



Exploring the Safety Challenges faced by Scholar Patrollers in the Primary Schools of Limpopo Province in South Africa

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ABSTRACT

Safety is a global concern affecting learners to and from schools. The negative effects on learners are physical and psychological and could lead to disability, depression, and decline in learner performance. Scholars are entitled to a safe schooling climate that is free from endangering their lives. The main objective of this paper was to explore safety issues faced by scholar patrols in their attempt to safeguard scholar pedestrians on their way to and from schools. A qualitative approach with a case study design was employed to provide an understanding of the threat to safety as experienced by scholar patrollers. Participants in this paper comprised educators, parents, and Grade six learners of the two former Model-C schools in the Potgietersrus circuit in Limpopo Province. Data from interviews and a document review were the data collection methods. Data collected was analysed through thematic content analysis. Research results indicated that the safety and security of scholar patrollers are receiving increasing attention. Also, the scholar patrol comprises two teams that relieve each other on an alternatively scheduled basis, scholar patrol is a call for unselfish services by fellow pupils to their communities hence the programme of scholar patrollers provides safer access to primary schools at nearby crossings. Based on the shared research results, it was recommended that all stakeholders such as educators, parents, and scholar patrollers should continue to take scholar patrolling seriously since it serves to safeguard fellow learners. The study on scholar patrolling will contribute to teaching about road safety and encourage learners to observe the rules of safety.

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INTRODUCTION

Like other countries, South Africa adopted the initiative that was introduced in schools to remedy the safety of scholars when crossing the roads. The initiation of scholar patroller is supported by the Constitution of South Africa Act 108 of 1996 which protects the citizen's right to life and safety when on the roads. The National Road Traffic Act 93 of 1996 promotes road safety through the implementation of diverse policies to reduce the danger of learners on the roads. Scholar patrollers render a responsible public service role by controlling traffic and safeguarding scholars en- route to schools. They calm the traffic and ensure that learners cross the streets only when it is safe. In most countries, the use of scholar patrollers where learners cross on their way to schools was introduced to enhance their safety when crossing the streets leading to their schools. Scholar patrollers function as noticeable representatives in the school streets and assist learners in the morning when their parents drop them off and in the afternoons

when they collect them. Their duties are recognised globally and regarded as helpful since they benefit their schools and communities.

There are national policies in the education system formulated to manage safety issues in schools. In most instances, operationalizing those policies appears to be contributing to the safety of every learner on the way to and from school. School officials in America, Canada, Israel, Kenya and Nigeria all face safety concerns ranging from devastating internal to external school environments.¹ No doubt, learner safety continues to be a challenge in South African schools which emanates from natural disasters, bullying, unpleasant infrastructure and gangsterism.² Despite all that, this paper focuses on safety challenges faced by scholar patrollers in primary schools of this province and country.

Historically speaking, the scholar patrollers concept originates from the United States of America's Automobile Association. The initiative aimed at averting danger to scholars in many countries on their way back to school. There are instances where scholar patrollers become victims of road accidents while assisting fellow scholars to cross into their schools. Motorists, who do not abide by the road signs, become a threat due to being disrespectful to scholar patrollers and road users. They disrespect the signs and markings put by scholar patrols. At any moment, such an unbecoming behaviour could lead to disaster which a programme of scholar patrol aims at averting. It is worth emphasising that in the context of South Africa, the scholar patrol initiative was introduced to support pedestrian learners on a daily basis.³ In most provinces in South Africa, learners make the journey on foot to school. For instance, based on statistics SA about 10.1 million scholars walk to their educational institution because it is closer to their homes and transportation is expensive. Furthermore, the 2017 statistics indicate that learners between the ages of 0-19 have added to the 14, 8% of fatalities. This is regrettable and serves to underscore the irreplaceable part that could be played by scholar patrollers to reduce the statistics especially where fatalities occurred at learners' pedestrian crossing lines. Scholar patrollers are essential since the bulk of children are known to lack guidance as pedestrians, are neglected and are easily distracted on the roads.⁴ To manage and circumvent this, the Department of Basic Education together with that of Road and Traffic initiated the useful scholar patrollers programme. Much as scholar patrollers want the safety of every learner on their way and back to school, they, unfortunately, become victims in the process of scholar patrol missions.

Discharging a scholar patrol exercise is a demanding responsibility fraught with the dangers of losing lives. That is why the manner of appointing scholar patrollers by educators requires that one is ever meticulous. School patrolling is ever faced with serious challenges, sometimes from the patrollers themselves or externally imposed challenges such as uncooperative motorists who do not recognise school patrollers to the peril of everyone involved. Currently, it is not clear whether its implementation methods are poor enough to create a danger to the patrollers and scholars. For instance, a preliminary literature study revealed that scholar patrols experience challenges while on duty because of the high influx of traffic during peak hours.⁵ South African National Road Agency highlights that the challenges faced on the roads are due to speeding of drivers, texting while driving, poor concentration, and visibility-related problems. This paper highlights challenges as witnessed by scholar patrols in their endeavour to guarantee the safety of fellow pedestrian pupils en route to school and back home.

¹ Matthew Cuellar, Susan Elswick, and Matthew Theriot, "School Social Workers' Perceptions of School Safety and Security in Today's Schools: A Survey of Practitioners across the United States," *Journal of School Violence* 17, no. 3 (2018): 271–83; Hanna Shvindina, "Cooperation as an Emerging Trend in Research: Perspectives for Safety & Security," *Safety* 5, no. 3 (2019): 61; E Leiter et al., "Barriers and Facilitators of Health Behavior Engagement in Ultra-Orthodox Jewish Women in Israel," *European Journal of Public Health* 29, no.4 (2019): ckg186-455; Genevieve Wanjala and M. A. Onyango, "Disaster Awareness and Preparedness of Secondary Schools in Homa Bay County, Kenya," in *1st Annual International Conference on Research and Innovation in Education, Kenya*, 2018; Sulaimon Adewale, Sherifat Shola Adebayo, and Peters Abiodun Afolabi, "Managing School Safety in Nigeria in the 21st Century: The Need for A Balanced Approach," *African Journal of Humanities and Contemporary Education Research* 10, no. 1 (2023): 72–78..

² Monique de Klerk and Werner de Klerk, "Exploring Educators' and Support Staffs' Experiences Regarding Crises Containment Management in South African Schools," *Journal of Psychology in Africa* 32, no. 2 (2022): 199–206.

³ Mmakwena Modipa, Sean Kockott, and Adewale Olutola, "The Efficacy of Road Safety Education to Prevent Pedestrian Fatalities in Limpopo Province (South Africa)," *Technium Soc. Sci. J.* 27 (2022): 995.

⁴ Hagai Tapiro, Tal Oron-Gilad, and Yisrael Parmet, "Pedestrian Distraction: The Effects of Road Environment Complexity and Age on Pedestrian's Visual Attention and Crossing Behavior," *Journal of Safety Research* 72 (February 2020): 101–9, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jsr.2019.12.003>.

⁵ Wan-Hao Zhang, Qiong Yuan, and Helen Cai, "Unravelling Urban Governance Challenges: Objective Assessment and Expert Insights on Livability in Longgang District, Shenzhen," *Ecological Indicators* 155 (November 2023): 110989, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ecolind.2023.110989>.

The purpose of this paper is to explore ways and means of ascertaining the safety of school patrollers when rendering their voluntary life-saving service to their fellow learners in the primary schools of Limpopo province, South Africa. The research questions guiding this paper are as follows: In what way could the safety of scholar patrollers be ascertained at the pedestrian crossing lines? To achieve the mentioned main research question, the following sub-questions shall be pursued:

- How do scholar patrollers understand safety challenges?
- What safety challenges do scholar patrollers encounter on a daily basis while performing their duties?
- What safety measures do schools put in place to ensure the well-being of scholar patrollers in schools?

LITERATURE REVIEW

The literature review points to safety challenges faced by scholar patrols in the primary schools of Limpopo Province. The scholar patrollers being a system to assist learners to safely cross the streets into their schools is implemented by schools in both the urban and rural areas of South Africa. The system is implemented in schools to improve pedestrian safety, which is about learners' safety.⁶ The scholar patrol system contains a number of challenges some of which lead to learners' casualties from road traffic when crossing to the schools. A review of the literature presents scholar patrol as a road safety education programme which is an important part of enhancing the safety and security of scholars.

The literature reviewed states that the USA initiated scholar patrol purposefully to assist fellow learners to cross the streets into the schools between the dangerous traffic congestion in the morning and afternoons. On that basis, the USA could be regarded as the source of this safety and security programme for learners crossing traffic streets to schools and back home. Furthermore, the literature explains that the US school and traffic authorities acknowledge that congestion creates dangerous locations on learners' journeys to and from the school. While that is the understanding, scholar patrollers are out to operate on the unsafe streets of America.⁷ Even though the appointed learners are screened for proper character traits and trained to perform the scholar patrol duty at schools, their safety to be at the streets between moving cars is not guaranteed. That is why as per the title of this paper, they just like their fellow learners whom they assist to safely cross the busy traffic streets, do face safety and security challenges. The fact that most of the time they do the patrol without adults is a concern. For a twelve-year-old child to enter incoming traffic to stop it with a signage is risky and their safety is not assured.

In the context of the SA schools, it is advisable that scholar patrol be done by Grade 6 and 7 learners. This is according to the literature extracted from the "Arrive Alive booklet" that serves as the guideline for scholar patrol. The review of the literature demonstrates that the percentage of learners walking or cycling to schools varies from 43% in Gauteng to 79% in Limpopo. This proves that a large number of scholars walk a distance to their educational institutions in provinces having a large number of rural areas.⁸ In this sense, road safety become a major challenge to vulnerable road users. Scholars share the road with adult pedestrians, cyclists, cars, trucks, minibuses, and buses bringing high-intensity traffic peaks. Scholars performing patrolling duties have to deal with these complex traffic movements when walking to and from the schools. Instead of educators assisting learners to cross the streets, the responsibility is found to be shouldered by scholar patrols alone. Ideally, scholar patrollers in most cases need to be Grade 6 learners of the schools. The implementation of scholar patrol is expected to overcome the danger faced by learner pedestrians and cyclists in the form of calming the road traffic especially where learners are involved and making the road environment more child-friendly.⁹

Scholar patrol is essential to enhancing the safety of the scholars by controlling the dangerous traffic congestion. The literature reviewed on the theory of planned behaviour to determine road safety skills in South African schools indicates that primary schools use scholar patrol mechanisms to counteract

⁶ M Groenewald, "A Systems Approach to Improving Pedestrian Safety in Rural Communities," 2014.

⁷ C. J. Banta-Green and J Williams, "AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety," *Washington, DC: AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety*, 2016.

⁸ Abigail Simons et al., "Parental Supervision and Discomfort with Children Walking to School in Low-Income Communities in Cape Town, South Africa," *Traffic Injury Prevention* 19, no. 4 (2018): 391–98.

⁹ Mabusyi Mhlanga, "Investigation of the Road Safety Measures around Schools in Ethekewini," 2018.

the challenges of scholar pedestrian fatalities.¹⁰ In the literature about road safety skills in SA school learners, scholar patrol becomes the responsibility of Grade 6 learners. Educators responsible for the scholar patrol work together with the traffic officers during training and assist learners during morning patrol and when schools knock off. For scholar patrollers to operate, they are given, cones, stop signage, and at times visible day-glow bibs. Their safety as bodies that operate between dangerous moving objects is not guaranteed nor discussed in any way to introduce safety mechanisms.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This paper employed Abraham Maslow's theory of hierarchy needs of safety and security.¹¹ The theory highlights physical, financial and emotional safety and security as the three types of needs that deserve to be prioritised. Maslow emphasizes that a feeling of safety and security is an essential and indispensable need for many. Physical safety requires every person not to face any physical violence but to have insurance that would assist them to survive disaster. Maslow's theory of emotion explains that it is important to be safe around society one trusts to be able to be confident in one's own feelings and to feel safe and secure enough without being unsettled with insecure feelings. In this paper, Maslow's theory is used to determine the safety needs that scholar patrollers need to receive while safeguarding fellow learners.

Scholar patrols are found to be the Grade six learners who are placed on the congested streets to control traffic and to secure fellow learners. The concern that led to this paper is the fact that the activity poses a safety danger to them and their physical and emotional safety is being compromised. Scholar patrollers may not feel safe to cope on the streets due to being alone between speeding cars. That is where the relevance of Maslow's hierarchy needs theory is practicable. Such a theory emphasises that everyone has a safety and security need, something happening to scholar patrollers. Evidently, much as scholar patrollers in primary schools provide safety and security to their fellow learners crossing busy traffic streets, they as well are missing the very same safety. That adequately, justifies why Maslow's theory of hierarchy needs was selected to underscore this paper in contrast to other available theories. That is why Maslow proposes that to be physically and emotionally safe and secure, people miss the assurance of safety they are giving to others, especially in the event of emergencies, and should be able to take combat competency.¹² The Arrive Alive Policy is in line with theory because it reveals that there are public liability and personal accident cover compensation with regard to incidental death and physical injuries. However, this does not mean that scholar patrollers are free from challenges in the execution of their school patrol responsibility.

METHODOLOGY

This paper is placed within the interpretivist paradigm and qualitative research methodology.¹³ The researchers attempted to make meaning to the challenges faced by the scholar patrols in the Potgietersrus circuit. A descriptive case study design was used with the aim of defining the views of principals, educators, parents, and scholar patrollers. Their views were more than essential in assisting to emerge with ways and means of ascertaining that scholar patrollers are ever safe and secure, the same way they provide safety and security to their peers who have to cross busy traffic roads on their way to school and back home.

Research Procedures

Data was collected through interviews and the document review method from the two selected primary schools in the Potgietersrus Circuit. The scholar patrol guides were used as documents and served as a background of how scholar patrolling is administered. Scholar patrol record books were also visited and

¹⁰ G Van Dijk, L Malan, and H Fourie, "Pedestrian Behavior In South African Primary School Learners: A Cohort Study Using The Theory Of Planned Behaviour," in *ICERI2018 Proceedings* (IATED, 2018), 9346–54.

¹¹ Eleonora Papaleontiou-Louca, Saeed Esmailnia, and Niki Thoma, "A Critical Review of Maslow's Theory of Spirituality," *Journal of Spirituality in Mental Health* 24, no. 4 (2022): 327–43.

¹² Bina Soni and Ramesh Soni, "Enhancing Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs for Effective Leadership," in *Competition Forum*, vol. 14 (American Society for Competitiveness, 2016), 259.

¹³ Ulyan Nasri, "Exploring Qualitative Research: A Comprehensive Guide to Case Study Methodology," *Al-Hikmah: Jurnal Studi Islam* 4, no. 3 (2023): 72–85.

served as supporting documents to explain how they operate in schools. The researchers were interested in the ways and means by which scholar patrollers perform their duties and the ongoing challenges they face and how to overcome those difficulties.

Participants

The participants were selected purposively by identifying the people who have the capability to provide relevant data on managing and performing scholar patrols.¹⁴ Participants selected were twelve in number from the two primary schools. The research participants consisted of two educators, four parents, and six scholar patrollers in the year 2024. Two educators were selected by virtue of being the mentors of scholar patrols, whereas the four parents were selected because they gave consent to the children to participate in the scholar patrol and even in the study itself. Altogether, this study was possible as a result of the views of educators, parents, and scholar patrollers.

Ethical Issues

Ethical issues were considered throughout the research process. It involved obtaining ethical considerations from the University of Limpopo. Permission to conduct the study was obtained from the Limpopo Department of Education, the circuit of Potgietersrus, the two primary schools, the educators and the parents of the six learners. In the application for permission to conduct this research, the purpose of the study was explained, and the fact that participation is voluntary was well outlined. The participating schools were labelled A and B to protect them from being known whereas the participants were labelled by means of codes E1 and E2 for educators, parents as P1, P2, P3, and P4 and learners as SP1 to SP6 for scholar patrols.¹⁵ Researchers provided care, therapy, and intervals during the interviews where research participants' emotions were triggered by questions and experiences requested. Opinions of the participants were presented as given and never modified.

Data Analysis

A document review analysis was performed whereby all the documents related to scholar patrols available in schools were read to get a clear understanding of what is expected of primary schools to have scholar patrols.¹⁶ This included the "Arrive Alive" booklet, the Department of Basic Education's policies, circulars, and application letters in the two schools. Adequate attention was paid to all the documents to get a clear picture of scholar patrols. Data from the interviews was analysed through thematic analysis. Researchers transcribed data from the recordings and read them with understanding to discover the overall impression regarding scholar patrolling in the primary schools of Limpopo Province, South Africa. Researchers performed coding and labelling to specific elements and later studied and examined the initially identified codes. Researchers then identified themes and sub-themes and organised them and linked them to the description of challenges faced by the scholar patrollers as they render patrol service to their fellow pupils.

PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS

The findings of this paper disclose a series of components that are categorised as follows:

Findings from Interviews

Findings from educators, parents and scholar patrollers were divided into themes: Minimum consultations, pitiable adult contributions, road rage, inclement weather conditions, human trafficking possibilities and disobedient and driving irregularities are some of the themes generated.

¹⁴ Edward J Alessi and Sarilee Kahn, "Toward a Trauma-Informed Qualitative Research Approach: Guidelines for Ensuring the Safety and Promoting the Resilience of Research Participants," *Qualitative Research in Psychology* 20, no. 1 (2023): 121–54.

¹⁵ Riikka Korkiamäki and Mervi Kaukko, "Faceless, Voiceless Child—Ethics of Visual Anonymity in Research with Children and Young People," *Childhood* 30, no. 1 (2023): 55–70.

¹⁶ Hani Morgan, "Conducting a Qualitative Document Analysis," *The Qualitative Report* 27, no. 1 (2022): 64–77.

a. Minimum Consultations

Parent participants in both schools explained that they were not consulted before and were only sent letters informing them and asking permission to allow their children to take part in the scholar patrol. They added that the activity was not discussed with them in full and therefore, do not have a clear understanding of what is expected of them. Educators responded that scholar patrol is a programme run in schools by the Department of Transport and Community Safety. E1 in school A said, *“We did not think of calling the parents to the school because we thought the learners understand and are trained on what to do.”*

A parent from School A explained that he read the letter from the school asking permission and thought that they would be called to attend a briefing session to know what is expected of their children and that was not done. School A parent said, *“I thought all the prefects were scholar patrollers, I did not know they were selected. In fact, I do not understand how it works, I just signed the form.”*

Scholar patrollers were also interviewed. They knew very well that they were selected and trained. They know what is expected of them and how they operate as scholar patrol. SP 2 argued that *“we are 6 scholar patrols in our schools. Not everyone is chosen. Some are prefects in the offices, classrooms, and playgrounds. The school educator selected us and the department trained us.”* Although the consent forms were sent home, parents were not consulted in full and did not understand the safe and dangerous part of scholar patrols.

b. Pitiably Adult Contributions

Researchers found that in both schools only 2 educators are assigned to manage scholar patrols. The principal, heads of departments and other educators do not form part of the school patrols.

Scholar patrols in Schools A take place in the morning at 6:45 and at 13:15. At this time, traffic is very congested because all the parents drop off their children. In the morning, some educators do playground supervision whereas others attend meetings. This is the time in which scholar patrollers are on duty. School B starts the scholar patrol at 07H00 because they start school at 07:15. The school also starts with morning meetings and playground supervision. E1 from school B said, *“I am the only one assigned to support and monitor the scholar patrol, I have to be in the meeting as well. The scholar patrollers are divided into teams and know exactly what to do. Sometimes I visit them or call them for a short meeting especially when there are complaints. Other educators have their responsibilities. We do not have time to do all these things.”* There is a lack of educator involvement in schools, particularly in scholar patrols. The responsibility is given to learners which is inappropriate because they are still minors. Scholar patrols alone on the roads are not safe, they need support from the educators. SP6 maintains that *“Sometimes we arrive in the morning while the educators have not arrived. They pass through the patrol and go to the meeting or classrooms.”* With scholar patrol, as learners, the researchers could not see the danger of being alone on the street. They are only concerned when some members of the team are absent or late. These are some of the issues they raise with their supervisors.

c. Road Rage

Participants in the study understand the danger that any person may face as a road user. Drivers who disobey road signs and cause traffic congestion around the school also contribute to issues that affect scholar patrollers. They acknowledged that walking between the cars and using the roads either way may pose a danger to them. When scholar patrol participants were asked how they cope alone on the roads SP3 expressed that *“it is not safe, sometimes the driver refuses to stop and we have to drop the signages and run away from the road.”* The educator responded with regret and remorse. E2 states that *“we are aware that they operate where it is not safe. They report to us and we intervene. We report matters to the principals and to the traffic department. Scholar patrollers enhance the safety of children but they might get hurt or injured when trying to protect or save other learners because of speeding cars and drivers that disobey the road signs and display behaviours that border on road rage.”*

d. Disobedient Driving Irregularities

The two schools that participated in the study are located in town. Everyone understands the traffic congestion faced in town when parents have to drop their children to school on their way to work. Views from the participating educators confirmed that scholar patrollers experience vulgar words from rude

drivers, some of whom order them to remove the signage on the road. This normally results from hurrying drivers who are late for work or drivers on duty (taxi drivers). SP6 shares that *“there is a driver of a bus who every day orders us to move away so he can pass because we waste his time. We normally tell our supervisor about the incident.”* The field study revealed that school A is near the hospital where taxis, pedestrians and buses pass regularly. A lot of driving irregularities are experienced on this street. SP 4 added, *“They insult us very badly in their own language. We see their facial expressions demonstrating anger.”* On that note, parents were of the view that their children go through emotional trauma and stress before they can start with their academic work. Even though scholar patrol operates according to the prescripts, the treatment they receive while safeguarding their fellow learners is detrimental, injurious and brings them discomfort. P1 concludes that *“It is too dangerous for learners to control the traffic. Schools should better work together with the traffic corps. They must join the scholar patrollers every morning or at least twice a week so that the drivers can expect them any day. They will respect the stop signs that scholar patrols lift, otherwise, I foresee danger.”*

FINDINGS FROM DOCUMENTS REVIEW

The findings revealed that both schools possess the same documents in common. In both schools, the documents analysed included the scholar patrol manual, circulars from the Department of Transport and Community Safety, appointment letters, a list of equipment supplied, scholar patrol inspection forms, school plans and parents' consent forms. Each document is analysed below.

a. Scholar Patrol Manual

Analysed documents proved that scholar patrolling is supported by the Road Traffic Act 93 of 1996. Before the scholar patrol can start operating in schools, schools should first apply to the Department of Road and Traffic and can be granted permission only when they qualify. Upon qualifying they should complete Sections A, B and C of SP1 form. Secondly, the document analysed indicates that scholar patrollers should at least be 8 years of age (section 3.4) and that a letter of consent (SP2) should be completed as permission and be kept at the school and the traffic departments. There should be at least 2 teams in each school to relieve each other and should operate under one educator who serves as a supervisor.

b. Circulars

The researchers analysed circulars from the Department of Traffic and Community Safety. The circulars proved that workshops and training take place, that inspections take place and that schools are supplied with signage and uniforms which they inspect as well. Copies of delivery acknowledgement notes are included in the files.

c. School Plans

The two schools follow the scholar plan that indicates the name of the supervisor, a list of team members and positions, gates allocated to them, time and duration of the patrol. There are also scholar patrol consent forms from their parents granting permission for their children to serve in the Scholar Patrol. School A uses Grade 7 whereas School B uses Grade 6 learners.

DISCUSSIONS

Support and Monitoring

The findings of this study reveal that schools do not offer adequate support to the scholar patrol initiative. Participants mentioned that they were only supported by the responsible supervisor. The initiation is a good motive and will only survive if stakeholders lead the program. It is negligent of the school to leave learners performing the duty on their own. Educators are expected to understand the development of a child better than any person and also expected to act in “*loco parentis*” than any person to the extent that they are not supposed to give learners responsibility without tight supervision considering the dangers associated with duty. In short, educators themselves as mature adults need to perform the scholar patrol task.

The inability of both pedestrians and motorists to understand and interpret the rules of the road is a major problem. In most cases where fatalities occur, victims explain themselves without forgetting to mention the fact “I thought or wanted to or I did not see it properly”. Until then all the road users learn to obey the rules and understand that some of the road users are minors, South African road users are likely to always have accidents on the roads due to their level of negligence when on the roads. In the case of scholar patrollers, their safety is likely to be compromised until road users acknowledge the implementation of scholar patrols in the school streets and learn to understand and interpret road signs as required.

Most road accidents are caused by impatience, disobedience and disrespect. Only if South African road users can learn to tolerate each other and respect the school streets as most are labelled, the safety of scholar patrollers can be addressed. Secondly, if all can acknowledge the roles of scholar patrollers as essential and imperative then the safety of the school learners along the roads could be guaranteed.

The introduction of scholar patrollers in SA was initiated because a need was identified. However, placing the implementation of the plan largely in the hands of the scholar patroller appears not to be a wise decision due to the dangers involved. The non-involvement of adults in the project showed a lack of elements to complete the good safety initiative for primary school learners. Schools that do not support the initiative by adding educators as part of the scholar patrollers are not creative and contribute sufficiently to the deterioration of the project.

IMPLICATIONS OF THE STUDY

Three implications emerged from this paper. First, using learners as scholar patrols put their lives in danger. They are minors and their minds are still young to partake in scholar patrol. They can be easily distracted on the road by different sounds and their attention can be drawn by fancy cars and thus, may not pay enough attention to safety-related issues. Secondly, Grade 6 and 7 learners are minors, and as such the responsibility of safeguarding the lives of other learners is a huge responsibility. They need to experience safety so they can provide the same to their peers. Thirdly, there are adults in schools who can responsibly perform scholar patrol duties based on better maturity and understanding of safety and their ability to act responsibly in dangerous situations.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings shared and discussed, the researchers provide possible recommendations as follows:

- The scholar patrollers' accountability should be shifted from school learners to educators.
- Departments of Transport and Education should involve adults in road safety education.
- Department of Basic Education should review scholar patrol to ensure that its purpose is achievable.
- Traffic authorities should work with the Department of Basic Education to simplify road safety policies and strategies for road users.
- Schools should collaborate with the traffic officers to ensure that scholar patrol gains its strength and succeeds in schools.
- School streets should exclusively be reserved for net cars and school buses only.
- There is a need to adopt a traffic officer for each school in town be implemented.

CONCLUSION

Even though scholar patrols appear to contribute towards safety in schools, their implementation and management are questionable. This paper has revealed that the Grade six learners who serve as scholar patrols are in danger. The use of Grade six learners as scholar patrollers requires review and intervention to ensure that no learner's life is endangered when dealing with safety issues in the primary schools of Limpopo province. When restructuring the implementation of scholar patrollers in schools, all stakeholders like Learner Representative Councils, Parents, Department of Basic Education Officials and the Department of Transport and Safety should be part of the plan for proper management and implementation. All learners in primary schools need to form part of training and enrichment programmes for effective management and implementation of the scholar patrol initiative. The use of scholar patrollers is a good initiative but it deserves restructuring. Similar studies can be conducted to establish how schools in other districts and provinces administer and manage scholar patrol.

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AUTHORS' CONTRIBUTIONS

MF wrote the manuscript with the support of NSM. MFM conducted interviews and provided data for the manuscript. The above mentioned discussed results contributed to this final manuscript.

NOTES

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