur in or near schools; 16,000 take place each day, or one every six seconds. Jones (1994), reported that school violence not only results in the loss of human life, but also the cost for taxpayers is more than $200 million a year. School violence, in addition, has a negative impact on student learning and achievement. Aggressive and disruptive classroom behavior, according to Jones, (1994), results in poor achievement and poor peer relationships, which eventually lead to the child taking on other anti-social behaviors. Aside of generating fears for everyone’s safety, violence in the schools is diverting both resources and energy from instructional time. When violence occurs in the schools, it precludes teachers and students from concentrating on teaching and learning.
The National Education Association (NEA) reports that every day, approximately 160,000 students skip classes because they are afraid of being physically harmed while at school (Jones, 1994).

The increased amount of violence, according to McCune (1994), has forced many school districts to spend more of their budgets on violence prevention technology and programs. Because many school districts are not given extra funding for such technology and programs to address the issue of school violence, monies are being taken away from other areas of the budget.

Statement of the Problem

The problem of school safety and violence has been discussed nationwide. The concern about school violence has increased so much in recent years that it has necessitated changes in educational public policy. Congress, for example, passed the School Safety Act of 1993, and the Centers for Disease Control presently considers violence among youth to be a national epidemic (Furlong, 1994). The Safe Schools Act of 1993 appropriated money for school districts that had high rates of crime and violence. The amount of money distributed was based on 15% of the children coming from economically disadvantaged families. Although the districts could spend the money as they wanted, not more than 33% could be spent on security and metal detectors (Rowicki, 1994). President Clinton signed the 1994 Gun-Free Schools Act, which mandated a one-year expulsion for students who
brought weapons on the school campus. This Act bolstered the already in place “zero tolerance” weapon policies that some states and school systems had. The Federal government, and some states, also provide funds for violence prevention activities (Schwartz, 1996).

Of the three million crimes committed in America each year, 11% occur in the 85,000 public schools. Every hour, more than 2,000 students and approximately 40 teachers are physically attacked. Nationwide, a crime is committed at school every six seconds (Sautter, 1995). According to Lantieri (1995), nearly 900 teachers are threatened on school grounds every hour. The National School Safety Center reported that in 1994, 35 deaths and 92 injuries resulted from guns in the schools (Sautter, 1995).

According to Furlong (1995), victims of school violence are usually males who perceive schools as unsafe. Although more males than females have traditionally belonged to gangs, female membership in gangs has increased in recent years. Females are smoking more than males, and are more and more joining gangs at a very early age. According to Arnette and Walsleben (1998), a significant factor contributing to an environment of fear and intimidation in the schools was the presence of gangs. The authors reported in 1995 that in a survey of urban, rural, and suburban areas by the Department of Justice, there were approximately 23,000 youth gangs in the United States with as many as 660,000 members.

While violence among youth is considered to be one of the most pressing concerns in America today, it is also quite controversial. Recent studies by Ceperley (1994) and Noguera (1995) have indicated that violence among youth, especially in schools, is increasing. In addition, guns, instead of fists, are being used more often by youth and adults
to settle disputes. And, finally, whereas violence among youth was once considered an urban public school problem, and a result of poverty and a dysfunctional family environment; stable suburban and rural communities as well as private schools are also experiencing the high rates of crime (Schwartz, 1996).

The American Psychological Association (APA) Commission on Violence and Youth in 1993, focused on the interpersonal nature of violence among youth which the commission defined as “behavior that threatens, attempts, or completes intentional infliction of physical or psychological harm” (Mulhem, 1994, p. 12). As far as schools are concerned, violence involves a large range of situations which includes criminal behavior, harassment, and misconduct. The APA contends that violent acts usually involve victims, perpetrators, and one or more witnesses (Mulhem). Examples of school violence that usually occur, according to the APA, include (a) use and possession of weapons, (b) bomb threats, (c) sexual harassment and assault, (d) corporal punishment involving students, (e) racial harassment, (f) verbal and physical assault, (g) bullying, (h) arson, (i) extortion, (j) theft, (k) cult activity or threat, (l) hazing, and (m) gang activity (Mulhem, 1994).

In a national poll taken in 1993, the public ranked as the biggest problems facing schools today: (a) school funding, (b) drug abuse, (c) discipline, and (d) fighting or violence (Ceperley, 1994). In that same year, the United States Department of Justice reported that approximately 100,000 students were taking guns to school with them on a daily basis, and an estimated 160,000 remained at home each day because they feared other students who brought guns to school (Ceperley). Noguera (1995), stated that academic achievement,
which has traditionally been the most recurring topic on the country’s education agenda, has now been surpassed by the concerns of violence.

School administrators, according to Sheley (1995), have, for good reasons, named violence and security as primary problems in their schools. A survey taken of high school students in Baltimore, for example, revealed that nearly half of the male students had carried a gun to school on at least one occasion (Hackett & Sandza, 1988). During that same year, of the 11,000 students in the 8th and 10th grades surveyed, 3% of the male students reported having taken a gun to school (National School Safety Center, 1989).

Violence has been reported by schools, parents, caregivers, and healthcare providers as affecting children at earlier ages. While most of the reports of school violence have focused on middle and high school students, more and more elementary principals have witnessed violence in their schools (Walker, 1995). Hechinger (1994) reported that the findings of a study of first and second graders in Washington, D.C. revealed that 45% said they had witnessed muggings, 31% had witnessed shootings, and 39% had seen dead bodies.

According to Grady (1996), weak administrators contribute to the rise in school violence. Small minor acts of violence become major in a school where discipline is not properly applied or enforced. Students are more tempted to use force and/or threaten to get what they want and bring harm to someone they do not like.

Both teachers and administrators need special skills to deal with potentially violent students; however, many may not be receiving training in those skills in teacher preparation programs. A study conducted by the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing School Violence Advisory Panel revealed that of 362 teacher and administrator preparation
programs, only 4% of the program graduates left their programs prepared to effectively address the issue of violence (Hughes, 1994). That same study revealed that approximately 90% of the administrators, teachers, and support personnel felt there was a need for such training (Dear, 1994). In an effort to assist and effectively handle potentially violent situations in the schools, the California Legislature amended the California Education Code to require the Teacher Credentialing Agency to provide activities that will help teachers be better able to handle violent behaviors. In 1993, the California Legislature passed legislation to amend the previous code to require that instruction and school safety be a prerequisite in order to obtain teacher and administrator credentials. Effective January 1, 1996, all colleges and universities in the state of California were required to modify their curriculum to include instruction on school safety (Hughes, 1994).

In June of 1992, Pepperdine University developed a model curriculum entitled “School Safety Leadership Curriculum.” This curriculum focused on providing the skills and knowledge that administrators and teachers would need to insure and maintain a safe and secure school environment. The curriculum included modules in (a) peer aggression and self-esteem, (b) gangs and youth violence, (c) preparing for the unexpected, (d) balancing student rights and responsibilities, and (e) making every school campus safe. This curriculum was funded by a grant from the Pacific Telesis Foundation to develop a model curriculum on developing a safe school environment for administrator and teacher preparation programs (Hughes, 1994).

In a study conducted in 1995 of 52 principals, recommendations were made concerning the preparation of teachers in handling violent situations. The principals
concluded that teachers needed positive methods for the prevention of violence and in
developing safe and conducive learning environments. The principals also believed that
these skills should be provided to the teachers by the use of carefully planned staff
development programs. Because teacher education programs may not have prepared these
teachers adequately enough to handle these situations, principals felt that the schools should
ultimately be responsible for preparing teachers for possible violent situations. Teacher
education programs, according to the principals, may have prepared teachers for discipline
and classroom management problems, but such preparation is not enough to handle the
challenges that schools are faced with today. Principals also suggested that perhaps teachers
may need more special education training. It was noted that those teachers who had been
training in special education seemed better able to handle students with discipline problems
(Grady, 1996).

A study in Arkansas concerning perceptions of violence in the schools and the need
for violence programs concluded that there was a need for violence prevention programs.
A total of 239 administrators in elementary, middle, and high school, responded to the
survey. Findings were consistent for both rural and urban schools. Although it is believed
that violence prevention inservice programs are needed, most school districts, according to
Nims and Wilson (1998), are just starting to implement programs. Part of the reason for the
prolongation of violence prevention programs is because school personnel lack the
necessary knowledge and skills to devise and implement the programs.

U.S. college and university teacher education programs were surveyed to determine
what is currently being done in to prepare teachers for school violence. Department heads
and college deans of colleges and universities who held membership in the American
Association of Colleges for Teacher Education, received questionnaires. The questionnaires
surveyed polices and attitudes in regard to inclusion of violence prevention as a part of the
curriculum for teacher education. The questionnaire asked if there were any courses that
centered exclusively on violence prevention. The questionnaire also requested participants
to tell if the institution sponsored any workshops in violence prevention, and if there was
any consultation by faculty and/or staff on a local or state level concerning school violence
issues. Results from the 350 administrators that responded indicated that most institutions
were doing little in preparing teachers to handle problems of school violence. However, less
than half of the respondents felt their teachers needed additional preparation in violence
prevention (Nims & Wilson, 1998).

Ascher (1994), reported that training should not only be provided for administrators,
counselors, teachers, and other professionals; but, also for other
employees, such as cafeteria staff, paraprofessionals, secretaries, custodians, and bus
drivers. In addition, in-service training should include, not only how to address violent
situations in the classroom, but also in the cafeteria, hallways, and on the school buses.

Because the issue of school violence is a large concern of administrators, teachers,
staff, students, and parents, these are perhaps the most challenging times for educators.
Even though schools must play a vital role in the ending of school violence, it will take the
cooperation of everyone to be successful in combating the problem of violence in the
schools. Students and teachers may have to learn skills such as conflict resolution or peer
mediation. Parents and community agencies may need to assist the schools by volunteering
their services, and being involved in all aspects of the children’s education. Local, state, and federal governments can also be supportive by making and enforcing policies that will assist in the reduction of violence in the schools. They can also provide funding for materials and training needed to implement safety measures and various programs. With the comprehensive efforts of many groups, schools will have a better opportunity of decreasing or preventing violence in the schools (Mulhem, 1994).

The continued rise of violence in the schools is directly affecting students and educators by causing a decrease in the effectiveness of schools and thus inhibiting learning. The lack of discipline in the schools, according to Sewall and Chamberlin (1997), is a significant cause of the disruption of the learning process. A study conducted in Little Rock Arkansas School District, revealed that principals, teachers, parents, and students all identified discipline as a major problem in the schools. Of the 26 principals surveyed, 46% said they felt discipline was too lax. Teachers named discipline as their number one concern. Teachers in junior high schools tended to perceive discipline more negatively than other groups surveyed. Parents of students in private schools indicated that safety and discipline were significant factors in choosing a school for their children. Of the 77 private school parents surveyed, 39% indicated a lack of discipline and safety in the public schools as their reason for their choice. Forty-five percent of the private school parents said improved safety and discipline were the conditions which would allow them to enroll their children back in the public schools. These same parents also noted that the information they had regarding the public schools came primarily from the news media rather than parents who had children in the public schools, or from students in the public schools (Sewall & Chamberlin, 1997).
In view of the large concern of the issue of school safety and violence voiced by educators, parents, students, and community, there is a great need to provide research on the issue of school safety and violence. Violence in the schools is increasing, and as a result is having a negative impact on student learning and achievement. Maslow, in his theory of human motivation, believed that self-actualization, which is the highest level of need, cannot be obtained if the lower needs such as hunger, safety, and belonging have not been satisfied. Although the safety needs are considered among the lower, basic needs, the higher level needs of belonging, esteem, self-actualization, and aesthetic needs cannot be obtained unless the lower level needs have been met. Students that attend school and fear for their lives will certainly not be able to concentrate or put their best efforts into learning. Self-actualization, which is one of the primary goals of education, cannot be a consideration if students fear for their safety (Maslow, 1970).

Purpose of the Study

The primary purposes of this study were to determine (a) the perceptions of administrators, counselors, teachers, and students, regarding levels of school safety and violence in selected secondary schools in north Louisiana, (b) the types of violence that had the greatest impact on safety, and (c) what strategies were currently being used to address violence in the schools. The secondary purposes of this study were to determine the differences in perceptions of school safety and violence of administrators, counselors, and teachers due to ethnic background, gender, age, and years of experience, as well as perceptions by students by ethnic background, gender, and grade level. Additionally, this
study investigated (a) how the level of violence in the selected schools has changed, (b) the
differences in perceptions based on size of schools, (c) the differences in perceptions by all
group members, and (d) the types of professional development activities being implemented
to address school violence and safety.

Justification of the Study

In recent years, Americans have experienced violence in the schools as never before
imagined (Gaustad, 1991). Many young children and teenagers have experienced
violence in their homes and communities. For some children, according to Gaustad, violence
is a way of life. These children have witnessed their parents interacting in an abusive
manner, and for them, violent behavior has been the norm in their community. Because of
these experiences, these children have brought these behaviors with them to school.

Various explanations have been offered to account for the crime and violence that
threaten the school environment today. Jones (1994), identified several causes for violence
in the schools. Among those included (a) poverty, (b) racism, (c) unemployment,
(d) substance abuse, (e) frequent exposure of violence by the media, (f) abusive or
inadequate parenting practices, and (g) easy access to weapons. A report that emerged from
the school board association in Florida discovered that 86% of the weapons seized from
students during the 1986-88 school year came from the homes of students (Smith, 1990).
According to the Center to Prevent Handgun Violence, for every household in the United
States, there are approximately two guns (Gaustad, 1991).
By studying the perceptions of administrators, counselors, teachers, and students, school officials can more fully understand the impact on learning and achievement that school violence is having on the schools. Where areas of concern are noted, data can be used to establish policy to meet those needs.

The results of this study may assist school districts in incorporating and developing more effective violence prevention strategies. More effective violence prevention strategies will, in turn, enhance the school and learning environment. The results of this study can, in contribute to the growing body of knowledge that presently exists concerning school safety and violence.

Recommendations can be made to school boards as to what methods are effective in reducing school discipline problems and violence so that they may reassess their budgets and include monies for items that will combat violence. The results of these efforts ultimately will be to improve student learning and achievement. Although Louisiana has not yet experienced any tragedies such as the shooting rampage in Littleton, Colorado, school officials are meeting to discuss ways to prevent the type of violence that happened in Colorado, as well as several other schools across the country. On April 26, 1999, Rich Lieberman met with Louisiana educators, law enforcement personnel, and state officials concerning school violence. Lieberman, who is in charge of crisis intervention programs in the Los Angeles public schools, stressed the importance of intervention. Lieberman noted that students should be taught how to handle conflicts and anger, and there should be some programs in place for students such as suicide prevention, and drug and alcohol abuse programs (“Stress, guns, violence,” 1999).
Theoretical Framework

When violence occurs in schools, it prevents teachers, as well as students, from concentrating on teaching and learning. The National Education Association (Gutloff, 1999) reports that 160,000 students skip classes every day because they fear physical harm. Students, according to Jones, (1994), are the largest group of victims and witnesses of violence. While the highest rate of violence in schools is student against student, teacher responses have also been the subject of studies. Of those teachers who rated their schools as fair or poor, 44% reported that they felt safe at their respective schools. Teachers that have been victimized may require special counseling to avoid blaming themselves or perceiving the incident as a professional failure (Jones, 1994).

A review of theorists such as Maslow helps to further explain why it is important that schools be safe. In his Hierarchy of Needs, Maslow includes the components of (a) physiological needs, (b) safety, (c) belongingness and affection, (d) self-esteem, and (e) self-actualization or self-fulfilment. Safety according to Maslow, includes security, stability, dependency, protection, freedom from fear, anxiety, and chaos; need for structure, law, and order. The first level of the hierarchy is physiological needs, which include the basic biological functions of humans. The second level, safety and security, derives from the desire for a calm, smooth, stable society. In the third level, belonging, love, and social needs, are very important in today’s society. The esteem needs, the fourth level, are satisfied by achievement, competence, status, and recognition. The fifth level, self-actualization, includes the need to be what one wants to be, achieve fulfillment of life goals, and realizing one’s full potential. In order to reach the higher level of self-actualization or self-fulfillment, Maslow
contends that the lower level needs must first be met. The implication for educational organizations is that if the lower level needs, such as safety and security, are not met, then students will not be able to attain the higher order levels of need. He further states that people are usually good and will strive to do good. It is only when one is not being able to meet these needs that frustration develops, and undesirable behavior occurs. Maslow further contends that a common reaction to the threat of safety is that human beings will tend to respond to their fear by preparing to defend themselves. Students that go to school and fear for their lives, according to Maslow’s Theory, will never be motivated to achieve the higher level needs such as self-actualization or self-fulfillment. Self-actualization, according to Maslow, is to become everything that one is capable of becoming; however, the ability to obtain this need rests upon prior satisfaction of the physiological, safety, love, and esteem needs. This is very significant because the objective of the educational system is to assist the student in reaching the self-actualization or self-fulfillment level (Maslow, 1970).

Many theories have evolved to explain violence. One theory, Zuckerman’s Sensation Theory, contends that violence and drug use are a direct result of sensation seeking behavior (Zuckerman, 1991). Another theory, Bandura’s Reciprocal Determinism Theory, states that people learn behaviors through modeling or observation of others. According to Bandura (1986), if applied effectively, the modeling can be effective and can be used to teach good behaviors. It is believed that children, therefore, learn and practice violence in school settings when they see, perceive, or experience the presence of violence. Children, for example, may bring weapons to school because they see other students carrying weapons, or use drugs that they see others using (Bandura).
In discussions of different types of character and society, Riesman (1950) talks about the tradition-directed, the inner-directed, and other-directed types of character. The tradition-directed person believes that conformity is directed by relations with various power groups. Behavior is controlled by the fear of being shamed. Inner-directed types of character are usually very stable, and do not need the approval of others in order to reach their goals. The other-directed type of character feels that the peer group is more important than in other cases which explains the increase in group relationships such as gangs. The need to be accepted and belong is very important for these individuals (Riesman).

The basic theory that forms the framework for this study is Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs. Maslow’s theory, which was developed on the premise that the lower level needs such as physiological and safety must be met before the higher level needs can be fulfilled, contends that effective learning can not take place in an unsafe environment. When schools are safe, they become productive places where both teachers and students can focus their attention on the learning process. Maslow’s theory also suggests that individuals react to fear by defending themselves. There have many instances of students carrying weapons to school for protection, or because they see other students with weapons (Bandura, 1986).

**Research Questions**

This study attempted to answer the following research questions:

1. What issues of violence do administrators perceive to have the greatest impact on school safety?
2. What issues of violence do counselors perceive to have the greatest impact on school safety?

3. What issues of violence do teachers perceive to have the greatest impact on school safety?

4. What issues of violence do students perceive to have the greatest impact on school safety?

5. Have incidents of violence increased as perceived by administrators?

6. Have incidents of violence increased as perceived by counselors?

7. Have incidents of violence increased as perceived by teachers?

8. Have incidents of violence increased as perceived by students?

9. What types of violence prevention methods are presently being used in the selected schools?

10. What types of professional development workshops or activities have administrators, counselors, and teachers participated in, that prepared them to deal with school violence?

**Hypotheses**

The researcher identified 12 issues of school safety and violence through a review of the literature. The results of an exploratory factor analysis of the survey data revealed that these 12 issues clustered together into two factors, each with an eigenvalue greater than 1. The first factor, which consisted of seven issues (physical attacks/fights among students; robbery/theft of items over $10; racial tensions; sale of drugs on school grounds; student possession, distribution, or use of alcohol or drugs; vandalism of school property; and,
verbal abuse of teachers), was labeled Disruption/Abuse. The second factor, which consisted of five issues (gang activity, physical abuse of teachers, sexual battery/rape, student possession or use of a firearm, and student possession or use of a weapon other than a firearm) was labeled Violence/Aggression. As a result of the literature review and the exploratory factor analysis, the following hypotheses were proposed:

1A. No significant differences exist in the perceptions of administrators regarding the factor of disruption/abuse due to ethnicity.

1B. No significant differences exist in the perceptions of administrators regarding the factor of violence/aggression due to ethnicity.

2A. No significant differences exist in the perceptions of administrators regarding the factor of disruption/abuse due to gender.

2B. No significant differences exist in the perceptions of administrators regarding the factor of violence/aggression due to gender.

3A. No significant differences exist in the perceptions of counselors regarding the factor of disruption/abuse due to years of experience.

3B. No significant differences exist in the perceptions of administrators regarding the factor of violence/aggression due to years of experience.

4A. No significant differences exist in the perceptions of counselors regarding the factor of disruption/abuse due to ethnicity.

4B. No significant differences exist in the perceptions of counselors regarding the factor of violence/aggression due to ethnicity.
5A. No significant differences exist in the perceptions of counselors regarding the factor of disruption/abuse due to years of gender.

5B. No significant differences exist in the perceptions of counselors regarding the factor of violence/aggression due to gender.

6A. No significant differences exist in the perceptions of counselors regarding the factor of disruption/abuse due to years of experience.

6B. No significant differences exist in the perceptions of counselors regarding the factor of violence/aggression due to years of experience.

7A. No significant differences exist in the perceptions of teachers regarding the factor of disruption/abuse due to ethnicity.

7B. No significant differences exist in the perceptions of teachers regarding the factor of violence/aggression due to ethnicity.

8A. No significant differences exist in the perceptions of teachers regarding the factor of disruption/abuse due to gender.

8B. No significant differences exist in the perceptions of teachers regarding the factor of violence/aggression due to gender.

9A. No significant differences exist in the perceptions of teachers regarding the factor of disruption/abuse due to years of experience.

9B. No significant differences exist in the perceptions of teachers regarding the factor of violence/aggression due to years of experience.

10A. No significant differences exist in the perceptions of students regarding the factor of disruption/abuse due to ethnicity.
10B. No significant differences exist in the perceptions of students regarding the factor of violence/aggression due to ethnicity.

11A. No significant differences exist in the perceptions of students regarding the factor of disruption/abuse due to gender.

11B. No significant differences exist in the perceptions of students regarding the factor of violence/aggression due to gender.

12A. No significant differences exist in the perceptions of students regarding the factor of disruption/abuse due to age.

12B. No significant differences exist in the perceptions of students regarding the factor of violence/aggression due to age.

13A. No significant differences exist in the perceptions of students regarding the factor of disruption/abuse due to grade level.

13B. No significant differences exist in the perceptions of students regarding the factor of violence/aggression due to grade level.

14A. No significant differences exist in the perceptions of school group members regarding the factor of disruption/abuse.

14B. No significant differences exist in the perceptions of school group members regarding the factor of violence/aggression.

15A. No significant differences exist in the perceptions of school group members regarding the factor of disruption/abuse due to size of school.

15B. No significant differences exist in the perceptions of school group members regarding the factor of violence/aggression.
Delimitations of the Study

The findings of this study must be considered in light of the following limitations:

1. The study was limited to 11 schools (4 small, 4 medium, and 3 large) in north Louisiana.

2. The study was limited to only public secondary schools.

3. Conclusions derived from this study are not necessarily generalizable to all populations across the state or the country.

4. Data were self-reported perceptions of administrators, counselors, teachers, and students.

Definition of Terms

For purposes of this study, the following terms are defined:

1. Administrators—refers to persons who were administratively certified by the Louisiana Department of Education in the state of Louisiana and who were serving as building level administrators at the time of the study.

2. Counselors—refers to persons who were certified as counselors by the Louisiana Department of Education in the State of Louisiana and who were serving as counselors at the time of the study.

3. Disruption/Abuse—one of the two identified factors of school safety and violence. This factor includes the issues of (a) physical attacks/fights among students; (b) robbery/theft of items over $10; (c) racial tensions; (d) sale of drugs on school grounds;
(e) student possession, distribution, or use of alcohol or drugs; (f) vandalism of school property; and, (g) verbal abuse of teachers.

4. **Large School**—public high schools that had enrollments of 1000 or more.

5. **Medium School**—public high schools that had enrollments of 300-999.

6. **Secondary Schools**—public schools that were considered high schools. This included schools with students in grades nine through twelve.

7. **Small School**—public high schools that had enrollments of less than 300.

8. **Students**—persons enrolled in the selected secondary schools in grades nine through twelve at the time of the study.

9. **Teachers**—refers to persons who held full-time classroom positions in the district and who were teaching in the selected schools at the time of the study.

10. **Violence**—all incidents of criminal behavior, misconduct, and harassment as defined by state and/or district policy.

11. **Violence/Aggression**—one of the two identified factors of school safety and violence. This factor includes the issues of (a) gang activity, (b) physical abuse of teachers, (c) sexual battery/rape, (d) student possession or use of a firearm, and (e) student possession or use of a weapon other than a firearm.
CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

School safety has become a national concern. This concern has resulted in both national and state legislation throughout the country. In light of the large concern of the issue of school safety and violence voiced by educators, parents, students, and community, there is a great importance to study the issue of school safety and violence. Violence in the schools is increasing, and as a result is having a negative impact on student learning and achievement. In addition, the increase of violence in the schools is proving to be an additional financial burden to schools. School districts are having to spend more of their budgets on violence prevention strategies and programs.

Although many school personnel believe that the problem is not as severe as the public believes, schools still have to be accountable to the growing public concern. (Bell, 1997c). In the 29th Annual Phi Delta Kappa/Gallup Poll (Bell, 1997c) of the public’s attitudes toward the public schools, 53% of the people polled indicated that they were either somewhat or very satisfied with the way schools were dealing with the drug problem. The second question, which dealt with “zero tolerance” policies calling for automatic suspension of students carrying drugs or alcohol into the school, found 86% saying they supported the policy. Some schools also have “zero tolerance” policies that call for automatic suspension of students who bring weapons to school. Nearly 96% of those polled supported this policy.
The sixth National Education Goal (U.S. Department of Education, 1998) states that by the year 2000, every school in America will be free of drugs, violence, alcohol, and firearms, and provide a safe environment that is conducive to learning. In order to achieve this goal, the Safe and Drug-Free Schools and Communities Act of 1994 was enacted. This act provided support for drug and violence prevention programs (Casserly, 1995). The act also included an evaluation component which required the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) to collect data, and determine the frequency, seriousness, and occurrences of violence in elementary and secondary schools. In response to the legislation, the NCES conducted a survey to obtain current data on school violence and discipline in the schools. The survey was conducted with a national sample of public elementary, middle, and high school in the 50 states and the District of Columbia. The survey requested data concerning crimes that had occurred at schools during the 1996-97 school year. Results of the survey showed that during the 1996-97 school year, approximately 4,000 incidents of rape or other types of sexual battery were reported in the schools. About 11,000 incidents of physical attacks or fights in which weapons were used were reported, and a total of 7,000 robberies were reported. In addition, an estimated 190,000 fights or physical attacks not involving weapons also occurred at the schools. Reported incidents of thefts totaled 115,000, and 98,000 incidents of vandalism (National Center for Education Statistics, 1998).

The concern of safety has not only become a problem in the inner city schools; suburban schools are also experiencing violence. A study conducted in 1990 at Texas A & M University found that many rural schools have worse incidents of violence than the national average (Kingery, 1990). Although crimes by youth in schools have declined,
according to Sautter (1995), the crimes have become more serious and violent. While the
arrest rate for youth has declined, Education USA reported that there has been an increase
of 14% of violent acts in schools (Landan, 1992).

In this chapter, a review of the current literature applicable to the perceptions of
school safety and violence is presented. The review of literature will be presented by the
discussion of four relevant topics: (a) The Problem of Violence in Society, (b) The Problem
of Violence in Schools, (c) Methods and Strategies Currently Used, and (d) What is
Currently Being Done to Prevent Violence in the Schools.

The Problem of Violence in Society

The United States, overall, has more homicides than any other country in the
industrial world. The Department of Justice reported that between 1988 and 1992 violent
crimes among juveniles had risen 24% (Sautter, 1995). A 1991 study indicated that one out
of every 18 students attending high school carried a gun. In 1992, 23,760 murders were
recorded which made homicide the tenth most common cause of death in the United States.
Although reports say that youth crime hit its high peak in the mid-1970s, 22 cities set
murder records in 1993. In 1970, a total of 1,660,643 youth age 18 and younger were
arrested. This accounted for approximately 26% of all arrests that year. Although the
number of youth arrested decreased in the 1980s and early 1990s, the types of crimes
committed by young people had become more serious. In addition, youth are committing
crimes at younger and younger ages (Sautter, 1995).
According to a survey of 700 schools conducted by the National School Board Association (NSBA) in 1994, school violence is worse now than in previous years (Petersen, 1996).

Templeton (1995) reported that on a normal day in the United States (a) 135,000 children take guns to school campuses, (b) 10 children die as a result of guns, and approximately 30 are wounded, (c) 211 arrests of children are made for abuse of drugs, (d) an estimated 2,795 teens get pregnant and 1,295 give birth, (e) nearly 1,512 teenagers quit school, (f) roughly 1,849 children suffer from abuse or neglect, (g) an estimated 3,288 children run away from home, and (h) approximately 2,989 children are victims of divorced homes. Even more troubling, according to the Children’s Defense Fund report in 1994, the number of children murdered as a result of guns from 1979 to 1991 far surpassed the number of American soldiers killed in the Vietnam war (Hill & Hill, 1994).

Over the last two decades, violence by and against youth has affected all racial and socio-economic lines. The number of assaults has dramatically increased. Although most acts of violence occur between people who know each other, incidents of random violence seem to be increasing. Factors that influence these acts of violence range from simple arguments to gang-related violence (Pereira, 1995). A survey conducted by the National School Boards Association reported that urban, suburban, and rural school superintendents ranked violence in the media, and family problems as the most important factors identified with the increase in violence (Elliott, 1994).

Although incidents of violence in the schools are appearing more often, violence is also a problem in society. In 1992, there were more than 111,000 reported incidents of violence. Of those incidents, 750 resulted in deaths in the workplace. One in every four
American households is a victim of a violent crime or theft. Over half of all Americans express their fears of walking the streets at night in their own neighborhoods; another one-fourth are afraid for their lives in their homes. Homicide, as a cause of death for many Americans, is only second to accidental injuries (Ceperley, 1994). The United States, overall, has the highest homicide rate in the industrial world. Crime is up more than 600% since the 1950s according to one New York Times estimate (Sautter, 1995).

The enormous amount of violence in movies, popular songs, and on television, has also been blamed for the epidemic of tragedies across the country. According to Ascher (1994), people who have grown up in poor urban neighborhoods with poor rundown deteriorated surroundings, tend to be unemployed or underemployed, and in constant fear of crime. These experiences, subsequently, result in angry youth accompanied by feelings of frustration, which make them like time bombs ready to explode (Ascher, 1994). Violence and drugs are not only a major concern in America, but also societies throughout the world. In an effort to understand, and as a result, curb violence, social scientists, scholars, policy makers, and researchers have spent many hours and money in order to eliminate, or at least decrease the problem (Kimweli, 1997).

Many theories have evolved to explain violence. Zuckerman’s Theory contends that violence and drug use are a direct result of sensation-seeking behavior. Bandura’s Reciprocal Determinism Theory approach school violence from a social learning perspective and examines violence as a result of interaction between environmental events and personal psychological factors. According to Bandura, behaviors are learned by modeling or
observation of others. It is therefore postulated that students learn about, and practice violence that they witness in the school settings (Kimweli, 1997).

The Problem of Violence in Schools

In many current polls, such as the Fourth Phi Delta Kappa Poll of Teachers’ Attitudes Toward Public Schools, and The 29th Annual Phi Delta Kappa/Gallup Poll of the Public’s Attitudes Toward the Public Schools, where the public has been asked to name the greatest problem facing public schools, school safety and violence has been number one. In 1997, “lack of discipline” and “lack of financial support” were named by approximately 15% of the participants respectively as the most serious problems facing public schools (Bell, 1997a). In addition, a survey that was conducted in public schools by parents and students in grades 3 to 12 indicated a large amount of fear on the part of students and parents was related to incidents occurring on school campuses (Metropolitan Life, 1993).

In a poll conducted by Phi Delta Kappa comparing the opinions of secondary and elementary teachers, 17% more elementary teachers believed that children disrupt class more frequently, and 12% said they were more disobedient. Ten percent more teachers on the high school level believed that students often dress inappropriately or are involved in drugs at school (Langdon, 1997).

During 1987-1994, a large percentage of teachers, both in elementary and secondary public schools, reported physical conflicts among students as either moderate or serious problems in their respective schools. From the 1987-88 school year to the 1990-91 school year, the percentages of physical conflicts reported among students increased from 26
percent to almost 30 percent. From the 1990-91 school year to the 1993-94 school year, the percentage increased by a third to almost 40 percent. During each year, secondary school teachers perceived physical conflicts among students as being more moderate or serious more often than elementary teachers (Daugherty & Rossi, 1996).

From 1987-88 to 1990-91, the percentage of public secondary school teachers reporting student possession of weapons on school grounds as moderate or serious, remained the same. However, the reports from these same teachers nearly doubled from the 1990-91 to 1993-94 school year. The percentage increased from 11 percent to approximately 20 percent. Elementary teachers also showed an increase in the problem for that same period of time. The percentage rose from 2.2 percent in 1990-91 to approximately 3.4 percent in 1993-94. During the 1987-88 school year to 1993-94 school year, public school teachers reported physical conflicts between students and weapon possession as moderate or serious more often in schools with more than 750 students than did teachers in schools with fewer than 150 students (Daugherty & Rossi, 1996).

The findings from these studies suggest that teachers perceived public schools as less safe in 1993-94 than they did in 1987-88. Both elementary and secondary teachers believed that physical conflicts and weapon possession among students were at an all time high in 1993-94. Although secondary teachers reported physical conflicts and weapon possession more often than elementary teachers, the problems were cited more often in large schools than small schools (Daugherty & Rossi, 1996).

A study conducted of 28 administrators and 231 students regarding their perceptions of school violence revealed that administrators and students had significantly different
perceptions regarding the nature, extent, and management of school safety and violence issues. While administrators perceived that school violence was not a big problem, students felt differently. In addition, administrators felt that their staffs were more aware of school violence than did the students. Even though 75% of the students said that they felt safe at school most of the time, more than 50% of the male students stated that they had experienced some form of physical violence such as fights, punching, hitting, grabbing, verbal threats, bullying, theft, or damage to personal property. More than 20% of the male students indicated that they had been threatened with a weapon while at school (MacDonald, 1997).

A study conducted in the high schools in the Hinds County Public School District in Mississippi concerning students’ and school personnel’s perceptions of violence and school safety revealed that age, gender, grade level, and race had no significant impact on student’ perceptions. In addition, years of experience, certification, gender, and race had no significant effect on school personnel’ perceptions. A total of 611 participants took part in the study. Although students and school personnel perceived school safety as a problem, only school personnel perceived gang activity as a major concern (Duncan, 1995).

On May 1, 1992, a student who had dropped out of school appeared on the school grounds in Olivehurst, California and terrorized students and teachers for approximately eight hours. Before the incident was over, three students and one teacher had been killed. Nine others were wounded. During that same month, a student at a middle school in Napa,
California brought a gun to school and shot and wounded two students. The student told authorities that he was retaliating for having been bullied by students at the school (Hughes, 1994).

The 1997-1999 school years made everyone aware that guns come to school. School communities across the country have accepted the fact that violence can happen. On October 1, 1997, a 16-year-old boy in Pearl, Mississippi killed his mother and then shot nine students, leaving two dead. Approximately 200 students stayed home the following day for fear of more violence. In addition to the high number of absences, another 35 students left school early (“About 200,” 1997). On December 1, 1997, three students were killed and five wounded when a 14-year-old student entered a hallway at Heath High School in West Paducah, Kentucky (“School leaders,” 1998).

On Tuesday, March 24, 1998, two boys, age 11 and 13, skipped classes and, armed with rifles and handguns, and dressed in camouflage, drove to the Westside Middle School and opened fire on their classmates (Adler, Gegax, & Pedersen, 1998). The two boys waited in the woods near the school, and opened fire on their classmates and teachers when they were called out during a false fire alarm. A third student was allegedly responsible for pulling the fire alarm. The incident, which happened in Jonesboro, Arkansas, caused the death of four students and a teacher. Eleven people were wounded. Although no motive was offered, classmates said one of the boys had recently broken up with his girlfriend. According to authorities in Jonesboro, Arkansas, as many as 27 shots were fired during the incident. Shortly after the incident the boys were caught as they ran toward a van where more guns and ammunition were found (“School Ambush,” 1998).
On April 24, 1998, a fourteen-year-old boy in Edinboro, Pennsylvania was charged with killing a teacher and wounding two students at an eighth-grade graduation dance. Another teacher was glazed by a bullet, but did not need medical attention. The student, who was enrolled at the school, walked onto the patio outside the banquet hall, shot the teacher, and went inside and fired even more shots. The student had previously joked with other students about planning to kill people and then commit suicide ("Teacher killed," 1998).

In Fayetteville, Tennessee on May 19, 1998, an 18-year-old honor student opened fire in a parking lot killing a fellow student who was dating his ex-girlfriend. No one else was hurt in the incident which occurred at Lincoln County High School ("High school," 1998).

On May 21, 1998, a fifteen-year-old was arrested after a shooting spree which killed two students and wounded twenty-two. The student, who also killed his parents, lunged at a police officer with a knife that he had managed to smuggle into the police station after his arrest ("Suspect attacks," 1998). The student, after killing his parents, drove to school and opened fire in a crowded cafeteria with a .22-caliber semiautomatic rifle ("School scrubbed," 1998). Classmates said that the boy was upset and embarrassed about being suspended from school and arrested for bringing a gun to school. The student told classmates that he was going to do something to get back at the people who were responsible for his expulsion. The student, according to classmates, had often bragged about building bombs and torturing animals ("Mowed em down," 1998). The incident happened at Thurston High School in Springfield, Oregon ("Oregon students," 1998).
On Wednesday, February 24, 1999, after several students noticed a student with a gun, the principal was immediately alerted. When the principal confronted the student, he pulled the gun on the principal in the office, took him hostage, and held him at gunpoint for nearly three hours. About 90 minutes after releasing the principal, the student surrendered to police. No shots were fired but the building was evacuated. The incident happened at Montvale Elementary School in Maryville, Tennessee ("Tenn. Eighth-grader," 1999). On April 16, 1999, a high school sophomore fired two shotgun blasts in a school hallway in Notus, Idaho. There were no injuries in this incident ("Horror at Columbine," 1999). And on April 20, 1999, in what was reported as the worst school shooting in U.S. history, two students, armed with guns and bombs, entered a school in Littleton, Colorado and opened fire. Twelve students and one teacher were killed. As many as twenty-one were injured (Cannon, McGraw, & Streisand, 1999). On May 12, 1999, four students, ages 12 to 14, at a middle school in Port Huron, Michigan were jailed after being charged with conspiracy to commit murder at the 560-student school. The students allegedly had planned a massacre similar to the one at Columbine High School in Colorado ("Michigan schools reopen," 1999). On May 20, 1999, a boy upset over a broken romance shot and wounded six students at Heritage High School in the suburban community of Conyers, Georgia. The 15-year-old sophomore student, armed with two guns, opened fire approximately 20 minutes before school was to start. None of the victims' wounds were considered life-threatening ("Schools in the line," 1999).

Violent and criminal activity on school premises poses a threat to the safety of students and school personnel and can, in addition, result in a significant barrier to the
effectiveness of the education process (Chandler, Chapman, & Rand, 1998). Although many agree that social violence is affecting the nation’s schools, few will agree on how large the problem actually is.

**Methods and Strategies Currently Used**

The increase in violence and threats of violence in America’s schools has prompted many school districts to take some aggressive action toward providing greater security, and a more positive learning environment. Review of the literature will show that the instructional leader is one of the key persons in making sure that a conducive environment is provided in order that learning takes place. The instructional leader should set the tone for the school by developing sincere, caring relationships with students. By (a) maintaining a high profile, (b) visiting classrooms, (c) being visible, and (d) being accessible to students and staff, the principal can reduce the possibility of undesired behaviors among students. The role of the instructional leader should also include the encouragement of a sense of ownership and shared decision-making (Schwartz, 1996).

There is, however, sometimes a contradiction between school policies and practice. Although most school districts have comprehensive policies for handling violence in the schools, enforcement may be somewhat lax. This creates an environment where teachers do not feel that they have the support of the administration when they have to impose discipline. Students, in addition, do not feel protected in this type situation (Schwartz, 1996).

Schools, however, cannot be solely responsible for solving the problem of school violence. The parents, community, lawmakers, and schools should work together to help
reduce violence in the schools. In addition, because reducing violence usually requires outside expertise, educators should reach out to other professional agencies for assistance. According to Rowicki (1994), not every method will work; therefore, each school needs to evaluate its own individual situation in order to determine which method works best.

In an effort to reduce the availability of guns, legislation has been enacted at all levels of government. The practice of trying violent juvenile offenders as adults is growing, and weapon offenses are being judged more severely. Parents are being held legally responsible in some states, for certain behaviors of their children (Mulhem, 1994).

This growing concern of school safety among educators, students, and parents has prompted many school districts across the country to implement a large number of safety measures. These measures have ranged from purchasing and installing metal detectors, to hiring full-time security guards or police officers (Mulhem, 1994). Metal detectors, according to Sautter (1995), seem economical in that national estimates say that more than 200,000 students take weapons with them to school in their school lunches, distracting classes, frightening other students and teachers, and sometimes even killing students, teachers, and administrators. In addition, other lives are also ruined in the midst of those who had been associated either with the killer or the victim. A teacher and her son were seriously affected psychologically when two students and a teacher at Frontier Middle School in Moses Lake, Washington were murdered on the school grounds. Her son, who was fifteen at the time of the incident, witnessed the deaths first-hand. Although the student attended several counseling sessions afterwards, still after three years, had vivid pictures in his mind. He continued to remember the sounds of his friends dying. He has also suffered
from survivors' guilt. He has often wondered if there was anything he could have done to save his friends and feels guilty about them dying. One particular girl he felt guilty about was one that had, minutes before the shootings, asked him if he would switch seats so that she could sharpen her pencil. If he had switched, he would have been sitting in the seat where the shooting began (Gutloff, 1999). According to Jones (1994), one can be a victim of violence without being physically hurt. The effect of witnessing violent acts can be devastating, especially for children. A study conducted in New Orleans of elementary age children showed that over 90% of those interviewed had witnessed some type of violent incident, 70% had seen weapons being used, and approximately 40% had seen a dead body (Jones, 1994).

In Washington, D.C., metal detectors are considered a key element in the safety efforts of the schools. While hand-held units are used at the middle school levels, all of the school system's high schools have walk-through metal detectors. These violence prevention strategies are supplemented with random searches of lockers and book bags, and staff development training to handle and prevent violence (McCune, 1994). Although metal detectors have been shown to be very successful in many school districts, they also have proved to be very expensive and controversial. Stover (1988) reported that a Detroit school system was challenged legally for using metal detectors because of the difficulties of getting the students through the gates in time for class. As a result of this challenge, the use of the metal detectors was consequently abandoned. Although there is little evidence that metal detectors work, according to the National School Safety Council, many of the country's largest school districts are using them. Schools in Detroit installed them in 1985, schools in
New York City in 1987, and schools in Kansas City, Missouri in 1993. The Center for Disease Control and Prevention contend that metal detectors may decrease, but not abolish violence by guns. The Center further concluded that the metal detectors do not address long-term dilemmas, and have no obvious effect on the amount of threats, injuries, or deaths of violence in schools (Sautter, 1995).

A study conducted by the United States General Accounting Office investigated some innovative programs that were being used by some schools to control violence. The study specifically looked at four violence-prevention programs. The programs, which were located in Anaheim, California, Dayton, Ohio, New York City, and Paramount, California, reported that there was less disruptive behavior, less involvement with the criminal justice system, and changes in participants’ attitudes toward violence and membership in gangs. Evaluations over the years showed that the programs made a difference in keeping children from joining gangs. While some 5th grade students, for example, had neither positive nor negative feelings about gang membership before their participation in the program, they had negative attitudes about gangs after their participation in the program (General Accounting Office, 1995).

The program that was implemented in Anaheim, which stressed school management and order issues, reported that the number of incidents involving student fights, graffiti, and defiance of authority, had dropped tremendously. The anger-management program that was used in New York, which involved the use of peer-mediation and conflict-resolution skills, reduced student fighting. Approximately 71% of the teachers in the New York study noticed less physical disorder among students.
In an Albuquerque, New Mexico middle school, several measures were taken in order to intervene in a three-gang dispute, including searching for weapons, banning colors, imposing dress codes, counseling, and limiting groups to five students. The New Mexico Center for Dispute Resolution (NMCDR), along with the school staff, collaborated with a community agency that was experienced in gang-intervention. As a result of the mediation process, school violence, student suspensions, and student expulsions decreased, and more students were kept out of the juvenile system (Smith, 1994).

Many schools are implementing “zero tolerance” policies that result in automatic suspensions of students who are caught with weapons at school. Another form of the “zero tolerance” policies calls for automatic suspension of students who carry drugs or alcohol on school grounds. In a poll conducted to find out how satisfied people were with the steps being taken to deal with these problems, 65% of the parents were satisfied with the policies and 86% said they supported the policy (Bell, 1997b).

Another response to school violence by school districts is the creation of alternative programs. One program in Baltimore, Maryland, an alternative middle school for violent and disruptive youth, not only provides intensive academic support, but also sessions in anger management, psychological counseling, and conflict resolution. After students have been suspended three times for violent or assaultive behavior from school, they can be referred to the alternative school. The students may remain at the alternative school for up to a year. Several school districts in Virginia have contracts with selected high schools to render off-campus training for expelled students. The classes are limited to no more than 15, and a maximum of 30 students per site (Harrington-Lueker, 1995).
In 1992, Congress authorized a total of $44 million to fund a program for disruptive kids. The program, called Youth Challenge Corps, has had a total of 4,500 to graduate in the first 2 years of the program. The program, which uses the facilities of the National Guard, is in 15 states. The first five months of the 17-month camp resemble a military boot camp. Students reside in barracks, commit time to physical training activities, and perform community service. Of the students that enroll in the Youth Challenge Corps, 76% usually graduate, and approximately 91% complete their GED (Harrington-Lueker, 1995).

Many states are implementing some form of alternative program to prevent students from being on the streets. In 1996, the state of Louisiana required every parish to provide some type of alternative setting for students ("Experts heed," 1998). School systems in Colorado are being asked to help organize and operate reform schools statewide for expelled students. Students in Corpus Christi, Texas carry charts with their progress reports everywhere they go. New York City Schools provide four alternative schools to accommodate students expelled as a result of the zero tolerance policy. The school is staffed with a full-time psychologist and social worker. In addition, training is provided to all teachers and aides in the areas of conflict resolution, behavior modification, and crisis management (Vail, 1995).

The Long Beach Unified School District conducted a study on mandatory school uniforms in 1995 (Stanley, 1996). The study included questions that assessed the perceptions of mandatory school uniforms by students, teachers, administrators, and parents. The subjects’ perceptions of school safety were also addressed in the study.
Findings indicated that the schools in Long Beach were perceived to be safe. Suspensions in elementary schools declined from 3,183 in 1993-1994 to 2,278 in 1994-1995. Suspensions in middle schools decreased from 2,813 in 1993-1994 school year to 1,814 in 1994-1995. The data showed the following reports: (a) assault/battery decreased 34%, (b) assault with a deadly weapon decreased 50%, (c) fighting decreased 51%, (d) sex offenses decreased 74%, (e) robbery decreased 65%, (f) extortion decreased 60%, (g) possession of chemical substances decreased 69%, (h) possession of weapons decreased 52%, and (i) vandalism decreased by 18%.

The study indicated that adults, specifically administrators, had a perception that uniforms had a positive impact on student behavior. One hundred percent of the administrators, 85% of the counselors, and approximately 66% of the teachers indicated that they felt safer. In addition, administrators perceived (a) a decrease in class disruptions, (b) an increase in student cooperation and attitude, (c) improved student behavior, (d) an increase in student courtesy and work ethic, and (e) a decrease in the number of fights, suspensions, and dress code violations. The counselors perceived the students as being more cooperative. Teachers perceived the uniform policy as being responsible for a decrease in the number of student disruptions and improved student conduct.

Parents also indicated a positive perception in regard to the uniforms. Approximately 67% of the parents indicated that they felt the school setting had improved. They also felt that the uniform policy was responsible for (a) an increase in citizenship grades, (b) students getting along better with each other, and (c) reinforcing the fact that they were attending school for the purpose of learning (Stanley, 1996).
A 10-state survey conducted by the National Association of Elementary School Principals suggested that the national trend has been moving toward uniforms. The study, which surveyed approximately 3000 schools, found that almost two-thirds of the present uniform policies that have been developed were within the last two years. In addition, the principals surveyed contended that uniforms reduced peer pressure and improved school spirit and classroom discipline (“School uniforms,” 1998).

Concerning the innovations and technology being implemented in the school, the participants were asked to rank the top programs that they felt were most effective. The top 10 programs most frequently ranked as effective were (a) teachers standing in the halls, (b) security personnel, (c) police security, (d) peer mediation/conflict resolution programs, (e) alternative schools or some other educational program, (f) closed campuses, (g) metal detectors, (h) locker removals, (i) mandatory uniform policies, and (j) before or after school programs. Schools of smaller size ranked class schedule changes, security cameras, and parental involvement as most effective. Mid-size school systems named conflict management programs and the use of police dogs as most effective (Schwartz, 1996).

One of the most common measures used for school security is the monitoring of students as they move through the hallways and in places where they may congregate. Although traditionally teachers and administrators have served as monitors, more and more schools are hiring security guards. Although some educators welcome the presence of security guards or police, others believe that the presence of police or security has a negative impact on the educational process, and that this should be the responsibility of the administration (Schwartz, 1996).
Some schools are using parents as monitors. According to Schwartz, using parents is not only inexpensive, but is also a useful deterrent. Students may not misbehave as badly when watched by someone who lives in their community. Involving parents also gives them a sense of ownership in the school.

What is Currently Being Done to Prevent Violence in the Schools

In response to the concern over school safety and violence, much legislation has been passed. Congress, in 1970 passed the “schoolyard statute” (Comprehensive Drug Abuse Prevention and Control Act) (Menacker, 1994). This act created what was called a “drug-free” zone of 1,000 feet around schools. Congress, additionally, passed the Gun Free School Zones Act in 1990. This legislation made it illegal for anyone to have in his or her possession a firearm in or near a school zone. Some states such as Illinois, Texas, and Arkansas have laws that prohibit students from having devices such as pagers in their possession (Menacker, 1994). In addition to federal legislation passed since 1970, many states have enacted legislation to prevent school violence. Although much of the state legislation is modeled after the federal laws, some may vary. For example, the size of drug free zones may vary from state to state, anywhere from 300 feet to 1000 feet.

The punishments may also vary from one state to another, ranging from expelling a student for selling or using drugs in one state, to punishment of imprisonment in another state.

Disturbed by school violence in other states, Louisiana’s Superintendent of Education called a meeting in April, 1998 of all local superintendents in the state to brainstorm the topic of school security. While the meeting was set up to get ideas from local
superintendents, the state superintendent suggested the use of “ombudsmen” to keep principals informed of what is going on in the schools. According to the state superintendent, students can alert the appropriate individuals of conflicts or talk of threatening violent behavior (“School leaders,” 1998). After the school shooting in Edinboro, Pennsylvania, the school superintendent indicated that warnings of shootings should not be ignored. Only after the incidents in Jonesboro, Arkansas, and West Paducah, Kentucky did officials start to talk about how to prevent these types of incidents from happening (“Experts heed,” 1998).

A study conducted by Petersen (1996), investigated teacher and administrators’ perceptions of school violence and violence prevention programs. The study, which included a total of 15 school systems of all levels, was representative of 12 states across the country. The study focused on (a) determining the fears of violence from school personnel, (b) the number of cases in which school personnel had been victims of violent actions, (c) areas in the school which posed the greatest risk for violent actions to occur, (d) perceived causes of violence, (e) innovations and technology that had been implemented by the schools, (f) perceptions concerning which methods were most and least effective, and (g) expenses of school systems that have violent prevention programs.

Creating the Peaceable School, a program developed by former educators in the Urbana Illinois School District, provided a framework for collaboration among educators, parents, community, and students. The peaceable school philosophy challenged youth to believe that living in a nonviolent society can be a realistic goal. It was founded on the
premise that students, in addition to being taught the necessary skills to resolve conflict and differences without violence, should also be given the opportunity to use these skills on a daily basis in the classroom and the community. The peaceable classroom, according to Bodine (1995), possess qualities of cooperation, communication, tolerance, positive emotional expression, and conflict resolution. When schools are peaceable, they become safe and productive places where both teachers and students can focus their attention on learning. The classroom becomes a place where students resolve conflicts nonviolently rather than by violence.

Strategies such as mediation, negotiation, and group problem solving are at the heart of the creation of a peaceable school. Bodine, (1995), contends that students who learn and use these strategies are able to deal with their differences in situations where conflicts arise among individuals. The strategies and skills that are taught and utilized by the students in a peaceable school to resolve conflicts are the same strategies being utilized by administrators and teachers. Parents and community leaders are also involved in the violence prevention strategies. The peaceable school, subsequently, seeks not only to reach the individual child, but rather to try and change the total school environment by involving educators, parents, and community leaders as partners to create safe schools.

A number of schools have achieved positive results by changing the roles and by increasing the number of guidance counselors. Some of their responsibilities include counseling with students after violent acts have occurred, and intervening in crisis situations. Many counselors are, in addition, counseling with parents, cafeteria staff, bus drivers, and
other support staff. The objective is to give everyone involved with the school equal skills in order to address stress and conflict and create an environment that is free from violence (Ascher, 1994).

Reaching out to parents is another method being utilized by schools in an effort to help them become knowledgeable of the parenting skills they have, enhance these skills, and increase their choices in guiding, teaching, and disciplining their children. Some elementary and high schools are also bringing parents into the school to make them feel more comfortable with the schools. In other situations, schools hold classes for four days and on the fifth day the students and parents come together and are involved in joint activities (Ascher, 1994).

Alternative programs which develop self-discipline and self-respect have also been indicated as deterrents to school violence. Many schools are focusing on increasing the students' self-esteem and increasing socialization skills which some students did not receive at home. Some elementary schools are focusing on teaching students how to simply greet and interact with each other (Ascher, 1994).

In suggesting remedies for reducing violence in the schools, Fontenot (1993) proposed (a) clearly defining the purpose and mission of the school; (b) acknowledging the cultural and ethnic variations in lifestyles, values, and beliefs; (c) giving teachers more time to concentrate on teaching, and children more time to learn; (d) developing orientation activities in order to teach the school’s culture as mandatory attendance for all students; (e) instituting peer mediation and conflict resolution programs in every school; (f) organizing
an alternative program for disruptive students; and (g) allowing teachers and school personnel to have full control of the operation of the school without interference of government and judicial constraints.

In February, 1996, a 14-year-old terrorized students by waving a gun in his math class, then killing a teacher and two other students. The incident, which happened at Frontier Middle School in Moses Lake, Washington, resulted in several security changes at the school. Major renovations, which included widening hallways, were put in place. The purpose of the wide space was to abolish any cubbyholes and crannies where students could hide or linger. Rest rooms, like mall bathrooms, were redesigned without doors. Parts of the bathroom, such as the central sink, are now closer to the outside so that the staff can observe what is going on inside. Frontier Middle School has also added surveillance cameras in the hallways. The cameras are positioned to observe different parts of the building in places where there are a lot of students and not many teachers. The staff at the school wear badges now to make it easier to distinguish any strangers. In addition, during the day, only one main entrance is open. All visitors have to walk past the secretary in the main office, and must wear a visitor’s pass. Two security guards, who use walkie-talkies to talk back and forth, also monitor the halls and make sure that students are not loitering. A siren alerts students and teachers twice a year to lock doors and windows, retire to a specified room, and remain where they are until they get the go ahead. Another innovation, as a result of the shootings, was reconfiguration of the school. While the sixth graders were moved to the seventh and eighth grade school, the ninth graders were moved to the high school. Mike Himes, president of the Moses Lake Education Association, indicated that the reconfiguration of the middle
school structure was one of the best security changes in the school district. According to the
association president, moving the ninth graders to the high school removed some of the peer
pressure for the seventh and eighth graders (Gutloff, 1999).

While some schools are implementing major changes to assure the safety of their
schools, most schools, according to a study conducted by the National Center for Education
Statistics (NCES) reported that they utilized low levels of security measures to prevent
violence (National Center for Education Statistics, 1998). The study, which was conducted
with a national sample of approximately 1,234 regular public elementary, middle, and
secondary schools in 50 states and the District of Columbia in 1997, requested information
from principals concerning the types of violence-prevention methods being used in their
schools. In order to determine what types of security was being used, principals were asked
if they had (a) visitor registration, (b) closed campuses, (c) random metal detectors, (d) and
presence of police or security guards. While 2% of the schools had stringent security, 11%
had instituted moderate security measures such as full-time or part-time security personnel,
or metal detectors with no security. Eighty-four percent of the schools reported having a low
level of security-restricted access to the schools, but no security or metal detectors. Three
percent reported that none of the violence-prevention measures asked about in the survey
were utilized (NCES, 1998).

In Edinboro, Pennsylvania where a teacher was killed and two students were
wounded, cars in the parking lot have windshield tags identifying them as school staff.
During the day all doors are locked except the main entrance, and all school staff now wear
identification badges. In Jonesboro, Arkansas, where four students and a teacher were killed,
a fence has been installed around the middle school. Some districts in the surrounding areas have hired local police to monitor their campuses. One school district, as a result of the shootings, has hired two social workers, and is providing training in conflict resolution for its teachers. In Springfield, Oregon, where a fifteen-year-old went on a shooting spree and killed two students and wounded twenty-two, the school district considered making information available about students who have a brutal past or criminal record (Marcus, 1999).

Violence in the schools has reached epidemic numbers. Providing a safe learning environment where children can learn has become a national concern and priority. Over 3,000,000 crimes occur on or close to school grounds each year. This translates to 16,000 per school day, or one every 6 seconds. A fourth of the major school districts in the country now use metal detectors in an effort to decrease the number of weapons that are being brought to school by students. Approximately twenty percent of teachers in the schools have reported being threatened by a student (Hughes, 1994).

The National Association of School Security Directors estimates that each year students are responsible for approximately 12,000 robberies, 270,000 burglaries, 204,000 aggravated assaults, 9,000 rapes, and 70,000 assaults against teachers. The U.S. Senate Committee on Delinquency has estimated that the cost of vandalism in America’s schools is over $600 million per year. Although most people previously believed that violence only occurred in the large urban areas such as New York, Chicago, or Los Angeles, review of the literature has shown that a large majority of the most recent incidents of school violence
occurred in small suburban towns. A 1990 Texas A & M University study found that many rural schools have worse incidents of violence than the national average (Kingery, 1990).

A major focus in education is striving for excellence; however, in for excellence to be achieved, schools must be safe places for both teachers and students. Teachers cannot teach and students cannot learn in an environment that is filled with fear and violence. School officials are expected to maintain safe environments for their schools. As shown in the literature many mandates have been enacted in order to assist the states and local school districts in making their schools drug and violence free, yet the problem has not gone away. The problem of school violence is rapidly becoming a problem across the country. This is not confined to urban and suburban schools; rural schools are also experiencing the problem of school violence.
CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

The primary purposes of this study were to determine (a) the perceptions of administrators, counselors, teachers, and students regarding levels of school safety and violence in selected secondary schools in north Louisiana, (b) the types of violence that had the greatest impact on safety, and (c) what strategies were currently being used to address violence in the schools. The secondary purposes of this study were to determine the differences in perceptions of school violence and safety of administrators, counselors, and teachers due to ethnic background, gender, and years of experience, as well as perceptions of school violence by students by ethnic background, gender, age and grade level. Additionally, this study investigated (a) how the level of violence in the selected schools has changed, (b) the differences in perceptions based on size of schools, (c) the differences in perceptions by all group members, and (d) the types of professional development activities being implemented to address school violence and safety. Respondents were asked, using a questionnaire, their perceptions regarding levels of school safety and violence in the schools. Data were gathered to allow analysis on the variables of gender, age, ethnic background, and grade for students, and gender, ethnic background, years of experience, and position for school personnel. In this chapter, the researcher will elaborate on the methods and procedures
that were used to accomplish the purposes of this study. Sections contained in this chapter include population and samples, instrumentation, pilot study, procedures in data collection, and statistical analysis.

**Population and Samples**

The population for this study included administrators, counselors, teachers, and students. The sample included the use of small, medium, and large secondary schools in north Louisiana. The area identified as north Louisiana was the 20 parishes (21 school systems) which are served by the Louisiana Education Consortium as named by the Louisiana Board of Regents. This includes all the designated service area of Grambling State University, Louisiana Tech University, and the University of Louisiana at Monroe.

In developing samples for the schools, the researcher obtained a list of the schools and school sizes from the current Louisiana School Directory. All secondary schools (N=90) in north Louisiana were identified. For the purpose of this study, the following parishes were considered north Louisiana: Bienville, Bossier, Caddo, Caldwell, Catahoula, Claiborne, Concordia, East Carroll, Franklin, Jackson, LaSalle, Lincoln, Madison, Monroe City, Morehouse, Ouachita, Richland, Tensas, Union, Webster, and West Carroll. Of these 90 schools, 50 were identified as small, 24 as medium, and 16 as large based on the 1998-99 enrollment figures. A stratified cluster sampling procedure was used to select 11 schools using a table of random numbers. A random sample, according to Witte and Witte, (1980), guarantees that all participants included in the population have equal chances of being
included in the sample. Using a stratified random cluster sample of schools; four small (0-299), four medium (300-999), and three large (1000 or more) schools were selected to participate in the study.

**Instrumentation**

The questionnaire instruments developed for this study consisted of 14 items. Items 1 through 12 consisted of statements the participants were asked to respond to using a 4-point Likert scale. The students completed the Student Questionnaire, (Appendix A) while the administrators, counselors, and teachers, were asked to complete the School Personnel Questionnaire (Appendix B). The list of school safety and violence issues used for the School Personnel and Student Questionnaire was generated by reviewing the literature on school violence. Twelve issues were identified through the literature review. For the purpose of this study, Gang Activity was identified as school safety and violence issues by youth such as drug trafficking, burglary, street fighting, illegal weapon sales, robbery and theft. Studies by Furlong (1994), Kimeli (1997), and Spearman (1993), included gang activity in their survey. Physical Abuse of Teachers, which includes the use of force or inciting the use of force to injure, was used in studies by MacDonald (1997), and Spearman. Physical Attacks or Fights Among Students, defined as disruptive behavior that may interfere with order in school, was used in studies by Furlong, MacDonald, Spearman, and Daugherty and Rossi (1996). Robbery or Theft of Items over $10 consisted of the taking or attempting to take, by force or threat of force or violence, anything of value that is owned by another person. Kimeli and the U.S. Department of Education (1998) used these behaviors in their studies. Racial Tensions, was defined as the use of racial slurs and ethnic name-calling. Furlong, MacDonald,
Spearman, and the U.S. Department of Education used this behavior in their studies. The Sale of Drugs, a type of behavior used in studies by Kimeli, MacDonald, Spearman, and the U.S. Department of Education, was defined as the illegal selling of a controlled substance. Sexual Battery or Rape, used in studies by Furlong, MacDonald, and Spearman, was defined as touching or unwanted sexual force. Student Possession, Distribution, and use of Alcohol or Drugs was defined as the possession, distribution, or use of any alcohol or drugs such as marijuana, inhalants, or cocaine. Furlong, Kimweli, Spearman, and the U.S. Department of Education used this behavior in their surveys. Student Possession or Use of a Firearm encompassed the possession of use of any weapon designed to discharge a projectile by the movement of an explosive. This includes the use of bombs, guns, pipebombs, grenades, or any devices created to explode and capable of inflicting bodily harm or property damage. Daugherty and Rossi, Kimeli, Spearman, and the U.S. Department of Education all used this behavior in their studies. Student Possession or Use of a Weapon other than a Firearm included any other object or instrument other than a firearm used with the intent to injure, threaten, or kill. These include items such as knives, razor blades, ice picks, bottles, or sticks. Both Furlong and Spearman used this type behavior in their studies. Vandalism of School Property consisted of the damage or destruction of any school property. Vandalism includes arson, bombing, graffiti, or any other acts that cause damage to school property. Furlong, MacDonald, Spearman, and the U.S. Department of Education used this behavior in their surveys. Verbal Abuse of Teachers was identified as using or inciting others to use
inappropriate language for the purpose of threatening or intimidating a teacher. This behavior was used in studies conducted by Furlong, MacDonald, Spearman, and the U.S. Department of Education.

Responses available to participants were Serious, Moderate, Minor, and Not A Problem. For analysis purposes, the value of the Likert scale was rated as follows: Serious was weighted with the value of 4; Moderate was weighted with the value of 3; Minor was weighted with the value of 2; and Not a Problem was weighted with the value of 1. The raw score for the School Personnel and Student Questionnaire ranged from 12-48. One open-ended question was included at the end of the School Personnel Questionnaire asking participants about any training or professional development workshops in which they had participated in order to prepare them to deal with the problem of school violence.

A researcher-developed checklist, the Principal Checklist, (see Appendix C) was completed by the school principals to determine the types of violence prevention measures and programs currently being used in the selected schools. The fifteen violence prevention strategies listed on the Principal Checklist were developed from studies in the related literature. While alternative schools or programs are designed to serve students that have been involved in disruptive or school safety and violence issues, peer mediation and conflict resolution programs attempt to teach students the skills to conduct their behavior and resolve conflict peacefully. These programs are generally offered in an environment away from the school. These strategies were used in studies by Spearman (1993), Schwartz (1996), the General Accounting Office (1995), and the U.S. Department of Education (1998). Before or After School Programs are programs that focus on assisting students in dealing with behavior
problems, but are generally offered on the school campus. These programs may include after-
school recreational and/or academic activities. Schwartz, the General Accounting Office, and
the U.S. Department of Education, used these strategies in their studies. Security cameras are
surveillance cameras placed in areas where students congregate. Schwartz, the General
Accounting Office, and the U.S. Department of Education identified these strategies in their
studies. Closed campuses restrict students from leaving the school campus unless permission
has been granted by an administrator or his/her designee, or a parent or his/her designee. This
strategy was identified in studies by Schwartz, the General Accounting Office, and the U.S.
Department of Education. Dog Searches include random searches of the school grounds,
which are not limited to lockers, classrooms, or cars, in order to find illegal drugs. Metal
detectors, either hand-held or stationary, include strategies used to prevent students from
bringing weapons on the school grounds. Schwartz, Spearman, the General Accounting
Office, and the U.S. Department of Education identified metal detectors as a popular violence
prevention strategy. Programs to Increase Parental Involvement consist of programs designed
to encourage parents to be more involved in the school. Some schools use parents as
monitors. According to Schwartz, parents can be effective barriers because students may tend
to be more hesitant to behave badly when observed by someone they know. Removal of
Lockers or Locker Searches consists of the random searching or removing of lockers to keep
students from concealing any illegal drugs or weapons. Schwartz, the General Accounting
Office, and the U.S. Department of Education surveyed participants concerning this violence
prevention strategy. Security personnel consist of police or campus monitors, or security
guards, used to patrol the campus, hallways, and other areas where students tend to
congregate, such as restrooms, and cafeteria areas. The most common strategy that has been used is the monitoring or presence of teachers in the hallways and at the doors. Both of these strategies were identified in studies by Schwartz, Spearman, and the U.S. Department of Education. Transparent book bags are clear book bags that expose the contents of the book bags. This strategy was included in the studies conducted by the U.S. Department of Education. Uniforms consist of attire that has been established by a school system, school, committee, or some group that is mandatory for students to wear. The U.S. Department of Education included this strategy in its study. Visitor Registration, or passes include requiring any visitors to sign in and or wear a name badge while on the school campus. Schwartz, Spearman, and the U.S. Department of Education identified this strategy in their studies. Multicultural or Diversity Awareness Programs include programs that are designed to encourage participation of all ethnic groups in the total school program to increase the awareness of other cultures, thus preventing racial conflicts on the school campus. This strategy was identified in the study by the U.S. Department of Education. Principals identified each strategy used as either Always, Often, Occasionally, Seldom, or Never. Administrators, counselors, teachers, and students were all asked if they felt the level of violence in their school had decreased, stayed the same, increased a little, or increased a lot. The questionnaire instruments developed for this study consisted of 14 items. Items 1 through 12 consisted of statements the participants were asked to respond to using a 4-point Likert scale. The students completed the Student Questionnaire, (Appendix A) while the administrators, counselors, and teachers, were asked to complete the School Personnel Questionnaire (Appendix B). The items used on the questionnaires were developed from the
review of the literature. Responses available to participants included Serious, Moderate, Minor, and Not A Problem. For analysis purposes, the value of the Likert scale was rated as follows: Serious was weighted with the high value of 4, Moderate was weighted with the value of 3, Minor was weighted with the value of 2, and Not A Problem was weighted with the value of 1. The raw score for the School Personnel and Student Questionnaire ranged from 12-48. One open-ended question was included at the end of the School Personnel Questionnaire asking participants about any training or professional development workshops in which they had participated in order to prepare them to deal with the problem of school violence. A researcher-developed checklist, the Principal Checklist, (see Appendix C) was completed by the school principals to determine the types of violence prevention measures and programs currently being used in the selected schools. Administrators, counselors, teachers, and students were all asked if they felt the level of violence in their school had decreased, stayed the same, increased a little, or increased a lot.

Pilot Study

To establish the content validity of the questionnaire, a pilot study was conducted at Ouachita Parish High School in September, 1998. A total of 90 administrators, counselors, students and teachers were included in the pilot sample. Pilot study participants were encouraged to comment regarding any unclear or ambiguous statements in the instruments and to make recommendations to improve the clarity of survey items. The checklist, which was developed from the review of literature of common violence prevention strategies, was reviewed by the researcher's doctoral committee, and piloted by administrators. In addition,
a Cronbach Alpha was computed on the data from the full survey results which yielded a reliability coefficient of .8994. As a result of the pilot test, input from participants, the results of the Cronbach Alpha, and the review by the researcher's doctoral committee for content validity, both instruments were determined to be valid and reliable for the purposes of this study.

**Procedures in Data Collection**

The proposed time frame for gathering the data was approximately three months. Prior to data collection, permission to conduct the study was obtained from the Human Use Committee at Louisiana Tech University (Appendix D). The researcher then sent a cover letter to each superintendent in each school district requesting permission to conduct the research. After permission was received from each superintendent, a cover letter was mailed to each principal of the selected schools in to request their permission. A cover letter, (see Appendix E, F, G, H, and I) explaining the purpose and scope of the study, the questionnaires (see Appendix A and B), the checklist, (see Appendix C), and the human consent forms, (see Appendix J and K) along with stamped addressed envelopes, were delivered by the researcher to each school and given to the principal.

The principals in each school were asked to assign a contact person within the school to distribute the Student and School Personnel Questionnaires. All administrators, counselors and teachers were given questionnaires to complete. The principal or his or her designee selected a class of 30 students to complete the student questionnaires. Upon completion of the instruments, questionnaires were returned to the principal or his or her designee, and then mailed to the researcher. Self-addressed envelopes were provided for this purpose (there
was one exception; the principal of one school requested that the researcher send individual self-addressed envelopes for each participant. The questionnaires were then mailed directly to the researcher rather than being collected by the principal or contact person).

Principals completed a checklist consisting of 15 questions to determine the types of violence prevention strategies and programs currently being used in their schools. Administrators, counselors, teachers, and students completed a demographic survey, and a questionnaire to measure their perceptions regarding the levels of school safety and violence.

**Statistical Analysis**

The primary purposes of this study were to determine perceptions of administrators, counselors, teachers, and students, regarding levels of school safety and violence in selected secondary schools in north Louisiana, to determine the types of violence that had the greatest impact on safety, and what strategies were currently being used to address violence in the schools. The secondary purposes of this study were to determine the differences in perceptions of school safety and violence of administrators, counselors, and teachers by ethnic background, gender, and years of experience, as well as perceptions by students by ethnic background, gender, and grade level. Additionally, this study investigated how the level of violence in the selected schools has changed, the differences in perceptions based on size of schools, the differences in perceptions by all group members, and the types of professional development activities being implemented.

An Exploratory Factor Analysis was conducted on the data from the questionnaires. Results of the rotated factor matrix in this Factor Analysis showed that the 12 issues of school
safety and violence clustered together on two factors, each with an eigenvalue greater than 1. The first factor, which consisted of seven issues (physical attacks/fights among students; robbery/theft of items over $10; racial tensions; sale of drugs on school grounds; student possession, distribution, or use of alcohol or drugs; vandalism of school property; and, verbal abuse of teachers), was labeled Disruption/Abuse. The second factor, which consisted of five issues (gang activity, physical abuse of teachers, sexual battery/rape, student possession or use of a firearm, and student possession or use of a weapon other than a firearm) was labeled Violence/Aggression. Results of this factor analysis are shown in Table 1. Responses to the questionnaires were analyzed using both descriptive and statistical (inferential) analysis. A Levine’s Test for Homogeneity, with alpha set at .05, was conducted to determine if the data violated the assumptions of a parametric test. Results of this procedure yielded a probability of .001. Thus it was concluded that the assumptions were not violated and a One-Way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was then used to analyze the data.

The Analysis of Variance was used to determine if there was a significant difference among the means of two or more groups and tested the null hypotheses. The fifteen null hypotheses were tested at the .05 level of significance. The resulting F value told the researcher if there was any significant difference in the perceptions regarding the levels of school safety and violence by the different groups. Due to the smaller sample size of the counselor group, a t-test of independent samples was used to test for significance with
Table 1  
Results of Exploratory Factor Analysis: Rotated Factor Matrix

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Factor 1 Disruption/Abuse</th>
<th>Factor 2 Violence/Aggression</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gang Activity</td>
<td>.41200</td>
<td>.57658*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical Abuse of Teachers</td>
<td>.15247</td>
<td>.78188*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical Attacks/Fights Among Student</td>
<td>.63496*</td>
<td>.35841</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Robbery/Theft of Items over $10</td>
<td>.73363*</td>
<td>.17657</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Racial Tensions</td>
<td>.50806*</td>
<td>.31083</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sale of Drugs on School Grounds</td>
<td>.59825*</td>
<td>.45027</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sexual Battery/Rape</td>
<td>.22780</td>
<td>.73319*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Possession, Distribution, or Use of Alcohol or Drugs</td>
<td>.63413*</td>
<td>.41074</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Possession or Use of a Firearm</td>
<td>.17611</td>
<td>.81357*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Possession or Use of a Weapon other than a Firearm</td>
<td>.41978</td>
<td>.68051*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vandalism of School Property</td>
<td>.83506*</td>
<td>.09495</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Verbal Abuse of Teachers</td>
<td>.62733*</td>
<td>.29298</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factor</th>
<th>Eigenvalue</th>
<th>% of Variance</th>
<th>Cum. %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Disruption/Abuse</td>
<td>5.78291</td>
<td>48.2</td>
<td>48.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Violence/Aggression</td>
<td>1.09371</td>
<td>9.1</td>
<td>57.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
regard to Hypotheses 4A and B through 6A and B. Descriptive statistics for all items on the questionnaire and the data from the violence prevention measures and program checklist were presented in tables with the appropriate narrative. Descriptive statistics were used to present data to answer the research questions.
CHAPTER 4

PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF DATA

The primary purpose of this study were to determine the perceptions of administrators, counselors, teachers and students, regarding levels of school safety and violence in selected secondary schools in north Louisiana, to determine the types of violence that had the greatest impact on safety, and what strategies were currently being used to address violence in the schools. The secondary purposes of this study were to determine the differences in perceptions of school safety and violence of administrators, counselors, and teachers by ethnic background, gender, and years of experience, as well as perceptions by students by ethnic background, gender, age, and grade level. Additionally, this study investigated how the level of violence in the selected schools has changed, the differences in perceptions based on size of schools, the differences in perceptions by all group members, and the types of professional development activities being implemented. The researcher acquired the data by surveying administrators, counselors, teachers, and students in 11 (4 small, 4 medium, and 3 large high schools) in north Louisiana. The data obtained and the accompanying statistical analyses are presented in this chapter.

A descriptive survey design was used to collect the data for this investigation. The survey was sent to 863 school group members through a stratified random cluster sampling procedure. Three instruments were used to collect the data. These were the “Student
Questionnaire” (see Appendix A), the “School Personnel Questionnaire” (see Appendix B), and the “Principals’ Checklist” (see Appendix C). The data analysis was accomplished both descriptively and statistically. Demographic profiles of the participants are provided in the first section of the analysis, while the second section addresses the research questions. The third section of this chapter examines the null hypotheses postulated for the study. Testing of the hypotheses was accomplished through the application of the One-Way Analysis of Variance and the Independent t-test. Percentage analysis was used to answer the research questions. All of the hypotheses were tested at the .05 level of significance.

Return Percentage

As shown in Table 2, of the 812 questionnaires distributed, a total of 581 (71%) were returned. Of the 29 distributed to administrators, 26 (90%) were returned. Of the 19 distributed to counselors, 17 (89%) were returned. While 434 questionnaires were distributed to teachers, 292 (67%) were returned. Three-hundred thirty questionnaires were distributed to students and 246 (75%) were returned. Total return for the study was 71%.

Demographic Profile of Participants in the Study

As shown in Table 3, participants in this study consisted of 581 school group members. Of these, 26 (4.5%) were administrators, 17 (2.9%) were counselors, 292 (50.3%) were teachers, and 246 (42.3%) were students.
## Table 2

**Number and Percentage of Returns**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Administrators</th>
<th></th>
<th>Counselors</th>
<th></th>
<th>Teachers</th>
<th></th>
<th>Students</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Dist</td>
<td>Ret</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>Dist</td>
<td>Ret</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>Dist</td>
<td>Ret</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Small</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>24</td>
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<tr>
<td>D</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>19</td>
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<td>100</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>15</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>38</td>
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<tr>
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<td>2</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>100</td>
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<td>100</td>
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<td>66</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>100</td>
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<td>43</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>100</td>
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<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total N=26

## Table 3

**Number and Percentage of Participants by Title**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Administrators</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>4.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Counselors</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>2.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers</td>
<td>292</td>
<td>50.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students</td>
<td>246</td>
<td>42.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>581</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Because only 1 administrator responded whose ethnic background was not African American or Anglo American, the variable of ethnicity was categorized into two levels: Minority and Non-Minority. There were 12 (46.2%) administrators who identified themselves as Minority. In comparison, 14 (53.8%) administrators identified themselves as Non-Minority. There were 8 (30.8%) female administrators who participated in this study. By contrast, there were 18 (69.2%) male administrators who participated. A total of twenty-six administrators participated in this study. The variable years of experience was collapsed into two categories for the purpose of this study. There were 15 (57.7%) administrators who reported 25 years or less of experience and 11 (42.3%) who indicated 26 years or more of experience. The variable ethnicity was collapsed into two categories for the counselor group for analysis purposes. These were 5 (29.4%) counselors who identified their ethnic background as Minority and 9 (52.9%) who identified themselves as Non-Minority. There were 3 missing responses. Twelve (70.6%) female counselors responded to the questionnaire in this investigation. On the other hand, only 4 (23.5%) male counselors participated in this study. There was one missing case. Since there were only 17 counselors who participated in this study, the variable years of experience was categorized into two levels for analysis purposes. Seven (41.2%) counselors who reported 25 years or less of experience and 10 (58.8%) who indicated 26 years or more of experience. With respect to the teachers' ethnicity, 91 (31.2%) identified themselves as Minority, 184 (63%) indicated Non-Minority, and 17 (5.8%) reported their ethnic background in the “Other” category. There were 200 (68.5%) female teachers who responded to the school personnel questionnaire. By contrast, 91 (31.2) male teachers participated in the study. There was 1 missing case. The variable years of experience in the
teacher group was divided into three categories. One hundred thirteen teachers (39%) indicated they had 10 years or less of experience; 73 (25%) reported 11 to 20 years of experience; and 106 (36%) expressed 21 years or more of experience. These data are presented in Table 4.

Table 4

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ethnicity</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Years of Experience</th>
<th>&lt;25</th>
<th>25+</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Administrators</td>
<td>12 (46.2)</td>
<td>14 (53.8)</td>
<td>18 (69.2)</td>
<td>8 (30.8)</td>
<td>15 (57.7)</td>
<td>11 (42.3)</td>
<td>0-10</td>
<td>25</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Counselors</td>
<td>5 (29.4)</td>
<td>9 (52.9)</td>
<td>4 (23.5)</td>
<td>12 (70.6)</td>
<td>7 (42.2)</td>
<td>10 (58.8)</td>
<td>11-20</td>
<td>21 or More</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers</td>
<td>91 (31.2)</td>
<td>184 (63.0)</td>
<td>91 (31.2)</td>
<td>200 (68.5)</td>
<td>113 (38.7)</td>
<td>73 (25)</td>
<td>106 (36.3)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The variable of student ethnicity was categorized into three ethnic background groups for the present study. One hundred thirteen (45.9%) of the students identified their ethnic status as Minority and one-hundred twenty three (50%) indicated Non-Minority. Eight students (3.2%) were grouped in the “Other” category. There were two missing cases. Of the 246 students who participated in this study, 147 (59.8%) were females. In comparison, 98 (39.8%) were males. There was one missing case (see Table 5).
Table 5
Number and Percentage of Students by Ethnicity and Gender

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ethnicity</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Minority</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>113</td>
<td>(45.9)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Minority</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>123</td>
<td>(50.0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>(3.2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>98</td>
<td>(39.8)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>147</td>
<td>(59.8)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In regard to the age of the students who participated in the study, 63 (25.6%) were between the ages of 14 to 15; 143 (58.1%) were between the ages of 16 to 17, and 38 (15.4%) were between the ages of 18 to 19. There were two missing cases. For the present investigation, the variable grade level was divided into four classifications. These were 47 (19.1%) students enrolled in the ninth grade; 48 (19.5%) in the tenth grade; 53 (21.5%) in the eleventh grade; and 96 (39%) in the twelfth grade. There were 2 missing cases (see Table 6).

Table 6
Number and Percentage of Students by Age and Grade Level

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Grade Level</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>14-15</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>63 (25.6)</td>
<td>143 (58.1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>244</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Examination of Research Questions

Research Question 1

What issues of violence do administrators perceive to have the greatest impact on school safety?

Shown in Table 7 are the percentage analyses regarding how administrators perceived the impact of the issues of violence on school safety. Physical attacks/fights among students, vandalism, and verbal abuse of teachers were considered the most serious problems as perceived by administrators. Of the 12 issues of violence investigated in this study, administrators rated only four of them (physical attacks/fights among students, robbery/theft, vandalism, and verbal abuse of teachers) in the “serious” category. Five issues of violence (gang activity, physical attacks/fights among students, robbery/theft, sale of drugs, and vandalism) were classified in the “moderate” category. However, 11 of the 12 (all but sexual battery) issues of violence were rated over 20% in the “minor” category. Finally, 10 of the 12 issues of violence (all but physical attacks/fights among students, and vandalism) were rated over 20% by the administrators in the “not a problem” category. Clearly, a majority of administrators perceived that the types of school safety and violence issues listed were either minor or not a problem in their schools. One-hundred percent of the administrators reported that physical abuse of teachers, sexual battery, and student possession of firearms were categorized as minor or not a problem. Six categories (gang activity, racial tensions, sale of drugs, student possession, distribution, or use of alcohol/drugs, student possession of weapons, and verbal abuse of teachers), were perceived by more than 70% of the administrators as either minor or not a problem.
Table 7  
*Issues of Violence Perceived to Have the Greatest Impact on School Safety by Administrators*  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Types of Violence</th>
<th>Serious N</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Moderate N</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Minor N</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Not A Problem N</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gang Activity</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
<td>6</td>
<td>23.1</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>34.6</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>42.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical Abuse of Teachers</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
<td>6</td>
<td>23.1</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>76.9</td>
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<td>Physical Attacks</td>
<td>2</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>26.9</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>61.5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3.8</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fights among Students</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>30.8</td>
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<td>42.3</td>
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Total N=26  

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Research Question 2

What issues of violence do counselors perceive to have the greatest impact on school safety?

Revealed in Table 8 are the percentage analyses results regarding how counselors perceived the impact of the issues of violence on school safety. Physical attacks/fights among students, vandalism, and verbal abuse of teachers were considered the most serious problems as perceived by counselors. Only two of the 12 issues of violence (physical attacks/fights among students, and vandalism) were rated over 20% in the “serious” category by the counselors. Nine of the issues of violence (all but physical abuse of teachers, sexual battery, and student possession of a firearm) were rated over 20% in the “moderate” category. Moreover, 11 issues of violence (all but physical abuse of teachers) were rated over 20% in the “minor” category. However, four of the 12 issues of violence (physical abuse of teachers, racial tensions, sexual battery, and student possession of a firearm) were rated over 20% by the counselors in the “not a problem” category. Consistent with the perceptions of administrators, counselors felt that physical abuse of teachers, sexual battery, and student possession of firearms, were among the top three items categorized as minor or not a problem. These three above-mentioned items were reported by 70% or more counselors. All 12 items (gang activity, physical attacks/fights among students, physical abuse of teachers, robbery/theft over $10, racial tensions, sale of drugs on school grounds, student possession, distribution or use of alcohol/drugs, student possession of weapons other than firearms, vandalism, sexual battery/rape, and verbal abuse of teachers), were reported as either serious or moderate by counselors.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Types of Violence</th>
<th>Serious N</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Moderate N</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Minor N</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Not a Problem N</th>
<th>%</th>
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<td>35.3</td>
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<td>35.3</td>
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<td>5.9</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>5.9</td>
<td>6</td>
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<td>52.9</td>
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<td>5.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Racial Tensions</td>
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<td>11.8</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>23.5</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>41.2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>23.5</td>
</tr>
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<td>11.8</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>29.4</td>
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<td>47.1</td>
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<td>11.8</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Possession Distribution, or use of Alcohol/Drugs</td>
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<td>17.6</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>29.4</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>41.2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>11.8</td>
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<tr>
<td>Student Possession or use of a Firearm</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>17.6</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>23.5</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>41.2</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vandalism of School Property</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>23.5</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>41.2</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>35.3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Verbal Abuse of Teachers</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>23.5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>23.5</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>41.2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>11.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total N=17

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Research Question 3

What issues of violence do teachers perceive to have the greatest impact on school safety?

Reported in Table 9 are the percentage analyses with respect to how teachers perceived the impact of the issues of violence on school safety. Vandalism, verbal abuse of teachers, student possession, distribution, or use of alcohol/drugs were considered the most serious problems as perceived by teachers. Only one of the 12 issues of violence (vandalism) was rated over 20% in the “serious” category by teachers. In addition, seven issues of violence (physical attacks/fights among students, robbery/theft, racial tensions, sale of drugs, student possession, distribution, or use of alcohol/drugs, vandalism, and verbal abuse of teachers) were rated over 20% in the “moderate” category. Teachers, like administrators and counselors, felt that physical abuse, sexual battery, and student possession or use of a firearm, was either minor or not a problem.

Research Question 4

What issues of violence do students perceive to have the greatest impact on school safety?

Indicated in Table 10 are the percentage analyses findings relative to how students perceived the impact of the issues of violence on school safety. Vandalism, student possession, distribution, or use of alcohol/drugs, and verbal abuse of teachers were considered the most serious problems as perceived by students. Only one of the 12 issues of violence
### Table 9

**Issues of Violence Perceived to Have the Greatest Impact on School Safety by Teachers**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Types of Violence</th>
<th>Serious N</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Moderate N</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Minor N</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Not a Problem N</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gang Activity</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>5.8</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>14.7</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>30.5</td>
<td>142</td>
<td>48.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical Abuse of Teachers</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>7.5</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>29.1</td>
<td>175</td>
<td>59.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical Attacks</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>10.6</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>33.6</td>
<td>128</td>
<td>43.8</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>12.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fights among Students</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>14.4</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>35.6</td>
<td>115</td>
<td>39.4</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>10.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Robbery/Theft of Student</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>4.8</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>24.0</td>
<td>122</td>
<td>41.8</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>29.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical Abuse of Student</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>8.2</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>24.0</td>
<td>107</td>
<td>36.6</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>30.5</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sale of Drugs on School Grounds</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>6.5</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>28.8</td>
<td>180</td>
<td>61.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>51</td>
<td>17.5</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>22.6</td>
<td>111</td>
<td>38.0</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>21.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rape</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>10.6</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>30.8</td>
<td>158</td>
<td>54.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>16</td>
<td>5.5</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>13.7</td>
<td>116</td>
<td>39.7</td>
<td>119</td>
<td>40.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Possession or use of a Firearm</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>20.2</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>32.2</td>
<td>108</td>
<td>37.0</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>10.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Verbal Abuse of Teachers</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>19.5</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>32.2</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>31.2</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>17.1</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Total N=292

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(vandalism) was rated over 20% in the “serious” category by the students. Four issues of violence (physical attacks/fights among students, robbery/theft, student possession, distribution, or use of alcohol/drugs, and vandalism) were rated over 20% in the “moderate” category. Additionally, nine of the twelve (all but physical abuse of teachers, sexual battery, and student possession of firearms) were rated over 20% in the “minor” category by the students. Furthermore, 11 of the 12 issues of violence (all but physical attacks/fights among students) were rated over 20% (25.6% to 81.7%) in the “not a problem” category. Similar to administrators, counselors, and teachers, students also perceived that physical abuse of teachers, sexual battery, and student possession of a firearm, were the top three items categorized as minor or not a problem. More than 70% of the students reported gang activity, racial tensions, sale of drugs, and student possession or use of other weapons other than a firearm, as either minor or not a problem. More than 30% of the students reported five items (physical attacks/fights among students, robbery/theft, student possession, distribution, or use of alcohol/drugs, verbal abuse of teachers, and vandalism) as either serious or moderate.

Research Question 5

Have incidents of violence increased as perceived by administrators?

As shown in Table 11, when percentage analyses were computed regarding the perceptions of administrators toward the incidents of violence on school campuses in selected schools in north Louisiana, 4 (15.4%) administrators reported that violence had increased a lot; 6 (23.1%) indicated they believed it had increased a little; 3 (11.5%) said it
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Types of Violence</th>
<th>Serious N</th>
<th>Serious %</th>
<th>Moderate N</th>
<th>Moderate %</th>
<th>Minor N</th>
<th>Minor %</th>
<th>Not A Problem N</th>
<th>Not A Problem %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<td>20.3</td>
<td>148</td>
<td>60.2</td>
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<td>3.7</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2.0</td>
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<td>35.4</td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td>11.4</td>
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<td>Racial Tensions</td>
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<td>11.8</td>
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<td>26.8</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>34.1</td>
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<td>on School grounds</td>
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<td>16.7</td>
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<td>of other Weapons</td>
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</tr>
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<td>19.1</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>25.6</td>
<td>103</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total N=246

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had stayed the same; and 13 (50%) expressed a decrease in the number of incidents of violence. While more than half (61.5%) of the administrators perceived that incidents of violence had either decreased or stayed the same, only 38.5% believed that incidents of violence had increased.

Table 11
Perceived Incidents of Violence by Administrators

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Perceived Incidents of Violence</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Increased a Lot</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>15.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increased a Little</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>23.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stayed the Same</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>11.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Decreased</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>50.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Research Question 6

Have incidents of violence increased as perceived by counselors?

As revealed in Table 12, when percentage analyses were calculated with reference to the perceptions of counselors toward the incidents of violence on school campuses in selected schools in North Louisiana, 3 (18.7%) counselors indicated that violence had increased a lot; 3 (18.7%) counselors reported that violence had increased a little; 7 (43.9%) said it had stayed the same; and 3 (18.7%) revealed that it had decreased. While more than half (62.6%) of the counselors reported that incidents of violence had decreased or stayed the same, only 37.4% indicated that incidents of violence had increased.
Table 12

Perceived Incidents of Violence by Counselors

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Increased a Lot</th>
<th>Increased a Little</th>
<th>Stayed the Same</th>
<th>Decreased</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>%</td>
<td>18.7</td>
<td>18.7</td>
<td>43.9</td>
<td>18.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Research Question 7

Have incidents of violence increased as perceived by teachers?

As illustrated in Table 13, when percentage analyses were computed with regard to the perceptions of teachers toward the incidents of violence on school campuses in selected schools in north Louisiana, 34 (11.7%) of the teachers reported that violence had increased a lot; 66 (22.7%) indicated it had increased a little; 114 (39.1%) said it had stayed the same; and 77 (26.5%) reported that incidents of violence had decreased. Consistent with the perceptions of administrators and counselors, a majority of teachers (65.6%) felt that incidents of violence had either decreased or stayed the same. Less than half (34.4%) of the teachers perceived that the incidents of violence had increased.
Table 13

Perceived Incidents of Violence by Teachers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Increased a Lot</th>
<th>Increased a Little</th>
<th>Stayed the Same</th>
<th>Decreased</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>34</td>
<td>11.7</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>22.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Research Question 8

Have incidents of violence increased as perceived by students?

As indicated in Table 14, when percentage analyses were tabulated with respect to the perceptions of students toward the incidents of violence on school campuses in selected schools in north Louisiana, 17 (6.9%) of the students reported that incidents of violence had increased a lot; 30 (12.2%) said it had increased a little; 110 (45%) indicated that it had stayed the same; and 88 (35.9%) expressed that it had decreased. Accordingly, it can be reported that a large majority of students (80.9%) perceived that the incidents of violence on school campuses had remained the same or decreased. Less than 20% of the students perceived that incidents of violence had increased.

Table 14

Perceived Incidents of Violence by Students

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Increased a Lot</th>
<th>Increased a Little</th>
<th>Stayed the Same</th>
<th>Decreased</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>6.9</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>12.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Research Question 9

What issues of violence prevention methods are presently being used in the selected schools?

As shown in Table 15, percentage analysis was employed to determine what types of preventive strategies to curb school violence are currently being used in the schools. Three of the preventive strategies (closed campus, teachers in the hallways, and visitor pass/reg) received over 70% in agreement in the always category. Regarding the “often category” none of the preventive strategies received over 20% agreement. Moreover, with regard to the “occasionally” category, three of the preventive strategies (dog searches, parental involvement, and locker searches) received over 60% agreement. In addition, four of the preventive strategies (peer mediation, locker searches, security personnel, and multicultural diversity programs) received over 20% agreement in the “seldom” category. Finally, three of the prevention strategies (security cameras, transparent bookbags, and uniforms) received over 55% agreement in the “never” category.

Research Question 10

What types of professional development workshops or activities have administrators, counselors, and teachers been involved in that prepared them to deal with school violence?

Item 14 of the School Personnel Questionnaire was an open-ended question that asked administrators, counselors, and teachers if they had attended any professional development workshops or activities concerning school violence. Frequency counts of the most common
Table 15
*Types of Violence Prevention Methods Currently Being Used in the Schools*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Prevention Strategies</th>
<th>Always N</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Often N</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Occasionally N</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Seldom N</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Never N</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alternative School Programs</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>27.3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>18.2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>36.4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>9.1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>9.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Security Cameras</td>
<td></td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>18.2</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>54.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Closed Campus</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>90.9</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>9.1</td>
<td></td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>18.2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>19.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dog Searches</td>
<td></td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>72.7</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>18.2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>9.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Metal Detectors</td>
<td></td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>18.2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>36.4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>9.1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>36.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peer Mediation/Conflict Resolution</td>
<td></td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>18.2</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>45.5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>18.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parental Involvement Programs</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>9.1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>81.8</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>9.1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Locker Searches</td>
<td></td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>63.6</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>27.3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>19.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Security Personnel</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>18.2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>9.1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>9.1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>27.3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>36.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers in Hallways</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>90.9</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>9.1</td>
<td></td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transparent Bookbags</td>
<td></td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>9.1</td>
<td></td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>90.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visitor Pass/Reg</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>72.7</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>27.3</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multicultural/Diversity Programs</td>
<td></td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>36.4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>36.4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>27.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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workshops and activities, as well as content analysis of participant responses were used to analyze data to this open-ended question. Of the 331 participants that responded, 112 or 38% reported attending some form of professional development workshop or activity on school violence. Sixteen, or 62% of the administrators had attended some form of workshop. Twelve, or 71% of the counselors had attended some form of workshop. Eighty-four, or 29% of the teachers had attended some form of workshop or activity. One-hundred twenty-six participants did not respond to this question.

A summary of the most frequently occurring workshops and/or activities is presented in Table 16. The table presents a total frequency count of responses for each item, along with a breakdown of how many were from administrators, counselors, and teachers.

The most frequent type of workshop that had been attended by all groups was on gang violence. The second most popular type of activity involved workshops on school violence given by the local school districts. Drug education workshops were listed as the third most popular activity that was attended by administrators, counselors, and teachers. While only 10 of the participants had attended workshops on Conflict Resolution, it was named as one of the most frequently attended professional development activities. Other types of activities mentioned by respondents included workshops on (a) Cultural Diversity, (b) Special Education Discipline, (c) Crisis Response Team Training, (d) Alcohol Awareness, (e) Peer Counseling, and (f) Cooperative Discipline.

While some participants that had not participated in any professional development activities concerning school violence felt such activities would be worthwhile, some felt that because of the school history, workshops were unnecessary. One participant stated, “Since...
we have such a great record of safety here, we don’t have to have workshops to address this problem.” Another respondent commented, “I don’t think we need any because our student body is not prone to violence and our assistant principal in charge of discipline runs a

very tight ship.” A third stated that, “We do not have problems with school violence. Our administration does a tremendous job of controlling our students.” Some participants, however, felt that there was a need for some information to prepare them for school violence. One teacher stated, “We were in-serviced on how to restrain a severely behavior disordered student. Other than that, none. We have one for fire, tornado, and natural gas disaster. Shouldn’t we have one for violence too?”

Although several teachers had not attended any type of workshop or activity related to school violence, many of those that had, felt they were worthwhile. One teacher responded, “I attended an in-service workshop where an expert on gangs in schools presented materials,
signs, etc. about gangs in schools which really opened my eyes. I realized that I had seen some of the “signs” and was totally unaware of what they were! It really frightened me!” Another teacher stated “This parish provides in-services for school personnel. The sessions at individual schools have been helpful for me in that it helps us know what to look for, and thus prevent potential problems.” One principal stated “I have attended drug awareness workshops which were helpful in identifying certain drugs and drug paraphernalia.” Another administrator responded “I have attended several workshops on school violence stressing how to identify at-risk students; videos showing characteristics of these students, in addition to having had the opportunity of meeting and hearing a person who infiltrated a group. I was surprised to hear of some identifying characteristics.” One teacher stated “The Drug and Alcohol Awareness workshop helped to inform me about the different types of behavior exhibited by students on various drugs. It also demonstrated statistics on alcohol and drug abuse.” Another teacher responded by saying “Each year we have in-service training where different people come and give us information on gangs and drugs. These training seminars supply us with knowledge to know if the things we see and hear are gang or drug related. It is surprising to me the number of high school teachers who do not know what cocaine looks like, or what the different looks of a gang are. Knowing these things and being aware of them are big factors in keeping violence down in our schools.”

Of the total number of participants that reported, less than half of the administrators, counselors, and teachers indicated that they had attended some form of professional development workshop or activity on school safety or violence. The workshops attended that were listed most frequently by administrators, counselors, and teachers included (a) gang
violence, (b) school violence workshops, (c) drug education, and (d) conflict resolution.

Although many respondents indicated that they had not attended any workshops or activities, they felt that such activities would be beneficial. In addition, some participants reported that the workshops that they had attended had been useful.

The 15 hypotheses stated in Chapter 1 were tested at the .05 level of significance and the results of these tests are as follows:

**Hypotheses 1A and 1B**

Hypothesis 1A: No significant differences exist in the perceptions of administrators regarding the factor of disruption/abuse due to ethnicity.

Hypothesis 1B: No significant differences exist in the perceptions of administrators regarding the factor of violence/aggression.

Reported in Table 17 are the One-Way Analysis of Variance results regarding the ethnicity of the administrators and their obtained perception scores regarding the factors of school safety and violence. The differences in the obtained perception scores of Minority and Non-Minority administrators with respect to the disruption/abuse (F = .1717, df = 1/24, p > .05) and violence/aggression (F = .0541, df = 1/24, p > .05) factors of school safety and violence were not significant at the .05 level. Therefore, hypotheses 1A and 1B were retained.
Table 17
Analysis of Variance Summary Table Regarding the Perception of Administrators Toward the Two Factors of School Safety and Violence by Ethnicity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factor</th>
<th>Degrees Of Freedom</th>
<th>Sum of Squares</th>
<th>Mean Squares</th>
<th>F Ratio</th>
<th>P</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Disruption/Abuse</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Between Groups</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.4762</td>
<td>2.4762</td>
<td>.1717</td>
<td>.6822</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Within Groups</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>346.0238</td>
<td>14.4177</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Violence/Aggression</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Between Groups</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.1795</td>
<td>.1795</td>
<td>.0541</td>
<td>.8181</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Within Groups</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>79.6667</td>
<td>3.3194</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Hypotheses 2A and 2B**

Hypothesis 2A: No significant differences exist in the perceptions of administrators regarding the factor of disruption/abuse due to gender.

Hypothesis 2B: No significant differences exist in the perceptions of administrators regarding the factor of violence/aggression due to gender.

The data in Table 18 show that there was no significant difference regarding male and female administrators and their obtained perception scores with respect to the two factors of school safety and violence. Differences were not found between their perceptions of the disruption/abuse factor ($F = .1124, df = 1/24, p > .05$) and the violence/aggression factor ($F = .1425, df = 1/24, p > 0.05$). Consequently, hypotheses 2A and 2B were retained.
Table 18
*Analysis of Variance Summary Table Regarding the Perception of Administrators Toward the Two Factors of School Safety and Violence by Gender*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factor</th>
<th>Degrees Of Freedom</th>
<th>Sum Of Squares</th>
<th>Mean Squares</th>
<th>F Ratio</th>
<th>P</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Disruption/Abuse</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Between Groups</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.6250</td>
<td>1.6250</td>
<td>.1124</td>
<td>.7403</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Within Groups</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>346.8750</td>
<td>28.7708</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Violence/Aggression</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Between Groups</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.4712</td>
<td>.4712</td>
<td>.1425</td>
<td>.7092</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Within Groups</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>79.3750</td>
<td>3.3073</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Hypotheses 3A and 3B**

Hypothesis 3A: No significant differences exist in the perceptions of administrators regarding the factor of disruption/abuse due to years of experience in education.

Hypothesis 3B: No significant differences exist in the perceptions of administrators regarding the factor of violence/aggression due to years of experience in education.

Shown in Table 19 are the Analysis of Variance results regarding the years of experience of administrators and their obtained perception scores regarding the two factors of school safety and violence. The differences in the obtained perception scores of the three
experience groups of administrators with regard to the disruption/abuse ($F = .0585$, $df = 1/24$, $p > .05$) and the violence/aggression ($F = .5772$, $df = 1/24$, $p > .05$) factors were not significant at the .05 level. Therefore, hypotheses 3A and 3B were retained.

**Table 19**

*Analysis of Variance Summary Table Regarding the Perception of Administrators Toward the Two Factors of School Safety and Violence by Years of Experience*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factor</th>
<th>Degrees Of Freedom</th>
<th>Sum Of Squares</th>
<th>Mean Squares</th>
<th>F Ratio</th>
<th>P</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Disruption/Abuse</td>
<td>Between Groups</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.8478</td>
<td>.8470</td>
<td>.0585</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Within Groups</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>347.6522</td>
<td>14.4855</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Violence/Aggression</td>
<td>Between Groups</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.8751</td>
<td>1.8751</td>
<td>.5772</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Within Groups</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>77.9710</td>
<td>3.2488</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Hypotheses 4A and 4B**

Hypothesis 4A: No significant differences exist in the perceptions of counselors regarding the factor of disruptive/abuse due to ethnicity.

Hypothesis 4B: No significant differences exist in the perceptions of counselors regarding the factor of violence/aggression due to ethnicity.

Illustrated in Table 20 was the independent t-test with equal variance calculations between the perceptions of Minority and Non-Minority counselors toward school safety and
violence. The mean perception score for Minority counselors regarding the disruption/abuse factor was 16.20 (SD = 5.54) and for Non-Minority counselors was 18.00 (SD = 5.39).

The mean perception score for Minority counselors regarding the violence/aggression factor was 13.20 (SD = 4.38) and for Non-Minority counselors was 16.44 (SD = 3.09).

Differences were not found between the two ethnic groups of counselors with regard to the disruption/abuse factor (t = -.59, df = 12, p > .05) and the violence/aggression factor (t = -1.63, df = 12, p > .05) at the .05 level of significance. Therefore, hypotheses 4A and 4B were retained.

Table 20
The t-test Results of Differences Between the Perceptions of Counselors Regarding the Two Factors of School Safety and Violence by Ethnicity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factor</th>
<th>Minority (N=5)</th>
<th>Non-Minority (N=9)</th>
<th>Diff</th>
<th>DF</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Disruption/Abuse</td>
<td>16.20</td>
<td>5.54</td>
<td>18.00</td>
<td>5.39</td>
<td>-1.80</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Violence/Aggression</td>
<td>13.20</td>
<td>4.38</td>
<td>16.44</td>
<td>3.09</td>
<td>-3.24</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Hypotheses 5A and 5B

Hypothesis 5A: No significant differences exist in the perceptions of counselors regarding the factor of disruptive/abuse due to gender.
Hypothesis 5B: No significant differences exist in the perceptions of counselors regarding the factor of violence/aggression due the gender.

Presented in Table 21 are the equal variance independent t-test findings between the perceptions of male and female counselors toward the two factors of school safety and violence. The mean perception score for the female counselors regarding the disruption/abuse factor was 16.50 (SD = 5.78) and for male counselors was 19.25 (SD = 4.11). The mean perception score for female counselors regarding the violence/aggression factor was 14.58 (SD = 4.03) and for male counselors was 16.50 (SD = 3.00). Significant differences were not found to exist between the perceptions of male and female counselors with respect to the disruption/abuse factor ($t = .87$, df = 14, $p > .05$) or the violence/aggression factor ($t = .87$, df = 14, $p > .05$). Based on the aforementioned findings, hypotheses 5A and 5B were retained.

Table 21

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factor</th>
<th>Female (N=12)</th>
<th>Male (N=4)</th>
<th>Mean Diff</th>
<th>DF</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>P</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Disruption/Abuse</td>
<td>16.50</td>
<td></td>
<td>19.25</td>
<td>4.11</td>
<td>-2.75</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5.78</td>
<td>2.06</td>
<td>-1.92</td>
<td>-401</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Violence/Aggression</td>
<td>14.58</td>
<td></td>
<td>16.50</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>-1.92</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4.03</td>
<td>1.50</td>
<td>-1.92</td>
<td>-401</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Hypotheses 6A and 6B

Hypothesis 6A: No significant differences exist in the perceptions of counselors regarding the factor of disruption/abuse due to years of experience in education.

Hypothesis 6B: No significant differences exist in the perceptions of counselors regarding the factor of violence/aggression due to years of experience in education.

Reported in Table 22 are the t-test of independent samples with equal variance results between the perceptions of counselors who had 25 years or less of experience and those with 26 years or more of experience with regard to the two factors of school safety and violence. The mean score for the 25 years or less group with respect to the disruption/abuse factor was 15.14 (SD = 6.59) and for the 26 years and above group was 18.70 (SD = 3.77). The mean score for the 25 years or less group regarding to the disruption/abuse factor was 13.71 (SD = 4.07) and for the 26 years and above group was 15.60 (SD = 3.62). A significant difference was not found between the two means regarding the disruption/abuse factor (t = -1.42, df = 15, p > .05) or the violence/aggression factor (t = -1.00, df = 15, p > .05) at the .05 level. Accordingly, hypotheses 6A and 6B were retained.
Table 22
The t-test Results of Differences Between the Perceptions of Counselors Regarding the Two Factors of School Safety and Violence by Years of Experience

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factor</th>
<th>25 Years or Less (N=7)</th>
<th>26 Years or Above (N=10)</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Disruption/Abuse</td>
<td>15.14 6.59 2.49</td>
<td>18.70 3.77 1.19</td>
<td>-3.56 15 -1.42 -.177</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Violence/Aggression</td>
<td>13.71 4.07 1.54</td>
<td>15.60 3.62 1.15</td>
<td>-1.89 15 -1.00 -.331</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Hypotheses 7A and 7B

Hypothesis 7A: No significant differences exist in the perceptions of teachers regarding the factor of disruptive/abuse due to ethnicity.

Hypotheses 7B: No significant differences exist in the perceptions of teachers regarding the factor of violence/aggression due to ethnicity.

When the One-Way Analysis of Variance results were compared between the three ethnic groups of teachers revealed in Table 23, significant differences were not found between the three ethnic groups of teachers regarding the disruption/abuse (F = .2.1121, df = 2/287, p > .05) or the violence/aggression (F = 1.1543, df = 2/286, p > .05) factors at the .05 level. Accordingly, hypotheses 7A and 7B were retained.
Table 23

Analysis of Variance Summary Table Regarding the Perception of Teachers Toward the Two Factors of School Safety and Violence by Ethnicity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factor</th>
<th>Degrees Of Freedom</th>
<th>Sum Of Squares</th>
<th>Mean Squares</th>
<th>F Ratio</th>
<th>P</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Disruption/Abuse</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Between Groups</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>92.9034</td>
<td>46.4517</td>
<td>2.1121</td>
<td>.1229</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Within Groups</td>
<td>287</td>
<td>6311.9966</td>
<td>21.9930</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Violence/Aggression</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Between Groups</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>24.1331</td>
<td>12.0666</td>
<td>1.1543</td>
<td>.3168</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Within Groups</td>
<td>286</td>
<td>2989.8392</td>
<td>10.4540</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Hypotheses 8A and 8B

Hypothesis 8A: No significant differences exist in the perceptions of teachers regarding the factor of disruption/abuse due to gender.

Hypothesis 8B: No significant differences exist in the perceptions of teachers regarding the factor of violence/aggression due to gender.

Reported in Table 24 are the One-Way Analysis of Variance results relative to male and female teachers and their perceptions toward the two factors of school safety and violence. A significant difference was not found between the perceptions of the two gender
groups of teachers with respect to the disruption/abuse ($F = 3.5626, df = 1/287, p > .05$) or the violence/aggression ($F = 3.4411, df = 1/286, p > .05$) factors at the .05 level. Therefore, hypotheses 8A and 8B were retained.

**Table 24**

*Analysis of Variance Summary Table Regarding the Perception of Teachers Toward the Two Factors of School Safety and Violence by Gender*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Degrees of Freedom</th>
<th>Sum of Squares</th>
<th>Mean Squares</th>
<th>F Ratio</th>
<th>P</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Disruption/Abuse</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Between Groups</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>78.3034</td>
<td>78.3034</td>
<td>3.3842</td>
<td>.0669</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Within Groups</td>
<td>287</td>
<td>6308.0427</td>
<td>21.9792</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Violence/Aggression</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Between Groups</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>35.7458</td>
<td>35.7458</td>
<td>3.4411</td>
<td>.0646</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Within Groups</td>
<td>286</td>
<td>2970.9730</td>
<td>10.3880</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Hypothesis 9A and 9B**

Hypothesis 9A: No significant differences exist in the perceptions of teachers regarding the factor of disruption/abuse due to years of experience in education.

Hypothesis 9B: No significant differences exist in the perceptions of teachers regarding the factor of violence/aggression due to years of experience in education.
Revealed in Table 25 are the One-Way Analysis of Variance results between the various experience groups of teachers toward two factors of school safety and violence. No significant differences were found at the .05 level of significance regarding the disruption/abuse ($F = .0686$, df = 2/287, $p > .05$) or the violence/aggression ($F = .7390$, df = 2/286, $p > .05$) factors of school safety and violence. Thus, hypotheses 9A and 9B was retained.

Table 25

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factor</th>
<th>Degrees of Freedom</th>
<th>Sum of Squares</th>
<th>Mean Squares</th>
<th>F Ratio</th>
<th>P</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Between Groups</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3.0613</td>
<td>.0686</td>
<td>.9337</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Within Groups</td>
<td>287</td>
<td>6401.8387</td>
<td>22.3061</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disruption/Abuse</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Between Groups</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>15.4952</td>
<td>.7390</td>
<td>.4785</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Within Groups</td>
<td>286</td>
<td>2998.4771</td>
<td>10.4842</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Violence/Aggression</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Hypotheses 10A and 10B

Hypothesis 10A: No significant differences exist in the perceptions of students regarding the factor of disruptive/abuse due to ethnicity.

Hypothesis 10B: No significant differences exist in the perception of students regarding the factor of violence/aggression due to ethnicity.
One-Way Analysis of Variance results were computed between Minority and Non-Minority students and their observed perception scores toward the two factors of school safety and violence. As shown in Table 26, no significant differences were found between the perceptions of Minority and Non-Minority students regarding the disruption/abuse factor ($F = .6315$, df = 2/241, $p > .05$) or the violence/aggression ($F = 1.4581$, df = 2/241, $p > .05$) factors at the .05 level. Consequently, hypotheses 10A and 10B were retained.

Table 26

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factor</th>
<th>Degrees of Freedom</th>
<th>Sum of Squares</th>
<th>Mean Squares</th>
<th>F Ratio</th>
<th>P</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Disruption/Abuse</td>
<td>Between Groups</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>26.5972</td>
<td>13.2986</td>
<td>.6315</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Within Groups</td>
<td>241</td>
<td>5075.0872</td>
<td>21.0585</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Violence/Aggression</td>
<td>Between Groups</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>29.8896</td>
<td>14.9448</td>
<td>1.4581</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Within Groups</td>
<td>241</td>
<td>2470.1596</td>
<td>10.2496</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Hypotheses 11A and 11B

Hypothesis 11A: No significant differences exist in the perceptions of students regarding the factor of disruption/abuse due to gender.
Hypothesis 11B: No significant differences exist in the perceptions of students regarding the factor of violence/aggression due to gender.

As reported in Table 27, when the One-Way Analysis of Variance was computed between the perceptions of male and female students toward the two factors of school safety and violence, differences were not found on the factors of disruption/abuse (F = 1.2499, df = 1/243, p > .05) or violence/aggression (F = 1.4740, df = 1/243, p > .05) at the .05 level. Accordingly, hypothesis 11A and 11B were retained.

Table 27
Analysis of Variance Summary Table Regarding the Perception of Students Regarding the Two Factors of School Safety and Violence by Gender

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factor</th>
<th>Degrees of Freedom</th>
<th>Sum of Squares</th>
<th>Mean Squares</th>
<th>F Ratio</th>
<th>P</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Disruption/Abuse</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Between Groups</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>26.1333</td>
<td>26.1333</td>
<td>1.2499</td>
<td>.2647</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Within Groups</td>
<td>243</td>
<td>5080.6667</td>
<td>20.9081</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Violence/Aggression</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Between Groups</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>15.1027</td>
<td>15.1027</td>
<td>1.4740</td>
<td>.2259</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Within Groups</td>
<td>243</td>
<td>2489.8605</td>
<td>10.2463</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Hypothses 12A and 12B

Hypothesis 12A: No significant differences exist in the perceptions of students regarding the factor of disruption/abuse due to age.
Hypothesis 12B: No significant differences exist in the perceptions of students regarding the factor of violence/aggression due to age.

Shown in Table 28 are the One-Way Analysis of Variance results relative to the age of students and their perceptions regarding the factors of school safety and violence. The differences in the obtained perception scores toward the disruption/abuse (F = .4030, df = 2/241, p > .05) or violence/aggression (F = .2983, df = 2/241, p > .05) factors of school safety and violence of the three age groups of students were not found to be significant at the .05 level. Based on the above results, hypothesis 12A and 12B were retained.

Table 28

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factor</th>
<th>Degrees Of Freedom</th>
<th>Sum Of Squares</th>
<th>Mean Squares</th>
<th>F Ratio</th>
<th>P</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Disruption/Abuse</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Between Groups</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>16.9739</td>
<td>8.4870</td>
<td>.4030</td>
<td>.6688</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Within Groups</td>
<td>241</td>
<td>5075.7597</td>
<td>21.0612</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Violence/Aggression</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Between Groups</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6.1774</td>
<td>3.0887</td>
<td>.2983</td>
<td>.7424</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Within Groups</td>
<td>241</td>
<td>2495.5767</td>
<td>10.3551</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Hypothesizes 13A and 13B

Hypothesis: No significant differences exist in the perceptions of students regarding the factor of disruption/abuse due to grade level.

Hypothesis: No significant differences exist in the perceptions of students regarding the factor of violence/aggression due to grade level.

Indicated in Table 29 are the One-Way Analysis of Variance results regarding the various grade levels of students and their obtained perceptions with regard to the disruption/abuse and violence/aggression factors of school safety and violence. A significant difference was not found between the four grade levels of students regarding the disruption/abuse ($F = .7171, df = 3/240, p > .05$) or the violence/aggression ($F = 2.0168, df = 3/240, p > .05$) factors at the .05 level. Thus, hypotheses 13A and 13B were retained.

Table 29
Analysis of Variance Summary Table Regarding the Perception of Students Regarding the Two Factors of School Safety and Violence by Grade Level

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factor</th>
<th>Degrees Of Freedom</th>
<th>Sum Of Squares</th>
<th>Mean Squares</th>
<th>F Ratio</th>
<th>P</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Disruption/Abuse</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>45.3431</td>
<td>15.1144</td>
<td>.7171</td>
<td>.5426</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>240</td>
<td>5058.4069</td>
<td>21.0767</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Violence/Aggression</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>61.4046</td>
<td>20.4682</td>
<td>2.0168</td>
<td>.1122</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>240</td>
<td>2435.7553</td>
<td>10.1490</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Hypotheses 14A and 14B

Hypothesis 14A: No significant differences exist in the perceptions of school group members regarding the factor of disruption/abuse.

Hypothesis 14B: No significant differences exist in the perceptions of school group members regarding the factor of violence/aggression.

Included in Table 30 are the One-Way Analysis of Variance results relative to the perceptions of school group members toward the disruption/abuse and violence/aggression factors of school safety and violence on school campuses. Statistically significant differences were found between the perceptions of the four groups of school group members with respect to the disruption/abuse ($F = 6.5097$, $df = 3/575$, $p < .001$) and the violence/aggression ($F = 7.2698$, $df = 3/573$, $p < .001$) factors of school and violence at the .001 level. Thus, hypothesis 14A and 14B were rejected. Further data analysis using the Scheffe’ test as a follow-up test (See Table 31), revealed that students perceived their schools to be significantly less safe with respect to the disruption/abuse factor than did their teachers. Additionally, the Scheffe’ (See Table 32) reported that students perceived their school to be significantly less safe with regard to the violence/aggression factor than did counselors and teachers. Finally, administrators perceived their school to be significantly less safe than counselors regarding the violence/aggression factor. No other mean differences were observed.
Table 30

*Analysis of Variance Summary Table Regarding the Perception of School Group Members Regarding the Two Factors of School Safety and Violence*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factor</th>
<th>Degrees of Freedom</th>
<th>Sum of Squares</th>
<th>Mean Squares</th>
<th>F Ratio</th>
<th>P</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Disruption/Abuse</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Between Groups</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>469.8440</td>
<td>156.6147</td>
<td>6.5097</td>
<td>.0002***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Within Groups</td>
<td>575</td>
<td>13833.6621</td>
<td>24.0585</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Violence/Aggression</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Between Group</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>218.7193</td>
<td>72.9064</td>
<td>7.2698</td>
<td>.0001***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Within Groups</td>
<td>573</td>
<td>5746.4523</td>
<td>10.0287</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

***Significant at the .001 level

Hypotheses 15A and 15B

Hypothesis 15A: No significant differences exist in the perceptions of school group members regarding the factor of disruption/abuse due to size of school.

Hypothesis 15B: No significant differences exist in the perceptions of school group members regarding the factor of violence/aggression due to size of school.

Shown in Table 33 are the One-Way Analysis of Variance results with respect to the perceptions of school group members regarding the disruption/abuse and violence/aggression factors of school safety and violence on school campuses by size of school.
Table 31  
Scheffe’ Results Regarding the Disruption/Abuse Factor of School Safety and Violence by Position

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Adm</th>
<th>Coun</th>
<th>Tea</th>
<th>Stud</th>
<th>Observed Mean Difference</th>
<th>Scheffe’ Critical Value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>20.50</td>
<td>17.24</td>
<td>18.30</td>
<td>19.94</td>
<td>3.26</td>
<td>4.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20.50</td>
<td>----</td>
<td>----</td>
<td>----</td>
<td>2.20</td>
<td>2.84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20.50</td>
<td>----</td>
<td>----</td>
<td>----</td>
<td>.56</td>
<td>2.87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17.24</td>
<td>18.30</td>
<td>----</td>
<td>----</td>
<td>-1.06</td>
<td>3.44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17.24</td>
<td>----</td>
<td>19.94</td>
<td>----</td>
<td>-2.70</td>
<td>3.46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18.90</td>
<td>----</td>
<td>19.94</td>
<td>----</td>
<td>-1.64*</td>
<td>1.15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Significant at the .05 level

A significant difference was not found among school group members from the three different sizes of schools with regard to the disruption/abuse (F = .6395, df = 2/578, p > .05) or the violence/aggression (F = 1.4365, df = 2/576, p > .05) factors of school safety and violence at the .05 level. Therefore, hypotheses 15A and 15B were retained.
### Table 32

**Scheffe’ Results Regarding the Violence/Aggression Factor of School Safety and Violence by Position**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Adm</th>
<th>Coun</th>
<th>Tea</th>
<th>Stud</th>
<th>Observed Mean Difference</th>
<th>Scheffe’ Critical Value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>17.92</td>
<td>14.82</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3.10*</td>
<td>2.79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17.92</td>
<td></td>
<td>16.69</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1.23</td>
<td>1.83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17.92</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>17.61</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.31</td>
<td>1.86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14.82</td>
<td></td>
<td>16.69</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-1.87</td>
<td>2.22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14.82</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>17.61</td>
<td></td>
<td>-2.79*</td>
<td>2.23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16.69</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>17.61</td>
<td>-0.92*</td>
<td>.74</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Significant at the .05 level
Table 33
Analysis of Variance Summary Table Regarding the Perception of School Group Members Toward the Two Factors of School Safety and Violence by Size of School

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factor</th>
<th>Degrees Of Freedom</th>
<th>Sum Of Squares</th>
<th>Mean Squares</th>
<th>F Ratio</th>
<th>P</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Disruption/Abuse</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Between Groups</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>31.6352</td>
<td>15.8176</td>
<td>.6395</td>
<td>.5279</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Within Groups</td>
<td>578</td>
<td>14295.8794</td>
<td>24.7334</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Violence/Aggression</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Between Groups</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>29.5894</td>
<td>14.7947</td>
<td>1.4365</td>
<td>.2391</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Within Groups</td>
<td>576</td>
<td>5940.4314</td>
<td>10.3132</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CHAPTER 5
SUMMARY, FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS,
AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The first section of this chapter includes a summary of the purpose and design of the study. The findings from the study are included in the second section. The third section includes a discussion, and conclusions are presented in the fourth section. The last section includes a list of recommendations for practice and recommendations for future research based on the research in this study.

Summary

The primary purposes of this study were to determine the perceptions of administrators, counselors, teachers, and students, regarding levels of school safety and violence in selected secondary schools in north Louisiana, to determine the types of violence that had the greatest impact on safety, and what strategies were currently being used to address violence in the schools. The secondary purposes of this study were to determine the differences in perceptions of school safety and violence of administrators, counselors, and teachers by ethnic background, gender, and years of experience, as well as perceptions by students by ethnic background, gender, age, and grade level. Additionally, this study investigated how the level of violence in the selected schools has changed, the differences in
perceptions based on size of schools, the differences in perceptions by all group members, and the types of professional development activities being implemented.

Participants in this study consisted of 581 school group members. Of this total, 26 were administrators, 17 were counselors, 292 were teachers, and 246 were students. There were 12 administrators who identified themselves as Minority and 14 who identified themselves as Non-Minority. There were 8 female and 18 male administrators who participated in the study. The variable years of experience was collapsed into two categories. There were 15 administrators who reported 25 years or less experience and 11 who had 26 years or more of experience. Of the 17 counselors, 5 identified their ethnic background as Minority and 9 as Non-Minority. There were 3 missing responses. Twelve female and 4 male counselors participated in this study. There was one missing case. Of the 17 counselors, there were 7 who reported 25 years or less of experience and 10 who indicated 26 years or more of experience. With respect to the ethnicity of the teachers, 91 identified themselves as Minority, 184 indicated Non-Minority, and 17 reported their ethnic background as “Other.” There were 200 female teachers who responded to the questionnaire and 91 male teachers. The variable years of experience in the teacher group was divided into three categories. One hundred thirteen teachers indicated they had 10 years or less of experience, 73 reported 11 to 20 years of experience, and 106 expressed 21 years or more of experience. While 113 students identified their ethnic status as Minority, 153 indicated Non-Minority. Of the 246 students who participated in this study, 147 were females in comparison to 98 males. In regard to the age of the students who participated in the study, 63 were between the ages of 14 to 15, 143 were between the ages of 16 to 17, and 38 were between the ages of 18 to 19.
There were two missing cases. The variable grade level was divided into four classifications. There were 47 students enrolled in the ninth grade, 48 in the tenth grade, 53 in the eleventh grade, and 96 in the twelfth grade. There were two missing cases.

Responses to the questionnaires were analyzed using both descriptive and statistical analysis. The statistical method used to analyze the data was the One-Way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA). The analysis of variance was used because it determined if there was a significant difference among the means of two or more groups and tested the null hypotheses. The fifteen null hypotheses were tested at the .05 level of significance. This analysis revealed conclusions about the means by analyzing the variation (variance) of the groups. The resulting F value told the researcher if there was any significant difference in the perceptions regarding the levels of school and safety and violence by administrators, counselors, teachers, and students. Descriptive statistics for all items on the questionnaire and the data from the violence prevention measures and program checklist were presented in tables with the appropriate narrative. Descriptive statistics were used to present data to answer the research questions. Three instruments entitled the “School Personnel Questionnaire,” (Appendix A) the “Student Questionnaire,” (Appendix B) and the “Principals’ Checklist,” (Appendix C) were used to gather the data. The questionnaires were validated with a pilot study of authorities in public school administration and education. This instrument had a Cronbach Alpha reliability coefficient of .8994 for the test as a whole.

The data were tested through the application of percentage analysis, t-test of independent samples, One-Way Analysis of Variance, and the Scheffe follow-up test. The following questions provided specific directions for the study:
Research Questions:

This study attempted to answer the following research questions:

1. What issues of violence do administrators perceive to have the greatest impact on school safety?

2. What issues of violence do counselors perceive to have the greatest impact on school safety?

3. What issues of violence do teachers perceive to have the greatest impact on school safety?

4. What issues of violence do students perceive to have the greatest impact on school safety?

5. Have incidents of violence increased as perceived by administrators?

6. Have incidents of violence increased as perceived by counselors?

7. Have incidents of violence increased as perceived by teachers?

8. Have incidents of violence increased as perceived by students?

9. What issues of violence prevention methods are presently being used in the selected schools?

10. What types of professional development workshops or activities have administrators, counselors, and teachers participated in that prepared them to deal with school violence?
The following null hypotheses were tested at the .05 level of significance in this study:

1A. No significant differences exist in the perceptions of administrators regarding the factor of disruption/abuse due to ethnicity.

1B. No significant differences exist in the perceptions of administrators regarding the factor of violence/aggression due to ethnicity.

2A. No significant differences exist in the perceptions of administrators regarding the factor of disruption/abuse due to gender.

2B. No significant differences exist in the perceptions of administrators regarding the factor of violence/aggression due to gender.

3A. No significant differences exist in the perceptions of administrators regarding the factor of disruption/abuse due to years of experience in education.

3B. No significant differences exist in the perceptions of administrators regarding the factor of violence/aggression due to years of experience in education.

4A. No significant differences exist in the perceptions of counselors regarding the factor of disruption/abuse due to ethnicity.

4B. No significant differences exist in the perceptions of counselors regarding the factor of violence/aggression due to ethnicity.

5A. No significant differences exist in the perceptions of counselors regarding the factor of disruption/abuse due to years of gender.

5B. No significant differences exist in the perceptions of counselors regarding the factor of violence/aggression due to gender.
6A. No significant differences exist in the perceptions of counselors regarding the factor of disruption/abuse due to years of experience in education.

6B. No significant differences exist in the perceptions of counselors regarding the factor of violence/aggression due to years of experience in education.

7A. No significant differences exist in the perceptions of teachers regarding the factor of disruption/abuse due to ethnicity.

7B. No significant differences exist in the perceptions of teachers regarding the factor of violence/aggression due to ethnicity.

8A. No significant differences exist in the perceptions of teachers regarding the factor of disruption/abuse due to gender.

8B. No significant differences exist in the perceptions of teachers regarding the factor of violence/aggression due to gender.

9A. No significant differences exist in the perceptions of teachers regarding the factor of disruption/abuse due to years of experience.

9B. No significant differences exist in the perceptions of teachers regarding the factor of violence/aggression due to years of experience.

10A. No significant differences exist in the perceptions of students regarding the factor of disruption/abuse due to ethnicity.

10B. No significant differences exist in the perceptions of students regarding the factor of violence/aggression due to ethnicity.

11A. No significant differences exist in the perceptions of students regarding the factor of disruption/abuse due to gender.
11B. No significant differences exist in the perceptions of students regarding the factor of violence/aggression due to gender.

12A. No significant differences exist in the perceptions of students regarding the factor of disruption/abuse due to age.

12B. No significant differences exist in the perceptions of students regarding the factor of violence/aggression due to age.

13A. No significant differences exist in the perceptions of students regarding the factor of disruption/abuse due to grade level.

13B. No significant differences exist in the perceptions of students regarding the factor of violence/aggression due to grade level.

14A. No significant differences exist in the perceptions of school group members regarding the factor of disruption/abuse.

14B. No significant differences exist in the perceptions of school group members regarding the factor of violence/aggression.

15A. No significant differences exist in the perceptions of school group members regarding the factor of disruption/abuse due to size of school.

15B. No significant differences exist in the perceptions of school group members regarding the factor of violence/aggression.
Findings

Based on the results of this study, the following findings were observed:

1. Physical attacks/fights among students, vandalism, and verbal abuse of teachers had the greatest impact on school safety as perceived by administrators.

2. Physical attacks/fights among students, vandalism, and verbal abuse of teachers had the greatest impact on school safety as perceived by counselors.

3. Vandalism, verbal abuse of teachers, and student possession, distribution, or use of alcohol/drugs had the greatest impact on school safety as perceived by teachers.

4. Vandalism, student possession, distribution, or use of alcohol/drugs, and verbal abuse of teachers had the greatest impact on school safety as perceived by students.

5. The majority (61.5%) of administrators perceived that incidents of violence had either remained the same or decreased in the time they had been in their respective schools.

6. The majority (58.8%) of counselors perceived that incidents of violence had either remained the same or decreased in the time they had been in their respective schools.

7. The majority (65.4%) of teachers perceived that incidents of violence had either remained the same or decreased in the time they had been in their respective schools.

8. An overwhelming majority (80.5%) of the students perceived that the incidents of violence had remained the same or decreased in the time they had been in their respective schools.

9. A majority of the principals indicated that teachers monitoring the halls, closed campuses, and the use of visitor passes/registration were the most popular violence prevention methods currently being used.
10. The most popular types of workshops that had been attended by administrators, counselors, and teachers, were (a) gang violence, (b) school violence workshops, (c) drug education, and (d) conflict resolution.

11. The perceptions of administrators regarding school safety and violence were not significantly affected by their ethnicity.

12. The perceptions of administrators regarding school safety and violence were not significantly affected by their gender.

13. The perceptions of administrators regarding school safety and violence were not significantly affected by their years of experience.

14. The perceptions of counselors regarding school safety and violence were not significantly affected by their ethnicity.

15. The perceptions of counselors regarding school safety and violence were not significantly affected by their gender.

16. The perceptions of counselors regarding school safety and violence were not significantly affected by their years of experience.

17. The perceptions of teachers regarding school safety and violence were not significantly affected by their ethnicity.

18. The perceptions of teachers regarding school safety and violence were not significantly affected by their gender.

19. The perceptions of teachers regarding school safety and violence were not significantly affected by their years of experience.
20. The perceptions of students regarding school safety and violence were not significantly affected by their ethnicity.

21. The perceptions of students regarding school safety and violence were not significantly affected by their gender.

22. The perceptions of students regarding school safety and violence were not significantly affected by their age.

23. The perceptions of students with regard to school safety and violence were not significantly affected by their grade level.

24. Students perceived their schools to be less safe than did their teachers with regard to the factor of disruption/abuse.

25. Students perceived their schools to be less safe than did their counselors and teachers with regard to the factor of violence/aggression.

26. Administrators perceived their schools to be less safe did their counselors with regard to the factor of violence/aggression.

27. The size of the school did not produce a significant impact on the perceptions of school group members toward school safety and violence.

28. The most popular types of workshops attended by administrators, counselors, and teachers included inservices on (a) gang violence, (b) school violence workshops, (c) drug education, and (d) conflict resolution.
Discussion

The most significant finding of the current study was the difference in the perceptions among school group members regarding school safety and violence (Research Questions 1-4, Hypotheses 14A and 14B). Analysis of the data in the present study revealed that students perceived that school violence was more of a problem than did teachers and counselors with regard to the disruption/abuse factor. These findings correspond with those of Bell, (1997c), and MacDonald (1997). Both of these researchers found differences in the perceptions of school group members regarding school safety and violence. A reasonable explanation for the present findings might be that students are more aware of school safety and violence issues on school campuses because of their involvement with other students. In addition, students may be the ones more likely to be confronted with violent behavior than any other school group members. This is consistent with the findings of Jones (1994). This researcher reported that students are the largest group of victims and witnesses of violence. Findings also revealed that students perceived their school to be significantly less safe with regard to the violence/aggression factor than did counselors and teachers. The issues included in the violence/aggression factor (gang activity, physical abuse of teachers, sexual battery/rape, student possession or use of a firearm, and student possession of a weapon other than a firearm) do not occur as frequently as issues in the disruption/abuse factor. In addition, most of these issues would usually not occur in the classroom, and therefore, teachers and counselors may not be as aware of their existence in their schools. These issues would also be considered more serious than those in Factor 1, and therefore would probably not be discussed as much for fear of negative publicity for the school. Finally, administrators
perceived their schools to be significantly less safe than counselors with regard to the violence/aggression factor. Because counselors normally have less contact with students than teachers or administrators, they might not be aware of the issues that are addressed in Factor 2. While students are involved in incidents, administrators have to deal with them. Unless an incident occurs in a teacher’s classroom, he/she may not be aware of it. Most of the incidents in Factor 2 (gang activity, physical abuse of teachers, sexual battery/rape, student possession or use of a firearm, student possession of a weapon other than a firearm), would probably not occur in the classroom.

Additionally, both administrators and counselors perceived that physical attacks/fights among students, vandalism, and verbal abuse of teachers had the greatest impact on school safety. Physical attacks/fights among students was not considered to have a major impact on school safety as perceived by teachers and students. The fact that administrators and counselor’s positions are not as confining, thus allowing them to be more visible in the school, might account for the difference in the perceptions. In addition, a large part of administrators’ responsibilities include dealing with discipline, and would allow administrators to be more aware of the everyday occurrences in the school. Teachers and students perceived that the possession, distribution, and use of alcohol/drugs had a major impact on school safety. Administrators and counselors did not perceive the possession, distribution, and use of alcohol/drugs as having a major impact on safety. Students interact with each other and teachers more than with administrators and counselors. This might account for the difference in perception that existed concerning the possession, distribution, and use of alcohol/drugs. All school group members perceived that vandalism and verbal abuse of teachers had a major
impact on school safety. These findings are parallel with those of Ascher (1994), Kimweli (1997) and Daugherty and Rossi (1996). These researchers found that physical attacks/fights among students, vandalism, and drugs/alcohol were significant factors which have an impact on school safety. Because verbal abuse would generally take place in the classroom, teachers and students would be more aware of the problem. Counselors, like administrators, have worked in the classroom and are also aware of the problem.

Another important finding of the present study pertained to the perceptions of school group members regarding the incidents of violence (Research Questions 5-8). All four groups indicated that the level of violence on their campuses had either remained the same or decreased. These findings were not supported by the work of Daugherty and Rossi (1996). These researchers reported that school group members, especially teachers, felt that violent behavior on school campuses was increasing. A possible reason for the prevailing findings might be that school personnel in the surveyed schools work collectively together in some important ways to develop prevention programs to reduce the degree of violence on their campuses.

The data regarding types of violence prevention programs (Research Question 9) revealed that a majority of the principals felt that teachers monitoring the halls, closed campuses, and the use of visitor passes/registration were the most popular violence prevention methods currently being used in the surveyed schools. These findings are consistent with those of Ascher (1994) and Schwartz (1996). The above researchers revealed in their findings the significant influence that closed campuses have on school safety. These
findings are also consistent with the findings of the 1997 NCES study that found that most schools (84%) reported using low levels of security measures (NCES, 1998).

Another finding revealed that workshops or inservices on gang violence, school violence, drug education, and conflict resolution were the most popular (Research Question 10). Although some participants had not been exposed to any workshops, many felt that they would be beneficial.

Data collected regarding the perception of school group members toward school safety and violence by size of school (Hypotheses 15A and 15B) revealed that there was no significant difference found among the three different sizes of schools. This finding was consistent with the findings of Schwartz, (1996,) who found that all communities, suburban and rural, are experiencing problems of school violence.

Findings relative to demographics (Hypotheses 1A and B through 9A and B) revealed that regardless of the variables of ethnicity, gender, or years of experience, administrators, counselors, and teachers seemed to possess similar perceptions toward levels of school safety and violence. Regardless of the variables of ethnicity, gender, age, and grade level, students seemed to possess similar perceptions toward levels of school safety and violence (Hypotheses 10A and B through 13A and 13B). These findings were consistent with the works of Duncan (1995). Duncan found that the aforementioned variables did not have a significant effect on school personnel’s perceptions. One explanation for the present findings might be that school group members, regardless of social and environmental factors, hold similar perceptions toward school safety and violence.
Conclusions

Based on the findings of the study and the review of the related literature, several conclusions may be drawn.

1. It appeared that students felt less safe with regard to Factor 1 (disruptive/abuse) than did their teachers.

2. Students felt less safe with regard to Factor 2 (violence/aggression) than did their counselors and teachers.

3. Administrators felt less safe with regard to Factor 2 (violence/aggression) than did the counselors.

4. Regardless of the variables of ethnicity, gender, or years of experience, administrators, counselors, and teachers seemed to possess similar perceptions regarding levels of school safety and violence.

5. Regardless of the variables of ethnicity, gender, age, and grade, students seemed to exhibit similar perceptions with regard to school safety and violence.

6. Vandalism and verbal abuse of teachers appear to have had the most impact on school safety and violence as perceived by administrators, counselors, teachers, and students. Physical attacks/fights among students, vandalism, and verbal abuse of teachers appeared to have had the greatest impact on school safety and violence as perceived by administrators and counselors.

7. The possession, distribution, and use of alcohol/drugs by students, vandalism, and verbal abuse of teachers seemed to be a major concern regarding the impact of school safety and violence as perceived by students and teachers.
8. All school group members perceived that incidents of violence on school campuses had remained the same or decreased.

9. Violence prevention methods, such as teachers monitoring the halls, closed campuses, and the use of visitor passes/registration were the most popular violence prevention methods currently being used in the schools surveyed.

10. The most popular types of professional development workshops attended by administrators, counselors, and teachers were inservices on gang violence, school violence, drug education, and conflict resolution.

**Recommendations for Practice**

Based on the findings of the research and the review of the literature, the following recommendations are proposed:

1. Administrators, especially those who are responsible for developing or implementing strategies to prevent school violence, should be aware of the perceptions of students, teachers, and counselors regarding the levels of school safety and violence. If the violence prevention strategies are going to be effective, all stakeholders must play a vital role in the development, as well as the implementation, of the programs.

2. Administrators should become more aware of the new technology and programs available for school safety. Programs such as anger management, peer-mediation, and conflict resolution are being implemented to resolve conflicts and create safe schools. Alternative programs, according to Ascher, (1994), help in developing self-respect and self-discipline and
have been indicated as obstacles to school violence. Administrators must make every effort to acquire the best method that would not hinder the pedagogical process, but enhance and cultivate this process in a secure environment.

3. Administrators should, as much as possible, provide inservices, speakers, or resource people to inform their staff concerning problems on school safety and violence. Resource persons could provide valuable information on topics such as crisis management skills, how to identify gang members, and how to deal with violent situations.

Recommendations for Future Research

1. A follow-up study should be conducted using both elementary, middle, and secondary public schools from different areas. Such a study would provide additional data on the impact of school violence in the schools.

2. Another study should be conducted that would include more administrators and counselors to get a better understanding of their perceptions on school safety and violence.

3. A study should be conducted to investigate the perceptions of school group members from rural and urban school districts.

4. A study needs to be conducted to examine the effectiveness of the violence prevention methods currently being used in the schools.

5. Additional studies should be conducted to more clearly identify the issues that contribute to the factors of Disruption/Abuse, Violence/Aggression, or potential additional factors in order to better understand the circumstances underlying school safety and violence.
APPENDICES
DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

Student

1. Sex: Female______ Male____

2. Age: _____

3. Ethnic Background: Asian______ Black_____ Hispanic____

   Native American_____ White____

   Other____________________

4. Grade Level: Ninth_____ Tenth_____ Eleventh_____ Twelfth_____
**Student Questionnaire**

Directions: In completing this questionnaire rate each item using the following scale: For each issue, if you feel that the problem has not occurred or is not an issue to you, rate the item a 1 (Not a Problem); if you feel the problem rarely occurs and is of minor concern, rate the item a 2 (Minor); if you feel the problem occurs occasionally or rarely, but is a major concern, rate the item a 3 (Moderate); if you feel the issue is a major concern, rather it occurs rarely, occasionally, or often, rate the item a 4 (Serious).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Issue</th>
<th>Serious</th>
<th>Moderate</th>
<th>Minor</th>
<th>Not A Problem</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Gang Activity</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Physical Abuse of Teachers</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Physical Attacks/ Fights among students</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Robbery/Theft of Items Over $10</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Racial Tensions</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Sale of Drugs on School Grounds</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Sexual Battery/Rape</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Student possession, distribution, or use</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>of alcohol or drugs</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>9. Student possession or use of a firearm</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Student possession or use of a weapon other than a firearm</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Student Questionnaire
Page 2

11. Vandalism of School Property
    4  3  2  1

12. Verbal Abuse of Teachers
    4  3  2  1

13. In the time you have been in your current school how do you believe the level of violence has changed in your school? (Place a check in the appropriate blank).
    ____Increased a lot    ____Increased a little    ____Stayed the same    ____Decreased
APPENDIX B

SCHOOL PERSONNEL QUESTIONNAIRE
DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

School Personnel

1. Sex: Female_____ Male_____

2. Ethnic Background: Asian_____ Black_____ Hispanic_____ 

   Native American_____ White_____ 

   Other__________________

3. Highest Education Degree(s): Bachelor's _____ Master's_____

   Master's + 30_____ Specialist_____

   Doctorate_____ Other_____

4. Years of Experience in Education:___________

5. Current Position: _____ Assistant Principal  _____ Counselor 

   _____ Principal _____ Teachers
**School Personnel Questionnaire**

Directions: In completing this questionnaire rate each item using the following scale: For each issue, if you feel that the problem has not occurred or is not an issue to you, rate the item a 1 (Not a Problem); if you feel the problem rarely occurs and is of minor concern, rate the item a 2 (Minor); if you feel the problem occurs occasionally or rarely, but is a major concern, rate the item a 3 (Moderate); if you feel the issue is a major concern, rather it occurs rarely, occasionally, or often, rate the item a 4 (Serious).

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<tr>
<td>8. Student possession, distribution, or use of alcohol or drugs</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Student possession or use of a firearm</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Student possession or use of a weapon other than a firearm</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
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</table>
11. Vandalism of School Property

12. Verbal Abuse of Teachers

13. In the time you have been in your current school how do you believe the level of violence has changed in your school? (Place a check in the appropriate blank).

   _____ Increased a lot  _____ Increased a little  _____ Stayed the same  _____ Decreased

14. In the time that you have been in your current school, please describe any professional development workshops or activities that you feel have prepared you to deal with the problem of school violence.
PRINCIPAL CHECKLIST

Instructions: Please read the following and circle the item or items that pertain to your school.

A = Always
B = Often
C = Occasionally
D = Seldom
E = Never

Which of the following violence prevention strategies are used in your school?

1. Alternative schools/programs
   A B C D E

2. Before/After School Programs
   A B C D E

3. Security Cameras
   A B C D E

4. Closed Campus
   A B C D E

5. Dog Searches
   A B C D E

6. Metal Detectors
   A B C D E

7. Peer Mediation/Conflict Resolution
   A B C D E

8. Programs to Increase Parental Involvement
   A B C D E

9. Removal of Lockers/Locker Searches
   A B C D E

10. Security Personnel
    A B C D E

11. Teachers placed/present in hallways
    A B C D E

12. Transparent book bags
    A B C D E

13. Uniforms
    A B C D E

14. Visitor Registration, wearing passes
    A B C D E

15. Multicultural/Diversity Programs
    A B C D E
TO: Mrs. Sharilynn Locke
    Dr. Randy Parker

FROM: Deby Hamm, Graduate School

SUBJECT: HUMAN USE COMMITTEE REVIEW

DATE: February 18, 2000

In order to facilitate your project, an EXPEDITED REVIEW has been done for your proposed study entitled:

"Perceptions of administrators, counselors, students, and teachers concerning school safety and violence in selected secondary schools in north Louisiana"

Proposal # 1-OL

The proposed study procedures were found to provide reasonable and adequate safeguards against possible risks involving human subjects. The information to be collected may be personal in nature or implication. Therefore, diligent care needs to be taken to protect the privacy of the participants and to assure that the data are kept confidential. Further, the subjects must be informed that their participation is voluntary.

Since your reviewed project appears to do no damage to the participants, the Human Use Committee grants approval of the involvement of human subjects as outlined.

You are requested to maintain written records of your procedures, data collected, and subjects involved. These records will need to be available upon request during the conduct of the study and retained by the university for three years after the conclusion of the study.

If you have any questions, please give me a call at 257-2924.
APPENDIX E

COVER LETTER-PRINCIPAL
Dear Principal:

Your position in education as it relates to violence and safety in the schools is very important.

I am conducting a study at Louisiana Tech University that is concerned with investigating the perceptions of students, teachers, counselors, and administrators toward school safety and violence. As a principal, your role is very important to this study.

This study will be conducted in selected secondary schools in north Louisiana. You and all the participants have been randomly selected. Permission has been secured from the Superintendent to request your cooperation.

We share a common interest and concern for the safety of our students in the educational system today. It is on the basis of a common goal of increased knowledge about the methods that are being used that I am requesting your cooperation in completion of this questionnaire.

Completion of this questionnaire will involve answering some questions concerning demographics, as well as your perceptions of school safety and violence in your school. You are also asked to complete a checklist on the types of strategies that you are presently using in your school.

You need not sign the questionnaire, and you are assured that your responses will remain anonymous and confidential, however, you will need to sign the human consent form.

If you wish to see a summary of this study, there will be a copy available for you. If you have questions, please feel free to contact me or my major adviser, Dr. Randall Parker, at P.O. Box 3161, Louisiana Tech University, Ruston, LA 71272, or (318) 257-2967.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Sincerely,

Sharilynn Loche, Doctoral Student
Louisiana Tech University
APPENDIX F

COVER LETTER-ASSISTANT PRINCIPALS
Dear Assistant Principal:

Your position in education as it relates to violence and safety in the schools is very important.

I am conducting a study at Louisiana Tech University that is concerned with investigating the perceptions of students, teachers, counselors, and administrators toward school safety and violence. As an assistant principal, your role is very important to this study.

This study will be conducted in selected secondary schools in north Louisiana. You and all the participants have been randomly selected. Permission has been secured from the Superintendent and the Principal to request your cooperation.

We share a common interest and concern for the safety of our students in the educational system today. It is on the basis of a common goal of increased knowledge about the methods that are being used that I am requesting your cooperation in completion of this questionnaire.

Completion of this questionnaire will involve answering some questions concerning demographics, as well as your perceptions of school safety and violence in your school.

You need not sign the questionnaire, and you are assured that your responses will remain anonymous and confidential, however, you will need to sign the human consent form.

If you wish to see a summary of this study, there will be a copy available for you. If you have questions, please feel free to contact me or my major adviser, Dr. Randall Parker, at P.O. Box 3161, Louisiana Tech University, Ruston, LA 71272, or (318) 257-2967.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Sincerely,

Sharilynn Loche, Doctoral Student
Louisiana Tech University
APPENDIX G

COVER LETTER-COUNSELORS
Dear Counselor:

Your position in education as it relates to violence and safety in the schools is very important.

I am conducting a study at Louisiana Tech University that is concerned with investigating the perceptions of students, teachers, counselors, and administrators toward school safety and violence. As a counselor, your role is very important to this study.

This study will be conducted in selected secondary schools in north Louisiana. You and all the participants have been randomly selected. Permission has been secured from the Superintendent and the Principal to request your cooperation.

We share a common interest and concern for the safety of our students in the educational system today. It is on the basis of a common goal of increased knowledge about the methods that are being used that I am requesting your cooperation in completion of this questionnaire.

Completion of this questionnaire will involve answering some questions concerning demographics, as well as your perceptions of school safety and violence in your school.

You need not sign the questionnaire, and you are assured that your responses will remain anonymous and confidential, however, you will need to sign the human consent form.

If you wish to see a summary of this study, there will be a copy available for you. If you have questions, please feel free to contact me or my major adviser, Dr. Randall Parker, at P.O. Box 3161, Louisiana Tech University, Ruston, LA 71272, or (318) 257-2967.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Sincerely,

Sharilynn Loche, Doctoral Student
Louisiana Tech University
APPENDIX H

COVER LETTER-TEACHERS
Dear Teacher:

Your position in education as it relates to violence and safety in the schools is very important.

I am conducting a study at Louisiana Tech University that is concerned with investigating the perceptions of students, teachers, counselors, and administrators toward school safety and violence. As a teacher, your role is very important to this study.

This study will be conducted in selected secondary schools in north Louisiana. You and all the participants have been randomly selected. Permission has been secured from the Superintendent and the Principal to request your cooperation.

We share a common interest and concern for the safety of our students in the educational system today. It is on the basis of a common goal of increased knowledge about the methods that are being used that I am requesting your cooperation in completion of this questionnaire.

Completion of this questionnaire will involve answering some questions concerning demographics, as well as your perceptions of school safety and violence in your school.

You need not sign the questionnaire, and you are assured that your responses will remain anonymous and confidential, however, you will need to sign the human consent form.

If you wish to see a summary of this study, there will be a copy available for you. If you have questions, please feel free to contact me or my major adviser, Dr. Randall Parker, at P.O. Box 3161, Louisiana Tech University, Ruston, LA 71272, or (318) 257-2967.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Sincerely,

Sharilynn Loche, Doctoral Student
Louisiana Tech University

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APPENDIX I

COVER LETTER-PARENTS/STUDENTS
Dear Parent/Student:

Your position in education as it relates to violence and safety in the schools is very important.

I am conducting a study at Louisiana Tech University that is concerned with investigating the perceptions of students, teachers, counselors, and administrators toward school safety and violence.

This study will be conducted in selected secondary schools in north Louisiana. Students, as well as all the other participants have been randomly selected. Permission has been secured from the Superintendent and the Principal of your high school to conduct this study.

We share a common interest and concern for the safety of our students in the educational system today. It is on the basis of a common goal of increased knowledge about the methods that are being used that I am requesting your cooperation in allowing your child to participate in this study.

Completion of this questionnaire will involve answering some questions concerning demographics, as well as your perceptions of school safety and violence in your school.

You need not sign the questionnaire, however, you will need to sign the Human Subjects Consent Form which gives permission for your child to complete the enclosed questionnaire.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Sincerely,

Sharilynn Loche, Doctoral Student
Louisiana Tech University
APPENDIX J

HUMAN SUBJECTS CONSENT FORM-ADMINISTRATORS, COUNSELORS, TEACHERS
Title of Project: Perceptions of Administrators, Counselors, Teachers, and Students Concerning School Safety and Violence in Selected Secondary Schools in North Louisiana.

Purpose of Study/Project: To determine the perceptions of administrators, counselors, teachers, and students concerning school safety and violence.

Procedure: Approximately 550 administrators, counselors, teachers, and students from eleven schools in eleven school districts will voluntarily complete a packet of inventories. Data will then be analyzed to determine the perceptions of these groups.

Instrument: A checklist for principals to determine current safety measures being used. A questionnaire for all groups to assess perceptions. A self-report instrument to collect demographic information.

Risks/Alternative Treatments: There are no risks associated with participants in this study. It requires completion of a questionnaire composed of the instruments mentioned above.

Benefits/Compensation: None

I, ____________________________, attest with my signature that I have read and understand the following description of the study, “Perceptions of Administrators, Counselors, Teachers, and Students Concerning School Safety and Violence in Selected Secondary Schools in North Louisiana,” and its purposes and methods. I understand that my participation in this research is strictly voluntary and my participation or refusal to participate in this study will not affect my relationship with Louisiana Tech University. Further, I understand that I may withdraw at any time or refuse to answer any questions without penalty. I understand that the results of my questionnaire will be accessible only to the principal researchers. Results of this study will be reported by group data. Results of the study will be made available to the following school districts in groups of five or more participants: Caddo Parish School System, Claiborne Parish School System, Concordia Parish School System, and Monroe City School System. I have not been requested to waive, nor do I waive any of my rights related to participating in this study.

Signature of Participant

Date
CONTACT INFORMATION: The principal experimenters listed below may be reached to answer questions about the research, subjects’ rights, or related matters.

Sharilynn Loche
Dr. Randy Parker

Members of the Human Use Committee of Louisiana Tech University may also be contacted if a problem cannot be discussed with the experimenters:

Dr. Terry McConathy (257-2924)
Dr. Mary Livingston (257-4315)
Mrs. Deby Hamm (257-2924)
APPENDIX K

HUMAN SUBJECTS CONSENT FORM-STUDENTS
Title of Project: Perceptions of Administrators, Counselors, Teachers, and Students Concerning School Safety and Violence in Selected Secondary Schools in North Louisiana.

Purpose of Study/Project: To determine the perceptions of administrators, counselors, teachers, and students concerning school safety and violence.

Procedure: Approximately 550 administrators, counselors, teachers, and students from eleven schools in eleven school districts will voluntarily complete a packet of inventories. Data will then be analyzed to determine the perceptions of these groups.

Instrument: A checklist for principals to determine current safety measures being used. A questionnaire for all groups to assess perceptions. A self-report instrument to collect demographic information.

Risks/Alternative Treatments: There are no risks associated with participants in this study. It requires completion of a questionnaire composed of the instruments mentioned above.

Benefits/Compensation: None

I, ______________________, understand that I will be a part of a study pertaining to “Perceptions of Administrators, Counselors, Teachers, and Students Concerning School Safety and Violence in Selected Secondary Schools in North Louisiana.” I understand that my participation in this research is voluntary.

Signature of Student Participant: ___________________________ Date: ___________________________

Signature of Parent/Guardian: ___________________________ Date: ___________________________

CONTACT INFORMATION: The principal experimenters listed below may be reached to answer questions about this research, subjects’ rights, or related matters.

Sharillynn Loche

Dr. Randy Parker
Members of the Human Use Committee of Louisiana Tech University may also be contacted if a problem cannot be discussed with the experimenters:

Dr. Terry McConathy (257-2924)
Dr. Mary Livingston (257-4315)
Mrs. Deby Hamm (257-2924)
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VITA

Sharilynn Duckworth-Loche was born September 6, 1953, in Bastrop, Louisiana. She graduated from Bastrop High School in Bastrop, Louisiana, in 1971 and immediately enrolled in Grambling State University in Grambling. In 1974 she received a Bachelor of Science degree in Business and Office Education from Grambling State University. In 1976 she began a graduate program in secondary education at Northeast Louisiana University in Monroe, earning the degree of Master of Education in 1976. In 1989 she began an educational specialist program in curriculum and instruction at Northeast Louisiana University, earning the degree of Educational Specialist in 1991. In 1995 the author began a doctoral program in the Louisiana Education Consortium, which includes Grambling State University, Louisiana Tech University, and the University of Louisiana at Monroe (formerly Northeast Louisiana University) and completed the requirements for the Doctor of Education degree in Educational Leadership in May 2000.

Sharilynn Loche began her teaching career at Richwood High School in Monroe, Louisiana as a Marketing Education Coordinator in January 1979. In the fall of 1987, she transferred to Ouachita Parish High School in the same capacity.

At the time of this study, she was a member of Phi Delta Kappa, Kappa Delta Pi, Omicron Delta Kappa, Louisiana Vocational Association, Louisiana Marketing Educators,
American Vocational Association, Ouachita Association of Educators, Louisiana Association of Educators, and National Education Association.