ANNELIEKE VAN DIJK

ARMOURED WITH MORALITY

Community expressions of hope and resistance to neighbourhood violence in Brazilian slums

Armoured with morality

Community expressions of hope and resistance
to neighbourhood violence in Brazilian slums

Annelieke van Dijk

Armoured with morality

Community expressions of hope and resistance to neighbourhood violence in Brazilian slums

Gewapend met moraliteit. Gemeenschapsuitingen van hoop en verzet tegen geweld in de buurt in Braziliaanse sloppenwijken
(met een samenvatting in het Nederlands)

Armado com moralidade. Expressões comunitárias de esperança e resistência à violência de bairro em favelas brasileiras
(com um resumo em Português)

Proefschrift

ter verkrijging van de graad van doctor aan de
Universiteit Utrecht
op gezag van de
rector magnificus, prof. dr. H.R.B.M. Kummeling,
ingevolge het besluit van het College voor Promoties
in het openbaar te verdedigen op

vrijdag 20 december 2024 te 14.15 uur

door

Annette Lydia van Dijk

geboren op 15 maart 1987
te Middelburg

Promotoren:

Prof. dr. M.J. de Haan
Prof. dr. M. de Winter

Beoordelingscommissie:

Prof. dr. F.N.A. Kaulingfreks
Dr. C.G. Koonings
Prof. dr. G.T.M. Mooren
Prof. dr. F.L. Tibbitts
Dr. B.G.J. Wansink

Content

Chapter 1
General Introduction

1. Outlining the scene

It's 7 AM, the sun is shining and the temperature is still pleasant at this hour as I walk from the bus stop at the foot of the hill up to the community preschool. People are walking down the road, wishing each other bom dia (good morning) and making a joke while passing by. A father drops off his daughter at the school gate, and has a chat with the janitor before heading off to work. I greet them both as I walk through the gate and am welcomed by the sound of playing children. One of the teachers claps in her hands and starts singing the song that announces circle time. The children stow away their toys and bring their chairs in the circle that the teacher is arranging. We sing the song of 'good morning' and talk about which day of the week it is and what today's weather is like, choosing from signs marked as sunny, cloudy or raining. All the children cheerfully choose sunny! While circle time continues with stories of the weekend, I walk up to the kitchen to help out with organising the classroom's breakfast: today it's mingau (porridge). A few mothers from the karate programme and some school staff are gathered in the hall way, speaking in a subdued voice. They're talking about confusion going on at the bus stop. The buses are not running because there have been demonstrations further along the main road. Yesterday night a 15-year-old boy from the community got killed. He was shot in the back. People say it was the police who killed him and that the boy was not even involved in crime, that he was just attending a party and was innocent. During protests this morning in response to his death a bus got set on fire and now the bus drivers refuse to drive there and stopped their service. Other people say the boy was part of a local gang and that the gang leader ordered to start the fire. One of the teachers says it's good to be informed since she planned to go to that same area for some groceries in the afternoon, but now decides to cancel her plans.

This scene exemplifies how everyday life in neighbourhoods affected by high levels of violence has different sides to it, from familiar scenes at the preschool and neighbours friendly greeting each other in the streets, to the violent death of a 15-year-old and the chain of events that followed, which unfortunately is also far from unusual. The talk about his tragic death demonstrates how such incidents are surrounded with suspicion and uncertainties but also lead to many hazards and insecurities; from the risks for bus drivers to the practical complications for community members that are left without transport. The aim of this study is to create a better understanding of the complex dynamics of the upbringing of youth in such violent neighbourhood contexts by looking at the issue from the perspectives of educators and young people living in Brazilian slum neighbourhoods. While many educational approaches have been developed to counter neighbourhood violence and its detrimental impact on youth and communities around the world (Ali-Saleh Darawshy, Gewirtz & Marsalis, 2020; Voisin & Berringer, 2015; UNICEF, 2016), voices from the communities that suffer under

these circumstances are often not heard. Rather, many interventions are being developed in privileged settings at a large distance from people in marginalised neighbourhoods, leaving community perspectives underexamined (Bajaj, 2015; Voisin & Berringer, 2015; Philip, Bang & Jackson, 2018). Not infrequently, these interventions aim to 'remedy' assumed deficiencies in individual youth or their parents, which can be considered a problematic approach because it suggests that they are to blame for violent neighbourhood circumstances and leaves systemic and environmental aspects unaddressed. A more holistic understanding of the dynamic complexity of neighbourhood violence and the diverse and interconnected layers of social, contextual and sociopolitical processes involved is currently still lacking (Burrell et al., 2021; Abt & Winship, 2016). Against that background, this dissertation aims to gain more insight into the intricate dynamics of neighbourhood violence and potential transformative educational practices and community initiatives by investigating how school educators, mothers and young people develop strategies to deal with violence in their neighbourhoods and create opportunities for resistance in order to find openings to work towards peace.

This first chapter gives a description of the research method and main theoretical approaches, followed by some background on the study setting and an outline of the content of this dissertation.

2. Method

To achieve the study's aim to create a better understanding of the upbringing of youth in violent contexts, an ethnographic research design was considered a suitable approach, offering the opportunity to gain more insight into the perspectives of people living in such contexts. Since in ethnographies the purpose is 'to discover the cultural knowledge people are using to organize their behavior and interpret their experience' (Spradley, 1980, p.30), an ethnographic approach could help to reveal the insights of educators and young people in this study on how to deal with neighbourhood violence, their understanding of the challenges it presents and their perceptions of opportunities for possible solutions. In order to shed light on the complex dynamics of young people's upbringing in violent contexts, ethnography's objective to describe and explain the layered, diverse and unstable aspects of social action offers a relevant and useful methodological approach, contrasting with scientific methods that aim to establish simplification of complexity (Blommaert & Dong, 2010).

As a topic-oriented ethnography, this study was directed at the issue of neighbourhood violence in relation to the upbringing of youth as an important aspect of life known to exist in the community of concern. As is common in ethnographic research, the study followed a cyclical pattern wherein research phases of asking questions, collecting data and analysing data were constantly repeated and influenced by one another (Spradley, 1980).

This continuous process resulted in adapting the research questions asked while collecting and analysing data, which in turn lead to adjustment in data collection and shifting analysis. This cyclical process resulted in the following main research question of this dissertation:

> *What can we learn from the strategies educators and young people develop in a violent neighbourhood context to deal with and resist violence? And how can insight into such strategies inform the design and implementation of educational interventions and contribute to finding openings for transformation through educational solutions, without overlooking contextual dynamics of violence?*

Data was collected through participant observation and in-depth interviews with school educators, mothers and young people from three slum neighbourhoods in the Brazilian city Salvador da Bahia. The ethnographic fieldwork consisted of daily participation in community preschools and other educational programmes that were offered by community organisations while I lived with a host family. I collected data for the study over the course of six years, starting with 11 months of fieldwork in 2015-2016 generating the larger part of the data set, which was complemented with another month of fieldwork in 2018 and a final month in 2022. This enabled a longitudinal perspective particularly with regard to the development of young people's strategies and perceptions.

Although the full data set includes various types of ethnographic data (e.g. field notes, photographs, recordings, news reports), the central data for this study consists of in-depth, semi-structured interviews with the participants. Based on Kvale's (2011) considerations on the qualitative interview as an indispensable element in ethnographic methodology, the aim was to gain insight in the participants' perspectives on growing up and raising young people in a violent neighbourhood context through narratives about their experiences, feelings and beliefs, that demonstrate how they reflect on themselves and their surroundings.

The cyclical pattern of this study and its longitudinal design facilitated a research process of continuous 'checking' and 'questioning' to validate research data (Kvale, 2011). Checking and questioning means to subject the data and analysis to critical reviews, considering sources of potential biases, triangulating, and deliberately looking for contradicting insights (Miles and Huberman, 1994). Feedback from participants during formal presentations and informal conversations, as well as cooperation with local research assistants for the transcription and analysis of interviews, were extremely valuable in that regard. Furthermore, the cyclic and longitudinal design facilitated follow-up on unexpected details and ambiguities. For example, in several interviews participants made contradicting statements about their beliefs on the role of parenting practices in neighbourhood violence. Such contradictions might call in question the validity of the data or the interview technique, but might also reflect the subtleties and fluidness of social attitudes and turn out to be

essential information for constructing theory about the phenomenon investigated (Kvale, 2011). The cyclical and longitudinal research process of this study, returning to the field several times to do follow-up interviews, provided the opportunity to reflect on such contradictions with participants and enabled verification of interpretations and reflection on previous accounts. The analysis of contradictions and follow-up on ambiguities and relating them to existing theory about social dynamics in violent contexts was an important element in this study to create a better understanding of the complexity of education in neighbourhoods affected by high levels of violence.

3. Theoretical approaches

In this dissertation I use several theoretical orientations that are related to and provide relevant considerations for a better understanding of the upbringing of youth in violent contexts. In the following I will provide a short description of the most important approaches and related concepts and how I use them in my analyses as described in the various chapters of this book.

3.1 Street culture and social dynamics in contexts of violence

Firstly, to understand the social dynamics in neighbourhoods with high levels of violence I make use of theory on street culture (Anderson, 1999; Ilan, 2015) and neighbourhood organisation (Kubrin & Wo, 2016; Kubrin, 2009). To explain why some neighbourhoods show higher rates of violence and crime than others, a wide variety of theoretical approaches has been developed, which are further outlined in the literature review in Chapter 2 when I discuss their connection to current educational responses to neighbourhood violence. Some of these theoretical approaches attribute high rates of violence to a deficit in norms, attitudes and beliefs of people in so-called 'violence-prone' areas, due to a lack of impulse control (Gottfredson & Hirschi, 1990) or a normative system that facilitates the development of violence and crime into a social tradition passed on from generation to generation (Wolfgang & Ferracuti, 1967 in Kubrin, 2009). Such deficit-oriented approaches reflect a perspective that Anderson (2012) calls "the iconic ghetto": a pervasive stereotype in the imagination of outsiders, reinforced by the media, that stigmatises poor neighbourhoods as a place inhabited by people who are unable or fail to assume the responsibility to take care of themselves and their families, blaming the state of the ghetto on its residents. In this dissertation I make use of Anderson's 'code of the street' (1999) and the elaborate work of Das and colleagues (2000) on social life in violent contexts, to demonstrate how this stigma disregards the complex dynamics violence produces. Anderson (1999) underlines that to be able to manoeuvre in disadvantaged neighbourhoods, residents must adopt a 'street code' which legitimises violence

in certain situations and presents aggressive behaviour as a cultural script to gain respect and protection from victimisation. When analysing the perspectives of school educators (Chapter 3), mothers (Chapter 4) and young people (Chapter 5), I build on Anderson's (1999) street-cultural approach to interpret their strategies to deal with neighbourhood violence and how these are related to survival and protection. Additionally, I use the work of Das and colleagues (2000) to consider how their practices are shaped by the intricate social dynamics in contexts of protracted violence where perpetrators and victims are embedded in the same social space. A key element in these social dynamics is the impact of a 'dominant ecology of fear' (Das & Kleinman, 2000, p. 11) on social life in communities affected by high levels of violence. Research in neighbourhoods with high rates of violent crime has demonstrated how high levels of fear constrain social interaction and the willingness to engage in informal control (Liska & Warner, 1991; Liu, 1993; Sampson & Raudenbush, 1999; Bellair, 2000). Although limiting social interaction and withdrawing from public social life seem to be effective strategies for reducing risk of victimisation (Liska & Warner, 1991) these dynamics produced by fear of violence also undermine social solidarity and cohesiveness in the neighbourhood (Sampson & Raudenbush, 1999; Liu, 1993). In Chapter 3, I consider how these social processes affect the educational practice of local school educators and relate these insights to Perlman's (2010) ethnographic work in Brazilian slum neighbourhoods, that demonstrates how the upsurge of gang and police violence has far-reaching consequences for community cohesion.

3.2 The asymmetric relation between dominant and subaltern cultural perspectives: power imbalances and social inequality

To consider the wider social dynamics involved in neighbourhood violence that move beyond the bounds of the communities where it is manifesting, I make use of theoretical approaches that examine the relationship between hegemonic and subaltern cultures, including street culture (Ilan, 2015; Anderson, 1999) and popular culture (Ginzburg, 2013; Aguirre Rojas, 2005). In his elaborate work on street culture and the relation between poverty, youth and crime, Ilan (2015) proposes that around the globe – from inner-city neighbourhoods in the USA to French banlieues and Brazilian favelas – 'street culture' shares common characteristics that have emerged in response to exclusion from mainstream society, material deprivation and cultural subordination. These common 'street cultural concerns' are often depreciated and stigmatised by mainstream society and labelled as culturally 'deviant' (Ilan, 2015). This ties in with Ginzburg's (2013) ideas on the struggle between multiple cultural perspectives within society, where the dominant class takes possession of public discourse, expressing their ideas and visions and degrading cultural practices and perceptions of subaltern classes as 'vulgar' and morally wanting (Aguirre Rojas, 2005). I make use of their insights to further reflect on how such stigmatising perceptions related to neighbourhood violence affect marginalised communities and how they are reproduced as well as opposed by mothers' parenting

practices (Chapter 4) and connect to young people's strategies to deal with and move away from neighbourhood violence (Chapter 5).

While these power imbalances between dominant and subaltern cultures indicate a degree of opposition between cultural perspectives, at the same time the work of Ginzburg (2013) as well as theoretical perspectives on street culture (Ilan, 2015) point towards the interrelationships between hegemonic and 'popular' or 'street' cultures and underline they do not operate in a cultural vacuum. As Ilan (2015) proposes, street culture does not develop separate street cultural values but shares mainstream 'capitalist' cultural concerns, like accumulating wealth and seeking pleasure. In that sense, street culture is not so much considered an oppositional (sub)culture that rejects 'mainstream' values, but rather values the same concerns and ambitions even though they might manifest in different forms (Ilan, 2015). The idea of a rigid division between hegemonic and street or 'popular' cultures is also contested by Ginzburg's (2013) concept of 'constant circularity', addressing how they continuously exchange cultural elements and mutually influence each other. He criticised a descendent vision of culture where subaltern classes passively receive and reproduce cultural aspects of dominant classes and instead theorised how both classes constantly transform and re-functionalise cultural elements to fit their context, meanwhile safeguarding elements of their own culture. In my analysis of school educators' (Chapter 3), mothers' (Chapter 4) and young people's (Chapter 5) strategies to deal with neighbourhood violence, I build on Ilan's (2015) and Ginzburg's (2013) work to discuss the positioning of street cultural and hegemonic 'middle class' cultural perspectives in their practices and how their strategies reflect adaptation as well as resistance to aspects of both cultural perspectives.

However, the dialogue and mutual relations between hegemonic and subaltern cultures do not remove the asymmetry and inequity of the relationship (Aguirre Rojas, 2005). These power imbalances are reflected in the earlier referred to processes of stigmatisation and social exclusion that disadvantage and discriminate people from poor neighbourhoods. When social structures harm people and impair their fundamental needs this can be considered a type of social injustice or oppression that expresses structural violence (Galtung, 1996). Galtung (1996) argues that in order to eradicate direct forms of violence, structures that deprive people of their basic needs, such as structurally conditioned poverty and repression, need to be put to an end as well. In a context of historical social inequalities where such expressions of structural violence are justified and made acceptable in society, direct or physical expressions of violence might be difficult to combat (Galtung, 1996). In the literature review in Chapter 2, I make use of perspectives on social injustice and structural violence to critically analyse current educational responses to neighbourhood violence and various layers of intervention, to consider to what extent approaches address harmful structural mechanisms and whether they might (implicitly) express a deficit-thinking framework. Furthermore, throughout this dissertation I reflect on issues of social inequality and stigma

against the neighbourhood communities in this study, like conditions of poverty, unequal access to public services (e.g. basic infrastructure, health care, education, safety) and unequal exposure to police violence, which from a community perspective cannot be seen in isolation from the violent neighbourhood context and people's opportunities to deal with risks and offer resistance to neighbourhood violence.

3.3 Opportunities for agency and resistance

An important related issue in this dissertation is the balance between such structural constraints and opportunities for agency. In the analyses of young people's and educators' strategies to deal with neighbourhood violence and its limiting circumstances, I use theoretical approaches that present a dynamic perspective on agency to contribute to a better understanding of the relation between structural influences and opportunities for agency and control. In particular studies on youth transitions have underlined the need to address both the importance of structures – including dimensions of social class, race and the impact of economic conditions – as well as young people's sense of agency and control on their trajectories towards adulthood (Evans, 2007; Thomson, Henderson & Holland, 2003). Dynamic perspectives on agency and control describe agency as a socially situated process and propose that people's actions are influenced but not determined by their environment (Evans, 2007) and shaped by a variety of control beliefs and strategies in response to their circumstances (Bisgaard, 2021). To enable a deeper understanding of how agency is situated in particular contexts, I make use of a dynamic model of agency and control (Bisgaard, 2021) that suggests how people's perceptions of opportunities for agency develop through a process of constant negotiation. In this model, control beliefs are not considered static and dualistic traits orientated towards either internal or external factors, but are instead presented as a dynamic set of beliefs, including both internal and external perceptions of control. Such dynamic perspectives on agency and control enable analysis of the flexibility of people's perceived levels of agency in response to their contexts and how they interpret encountered circumstances.

To consider the ways in which neighbourhood violence has an impact on agency and control, I once more make use of Das and colleagues' (2000) work on the relation between violence and subjectivity. They describe how violence and the previously mentioned 'dominant ecology of fear' it generates, inhibit agency and restrict possibilities to actively resist violence. In my analysis of school educators' educational practices (Chapter 2) and young people's strategies to deal with neighbourhood violence (Chapter 5) I make use of their work to situate manifestations of inaction and restraint as well as to recognise expressions of resistance. Despite the restricting impact of violence and the fear it produces, Das and colleagues (2000) and other scholars (e.g. Penglase, 2014) have investigated how people in contexts of violence develop a variety of strategies to increase their opportunities for agency and express their disapproval. For example, Penglase (2014) demonstrates how in the context

of Brazilian slum neighbourhoods risks are managed through creative social tactics such as feigning ignorance about drug crime or using vague language to establish 'temporary spaces of autonomy' without challenging the power system of local gangs and other parties involved in the drug trade. Likewise, Spencer (2000) shows how in a village caught up in Sri Lanka's civil war, refusing to participate in violence and other acts of avoidance might actually be a strategy for expressing objection. I use their work to consider the opportunities for agency in violent circumstances and to analyse how educators and young people develop various forms and shapes of resistance beneath the surface.

Furthermore, to interpret how strategies of educators and young people to deal with neighbourhood violence might involve different types of expressions of resistance, I make use of Abowitz's (2000) revision of resistance theory. She offers a conceptual framework based on Dewey's modes of inquiry, to distinguish between interactionist and transactionalist understandings of resistance. While from an interactionist perspective resistance is interpreted as a direct response to oppression, a clash between two separate and conflicting entities, a transactionalist perspective underlines a more complex dynamic to recognise multiple and shifting positions of the parties involved. Such a transactionalist approach enables a focus on the transformative character of resistance and provides a lens to consider strategies for resistance in terms of their aim to create change in perceptions, in people and in the systemic context. While resistance theory in education generally focuses on student opposition to a dominant school culture, I make use of Abowitz's framework to analyse how educators and young people develop different levels of resistance to violence in their neighbourhoods and how they make use of various educational environments in their efforts to do so.

3.4 A pedagogy of hope

Such a perspective on resistance in terms of the potential for transformation aligns well with the concept of hope. Although long a neglected topic in educational studies (Halpin, 2001), over the past decades the concept has gained growing interest in fields from positive psychology to critical pedagogy, resulting in a range of theories and pedagogies of hope (Webb, 2013; De Winter, 2024). To consider the relation between hope and agency and examine the perceived opportunities and limitations for agency of educators and youth in violent contexts, I mostly fall back on Freire's 'Pedagogy of Hope'. Freire considers hope essential for agency in order to work towards change and vice versa. Agency without hope can quickly turn into despair, but at the same time hope also needs practice, in Freire's (2021) words: 'just to hope, is to hope in vain' (p. 16). From Freire's perspective, educational practice should entail a 'pedagogy of hope' as an encouragement to not look away or to surrender to circumstances as inescapable fate, but to draw on these circumstances as offering up new challenges and opportunities. According to Freire (2021), education should be directed at

expanding the horizons of possibility, to think outside of the bounds of the existing social, economic and political situations and challenge current realities.

Freire was not the first nor the last pedagogue to talk about hope and its significance for education. The work of John Dewey in the 1920s and 1930s already reflects an 'ultimate, democratic hope' for social reform towards a more just and equitable future where people cooperatively apply their skills for the common good (Fishman & McCarthy, 2007; De Winter, 2024). Dewey considered the human capabilities of intelligence, creativity and cooperation central in the hopeful endeavour to improve current conditions despite hazards and uncertainties (Fishman & McCarthy, 2007). Following his emphasis on the individual human being as part of a social whole, for Dewey hopeful living entails being motivated by the desire to use our capabilities to strive for goals and ideals that go beyond the individual interest, a unifying goal orientated towards making a difference for ourselves and future generations (Fishman & McCarthy, 2007; De Winter, 2024).

Such a perspective that emphasises hope aimed at transformation of current social realities underlines the connection between a pedagogy of hope and critical pedagogy, for both of which Dewey's ideas served as an inspiration (De Winter, 2024; Monchinski, 2010). Despite apparent differences in their views, one of the many similarities in Dewey's and Freire's perspectives is the importance they attach to educating for cooperation and working towards concrete shared goals and ideals while remaining attentive to real conditions and changing contexts (Fishman & McCarthy, 2007; Monchinski, 2010). For example, Freire (2021) proposed that a pedagogy of hope requires critical analysis of the present reality but also the construction of a practical alternative. He introduced the concept of *inédito viável*, or untested feasibility, to work on such concrete visions of a practicable ideal that is unprecedented but yet viable. Through reflection and action on these 'practicable ideals', Freire argued it becomes possible to break through limiting circumstances and induce social transformation.

While the concept of hope recurs throughout the chapters of this dissertation, I particularly elaborate on the idea of a pedagogy of hope and its importance for education in violent contexts in the general discussion (Chapter 6). In the preceding chapters I make use of the above theoretical perspectives on hope and transformation to consider the educational goals and practices of school educators (Chapter 3) and mothers (Chapter 4) and the strategies of young people to overcome difficult neighbourhood circumstances (Chapter 5). In particular, I make use of Freire's (2021) concept of *inédito viável* to consider young people's and educators' strategies to deal with neighbourhood violence as a way to transcend limiting situations and create opportunities for change.

4. Study setting

Since knowledge gathered in ethnographic research cannot be disconnected from its situatedness and should be understood in terms of the various aspects of its context as well as the process in which it has come to bear (Blommaert & Dong, 2010), it is of fundamental importance to consider the study setting and how I, as a researcher, came to be in it. After a first experience in a Brazilian slum neighbourhood during my Masters studies, for several years I had been cherishing the wish to return to this intriguing country and contribute as a researcher to a better understanding of the upbringing of youth in these contexts. I reached out to the Dutch foundation Stichting Vrienden van Kleutercentra Brazilië, that supports community preschools in the city of Salvador da Bahia and discussed my aspirations with the board. They brought me in touch with three local community organisations with whom I worked out further details of the research project and my participation in their educational projects, including the preschools and sports programmes.

Community organisations have developed in slum neighbourhoods throughout Brazil since the 1980s, when during a new era of re-democratisation after the military regime people started organising themselves in social movements in response to poverty, violence, inequality and other hardships in order to improve their living conditions (Mariz, 1994; Gohn, 2011; Almeida Cunha Filgueiras, 1994). These community cooperatives worked on practical solutions to urgent problems that the government failed to address properly, such as creating the necessary infrastructure and organising day care initiatives (Kramer, 2006; Almeida Cunha Filgueiras, 1994; Gohn, 2014). The latter developed into *crèches comunitárias*, that initially served as day cares but gradually focused more on pedagogical experiences in response to the public system failing to provide education for youth from these communities. In many cases these crèches eventually developed into preschools which came under municipal secretaries of education in 2002 (Kramer, 2006; Almeida Cunha Filgueiras, 1994). Many of these community organisations are still active today, fully or partially funded by public resources, and function as educational environments with a particular mission to address and transform the community's reality (Mariz, 1994; Vanden, 2007).

Over the past decades, one of the most pressing issues for community organisations has been to develop a response to soaring urban violence and its uneven impact on slum neighbourhoods (Gohn, 2014). The city of Salvador da Bahia has an infamous reputation for its high rates of violence and over the course of this study homicide rates and drug trafficking have further escalated (FBSP, 2022). In the following chapters I present more elaborate statistical information, but considering the limited space available in the chapters, in this Introduction I would like to add some more considerations with regard to the complex and multifaceted issue of the violence slum neighbourhoods are affected by. Since the mid 1980s drug trafficking, arms trafficking and the related violence have increased dramatically in a

large part of Brazil, particularly in big cities including Salvador da Bahia (Stahlberg, 2021; Perlman, 2010; Manso & Dias, 2018). Brazil has become one of the largest cocaine exporters in the world and because of their strategic location several port cities have become central points for the shipment of cocaine, mainly to Europe (United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, 2020). While slum neighbourhoods have become well-known as territory of local gangs involved in the drug trade, behind the scenes operate powerful transnational and international organised crime groups and their networks of complicity within the police and judiciary and political structures (Stahlberg, 2021; United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, 2020). Taking advantage of the historical absence of the state in slum areas and the lack of consistent and proactive public safety policies (e.g. policing, homicide investigations), local gangs and transnational organised crime groups have increased their power over these neighbourhoods (Cerqueira, Lobão & Carvalho, 2007; Perlman, 2010). Meanwhile, residents feel trapped in wars between rival gangs and the police, reflected in examples of gang members who force people to hide them in their homes during police raids, who at their turn break down people's doors and knock them around in their search. Residents of deprived areas are more likely to become victim of police violence (Carvalho & Arantes, 2021) and approximately 6.000 people are killed each year during police interventions, making Brazil's police force one of the most lethal worldwide (FBSP, 2022). At the same time, due to their occupation police officers also run great risk to get killed (FBSP, 2016; Fernandes, 2016). This exemplifies the at times highly diffuse roles of perpetrator and victim and demonstrates how the risk of violence is extremely unequally distributed. Several studies have demonstrated that the most likely victims of homicide in Brazil are young males aged 15-29 of brown or black race living in an urban slum neighbourhood (Cano & Ribeiro, 2007; FBSP, 2022; Espinheira, 2004). Many of the participants in this study had an uncle, cousin, nephew or other relative who died in a homicide related to drug traffic, demonstrating how violence is widespread and has a large impact on the communities.

However, despite the violent circumstances and other hardships, many people also experience their neighbourhood as a good place, or at least 'not that bad'. They feel connected to the community, they know their neighbours well and feel at home in their neighbourhood. One of the participants described the tension between these two realities by distinguishing between two environments within the neighbourhood: that of the streets, which she described as violent and 'no good', and that of the community, which she considered caring and helpful. For her, like for many other residents of slum neighbourhoods, the term '*comunidade*' refers to the neighbourhood as a community and stands for the good part of living in their neighbourhood (De Luna Freire, 2008). Therefore, many prefer the term *comunidade* to the term *favela*, which over time has acquired a derogatory character associated with the historically produced stigma related to these urban spaces and their inhabitants as violent, disorderly, potentially criminal and morally inferior (De Luna Freire,

2008). The media, including documentaries, movies and Netflix series about Brazilian *favela*s dressed up in sensationalism, often contribute to such a distorted picture of these neighbourhoods that ignores the 'normal' aspects of life because it sells better. However, a recent study conducted by the Brazilian statistics bureau (IBGE) to reconsider their current terminology for neighbourhoods that originally arose as informal housing settlements, has demonstrated that residents use a variety of classifications including *favela* and *comunidade* (IBGE, 2024). In fact, after careful consideration with community leaders, the term '*favelas* and urban communities' has been recently selected as the most appropriate to replace the current use of 'subnormal agglomerations'. Since *favela*s are considered territories where 'the poor' assert their presence in urban space (IBGE, 2024; Barbosa & Silva, 2013), and are linked to the historical demand for recognition and identity of their residents, it has been considered an applicable denomination to underline their right to housing and replace the 'subnormal agglomeration' that emphasises their irregularity and illegality, reinforcing further stigmatisation (IBGE, 2024). In this dissertation I generally use the term slum neighbourhood but have also used the term *favela* to refer to the locality of the neighbourhoods, because it is internationally widely used to refer to Brazilian slums and because the neighbourhoods in this study have been categorised by IBGE as '*favela*s and urban communities' (conforming their new terminology). In line with common use among the participants in this study, I have reserved the term community or *comunidade* to refer to the social ties among residents of the neighbourhood.

5. The content of this dissertation

This dissertation is comprised of four studies that each aim to contribute to a better understanding of the upbringing of youth in violent neighbourhoods and consider the transformational potential of educational practices in these contexts. Together, these studies aim to answer the main research question focussed on what educational interventions can learn from the strategies of local school educators, mothers and young people to deal with and resist violence in their neighbourhoods, in order to find openings for transformation and work towards peace in violent neighbourhood contexts.

Firstly, Chapter 2 presents the results of a literature review on the broad range of current educational interventions to counter community violence. Despite the considerable amount of research on the subject and an extensive collection of intervention programmes, the existing body of knowledge is extremely fragmented and the scientific literature provides little insight in the distinguishable approaches and how they might work in different contexts (Abt & Winship, 2016; Butts, Gouvis Roman, Bostwick & Porter, 2015; Fowler et al., 2009). Considering the wide array of theoretical perspectives and diversity of conceptualisations of

'community violence', the integrative review of theory and research in Chapter 2 serves as a useful starting point for this dissertation. It contributes to a holistic understanding of the complexity of community violence through unravelling various layers of intervention, how they are related to different theoretical orientations and conceptualisations, and critically analysing existing imbalances between individual, interpersonal and systemic approaches. This provides a comprehensive and coherent overview of the distinguishable approaches in current educational responses and offers a critical analysis of their primary objectives and strategies to counter community violence. Resulting from the debate on the various conceptualisations of community violence discussed in Chapter 2 and how these might carry the implicit suggestion that the community is to blame for the violence it suffers from, in the other chapters of this dissertation I generally used different terminology and preferred the term 'neighbourhood violence'.

Secondly, the remaining three studies investigate the perspectives of school educators, mothers and young people living in neighbourhoods affected by high levels of violence and examine how they develop strategies to deal with the obstacles and risks neighbourhood violence poses and how they construct opportunities for change. In Chapter 3, based on in-depth analysis of the educational goals and practices of educators in community preschools in response to neighbourhood violence, I discuss the limitations they experience and the opportunities they create to educate for peace in order to consider the transformative potential of educational environments and the implications for peace education in violent contexts. Chapter 4 outlines the perspective of mothers on raising their children in a violent neighbourhood context. Through analysis of their parenting goals, strategies and underlying values, I examine how they manage risks and develop strategies to deal with insecurity and consider how they construct a framework for moral education in response to the violent neighbourhood context. In Chapter 5 the perspective of young people on growing up in a violent neighbourhood context is discussed, based on a qualitative longitudinal analysis of their trajectories from adolescence towards young adulthood. The chapter presents a multiple case study of six young people participating in community sports programmes, to investigate how they developed strategies for resilience and resistance to neighbourhood violence. Through in-depth analysis of their perceived opportunities for agency to overcome constraints and to create alternative future pathways, identifying patterns through time, I examine how youth develop forms of agency that translate in resilience and consider the potential role of educational (sports) interventions in violent contexts.

To sum up, each chapter discusses a central sub question to contribute to a better understanding of the upbringing of youth in violent neighbourhoods and consider what we can learn from community practices for the design and implementation of educational interventions:

CH 2   What do current educational responses towards neighbourhood/community violence look like?

CH 3   What is the educational practice of in-school educators in a Brazilian slum neighbourhood in response to violence in the neighbourhood context?

CH 4   How do mothers construct a moral framework for parenting in violent neighbourhood contexts and develop strategies to manage risks and insecurity while introducing alternative moral teachings?

CH 5   What are the strategies of young people growing up in a Brazilian slum neighbourhood to become resilient and resistant to neighbourhood violence, and what is the potential role of their participation in the educational environment of a community sports programme in developing these strategies for resilience and resistance?

Finally, Chapter 6 provides a general discussion that brings the perspectives of school educators, mothers and young people together and discusses the main findings of these three empirical studies in light of the results of the literature review. Based on synthesis of the contributions of each chapter, several conclusions and implications for future practice and research are discussed.

Chapter 2
Literature Review:

Educational responses towards community violence: a critical analysis of perspectives on causes and solutions

Abstract

Alarming rates of community violence and the detrimental impact on youth and communities stress the need for a well-founded response. This paper presents an integrative review of theory and research on the broad range of educational interventions to counter community violence. Based on critical analysis of distinctions in perspectives, objectives and strategies, we established a multi-disciplinary taxonomy of distinguishable approaches. The results show most interventions focus on either individual behaviour or group interaction, while strategies for transformation of social systems are underrepresented. Based on related imbalances in theoretical orientations, the paper suggests a conceptual re-orientation of community violence that includes structural mechanisms and enables a targeted approach of the many levels through which youth and communities are affected. By presenting a coherent overview of current educational responses, this paper assists policy makers and practitioners to integrate multiple strategies in a context-based and community-involved approach to reverse violence and promote peace.

Key words

This Chapter is under review as:

Author contributions:

Annelieke van Dijk (AvD) conducted the literature review and wrote the article. M.J. de Haan (MdH) and Micha de Winter (MdW) contributed to the analysis and supervised and edited the writing of the article.

1. Introduction

Over the past decades, children's exposure to violence and its detrimental consequences have caused great concern around the globe (UNICEF, 2016). Approximately 30-50% of youth around the world directly experience violence in their communities and estimates are 70-98% have been a witness to community violence (Haj- Yahia, Leshem & Guterman, 2013; Guterman et al. 2010; Jain and Cohen, 2013; Shields, Nadasen & Pierce, 2008). These high rates have been recognised as a global public health issue for quite some time now and various reports have stressed the need for an effective response (WHO, 2014, UNICEF, 2016, UNESCO, 2017). The World Health Organization considers violence prevention and reduction a top priority and calls for a variety of measures, from enactment and enforcement of legislation to reduce access to weapons, to social and educational programmes that promote equity and nonviolence in communities (WHO, 2014). At the same time, their report underlines the existing lack of data on violence in communities and the need for strategies informed by evidence. In this paper we therefore argue for a critical analysis of what 'community violence' is, in order to construct an informed and well-founded approach. The impact of exposure to community violence, commonly referred to as being victim of or witnessing violence outside the home (Overstreet, 2000), has been well documented in developmental psychology, demonstrating negative behavioural, emotional and academic outcomes, including post traumatic stress disorder, antisocial behaviour (e.g. delinquency, gang involvement, aggression), low school engagement and poor academic functioning (Overstreet, 2000; Voisin & Berringer, 2015). Additional to these consequences for youth on the individual level, high rates of violence also have a large impact on community life, causing a communal sense of insecurity in neighbourhoods (Fowler, Tompsett, Braciszewski, Jacques-Tiura & Baltes, 2009). Such community-level consequences have been given less attention in the literature, despite that – due to the pervasive character of community violence and the anxiety it produces – the impact on neighbourhood characteristics such as a lack of social interaction and a generalised fear for safety has been found substantial (Liska & Warner, 1991; Markowitz, Bellair, Liska & Liu, 2001; Fowler et al., 2009). A primary focus on individual-level consequences can be considered problematic since it presents an incomplete picture of the issue of community violence and might steer the discussion on causes and solutions into a particular direction without taking all aspects involved into account. In particular, it risks overlooking systemic aspects of community violence not just within but also beyond the communities where it is manifesting. When the main focus of attention is on people from the communities that are highly affected by community violence, cause and consequence might be confounded in a perspective that suggests individual people and communities are to blame, while social, economic and political systems in wider society and how they affect violence in communities remain unexposed.

Considering the alarming rates of youth's exposure to community violence and the increasing evidence of its detrimental impact, violence prevention has become of major concern in education (UNESCO, 2017) and other policy areas such as security (Skogan, 2011) and health (McDaniel & Sayegh, 2020). This resulted in a wide array of responses and interventions, each with their own particular focus and approach, but unfortunately a comprehensive and effective solution has not yet been agreed upon. This diversity of approaches seems to be a reflection of the existing different conceptualisations of community violence (Overstreet, 2000). Although community violence has been investigated in a considerable amount of research, broad consensus on a univocal definition has not yet been achieved in the academic debate and a variety of more broad to narrow explanations of the concept continue to exist (Ali-Saleh Darawshy, Gewirtz & Marsalis, 2020). In Ali-Saleh Darawshy et al.'s (2020) review study, community violence is defined as 'interpersonal violent behaviour that takes place in community settings (e.g. the street, the school, the neighbourhood, and public spaces), which causes or threatens to cause injuries to another person or group; this may include assaults, chasing, use of weapons, gunfire, etc.' (p. 365). Community violence can therefore be considered a container concept, incorporating a variety of types of violence, including gang-related violence and violence in schools. Despite the overlap in exposure to community violence and other types of violence – both in the private sphere and the public domain – and the fact that these boundaries are never absolute, it is important to note that the term community violence overall does not encompass domestic violence, sexual violence, vandalism or political violence. For instance, while community violence might involve political motives and can stem from discontent of social inequality or other issues in the social sphere, the concept does not refer to calculated acts of violence used as an instrument to reach specified ideological goals, such as in the case of various forms of political violence like violent protests, terrorism or rebellion. Accordingly, in this paper we are mainly interested in how communities deal with interpersonal violence that takes place in the public rather than private domain, involving informal actors instead of institutionalised agents and concerning violence against civilians instead of institutions or power structures. Formalised forms of violence such as acts of war and politically driven violence orchestrated by state actors or political movements (e.g. police violence or violence by para-military and rebel groups) are therefore outside the primary scope of this paper. Instead, in line with the foregoing, we build on Ali-Saleh Darawshy et al.'s (2020) definition of community violence, with specific regard for its environmentally pervasive and chronic character (Lorion and Saltzman, 1993) and the complex social dynamics in contexts where the street environment is considered dangerous and unpredictable and where victims and perpetrators are embedded in the same social space (Das & Kleinman, 2000). We emphasise that the intricate dynamics of community violence go beyond the individual and interpersonal level, and involve systemic aspects not only within communities experiencing high levels of violence, but also related to

social, economic and political structures in wider society that have been underexposed in the literature (Wilkins et al., 2014; Burrell et al., 2021).

While a more narrow definition focussed on interpersonal violence in the public domain, might seem to provide a straightforward starting point for the formation of a framework to study community violence and the development of a response, it does not correspond with the complex dynamics and systemic character of the problem. Furthermore, even within this limited conceptualisation a variety of perspectives and approaches have been developed, each containing their own underlying principles with regard to causes, effects and potential solutions to violence. Despite their widely divergent character – ranging from a criminal justice approach characterised by repressive police action, to educational initiatives such as conflict-resolution or peace educational programmes – these responses are often lumped together as interventions for community violence in the scientific literature. This is problematic for policymakers, administrators and practitioners looking for applicable solutions to community violence. Insufficient knowledge about the distinguishable approaches and their potential impact on youth and communities, hinders well-considered choices for implementation and there is little practical guidance on how to identify the right interventions for a particular context (Abt, 2014, in Abt & Winship, 2016). Furthermore, the existing body of knowledge on community violence and lines of intervention is extremely fragmented. The subject has been studied by multiple academic disciplines, from psychology and education to sociology and criminology, each presenting a profusion of theoretical perspectives which are seldomly seen in relation but function either as separated worlds or as oppositional approaches denouncing each other's results (Weijers, 2020; Overstreet, 2000). An overall, encompassing perspective that integrates this diversity of insights and cuts across academic departments is still lacking (Weijers, 2020). Moreover, up until now, differences in programme design and implementation, and deficiencies and gaps in research methods and outcome indicators, led to inconclusive results, making it difficult to establish the effectiveness of interventions directed at community violence (Abt & Winship, 2016; Butts, Gouvis Roman, Bostwick & Porter, 2015; Fowler et al., 2009).

A holistic understanding of the dynamic complexity of community violence is still lacking and the scientific literature provides little insight in how interventions address various layers of individual, interpersonal and contextual processes involved in order to examine what works across different contexts (Burrell et al., 2021; Abt & Winship, 2016). Unravelling these various intervention layers and how they are related to different theoretical orientations might provide useful insights to reconsider existing conceptualisations of community violence. The construction of a more holistic conceptualisation of community violence that addresses how social, economic and political structures are involved, might offer a more comprehensive theoretical basis for the development of interventions, the evaluation of their effects and the understanding of how interventions work towards change in specific contexts.

This also calls for critical reflection on research designs to assess effectiveness of interventions for community violence, since research sites, methods and measures of impact are often western-based and give preference to dominant perspectives, overlooking perspectives of non-dominant communities (Philip, Bang & Jackson, 2018).

While the extensive collection of intervention programmes could support judicial services, educational institutions, social service providers, community initiatives and other stakeholders to construct an effective response to community violence, it has resulted in an impenetrable black box, and many organisations are struggling to find a fitting perspective with a well-founded approach (Abt & Winship, 2016; Voisin & Berringer, 2015). Despite the wide variety of interventions, the majority appears to have been developed in western countries, shaped by perspectives of dominant groups and not attuned to a diversity of local contexts, in particular those of non-dominant communities. During our own research in slum neighbourhoods in Brazil, we have witnessed how community organisations are thrown upon their own resources and feel alone in the arduous endeavour to work towards a more peaceful neighbourhood environment (masked reference, 2020).

Practitioners and researchers in the field could thus benefit from a comprehensive and coherent overview, that assembles the various approaches, unravels their distinguishing objectives and investigates their specific strategies and underlying orientations to community violence. In this paper, we therefore gradually work towards an overview of the different types of interventions and their distinctions across various contexts and countries, based on an integrative review of the literature, with the specific ambition to include non-dominant perspectives. First, we present a general exploration of the main perspectives towards community violence related to the central academic disciplines that have been investigating the issue. Second, based on the analysis of a number of intervention programmes – both established and less well-known or unconventional ones – we examine objectives, strategies and underlying theoretical orientations and explore perspectives on youth and communities. Building on these analyses, we discuss some fundamental tensions in the design, implementation and evaluation of interventions in relation to the complex and systemic character of community violence.

The resulting overview, based on critical analysis of the different approaches and their underlying principles, can provide important directions for practitioners and policy makers implementing interventions to counter community violence. However, while the primacy of this review is with the field of practice, the paper also offers an important conceptual contribution by addressing imbalances in theoretical orientations towards community violence and demonstrating major consequences for intervention approaches, primarily oriented towards the individual instead of systemic change. By underlining the underexposure of social, economical and political conditions of inequality and oppression involved in community violence, we aim to contribute to a conceptual re-orientation in order to promote

the development of thorough and targeted approaches to counter community violence and its harmful impact on children and communities.

2. Method

To gather literature on interventions directed at community violence we worked in a phased cyclic process of literature search and analysis, using multiple search strategies and a three-step analysis. We started with making an initial broad overview of various approaches towards community violence based on a general search for review studies on the issue, including reviews focussed on exploring the problem of community violence and its consequences and review studies of intervention programmes and their effectiveness. Relevant studies that were already known to the authors through prior research provided a meaningful starting point. Additionally, we consulted multiple electronic databases and specific journals including International Review of Education, Educational Research Review and Review of Educational Research, searching for studies that included the terms "community violence", "gang violence" or "youth violence". This general search was directed at an exploration of the literature on community violence, related concepts and approaches, and resulted in an initial overview based on 87 studies, including journal articles (reviews and single studies), policy reports, books and book chapters. This initial overview was complemented through backward citation searching, focussed on finding studies that described intervention programmes, generating another 25 studies.

In a second phase, we conducted an independent additional search using combinations of the following key terms in English, Spanish and Portuguese: 1) youth, children, adolescents, 2) community violence, gang violence, youth violence, 3) education, intervention, prevention, programme. Related to our prior work in Latin America and our special interest in this region, we decided to expand the search with publications in Spanish and Portuguese. We consulted with a research librarian regarding the search terms and developed the following search string for a systematic search in Web of Science: TS=((youth OR child* OR adolescents) AND ("community violence" OR "gang* violence" OR "youth violence") AND (education* OR intervention OR prevention OR programme)). Using the alert system from February 5 to December 31 2021, the search generated 106 studies, including journal articles (reviews and single studies), dissertations and book chapters. Titles and abstracts were reviewed by the first author for relevancy, i.e. if the paper addressed an intervention or approach in response to community violence directed at youth. This resulted in the exclusion of 86 studies, because they did not describe an intervention (e.g. Bordin, Handegård & Paula, 2022), were not directed at violence or at other types of violence outside the definition of community violence (e.g. domestic violence, sexual abuse, suicide

prevention, for example Van Wyk, 2022) or were not directed at youth (e.g. Raja, Rabinowitz & Gray, 2021). In addition, we conducted targeted grey literature searches in order to find more information on specific intervention programmes or approaches, in particular those that were not retrieved via earlier searches, such as community building and victim support groups. In total, the search strategies in this second phase resulted in the inclusion of an additional 43 studies, including journal articles, policy and research reports, book chapters, essays, dissertations and theses. The search strategies in phase 1 and 2 combined resulted in a total of 155 studies included in this review, published between 1991 and 2021. Included studies were predominantly written in English, but also in Portuguese (n=6), Spanish (n=3) and Dutch (n=15). All reviewed articles are listed in Supplementary Table S1[1].

The initial overview based on the first step of the analysis was sequentially revised, complemented and further specified and detailed as analysis of succeeding literature progressed. In this second step of the analysis, the main features of interventions located in the literature were systematically analysed, based on the following questions:
- what is the intervention's view on the causes of community violence,
- what is the intervention's view on potential solutions
- how are these views related to theoretical orientations regarding the roots of violence
- what are the main objectives of the intervention,
- who are the main agents (developers, facilitators/staff and participants or target group)
- what are the main ingredients of the intervention,
- to what extent does the intervention involve local community and youth,
- for which type(s) of contexts has the intervention been designed,
- in which type(s) of contexts has the intervention been implemented.

Building on the results of these analyses, we located some noticeable distinctions which we investigated further in the third step of the analysis. In this step we focussed on several tensions related to the content and presentation of interventions directed at community violence, that we will address and elaborate on in this paper. Firstly, the dichotomy in the literature between a criminological, an educational and a psychosocial health perspective fragmentises the knowledge on community violence and results in a large variety of interventions (1) that work with different and sometimes opposite objectives (2). When zooming in on the interventions' objectives and strategies, we distinguished a subdivision of various intervention levels and different types of transformation interventions aspired (3). These objectives and strategies seem to reflect different theoretical orientations on the roots of violence, which, while uncommonly referred to explicitly in the literature, we identified as an important element in the construction of approaches towards community violence. A related aspect of these approaches which we analyse in more detail are the distinct perspectives on youth and the communities they live in (4).

---

1   Appendices, p. 197.

Furthermore, separate from the type of intervention strategy, we observe distinctions in the way communities are involved in intervention programmes (5). Finally, we examine available indications for the effectiveness of the various intervention strategies and how diverse methods and measures for evaluation complicate the comparison between them (6). Table 1[2] provides an overview of interventions encountered in this review organised according to these six dimensions of our analysis and their distinguishable categories.

3. Results

3.1 Segregated academic disciplines: a criminological, educational and psychosocial health perspective

In general, we identified three main perspectives that can be distinguished in the literature on community violence and the interventions that have been developed in response: a criminological perspective, an educational perspective and a psychosocial health perspective. Each of these perspectives, related to the central academic disciplines that have been studying the phenomenon of community violence, encompass several general approaches towards the issue. Starting with a criminological perspective, the most common responses to community violence stem from a criminal justice approach characterised by repressive action from the police force, incarceration and other types of punishment such as imposed community service. A common counterpart to these responses that also have a crime-oriented perspective yet with a different approach, are socio-preventive responses to community violence. Interventions from this approach aim to address social determinants in order to prevent violence (Williams, Currie, Linden & Donnelly, 2014). These initiatives, while administered by law enforcement, offer alternatives to violent crime by providing youth at risk access to social and other public services and by improving their opportunities in education and employment. While containing educational elements, these interventions are oriented towards security and crime reduction and based in criminology as an academic discipline. A third approach presented in the literature from a criminological perspective to community violence, is characterised by politically driven initiatives to crime, such as peace talks and truces between gangs and the government or between rivalling gangs. This might be referred to as a negotiation approach, aimed at constructing dialogue between the warring parties in order to come to an agreement (Van Damme, 2018). These three approaches have in common that they focus mostly on gang-related violence and make use of crime reduction and prevention strategies based on a criminological foundation to find solutions to this particular aspect of community violence.

_____

2   Appendices, p. 189.

Secondly, a large share of the literature on community violence and related interventions, is based on an educational perspective. Within this field of study, many initiatives are implemented in school settings, often directed at solving school violence. While violence in schools is included in the definition of community violence, it is also often presented as a consequence of high rates of violence in the surrounding community. A frequently applied response in schools is therefore directed at keeping violence outside school walls with an approach centred at security and order. This involves repressive and controlling measures such as metal detectors, police patrol and a 'zero tolerance' policy towards students involved in violent incidents, immediately sanctioned with suspension or expulsion (Noguera, 1995; UNESCO, 2017; Welsh & Little, 2018). A different approach often highlighted in the literature from an educational perspective, concentrates on improving school climate as a response to community violence. This approach consists of a wide variety of comprehensive school programmes to encourage positive relations between students and school staff, as well as interventions aimed at improving prosocial behaviour and conflict resolution skills (UNESCO, 2017; Welsh & Little, 2018; Johnson & Johnson, 1996).

Finally, a psychosocial health perspective consists of initiatives aimed at reducing the negative impact of exposure to community violence on youth. These include interventions from a psychopharmacological approach, involving medication for victims of community violence who have developed particular symptoms of distress such as depression, anxiety or PTSD (Voisin & Berringer, 2015), as well as therapeutical programmes aiming to reduce either such internalising symptoms or externalising problem behaviour, like anger management therapy (Ali-Saleh Darawshy et al., 2020). Although these programmes are also implemented in school settings, their main focus is training in psychological coping strategies for community violence.

3.2 Divergent objectives: containment vs transformation

While these perspectives are functioning as segregated branches, various approaches across the different academic disciplines show overlap in their objectives and strategies in response to community violence. For example, in the literature from a criminological perspective, educational approaches to youth delinquency are frequently presented as a solution for community violence. And likewise, within educational sciences some approaches are strongly crime-oriented, such as the rather new field of study 'forensic clinical child and adolescent studies' (Cima, 2016; Hendriks & Stams, 2016). Therefore, in our analysis we removed the barriers between the academic disciplines and looked across interventions cited in the literature from all three perspectives. We found that the various approaches towards community violence that we identified, were not so easily distinguished by the academic discipline they stem from, but were more apparent defined by the objective they

pursue. Within the approaches described in the literature from a criminological perspective, as well as within the approaches described from an educational and psychosocial health perspective on community violence, we discerned two divergent main objectives. On the one hand, repression and punishment exercised by the criminal justice approach and by security measures in educational settings, are directed at the containment of violence. They focus on restriction and control. On the other hand, initiatives that address social aspects of violence, whether administered by law enforcement or by schools and social services, aim to create alternatives for violence. They focus on dialogue and care. An overview of the academic perspectives and these main objectives of interventions for community violence is presented in Figure 1.
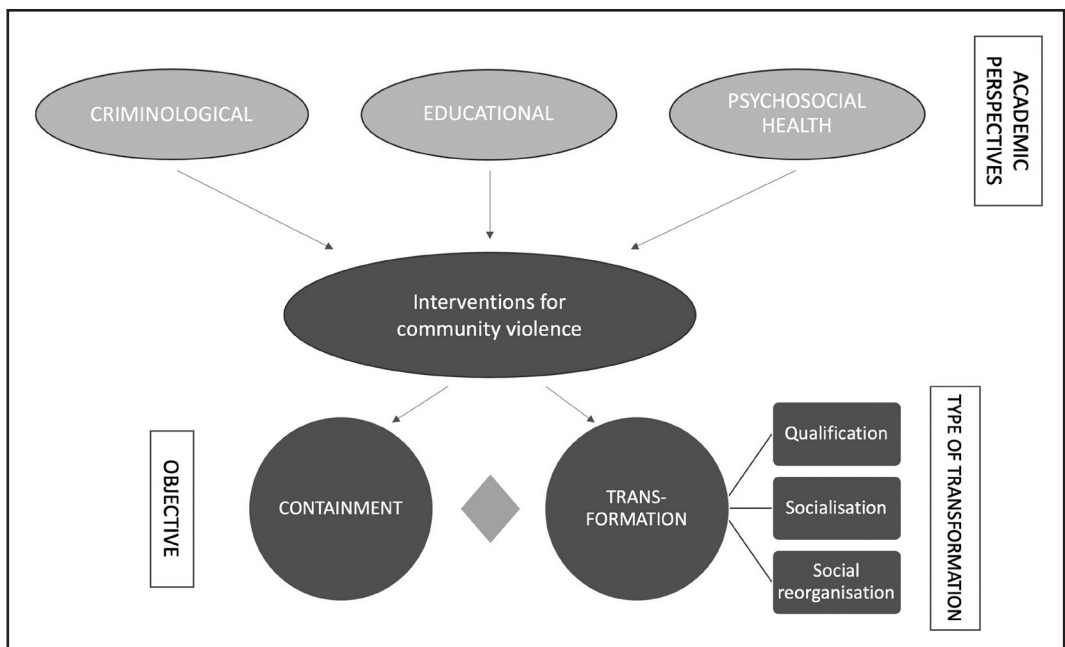
Figure 1

Overview of academic perspectives and main objectives of interventions for community violence

In the continuing of this paper we will explore the latter type of interventions with the goal to counter community violence by creating peaceful alternatives, because these interventions are not merely aimed at containment of violence but at its transformation. This aspiration for transformation is what we understand as educational, irrespective of the academic discipline the interventions are connected to. We consider interventions educational if they aim for at least one of the three 'major functions' of education as proposed by Biesta (2012): 1) qualification, focussed on acquiring knowledge, skills, values and attitudes, 2) socialisation, initiating youth in existing practices and traditions of a certain culture, and 3)

subjectification, which is best understood as the opposite of socialisation, not incorporating youth as 'newcomers' in existing orders, but investigating ways of being independent from these orders. Combining these three dimensions, Biesta (2015) views education as adding something new to the world, causing a reorganisation of the known reality. As such, Biesta (2015) proposes that education involves an interference that should have a transforming impact. This line of thought ties in with the ideas of Freire (2018), who emphasised that education should not only aspire self-reflection and a critical understanding and awareness of oneself and the world, but ultimately also strive for the conditions to produce a new set of arrangements where students and teachers come to see the world not as a static reality but as a reality in process, in transformation. While repressive approaches might also expect change through punitive measures in the sense of reduction of violent behaviour, their major objective or purpose is however the containment of violence. The interventions we will focus on in the continuing of this review, aim for some kind of transformation by constructing alternatives and generating something new, which, in line with Biesta and Freire, we argue is fundamental for an educational approach.

3.3 Types of transformation

Such a focus on interventions that aim for transformation somewhat narrows down the miscellaneous collection of interventions directed at community violence, providing a meaningful next step in creating an overview. However, interventions with such a transformational objective still consist of a wide variety of initiatives with many differences between them. Some interventions focus on preventing or deterring gang membership among youth through employment and education, while others aim to create alternative patterns of interaction, such as conflict-resolution and anger management programmes. Although all these interventions aspire to transform, they aim for a different kind of transformation and intervene on a different level.

In our analysis we distinguish between three types of transformation, inspired by Biesta's (2012) major functions of education (see Figure 1).[3] The categories as we use them, are not an exact match to how Biesta does this in his work. They are derived from his classification and adapted to interpret the transformational objectives of interventions directed at community violence in the following way. Firstly, qualification of youth in skills, attitudes or knowledge, can be considered a type of transformation that is directed at

---

3   Since Biesta's (2012) classification was used to define 'educational interventions' and in the analysis was found largely applicable to the transformational objectives of the interventions we encountered, we chose to tailor the existing categories instead of creating new categories that would be considerably similar. Building on Biesta's (2012) classification by tailoring his categories generates a more convenient arrangement of the types of transformation we encountered among the interventions and simultaneously provides proper recognition of his work.

enabling youth to act or behave in a certain manner. We identified this type of transformation in those interventions that focus on teaching youth non-violent attitudes and prosocial behaviour or other skills that might help them to promote peace or reduce the negative impact of violence. An interesting example of the latter is the mindfulness-based stress reduction programme (MBSR) that teaches skills to reduce high stress levels induced by exposure to community violence (Sibinga, Webb, Ghazarian & Ellen, 2016). This programme aims to qualify young people in coping strategies to deal with consequences for their mental health. Like MBSR, interventions that focus on qualification, mostly intervene at the individual level, targeting individual behaviour of youth.

Secondly, we identified interventions directed at socialisation of youth that focus on the transmission of social norms and values and youth's integration in society through employment and schooling. This can be considered a different type of transformation because it is not directed at their individual behaviour, but aims to transform social norms and insert youth in particular cultural traditions and institutions of society. Interventions that aim for socialisation, generally intervene at the level of group interaction. Mind that this is an important distinction from how Biesta (2012) originally argued about the socialisation function of education, since he refers to how individuals are introduced and embedded in cultural practices. Contrary to an individual-oriented approach, we found that these interventions particularly focus on social groups and make use of the group's social cohesion as an instrument and potential source of support in the change process. One example is the TIP programme[4], implemented in Colombia, that approaches entire youth street gangs to transform group behaviour and enhance their access to public services (Gutierrez-Martinez, Dario-Valencia & Santaella-Tenorio, 2020). Instead of separating the individual from the group, the group becomes the target of intervention with the objective to establish change in the peer group. A similar approach is represented by some anti-bullying programmes that instead of focussing on the bully or the bullied, take the entire classroom as their target for change (Kärnä, Voeten, Little, Poskiparta, Kaljonen, & Salmivalli, 2011; Smith, Ananiadou & Cowie, 2003). These interventions are based on the principle that not the individual but group dynamics and social norms are primarily responsible for violence, reflected in an emphasis on shifting group behaviour (Abt & Winship, 2016). Likewise, the Glen Mills School for delinquent boys was based on the idea that the same (group) processes that are believed to contribute to the development of antisocial behaviour (e.g. imitation and reinforcement, status and recognition, peer pressure and the need to belong) can be used as a resource to encourage prosocial behaviour (Hilhorst & Klooster, 2004; Dubnov, 1986).

Thirdly, we found interventions that do not aim for behavioural change of youth or

---

4   The programme is called Tratamiento Integral a Pandillas (TIP) – Jóvenes sin Fronteras (Gang Integral Treatment – Youth Without Borders) and is implemented in Cali (Colombia) by a cooperation of the municipal police and a university.

their adjustment to societal norms, but foster critical analysis of existing social processes that fuel violence and encourage the participation of youth in establishing alternative cultural ways and new policies. We classified this type of transformation as social reorganisation, because it is directed at awareness and transformation of social processes and structures. Although this category differs in many ways from Biesta's (2012) function of subjectification, it involves a similar process of 'investigating ways of being independent from existing orders' (p. 31). While Biesta (2012) refers to the subjectivity of the individual, we refer to a category of interventions that aim to empower people not only regarding how to be independent from existing orders individually but also to establish alliances with others and encourage them to reorganise these orders or create new ones. This is illustrated by a peace education programme from Colombia called Hermes, that aims to establish cultural change in schools and addresses asymmetrical power relationships in educational environments (Marciales Mogollón & Vega Romero, 2019). By targeting the entire school community, not only questioning behaviour of students and teachers but also organisational values and school policy related to conflict management, this initiative facilitates youth and everyone involved in the school to analyse their functioning and construct an alternative culture of consensus. Interventions that aim for such a social reorganisation often intervene at a broader societal or contextual level, aiming for change in the environment such as within institutions (e.g. school climate, disciplinary procedures, policy on social services) or neighbourhood contexts, for example through transformation of social processes in communities and community initiatives.

Overall, in our analysis we identified three types of transformation (qualification, socialisation and social reorganisation) and three levels of intervention (individual behaviour, group interaction and environment) that often occurred in the combinations as previously described and which we therefore organised as three clusters of intervention strategies (see Figure 2): 1) qualification of individual youth, 2) socialisation of peer groups, and 3) social reorganisation of the environment. However, while these clusters have their own particular focus, they are not mutually exclusive but are interconnected and often overlap: the content of interventions focussed on qualification also have a socialising impact and vice versa, while both types can also to some extent encourage critical analysis of society's orders. Furthermore, several intervention programmes include a diversified set of programme elements that operate at different levels of intervention and aim for different types of transformation. As Biesta (2012) argues, education has a multidimensional character with overlapping and conflicting purposes. Accordingly, interventions for community violence both within and between these three clusters can share similar features while also pursue disparate strategies.

Nevertheless, choices for a specific strategy have important implications for the intervention's view on the roots of violence, in particular regarding the importance attributed to either individual or environmental factors. Although one's view on the roots of violence encompasses more than this distinction and the accompanying selection of a certain level of

intervention, this particular element often leads to different considerations about whether the individual or the environment should be the main target of change and whether interventions should adopt an individual or a collective approach. Based on the intervention programmes we encountered in our review of the literature (see Table 1), in the continuing we will analyse for each cluster how their strategies are related to theoretical orientations to the roots of violence and their representation of particular views on the kind of transformation that is needed to provide a solution to community violence.
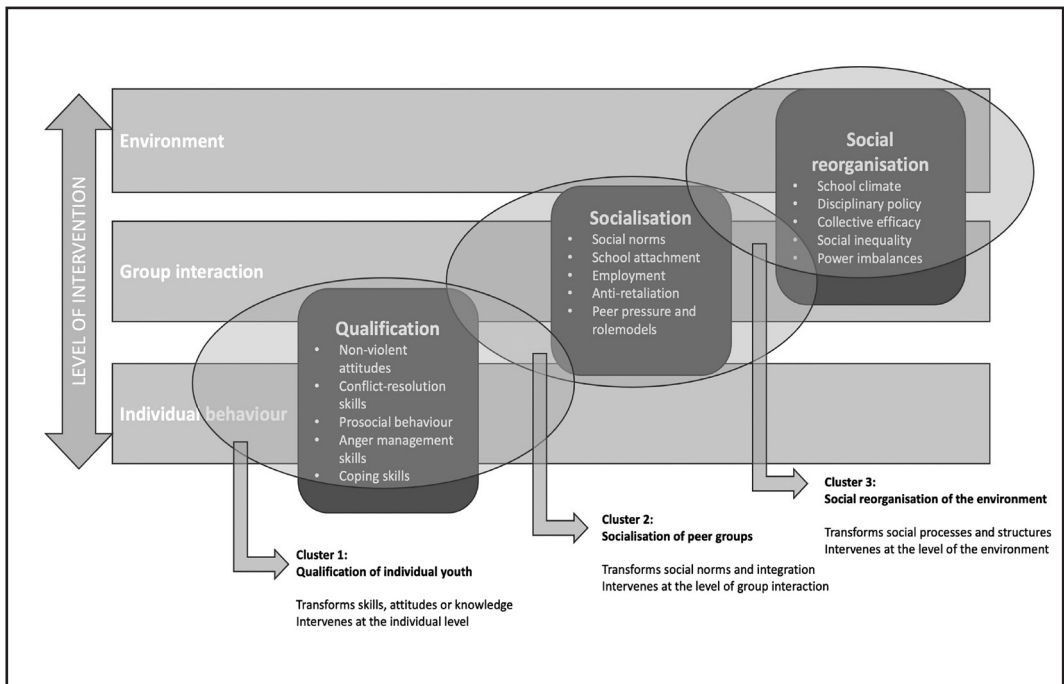
Figure 2

*Three clusters of intervention strategies: (1) Qualification of individual youth,
(2) Socialisation of peer groups and (3) Social reorganisation of the environment*

3.4 Underlying views to the roots of violence

The three clusters of intervention strategies we identified and their choices for a particular type of transformation, each reflect different views on the roots of community violence, which can be traced back to the main theories that have been developed to explain youth delinquency and (violent) crime. While the relation between violence and crime is diffuse, violence and aggression are often associated with crime and all three are recurrently used indistinctively (Pino, 2007). The same theoretical considerations and empirical evidence are at

the basis of explanations for behaviour classified either as aggressive, violent, or criminal, even while they each have their own distinctions (Van den Brink, 2006; Lilly, Cullen & Ball, 2019). Furthermore, in many societies, the use of physical violence is in most situations considered a violation of the law and therefore labelled as a criminal act (Lilly, Cullen & Ball, 2019). These theoretical links between crime and violence also explain that despite the multi-disciplinary character of community violence, even the literature on educational, transformative intervention strategies largely builds on criminological research traditions, in particular those focussed on youth delinquency. Operating at the interface between criminology and youth studies, theories on youth delinquency address developmental, social psychological, political and anthropological explanations of crime and violence, which seem to provide a basis for the form and content of various educational interventions to prevent and reduce community violence. Although they are uncommonly referred to explicitly in the literature as part of a programme theory or theoretical framework and were not designed for the concept of community violence, in our analysis we established connections between several of their central ideas and the strategies for transformation pursued by interventions in each of the three clusters.

Cluster 1: Lack of behavioural skills and impulse control
The first cluster of interventions directed at community violence includes programme elements that aim to transform youth's individual values and attitudes and to provide knowledge and skills assumed to reduce violence and its negative impact. Examples are programmes that transfer moral values of peace, teach non-violent patterns for conflict resolution or focus on normative beliefs about the acceptability of violence through individual coaching or group sessions. The United Nations have introduced several school programmes that teach about peace, tolerance and human rights (Page, 2008; UNESCO, 2017; UNICEF 2016). And we found several similar initiatives, such as the character education and problem behaviour programme 'All Stars' (Harrington, Giles, Hoyle, Feeney & Yungbluth, 2001) and the violence prevention programme 'El Joven Noble' (Kelly, Lesser, Cheng, Oscós-Sánchez, Martinez, Pineda & Mancha, 2010). The latter is directed at elementary school children and their families from Latino communities in the USA. It consists of 10 weekly after-school sessions to replace 'violent-provoking norms and attitudes with a set of beliefs that support harmony, balance and responsibility in all relationships' (Kelly et al., 2010, p. 210). The programme aims to encourage moral values of harmony and peace and improve self-efficacy by teaching non-violent alternatives for conflict resolution.

These interventions or programme elements are based on the view that transformation of youth's individual behaviour is required, which reflects important theoretical orientations to the roots of violence. Some of these interventions particularly focus on 'youth at risk', who are assumed to be inclined to a risky lifestyle and attracted to

peer groups with antisocial and criminal behaviour because they pursue excitement and suspense (Van den Brink, 2006; Bol, Terlouw, Blees & Verwers, 1998; Junger-Tas, 1996). The tendency towards risk and other associated individual characteristics such as hyperactivity and impulse control, form the basic elements of the self-control theory of crime (Gottfredson & Hirschi, 1990). The ability to control impulses, delay need satisfaction and to make use of verbal communication techniques instead of violence to get things done, is considered of great importance to prevent people from violent and criminal behaviour (Gottfredson & Hirschi, 1990). Training of these abilities is often a central component of approaches towards community violence from a psychosocial health perspective, like anger management therapy but also more comprehensive educational programmes that aim to improve self-efficacy by teaching non-violent behavioural strategies. For example STYL, a programme of cognitive behaviour therapy for 'high-risk' young men in Liberia, focusses on actively practicing new skills like planning, goal-setting and self-control in order to reshape their social identity as 'outcasts' (Blattman, Jamison & Sheridan, 2015). Programme elements intended to foster this type of behaviour (e.g. deliberate decision-making, controlling emotions and impulses), aim for transformation on a qualification level through the disruption of existing patterns of thinking and behaviour and acquiring new skills and attitudes to reduce violent tendencies. As such, intervention strategies in this cluster reflect a perspective on community violence caused by a deficit in norms, attitudes and beliefs of individual youth and their communities.

Cluster 2: Lack of social bonds to mainstream society
The second cluster consists of interventions or programme elements directed at the transformation of social norms and beliefs about violence in peer groups. Some programmes focus on peer pressure prevention, others involve adult and peer role models to encourage certain life choices or try to intervene in norms for conflict resolution in peer groups or youth gangs. An example is the 'Cure Violence' strategy that uses role models to convince gang-involved youth to refrain from violent retaliation after an attack from a rivalling gang (Butts et al., 2015). These type of programme elements aim for transformation on a socialisation level, modelling particular attitudes and behaviour that are culturally accepted by mainstream society. In these interventions we recognise the view that delinquent behaviour is learned through social interaction via a process of imitation and reinforcement, offered by the differential association and social learning theory. In particular the role of peer groups has been addressed as an important 'risk factor' for crime involvement: peer relations with delinquent peers serve as a risk, while friendships with non-delinquent peers function as a brake (Angenent, 1991).

To increase the endorsement of socially accepted norms and encourage young people's socialisation in mainstream society, some programmes aim to promote connections with 'prosocial institutions', providing employment opportunities and job training and

encouraging young people's attachment to the school environment. Such strategies reflect the ideas of the social bonds theory (Hirschi, 1969), which contends that bonds to school, work and family but also attachment to societal norms, help to prevent involvement in (violent) crime and other types of antisocial behaviour. The stronger the bonds, the lesser the chance to be involved in crime because these bonds help people to 'stay on track'. Several interventions we found in our review include programme elements that aim to increase young people's opportunities in mainstream society and meanwhile improve their living conditions. For example, many deterrence programmes directed at gang-involved youth connect them to social services to address housing conditions, joblessness, health problems and other issues that limit their opportunities to build a life in mainstream society. Such a focus on improving young people's circumstances reflects the view that criminal behaviour might be a consequence of frustration about negative circumstances that limit their possibilities to achieve success via socially accepted means, as outlined in strain theory. In particular in meritocratic societies where everyone is supposed to be able to accomplish 'the American Dream', people who feel strained by a lack of income, bad housing, poor health and other disadvantages, might turn to illegal means to achieve financial success (Merton, 1938 in Weijers, 2020). By providing support and improving youth's living conditions, these interventions or programme elements aim for a different kind of transformation than to remedy their individual attitudes or group behaviour, but break ground for a focus on transformation of the environment they live in. While this second cluster of interventions focuses on embedding youth in mainstream society, the last cluster of intervention strategies which we will now turn to, takes this a step further through programme elements that question the role of dominant society and that actively try to establish a reorganisation of young people's reality from the bottom up.

Cluster 3: a consequence of social exclusion and oppression
Finally, intervention strategies from the third cluster aim for a transformation of the environment by encouraging a social reorganisation where communities and youth can actively participate and contribute to the development of new arrangements with a more equal balance of power. Several interventions in this cluster question processes of social exclusion and encourage empowerment of marginalised youth and communities as a response to community violence. This includes strategies that enable equal participation and resist power imbalances within communities and society. For example in Mexico, the establishment of autonomous schools improves access to education for indigenous people with a culturally relevant curriculum that protects their culture, language and civil rights, but also aspires socio-political restructuring by creating awareness about injustices and violence caused by a history of marginalisation (Bajaj, 2015; De Buck, 2020). In these schools, students are encouraged to form alliances in order to create solutions to urgent community matters

such as community violence and politically advocate for their needs and rights (De Buck, 2020). These educational projects offer a solution to community violence by addressing social, economical and political conditions of inequality and oppression, based on the view that historical systematic exclusion and social injustice lies at the bottom of multiple forms of violence (Pino, 2008; Bajaj, 2015).

These intervention strategies reflect a view on community violence in line with theoretical approaches centred around the concept of 'cultural deviance'. Building on strain theory, cultural deviance theory argues that young people growing up in socioeconomic disadvantage seek alternative means to achieve success when the 'legitimate' route seems inaccessible to them (Cohen, 1955; Lilly, Cullen & Ball, 2019). In opposition to other theories, this approach argues that aggressive and violent behaviour does not stem from poor self-control or a lack of non-violent conflict resolution skills, but can be considered a response to earlier experiences of humiliation and exclusion (Pels, 2003). In this view, accumulated frustration due to negative circumstances and experiences that cause anger, rancour and feelings of injustice, such as poverty and unequal treatment by people in authority (e.g. police, teachers, employers) function as a main trigger for violence (Pels, 2003; Agnew, 1992 in Weijers, 2020). Interventions and programme elements that advocate critical consciousness about social inequality and act for social change, such as the indigenous autonomous schools in Mexico and the Hermes programme in Colombia, try to counter community violence by addressing these triggers and challenging disempowering social structures. Instead of adapting youth's social norms to dominant society, intervention strategies in cluster 3 are aimed at cooperatively creating alternative paths of resistance to social inequality and a reorganisation of the social environment.

Some theoretical approaches related to both this third cluster as well as the second cluster ('socialisation of peer groups') emphasise that such feelings of social exclusion generate an oppositional subculture that rejects the dominant societal order and approves of aggression and law violation (Cohen, 1955; Ilan, 2015). This idea suggests that in some neighbourhoods a normative system facilitates the development of violence and crime into a social tradition passed on from generation to generation (Wolfgang & Ferracuti, 1967 in Kubrin, 2009). However, other lines of research demonstrate that despite culturally 'deviant' behaviour, the majority of delinquent youth do not reject mainstream society, but instead temporarily sideline the societal order (Pels, 2003; Weerman, 1998). Furthermore, it is argued that most residents of neighbourhoods with high levels of violence, instead of endorsing values and beliefs that are oppositional to dominant society, share conventional values and desire a crime-free community (Kornhauser, 1978 in Kubrin, 2009). However, trust among neighbours and social organisation is limited, which means that there is less collective efficacy to intervene and maintain order in the public interest (Lilly, Cullen & Ball, 2019; Kubrin, 2009; Sampson, Raudenbush & Earls, 1997). Furthermore, to be able to manoeuvre

in their neighbourhoods, residents must adopt a 'street code' which legitimises violence in certain situations and presents aggressive behaviour as a cultural script to gain respect and protection from victimisation (Anderson, 1999; Stewart & Simons, 2010). In these types of environments, joining a gang can become an appropriate means of mitigating the threat from armed offenders (Pitts, 2008; Decker and Van Winkle, 1996, in Ilan, 2015) as well as securing economic survival (Padilla, 1992; Sanchez-Jankowski, 1991, in Ilan, 2015).

Here we notice that cluster 2 and 3 and their view on the roots of violence are not easily distinguished and overlap to some extent. However the main focus of the strategy they present as a solution differs. While strategies in cluster 2 aim for socialisation of youth into mainstream society, strategies in cluster 3 present a critical analysis of precisely that dominant society's role and its social structures in the roots of community violence. Some intervention strategies are directed at addressing issues of exclusion and disempowering processes at the societal level, while others aim to transform social processes at a neighbourhood level. Examples are programmes for community building that aim for stronger ties among neighbourhood residents and collective action to advocate for and address community needs, including those related to safety improvement and violence reduction. In our review we found only one such an example through a grey literature search, in the initiative 'Why are we so angry?'. This programme aims to create a safer neighbourhood through community meetings where residents share experiences, build trust and work towards a collective response to violence (Abdi, 2021). Such a bottom-up approach reflects a view on transformation that encourages dialogue and the active participation of community residents to create new arrangements and reorganise social reality.

3.5 Distinct perspectives on youth and communities

These three clusters of intervention strategies and their various underlying theoretical orientations to the roots of violence also have an impact on the selected approach towards young people and the communities they live in. For one part, this seems related to the way community violence is characterised and how communities that experience high levels of violence are perceived. Some interventions seem to consider community violence as an 'outside threat' that youth and communities have to guard themselves against, such as in the case of stress reduction programmes and other interventions from a psychosocial health perspective that teach young people coping strategies in response to violent environments. These interventions seem to approach their participants as victims of community violence who benefit from effective strategies to reduce the negative impact of exposure to violence. Such a perspective that puts focus on victimhood of youth is solidly grounded in the literature on community violence that, when defining the phenomenon centralises victimisation and differentiates between experiencing and witnessing violence. Contrastingly, other interventions take an approach towards young people as offenders. They consider

community violence as a problem coming from 'within', a social problem caused by particular youth and communities and their antisocial patterns of behaviour.

A one-sided focus on either victims or offenders seems to overlook the fact that young people are often both, known as the victim-offender overlap (Berg, Stewart, Schreck & Simons, 2012). This phenomenon has been explained by individual characteristics such as increased risk-taking and a lack of self-control (Gottfredson & Hirschi, 1990), but has also been related to street cultural practices and other neighbourhood processes (Berg et al., 2012). The victim-offender overlap has proven stronger in neighbourhoods with a street cultural orientation, that legitimises violence to resolve interpersonal disputes (Berg et al., 2012). In a neighbourhood context where residents believe that a reputation for violence may reduce their risk of victimisation (Anderson, 1999; Stewart & Simons, 2010), susceptibility to violent victimisation as well as violent offending may indeed actually increase (Berg et al., 2012; Burgason, Thomas, Berthelot & Burkey, 2014). Considering community violence either as an 'outside threat' or an 'inside restraint' therefore seems to disregard the intricate social dynamics, because roles of perpetrators, victims and witnesses are alternated and embedded in the same social space (Das & Kleinman, 2000). Furthermore, a dichotomy between the perception of youth and communities as either victims or offenders tends to reduce community violence to a deficit of individuals and communities, overlooking the importance of social, economical and political conditions at the macro level (Pino, 2008).

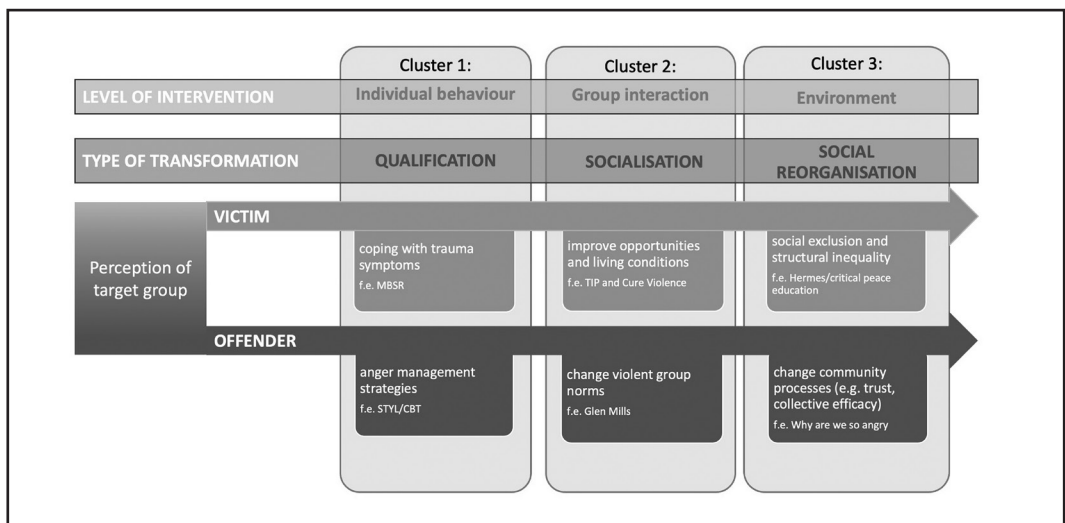**Figure 3**
Intervention strategies with a perception of the target group as victim or offender, organised in three clusters: (1) Qualification of individual youth, (2) Socialisation of peer groups and (3) Social reorganisation of the environment

Several interventions do recognise the complex dynamic of community violence involving competing influences, codes and positions (victim, offender, witness). However, this acknowledgement does not always translate to a matching methodology. In the end, interventions usually choose one main focus, instead of combining multiple approaches in this respect. For example, several offender-oriented programmes do include elements of care, but with the aim to cease or reduce perpetration. These choices for particular strategies are displayed in Figure 3, organised in the three clusters of interventions. Each cluster contains strategies that focus on their target group as victims (e.g. qualifying youth with coping strategies for trauma symptoms in cluster 1, or addressing structural inequality in cluster 3), and strategies that perceive them as offenders, (e.g. teaching anger management strategies in cluster 1 or changing violent group norms in cluster 2). The overview in Figure 3 again underlines that only the third cluster of intervention strategies specifically address systemic aspects of community violence by intervening in social processes and structures, focussed on systemic change in communities (e.g. trust, collective efficacy) or at the societal level (e.g. alliances to address social inequality).

3.6 Types of community involvement

Separate from the division in the three clusters of intervention strategies, another important distinction between interventions is the way in which communities are involved. A recent meta-review to evaluate interventions directed at community violence, has shown that active engagement and partnership with critical stakeholders is a main condition for effectiveness (Abt & Winship, 2016). However, we identified a wide variety between interventions in the type and degree of community involvement they aspired (Figure 4). Independent from the earlier distinguished clusters, we observed four types of community involvement, based on a categorisation developed by McLeroy and colleagues (2003).

Firstly, several interventions in all three clusters work with communities as a 'setting': for example by implementing their interventions in prioritised neighbourhoods with high levels of violence (f.e. MBSR, TIP and 'Why are we so angry'). Some of these and other interventions also consider communities as a 'target' of change, with the goal to impact community indicators. Remarkably, in our review of the literature we rarely encountered programmes that primarily target the community environment. Several programmes incorporate such elements as a supplement, like the TIP programme that organises restorative community actions (e.g. painting murals, sowing plants) with participant youth, intended to contribute to their behavioural change and their connection to the community (Gutierrez-Martinez, Dario-Valencia & Santaella-Tenorio, 2020). Likewise, the Cure Violence strategy includes public education campaigns such as vigils and marches to change community attitudes towards violence (Butts et al., 2015). However, both programmes are primarily aimed at changing social norms and group interaction among youth instead of changing the

community environment. An interesting exception is the earlier described initiative 'Why are we so angry?' that specifically targets community indicators and aims to establish trust, shared norms and collective action among neighbours (Abdi, 2021).

A third type of community involvement particularly intends to promote ownership and participation and considers the community a 'resource'. We found several interventions from all three clusters that mobilised communities as a resource (see Table 1). However, the degree to which community members and in particular youth are actively involved varied substantially. In our review we distinguished between programmes that hire staff from the community and aspire collaboration with community organisations (f.e. STYL in cluster 1, Cure Violence in cluster 2, and Abrindo Espaços in cluster 3) and programmes where community members actively contribute to the design, implementation and evaluation of the intervention (f.e. BBMI in cluster 1, Olweus in cluster 2 and Hermes in cluster 3).[5] Some initiatives actually design a methodology in cooperation with community members, directed at a specified collective purpose.
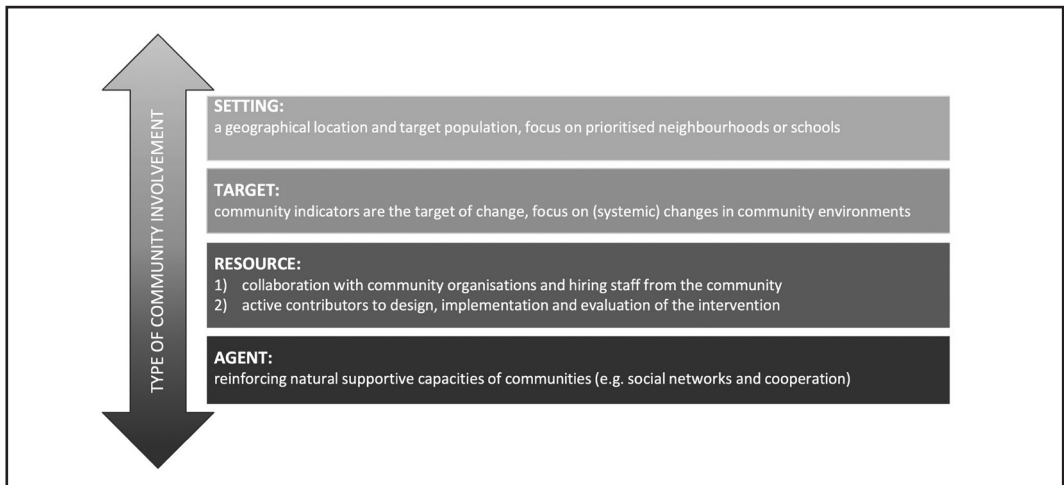
Figure 4

Four types of community involvement: as setting, target, resource or agent

Other interventions organise meetings with community representatives to discuss 'off the shelf' options and jointly decide which programme would best suit the particular context. However, this type of community involvement does not necessarily mean that youth are also invited to participate in that process. In our review we found only a few interventions where young people actively participated in programme development and implementation, for example as facilitators or by providing input on how to tailor the programme to the local

---

5   See Table 1 (Appendices, p. 189) for further information about the intervention programmes.

context. Hermes was the only programme we identified that particularly aimed to engage gang-involved youth in the design process to include their perspective. In most studies youth participation was not addressed and we could not determine whether they were consulted or otherwise involved.

Finally, McLeroy and colleagues (2003) distinguish a fourth type of community involvement when communities are taken as an 'agent' by identifying and strengthening 'naturally occurring units of solution' (p. 530), for example through encouraging formal and informal social networks and cooperation between initiatives. Remarkably, the autonomous indigenous schools were the only interventions that prioritised such efforts as their main objective. While we did not find clear connections between the categorisation in clusters and other types of community involvement, only interventions in cluster 3 did involve communities as an agent.

In several intervention programmes, community involvement was aspired in theory but not secured in practice. For example in the case of Cure Violence, in most intervention sites the intended collaboration with community organisations was not sufficiently reached, either due to an omission to attempt or a lack of community leaders willing to be involved in the programme (Butts et al., 2015; Fox, Katz, Choate & Hedberg, 2015; Wilson & Chermak, 2011). Earlier research has shown that high rates of violent crime increase levels of fear, which contributes to decreased social interaction and social control (Bellair, 2000; Liska & Warner, 1991), weaker trust in neighbours and reduced membership of community organisations (Perlman, 2010; Kubrin, 2009; Sampson, Raudenbush & Earls, 1997). This presents substantial obstacles to community involvement in programmes directed at community violence. For example, deterrence interventions that have been effective in contexts where strong partnerships between law enforcement, service providers and community representatives were built, have encountered difficulties in contexts where organised criminal groups were larger and more dangerous, because fear and mistrust between parties obstructed the opportunities for effective implementation (Abt & Winship, 2016).

3.7 Indications of effectiveness

Now that we have established an overview of the existing educational interventions directed at community violence, an important question that remains is if there are any indications of their effectiveness. To which extent do the intervention strategies in the three distinguished clusters provide a solution for community violence? While investigating intervention effects is not an explicit goal of this review study, we located a number of meta-reviews and meta-analyses that provide some relevant indications (Abt & Winship, 2016; Ali-Saleh Darawshy et al., 2020; Voisin & Berringer, 2015). Furthermore, all 26 intervention programmes that we found did report to some extent about their results (see Table 1), and although our record of the literature is by no means exhaustive and these findings are therefore not representative nor conclusive, they do present several interesting indications to consider.

One prominent result repeated in evaluations of multiple individual-oriented strategies from the first intervention cluster, is the value of cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT). Interventions with a CBT-component focussed on youth as victims have established positive results for reduction of anxiety, depression and PTSD symptoms (Ali-Saleh Darawshy et al., 2020; Voisin & Berringer, 2015), and CBT interventions focussed on youth as offenders have demonstrated a significant impact on reducing aggressive behaviour and preventing recidivism (Abt & Winship, 2016; Voisin & Berringer, 2015). In line with their strategy for transformation on an individual level, their effectiveness has been established solely in relation to behavioural and psychological outcomes for individual participants (e.g. reduced antisocial behaviour or internalising symptoms) and potential effects on the interpersonal or community level have not been measured. Furthermore, CBT-components proved particularly effective in combination with services that improved participants opportunities and living conditions, such as vocational training and cash grants to stimulate self-employment (Abt & Winship, 2016; Blattman et al., 2015). These type of services are also part of intervention strategies from cluster 2, such as programmes directed at specific (groups of) violent offenders with a coordinated response from law enforcement, social services and community stakeholders. Such focussed deterrence programmes have also established quite some evidence for their effectiveness (Abt & Winship, 2016), measured predominantly at the neighbourhood level through a reduction of gun violence and homicide rates among gangs (Papachristos & Kirk, 2015; Braga & Weisburd, 2012). An example is the frequently investigated programme Cure Violence that has shown mixed results, ranging from neighbourhoods with a 56% decline in homicides to no effects or in one case even an increase in violent events (Butts et al., 2015; Wilson & Chermak, 2011). However, without an ethnographic and qualitative component researchers could not interpret why the findings varied (Butts et al., 2015). Moreover, reduced homicide and assault rates might be an indicator for effectiveness, but many other relevant dimensions related to community violence have not been evaluated. Few evaluation studies located in our review included community parameters such as collective efficacy, sense of safety and neighbourhood satisfaction, while these might provide more insight in the potential impact of interventions at the community level. Furthermore, while many interventions in cluster 2 are directed at changing group norms and encouraging socialisation, only a few studies include outcome measures at the interpersonal level, such as positive peer interaction and student-teacher relations. Both indicators are included in the evaluation of the Olweus anti-bullying programme, but unfortunately the intervention had limited impact on this area, despite significant effects on student's individual behaviour across various subtypes of aggression and victimisation (Sullivan, Farrell, Sutherland, Behrhorst, Garthe & Greene, 2021).

In the third cluster of interventions directed at social reorganisation we retrieved fewer examples of intervention programmes and not all of them were evaluated. However, the

Hermes programme for peace education has multiple evaluation studies that demonstrated positive results for individual students and teachers, their social relations and the surrounding communities (Pinzon-Salcedo & Torres-Cuello, 2018; Marciales Mogollón & Vega Rivera, 2019). Indicators for school climate improved, such as student-teacher relations and the rate of students who feel at home at school (Marciales Mogollón & Vega Rivera, 2019). However, while school directors found that conflict management in their schools had improved, other measures for potential effects at the institutional level were not included (Pinzon-Salcedo & Torres-Cuello, 2018).

Overall, it has been proven difficult to come to coherent conclusions about the value of interventions directed at community violence. Firstly, corresponding with the variety of interventions we located in this review and the types of transformation they aspire, the outcome measures for effectiveness used in evaluation studies are diversified. From behavioural and psychological outcomes for individual participants (e.g. antisocial or internalising behaviour), to interpersonal indicators (e.g. student-teacher relations or peer interaction) and effects at neighbourhood level (e.g. gun violence or homicide rates). This variation complicates the comparison between interventions and makes it difficult to assess their value as an effective response to community violence. Secondly, many interventions demonstrated mixed and inconclusive results, indicating that their effectiveness in a particular neighbourhood or context is no guarantee for success when implementing the intervention elsewhere. Therefore, research with a multi-sited approach that includes ethnographic components, survey of community parameters and an in-depth qualitative examination of the change process could contribute to a better understanding of what works best in which context.

4. Conclusion and discussion

Based on our analysis of the literature and the interventions we located in this review, we have established a taxonomy that offers insight in current educational responses to community violence and their distinguishing perspectives, objectives and strategies. This taxonomy, presented in Table 1, is not meant as a classification of interventions into mutual exclusive categories, but rather as a practical overview that brings segregated perspectives from various academic disciplines together and demonstrates which choices are made in the design, implementation and evaluation of interventions. What type of transformation do they aspire and at which level do they intervene? What is their perception of youth and to which degree do they involve the community? And how do they measure the outcomes of their strategy? Table 1 presents an overview of our analysis of these elements for the 26 intervention programmes we identified in our review of the literature. Since we were particularly interested

in strategies for transformation, interventions directed at the containment of violence by means of repressive and punitive strategies, are not included in the overview.

Based on our integrative review and analysis of the literature, we would like to make two different contributions. Firstly, the taxonomy presented in Table 1, although by no means exhaustive, prominently offers a contribution relevant for policy and practice related to the development of policies and intervention strategies in response to community violence. Secondly, the results of our review offer a contribution relevant for scholarship, which concerns related implications for how community violence is conceptualised in the scientific literature. In the following we will discuss five important considerations that policy makers, practitioners and researchers should take into account when constructing educational responses towards community violence.

First, our analysis has demonstrated that the intervention strategies reflect choices for a particular type of solution which, when carefully examined, reveal theoretical orientations towards the roots of community violence. These orientations not seldomly remain implicit assumptions, while in the selection of an intervention strategy it could be useful for practitioners and policy makers to consider which orientation matches well with their analysis of the local situation and which related strategies tune in with their perspective on community violence in the particular context. Furthermore, although the interaction between various factors is generally accepted in the research on causes, consequences and solutions for community violence, in the design and implementation of interventions there is a considerable risk of favouring one element above the other. As we found in our analysis, even interventions that combine multiple strategies usually single out one main focus regarding the dimensions in the taxonomy as presented above. They centralise a main type of transformation, a main level of intervention and perceive youth principally as either victims or offenders. Targeting one element of the problem exclusively is problematic because, as illustrated by its definition, community violence is an intricate and diffuse phenomenon with many angles and aspects which may require a combination of strategies. Earlier reviews also suggested that the chronicity and pervasiveness of community violence calls for a strategy that builds on multiple interventions that address the many levels through which it develops and affects youth and communities (Fowler et al., 2009; Abt & Winship, 2016).

Second, while all types of transformation can be potentially valuable to counter community violence, they are not equally represented. Like Biesta (2012) puts forward in his analysis of the three major functions of education, the educational curriculum currently prioritises qualification and socialisation. He argues that this selective focus reflects the value society attributes to learning outcomes, academic achievement and good citizenship compared to empowerment, agency and resistance. In our analysis of interventions directed at community violence, we identified a similar concentration of programme elements that intend qualification and socialisation, with the risk that adaptation to the environment or

dominant society becomes the central aim and that transformation of that environment and the elements or structures in it that sustain violence receive a marginal position. This aligns with recent work of Kolluri and Tichavakunda (2023) that demonstrates the general emphasis in educational practice on individualistic qualification at the expense of structural change, even in counter-deficit oriented approaches. We argue that intervention strategies aimed at social reorganisation of the environment, allowing for a participative and dialogical process to re-create the world, should not be overlooked and deserve a more prominent place in the design and evaluation of interventions to counter community violence. Since we retrieved few evaluations of intervention programmes directed at social reorganisation we particularly call on researchers to fill this gap. Furthermore, despite the fact that the concept of community violence explicitly refers to the *community* context, a large share of the interventions we identified in our review were primarily intervening on the individual level. Although there is a strong evidence base for the effectiveness of these interventions in transforming individual behaviour, the question remains whether they suffice to provide a long-term solution for community violence. Earlier research also underlined that in particular in the psychosocial health domain, interventions for youth implemented in response to community violence mostly have been developed to address either mass violence or family violence and sexual abuse, while few interventions specifically target community violence (Voisin & Berringer, 2015). Considering the environmentally pervasive character of community violence, an individualised approach that aims to 'remedy' assumed deficiencies in marginalised youth and communities and fails to address deficiencies of social, economic and political structures involved, will not provide an adequate response.

A third consideration resulting from this imbalanced focus on qualification and socialisation, concerns the need for a critical debate on the conceptualisation of community violence. We argue that the predominance of individualised and interpersonal approaches among interventions to counter community violence is closely connected to how these interventions are based on conceptually one-sided theoretical orientations and models. While the scientific literature evidently points towards the intricate dynamics of community violence and the environmental and sociopolitical factors involved, this is hardly reflected in current definitions of community violence that generally emphasise individual and interpersonal frames of the concept. When systemic aspects such as processes of social exclusion and marginalisation are disregarded, intervention strategies are based on an incomplete conceptual framework that implicitly attributes responsibility for community violence to 'malfunctioning' individuals instead of deficient systems. In order to arrive at a holistic conceptual understanding of community violence, the historical and systemic violence that lies at the bottom of power imbalances within societies across the globe should be incorporated more prominently in theoretical orientations towards causes and solutions. We argue for critical analysis of social, economic and political structures that exclude,

disadvantage and discriminate groups of youth and communities and how they relate to community violence. Careful examination of these intricate dynamics will generate more insight in the significance of structural mechanisms, and more importantly, can contribute to the development of intervention strategies aimed at transforming disempowering systems. Herein lies an important assignment for research, to work towards agreement on a more comprehensive definition of community violence that includes systemic aspects and to expand counter-deficit approaches that consider structural oppressions and foster systemic change (Kolluri & Tichavakunda, 2023).

A fourth important element for both the field of practice and of research to consider, is the level of community involvement that varies substantially between interventions, even between programmes that are labelled as 'community-based'. While active engagement and partnership with communities is broadly acknowledged as an important condition for success, almost half of the interventions we located in our review work with communities as a setting for their programme but do not include them as an actual partner. Only a few programmes involve youth in the intervention design and implementation. Despite a vast amount of research from multiple academic disciplines, different theoretical orientations, and a variety of intervention strategies, the perspective of youth on the issue of community violence is infrequently explored. What are young people's ideas about the causes, consequences and solutions for community violence and how do they reflect on their role in a potential solution? These questions are currently mostly left unanswered in the various approaches we distinguished, and the active involvement of youth in finding answers and developing solutions could thus be considered a collective challenge. For researchers, this implies the construction of genuine and equal partnerships between academia and communities that correct power imbalances between stakeholders, also advocated for by Vetter and colleagues (2022) in this journal. Such partnerships need to move beyond mere formalities towards participatory processes that deliberately aim to transform power imbalances and give prominence to perspectives of non-dominant groups (Phillip, Bang & Jackson, 2018). These participatory processes might also be of fundamental importance for the development of strategies attuned to the local context.

Lastly, in line with the foregoing, we argue for more diversity in research sites and designs, using methodologies that examine how change is effected in different contexts. Earlier research has pointed towards the differential effects of interventions in various settings, even demonstrating examples of intervention strategies that caused harmful effects due to a mismatch with the local situation (Abt & Winship, 2016; Wilson & Chermak, 2011). For a better understanding of how interventions can reckon with the complex dynamics of community violence, in-depth qualitative examination of the change process could provide more insight in strategies that offer an adequate response in context-specific ways. Since the majority of intervention strategies are currently being developed, implemented and

evaluated in western contexts, scholars should expand the scope and enable the inclusion of non-western research sites and studies. The latter also implies critical reflection on measures of impact in order to move beyond the dominant paradigm of individual behavioural and psychological parameters and include non-dominant perspectives (Phillip, Bang & Jackson, 2018). This might also fill the knowledge gap of intervention effects at the environmental level, if studies pay more attention to the measurement of potential effects on communities, institutions and systems.

With the establishment of this overview, we hope to contribute to the initial impetus to an overall, encompassing perspective that integrates the diversity of insights that might help to counter community violence and work towards a peaceful environment. There is no 'one size, fits all' solution to the complex issue of community violence and in order to achieve significant change we might actually need a variety of approaches. As argued by Abt and Winship (2016), 'even the best interventions are not powerful enough to permanently reverse high rates of violence on their own' (p. 27). Their advice is a strategy that builds over multiple interventions. The findings of our review underline the importance of building on various types of transformation to counter the multi-facetted aspects of community violence, in particular those currently underexposed. This means strategies that exclusively focus on qualification of individual youth or socialisation of peer groups, while valuable, are not sufficient and interventions should adopt a broader approach that also addresses transformation of social systems.

In conclusion, the environmentally pervasive character of community violence, involving intricate social dynamics in neighbourhoods where victims and perpetrators are embedded in the same social space and feelings of injustice about poverty and social inequality cause a communal sense of mistrust and unsafety, calls for a context-based approach and a critical perspective. We argue that in order to provide a substantive solution, interventions should start from the local context and actively involve community members – young people in particular – in the analysis of the issue as well as in the design and implementation of a solution. Only if interventions empower communities and youth to participate in the development of new arrangements, underlying processes of social exclusion and the impact of community violence on social dynamics in neighbourhoods and wider society can be addressed substantially. In our view, the call for more agency should not be limited to educational intervention programmes, but should also be the basis for reliable and capable authorities that properly execute their fundamental tasks in providing a just social and security system. This does not only involve consistent and fair police action and ensuring the right to a fair judicial process, but also means providing protection against unlawful and discriminatory treatment by government bodies and eradicating other forms of systemic violence. A sustainable solution for community violence, needs a response that eliminates social, economical and political conditions of inequality and oppression (Pino, 2008; Bajaj,

2015). To conclude with Freire (2014, 2018), in dialogue between perspectives and strategies and between people in 'praxis', we might encounter precisely the collective experience that offers inspiration to work towards the 'viable unprecedented' that earlier might have seemed impossible and to re-create our environment.

Chapter 3
School educators' perspectives

Voicing versus silencing: education for peace in contexts of violence

Abstract

While most curricula addressing violence and peace are developed in privileged contexts, this paper reconsiders existing approaches to peace education from the perspective of communities affected by high levels of violence. In-depth analysis of the educational goals and practices of teachers in Brazilian slums demonstrates how they construct different levels of resistance to violence despite contextual restrictions. Teachers combined a restrictive approach with an ethic of care to create peaceful alternatives, while making use of their community position. The analyses underline the transformational potential of educational environments, while acknowledging the intricate dynamics of violence that narrow opportunities for change. Correspondingly, the paper considers how a critical understanding of the community context can inform peace educational programmes that aim for transformation.

Key words:

This Chapter was published as:

Author contributions:

AvD and MdH designed the study. AvD conducted the data collection, the data analyses and wrote the article. MdH and MdW contributed to the analyses and supervised and edited the writing of the article.

1. Introduction

Over the past decades, children's exposure to a violent environment and the harmful impact on their wellbeing and development has generated deep concern around the globe and various reports have stressed the need for an effective response (WHO, 2014, UNICEF, 2016, UNESCO, 2017). Consequently, violence prevention and peace building have become an increasingly pressing issue in education (UNESCO, 2017). However, despite the reasonable body of knowledge on education in violent neighbourhoods, curricula addressing issues of violence and peace are being developed predominantly in 'elite' contexts that generally keep a large distance from violence (Bajaj, 2015). This might limit possibilities to apply such programmes in contexts where they are most needed. In this paper we therefore intend to contribute to the existing perspectives on education for peace, by investigating educational practices in community preschools located in the violent context of Brazilian slums. We document the goals and practices of educators who both live and teach in these neighbourhoods and analyse how they formulate an educational response to violence. Finally, we consider how these responses provide input for an alternative paradigm to peace education that is born from resistance to violence. Based on Abowitz's (2000) revision of resistance theory, we combine insights from (critical) peace education and social dynamics of violence to outline a community-informed approach to peace education. These various perspectives function as building blocks for such a context-based paradigm in order to reveal subtle ways of resistance in the risky context of communities affected by high levels of violence.

1.1 A community-informed perspective on resistance to violence

The impact of a violent neighbourhood context on child development has been well documented, demonstrating negative behavioural and emotional outcomes, including aggression, gang involvement and post-traumatic stress disorder (Overstreet, 2000). In search of solutions, evidence on the role of supportive school environments in buffering negative community processes and fostering resilience in youth affected by violence is increasing (Gaias, 2018; Yablon, 2015; Bradshaw et al., 2014; O'Donnell et al., 2011). While educational programmes for improving school climate and peace building have been globally accepted as helpful in providing safe learning environments (UNESCO, 2017), to our knowledge, the social dynamics in communities affected by violence and the contextual obstacles that might interfere with their translation into practice are often overlooked. Whereas community engagement might improve educational efforts in conflict-affected environments (Global Coalition to Protect Education from Attack, 2014) and is of considerable significance for establishing school safety (UNESCO, 2017). Before considering educational approaches to address issues of violence and peace in schools, we therefore first explore the topic from a community perspective.

Exposure to high rates of violence has far-reaching consequences for community life. In her ethnographic work on Brazilian *favela*s, Perlman (2010) describes the escalation in gang-related violence and its devastating impact on the communities under study. In addition to the numerous effects on individuals and families, Perlman explores how violence erodes community life. The unpredictability of violent outbursts means the loss of public space as an area for social activities. Her findings show that since the upsurge of gang violence, incurred by the drug trade, community cohesion has hampered. This is reflected in decreased social interaction, weaker trust in neighbours and reduced membership of community organisations.

Similarly, Das and colleagues (2000) consider the ways in which violence shapes people's everyday life. They argue that violence produces intricate social dynamics, in particular when perpetrators, victims and witnesses are all embedded in the same social space. Das and Kleinman (2000) describe how a 'dominant ecology of fear' (p. 11) inhibits agency, restricts possibilities to actively resist violence, and virtually dictates community life. For example, in violent neighbourhoods in the US, high levels of fear – induced by high rates of violent crime – have been found to constrain social interaction and the willingness to engage in informal social control, thereby undermining solidarity and a sense of unity among residents (Liska & Warner, 1991; Bellair, 2000). Liska and Warner (1991) argue that street violence reduces most social interaction to private places, because people choose to stay at home and withdraw from public social life to avoid victimisation. Although this coping mechanism might be considered destructive for community cohesion, their analysis demonstrates that narrowing routine daily activities to the home environment, indeed is an effective strategy to reduce the risk of falling victim to violence because people remain in the relatively secured space of their homes.

Despite these apparent limitations, people in violent environments might enact various forms of resistance beneath the surface. In absence of possibilities to actively resist violence, refusing to participate in violent events and other acts of avoidance might be considered a direct expression of disapproval (Spencer, 2000; Penglase, 2014). For example, in the violent context of *favela*s risks are managed through 'social tactics' to create 'temporary spaces of autonomy' without challenging the power system (Penglase, 2014). Penglase (2014) argues that for *favela* residents, living with insecurity in a context that is beyond their control means knowing how to evade risks and obstacles in their daily lives. For example, by deliberately not taking sides and feigning ignorance about crime to achieve longer-term survival.

A useful conceptual framework to interpret such coping practices as expressions of opposition, is offered by Abowitz's (2000) revision of resistance theory. Applying Dewey's modes of inquiry, she distinguishes between interactionist and transactionalist understandings of resistance, characterising the first as acts of *opposition* in direct response

to oppression, and the latter as acts of *resistance* referring to a more complex social dynamic, modifying social positions of all parties involved. Spencer's (2000) and Penglase's (2014) analyses offer examples of how community practices move beyond the level of merely coping towards interactionist expressions of opposition, focused on the rejection of violence by learning how to navigate a violent context without becoming directly involved in it. A transactionalist approach, however, focuses on the transformative character of acts of resistance, aiming to create changes in the systemic context. While resistance theory in education focuses on student opposition to a dominant school culture, Abowitz's revision might also offer a framework to analyse different levels of opposition and resistance to violence, and how these are constructed in educational spaces.

1.2 Teaching for transformation through an ethic of care

School policies in violent neighbourhoods often focus on repressive measures such as metal detectors, police patrol and 'zero tolerance' (e.g. suspension, expulsion) to cope with violence (Noguera, 1995; UNESCO, 2017). Following Abowitz's (2000) framework, such measures might be considered acts of opposition to violence, aimed to control the situation yet not necessarily to create change. Several scholars criticise this exclusive focus on maintaining order and control , and argue that such coercive strategies cultivate violence and oppression (Williams, 2017; Noguera, 1995). They advocate for a more dialogic approach, involving a higher level of student participation, enhanced teachers' understanding of their pupils' neighbourhood context, and caring relationships between teachers and pupils. These are basic elements of an 'ethic of care' , invested in disrupting the cycle of violence by creating caring communities in schools. Central to this concept is that teachers model caring as 'a moral way of life' towards their students, based on affective connections between all people involved in the school environment, marked by compassion, tolerance and empathy (Noddings, 2012). Such a perspective ties in with the ideas of Freire (2018), who emphasised the importance of personal engagement between teachers and students and considered the commitment to work collectively towards a more just society as an act of love. According to Freire (2018), re-creating the world happens through dialogue, through an encounter between people in 'praxis', in action-reflection. Dialogue, as a transformative practice, he argues, cannot exist without love, it is founded on the commitment to others and to improving their situation. This caring aspect of teaching often plays a central role in both the personal and the professional identity of teachers, shaped by their involvement in local community contexts and closely linked to their practices in the classroom (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009; Lasky, 2005).

While repressive measures directed at the containment of violence in schools can be interpreted as coping practices or acts of opposition that might even reproduce patterns of violence, due to its transformative ambitions an ethic of care might be considered an

act of resistance to violence by modelling peaceful patterns. The ethic of care can therefore be considered one of the manifold approaches in peace education, that despite its various manifestations is unified in the aim to teach 'nonviolence, love, compassion and reverence for all life' (Harris & Morrison, 2013, p.11). Besides providing knowledge about war and peace, overall peace education programmes teach conflict resolution skills including listening, cooperation and reflection to promote peace, social justice and human rights and as such contribute to establishing caring relations in communities (Bajaj, 2015; Noddings, 2008).

1.3 Educating for peace in violent contexts

Founded on Freire's principle of inspiring 'critical optimism', peace education strives to enable students to become agents of social change (Bajaj, 2008). However, Freire (2014) cautioned for a counterproductive cultivation of hope without a critical understanding of the social conditions and contextual obstacles that inhibit agency and narrow possibilities for change. When peace education is disconnected from social reality, it might result in the dissemination of 'lovely principles that stand little chance of translation into practice' (Noddings, 2008, p. 90). Since most programmes for peace education are being developed in privileged contexts (Bajaj, 2015), they might need to be reconfigured for effective application in settings of inequality, power imbalances and conflicting interests, in particular in situations of protracted violence. Studies investigating peace education in (post)conflict areas also demonstrate the need for adaptations in order to create durable transformations in communities (Clarke-Habibi, 2005; Bar-Tal & Rosen, 2009).

Considering the complex dynamics of violence and its impact on community life as described above, educating for peace in a violent context might however be full of ambiguities that should be taken into account. Circumstances in environments characterised by hostility and mistrust, might very well impose constraints on the opportunities to address issues of violence and peace. Das and Kleinman (2000) argue that violence in everyday life creates an interchange between emotional conditions and moral processes which produces and transforms both people's individual values and communal meaning-making. They propose that when violence is part of day-to-day living, it becomes central to the moral order and orients norms and normality. This might have important implications for peace education in these contexts, which presents caring and compassion as an alternative moral order.

Building on resistance theory (Abowitz, 2000), combined with the transformative perspective of peace education (Noddings, 2008; Bajaj, 2015), we argue that to design and implement peace educational programmes in violent contexts effectively, a critical understanding of the community context is vital. This paper aims to contribute to the existing knowledge on education for peace by exploring the perspectives of educators who both live and teach in Brazilian slums. Starting from their actual reality, we investigate teachers' perceptions of violence in their communities in relation to their educational goals

and practices. While recognising Das and colleagues' (2000) distinct dynamics of violence to analyse the contextual limitations for addressing issues of violence and peace, we use Abowitz's framework to consider the transformative potential of educational environments in a violent neighbourhood context. To reach this goal, our study was guided by three main research questions: 1) what is the educators' perception of the (violent) neighbourhood context?, 2) how do educators look at the school's mission and how is this related to their perception of the school-neighbourhood relationship?, and 3) what is the educational practice of in-school educators in response to violence in the neighbourhood context?

2. Study setting

Data collection took place in three community preschools located in slum areas of Salvador, state capital of Bahia in north-eastern Brazil with a population of nearly three million people in 2016 (IBGE, 2016). Despite large improvements over the past decade, the metropolitan area of Salvador scores relatively low on educational outcomes (UNDP, 2013). In 2018 still 12.7 percent of the population above 25 was illiterate and 28.2 percent did not complete primary school (IBGE, 2018). Recommendations of the World Bank (2004) to improve the education system and reduce inequality levels in Brazil included continuing social assistance programmes linked to school attendance and enhanced access to preschool education for low-income families.

Many low-income families live in *favela*s, built on wasteland that was gradually urbanised and nowadays accommodates one third of Salvador's population; approximately one million people (Corso Pereira, 2008; IBGE, 2017). Throughout Brazil, favela residents formed local community cooperatives to work on practical solutions to urgent problems that the government failed to address properly, such as basic infrastructure and day care initiatives (Kramer, 2006; Almeida Cunha Filgueiras, 1994). The latter developed into a common phenomenon as crèches comunitárias, that initially served as nurseries but gradually focused more on educational experiences. Many developed into preschools – some partially funded by public resources – which function as educational environments with a particular mission to address community issues.

One such pressing issue is violence. Violent death rates in Brazil are similar to or even higher than rates in conflict-affected countries (Geneva Declaration on Armed Violence and Development, 2015). In 2017 Salvador had a total rate of 50.6 intentional violent deaths per 100,000 inhabitants, an increase compared to preceding years and significantly higher than the average rate for state capitals (FBSP, 2018). Violent offences and homicide in particular, occur most in the city's slum areas (Espinheira, 2001). Spatial analyses of homicides in Brazilian cities have demonstrated that homicide rates are two to three times higher in low-

income neighbourhoods, in particular those dominated by armed groups of drug traffickers (Barcellos & Zaluar, 2014; Costa & Lima, 2018; Santos et al., 2001). According to the Secretary of Public Security in Salvador approximately 70 percent of incidents involving excessive violence are related to rivalry between gangs or other drug related disputes (CNMP, 2013).

3. Method

Data for this study was collected by the first author during 11 months of ethnographic fieldwork in 2015 and 2016, which consisted of daily participation in three community preschools and several guest families, located in three different favelas of Salvador. Although the full data set includes various types of ethnographic data (e.g. field notes, photographs, recordings), in this paper we focus on semi-structured interviews with school staff conducted at the preschools. Examples of interview questions are listed in Table 1. Informed consent was obtained in all cases and the educators were informed about the study's purpose and their right to quit at any time.

Table 1. *Examples of interview questions*

PART A – Demographics
• Where were you born and where did you grow up?
• What is your family composition? Who do you share a house with?
PART B – Educational goals and practices
• What do you find important in the children's education?
• I would like to learn more about the values educators transmit to the children. With values I mean moral values, or fundamental ideals about what is important in life that give direction to people's behaviour. Which values do you find important in the children's education? Which values do you think are not important or wrong and would you prefer not to transmit to the children?
• Why do you find this value important/not important or wrong? Can you give an example of how you teach this value to the children? Do the children learn this value at other places than at school?
• What rules are there at school?
• Which type of behaviour do you try to encourage/discourage in the children? How do you encourage/discourage this behaviour?

PART C – Perception of home environment
• What are the similarities/differences between the school and the home environment?
• Do you talk with the parents about the education of the children?
• Do you visit the families at home?
PART D – Perception of neighbourhood environment
• How do you like living in this neighbourhood?
• What kind of behaviour do children learn in the streets?
• Which rules apply to the children in the streets?
• Which values in your opinion apply to the streets?
• Do you think the neighbourhood is a safe environment for the children? Why or why not?
• Does the presence of gangs in the streets affect the children in this neighbourhood? Does it impact the development of the children? If yes, in what way?
• Is the environment of the street different from the school environment? In what way?
• Is the environment of the street different from the home environment of the children? In what way?
• What kind of competences do educators need to educate children in this neighbourhood?

3.1 Participants

Interviewed school staff (n=26) were employed as coordinating staff (n=5), teachers (n=16) and teachers' aides (n=5). In the remainder of this paper we will refer to all participants as 'educators'. Despite the hierarchical distinction, they all had daily contact with pupils and their caregivers and played a significant role in the pupils' education, which was considered a team mission. Two of the three schools were founded by catholic churches.

The educators were between 21 and 60 years of age (mean=44) and varied in educational background from high school to postgraduate degree. The vast majority were women (n=23). Ten educators did not have children and the remaining sixteen had one to three children. Several educators raised their children as a single parent.

On average, the educators had been neighbourhood resident for over 30 years. Half of them were born and raised in the community (n=13), while others grew up in different slum areas of Salvador or in rural areas nearby, but generally had been living in the community for over 20 years. Five educators were currently living outside the schools' neighbourhood, adjacent to (n=1) or in other favelas (n=4). Because the educators lived inside their schools' neighbourhood or in similar areas, they had experienced its context from various perspectives (e.g. as a resident, a parent, a child and an in-school educator), providing them with an insider's view with multifarious perspectives on educational issues in their neighbourhood.

3.2 Procedure

All interviews were transcribed verbatim in Portuguese by the first author and four local research assistants. Transcripts were checked against the audio recordings for accuracy and entered into NVivo 11 for analysis. To ensure anonymity, (place-)names in transcript excerpts used in this paper are fictitious. A comprehensive process of thematic analysis was applied (Braun & Clarke, 2006), with the main analytical focus on the educators' perceptions of neighbourhood violence and their educational practices related to violence and peace. Themes addressed in participants' statements were identified and coded into categories. After analysis of seven interview transcripts a coding tree was developed and sequentially revised as succeeding transcripts were analysed. Themes were discussed among the three authors until consensus was established and were subsequently checked for consistency, distinctiveness and their validity in relation to the original dataset. Analysis of the interview data was directed at an improved understanding of the practical dilemmas involved in peace education in violent contexts and the opportunities for resistance to violence. Since the educators referred to the neighbourhood context whenever asked about their educational goals and practices, we conducted a three-step analysis, starting with the educators' perceptions of the neighbourhood environment, the family environment and the issue of violence. Secondly, their reflections on the school's mission and their educational goals in relation to the neighbourhood context are considered. As a final step, we show how the educators constructed an educational response to violence as a practical application of their mission. These three elements constituted the initial structure of the coding tree, further elaborated with subcategories and the connections between them as transcripts were thoroughly analysed. As an illustration of the coding tree, Table 2 displays an overview of the subcategories belonging to the educator's perception of the neighbourhood and family environment.

Table 2. *Overview main theme 'Perception of neighbourhood and family environment' and subcategories ordered by number of references*

Perception of neighbourhood	Perception of family
Culture of Violence	Irresponsible
Link Between Family and Gangs	Unstructured
Gang Violence	Main Influencer
Gang Supremacy	No Control
Worry and Distress	Ignorant or Resistant to School Value
Increasing Violence	No Loving Care and Attention
Street Cultural Neighbourhood Values	Struggle Hardships

Guns	Opposite to School Environment
Teaching Street-Gang Life	Poverty
Cultura do Ficar	Violence
Quarrels and Enmity	Harsh and Authoritarian
Rivalry	
Attention and Recognition	
Play in the Streets	
Retribution	
Appreciation for School Efforts	
Easy Money	
No Play Area	
School Under Attack by Gang Culture	
Distrust	
Many (Unused) Opportunities	

4. Results

4.1 The educators' perceptions of the neighbourhood context

4.1.1 Widespread violence

All educators described the neighbourhood environment as increasingly violent. In the first place they related the issue of violence to drug trafficking gangs and their confrontations with the police and rival factions. The risk of children getting caught up in drug use or traffic was considered the most dire threat within the community.[6]

They mentioned that gang presence was omnipresent throughout the neighbourhood's streets and the homes of its residents. Two educators who worked in the same classroom described the inescapability of being confronted with gang life through familial connections:

> *Emanuela: Our neighbourhood is like that, so every house has a bit of it. Every home has a piece of it. And there's no way around it. Because when it's like that, there's a father who is [involved], there's a mother who is a [drug] user, and there you go.*
> *Lea: There's an uncle, there's a brother, there's a nephew*
> *Emanuela: There's always someone who ehr, is involved.*

---

6   Educators referred to both types of involvement in the drug scene interchangeably since users and traffickers are both entangled in gang activity. See Goldstein (2013) for an elaborate description of this issue.

Most educators referred to the environment of the streets, the family homes and the wider community interchangeably when talking about violence, and emphasised their interconnectedness. They described how in the streets children learn violent behaviour from older youth and adults, mostly through a process of observation and imitation. However, they also referred to conflict and fights in family homes and the code of aggression parents instruct their children in. Many educators described such a mode of interaction as a 'culture of violence' which they lamentably observed to be very common in the community. As Vânia, a coordinator and former teacher stated:

> *These mothers find this a normal attitude. Resolving things with aggression, with attacking and knocking about. Because they were raised like that. (...) I consider it a question of family, I believe it is passed on from family to family, right, a family culture. And not all of them have that concern: "Gosh, my mother did this to me, and so I am going to try and give the best to my child, I am going to do it different with my child", not all of them have that concern.*

Vânia perceived that within 'these' families aggression is the regular way of dealing with conflict, which is passed on from one generation to the other. Despite the distinction between mothers who continue the cycle and those who try to break it, most educators generally considered families, sometimes including their own, to be 'part of the problem' of violence in the community.

4.1.2 Disorganised families in a fearful community

Other aspects in the educators' neighbourhood descriptions were often interconnected to their perception of violence as dominating family and community life. For example, many educators spoke about the issue of 'disorganised families', referring to several characteristics of family life they considered problematic, such as single parenthood, a young age of conception and no structured daily schedule. Some educators associated such 'disorganisation' with gang involvement, since several of their pupils were growing up in broken families due to a parents' imprisonment or violent death. In general, many educators believed disorganised families failed to provide sufficient support and supervision to their children, which they subsequently related to children's aggressive misconduct and even gang participation.

Despite their disapproval of what they called their neighbourhood's cultura de violência, the educators also stressed that everyone was inevitably embroiled in it. This was most prominently exemplified by the sense of fear that violence created, affecting family life as well as extended community relations. They described how everyday risks of gun violence and gang recruitment caused great anxiety among residents, including themselves. This was clearly expressed by Joana:

> *Joana: You know what I observe? The children pick a biscuit, they take the biscuit and say it's a gun. It goes back to that same point: the environment they live in. Because they see this daily. The police, killing. Ehr, among <u>eles</u> right, one another, killing each other. And the children over there in the middle. It's mothers running [for cover], (...) even like this week, me and the director, we went here close by to the upper part[7], after some [pupils] from the project.*
> *Interviewer: Ah to visit them at home?*
> *Joana: Exactly. And we got scared by what we saw. And as you know, the majority is from here, from the school. Many of the parents were there that moment. (.)*
> *Interviewer: And why did you get scared?*
> *Joana: Police! Seizing, taking them, all with guns in their hands. And <u>eles</u> over there, praticando .You know. (.) It's complicated, right. Complicated. And so, they grow up seeing these things. What's the future of these children? Am I wrong? What's their future?*

The fear Joana talks about is also manifested in the veiled terms referring to gang activity, which are standard in the community. For example, *eles*, literally translated as 'them', is commonly used to refer to gangs and *praticar* (to practice) means committing crime[8]. Besides the fear it induced, Joana explained how the visual presence of guns in the neighbourhood affected her pupils' behaviour in school. Her anxiety was therefore also related to her pupil's future, which she faced with a sense of desperation due to the dominating presence of gangs.

4.2 The schools' mission in the neighbourhood

4.2.1 Safe haven in a danger zone

Against the backdrop of an unsafe neighbourhood context, educators stressed the need for schools that provide protection from the harmful experiences and risks children are exposed to. They explicitly aimed to create a loving, providing and most of all secure environment where the children could be care-free and actually be 'a child'. They perceived the outside world as tough, inappropriate for children and lacking personal attention and they wanted to establish a different world inside the school. Vânia underlined this purpose in the following excerpt:

> *So the teacher also needs to know how to interact with the child concerning this issue of affection, right, with care. (...) They need to be in a comfortable environment, sitting in a good chair. But it's even more important that they feel welcome, that they feel sheltered.*

---

7   This part of the neighbourhood, located right next to the school, accommodated the poorest families and was considered extremely dangerous.

8   See Penglase (2014) for an elaborate discussion of concealing language in *favelas*.

> *And so we, in a certain way it's part of our competence because often they do not have this with their parents out there. They find it here, but not with the people whose duty it actually is: at home.*

Vânia pointed out how the school functioned as a 'shelter' for the children by providing caring relations. Meanwhile she contrasted the school environment with the family environment. By emphasising the difference between them, the educators dissociated the school from the community. Such a figurative 'wall' – also materialised by high fences and iron gates – aimed to create a safe haven, closed off from the outside world.

4.2.2 The path towards a better future

Although the schools deliberately dissociated themselves from the neighbourhood, establishing a secluded safe zone, their objective was also to provide the community and its families with support. This is illustrated by Vânia:

> *We have documents stating our goals, but I think that the strongest is to take care of the families in need, trying to really free them from marginalidade[9]. Because this project is directed at the child of today becoming a citizen in the future and they will need to have the belief that they can make a difference in this world. So we try to make them reflect, participate, make them see and in the future go and have an effect in the community.*

In this fragment Vânia made explicit that the school – as one of the community organisation's projects – aimed to enable the families to move out of the margins of society. When reflecting on their institution's and personal goals, all educators focused on a better future for the children, which in their eyes meant finishing an education instead of getting involved in gangs and drugs. This aim was often mentioned before they were asked about the community context, indicating the central role it played in the schools' mission and demonstrating how educational goals were closely knit to the educators' perception of the community. This is exemplified by Norah's answer to an initial interview question:

> *Interviewer: And what is your goal with the children? Here at the preschool?*
> *Norah: Seeing the children grow up and having a better future. You know. Because the violence is so big. Especially here in our neighbourhood, here in the outskirts.*

---

[9] *Marginalidade* is a diffuse concept in Brazil, often used to refer to poverty and delinquency altogether. *O marginal* is a synonym for the criminal or outlaw. According to www.dicionarioinformal.com.br *marginalidade* means "those who live in the margins of society and do not respect laws".

> *Every day you see, many, there have been youth who attended this preschool, children, who already died because of as drogas[10]. (.) And we don't want that for them, right. So I beg God all the time to show them something better. That we can show them, can help them find another path.*

Besides expressing deep concern for her pupils, in this statement Norah also underlined the objective to guide them towards a better future, away from the violence. This mission was also visualised in a hallway poster, as shown in Figure 1.
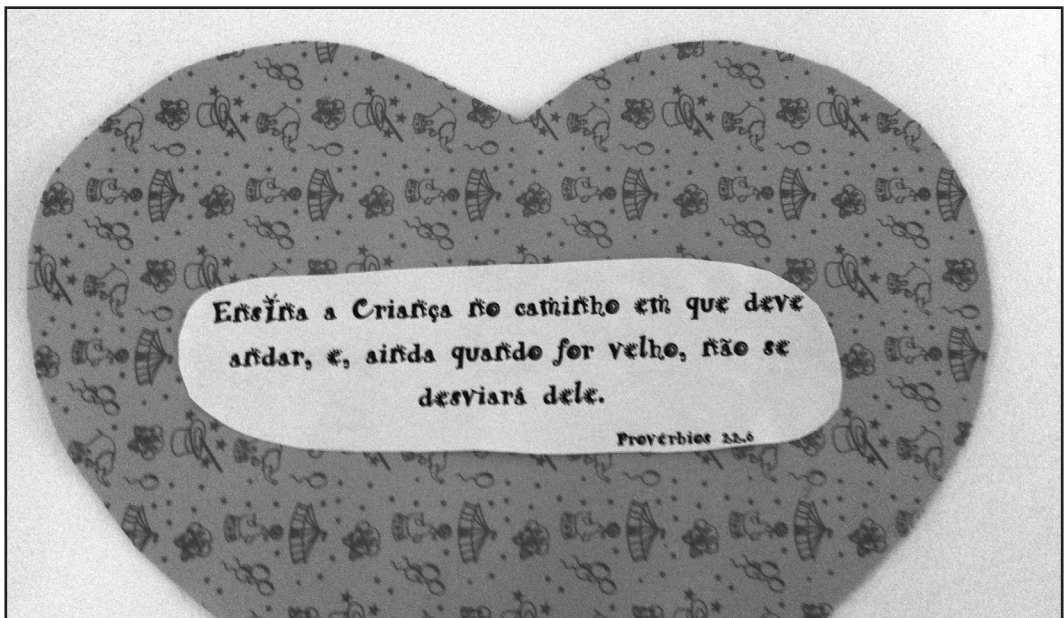
Figure 1. *A heart-shaped hallway poster, stating Proverbs 22:6:*
"Teach a child the path she should walk and even when she's old, she will not depart from it"

4.2.3 A culture of peace

The educators described this alternative path as a 'culture of peace'. When elaborating on their educational goals they highlighted a concept of love or respect, reflected in a set of interconnected values and a comprehensive mode of conduct they aimed to transmit: being kind and gentle, helpful and polite, empathetic and forgiving. Their ambition to form good citizens, who do not get involved in delinquency, was connected to their focus on these alternative moral values. Director Anselmo, stated his perspective as follows:

---

10   'As drogas' literally means 'the drugs', but it is also used to refer to the 'world' surrounding it: gang life, drug traffic and drug using.

> *At the start of the year we all gather to reflect on our aim, our mission. From there, we start our work. And we also speak about the values we want to pass on. The question of respect. Respect for the other. The responsibility, the engagement with the other. The question of taking care of the environment that we need to have. So it's more or less these basic principles. Not hurting the other. (...) [the objective] is to encourage a culture of peace. Say no to the violence and incite a culture of peace in the neighbourhood.*

Anselmo presented the effort to instil a culture of peace in the children as a counterweight to the violence in the neighbourhood. He explained that by passing on values of care and respect to the children, the school worked towards a more peaceful community environment. This was clearly considered a team effort, central to their collective mission. By presenting a different set of values in a secluded space, the in-school educators maintained their distance from the community, while simultaneously aiming to change the environment and therefore also engaging with it.

4.3 The educational response to a violent context

4.3.1 Care and order

The educators described many strategies to transmit a culture of peace to their pupils, such as songs and stories to teach them about right and wrong and explicitly modelling caring modes of interaction. An important everyday instrument were the *combinados* (classroom rules) that served as a guide to desired behaviour, such as helping each other, and undesired behaviour, such as fighting. Clarissa described how she dealt with aggression in her classroom:

> *We already live in a time in which everything is violent, lots of fighting, many deaths, and they act upon these situations (...) And so I am always telling them not to beat their classmates, that they should call on me, not hit back. (...) I also explain about the issue of the 'magic words', which are necessary. I explain that when we pass by and do not say 'good morning', 'good afternoon', this affects people. That a simple 'good morning' can at a certain moment even help the person that is passing by. We need to be polite to live together, because the world today is really tough, so if we do not pass on the love to them, they will grow up in a world surrounded by bad feelings.*

In this fragment Clarissa explicitly put forward the importance of advocating for thoughtfulness and amiability to compensate for the omnipresent violence, albeit through minor gestures like saying 'good morning'. While these 'magic words' might seem futile courtesies, many educators actually attached great importance to them as a powerful weapon in contesting violence in the neighbourhood.

The educators also stressed the importance of an orderly classroom and many *combinados* were directed at organisation, such as walking in line and cleaning up toys. Joana described why she found this important:

> *For me it has to be like this: no chaos (...) When it's circle time, wait at the side until the teacher has arranged the circle. When it's time to enter the circle, you can't get up all at once, it will turn into a mess. So the right word is organisation. Let's* <u>*organise*</u>*. Organisation is like this, you get up one by one, only when the teacher tells you to. If I did not call your name, stay put. And so they will learn to have organisation in their own lives.*

Like Joana, many educators believed that obeying a rather strict order and routine schedule was beneficial to the children, since it contributed to a predictable, calm and therefore secure and peaceful environment. Furthermore, Joana mentioned her pupils would adopt the order she imposed and would live by it in the future. The educators often contrasted the orderly and structured school environment which they considered important for creating peace, to disorganisation in the family environment, in their view an impediment to peace and harmony.

4.3.2 Voicing versus silencing

Establishing a peaceful environment was considered an arduous task, in particular since the issue of violence regularly entered the school walls in various forms. How the educators handled references to violence differed markedly according to circumstances. Children spoke relatively often about violence, for example during circle time. Taísa described how she responded to such situations:

> *Many [children], like for example this week, you saw that I let them talk, let them narrate and all, and it wasn't a very pleasant discourse, but we have to listen and accept it, right. And so I heard the story of "my dad beat up my mom, she took the scissors, the knife", and all that stuff. And so we have to impart to them that such a thing is not something I agree with, that it's not a good thing.*

While Taísa stressed that educators should demonstrate their disapproval of violent behaviour, she also underlined the importance of listening to the children and let them voice their stories about domestic violence, even while she considered these 'unpleasant'. However, most educators advocated for a stringent containment of such stories when involving referral to gangs. Besides accounts of killings or arrests, this also involved children's pretend play, impersonating gang members or staging police raids. Anselmo explained that prohibition of such play was purposely administered school policy in response to violence in the neighbourhood:

> *The culture of violence and drug trafficking is really developing. And it's affecting the children. So much that inside the preschool we don't accept any type of toy, neither swords nor guns, because they were brincando de arma[11] <u>all the time</u>. So we prohibited it and do not accept it.*

Banning this type of play was one element in a larger strategy of removing all references to the violent world outside the school walls. The educators explained that they aimed to make the children 'forget' about that part of their lives by creating an alternative, child-appropriate reality without swearing, accounts of gang disputes or any other expression associated with gang life or police violence.

This 'silencing' practice was thus directed at shielding the children from their neighbourhood reality, but for another part seemed linked to deliberately instructing them to keep quiet about gang-related issues. Two educators explained why they did not discuss these things with their pupils openly:

> *Emanuela: They come here already instructed: say nothing, do not talk about it, you know. And that's why we are like this (signs that hands are tied together). It's complicated.*
> *Lea: And you even should not know that much, because who knows too much...*
> *Emanuela: True. (laughs)*
> *Lea: That happens because of knowing too much.*
> *Interviewer: People prefer to?*
> *Lea: Keep quiet.*

Emanuela demonstrated that their hands were tied because of the 'see no evil, hear no evil and speak no evil' practice in the community. As Emanuela and Lea clarified – albeit with few words – such a strategy in fact had an important function, because 'knowing too much' could have severe consequences. Silencing of references to gang violence seemed a strategy for peace, without breaking the community 'rules'. However, these community rules also imposed significant restrictions at times, for example on arithmetic instruction, as Viola explained:

> *To only say the number three-, number three is a damned faction in the neighbourhood. And so you cannot talk about it. And so if you know about some news – they killed so-and-so (...) and he's of that faction and he came from I don't know where – they invented this, a war. That means, you cannot say the number three, because it's the others, they're from the other neighbourhood. (...) And so that's the thing, even when we're counting in class, this number three you have to say it softly. I feel scared.*

---

11   *Brincar de arma* was a broadly used verb by educators of all three schools to refer to pretend play involving guns.

Viola explained her restraint in speaking the number three out loud, because it referred to a rivalling gang. Using certain language or symbols because they were associated with particular factions or gang life in general was considered problematic. Since the educators were also community residents, despite the limitations these rules posed to their teachings they also knew – and like Viola often feared – the consequences if not abiding by them.

4.3.3 Starting points of transformation

Being a community member had the advantage of knowing how to navigate through the contextual obstacles and limitations, but meanwhile incurred additional difficulties in the establishment of a culture of peace. Some educators voiced the idea that they too had acquired 'inappropriate' or harmful practices that were difficult to erase. Clarissa expressed that she struggled to adjust the communication style she was raised in:

> *Myself, I grew up based on yelling and shouting, so much that today I have a louder voice because of it (laughs). I grew up in an environment of yelling, that's why I never learned and I think there should be agreement, a conversation between parent and child.*

Although Clarissa preferred a calm and dialogical communication style, she believed the argumentative style she 'inherited' affected the communication with her pupils. Many educators agreed that, because they were raised in the community, they were part of the practices they hoped to transform in the school. This was clearly stated by Vicki:

> *We try all the time to be a different [environment], although we also absorb much of the behaviour from [out] there. Because we have the moms inside the [school] space. And the teachers live <u>inside</u> the community. (...) And so we are in pursuit too, of trying to change ourselves in order to try to change these children (...). It's a daily struggle, so to say. We are working on this for it to change more and more. We cannot let the negative things win, right? Because we have a purpose here to do something important, something innovative that makes a change.*

Although Vicki underlined that effectuating change and remodelling themselves was a 'struggle', she also demonstrated determination in their collective purpose to innovate and transform community patterns of behaviour. This was exemplified with the educators' stance regarding parents who instruct their children to retaliate if they got mistreated by classmates. Although many educators explained this attitude as a way to protect their children, they were also frustrated about these parents undermining their efforts to create more peaceful interaction in the classroom. In their opinion, parents should instruct their children to turn to an adult supervisor. Emanuela reflected on these different ways of conflict resolution:

> *I think they order them [to retaliate] so that they can defend themselves, but that's not the way. To strike back, "Go and hit back so that you won't get hurt again". (...) But for us that's not the same anymore, here [at school] we don't have this type of treatment, we don't have this type of view.*

Emanuela showed understanding towards the parents' view on retaliation, but meanwhile contrasted their perspective with the educators' view which was 'not the same anymore' now that they were part of the school. Therefore, several educators believed the parents' perspective could alter as well. Joana gave a personal example of how she had changed her behaviour as a parent and how it inspired her to pass on her insights:

> *In my time, during my childhood, at the slightest provocation, I got smacked. (...) And I used to do the same thing with my kids. (...) Until that moment, when my sons (...) went to that school. And there, they gave these lectures, they were very important and they called my attention. Do you believe that after this lecture that I went to, I came home and I thought to myself: "my God, everything my kid does wrong, I go and beat him. I am not going to hit him anymore". (...) And so this school, it taught things that right now I am passing on to these families.*

Just like the lecture Joana referred to, the educators provided information and advice in parental meetings and in individual conversations with parents, hoping to transform parenting practices they considered harmful for their efforts to establish a culture of peace.

Community practices could thus be perceived as a threat to a safe and peaceful school environment, but could also offer opportunities to transform elements of violence. A widely used medium to do so, was reverting acts of aggression and stories about violence through theatre play and songs. These techniques did not only provide the educators with the opportunity to discuss themes like friendship and helpfulness and to convey peaceful modes of interaction, but also gave them instruments to creatively deal with expressions of violence entering the classroom. Clarissa explained this as follows:

> *We have to be creative teachers in the classroom and bring their reality to them in a different shape, you know. There are slang songs that we try to transform into calm songs. When they arrive in the morning "Miss! They killed that guy", we should be talking to them and revert the situation. It's a question of us being a creative teacher and making a change in their reality. We are no superheroes who can change everything, but change as much as possible. And it's hard. Because when we see that whole classroom shooting around, "tra tra tra", we need something that changes this straight away, and from that instant we respond, wake up, do something!*

When her pupils brought 'slang songs' that glamorise violence into her classroom, Clarissa used them as a starting point of transformation by introducing new, child-appropriate lyrics. She emphasised the need for such creative strategies to 'revert' expressions of gang violence into the complete opposite like a children's song. While not openly opposing the presence of gangs, she did present an alternative vocabulary, reconstructing symbols of gang violence into a manifestation of peace.

Similar to such a reconstruction of reality was the educators' ambition to transform their pupil's life courses. By offering alternative future prospects, the schools and other community projects were considered instruments for youth to resist gang life, as explained by Joana:

> *How many, thank God, are free of this. Because they found a place that took them in, right, who today, thank God, already have found their first job, already grew up in life and freed themselves from that. (...) So we need more environments, like the school, like the projects that bring them something different, something new, to pull them from this world that has nothing good to offer.*

By providing children an alternative, the community schools were directed at countering the 'world' of drugs. As such, the schools' existence was considered a transformative practice in itself. Not by openly opposing or fighting the gangs, but by offering an alternative environment and withdrawing their potential personnel, 'pulling' children towards a culture of peace.

5. Discussion

This paper intended to provide insight into peace educational practices of educators living and teaching in violent neighbourhoods. Their educational practice was characterised by restrictions and partly focussed on maintaining an orderly structure and strict rules for the containment of violence. In line with Das and colleagues' (2000) reflections on how violence creates an ecology of fear that inhibits agency and dictates social life, the educators shunned the topic of gang violence and banned any referrals to it. In doing so, they created an alternative child-appropriate environment, meanwhile teaching their pupils to adhere to the community rules to stay safe. Similar processes of 'silencing', denial and moving attention away from what is intimidating have been indicated as frequently used coping practices in contexts of violence (Lawrence, 2000). Whether to avoid reprisals or to cover 'trauma that is beyond language' (Lawrence, 2000, p.192), silence is often considered a form of protection. While restrictive measures and keeping quiet seem to be adaptive coping mechanisms to

preserve physical safety when people feel trapped between warring parties, they also might maintain the status quo.

However, within this limited playing field the educators constructed several strategies to oppose the 'culture of violence'. They focused on educating kindness, politeness and caring modes of interaction by providing their pupils with a non-violent repertoire, as elements of an alternative culture of peace. Despite the difficulties in addressing gang violence, the educators developed implicit ways to do so, making use of several 'loopholes' in the law of a violent context. Diverting the attention away from violence and aggression, their practices might be considered a manifestation of Penglase's (2014) 'tactics' to evade the obstacles presented by the neighbourhood's insecurity. However, we argue that their strategies exceed the level of coping with violent circumstances and actually can be considered a form of *resistance*, creating possibilities for transformation in an environment that is dictated by violence.

Without openly confronting the existing power relations in the neighbourhood, the educators aimed to establish a peaceful school environment and a safe haven for their pupils, creating an obvious interruption within the violent community context. Although to a certain extent they constructed a fortified space, isolated from the outside world, the school and neighbourhood environment were not strictly separated, since engaging with the families was a deliberate part of the schools' mission and staff came from the community. While this presented significant challenges because the educators were trying not just to educate their pupils in a different moral order but also tried to liberate themselves from inherited practices, it also provided them with the ability to find and make use of the loopholes in the community rules. The schools' efforts to create a secured and child-friendly physical space while involving the local community are in line with policy recommendations for protecting educational environments in contexts of violence (Global Coalition to Protect Education from Attack, 2016; Global Coalition to Protect Education from Attack, 2014). While current programmes mostly focus on soliciting advice and support from communities, our results stress the need for a more profound community engagement in order not to overlook violence-related dynamics and the limitations for community agency it generates. Notwithstanding the difficulties, *resistance* from within might be the only way to achieve a sustainable change in the neighbourhood context and disrupt violence's dominant order.

Through implicit practices to resist violence and an explicit mission to create a culture of peace, the educators orchestrated transformation in the community, directed by alternative future prospects through a route of education and care. While not openly discussing the issue of gang violence, they did oppose their presence, rejecting their lifestyle of crime and violence by presenting an alternative moral order. Apparently merely avoiding to challenge existing power relations, they actually constructed a comprehensive counteroffensive towards gang violence, working towards peace while staying within the boundaries of safety. Their strategies might contribute to indirect models of peace education

in conflict areas affected by protracted violence, where conditions do not allow direct reference to the conflict (Bar-Tal & Rosen, 2009).

6. Conclusion: towards community-informed peace education

Opportunities for resistance to violence might not be discovered without having full understanding of the neighbourhood reality. We argue that because of the educators' community perspective, their normative practice was fundamentally guided by the distinct logic violence produces, while it simultaneously enabled them to create alternate routes to navigate the context and achieve their educational goals. Our results suggest that these practices are not only directed at managing risks, but also at creating opportunities to introduce alternative moral teachings and transform the moral order in violent contexts. As such, the schools and their expressed hope for transformation by educating peace can therefore be interpreted as an act of *resistance* according to Abowitz's (2000) framework.

However, the restrictions educators experienced in debating gang violence and the discretion of their implicit transformative practices underline the difficulties in questioning dominant practices and working towards systemic change in educational environments involved in dynamics of insecurity and fear. While the educators created a safe haven inside the school and found several loopholes for transformation towards peace, possibilities for achieving fundamental change in the neighbourhoods' situation were severely limited by the contextual risks. Although the community schools adopted a distinct profile as a nonviolent space, they also circumvented the thorny issue of gang-related violence in an emotionally charged context where 'every home has a piece of it'. This raises the question what kind of transformation could be realised if these schools were enabled to expand their current safe zone and forge alliances for peace with kindred spirits. Through their engagement with the community, they might provide new opportunities for community building in the face of hampered community organisation due to neighbourhood violence (Perlman,2010).

This study provides important insights on protection and violence in relation to community notions of order and communication, as well as the limitations of community agency. Based on our analysis, we argue that peace education in violent contexts has to seek practices that take into account the actual risks people are exposed to, before designing strategies to transform existing patterns into new ones. Our results show that in circumstances of everyday violence, educators considered strict order and control a necessary precondition for a peaceful environment. They combined a restrictive approach directed at the containment of violence with elements of Noddings' (2012) 'ethic of care' in their education for peace. Their educational practice might be considered an adaptive transformational approach and a bottom-up curriculum of peace education in a violent

context. When genuinely considering local meanings and experiences, we encounter inventive practices that serve as subtle acts of resistance to violence and create an opening to work towards peace. Since community schools offer a potential transitional space in violent neighbourhoods, strengthening and expanding their educational practice and community approach might play a key role in designing solutions for the presented contextual restraints and constructing hopeful perspectives. Building on Freire (2014), Noddings (2008) and Bajaj (2008, 2015) we recommend peace educational programmes to connect to the social reality of communities affected by violence, by remaining attentive to contextual limitations and making use of alternate routes offered by local community practices to work towards social change and build peace.

Chapter 4
MOTHERS' PERSPECTIVES

Armoured with morality: Parental perspectives on moral education in the violent context of Brazilian slums

Abstract

This article describes the goals, practices and underlying values of parents raising children in the violent context of Brazilian slums. The results show that mothers act within a multivocal moral framework, combining 'street cultural logic' with 'middle-class' perspectives. Survival and a strong sense of morality are taught through both adaptation to and dissociation from the neighbourhood context. The analyses challenge the idea of a homogeneous 'street' culture in these communities and show that various cultural repertoires and multiple interconnected perspectives on morality are cultivated in response to violence. The study provides ways to interpret parental strategies to organise a moral counteroffensive as a lever for change.

Key words:

disadvantaged communities, moral education, violence, parenting values, street culture

This Chapter was published as:

Author contributions:

AvD and MdH designed the study. AvD conducted the data collection, the data analyses and wrote the article. MdH and MdW contributed to the analyses and supervised and edited the writing of the article.

1. Introduction

Over the past 25 years, equity gaps between nations have narrowed, but disparities between communities have often persisted (UNICEF, 2016). In disadvantaged communities, violence and poverty pose great challenges to both children and their caregivers and call for adequate strategies to cope with insecurity and deprivation. Such circumstances might have consequences for parenting in general and moral education in particular. This paper intends to analyse parenting repertoires in disadvantaged communities by exploring parental goals, practices, underlying values and related virtues, and examines how they constitute a framework for moral education in response to the local context.

1.1 Cultural repertoires in disadvantaged neighbourhoods

Academics from various disciplines have attempted to understand the lifestyles and belief systems predominating in disadvantaged neighbourhoods. These studies have resulted in concepts such as 'oppositional culture' and 'street culture' to explain cultural repertoires often considered deviant and morally wanting by dominant society. Phenomena such as single motherhood, loose sexual ethics and dealing in contraband or other illegitimate sources of income, are in public opinion typically associated with disadvantaged communities and labelled as an inherent part of their 'culture'. Such practices are considered deviations from conventional norms and are deemed inappropriate from a middle-class perspective on good citizenship. Consequently, disadvantaged neighbourhoods and their marginalised populations are often associated with immorality (e.g. delinquency, antisocial behaviour). These judgements imply that the dominant society and poor urban communities have opposing value systems. From such a viewpoint, dominant society and its middle-class cultural practices are regarded as morally correct, while disadvantaged communities and their cultural practices are labelled as morally wanting (Cohen, 2004; Dixon-Román, 2014; De Luna Freire, 2008).

Divergent from conventional norms, street cultural repertoires in poor neighbourhoods are also presented as a deliberate act of resistance. In a recent work on the relationship between poverty, youth and crime, Ilan (2015) presents an overview of the concept of street culture, defining it as 'the values, dispositions, practices and styles associated with particular sections of disadvantaged urban populations' (p. 8). According to Ilan, street culture shares particular principles around the globe, originating from the effects of exclusion. Street culture is generally referred to as a normative system in which violence is viewed as an appropriate means to resolve interpersonal discordance and essential for maintaining a 'tough' reputation (Anderson, 1999). As such, street culture is considered to redefine expectations of personal conduct, making it inconsistent or even bringing it into conflict with conventional culture (Berg et al., 2012).

However, such a rigid division between middle-class and disadvantaged communities is contested by Ginzburg's (2013) elaborate work on the intricate relationship between hegemonic and popular culture. He proposes that the culture of dominant and subordinated classes are opposed, while simultaneously engaged in a process of 'constant circularity', continuously exchanging cultural elements. Instead of functioning in isolation, they develop in each other's presence. This circularity, he argues, implies a heterogeneity within both cultures, creating a variety of cultural scripts and positions instead of a univocal, homogeneous entity. When relating Ginzburg's ideas to moral education, his perspective ties in with Swartz's (2010) concept of a moral ecology of 'interconnecting systems, complex antinomies, diverse codes, multiple positioning, discordant processes and competing influences, over time and on multiple levels' (p. 305).

If we apply such a perspective to education, moral teaching and learning can be considered a dynamic process characterised by tensions, deliberations and reconstructed meanings in the context of a continuously changing environment (Garland Reed, 2011). This perspective implies both teaching and learning morality are part of a 'constant circularity' involving multiple positions and perspectives. For instance, research on moral education practices in Chinese working-class families suggests their multidimensional nature (Wang, Bernas & Eberhard, 2012; Wang, 2017). These studies found that discrepancies in parents' moral teachings were related to parents' consideration for situational appropriateness of moral behaviour. Combining Ginzburg's theory with these insights might enrich our understanding of the dynamics in parental moral education and their relationship to the complexities of the environmental context.

Ginzburg's theory also explains why several studies found strong support for 'middle-class' views on morality in disadvantaged communities within domains such as education, work and social life (e.g. Carter, 2005; Young, 2004). In addition, Harding (2011) demonstrated that disadvantaged neighbourhoods encompass a greater heterogeneity in cultural orientations than more affluent areas. He argues that, particularly for youth, the confrontation with multiple cultural models creates ambiguity concerning how to behave. Residents of disadvantaged neighbourhoods, rather than being disconnected from dominant society, seem exposed to various, at times contradictory, cultural models. Such a context might pose challenges to the upbringing of youth, since it diffuses the distinction between morally 'good' and 'bad'.

1.2 Parenting as a situated cultural practice

The line between 'good' and 'bad' in a risky environment may in actual fact be quite tenuous. For example, although the majority of the population in disadvantaged neighbourhoods may prefer peaceful modes of interaction (Harding, 2010), there is evidence that parents teach their children to adopt a 'code' of aggression, at least superficially, in order to prevent victimisation (Anderson, 1999; Mullins, 2013). These parents are often considered by outsiders

as irresponsible or incompetent, because they fail to impart certain forms of morality to their offspring and foster antisocial behaviour. Such a view is supported by studies that indicate parenting styles as the prime cause of 'dysfunctional' child development in disadvantaged neighbourhoods (see, for an overview, Bradley and Corwyn, 2002). These studies mostly overlook the potential adaptive value of parental repertoires in their context.

In contrast, Gillies (2008) provides evidence that parents from disadvantaged communities are guided by a strong moral framework in their childrearing practices, although this diverges in some aspects from middle-class educational values. He shows how working-class parents in the UK wield an 'alternative moral logic' that concentrates on care and protection, originating from their lived conviction that the external world is dangerous. Instead of teaching their children skills in reasoning and negotiation – as preferred in middle-class families – these parents focus on equipping their children with the abilities to deal with instability, injustice and hardship. In a profound ethnographic work on urban poverty and violence in Brazilian slums, Goldstein (2003) found a similar 'survivalist ethos' among the poor working class. In a context with many hazards and limited control, middle-class parenting, characterised by democratic decision-making, might not only be less relevant but can even be considered harmful or at least risky. It has been argued that in these circumstances an authoritarian parenting style might be more adaptive and is often believed to function as a buffer against deviant peers and neighbourhood violence (Kriesberg, 1970; Tolan et al., 2004; Furstenberg et al., 1993). Likewise, Goldstein (2003) also found that harsh parenting was used as a strategy to discourage children from gang involvement. Such marked deviant parenting practices might actually be part of a dedicated moral parental discipline. Dixon-Román (2014) considers 'deviant' cultural practices as non-dominant forms of cultural capital, containing meaningful 'pedagogical' resources in the context of marginalised communities.

The heterogeneity of contradictory cultural models on the one hand, and contextual demands related to restrictive and street cultural parenting practices on the other, presumably have consequences for parents' perspectives on moral education and choices required to raise their children. According to Ginzburg (1991, in Aguirre Rojas, 2008), the exchange between hegemonic and subaltern cultures does not involve a passive acceptance of hegemonic culture by subordinated classes, but includes a recodification of hegemonic culture, 'customising' certain elements to fit the specific context. This implies an opening for individual agency and empowerment, offering people the possibility of navigating between various cultural repertoires and re-appropriating 'inherited' cultural practices and the underlying moral values. A similar process of appropriating sets of beliefs has been found by scholars studying urban disadvantaged neighbourhoods in Rio de Janeiro (Cunha, 2018; Steele, 2011). Both ethnographers show how moral principles related to religion are adapted to fit the challenging circumstances of Brazilian slums. Steele (2011) describes how traditional moral codes on teen pregnancy are loosened to fit the context of opposition to abortion

and valorisation of motherhood in communities characterised by violence and a competitive religious marketplace; while Cunha (2018) shows how urban popular culture is updated with Pentecostal moral principles and symbolism, producing new ways of coexistence representing a struggle between good and evil.

This study seeks to contribute to a better understanding of parental repertoires in disadvantaged communities heavily marked by violence, since to our knowledge there is little empirical evidence on the moral reasoning of parents in violent contexts. The central question addressed in this paper is how communities afflicted by poverty and violence deal with the moral socialisation of youth. Which educational goals do parents pursue? How do they teach their children about morality? Answers to these questions are explored using interview data from an ethnographic study conducted in three communities in the slums of Salvador, Brazil. Considering its high degree of segregation, the Brazilian context might prove informative for societies facing an increasing gap between various population groups.

2. Study setting

Salvador, capital of the north-eastern state of Bahia, had a population of nearly three million people in 2016 (IBGE, 2016). During colonial times, the city thrived on the export of sugar, coffee and tobacco, harvested by a slave workforce (Schwartz, 1987). Salvador's history is reflected in its current racial composition: according to a census in 2000, 75.2 percent of the population identified themselves as 'black' or 'mixed race' (Carvalho and Pereira, 2008).

Salvador is characterised by high social inequality and is comprised of neighbourhoods with diametrically opposed standards of living (Carvalho and Pereira, 2008). Almost one third of the city's population lives in slum areas known as *favelas* (IBGE, 2012). The income per capita in the metropolitan area of Salvador was 874 reais per month in 2010 (approximately USD 275). Although the UNDP poverty rate declined from 27.6 percent in 2000 to 13.2 percent in 2010, the Gini coefficient to measure inequality remained remarkably high (0.64 and 0.62 respectively) (UNDP, 2013).[12]

Salvador is relatively well known for its high crime rates, particularly regarding violent offences. In 2015, Salvador had a homicide rate of 45.9 per 100,000 inhabitants, compared to an average rate of 28.8 for state capitals (FBSP, 2016). Violent offences, and homicide in particular, mostly occur in the city's *favelas* (Espinheira, 2001). The Secretary of Public Security indicates that almost 70 percent of incidents involving excessive violence are related to drugs (CNMP, 2013).

---

12   UNDP Brazil determined the poverty rate in 2010 at a monthly household income per capita of 140 reais.

The relationship between violence and drugs is reflected in the perception of drugs as highly problematic among slum residents. Goldstein (2003) for example outlined that in the community that she studied, consumption of drugs was considered a great risk because it required contact with drug trafficking gangs and thus meant endangering oneself and their family.

3. Method

Data for this study was collected among mothers of pupils from three community preschools in three *favelas* in Salvador. It concerns two adjacent neighbourhoods on the city's outskirts and one in a more central area. All data was collected by the first author in Portuguese during 10 months of ethnographic fieldwork, which consisted of
daily participation in the community preschools and taking part in the family life of several guest families.

Ethnographic research is characterised by a dynamic process of searching for an equilibrium between inclusion and exclusion. The researcher – being a white European, highly educated, non-native speaker – arrived as an outsider. The distinct realities of ethnographer and participants might have been a limitation but also had advantages, as participants were more inclined to explain their beliefs because of the ethnographer's presumed ignorance. Meanwhile, participation in everyday life and shared characteristics such as being female contributed to developing a mutual understanding.

Although various types of ethnographic data (Blommaert & Dong, 2010) were gathered (e.g. field notes, photographs, recordings), in this paper we concentrate on semi-structured interviews held with mothers to explore their perspectives on the topics of educational goals and values, parenting strategies, and the neighbourhood context. Examples of interview questions are listed in Table 1. Informed consent was obtained in all cases and mothers who agreed to participate were carefully informed about the purpose of the study and their right to quit at any time. They were invited to take part in an individual interview conducted at the preschools. To minimise intrusiveness, only audio recording was used.

Table 1. *Examples of interview questions*

PART A – Demographics
• Where were you born and where did you grow up?
• What is your family composition? Who do you share a house with?
PART B – Parenting goals and practices
• What do you find important in your child's education?
• I would like to learn more about the values parents transmit to their children. By values I mean moral values, or fundamental ideals about what is important in life, that gives direction to people's behaviour. Which values do you find important in your child's education? Which values do you think are not important or wrong and would you prefer not to transmit to your child?
• In relation to the values you believe are important, why do you find this value important? Can you give an example of how you teach this value to your child? Does your child learn this value at other places than at home?
• What rules do you have at home?
• Which type of behaviour do you try to encourage/discourage in your child? How do you encourage/discourage this behaviour?
PART C – Perception of school environment[13]
PART D – Perception of neighbourhood environment
• How do you like living in this neighbourhood?
• What kind of behaviour do children learn in the streets?
• Which rules apply to your child in the streets?
• Which values in your opinion are most relevant to the streets?
• Do you think the neighbourhood is a safe environment for your child? Why or why not?
• Does the presence of gangs in the streets aBect the children in this neighbourhood? Does it impact the education of your child? If yes, in what way?
• Is the street environment different from the home environment? In what way?
•Which skills or capabilities do parents need to raise a child in this neighbourhood?

3.1 Participants

Participants were female caregivers (n=26) of pupils from the preschools. At the time of interview they were the primary caregivers of at least one biological child, except for one grandmother who was raising the daughter of a deceased son as if she was her own. All caregivers will be referred to as 'mothers'.

---

13   Part C of the interview has not been incorporated in the analysis of the results discussed in the current paper.

The mean age of the mothers was 32 years, with the youngest 19 and the oldest 44. Approximately half were married (n=12) and the remainder were raising their children as a single mother (n=14). In the majority of the single mother households, there was no or limited contact with the children's father(s). Half of the married mothers had older children from previous relationships and several mothers raised children who were not biologically their own. On average, the mothers had 2 to 3 biological children, with a range between 1 and 5 children.

The majority of the mothers had primary education level or less. Six mothers reported secondary school as their highest level of education and four mothers had completed vocational education. Most were unemployed at the time of interview (n=17). One mother had a fulltime formal job. Several mothers were running small-scale informal businesses, such as selling lottery tickets or household items. A few mothers had informal jobs – as a nanny or a manicurist.

On average, the mothers had been resident in the neighbourhood for 22 years. Half had been born and raised in the community (n=13), while those who grew up elsewhere generally had been living in the community for over ten years. Some mothers grew up in other Salvador slum areas or in towns nearby. Many had moved several times between and within neighbourhoods and cities. Reasons for migration were changes in relationships, search for employment or, when experienced during childhood, the death or 'elimination' of a parent.[14]

3.2 Procedure

All recorded interviews were transcribed by the first author and four local research assistants. Transcripts were checked against the audio recordings for accuracy. The transcripts and field notes were entered into NVivo 11 for analysis. Elements of a grounded theory approach to data coding were applied (Strauss & Corbin, 1998), using both inductive and deductive codes, with the main analytical focus on 'deviant' and 'conventional' cultural practices and values. The analysis paid special attention to how mothers endorse or resist these practices and values, potential contrasts in their discourse and how they construct a sense of morality in relation to the violent neighbourhood context. The analytical framework is presented in Table 2 and consists of two main research questions, each encompassing several questions for analysis.

Using this framework and grounded theory principles as a starting point, a comprehensive multi-phased process of thematic analysis was employed, as described in detail by Braun and Clarke (2008). Themes addressed in participants' statements were identified and coded into categories by two primary coders with expertise in qualitative research methods. A coding tree was developed based on the first three interviews and progressively modified as subsequent transcripts were analysed. During the coding process,

14   Family members often assume care for one or multiple children when the mother dies or is unable to raise them due to addiction or domestic difficulties, often involving a spouse who is not the biological father of the child.

themes were checked for internal coherence, consistency and distinctiveness and their validity in relation to the original dataset.

Table 2. *Research questions and related questions for analysis*

1. How do mothers describe their parenting goals, practices and underlying values and how do they relate these to the violent neighbourhood context?
Questions for analysis: • What do mothers find important in parenting and why? • How do they describe their parenting goals and the practices they use to achieve these? • What values do mothers wish to impart to their children and why? • What child behaviour is considered 'good' and 'bad'? • What parenting practices are considered 'good' and 'bad'? • Do mothers seek support from others in the general and moral education of their children? • How do mothers reflect on the violent neighbourhood context and its consequences for parenting? • What role does perceived danger play in their parenting practices? • How do mothers reflect on the pedagogical relevance of their parenting practices in the neighbourhood context?
2. Do mothers experience multiple value systems and, if so, how do they navigate between them?
Questions for analysis: • Do mothers experience a difference between moral standards in dominant society and in their neighbourhoodcontext? • Do mothers experience tension between value systems in various contexts within the neighbourhood (home, school, street, other environments)? • How do they reflect on multiple value systems and their consequences for parenting practices?

4. Results

4.1 Morality in an 'immoral' environment

When asked what they found important in the education of their children, almost all mothers, regardless of their backgrounds, immediately introduced morality and the distinction between good and bad as central issues. They declared that raising their children to be 'good people' was their principal aim. When invited to reflect on the values they wished to impart to their children, they motivated their choices in light of behavioural norms in

the neighbourhood which they considered 'immoral'. As such, they positioned their focus on teaching morally correct behaviour explicitly as a counterpoise to impure elements of the environmental context, stressing the importance of offering their children a contrasting perspective on how to act. For example, three-quarters of the mothers regarded 'honesty' as a central hallmark of a 'good person'. Honesty was seen as an overarching concept that included speaking the truth, but above all meant no 'thieving'. The mothers deemed it extremely important to explain to their children that, although the neighbourhood environment may teach them otherwise, stealing is forbidden. Jacira, a 40-year-old mother, described how she teaches her 6-year-old to be honest:

> *And mine [her son], when we go some place, I told him: 'Everything here, it is not yours, it's someone else's, you cannot touch nothing, you cannot take anything'. 'My name is not on it right, mum?'. 'No way. If it were mine it would have been written here, "Jacira". It's from Jacira for Mateus. And then you could. But if it's not the case, you ask, whose is this?' 'It's mine'. Also, whatever I find in his backpack, I open his backpack and look: 'Whose is this dear?'. 'Ah mum, I found it over there'. 'Let's go there and put it back on the same spot where you found it'.*

In this extract, Jacira emphasises the importance of, and obviously took pride in, teaching her child that stealing is wrong. In doing so, she positioned herself against her description of the neighbourhood context, in which these values she argued are not shared by all residents.

Besides honesty, the mothers considered politeness an important aspect of a good person and contrasted it with 'uncivilised' and 'immoral' behaviour present in the neighbourhood. Being polite means greeting other people, saying 'thank you' and 'excuse me' and not using abusive language. These might seem trivialities but the mothers strongly linked them with staying on the right track and refraining from involvement in delinquency or sexually immoral behaviour. The emphasis mothers placed on raising their children as 'good' people through imparting values such as honesty and politeness was presented as a moral counteroffensive against the neighbourhood context of 'immorality'. As Jacira stated: 'When you live in a certain *ambiente* [environment], it doesn't mean that you have to get involved in bad things'.

4.2 Survival and self-preservation

Obviously distinct from their focus on decency the mothers' accounts reveal safety as another principal aim of their parenting efforts. They emphasised values aimed at 'survival', such as vigilance and combativeness. The mothers believed that people should be tough, meaning that one should never give up and have the strength to endure hardship. They found it important that their children learned to persevere despite adversity. As Lisandra, a 35-year-old single mother explained:

> *Since I have never gained anything easily in life, that is what I pass on to them, you know. Today, nothing comes easy, I always tell them this. If you give up, it will only get worse. You cannot give up. However difficult life might be, you can never give up.*

This focus on survival is also reflected in the importance they attached to 'vigilance'. They expressed the essential importance of teaching their children to be alert at all times, paying attention to their surroundings. The mothers deemed this important because, as they said, the streets are unpredictable; violent events might happen unexpectedly, such as a shooting, a fight or a mugging. Furthermore, they found vigilance fundamental in relationships with others: people are not to be trusted. This line of thought is conveyed by Vanessa (38 years):

> *I look at alerta [alertness] like this: like attentive and vigilant, because of the place where I live, you know. So there are things that I say to my sons: 'Always be watchful, always be alert, never fall for nothing, if someone calls you "Take this here to try, to sniff", don't go, stay alert'.*

This mother, as well as the others, strongly connects the importance of teaching children vigilance to the dangers she perceives in the neighbourhood. Although they demonstrated great concern for their children's safety due to various hazards such as speeding motorcycles and unfenced sinkholes or cliffs, they mostly referred to gang-related violence. The mothers articulated a deep anxiety about their children getting caught in the crossfire, either literally, by being killed by a 'stray bullet', or indirectly, through being lured into gang life.

While their focus on imparting 'good' morals was positioned as an act of opposition towards the 'bad' morals in the neighbourhood environment, their focus on survival was presented as an adaptive strategy for protecting oneself against that environment. Both can be considered modifying strategies, developed as an adaptation to the context as well as a means to counter it. However, they also reflect the ambiguity of what can be considered 'good' and 'bad' and how these conceptions of good and bad are positioned in (moral) education. This is further illustrated by the mothers' approach to violence as outlined below.

4.3 The dialectics of violence

The mothers thus appeared to focus on two principal goals: being a good person and staying safe. In some respects, their aim to impart a strong sense of integrity and good manners interfered with their aim to teach survival skills. This conflict is reflected in the ambiguity regarding violence. For example, despite the widespread condemnation of parents who instruct their children to retaliate, several mothers demonstrated an ambivalent attitude as to whether violence is an acceptable way to defend oneself. In the following fragment, Lisandra

obviously struggles with her son's aggression towards peers, condemning and punishing him for it, while at the same time downplaying and justifying his behaviour:

> There are mothers (...) who encourage that if a classmate hits, hit back. I think this is a bad influence, right, that we order that child to do this, but many of them say this (...) Daniel is 7 years old but he fights a lot in school. I received many complaints about him, really many. Because he beats his classmates, and he has a deficiency in his eye so they call him 'Eye something, where is your eye?', they call him cabeção [blockhead], orelhudo [chump], and he does not accept provocation and so he goes and beats them. And so I always receive many complaints about him (...) there are mothers who even threatened me. I condone it, you know, because they are children's things. We talk about it. Me, my dear, I talk a lot with Daniel. I talk to him, punish him, sometimes I even give him a chinelada [strike with flip-flop], some cintadas [blows with belt] but it's pointless. Daniel, only God himself. His development is difficult.

Lisandra described the ambivalence towards violence in the community in many ways. Violent child behaviour is obviously perceived as problematic, while at the same time it is rationalised as 'children's things'. Furthermore, threatening with or using violence is presented as a solution to conflict for both children and adults. The dilemma of allowing or prohibiting violent child behaviour and utilising or refraining from violence as a parent are reflected in this mother's references to the difficulty of parenting. Such an internal struggle reveals the friction between the two goals of teaching children 'survival' skills and raising them as 'good people'. It also reflects how mothers navigate between various cultural scripts, from disapproval to tolerance and utilisation of violence.

Other mothers stated to reject aggressive child behaviour to all intents and purposes, despite their understanding of its origins. They explicitly stated trying to teach their children to refrain from aggression and to circumvent situations likely to result in violence. For example, Sílvia (42 years) explained how she teaches her 17-year-old son to respond calm and controlled to provocation:

> My son, he is a good boy, but I think due to his age, he does not accept provocation. And so I tell him there are things that you need to hear and ignore, just let it go. Right, and then something is up and he has to act like: "Ah, because this and this, and I don't know what" {raising her voice}. And I told him, because some guy looked at him and he didn't like it, I said: "My son, there is no harm in looking, let him keep looking. Accept it." Sometimes there are things that we see that we don't like, but when we don't accept it … we have to ignore it and let it go.

Regardless of her understanding for his urge to 'react', Sílvia finds it important to teach her son to control himself and disregard what she considers a relatively harmless affront. Her silence after saying 'when we don't accept it', accompanied with a well-meant look, seemed to imply that answering a provocation in a combative manner might lead to a problematic situation. Despite her choice for a non-aggressive solution by avoiding conflict, her main concern seems to be the same as Lisandra's: protecting her son from harm and teaching him how to 'armour' himself against (potentially) violent situations.

4.4 Parenting practices in a violent and immoral context

Besides the reflections on parenting goals, the parenting morale of these mothers was also constituted by their ideas about what parents should and should not do to raise their children as decent citizens and keep them safe. The majority of the mothers expressed a strong belief in the power and responsibility of parents to prevent negative influences in the neighbourhood from gaining hold of their children. A 32-year-old mother stated this conviction in highly expressive terms:

> *Who wants to, fights and succeeds. I'm not saying it's easy. It's no fairy tale, it's no soap series, it's no animated movie. It's difficult. It's a tough struggle, to be a parent. (...) Raising a child is a daily struggle. You don't kill one lion a day, no, you kill one lion, one cobra, you kill an entire fauna. But you will succeed. It's difficult but you will succeed.*

In addition to her assured sense of agency, this excerpt also reveals that parenthood is conceived as an arduous task. The mothers were particularly concerned about losing control and therefore emphasised the need to be strict. The two above-mentioned goals (staying safe and being a good person) were reflected in rather controlling parenting strategies directed at keeping bad influences out and creating an alternative, safe community with high moral standards. Their approach was characterised by restriction and confinement as well as creative circumvention, and consisted of several parenting practices, which will be further outlined below.

4.4.1 Exercising authority

The mothers mentioned using reinforcement strategies to exercise their authority, such as rewarding positive behaviour, punishment by withdrawing privileges and applying 'time out' periods, for example using a 'naughty chair'. Furthermore, several mothers reported physical punishment or the threat of it as a strategy to enforce obedience and considered other methods insufficient. As Jacira explained:

> *They learn bad things in the streets. For example, mine [my son] is playing, he has some relatives, God have mercy, I don't let him [play with them], no way. Swearing all the time, it's horrible. So I tell him: 'if you swear, I will stick your eyes out and put them in your ears. Because then you will not hear it and will not see it'. So he got scared. 'And something else, I will cut your tongue so you won't be able to speak at all'. But I would never do something like that. But you have to make them fear something.*

Jacira presented the threat of excessive physical punishment as a strategy to maintain authority over her son, instead of 'losing' him to what she defined as the immorality of the streets. The mothers clearly differentiated between physical punishment as a corrective strategy and domestic violence, involving excessive force and cruelty. As Fábricia, 36 years old and raising two daughters with her husband, explained: 'What's not normal is to injure your child, right. Get to the point that you draw blood from your child, tie up your child. That's a more severe thing'.

Whether making use of physical punishment or not, most mothers described themselves as controlling and strict. Being tough and uncompromising was considered commendable and they reflected upon harsh parenting as an expression of engagement and love, which prevented their children from going off the rails.

4.4.2 Close monitoring

The mothers expressed the belief that parents must be very alert to the potential corruption of their children and that supervision prevents them from adopting 'immoral' norms and slipping into delinquency under the influence of others. Such monitoring meant demanding to be informed about how their children spend their time and with whom, as well as inspecting their bags, and at times even following them to make sure they have not lied about where they are going. A 40-year-old mother described how she checked her teenage son's backpack:

> *But I tell them straight, if you have whatever type of backpack, I look at everything that's inside. When he comes home (...) I look at everything. He says: 'Oh mum, there is nothing in there'. I don't even want to know what I'm looking at, it's only stinky shoes, only dirty socks.*

This same mother explained how she closely monitored her son by following him in the streets:

> *I let him go ahead, after 5 minutes I go after him, I go following, he goes that way and I go this way, hiding myself. When I arrive there, he enters the church. Because many lie to their mothers you know. 'I am going to this place', and they go somewhere else. Like a nephew of mine, I am sad about him because he has the same age as my son. Today he is in a boca [crack house] and my son is in church. Thank God.*

The mothers repeatedly stated that parents should always question whether their children are telling the truth. Such distrust was based on their anxiety about the surrounding social world's destructive influence. This was also how one mother justified following her son:

> *They might be called to do something and afterwards they are lá dentro envolvido [involved, inside], without me even knowing of nothing. I mean, the mother is always the last to know. Everyone knew about it, and us mothers are the last to know.*

In this extract, she clarified her wariness, clearly expressing her fear of experiencing the fate of so many mothers in the community, whose children end up involved in gang life. Despite, or perhaps because of, this anxiety, many mothers clearly judged other parents who do not strictly monitor their children. They regarded permissive parenting practices as extremely harmful and as a manifestation of carelessness. Joselina, a 32-year-old recently divorced mother of five children, explained why it is so important to monitor one's children:

> *Today many [children] at the preschool come home with a pencil, they [the parents] do not even try to find out whose [pencil] it is. In my case, if he turns up with a pencil or whatever, I want to know who gave it to him, I go and ask all that, you know. Us parents have to check this out always, because afterwards if it turns into things that are no good, people will say: 'The mother is to blame, it's the mother who did that, the mother did not teach them about right and wrong', you know. So that's why I make a fuss. Because I have three boys and two girls, and today we know that to enter the world of crime it doesn't matter if they're male or female, they enter just the same.*

This mother speaks of a 'slippery slope' of crime, starting with stealing pencils at preschool, and the responsibility of parents to intervene. The mothers emphatically distanced themselves from parents who fail to do so, emphasising the importance of being strict and keeping tabs on your children at all times. Parents who let their children play outside without monitoring them are labelled irresponsible and negligent. The mothers deemed them preoccupied with their own comfort and convenience. Taking such a perspective, they seemed to align themselves with the judgemental position of the dominant discourse in Brazilian society that blames *favela* residents for the hardships they are facing, in particular as related to the issue of violence. Apparently, the mothers adopted this stigma while simultaneously opposing it by dissociating themselves from 'the other parents' in their community. Most of them voiced a very resolute stance in this regard, adamant about their 'verdict' and refusing to feel sympathy towards these parents. The recognition of parenthood as an extremely difficult responsibility looked like the only moderation of their determined judgement. A few mothers additionally stated that in some cases children follow the wrong 'path' by their own choice: parents tried

everything they could but their child chose to be disobedient and to enter the world of crime. Dolores, a 29-year-old single mother made a clear distinction between these two options:

> There are some classmates at school of whom I believe their parents are not really interested in passing along what's right. Or it comes from that child himself and the parent is unable to work on it.

4.4.3 Limitation of social contacts and creating safe spaces

Close monitoring and restrictive parenting were also applied in the selection and limitation of social contacts. Mothers were exceptionally transparent about their preference for preventing their children from developing strong friendships. They deliberately limited and meticulously regulated their children's peer relationships. This strategy is clearly conveyed in the response of Claudiana, a 36-year-old mother raising two sons as a single parent, when asked what she avoids imparting to her children:

> Too much friendship I don't like. Children very close together I don't like. To play I have to be present. Because children are not easy. (...) Because, look, there are children who lie. They put things in the heads of others. The other day I overheard a friend of his saying: 'Let's go man, are you a loser? Let's go man, your mother will not know'. (...) I went to this boy's mother and said, 'I don't want your son hanging out with mine'.

The mothers' view of the social world surrounding their family as unreliable and treacherous is an important motivation for limiting and strictly monitoring the social network. Restriction of social relationships, therefore, also served to teach children that they cannot rely on other people. In the following excerpt, Claudiana explained:

> He sees how I am on my own, I walk alone, it's just me and God, me alone. He knows that. 'Mum, why don't you hang with nobody?' I tell him: 'Because the strong always prevail over the weak'. Because if there were 25 boys playing, everybody is going to run and leave you alone in the hole. And who is going to get you out? Nobody.

In an exception to such isolationism, the mothers had formed close relationships with a few carefully selected people in whom they confided. They encouraged a strong bond between these people and their children. Likewise, many mothers indicated investing in the establishment of an intimate connection between their children as siblings. They created a small but tight and trustworthy network around themselves and their children.

Due to the perceived danger of the street environment, which mothers described both in terms of physical threats and behavioural influence, all of them sought to create safe spaces that provided their children with the 'right' values. In this effort, the mothers applied restrictive measures; for example, by literally locking their children inside the house. However, to expand their horizons, the mothers also sought other safe zones, such as leisure activities provided by community organisations. The mothers explained that these activities keep the children off the streets, 'distract their minds' and offer safe, supervised surroundings, providing alternative moralities to those they might otherwise experience on the streets. The same characteristics are attributed to catechism groups and church in general. Many mothers believed the environment of 'the church' to provide the 'right' moral teachings and to function as a buffer for entering the drugs scene. This is clearly stated by Luiza (42 years):

> When I go to church I bring them with me. In order for them to stay on the right track. (...) Thank God my daughter does not involve herself with these things, no drugs at all. She likes to party, the oldest, but thank God these days she is already quitting with that. She is going to church, so for me, it's good.

Church is presented as a favourable environment and Luiza, like most mothers, perceived religion and attending church in particular as an effective instrument for achieving her goal to teach good morals while providing protection from the world of crime. As such, religious environments played a central role in the mothers' attempts to create safe and morally 'approved' educational spaces.

4.5 A multivocal framework for moral education?

To summarise and conclude this result section, the narratives of these mothers can be interpreted as revealing a strong, multivocal moral framework related to their two principal parental goals: teaching 'survival' skills and raising 'good people'. Firstly, their parenting was directed at the organisation of a moral counteroffensive in response to the perceived immorality of the streets, articulating a strong feeling of responsibility for teaching their children right from wrong. Secondly, their parenting focused on adaptation to the contextual demands of their surroundings, instead of opposing and dissociating themselves from their neighbourhoods. Sometimes these multiple goals collided and caused conflict, as was demonstrated by some mothers' ambivalent attitude towards violence and aggression. Such friction was reflected in contradictory perspectives on the function of violence, in particular regarding conflict solution. Such a multivocality in their approach to the moral education of their children can be considered an expression of Ginzburg's (2013) circularity, constantly modifying cultural elements to fit the local context.

Their everyday experiences with violence run as a common thread through their accounts of parenting. Despite the apparent lack of control over the violent context, the results show that the mothers' choices are determined as much by the limitations as by the possibilities the context offers. Notwithstanding the fact that they view parenthood as an arduous task, the mothers clearly expressed a sense of agency with respect to parenting and its outcomes. For example, they considered controlling practices such as limiting social contacts and close monitoring essential to keep their children on an honourable path. A failure to strictly supervise children was deemed irresponsible, and laissez-faire parenting practices were strongly condemned. In addition to such restrictive parenting, which might lead to a certain degree of isolation, the mothers directed their efforts towards creating alternative sub-communities with high moral standards. These function as safe spaces, regulated by trusted networks, which allow children to grow up with a different moral perspective. The stark contrast between 'good' and 'bad' delineated by the mothers, might very well offer the much needed 'grip' while surrounded by a street environment that blurs the dividing line; an environment they interpreted as 'no good' and threatening their children's physical safety as well as their moral socialisation.

5. Discussion

This paper intended to provide insight into the pedagogical relevance of certain parenting practices which, although sometimes considered deviant or harmful from a middle-class perspective, might be highly adaptive in a context of conflict and violence. In line with Gillies's (2008) study on the moral framework of working-class parents in the UK, our analyses suggest that parental repertoires in favelas in Salvador have a distinct logic directly related to the situated context of risks that the mothers experience in their neighbourhood. The narratives of the mothers involved in the study revealed a multivocal moral framework consisting of educational goals, values and related virtues that combine 'street cultural logic' with 'middle-class' perspectives.

Mothers used strategies to cultivate a certain morality, partly based on middle-class customs, to resist and distance themselves and their children from the neighbourhood context. Simultaneously, they used and taught their children strategies usually associated with 'street culture' in order to 'survive'. They educated their children to protect themselves from the dangerous outside world by teaching them its rules, while also imparting that they have to dissociate themselves from that world. In other words, our analyses challenge the idea of a homogeneous 'oppositional' or 'street' culture in these communities and support the notion that various cultural repertoires are combined in an adaptive response to the violent context. Alternating between these repertoires, the mothers appeared to navigate between the daily

reality of violence and the need to endure it, and their efforts to transform that reality by raising good people. As such, they did not passively accept hegemonic or 'middle-class' cultural repertoires, nor did they submit indifferently to their neighbourhood circumstances. Rather, they creatively designed a patchwork of various strategies that fitted their contexts but simultaneously contributed to the – at least partial – reconstruction of the reality their children were growing up in. These results address the context-specific 'customised' dynamics of cultural parenting scripts, as outlined in the ideas of Ginzburg (2013), and underline the perspective of Swartz (2010) and Garland Reed (2011) on cultivating morality as a dynamic process involving multiple positioning and dialectical tensions.

We would like to conclude by considering some potential implications for social programmes directed at parents in disadvantaged neighbourhoods. Although an ambivalent attitude towards aggression presumably reinforces a spiral of violence, several mothers clearly regarded aggressive behaviour as a necessary evil to keep their children from harm. Teaching these mothers to exclude aggression altogether might therefore not fall on fertile ground, nor offer a solution. Appealing to their ambition to raise good people by strengthening their strategies to organise a moral counteroffensive might prove a more useful lever for change. Establishing trustworthy social networks consisting of carefully selected people and spaces, played a key role in their efforts. Social programmes directed at families in violent neighbourhoods might obtain better results by strengthening such trusted networks and reinforcing their attempts to create educational spaces with alternative standards of morality, instead of remodelling parenting practices from a perspective that condemns their ambiguous attitude towards aggression. Moreover, as our analyses show, the mothers' practices can be considered adaptive and functional in the context of violence. Although often deemed harmful in Western settings, in these neighbourhoods elements of authoritarian parenting are accepted as expressions of involved parenthood and seem fundamental to their moral education. We hope to have shown that social programmes directed at these parents would profit from a perspective on morality that takes into account the local dynamics of 'good' and 'bad' in settings of extreme violence.

Chapter 5
Young people's perspectives

Taking back control: a study on young people's agency to overcome a violent neighbourhood context

Abstract

This paper examines the complex dynamics of youth agency and resilience in violent contexts based on a qualitative longitudinal analysis of young people's trajectories in a Brazilian slum neighbourhood. We interviewed youth engaged in community sports programmes over the course of six years to investigate how and why they developed resilience and resistance to community violence. In-depth analysis of their strategies to deal with violence and create alternative future pathways demonstrates the importance of developing a highly tuned set of different levels of (perceived) agency. As youth came to understand violence in the neighbourhood as largely beyond their control, they altered their strategies to negotiate related external constraints in order to nevertheless make a future for themselves. While demonstrating the undermining impact of violence on agency, the analyses show how youth's determination to gain control and become resilient expresses resistance towards violence and social stigma attached to the neighbourhood. Encouraged by a shared moral discourse, their participation in community sports fostered not only individual agency, but also provided a collective resource for resilience and resistance. Finally, the paper considers how educational (sports) interventions can enhance opportunities for agency to overcome structural constraints while creating ways to challenge disempowering social systems.

Key words:

youth agency, resilience, community violence, marginalised youth, community sports

Author contributions:

AvD and MdH designed the study. AvD conducted the data collection, the data analyses and wrote the article. MdH and MdW contributed to the analyses and supervised and edited the writing of the article.

1. Introduction

Youth's exposure to violence and reported detrimental consequences cause great concern worldwide (UNICEF, 2016). While rates vary substantially across settings, globally approximately 50% of youth experience violence in their communities (Hillis et al., 2016). In Latin America, homicide rates are among the highest in the world and particularly put youth at risk (Briceño-León, Villaveces & Concha-Eastman, 2008). In Brazil, 27,4% of intentional violent deaths in 2021 concerned youth aged 18-24 years (FBSP, 2022).

The negative impact of youth's exposure to violence has been well documented, including post-traumatic stress, poor academic functioning, decreased sense of control and gang involvement (Overstreet, 2000; McCoy et al., 2023). Besides studies that demonstrate harmful consequences, ethnographic research describes how youth create strategies to protect and defend themselves in violent circumstances. For example, by adopting a 'street code' that legitimises violence and aggression in certain situations to prevent victimisation (Anderson, 1999). Being capable to 'take care of yourself' might provide a sense of control, especially when people feel they cannot rely on public safety (Anderson, 1999; Ilan, 2015). Under circumstances of violence, deprivation and social exclusion, for some youth joining a gang serves as a strategy to 'survive' (Ilan, 2015; Bourgois, 2003).

Whereas numerous studies have investigated gangs around the globe (Hagedorn, 2008), there's less knowledge of youth who haven't joined gangs and their strategies to protect themselves against harmful consequences (Baird, 2012). How do they deal with violence in their neighbourhoods and which opportunities do they experience to create alternative futures? Based on qualitative longitudinal research into young people's trajectories in a Brazilian slum neighbourhood, this paper aims to contribute to a better understanding of youth growing up in violent contexts from a dynamic perspective on agency and resilience.

1.1 Agency and control in violent contexts

In our earlier work we found that living in contexts of violence has a large impact on people's beliefs in opportunities for personal agency and their experiences of control (van Dijk, de Haan & de Winter, 2019; van Dijk, de Haan & de Winter, 2020). Das and colleagues (2000) describe how everyday violence affects agency through a 'dominant ecology of fear' (p. 11) that inhibits agency, restricts possibilities to actively resist violence, and severely affects community life. For example, high levels of fear – induced by violent crime – constrain social interaction and willingness to engage in informal social control (Liska & Warner, 1991). People stay at home and withdraw from public social life to avoid victimisation (Liska & Warner, 1991) and remain silent to prevent reprisals (Lawrence, 2000).

Such 'motions of withdrawal' are considered common coping mechanisms to preserve physical safety, but can also reveal strategies people develop beneath the surface

to increase opportunities for agency and resist violence (Das et al., 2000; van Dijk, de Haan & de Winter, 2020). For example, Spencer's (2000) analysis of a Sri Lankan village during civil war, shows that in the absence of possibilities to actively oppose violence, refusing to participate can express disapproval and resistance. In an environment of perpetuated violence and brutality, nonviolence might require as much or perhaps even more determined action as engaging in violent acts. Similarly, Penglase (2014) demonstrates how people in Brazilian slums create 'temporary spaces of autonomy' without challenging the ruling power system. He argues that for slum residents, living with insecurity in a context that is beyond their control means knowing how to 'dodge, evade or turn to one's advantage the obstacles that life placed in one's path' (p.7). For example, not taking sides and feigning ignorance about crime are used as deliberate strategies to stay away from violence. When everyday life is charged with the potential of danger, such evasive actions – focused on the rejection of violence by avoiding to become directly involved in it – might be considered the most viable form of resistance.

1.2 Dynamics of agency and resilience

For youth, growing up in a violent environment they feel limited control over, might indeed be about learning to navigate external circumstances and negotiate opportunities for personal agency. To enable yet a deeper understanding of how agency is situated in particular contexts, we use a dynamic model of agency (Bisgaard, 2021) to analyse how youth develop a variety of agentic (control)-strategies in response to their circumstances. Bisgaard's (2021) model suggests that people's perceptions of opportunities for agency develop through constant negotiation between acceptance of conditions perceived as externally controlled and identification of factors perceived as possible to internally control. In this model, control beliefs are not considered static and dualistic traits, orientated towards either internal or external control, but are instead presented as a dynamic set of beliefs, according to the (perceived) context (Bisgaard, 2021). Such a perspective enables analysis of the flexibility of people's perceived levels of agency in response to encountered situations.

Similarly, the concept of 'bounded agency' (Evans, 2002) describes agency as 'a socially situated process, shaped by the experiences of the past, the chances present in the current moment and the perceptions of possible futures' (p. 262). From this perspective, people's actions are influenced but not determined by their environment and shaped by internalised frames of reference as well as external actions (Evans, 2007). With regard to youth's resilience, such an approach considers the role of individual agency in their future opportunities, while simultaneously acknowledging the relevance of structural constraints. Studies of resilience in youth affected by violent conflict have indeed highlighted its dynamic character and, contrasting with static, generalised and trait-based definitions, argued for a conceptualisation that allows for situated understandings of resilience across time and

contexts (Tol, Song & Jordans, 2013). Likewise, Ungar (2011) underlines the interplay between individual, relational, cultural and community resources to overcome adversity and youth's resourcefulness to make use of them. Longitudinal resilience studies have indeed demonstrated young people's active involvement in building resilience through time by drawing on potential resources to construct supportive environments (Solem et al., 2020).

Such dynamic perspectives on agency and resilience contribute to a better understanding of the complex interplay between the external environment, youth's perceptions and their strategies to create alternative pathways, contrary to simple cause-and-effect models that explain change as produced by either external or internal factors (Thomson, 2007). This perspective acknowledges that young people's interpretation of opportunities and obstacles for agency can differ according to the social and cultural landscapes they move in, but can also change throughout time (Evans, 2007). In that sense, besides that circumstances might allow different levels of agency, youth's experienced agency is dynamic as they may interpret circumstances differently over time and alter their strategies to control and change their environment accordingly.

1.3 Promoting agency and resilience through sports

Considering the external constraints in violent neighbourhoods, promoting opportunities for youth to develop such dynamic strategies for control might be an important resource for resilience. Interestingly, Bisgaard (2021) describes how young people in South African townships develop strategies to overcome (perceived) uncontrollability of their circumstances through sports. He demonstrates how participation in training and competition can alter and expand their range of strategies to be or feel in control when they notice improvements in their game. He argues this might foster expansion of their control beliefs, from a predominantly external set due to the neighbourhood situation to a broader range including internally orientated beliefs of control (Bisgaard, 2021). Similarly, Öhman and Quennerstedt (2008) found that by promoting active participation and encouraging youth to work hard, do their best and not give in, sports instructors centralise agency and communicate a moral code that places high value on effort, determination and being active. These findings demonstrate how sports might promote a 'can-do' attitude among youth through its strong internal orientation towards opportunity and success.

Sports programmes have been incorporated frequently in policy directed at youth's resilience to violence, based on research that connects sports participation to the development of "protective factors" such as self-confidence, self-discipline, communication skills and a wider social network (Grossman, Johns & McDonald, 2014). However, other studies suggest these effects are context-dependent and strongly rely on active involvement of people from the community (Coalter, 2010). Based on this literature, when closely cooperating with

local communities, sports programmes might support youth in constructing strategies to become resilient to violence.

Building on the insights of dynamic perspectives on agency and resilience, this study aims to shed more light on the situated character of youth's agency development in contexts of violence that present important limitations to agency. We investigate how young people develop forms of agency that translate in resilience, by analysing the perspectives of youth participating in community sports programmes in a slum neighbourhood in Salvador da Bahia. How do they find ways to enhance their agency in a context with high levels of violence that poses constraints on their future paths? (How) can their strategies to deal with these constraints be read as actions directed against or in opposition to violence in their neighbourhood? And what might be the role of their participation in community sports in developing strategies to become resilient and resistant to violence? Based on a qualitative longitudinal analysis of their trajectories from adolescence towards young adulthood, this paper aims to answer these questions and gain more insight into youth agency in violent contexts.

2. Study setting

The site of this study is a community on the outskirts of Salvador, state capital of Bahia in north-eastern Brazil with 2.6 million inhabitants (IBGE, 2022a). The area is known as the *Subúrbio Ferroviário*, comprised of slum neighbourhoods around a railway track where many low-income families were transferred to after demolition of 'irregular' settlements in more central and advantaged city parts (Carvalho & Arantes, 2021). It's considered one of the city's most deprived areas, characterised by poor housing, infrastructural deficiencies and a lack of public services (Carvalho & Arantes, 2021). Socio-spatial inequalities are also reflected in limited access to education, employment and social security for people in slum neighbourhoods (Firpo de Souza Porto et al., 2015). Poverty and social inequality have increased explosively over the past years and 33.2 percent of Salvador's inhabitants live below the poverty line (IBGE, 2022b)[15]. The region's unemployment rate is highest in the country (21.3%) and in 2022 29.8 percent of youth between 15-29 years were unemployed and not in education (IBGE, 2022c).

Furthermore, social inequality is reflected in unequal exposure to violent crime and distribution of public safety resources (Carvalho & Arantes, 2021). Spatial analyses of homicides have demonstrated that low-income neighbourhoods are burdened disproportionately, in particular those dominated by armed groups of drug traffickers

---

15   R$475 per month (approximately €90/$97).

(Barcellos & Zaluar, 2014; Costa & Lima, 2018). Salvador's police capacity focuses strongly on privileged neighbourhoods while residents of deprived areas are more likely to become victim of police violence (Carvalho & Arantes, 2021). In 2021 18.6 percent of intentional violent deaths were related to police interventions (FBSP, 2022). Salvador is one of the country's most violent cities and over the course of this study homicide rates, drug trafficking and fire arms possession have escalated steadily (FBSP, 2016; FBSP, 2022).

Throughout Brazil, in absence of adequate government policy, slum residents formed community cooperatives to work on urgent problems, such as violence and childcare (Gohn, 2014). Many of these cooperatives developed into community organisations, providing various services including sports programmes, like the youth in our study attended.

3. Method

Data for this longitudinal multiple case study was collected over the course of six years through in-depth semi-structured interviews with young people (n=6) focussed on their perspectives on growing up in the neighbourhood and their sense of agency in a context with high levels of violence. The first round of interviews was conducted by the first author in 2016, during 11 months of ethnographic fieldwork consisting of daily participation in the community organisation and guest families. At that time, all youth had been participating in the sports programmes for several years. In 2018, a follow-up study involved three participants in a focus group on the same topic. A second round of individual interviews with all six participants was conducted in 2022. All interviews took place at the community organisation and typically took 1 hour. Examples of interview questions are listed in Supplementary Table S1[16]. All youth were informed about the study's purpose and their right to quit at any time and provided written consent. The study received approval from local field partners and our internal Ethics Review Board.[17]

Demographic information about participants is presented in Table 1. To ensure anonymity, names are fictitious. With such a small sample, our aim was not to present a representative reflection of all youth in the community, although participants do reflect diversity in gender, family composition and educational background, but rather to identify patterns across cases and through time, enabled by in-depth longitudinal case studies.

---

16   Appendices, p. 223.
17   Ethics Review Board of the Faculty of Social and Behavioural Sciences of Utrecht University
         (approval number 22-0323).

Table 1.*Participants*

Name	Age	Raised by	Children	Education	Employ-ment
Miguel	23	Grandparents	1 son	High school	Yes
João	24	Mother	2 step-children	Vocational	Yes
Fernando	24	Both parents	No	College	Yes
Daniel	21	Both parents (separated)	No	Vocational	No
Vitória	21	Both parents	No	Vocational	Yes
Joselina	20	Mother	1 daughter	Secondary school	No

All interviews were transcribed verbatim in Portuguese, checked against audio recordings for accuracy and entered into NVivo for analysis. Our analytical approach included analyses across and within cases, guided by the framework in Supplementary Table S2[18]. Firstly, a comprehensive process of thematic analysis was applied (Braun & Clarke, 2006), with the central focus on young people's strategies to deal with community violence and construct alternative future plans. Themes addressed in participants' statements were identified and coded into categories. A coding tree was developed and sequentially revised as subsequent transcripts were analysed. Themes were checked for consistency, distinctiveness and validity in relation to the original dataset.

Secondly, a qualitative longitudinal case study analysis (Thomson, 2007) was conducted to analyse changes through time, directed at a better understanding of each participant's story and how and why their life courses developed as they did. The follow-up interviews were particularly valuable in this respect, as we could ask participants to reflect on their trajectories and previous accounts. The original data and codes from each interview round were re-analysed to detect patterns through time.

This procedure provided detailed longitudinal narratives of each participant's story, summarised into 4-6 page condensed accounts, enabling analysis of the interplay between agency and environment. Guided by the questions in Table S2, these combined analyses were directed at understanding *how* these six young people became resilient and resistant to community violence and identifying patterns to understand *why*, including the potential role of their participation in community sports programmes.

---

18   Appendices, p. 225.

4. Results

4.1 A developmental path of control

All youth consider the neighbourhood a rather difficult place to grow up, particularly because the increasing violence poses significant constraints to everyday life and their development. They describe how they have to exercise great caution when navigating the neighbourhood; always being alert, avoiding dangerous areas and being outside after dark. Furthermore, they are restricted to stay within certain borders due to wars between rival gangs. This makes them feel literally constrained in their freedom, like Miguel who reminisces about his 'liberty' in early childhood:

> *It used to be freedom, because nowadays (…) we cannot walk anywhere we want. (…) Because the facção [gang faction] is dominating the world nowadays. So we have to be as cautious as possible, because we have to know how to enter places and how to leave as well, because those people are not kidding. (…) with a gun on their waist, interrogating people about where they are going, where they are coming from. So I believe that my best phase was when I still had my liberty, to be able to walk everywhere. (Miguel, 23, 2022)*

Miguel clearly describes how the elevated gang presence poses fundamental constraints on daily life and requires knowing how to literally navigate the streets. Learning to restrict your movements is needed to protect yourself from violence in the neighbourhood. Similarly, Fernando explains how the environment imposes restrictions in speech:

> *You have to stay within the rules, you cannot be walking around talking too much, there are things that you saw and you have to pretend you didn't see it. That gives you responsibility, it gives you discipline, you learn to behave according to the rules. (Fernando, 24, 2022).*

Fernando underlines the importance of acquiring discipline to follow the 'rules' and restrain yourself from speaking up. Later on he reflects on how this affects youth's development:

> *You hide yourself and let it happen (…). And this teaches you, right, it stays imprinted in us (…) that you cannot take any action when faced with a situation that's wrong. And many people grow up with this and end up taking wrong attitudes throughout life and harming themselves. (Fernando, 24, 2022)*

Fernando explains how adapting to violence in the streets teaches a certain 'inaction' that constrains agency later in life. As youth get older, the perception of violence as beyond their

control becomes stronger. João believes it's a question of learning to accept that you can't change it:

> *So talking about violence between traffic, between neighbourhoods.. If I could, I would end all of it, right? But I don't have that kind of power. So we, let's suppose that we try to accept it. Since we are unable to do anything to stop it.. So we have to-, it's a matter of accepting it. (João, 24, 2022)*

João demonstrates a certain resignation because he has no 'power' to change the situation, he has no control over it. On the other hand, youth learn to strictly control where they walk, what they talk about, but also the people they hang out with. All youth agree carefully selecting your friendships is essential to stay away from crime:

> *As a child, I got along with everybody. And then after I grew up, I started seeing the others' behaviour, I started noticing that it's better to differentiate myself, and then when I grew up a little more, I started to be more retroverted, so I didn't go outside that much anymore, I didn't spend that much time with the street people. (…) I started to spend more time at home (..) studying the Bible, I learned how to differentiate the types of friendships, what they were doing in the streets, what they were getting involved in, you know. (Daniel, 21, 2022)*

Daniel describes how over the years he learned to restrict his social relations, enabling him to distance himself from gang life and take a different route. Overall, through time, youth developed strategies to acquire a certain level of influence on their personal environment. While neighbourhood violence made them feel powerless, these restrictions seemed to provide a sense of agency, a way to feel in control.

4.2 Inner resources and external support

So where do youth find the strength to maintain this restraint and stay on the right track? Fernando explains it requires great determination:

> *It takes a lot of willpower, a lot of determination. Because there comes a moment in adolescence when (…) you start dating and (…) you want to go out and do something nice, but because you don't have the means, they look for what's closest to them, the easiest way to get money (…). And for you to escape from it, it's really difficult. Because we are right there in the middle of it, of that environment, we are seeing the other youth (…) enjoying that money. They are buying good stuff and you are there in that same situation like you were years before. It's very complicated. You have to have a lot of willpower. (Fernando, 24, 2022)*

Fernando underlines how much willpower it takes to resist crime, since gang life is extremely close and the easy money is tempting. All youth partly attribute their 'success' to inner strength and a determined mindset. Like Joselina, who believes it's all about internal motivation:

> *You have a choice: either you choose to be in this 'thing' and will become nobody in life, or you choose that you want to develop yourself and achieve something in life, to try as hard as you can, give the best of you to yourself and your family. (Joselina, 20, 2022).*

Joselina demonstrates a strong conviction that it depends on yourself to make a choice, to reject crime and work hard to succeed in life. While such a strong mentality is considered an important inner resource, all youth simultaneously underline external support as fundamental to their development. For example Fernando, although convinced that a determined mindset is essential, emphasises the importance of supportive environments like the community organisation:

> *Looking back, it represents the major watershed in my life. Because I think that (…) if I hadn't joined karate (…) if the community organisation had not existed in my life, I could have taken a different path. I might not have been able to untangle myself from the temptation, from the violence here in the neighbourhood (Fernando, 24, 2022)*

Fernando considers his participation in community programmes central to achieving a future away from violence. Being included in a social environment of supportive adults and likeminded young people is considered an essential source of strength, like Daniel also describes when explaining why he believes he did not get involved in gangs:

> *Karate because there you saw examples of other people, of other youth, who also wanted to pursue a career, be someone better. And also with the [Jehovah's] Witnesses this was reinforced even more, because I saw people (…) who achieved to develop themselves (…) people who chose the more difficult path but nowadays are, today they are examples. Although they had the same difficulties, economical too, financial too. (Daniel, 21, 2022).*

Daniel felt inspired by the companionship of people who, despite going through financial difficulties like himself, chose to pursue a career and demonstrated the possibility of an alternative future. Karate and church offered supportive communities encouraging him to follow the 'more difficult path'.

4.3 Karate: training control, discipline and determination

Interestingly, karate seems to bring these internal and external resources together. All youth consider karate's teachings a major contribution to acquiring the highly valued mindset of discipline, determination and control, as Vitória states:

> Usually, the mothers talk like: "Ah, I'm not going to sign up my son for karate because it's aggressive", and all that. While in itself, karate is control. We learn to control the spirit of aggression. (Vitória, 21, 2022)

Vitória underlines that, contrary to its image, karate helps to gain control and contain aggression. This is exemplified by Fernando who describes how through karate he got rid of the belligerence he developed in the neighbourhood:

> I was already a bit more, you know, affiliated with the neighbourhood. The culture, the violence, and so I was a bit of a fighter, I got into conflicts and I started karate with that idea, right? To become more combative. However, karate's philosophy (…) started shaping me (…) In the neighbourhood, if someone humiliates you, if someone attacks you, you have to get back at them and do something even worse, you have to act, you have to have an attitude. In karate, I learned how to react with dialogue, and also very important, with patience. (Fernando, 24, 2022)

The acquired attitude Fernando describes is all about discipline and control: he learned restraint and patience instead of responding aggressively. Containing the spirit of aggression is one of karate's philosophical rules for training[19], which many youth feel have guided their personal development. As João explains:

> In fact, it had most impact on my emotional control. Man, it helped me a lot. (…) After I left the [battered women's] shelter, I turned into a very aggressive person (...) And one [motto] that I used a lot when I started doing karate, was 'to contain the urges of aggression'. And so this was the first [motto] that I engraved on my memory. Then as time passed, I started to be less aggressive and so I practically, I changed completely. (…) In the past I even used to hit women, not anymore! My younger self, me when I was 13, I would hit everyone. But after I started trying, to have-, I made a promise to myself: "From today

---

19   Karate has five equally important philosophical rules, the *dōjō kun*: seek perfection of character, be faithful to the true path of reason, create the instinct to endeavour, respect others above anything, contain the spirit of aggression. These rules are posted on the dojo wall, and recited at the beginning and/or end of each class.

> *on I won't raise a hand to any woman, and also, I will be a different person". Because my father (…) did what he did, but he was a great dad, but he wasn't a great husband. (…) And karate helped me to separate these things. And so again, there is a vow, a karate motto, another one that goes like this: "have faithfulness to the true path of reason", okay. If you are wrong, what are you going to do? Make it right, fix yourself. (João, 24, 2022)*

Besides helping to control his emotions, João also refers to karate's mottos when he talks about redemption, about righting a wrong. The motto of being faithful taught him it's possible to 'fix yourself' and become a better person. As such, karate fostered a sense of agency despite difficulties. According to Miguel, karate's philosophy teaches that dedication is essential in that regard. To achieve goals in life, you have to put in the maximum effort:

> *They dedicate themselves more, they train more. (…) deprive themselves of the little time they have at home (…) to train all day long. (…) If I can spend even a little more, I will (…) so that I can achieve my goals. (…) Actually, we have a saying that goes like this: "A black belt is a white belt that never gave up". You know? And so when we are a white belt, we get excited: I will acquire that next belt. When we put a belt around our waist (…) we feel powerful, more motivated. And all this is influencing us, helping us to move forward, to not give up, right, of our dreams and goals. (Miguel, 23, 2022).*

Miguel describes how karate's belt system encourages motivation, because it creates a purpose and acquiring a belt gives a sense of power. He believes this teaches to keep moving forward in life and pursue your objectives.

4.4 Work with the tools available

As such, karate can provide a resource to transcend neighbourhood difficulties and create a better future. However, Miguel emphasises your own role: "You have a powerful tool in your hands, it's up to you if you want to hold on to it or not". All youth underline it requires an active choice to use the available support, like João explains:

> *Just yesterday a former pupil of mine came to ask me for help. Obviously he was in that world [of crime], and so I said to him: "Boy, it's up to you". (…) If you commit yourself that you want to leave, you will have my support. All you have to say is: "From today on, I want to". (…) But he said it's hard and this and that.. "Boy, the door will be open. Don't worry". (…) But it really depends on the person having the opportunity and taking the first step. Because we can't grab his hand and pull him, right? He has to take the first step. (João, 24, 2022)*

João underlines it's important for youth who are willing to quit gang life to be offered support, but meanwhile emphasises that *they* have to take the first step towards that other path. João's perspective reflects the belief that resources are crucial, but it's also about actively making use of them.

A similar dynamic perspective on agency is reflected in how youth work on career opportunities and adapt their strategies to the circumstances. While initially all youth were convinced a university degree was necessary to achieve their future goals, as they got older they found other ways, moving around the obstacle of expensive tuition fees. For example through apprenticeships that provide vocational training and a small income. While maintaining determination to achieve their goals, they interpreted their circumstances differently over time and altered their strategies accordingly. Like Vitória explains:

> *Before, I had that idea that I had to go to college to be able to achieve something good, so to say, right? And after I entered (…) the beauty sector, I saw that I didn't need to. (…) So I started to, like, look for people on the internet (…) so I could learn how to do things and develop myself, by taking different courses. (Vitória, 21, 2022).*

Vitória saw another way to accomplish something in life, schooled herself through courses and tutorials and now works as a professional beautician.

4.5 Becoming resilient as act of resistance

The youth's strategies to create alternative routes towards future careers when their original plans are hindered by financial difficulties, demonstrate acts of resilience to advance despite adversity. However, their determination to follow this 'more difficult path' can also be interpreted as an act of opposition, categorically rejecting the easy money of crime. By refusing to become involved in gangs, they oppose gang life itself as well as stereotypes in dominant society that frame youth from their neighbourhood as criminals. As Miguel explains:

> *This prejudice has to end. (…) Sometimes we want to obtain better living conditions, but we are not permitted. Because the other person does not give us the opportunity to grow, for the simple fact that he says we are living in a favela. I don't say that my community is a favela. Just because we don't have the conditions (…) does not mean we have to be considered a favelado.[20] (…) I think this is a lack of respect of people in upscale neighbourhoods. (Miguel, 18, 2018)*

---

20   *Favela* and *favelado* [favela inhabitant] have negative connotations and are generally used to label places or people's behaviour as morally inferior (e.g. using drugs, robbing, fighting) (De Luna Freire, 2008).

Miguel refers to the stigma attached to the words *favela* and *favelado*, often used to label slum areas and residents as disorderly, criminal and violent (De Luna Freire, 2008). By refusing to call his neighbourhood a *favela*, Miguel opposes that stereotype held by people in 'upscale neighbourhoods'. He wants to demonstrate that despite unequal opportunities, youth from the community are able to create a future that steers clear of crime. This refusal to conform to society's pessimistic expectations, is also clearly expressed by Joselina when reflecting on her young motherhood:

> *I talked about 'overcoming' things, because, like, I withstood. Because several people thought I was going to leave my daughter behind (…) that I wasn't going to pay attention to her because of my age. (…) Then at the time I said to myself I was going to show them it was not what they thought, that I would overcome it, and show that "I can do it, I want it, and I will achieve it". And so (…) it's my overcoming, to overcome the difficult things and make them become possible. (Joselina, 20, 2022).*

Joselina explains how stereotypes about teenage motherhood fuelled her determination to withstand. Showing people wrong provided a sense of agency: "I can do it".
The community organisation served as an important resource for such resistance, by offering youth an encouraging environment that boosts their agency to overcome limiting circumstances:

> *Because here is where they give you that 'push' so you can develop in life (…) because here, the programmes teach you good things and in the streets you will never find anything good. They teach you to get along with people, and teach you not to feel better nor worse than anyone else. They teach you values too, about life (…) to be educated, to grow and to also think about other people. (Joselina, 20, 2022).*

Joselina describes that, in opposition to the street environment, the community organisation teaches values that encourage youth to develop themselves and care for others. Similarly, Fernando describes how the karate programme offers an alternative moral code:

> *The basic rules we quote at the beginning and end of the classes, it enters us, it gets registered within us, in our conscience, our moral awareness (…) We have to have discipline, we have to avoid violence (…) And this goes completely against what is stored in the mind by the neighbourhood environment, right. Around all that violence. In the neighbourhood we learn one thing, and through karate, inside the programme, we learn something else, another perspective (Fernando, 24, 2022).*

Fernando describes how karate's mottos teach a new 'moral awareness' that opposes violent practices in the neighbourhood. As such, karate not only teaches control, necessary to navigate and overcome neighbourhood constraints, but also deliberately displays an opposite morality which can be considered an implicit form of resistance to violence. This alternative attitude to life focussed on care, nonviolence and personal change makes youth feel they indeed have a choice.

Over time, their own strategies for resistance seem to take on more implicit forms as well. Initially most youth expressed outrage about the suffering gang and police violence cause. For example Joselina clearly demonstrates a combative spirit at age 15:

> *If I was mother of a family, I would unite with everyone, with all mothers, and I would decide to organise like a petition to make this get off our streets and to put something good there instead, so that the people, and the children who are growing up have something good. It should not be like this, I would not have it. (Joselina, 15, 2016).*

Joselina expresses strong involvement to improve the neighbourhood through collective action. As she got older and actually became a mother, she seems to have accepted the neighbourhood situation and instead focuses on achieving a better future for herself, her daughter and other youth with the community organisation's support. While over the years most youth tried to accept the idea that changing the violent situation on a neighbourhood or societal level is not within their power, they have grown a stronger belief in individual change and the significance of supportive environments to move away from violence. Their increased focus on the possibility to transcend constraints, make a change for yourself and support younger youth to turn over a new leaf, also implies a form of resistance that another future is possible. To conclude with João's words:

> *I think education is something, it's a difficult thing, but it's not impossible. Because sometimes the child wants to follow the father, and others don't. They want to have a different way of thinking. And so I believe that with the right people supporting that child, or that youth, we can make the difference. (João, 24, 2022).*

5. Discussion

In this study we investigated youth's trajectories towards young adulthood in a violent neighbourhood and how they developed strategies to become resilient and resistant to violence. Our findings show that control was a central element, reflected in their emphasis on acquiring discipline, restraint and strict control over movements, speech and social relations

to circumvent violence and prevent gang involvement. While these restrictions encourage inaction and partly block agency, the related focus on discipline, not giving in to the temptation of easy money but following the more difficult path of hard work, is also about transcending constraints. In that sense, restrictive strategies can be considered ways to create opportunities for agency while faced with limiting circumstances. In the following we discuss four important considerations to contribute to existing perspectives on young people's trajectories towards resilience in violent contexts.

First, with respect to agency's dynamic character, seemingly in contrast with their focus on control, youth developed a certain resignation to the violent neighbourhood context. This combination of accepting what you can't control and strictly controlling the things you can, can be considered an example of dynamic control beliefs, not statically directed towards either externality or internality. Instead, similar to Bisgaard's (2021) model of varying ranges of internal and external control beliefs, youth developed a flexible set of different levels of perceived agency, in adaptation to the context. Such flexibility might be important for developing resilience to violent circumstances, since it enabled youth to create control strategies to avoid getting affected by violence while focussing on things they felt able to change. This implies that in violent contexts, educational interventions should not only be directed at fostering internal control beliefs, but should target precisely this dynamic interplay between acceptance of external circumstances and belief in the impact of one's own efforts to encourage youth to create opportunities for agency and overcome obstacles.

In addition, dynamics of agency and control strategies are reflected in our findings that youth's strategies for becoming resilient were not only flexible within the same person at a given point but also changed over time. As youth came to understand neighbourhood violence as something beyond their control and experienced obstacles for educational qualification, they developed alternative strategies to nevertheless achieve a future that moves away from gang involvement. In line with Evans (2007), these findings indicate that youth interpret circumstances differently over time and alter their strategies to negotiate structural constraints and open up space for action. They developed creative strategies to overcome obstacles on 'the more difficult path' towards a better future with a continued belief in individual change. Similar to Spencer (2000) and Penglase (2014), we found when active resistance is dangerous, youth reject violence by learning how to circumvent it. However, our findings show that their refusal to participate in violence and choosing a different attitude to life did not only articulate opposition towards violence but also towards social stigma against their neighbourhood.

A second consideration concerns the relation between individual agency and community support in developing resilience. Although our youth focussed on opportunities for individual change based on discipline and determination, to acquire these 'individual' qualities they mostly relied on resources with a collective character. Supportive communities

were considered fundamental for developing the inner strength to resist the attraction of gangs and creating alternative future possibilities. In particular the karate programme and its life philosophy seemed to unite these individual and collective elements of resilience by teaching control, discipline and determination in a supportive social environment. While these findings indicate once more how sports promotes *individual* agency by valuing effort and determination (Öhman & Quennerstedt, 2008), karate's philosophy was shared in a supportive community which also demonstrates how sports programmes can provide a *collective* resource for resilience.

Thirdly, it's important to consider how perceptions of opportunities for agency are affected by violence through time. The shared moral discourse of dedicating yourself to achieve a better future, serves as an important resource for youth's belief in the possibility to become resilient to neighbourhood violence and change their own lives. However, over time most youth learned to believe that neighbourhood and societal change is beyond their control. While initially several youth expressed ideas for collective action, their activistic attitude gradually transformed into implicit expressions of resistance. They learned not to rely on governmental action and, in response to the dangers of openly confronting gang and police violence, developed alternative, small-scaled strategies matching with their (perceived) options for agency. Although on the surface it might seem they gave up hope for change, they continued to look for opportunities for agency adapted to the context's external constraints. Their focus shifted towards individual change in their own lives and those of the younger generation involved in the community programmes. As such, they reconstructed their hope for change by developing alternative forms of action within a sports community.

Lastly, our results underline the need for a structural solution to neighbourhood violence and the potential value of educational interventions. Although our analysis shows that youth's focus on becoming resilient expressed resistance towards violence and social stigma, ultimately these strategies might not suffice to achieve fundamental change in the systemic context. Firstly, a focus on developing resilience through individual change might emphasise internal orientations towards opportunity and success that have already become deeply ingrained in youth's informal culture (Thomson et al., 2003). Many youth from disadvantaged backgrounds feel it comes down to oneself to overcome difficulties (Evans, 2007), while our findings underline the importance of a dynamic and highly tuned set of internal and external control strategies for developing resilience. Secondly, centralising individual resilience might come at the expense of examining and lifting systemic barriers. Our findings demonstrate that violence curbs youth's initial drive for overt forms of resistance and poses such overwhelming barriers that it takes a contextualised combination of individual and collective resources to transcend them. In earlier work we found that community educators experienced similar limitations due to dangers and developed implicit strategies to educate for peace (van Dijk, de Haan & de Winter, 2020). When collective resources for resilience are

undermined by the threat of violence, empowering community forces like sports programmes and other educational interventions that promote individual and shared forms of agency might prove fundamental for creating change.

This calls for interventions that, together with communities, make room for context-based strategies that impact youth's individual life courses, while also inciting transformation of social systems. Currently, community violence interventions demonstrate a disproportionate focus on qualifying individual youth with the skills to deal with violence and fail to address social, economical and political conditions of inequality and oppression involved (van Dijk, de Haan & de Winter, in press). With an individualised policy focus on self-reliance and individual assets to overcome structural constraints, social systems that pose these barriers remain underexamined. We therefore argue for a shift in focus towards educational interventions that enhance opportunities for agency to collectively resist power imbalances, and also call for social and security policy directed at transforming disempowering structures in society. Since our findings underline youth's active involvement in constructing strategies for change in interaction with their environment, we argue that future practice and research should include youth in developing a context-based and community-involved approach to counter community violence.

Chapter 6
General Discussion

1. Introduction

The aim of this study was to create a better understanding of the complex dynamics of the upbringing of youth in violent contexts. A critical analysis of existing educational approaches to neighbourhood violence demonstrates that while many interventions have been developed to counter neighbourhood violence, the voices of people from the communities that suffer under these circumstances are often not heard. The previous chapters have outlined how educators and young people living in neighbourhoods affected by high levels of violence develop strategies to deal with the obstacles their environment presents and how they create opportunities to resist violence and construct an alternative morality that opposes violence. Through analysis of their strategies and the role of educational activities offered by community organisations, this dissertation aimed to provide more insight in community perspectives and consider the transformational potential of educational environments, with the goal of providing recommendations for the design and implementation of educational interventions in violent contexts.

The need for finding educational approaches that are able to counter neighbourhood violence and offer opportunities for change is underlined by the alarming rates of violence and its detrimental impact on youth and communities around the world (UNICEF, 2016). In many instances, the reporting of violence in poor neighbourhoods in the media paints a distorted picture that stigmatises people who live there and suggests communities are to blame for the violent circumstances (Anderson, 2012). Not only in public discourse but also in academic literature a primary focus on approaches that aim to 'remedy' assumed deficiencies in youth and communities, developed at a large distance from violent contexts, leaves the perspectives of community members underexamined. This dissertation aspires to contribute to overcoming this simplified discourse, by investigating the intricate dynamics of neighbourhood violence from community perspectives in order to find openings towards peaceful educational solutions. Against the background of that ambition, the central question in this dissertation is:

> *What can we learn from the strategies educators and young people develop in a violent neighbourhood context to deal with and resist violence? And how can insight into such strategies inform the design and implementation of educational interventions and contribute to finding openings for transformation through educational solutions, without overlooking contextual dynamics of violence?*

The previous chapters have addressed this question from various perspectives. Firstly by reviewing the literature (Chapter 2) and subsequently by investigating the perspectives of school educators (Chapter 3), mothers (Chapter 4) and young people (Chapter 5). In this final chapter I will reflect on and synthesise the chapters' contributions to summarise the

main findings of this study and answer the central question. I start with crucial insights of this study based on the aggregation of the multiple perspectives of school educators, mothers, and young people on how to deal with violence in the neighbourhood context and create opportunities for resistance. Since they are all community members that can provide different viewpoints on the issue, it's interesting to look at repeated patterns in their strategies. This enabled the distillation of two key insights from this study, based on community strategies to deal with violence: a) the constant interplay between survival and resistance, and, relatedly, b) the importance of a contextualised and flexible sense of agency in violent contexts. Secondly, I consider what we can learn from their strategies in terms of practical implications for the design and implementation of educational interventions in violent contexts. Thirdly, I put forward a recommendation for working towards larger transformations of the context through a more holistic and systemic approach towards neighbourhood violence, when reviewing the main insights of educators' and young people's strategies in light of the results of the literature review on current educational responses. Next, I will address some methodological considerations including the limitations of this study. Finally, I conclude with a reflection on the challenging but important social task we all bear – as academics, policymakers, practitioners, and citizens – in constructing hopeful initiatives of transformation towards equal and peaceful social systems for future generations.

2. Key insights from the study: community strategies to deal with neighbourhood violence

When considering patterns in the strategies of school educators, mothers and young people to deal with violence in their neighbourhood context, some interesting similarities come to light that underline the constant interplay between survival and resistance, between resignation and maintaining control, between inaction and searching for opportunities to make a change. Here I discuss two important insights based on the aggregation of their perspectives, as outlined in Chapters 3 to 5. Firstly, I consider the central elements in their strategies and how these for one part are focused on survival and for another part are directed at creating forms of resistance to violence. Secondly, I discuss how this interplay between survival and resistance can be explained by the limitations of agency in violent contexts and the need to develop a realistic and contextualised sense of agency and control.

2.1 The interplay between survival and resistance

When searching for recurring patterns in the strategies of educators and youth, two central elements can be observed in the way they deal with violence: 1) becoming streetwise and gaining control to survive, and 2) a shared moral counteroffensive as an implicit form of resistance.

2.1.1 Becoming streetwise and gaining control to survive

Firstly, all three types of participants developed strategies to avoid and manage the risks posed by the violent neighbourhood circumstances. Many of the strategies educators and young people developed were about teaching and learning fundamental practices to stay safe, such as being alert at all times and learning which streets to avoid in order to circumvent gang members and potential shootings. The focus of mothers on teaching their children vigilance and combativeness, as well as young people's watchfulness on the streets and in social relations are examples of the importance they attached to knowing how to survive and persevere under the circumstances. These strategies for teaching and learning the 'rules' in a violent environment, were developed as adaptive strategies for protecting oneself against that environment. As such, becoming 'streetwise' was central to their strategies to deal with the violent context, directed at survival.

Many of their strategies to avoid and manage risks strongly focus on restraint and restriction, in order to gain control over their circumstances. This is clearly reflected in young people's emphasis on the need to acquire discipline and how they use restriction (not going outside, not speaking up, and not making friends) as a strategy to control their environment and avoid getting affected by violence. The same restriction can be observed in the mothers' concern about losing control over their children resulting in restrictive parenting practices such as locking their children inside the house, limiting their peer relations, and monitoring their children closely. In Chapter 3, restriction was an important part of the educational practice of school educators, who considered imposing order a necessary precondition to gain control over the school environment and keep violence outside the school walls. They were strongly focussed on establishing a secluded space, disconnected from the neighbourhood, materialised in locked gates and high fences. Similarly, in Chapters 4 and 5 we saw how mothers and young people distanced themselves from people in the community who were 'involved' in gangs, as a strategy to circumvent risks of becoming involved in violent situations and gain control over their immediate environment.

Some of these strategies for survival were considered harmful but necessary to stay safe. This was clearly reflected in the ambivalence some mothers demonstrated towards violence when they explained the need for an aggressive attitude to defend yourself. Similarly, young people talked about the almost inevitable practice of 'indirectly' participating in violence when witnessing violence in the streets. Although they felt the right thing to do was to intervene, they learned to look away in order to stay safe. Likewise, in Chapter 2 we saw how school educators taught their pupils to keep quiet about gang and police violence, extremely conscious of the risks of not abiding by the rules of the streets. Some school educators explicitly referred to possible repercussions when saying too much, even when speaking out loud those numbers that could be interpreted as a reference to local gangs, when in fact only meant for math instruction. As such, the threat of violence had a strong

impact on educational practice in schools and at home, and as demonstrated in Chapter 5, severely restricted young people's freedom to move around the neighbourhood. Learning the rules of the streets enabled them to navigate the circumstances and move around the obstructions and limitations violence in the neighbourhood environment posed. Sometimes literally, skirting certain areas, and sometimes figuratively through avoiding risks by looking away from and keeping quiet about gang and police violence.

2.1.2 Implicit acts of resistance: a shared moral counteroffensive

Secondly, the findings in Chapters 3 to 5 indicate that when looking closely at the strategies of school educators, mothers and youth, some strategies that on the surface seemed primarily directed at managing risks, did not only express a focus on survival, but also revealed implicit expressions of resistance to neighbourhood violence. This is perhaps most evidently reflected in young people's strategies, who restricted their social relations not only to avoid risks, but also to distance themselves from gang life and change their circumstances. Since active resistance was dangerous, they rejected violence by learning how to circumvent it and used restriction and restraint to resist the attraction of gangs. In a similar way, the results of Chapter 3 show how in community schools establishing a secluded space was not only directed at protection from violence but also served as a strategy to create a peaceful school environment, deliberately in contrast with the violent neighbourhood environment. As part of the school educators' efforts to educate for peace, their focus on keeping violence out was also a way to express their disapproval and offer resistance to neighbourhood violence. Likewise, Chapter 4 demonstrates how mothers' parenting strategies to create safe spaces were not only directed at protection, but also at creating an alternative environment for their children that, in opposition to the street environment, teaches what they considered the 'right' moral values.

These findings demonstrate that establishing such strictly monitored social environments was part of an active strategy of educators and young people to resist and reconstruct their realities. These secluded spaces served as areas to construct peaceful environments and alternative moralities. As shown in Chapter 3, a central aim of the school educators was to instil a culture of peace in the school and among the children, as a counterweight to violence in the neighbourhood. By passing on values of care for others and being polite, the school did not only provide a safe space, but also worked towards peaceful alternatives to transform a dominant moral order dictated by violence. The organisation of such a *moral counteroffensive* towards the perceived immorality of violence in the streets was an implicit way for school educators to oppose violent structures in the neighbourhood without addressing gang and police violence openly and endangering themselves and their pupils. A more explicit moral counteroffensive is presented by the mothers, whose principal aim was to teach their children right from wrong and raise them to be a 'good

person'. Their parenting efforts were directed at constructing trusted social networks with high moral standards, as opposed to the (perceived) immorality of the streets. Similarly, the findings in Chapter 5 show that young people developed a strong morality of discipline and determination focussed on working hard to succeed in life and how these values enabled them to reject the easy money of crime and follow the 'more difficult path'. Supported by karate's philosophy and the community organisation's encouraging environment, an opposite morality of nonviolence, care for others and personal change gave them the strength to resist the attraction of gangs.

For both educators and youth, sharing their efforts for such a moral counteroffensive was considered an important resource for resistance. For mothers, the community schools, sports programmes and religious environments were important partners in their parenting efforts to provide the right moral teachings and to encourage their children to grow up with a different moral perspective to that of the violent streets. For school educators, educating for peace was considered a collective mission. And for young people, inclusion in a social environment of supportive adults and likeminded peers, a collective of people that face the same difficulties but nevertheless remain determined to create alternative future possibilities, encouraged them to pursue their goals and served as an essential source of strength to resist the attraction of gangs. All in all, being part of an alternative community that shares a communal goal to encourage youth to create a future that moves away from gang involvement and violence, was of great importance in the educational efforts of mothers and school educators and a fundamental element of the young people's trajectories towards resilience. They all referred to the difficulty of keeping up this opposite morality, faced with the powerful order of neighbourhood violence, and found strength in sharing this alternative moral framework with others. Inclusion in such a supportive community with a shared moral discourse that promotes dialogue, nonviolence and care for others and opposes violent practices, provided a collective resource for resilience and resistance towards violence and the difficult neighbourhood circumstances young people, mothers and school educators were dealing with.

As such, the educators and youth constructed similar 'collective communities of resistance' as Freire (2021) suggested in his Pedagogy of Hope. Although the strategies of educators and youth in this study were not so much collective forms of action directed at radical change of the neighbourhood environment, their communal opposite morality did point towards a shared sense of agency that offered opportunities for resistance and change. Their strategies were not openly speaking or fighting against gang violence, but were nevertheless expressions of disapproval and efforts to transform their reality, albeit on the relatively small scale of the school environment, social networks and young people's personal lives. Considering the dangers of openly opposing violent orders, they invented ways to offer resistance in veiled terms and covert actions to avoid violent repercussions of

local gangs, corrupt police and the organised crime syndicates behind them. Matching with their (perceived) options for agency and adapted to the context's external constraints, school educators, mothers and youth developed strategies to implicitly oppose violent practices in order to create an opening for transformation. Therefore, based on Abowitz's (2000) revision of resistance theory, these strategies can be considered transactionalist acts of resistance, not only rejecting violence but aimed at modifying the violent context to a certain extent and achieving transformation. This calls for an understanding of local practices that goes beyond strategies for survival and coping with violent circumstances, towards expressions of resistance to violence directed at creating change in their immediate vicinity.

2.2 The importance of a contextualised and flexible sense of agency in violent contexts

The interplay between survival and resistance in the strategies of educators and young people points towards the constant confrontation with the limitations imposed by their realities and how they developed a flexible sense of agency and control in response.

On the one hand, their focus on survival and restriction in order to stay safe seems to express a certain 'immobility' that blocks agency. Young people experienced severe restrictions in their freedom and felt that the dangers of speaking up and responding to violent situations taught them a certain inaction. Likewise, fear for the threat of violence also had an 'immobilising' impact on educational practices, reflected in school educators' imposed restraint when silencing children's references to gang and police violence and mothers teaching their children that sometimes it's better to ignore things and accept them as they are. These findings demonstrate how a 'dominant ecology of fear' (Das & Kleinman, 2000) can indeed inhibit agency and restrict possibilities to actively resist violence. In spite of their creative ways to construct implicit forms of resistance, the results of this study also underline that under violent conditions educators and young people developed a certain acquiescence to the status quo. They were torn between an assured sense of agency, developing various strategies to gain control over their personal circumstances and opening up possibilities for resistance despite limitations, and a sense of hopelessness about the neighbourhood situation, reflected in the feeling they had no power over the increasing violence. Educators and young people continuously switched between perseverance and resignation, between taking control and feeling hopeless.

The resignation to the violent neighbourhood situation and the 'immobilism' reflected in how educators and young people dealt with risks and fear for violence can be considered expressions of what Freire (2021) calls 'paralysis' when he speaks of both the causes and consequences of hopelessness that disables the ability to take action. He argues that: "when it becomes a program, hopelessness paralyzes us, immobilizes us. We succumb to fatalism, and then it becomes impossible to muster the strength we absolutely need for

a fierce struggle that will re-create the world." (Freire, 2021, p. 16). While his pedagogy of hope is directed at overcoming such fatalism, he explicitly cautioned for a counterproductive cultivation of hope without a critical understanding of the social conditions and contextual obstacles that inhibit agency and narrow possibilities for change. Despite the transformative potential of human agency and the possibility for people to co-create their environment, we need to be careful not to ignore wider social conditions and constraints and not extol agency as a magic potion that solves everything. The findings of this study underline that possibilities for achieving fundamental change in the neighbourhood situation were severely limited by the contextual risks. This is reflected in the difficulties community schools experienced in questioning violent practices of gangs and police while exposed to dangers and involved in complex dynamics of insecurity and fear. Similarly, young people learned to muffle their initial ideas for collective action as they came to understand neighbourhood violence as something beyond their control. Over time, they also learned to accept other external circumstances such as financial difficulties, limited access to education and stereotypes held by people in 'upscale neighbourhoods' and considered them obstacles on their future paths they could not change but had to find a way to move around.

Nevertheless, although on the surface it might seem that the barriers created by violence made educators and young people give up hope for change, they continued to look for opportunities for agency adapted to the context's external constraints in order to create change. As demonstrated in Chapter 5, for young people this meant their focus shifted from neighbourhood improvement towards individual change in their own lives and the futures of a younger generation involved in the community organisation's educational programmes. Their activistic ideas for collective action, such as organising a petition, gradually transformed into other types of agency that expressed more implicit forms of resistance. While over the years most youth tried to accept the idea that changing the violent situation on a neighbourhood or societal level is not within their power, they grew a strong belief in the possibility to transcend constraints, make a change for yourself and support other youth to turn over a new leaf and move away from violence. Similarly, in Chapter 3 we saw how school educators, in response to imposed restrictions on openly confronting gang and police violence, searched for 'loopholes' to offer resistance without putting themselves, their pupils or the community organisation in danger. This means that in spite of the limitations of agency in violent contexts, acts of resistance had not completely subsided but instead took a different form, matching with the (perceived) options for agency within the context.

These results emphasise the flexibility in educators and young people's perceptions of agency, alternating between acceptance of external circumstances and their limiting impact on opportunities for agency on the one hand, and a continued sense of agency to find ways to move around the obstructions and limitations of violence in the neighbourhood on the other hand. This perspective allowed for a certain flexibility to navigate the circumstances.

This is reflected in how they balanced strategies for survival and resistance as described above, in some ways accepting and conforming to the rules of the streets and at other times taking action to oppose them. Additionally, this flexibility manifests in their acquiescence to the neighbourhood situation, while they continued to strongly believe in their ability to create change in young people's individual futures. These findings suggest the importance of situated and flexible understandings of experiences of agency, control and resilience, which offers important underlying insights when intervening in contexts of violence. Contrasting with static and trait-based conceptualisations of control and resilience, the strategies of educators and youth demonstrated a dynamic sense of agency and control that acknowledges the relevance of structural constraints, while simultaneously underlining the significance of individual and shared forms of agency to overcome difficult circumstances. The results of this study underpin the importance of such a flexible and contextualised set of different levels of perceived agency for developing resilience and (implicit) forms of resistance to violent circumstances and demonstrate how theoretical orientations like dynamic models of control beliefs (Bisgaard, 2021) and notions of 'bounded agency' (Evans, 2007) materialise in contexts of violence.

3. Practical implications for educational interventions

The starting point of this study was to learn from educators and young people living in a violent neighbourhood context for the design and implementation of educational interventions directed at countering neighbourhood violence. The aim was to examine their perspectives because interventions are generally developed in privileged contexts at a large distance from the circumstances in neighbourhoods affected by high levels of violence, without considering the experiences of the people involved. This dissertation investigated the strategies of school educators, mothers and youth living in violent neighbourhoods to deal with neighbourhood violence, which offer important input for the development of educational interventions. Additionally, the community organisations involved in this study and their educational programmes can be considered bottom-up, community-based initiatives that provide relevant examples of local educational interventions. Based on the empirical studies on strategies of school educators, mothers and young people to deal with and resist neighbourhood violence, I will reflect on implications for the design and implementation of educational interventions localised in violent contexts, also in light of the literature review on current educational responses in Chapter 2. These practical implications are categorised into three main directions: 1) acknowledge the limitations of agency in violent contexts, 2) consolidate implicit strategies for resistance, and 3) strengthen local initiatives for community building to create change.

3.1 Acknowledge contextual limitations and external constraints

Firstly, an important implication of the findings in this study is that educational programmes have to take into account the actual risks people in neighbourhoods with high levels of violence are exposed to and how this affects their opportunities for agency. Chapters 3 to 5 demonstrate that the threat of violence in a context where victims and perpetrators are embedded in the same social space imposes major limitations and generates intricate social dynamics characterised by fear of victimisation and a communal sense of mistrust. Without being attentive to such contextual constraints, interventions that advocate collective action might undermine local strategies to manage risks through restricting social contacts and establishing a certain degree of isolation as a means of protection. Meanwhile, since people live in the same space, some sort of connection with gangs through family relations or former friendships is often inevitable. As one of the school educators in Chapter 3 said: "every home has a piece of it". Living so closely together also induces fear for repercussions, which generates strategies of silencing and closing your eyes to violence. The stakes of speaking up and openly offering resistance are high and such strategies for survival are vital since people and particularly youth felt they could not rely on governmental action for protection, also reflected in the elevated levels of police violence against residents of slum neighbourhoods (Carvalho & Arantes, 2021; FBSP, 2022). A well-founded approach to neighbourhood violence should consider how these intricate social dynamics limit possibilities for overt resistance and opportunities for change.

This relates to Freire's ideas that, in order to create an opening for change, hope needs to be embedded within a realistic sense of its limits, in the words of Alain Badiou (2001): to open up space for the idea "that something else is possible, but not that everything is possible" (p. 115). Fostering notions of hope based on a one-sided focus on agency thinking, on the idea that as long as you put in enough effort you will be able to succeed, might quickly turn into despair when disregarding the impact of external constraints and might actually destruct opportunities for social change. A more flexible and contextualised perspective on the opportunities for agency might offer a better basis for educational interventions that aim for transformation in contexts of violence. The results of this study show that social conditions of violence, poverty and inequality severely limit possibilities for taking action and openly offering resistance, and makes young people and educators reconstruct their hope for change according to their (perceived) options for agency. These findings underline the importance of connecting to the social reality of communities affected by violence, by remaining attentive to contextual limitations and making use of alternate ways to transcend constraints offered by local community practices.

3.2 Consolidate principles of implicit strategies to resist violence

The findings of this study demonstrate how, in response to contextual limitations and external constraints, young people and educators developed strategies to open up opportunities for agency and offer implicit forms of resistance. When agency is severely constrained by risks, such localised subtle forms of resistance might prove constructive for working towards change, albeit at the smaller scale of transformations under the circumstances. Application of these strategies' principles provide several interesting suggestions for the design and implementation of educational interventions in violent contexts where conditions do not allow direct reference to the conflict and overt forms of resistance are suppressed by the threat of violence. Several elements in the educators' and young people's implicit strategies for resistance can contribute to an indirect approach to counter neighbourhood violence without disregarding the risks people are exposed to.

A first suggestion would be to embrace the idea of constructing safe spaces with an opposite morality to combine the need for safety and protection with the importance educators and young people attach to teaching and learning a different set of values that moves away from violence. The community schools and the karate programme in this study function as examples of such bottom-up initiatives to offer a moral counteroffensive, although they did not work with a structured programme or curriculum for peace education. The community organisations' efforts to advocate a 'culture of peace' while simultaneously allowing for certain 'rules of the street' that offer protection for violence (such as keeping silent), might inform indirect models of peace education under circumstances of protracted violence. The school educators' subtle strategies to work towards transformation provide examples of such indirect and implicit forms of resistance, like the school educator who reconstructed symbols of gang violence by replacing the lyrics of violent songs with peaceful lines. Instead of overlooking the transformative potential of these practices and enforcing open discussion or explicit forms of collective action, educational interventions can foster and support such implicit countermoves that do not directly protest against gang and police violence but do fundamentally aim to oppose and transform violent practices and educate for peace.

A second suggestion would be to incorporate educators' and young people's strategies for restraint and restriction, as a way to manage risks and become streetwise, but also as a way to gain control over their circumstances and transform future perspectives. In particular the way young people have experienced karate to contribute to developing the much-needed discipline to resist violence and gang involvement, offers an interesting perspective for educational interventions directed at fostering resilience and peaceful interaction in contexts of violence. Karate's life philosophy offered moral teachings centred around discipline, dedication and determination that helped youth to face and overcome difficulties they encountered and fostered their resistance to the attraction of gangs. Other

sports programmes and different types of educational interventions might benefit from this connection between being in control through learning how to protect and defend yourself and become streetwise, and taking control over your future through discipline and hard work in order to transcend constraints and pursue a path that moves away from violence. Rather than categorically rejecting 'streetwise' behaviour, educational interventions might consider their value for gaining control in a context with many risks and together with youth discuss possibilities to use acquired skills and knowledge on the streets as 'cultural capital' (Dixon-Román, 2014) to overcome difficulties.

Furthermore, the way school educators and particularly mothers used restriction to keep control over their children's immediate environment in order to keep their children safe and on the right path, implies that interventions aiming to remodel controlling parenting practices might need to reconsider their approach. The findings in Chapter 4 show how parenting practices that might be considered 'authoritarian' or overly strict, function as expressions of involved parenthood in contexts of violence and were fundamental to the mothers' strategies to protect their children and prevent their involvement in gangs. This also means reviewing theoretical orientations that rely on a universal perspective on 'good' and 'bad' parenting and argues for explicit regard for diversity across contexts. Rejecting authoritarian parenting practices unconditionally, marking these practices deviant from a dominant perspective on 'universal' educational values (often western-based and defined in 'privileged' contexts), might damage pedagogical resources in contexts of violence. In general, in light of the results of this study, it would be useful to review current educational interventions in order to consider whether their approach possibly undermines local strategies to deal with risks and further limits opportunities for agency instead of empowering educators and young people in working towards change.

Thirdly, educational interventions can build on the flexible and contextualised set of different levels of perceived agency that both educators and young people adopted for developing resilience and resistance to violence. They flexibly switched between resignation to the neighbourhood context which they felt no control over, and a convinced belief in opportunities for personal change when actively dedicating yourself to a future that moves away from gang violence. The findings in Chapter 5 demonstrated how this dynamic sense of agency and control prevented youth from losing hope and enabled them to focus on things they did feel able to change and resist neighbourhood violence on a personal level. This implies that educational interventions should encourage a flexible set of different levels of perceived agency, in adaptation to the context. In particular for interventions directed at promoting young people's resilience, this means they should work with youth on the realistic possibilities for action and control and should not be directed at fostering internal control beliefs *in general*, without considering its limits, but should also address how external constraints limit opportunities for agency and reflect with youth on their range of influence.

Young people's belief in the impact of their own discipline and dedication to resist the attraction of gangs and make a future for themselves was an important source of strength as long as they simultaneously acknowledged the existence of external constraints, such as neighbourhood violence and financial difficulties. In particular when this dynamic sense of agency was shared within a supportive community like the sports programme, it did not lead to despair but actually encouraged agency and hope.

3.3 Strengthen local initiatives for community building

Finally, a crucial implication of this study's results for educational policy and the use of interventions, is the potential value of strengthening and expanding the efforts of local community initiatives so that over time a growing number of people in neighbourhoods affected by violence can rely on their support to offer resistance to neighbourhood violence and overcome the obstacles and difficulties they face. The importance school educators, mothers and young people in this study attached to being part of a supportive community with a shared moral discourse to deal with violent circumstances and construct a future that moves away from violence, suggests the need for reinforcement of such collective resources for resilience and resistance. Being part of a caring and supportive community that shares a communal goal to encourage youth to create a better future that moves away from gang involvement was an important resource for educators and young people alike. Considering the current focus on individualised approaches as demonstrated in the literature review in Chapter 2, this means educational interventions directed at countering neighbourhood violence might need a shift in focus towards encouraging connection to other people and fostering shared perspectives and common goals. In particular in contexts of violence where community organisation is hampered (Perlman, 2010) and a communal sense of fear, mistrust and unsafety obstruct social connections, supporting initiatives like community schools, sports programmes, religious groups and other collectives might provide new opportunities for community building and provide hopeful perspectives to collectively act for change in neighbourhoods.

The community organisations in this study and their educational programmes such as the community preschools (Chapter 3) and the karate programme (Chapter 5) are examples of such local initiatives. Also, the literature review in Chapter 2 mentions a few examples of programmes for community building that can provide supportive environments to establish shared perspectives and work on communal goals. Such local cooperatives that aim to bring community members together to address community needs should be supported in their endeavours to achieve a sense of agency in contexts of violence and offer resistance. Freire refers to the potential 'mobilising conditions of the masses' (Fernandes & Da Trindade, 2024, p. 68) to work towards a shared vision of a better future and proposes that achieving that vision only becomes possible through collective action, since changing the

world alone is not a possible dream (Araújo Freire, 2002). According to De Winter (2024) this is what agency actually constitutes: the ability and the willingness to act *together*, and organise to have an effect on the environment.

However, the educators and youth in this study directed their shared strategies for transformation not so much at change of the neighbourhood environment, but instead focussed on creating alternative communities that encourage youth to develop themselves, care for others and construct a future that moves away from violence. Although these 'smaller' transformations might for some not be radical enough, interventions that call on collective action in violent contexts should always consider the risks people are exposed to when establishing their ambitions and especially when pressing them on others. As long as violent neighbourhood circumstances remain unchanged and the powerful structures of local gangs, transnational organised crime groups and corrupt police forces continue to dominate, it might be best if such initiatives are focussed on community issues that can be addressed without explicitly crossing or defying existing power structures. While in the next paragraph I argue for a more systemic approach to neighbourhood violence that aims for larger transformations and addresses the role of social, economic and political structures in wider society, initiatives for collective action might still be able to create significant improvements on a neighbourhood level on a smaller scale, little by little, without endangering the people involved, even when circumventing thorny issues. Advocating a culture of peace, promoting access to education, internships and jobs, or improving public facilities are all examples of such issues that might not involve increased risk because they are not directly linked to gang and police violence, but indirectly do entail a form of resistance and provide opportunities for creating change in the neighbourhood.

In general, all these practical implications stress the need for a more profound engagement of local communities in educational programmes in contexts of violence. Since opportunities for resistance to violence might not be discovered without having full understanding of the neighbourhood reality, interventions that aim for transformation should involve people from the community in the design and implementation, in order not to overlook violence-related dynamics and the limitations for community agency it generates. While the importance of active engagement and partnership with communities is broadly acknowledged, the findings in Chapter 2 show that currently the level of community engagement varies substantially between interventions and is often aspired in theory but not secured in practice. In particular the involvement of young people from communities is relatively rare, while their perspectives can provide crucial insights for educational programmes that aim to strengthen opportunities for localised forms of transformative agency, instead of misinterpreting or undermining community practices constructed to manage risks and take back control of their circumstances. In order to achieve change, educational practice needs a contextualised

curriculum that, as Freire (2021) suggests, is not universal but meaningful in people's own experiences and localities. This means that to construct strategies attuned to the local context, it is fundamental to include perspectives of young people, parents and other educators from the community through participatory processes in the development and implementation of interventions.

4. Creating larger transformations: a systemic approach to neighbourhood violence

Despite the transformative potential of bottom-up, small-scaled and implicit strategies to offer resistance to neighbourhood violence *under* the limiting circumstances communities face, more is needed to break through these limitations and bring about larger transformations *of* the circumstances. In Salvador, violence has increased over the course of this study (FBSP, 2016; FBSP, 2022) and the findings suggest that even when people are collectively organised in community organisations, they are severely restricted in their possibilities to stand up to the overpowering structures of local gangs, transnational organised crime groups and corrupt police forces. Even more so because of the unequal distribution of public safety resources and increased exposure to police violence (Carvalho & Arantes, 2021; FBSP, 2022) as well as unequal access to education, employment and public services (Firpo de Souza Porto et al., 2015). These inequities mean that to a great extent people in slum neighbourhoods are left unprotected and with few resources to offer resistance to neighbourhood violence. Such dominant social structures of inequity that impair people's fundamental needs can be considered expressions of structural violence which, if not corrected, can become a source of direct violence and present a fundamental obstacle for establishing peace (Galtung, 1996). However, the historical context of poverty and social inequality between people in slum neighbourhoods and people in privileged neighbourhoods is persistent and has in fact only been increasing in recent times (IBGE, 2022b). Meanwhile, as the literature review in Chapter 2 has underlined, most interventions fail to address structural inequality and oppression as a systemic aspect of neighbourhood violence and focus on qualifying youth to do well despite constraints, while transforming precisely these structures that limit opportunities for change might offer a fundamental solution. This brings us to a final recommendation: the need for a more holistic and systemic approach to neighbourhood violence in order to accomplish larger transformations of related social wrongs and inequities mentioned above. Before proposing two important considerations for such a systemic approach, first I reflect on how the participants in this study perceive and deal with the relation between structural inequalities and neighbourhood violence and how in educational policy and interventions systemic approaches remain underrepresented.

The findings of this study underline the complex dynamics involved in neighbourhood violence, also beyond the neighbourhood on a wider societal level, that point towards the connection between neighbourhood violence and larger, structural issues. Chapters 3 to 5 show that, from a community perspective, poverty, unemployment and unequal access to education and public services were considered important obstacles for offering resistance to the attraction of gangs and creating an alternative future path. Although educators and young people considered these obstacles no excuse for gang involvement, they did relate them to the pervasiveness of violence in the neighbourhood and believed it caused some people to grow up 'revolted'. The literature review in Chapter 2 also indicates the potential role of social, economic and political structures in neighbourhood violence, in particular those structural mechanisms that exclude, disadvantage and discriminate people from poor communities and limit possibilities to participate equally in society. Educators and young people acknowledge these difficulties but nevertheless mostly focus on their opportunities for agency to overcome them, for youth strongly motivated by their perceived lack of power to change them. This is reflected in the focus of both educators and youth on perseverance and determination to follow the 'more difficult path' regardless of economic difficulties and other hardships. With the acknowledgement of how much perseverance and willpower this takes, they actually underline the structural difficulties they are up against and the lack of support from public policy in making a change.

However, despite feelings of injustice generated by social inequality and exclusion, young people refused to become victim of these mechanisms and, regardless of unequal opportunities, constructed a future that moves away from violence, offering resistance to social stigma against their neighbourhood and gang violence at the same time. Similarly, while mothers and school educators partly seemed to align themselves with the judgemental dominant discourse that blames community residents for the hardships they are facing, on the other hand their moral counteroffensive towards violence in the neighbourhood was also a way to counter stereotypes and offer resistance to a stigmatising image that labels people from slum areas as irresponsible, immoral and violent. As such, the educators and young people reject and resist deficit-thinking that holds people from historically oppressed populations responsible for the difficult circumstances they face, including those conceptualisations of 'community violence' that tend to reduce the issue to a problem of deficient communities and overlook systemic conditions at both the neighbourhood and societal level.

Such deficit-oriented conceptualisations and approaches towards neighbourhood violence are also reflected in educational policy and interventions, and relate to how the role of structural social wrongs often remains unaddressed, despite scientific literature that points towards the systemic character of neighbourhood violence. In this dissertation, the review of educational interventions directed at neighbourhood violence (Chapter 2) identified a

concentration of programme elements that primarily intervene on the individual level, and intend qualification and socialisation of youth through teaching anger management skills or changing social norms. Such an individualised approach entails the risk of suggesting that 'malfunctioning' young people and 'violent prone' communities are to blame for neighbourhood violence, while social, economic and political structures in wider society and how they affect violence in communities remain unexposed. A similar risk is associated with individual perspectives on resilience and agency, as argued in Chapter 5. When emphasising internal orientations towards opportunity and success, grounded in a belief in personal agency and the conviction that with enough willpower everyone can achieve their goals and overcome structural constraints, wider social conditions of poverty and violence remain unaddressed (Shade, 2006; Webb, 2013; Kolluri & Tichavakunda, 2022). Although such individualised approaches can be personally transformative for young people facing adversity and, as the literature review in Chapter 2 suggests, there is a strong evidence base for their potential to transform individual behaviour, these approaches do not seem to offer a basis for larger transformations directed at social change. When adaptation to the existing environment is the central aim, transformation of that environment and the elements or structures in it that sustain violence receives a marginal position. As such, these individualised approaches cannot offer a solution to neighbourhood violence because they do not acknowledge the complex social dynamics involved, and although they might change young people's individual behaviour it leaves neighbourhood environments and societal conditions unchanged.

Various critiques of such an individualised pedagogy underline that it undermines the potential of educational environments to create social change, in particular because it individualises social problems instead of creating opportunities for collective action (Freire, 2021; De Winter, 2024, Webb, 2013). Individualised approaches suggest the social problems people are facing are private issues that should be addressed through personal responsibility, which also implies that if they are unable to solve these issues they remain unconnected to broader public concerns but are considered individual failings (Webb, 2013; De Winter, 2024). In conclusion, for a structural social problem with a complex, pervasive and layered character like neighbourhood violence, an individualised approach that aims to 'remedy' assumed deficiencies in marginalised youth and communities will not provide an adequate response and might even reinforce social inequities. The intricate social dynamics and structural mechanisms involved in neighbourhood violence, call for a critical, more holistic and systemic approach that also addresses deficiencies of social, economic and political structures. This implies that educational policy needs a shift in focus from primarily fostering individual resilience to violent neighbourhood circumstances towards transforming structures that sustain various types of violence. Instead of treating symptoms and working towards change under the circumstances, education could also contribute to a development that centralises

these circumstances as a target for change. Based on the findings of this study, I propose two directions for such a systemic approach that aims for social transformation of violent and disempowering environments in neighbourhoods and societies.

Firstly, considering the imbalanced focus on qualification and socialisation of youth among existing educational responses, the design, implementation and evaluation of interventions and curricula should give more prominence to intervention strategies directed at 'social reorganisation' through awareness and transformation of social processes and structures. Examples are educational interventions that advocate critical consciousness about social inequality and aim for social change, such as programmes that foster collective action to address the needs of students from slum neighbourhoods. This also calls for deliberate public policy aimed at correcting social injustices and enabling equal participation in society, reflected in equal access to public resources for education, safety, health and infrastructure, as well as fair and equitable treatment from governmental organisations including law enforcement. In particular in contexts of violence where the threat of gang and police violence and feelings of injustice about poverty and social inequality cause a communal sense of fear, mistrust and unsafety, building trust between communities and a reliable government, including a trustworthy police force, is in my view essential to counter neighbourhood violence.

Secondly, a systemic approach to neighbourhood violence needs educational interventions that not only advocate critical consciousness about social, economic and political structures that sustain violence, but also encourage to cooperatively create paths of resistance in order to change this reality. This means that educational practice should emphasise dialogue and cooperation to come to shared perspectives and goals; in the daily practice with youth, preparing them to act communally, as well as when it comes to cooperating with a variety of educational partners (e.g. parents, community members, (other) schools, sports organisations, youth care, law enforcement, policy makers). Educators have an important task in fostering youth's agency to collectively develop ideas to lift systemic barriers and come to creative solutions to thorny issues such as neighbourhood violence that move around risks. Through an optimistic and yet realistic 'pedagogy of hope' that promotes participation and cultivates opportunities for shared agency (De Winter, 2024; Freire, 2021; Fishman & McCarthy, 2007), education can serve as an encouragement to not look away or to surrender to circumstances as inescapable fate, but to draw on these circumstances as offering up new challenges and opportunities. To think outside of the bounds of the existing social, economic and political realities and challenge them by developing collective communities of resistance (Freire, 2021). The educational environments of community schools and sports programmes that provide a basis for a moral counteroffensive towards neighbourhood violence can be considered an interesting starting point for such collective communities of resistance to further explore possibilities to transcend limiting situations and transform

realities. Since neighbourhood violence involves complex social dynamics and structural mechanisms well beyond the borders of the neighbourhood, a well-founded response also requires strategies for larger social transformations that are carried by an alliance of contributors and can rely on adequate resources in order to break through and transform violent and disempowering systems. This implies that a systemic approach should mobilise a variety of agents to join forces and, contrary to most individualised approaches should not offer a 'quick fix' in terms of improving young people's skills, but a long term and durable approach to create a more just and peaceful neighbourhood and society.

5. Methodological considerations based on the limitations of this study

This study has some limitations that need to be acknowledged and give rise to considerations for future research. First, data collection took place in three slum neighbourhoods in Salvador da Bahia that, although sharing many characteristics with other slum areas in Brazil and elsewhere in the world, also have their own local specifics. For example, the expressive colonial history of the city deeply marks present day social dynamics, while its cultural and religious traditions linked with resistance, like *capoeira* and the *orixás*, are reflected in cultural and educational activities. Also relevant is the particular history of forced resettlements and peripheralization of slum neighbourhoods in Salvador's *Subúrbio Ferroviário*, like the transfer of residents of stilt houses on the shores to housing complexes on 'solid land' located at the outskirts of the city which completely disorganised social communities and their ways of living. Because of these and other local specifics, the findings cannot be disconnected from the context. Nevertheless, considering the particular dynamics in violent contexts, other areas affected by high levels of violence, and particularly neighbourhoods that are dealing with gang and police violence, are expected to be able to benefit from the knowledge gathered in this study.

Second, as common in ethnographic research, the findings should also be interpreted in light of the process in which it has come to bear (Blommaert & Dong, 2010). This particularly relates to myself as the ethnographer, arriving as an outsider in the community and searching for an equilibrium between inclusion and exclusion, between on the one hand becoming a 'knowing' member of the community accustomed to its 'normal ways', and, on the other hand, remaining an outsider who observes these 'normal ways' as remarkable (Blommaert & Dong, 2010). As a white European and non-native speaker involved in academic research, I represented a reality distinct from the participants' environment. This presented limitations in terms of language and understanding, but was also helpful, as participants were more inclined to explain their perspectives due to my outsider position. Meanwhile, daily participation in the community organisations and everyday life, as well as

shared characteristics such as being female and a former preschool educator, contributed to developing a mutual understanding. Nevertheless, social desirability remains an issue to take into account, in particular since the research topic touches upon several social stigmas as well as safety issues, which might have caused participants to hold back thoughts and opinions during the interviews.

Third, although I used various types of ethnographic data (e.g. field notes and observations, photographs, recordings, news reports), the in-depth interviews with participants were the main focus of this study. Although they presented a rich data set, only audio was recorded to minimise intrusiveness and ensure anonymity, also considering the safety of participants. This presented some limitations because discussing the topic of gang and police violence was often covered with veiled words, silences and non-verbal expressions. This brings us to the question how researchers can interpret verbatim accounts when violent contexts limit opportunities for expression? How can we interpret silences and ambiguous interruptions as means to communicate the unspeakable? In order to overcome this limitation and think of alternative instruments to capture people's reflections interpretations and meaning-making, I have discussed the issue with participating young people. However, we did not come to a solution, as for example we dismissed the use of photo-voice immediately due to safety issues, since taking pictures in the neighbourhood would raise suspicion among local gangs. Nevertheless, it would be interesting to consider other types of expression as methodological tools (e.g. sports, theatre, art) and co-design instruments with community members that move beyond verbal expression but meanwhile ensure anonymity (e.g. art works, mood boards and artifacts, a choreography or play).

Lastly, also in this study involvement of the community should have been given more prominence from the start. As a topic-oriented ethnography, I started the study with several research questions about aspects of life I knew existed in the communities, but I did not make use of formal participation structures such as a panel to co-design and carry out the research with participants. Nevertheless, I did make use of informal participation structures and the circular research process did allow for feedback from participants and other community members as the data collection progressed. In this regard the involvement of local research assistants from the community provided a valuable contribution. Also the longitudinal design provided the opportunity to return to the neighbourhoods several times and discuss interim results with participants to check and reflect on them, including changes through time. Looking backwards however, I would have liked to involve participants from the start in a bottom-up procedure to discuss with them relevant research topics, questions, designs and how they would want to be involved in the study through (informal) participatory processes that deliberately aim to give prominence to their perspectives.

6. To conclude: Hopeful perspectives

This study has demonstrated how school educators, mothers and young people create opportunities for agency while faced with limiting circumstances. They developed small-scaled and implicit strategies to resist violence that, under the circumstances, create hopeful perspectives of transformation. These hopeful perspectives are reflected in the school environment that provides a safe haven and educates for peace in a violent context (Chapter 3), in the moral counteroffensive of mothers who despite hardships devote all their efforts to raising good people (Chapter 4), and in the trajectories of young people who dedicate themselves with discipline and determination to create a future that moves away from violence (Chapter 5). They all offer examples of hopeful perspectives in contexts of violence in spite of feelings of hopelessness and limited opportunities for agency.

While these small-scaled strategies might not suffice to realise transformation on a neighbourhood or societal level, in imagining a future that moves away from neighbourhood violence towards peace and care for others, their collective efforts might provide a solid basis to develop and realise the '*inédito viável*' that Freire (2021) speaks of. Freire's (2021) proposal to realise this unprecedented yet viable reality and overcome the given circumstances, relies on a process of mediation, between individual and community, between ideas and consequences, between belief and action, between what is and what might be (Ronald & Roskelly, 2001). This process also means that there's no defined end point and it involves a type of dreaming which is always in motion, transforming and promoting new dreams and possibilities along the way. As such, the implicit forms of resistance developed by educators and young people in this study under the limiting circumstances of neighbourhood violence might be used as a starting point for a mediating process towards larger transformations to transcend limiting situations. In the long run, when such implicit acts of resistance steadily gain ground, a shared moral counteroffensive of peace and care for others put into practice by a growing number of people with the support from powerful educational interventions, they might have the potential to bring about unprecedented social change. The growing interest in pedagogies of hope that advocate for cooperatively working on social improvements and creating caring communities presents a hopeful perspective in that regard.

Freire (2021) proposes that such a transformative process should always start from those people who suffer from the reality that needs to be transformed. Against that background, the aim of this study was to learn from community perspectives. The findings underline the importance of having full understanding of local meanings and experiences in order not to overlook violence-related dynamics and argue for context-based and community-involved approaches in research and practice. On this matter some hopeful developments are emergent in the past years, reflected in more acknowledgement and attention for community participation, more awareness of the need to address and redress

power imbalances and increasing appreciation for minority perspectives in policy, in practice, in research and across society. However, inequalities and injustices remain a global challenge that societies across the world are facing, and the number of people affected by armed conflict including gang-related violence has even increased (UN, 2023). Transforming this reality is difficult, but not impossible. It underlines the need for a vision of hope that as Freire (2021) suggests combines hope with practice; to not hope in vain but to work towards change. Therein lies a particular task for educators, to make use of the transformational potential of educational environments and, together with young people, construct a transformative kind of hope that stretches beyond the narrow confines of the 'realistic' without becoming insincere, sentimental or impossible to achieve; a practicable ideal that is unprecedented but yet viable. It also underlines the challenging but important social task we all bear, whether in education or in other domains, whether in research or in practice, and as citizens, in constructing hopeful initiatives of transformation towards peaceful and just societies for future generations.

References

Abdi, A. (2021). *Gun Violence as a Public Health Issue: Evaluating the Interventions of KC Mothers in Charge* (Thesis). University of Missouri. https://mospace.umsystem.edu/xmlui/handle/10355/86282

Abt, T. & Winship, C. (2016). *What works in reducing community violence: a meta-review and field study for the Northern Triangle.* Washington DC: U.S. Agency for International Development.

Abowitz, K. K. (2000). A Pragmatist Revisioning of Resistance Theory. *American Educational Research Journal, 37*(4), 877–907. https://doi.org/10.3102/00028312037004877

Aguirre Rojas, C. A. (2005). Hegemonic Cultures and Subaltern Cultures: Between Dialogue and Conflict. *Review (Fernand Braudel Center), 28*(2), 187–210. http://www.jstor.org/stable/40241628

Aguirre Rojas, C. A. (2008). Popular culture and the teaching of history: A critical reflection. In D. Silberman-Keller, Z. Bekerman, H. A. Giroux, & N. C. Burbules (Eds.), *Mirror images. Popular culture and education* (pp. 199–214). New York: Peter Lang Publishing Inc.

Ali-Saleh Darawshy, N., Gewirtz, A., & Marsalis, S. (2020). Psychological Intervention and Prevention Programs for Child and Adolescent Exposure to Community Violence: A Systematic Review. *Clinical Child and Family Psychology Review, 23*(3), 365–378. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10567-020-00315-3

Almeida Cunha Filgueiras, C. (1994). A creche comunitária na nebulosa da pobreza. *Cadernos de Pesquisa, 88*, 18–29.

Anderson, E. (1999). *Code of the street. Decency, violence and the moral life of the inner city.* New York: Norton & Co.

Anderson, E. (2012). The Iconic Ghetto. *The ANNALS of the American Academy of Political and Social Science, 642*(1), 8-24. https://doi.org/10.1177/0002716212446299

Angenent, H. (1991). *Achtergronden van jeugdcriminaliteit.* Houten-Antwerpen: Bohn Stafleu van Loghum.

Araújo Freire, A. M. (2002). Paulo Freire and the untested feasibility. *Counterpoints, 209*, 7–14. http://www.jstor.org/stable/42979482

Badiou, A. (2001). *Ethics. An essay on the understanding of evil.* London: Verso.

Baird, A. (2012). Negotiating Pathways to Manhood: Rejecting gangs and violence in Medellín's periphery. *Journal of Conflictology, 3*(1), 30–41. http://dx.doi.org/10.7238/joc.v3i1.1438

Bajaj, M. (2008). "Critical" peace education. In M. Bajaj (Ed.), *Encyclopedia of Peace Education* (pp. 135–146). Charlotte (NC): Information Age Pub.

Bajaj, M. (2015). 'Pedagogies of resistance' and critical peace education praxis. *Journal of Peace Education, 12*(2), 154–166. https://doi.org/10.1080/17400201.2014.991914

Bar-Tal, D., & Rosen, Y. (2009). Peace education in societies involved in intractable conflicts: direct and indirect models. *Review of Educational Research, 79*(2), 557–575. https://doi.org/10.3102%2F0034654308330969

Barbosa, J.L. & de Souza e Silva, J. (2013). As favelas como territórios de reinvenção da cidade. *Cadernos de Desenvolvimento Fluminense,* (1), 115-126. https://doi.org/10.12957/cdf.2013.9062

Barcellos, C., & Zaluar, A. (2014). Homicídios e disputas territoriais nas favelas do Rio de Janeiro. *Revista de Saúde Pública, 48*(1), 94–102. https://doi.org/10.1590/s0034-8910.2014048004822

Beauchamp, C. & Thomas, L. (2009). Understanding teacher identity: an overview of issues in the literature and implications for teacher education. *Cambridge Journal of Education, 39*(2), 175–189. https://doi.org/10.1080/03057640902902252

Bellair, P. E. (2000). Informal surveillance and street crime: a complex relationship. *Criminology, 38*(1), 137–170. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1745-9125.2000.tb00886.x

REFERENCES

Berg, M. T., Stewart, E. A., Schreck, C. J., & Simons, R. L. (2012). The victim-offender overlap in context. Examining the role of neighbourhood street culture. *Criminology, 50* (2), 359–390.
https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1745-9125.2011.00265.x

Berkowitz, S. J., Stover, C. S., & Marans, S. R. (2010). The Child and Family Traumatic Stress Intervention: Secondary prevention for youth at risk of developing PTSD. *The Journal of Child Psychology and Psychiatry, 52*(6), 676–685.
https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1469-7610.2010.02321.x

Biesta, G. J. J. (2012). *Goed onderwijs en de cultuur van het meten.* Den Haag, Nederland: Boom Lemma.

Biesta, G. J. J. (2015). *Het prachtige risico van onderwijs.* Culemborg, Nederland: Uitgeverij Phronese.

Bisgaard, C.H. (2021). Locus of Control in Dynamic Settings: a Semiotic Extension of an Old Theory. *Human Arenas, 4*, 542–562.
https://doi.org/10.1007/s42087-020-00127-5

Blattman, C., Jamison, J. C., & Sheridan, M. (2017). Reducing Crime and Violence: Experimental Evidence from Cognitive Behavioral Therapy in Liberia. *American Economic Review, 107*(4), 1165–1206.
https://doi.org/doi:10.1257/aer.20150503

Blommaert, J., & Dong, J. (2010). *Ethnographic fieldwork. A beginner's guide.* Bristol: Multilingual Matters.

Bol, M.W., Terlouw, G.J., Blees, L.W. & Verwers, C. (1998). *Jong en gewelddadig. Ontwikkelingen en achtergronden van de geweldscriminaliteit onder jeugdigen.* Den Haag: WODC.

Bordin, I. A., Handegård, B. H., & Paula, C. S. (2022). Professional and informal help-seeking among low-income adolescents exposed to violence in the community and at school. *Child Abuse & Neglect, 123*, 105382.
https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chiabu.2021.105382

Bourgois, P. (2003). *In Search of Respect: Selling Crack in El Barrio.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Bradley, R. H., & Corwyn, R. F. (2002) Socioeconomic status and child development. *Annual Review of Psychology, 53*, 371–399. https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev.psych.53.100901.135233

Bradshaw, C. P., Waasdorp, T. E., Debnam, K. J., & Lindstrom Johnson, S. (2014). Measuring school climate in high schools: a focus on safety, engagement and the environment. *Journal of School Health, 84*(9), 593–604. https://doi.org/10.1111/josh.12186

Braga, A.A. & Weisburd, D.L. (2012). The effects of focused deterrence strategies on crime: A systematic review and meta-analysis of the empirical evidence. *Journal of Research in Crime and Delinquency, 49* (3), 323–358. https://doi.org/doi:10.1177%2F0022427811419368

Brantingham, P. J., Tita, G., & Herz, D. (2021). The Impact of the City of Los Angeles Mayor's Office of Gang Reduction and Youth Development (GRYD) Comprehensive Strategy on Crime in the City of Los Angeles. *Justice Evaluation Journal, 4*(2), 217–236. https://doi.org/doi:10.1080/24751979.2021.1887709

Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology, 3*(2), 77–101. https://doi.org/10.1191/1478088706qp063oa

Briceño-León, R., Villaveces, A., & Concha-Eastman, A. (2008). Understanding the uneven distribution of the incidence of homicide in Latin America. *International Journal of Epidemiology, 37*(4), 751-757. https://doi.org/10.1093/ije/dyn153

Burgason, K. A., Thomas, S. A., Berthelot, E. R., & Burkey, L. C. (2014). Gats and Gashes: Street Culture and Distinctions in the Nature of Violence between Youth and Adult Offenders. *Deviant Behavior, 35*(7), 534–554. https://doi.org/doi:10.1080/01639625.2013.862032

Burrell, M., White, A.M., Frerichs, L., Funchess, M., Cerulli, C., DiGiovanni, L.& Hassmiller Lich, K. (2021). Depicting "the system": How structural racism and disenfranchisement in the United States can cause dynamics in community violence among males in urban black communities. *Social Science & Medicine, 272* (2021), 113469. https://doi.org/doi:10.1016/j.socscimed.2020.113469

REFERENCES

Butts, J.A., Gouvis Roman, C., Bostwick, L. & J.R. Porter (2015). Cure Violence: A public health model to reduce gun violence. *Annual Review of Public Health, 36*, 39–53. https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev-publhealth-031914-122509

Cano, I., & Ribeiro, E. (2007). Homicídios no Rio de Janeiro e no Brasil: Dados, poíticas públicas e perspectivas. In M. V. da Cruz & E. C. Batitucci (Eds.), *Homicídios no Brasil.* Editora FGV.

Carter, P. (2005). *Keepin' it real. School success beyond black and white.* New York: Oxford University Press.

Carvalho, I. & Arantes, R. (2021). "Cada qual no seu quadrado" Segregação socioespacial e desigualdades raciais na Salvador contemporânea. *EURE (Santiago), 47*(142), 49-72. http://dx.doi.org/10.7764/eure.47.142.03

Carvalho, I. M. Moreiro de, & Pereira, G. Corso (2008). As "cidades" de Salvador. In I. M. Moreiro de Carvalho, & G. Corso Pereira (Eds.), *Como anda Salvador e sua região metropolitana* (pp. 81–108). Salvador, BA: EDUFBA.

Cavanaugh, S. M., Branas, C. C., & Formica, M. K. (2021). Community-Engaged and Informed Violence Prevention Interventions. *Pediatric Clinics of North America, 68*(2), 489–509. https://doi.org/doi:10.1016/j.pcl.2020.12.007

Cerqueira, D., Lobão, W., & Carvalho, A. (2007). O jogo dos sete mitos e a miséria da segurança pública no Brasil. In M. V. da Cruz & E. C. Batitucci (Eds.), *Homicídios no Brasil.* Editora FGV.

Cima, M. (2016). The Handbook of Forensic *Psychopathology and Treatment.* Oxon/New York: Routledge.

Clarke-Habibi, S. (2005). Transforming worldviews: the case of Education for Peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina. *Journal of Transformative Education, 3*(1), 33-56. https://doi.org/10.1177%2F1541344604270238

Coalter, F. (2010). The politics of sport-for-development: Limited focus programmes and broad gauge problems? *International Review for the Sociology of Sport, 45*(3), 295-314. https://doi.org/10.1177/1012690210366.

REFERENCES

Cohen, A.K. (1955). *Delinquent Boys. The Culture of the Gang.* New York: Free Press.

Cohen, C. J. (2004). Deviance as resistance: a new research agenda for the study of black politics. *Du Bois Review, 1* (1), 27–45. https://doi.org/10.1017/S1742058X04040044

Conselho Nacional do Ministerio Público (CNMP). (2013). *Motivação dos crimes de homocídios.* Retrieved from http://www.cnmp.gov.br/portal/images/stories/Noticias/2012/Apresentao2.pdf

Corso Pereira, G. (2008). Habitação e infra-estrutura urbana em Salvador e região metropolitana. In: I.M. Moreira de Carvalho & G. Corso Pereira (Eds.). *Como anda Salvador e sua região metropolitana* (pp. 137–155). Salvador: Edufba.

Costa, A., & Lima, R. (2018). Estatísticas oficiais, violência e crime no Brasil. *Revista Brasileira de Informação Bibliográfica Em Ciências Sociais, 84,* 81–106. https://doi.org/10.17666/bib8403/2018

Cunha, C. Vital da (2018). Pentecostal cultures in urban peripheries: a socio-anthropological analysis of Pentecostalism in arts, grammars, crime and morality. *Vibrant: Virtual Brazilian Anthropology, 15* (1), e151401. https://www.redalyc.org/journal/4069/406958255005/html/

Das, V., & Kleinman, A. (2000). Introduction. In V. Das, A. Kleinman, M. Ramphele, & P. Reynolds (Eds.), *Violence and subjectivity* (pp. 1–18). Berkeley: University of California Press.

Das, V., Kleinman, A., Ramphele, M., & Reynolds, P. (2000). *Violence and Subjectivity.* (V. Das, A. Kleinman, M. Ramphele, & P. Reynolds, Eds.) (First). Berkeley: University of California Press.

De Buck, M.A. (2020). At the Crossroads of Multiculturalism and Violence: Community *Policing and Grassroots Education in Guerrero, Mexico* (Doctoral dissertation). Utrecht: Utrecht University.

De Luna Freire, L. (2008). Favela, bairro ou comunidade. Quando uma política urbana torna-se uma política de significados. *Dilemas: Revista de Estudos de Conflito e Controle Social, 1* (2), 95–114.

De Winter, M. (2024). *Medemenselijk opvoeden. Samenlevingspedagogiek voor een hoopvolle en daadkrachtige generatie.* Amsterdam: Uitgeverij SWP.

Dixon-Román, E. J. (2014). Deviance as pedagogy: from nondominant cultural capital to deviantly marked cultural repertoires. *Teachers College Record, 116* (8), 1–30. https://doi.org/10.1177/016146811411600802

Dubnov, W. L. (1986). The Glen Mills Project: Innovation in Juvenile Corrections. *Journal of Offender Counseling, Services & Rehabilitation, 10*(4), 87–105. https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1300/J264v10n04_09

Espinheira, G. (2001). Sociabilidade e violência na vida cotidiana em Salvador. *Bahia Análise & Dados 11*(1), 8–16.

Evans, K. (2002). Taking control of their lives? Agency in young adult transitions in England and the New Germany. *Journal of Youth Studies, 5*(3), 245-269. https://doi.org/10.1080/1367626022000005965.

Evans, K. (2007). Concepts of bounded agency in education, work, and the personal lives of young adults. *International Journal of Psychology, 42*(2), 85-93. https://doi.org/10.1080/00207590600991237

Fernandes, A. (2016). Vitimização policial: análise das mortes violentas sofridas por integrantes da Polícia Militar do Estado de São Paulo (2013-2014). *Revista Brasileira de Segurança Pública, 10*(2), 192-219. https://doi.org/10.31060/rbsp.2016.v10.n2.702

Fernandes, R. C., & Da Trindade, A. (2023). The conditions for building popular hegemony: Paulo Freire's 'inédito viável' and the experience of the Landless Workers' Movement (MST). *Globalisation, Societies and Education, 22*(1), 63–76. https://doi.org/10.1080/14767724.2023.2211532

Firpo de Souza Porto, M., Bastos da Cunha, M., Pivetta, F., Zancan, L. & Dias de Freitas, J. (2015). Saúde e ambiente na favela: reflexões para uma promoção emancipatória da saúde. *Serviço, Social & Sociedade, 123*, 523-543. https://doi.org/10.1590/0101-6628.035

Fishman, S.M. & McCarthy, L. (2007). *John Dewey and the Philosophy and Practice of Hope.* Chicago: University of Illinois Press.

Fórum Brasileiro de Segurança Pública (FBSP). (2016). *Anuário Brasileiro de segurança pública 2016.* ISSN 1983-7364. São Paulo: FBSP.
Retrieved from
https://forumseguranca.org.br/publicacoes/anuario-brasileiro-de-seguranca-publica/

Fórum Brasileiro de Segurança Pública (FBSP). (2018). *Anuário Brasileiro de segurança pública 2018.* Retrieved from
https://forumseguranca.org.br/publicacoes/anuario-brasileiro-de-seguranca-publica/

Fórum Brasileiro de Segurança Pública (FBSP). (2022). *Anuário Brasileiro de segurança pública 2022.* Retrieved from
https://forumseguranca.org.br/anuario-brasileiro-seguranca-publica/

Fowler, P. J., Tompsett, C. J., Braciszewski, J. M., Jacques-Tiura, A. J., & Baltes, B. B. (2009). Community violence: A meta-analysis on the effect of exposure and mental health outcomes of children and adolescents. *Development and Psychopathology, 21*(1), 227–259.
https://doi.org/doi:10.1017/s0954579409000145

Fox, A.M., Katz, C.M., Choate, D.E. & Hedberg, E.C. (2015). Evaluation of the Phoenix TRUCE Project: A Replication of Chicago CeaseFire, *Justice Quarterly, 32*(1), 85–115.
https://doi.org/10.1080/07418825.2014.902092

Freire, P. (2014). *Pedagogy of Hope: Reliving Pedagogy of the Oppressed (Bloomsbury Revelations).* London: Bloomsbury Academic.

Freire, P. (2018). *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (4th ed.). New York: Bloomsbury Academic.

Freire, P. (2021). *Pedagogy of Hope. Reliving Pedagogy of the Oppressed.* London: Bloomsbury Academic.

Furstenberg, F. F., Belzer, A., Davis, C., Levine, J. A., Morrow, K., & Washington, M. (1993). How families manage risk and opportunity in dangerous neighborhoods. In W. J. Wilson (Ed.), *Sociology and the public agenda* (pp. 231–238). Newbury Park, CA: Sage.

REFERENCES

Gaias, L. M. (2018). *The role of school practices in supporting marginalized students* ((Doctoral dissertation)). Retrieved from https://repository.asu.edu/attachments/201132/content/Gaias_asu_0010E_14817.pdf

Galtung, J. (1996). *Peace by peaceful means: Peace and conflict, development and civilization.* London: SAGE Publications.

Garland Reed, G. (2011). The complexity of moral learning: diversity, deprovincialisation and privilege. *Journal of Moral Education, 40* (3), 359-367.

Geneva Declaration on Armed Violence and Development (2015). *The Global Burden of Armed Violence 2015: Every Body Counts.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. Retrieved from http://www.genevadeclaration.org/measurability/global-burden-of-armed-violence/global-burden-of-armed-violence-2015.html

Gillies, V. (2008). Perspectives on parenting responsibility: contextualizing values and practices. *Journal of Law and Society,* 35 (1), 95–112. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-6478.2008.00416.x

Ginzburg, C. (2013). *Clues, myths and the historical method.* Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press.

Global Coalition to Protect Education from Attack (2016). *What Schools Can Do to Protect Education from Attack and Military Use.* New York: GCPEA.

Global Coalition to Protect Education from Attack (2014). *The Role of Communities in Protecting Education from Attack: Lessons Learned.* New York: GCPEA.

Gohn, M. da Glória (2011). Movimentos sociais na contemporaneidade. *Revista brasileira de Educação, 16*(47), 333-361. https://doi.org/10.1590/S1413-24782011000200005

Gohn, M. da Glória (2014). *Movimentos sociais e redes de mobilizações civis no Brasil contemporâneo.* Petrópolis: Editora Vozes Limitada.

Goldstein, D. M. (2013). *Laughter Out of Place: Race, Class, Violence, and Sexuality in a Rio Shantytown.* Berkeley: University of California Press.

Goodman, A. C., Ouellette, R. R., D'Agostino, E. M., Hansen, E., Lee, T., & Frazier, S. L. (2021). Promoting healthy trajectories for urban middle school youth through county-funded, parks-based after-school programming. *Journal of Community Psychology, 49*(7), 2795–2817.
https://doi.org/doi:10.1002/jcop.22587

Gottfredson, M.R. & Hirschi, T. (1990). *A general theory of crime.* Stanford: Stanford University Press.

Grossman, M., Johns, A. & McDonald, K. (2014). "More Than a Game": The Impact of Sport-Based Youth Mentoring Schemes on Developing Resilience toward Violent Extremism. *Social Inclusion, 2*(2). 57-70.
https://doi.org/10.17645/si.v2i2.167

Guterman, N. B., Haj-Yahia, M. M., Vorhies, V., Ismayilova, L., & Leshem, B. (2010). Help-Seeking and Internal Obstacles to Receiving Support in the Wake of Community Violence Exposure: The Case of Arab and Jewish Adolescents in Israel. *Journal of Child and Family Studies, 19*(6), 687–696.
https://doi.org/doi:10.1007/s10826-010-9355-x

Gutierrez-Martinez, M. I., Valencia, R. D., & Santaella-Tenorio, J. (2020). The holistic transformative street-street gang intervention impact and its association with homicide rates in Cali, Colombia. *Revista Criminalidad, 62*(3): 39–48.

Hagedorn, J. (2008). *A world of gangs: Armed young men and gangsta culture.* Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

Haj-Yahia, M. M., Leshem, B., & Guterman, N. B. (2013). The Rates and Characteristics of the Exposure of Palestinian Youth to Community Violence. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence, 28*(11), 2223–2249. https://doi.org/doi:10.1177/0886260512475309

Halpin, D. (2001). The nature of hope and its significance for education. *British Journal of Educational Studies, 49*(4), 392-410.
https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-8527.t01-1-00184

Harding, D. J. (2010). *Living the drama. Community, conflict and culture among inner-city boys.* Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

Harding, D. J. (2011). Rethinking the cultural context of schooling decisions in disadvantaged neighborhoods. From deviant subculture to cultural heterogeneity. *Sociology of Education, 84* (4), 322–339.
https://doi.org/10.1177/0038040711417008

Harrington, N.G., Giles, S.M., Hoyle, R.H., Feeney, G.J. & Yungbluth, S.C. (2001). Evaluation of the All Stars character education and problem behavior prevention program: effects on mediator and outcome variables for middle school students. *Health Education & Behavior, Vol. 28*(5), 533-546.
https://doi.org/10.1177/109019810102800502

Harris, I. M., & Morrison, M. L. (2013). *Peace Education* (3d ed.). Jefferson (NC): McFarland & Company.

Heller, S. B., Shah, A. K., Guryan, J., Ludwig, J., Mullainathan, S., & Pollack, H. A. (2016). Thinking, Fast and Slow? Some Field Experiments to Reduce Crime and Dropout in Chicago*.
The Quarterly Journal of Economics, 132(1), 1–54.
https://doi.org/doi:10.1093/qje/qjw033

Hendriks, J., & Stams, G. J. (2016). Forensisch orthopedagogische behandeling: een kritische beschouwing. *Orthopedagogiek: onderzoek en praktijk, 55*(9/10), 214-222.

Hilhorst, N. & Klooster, E. (2004). *Programma-evaluatie van de Glen Mills School.* Den Haag: WODC.

Hillis, S., Mercy, J., Amobi, A., & Kress, H. (2016). Global prevalence of past-year violence against children: a systematic review and minimum estimates. *Pediatrics, 137*(3), e20154079.
https://doi.org/10.1542/peds.2015-4079

Hirschi, T. (1969). *Causes of Delinquency.* Berkeley: University of California Press.

Ilan, J. (2015). *Understanding street culture. Poverty, crime, youth and cool.* London: Palgrave.

Instituto Brasileiro de Geografia e Estatística (IBGE). (2012). *Censo demográfico de 2010.* Rio de Janeiro: IBGE.

REFERENCES

Instituto Brasileiro de Geografia e Estatística (IBGE). (2016). *Estimativas da população residente no Brasil e unidades da Federação com data de referência em 1º de julho de 2016.*
Retrieved from ftp://ftp.ibge.gov.br/Estimativas_de_Populacao/Estimativas_2016/estimativa_dou_2016_20160913.pdf

Instituto Brasileiro de Geografia e Estatística (IBGE). (2017). *Dia Nacional da Habitação: Brasil tem 11,4 milhões de pessoas vivendo em favelas.*
Retrieved from https://agenciadenoticias.ibge.gov.br/agencia-noticias/2012-agencia-de-noticias/noticias/15700-dados-do-censo-2010-mostram-11-4-milhoes-de-pessoas-vivendo-em-favelas

Instituto Brasileiro de Geografia e Estatística (IBGE). (2018). *Educação 2018. Pesquisa Nacional por Amostra de Domicílios Contínua (PNAD Contínua).* Tabela: Suplemento de Educação.
Retrieved from https://www.ibge.gov.br/estatisticas/sociais/trabalho/17270-pnad-continua.html?edicao=24772&t=resultados

Instituto Brasileiro de Geografia e Estatística (IBGE). (2022a). *Prévia da população dos Municípios com base nos dados do Censo Demográfico 2022 coletados até 25/12/2022.*
Retrieved from https://www.ibge.gov.br/estatisticas/sociais/populacao/22827-censo-demografico-2022.html

Instituto Brasileiro de Geografia e Estatística (IBGE). (2022b). *PNAD Contínua. Em 2021, rendimento domiciliar per capita cai ao menor nível desde 2012.*
Retrieved from https://agenciadenoticias.ibge.gov.br/agencia-noticias/2012-agencia-de-noticias/noticias/34052-em-2021-rendimento-domiciliar-per-capita-cai-ao-menor-nivel-desde-2012

Instituto Brasileiro de Geografia e Estatística (IBGE). (2022c). *Educação 2022. Pesquisa Nacional por Amostra de Domicílios Contínua (PNAD Contínua). Tabela 7269: Pessoas de 25 anos ou mais de idade, por sexo e grupamentos de nível de instrução.*
Retrieved from https://www.ibge.gov.br/estatisticas/sociais/trabalho/17270-pnad-continua.html?edicao=36982&t=resultados

REFERENCES

Instituto Brasileiro de Geografia e Estatística (IBGE). (2024). *Favelas e Comunidades Urbanas. Notas metodológicas n. 01. Sobre a mudança de Aglomerados Subnormais para Favelas e Comunidades Urbanas.* Retrieved from https://www.ibge.gov.br/geociencias/organizacao-do-territorio/tipologias-do-territorio/15788-aglomerados-subnormais.html

Jain, S., & Cohen, A. K. (2013). Behavioral Adaptation Among Youth Exposed to Community Violence: a Longitudinal Multidisciplinary Study of Family, Peer and Neighborhood-Level Protective Factors. *Prevention Science, 14*(6), 606–617. https://doi.org/doi:10.1007/s11121-012-0344-8

Johnson, D.W. & Johnson, R.T. (1996). Conflict Resolution and Peer Mediation Programs in Elementary and Secondary Schools: A Review of the Research. *Review of Educational Research, 66*(4), 459-506. https://doi.org/10.3102/00346543066004459

Junger-Tas, J. (1996). Gezinsbeleid vanuit een justitieel perspectief. *Justitiële verkenningen, 22*(6), 17-37.

Kärnä, A., Voeten, M., Little, T.D., Poskiparta, E., Kaljonen, A., & Salmivalli, C. (2011). A large-scale evaluation of the KiVa anti-bullying program. *Child Development, 82*, 311-330. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-8624.2010.01557.x

Kelly, P. J., Lesser, J., Cheng, A. L., Oscós-Sánchez, M., Martinez, E., Pineda, D., & Mancha, J. (2010). A Prospective Randomized Controlled Trial of an Interpersonal Violence Prevention Program With a Mexican American Community. *Family & Community Health, 33*(3), 207–215. https://doi.org/doi:10.1097/fch.0b013e3181e4bc34

Kennedy, D.M. (2011). Whither streetwork? The place of outreach workers in community violence prevention. *Criminology & Public Policy, 10* (4), 1045-1052.

Kolluri, S., & Tichavakunda, A. A. (2023). The Counter-Deficit Lens in Educational Research: Interrogating Conceptions of Structural Oppression. *Review of Educational Research, 93*(5), 641-678. https://doi.org/10.3102/00346543221125225

Kramer, S. (2006). As crianças de 0 a 6 anos nas políticas educacionais: educação infantil e/é fundamental. *Educação e Sociedade, 27*(96), 797–818.

Kriesberg, L. (1970). *Mothers in poverty: A study of fatherless families.* Chicago: Aldine Pub. Co.

Kvale, S. (2011). *Doing interviews.* London: SAGE Publications.

Kubrin, C.E. (2009). Social disorganization theory: Then, Now and in the Future. In: M.D. Krohn, A.J. Lizotte & G. Penly Hall (Eds.), *Handbook on crime and deviance.* (pp. 225-236). New York: Springer. https://doi.org/doi:10.1007/978-1-4419-0245-0

Kubrin, C. E., & Wo, J. C. (2016). Social disorganization theory's greatest challenge: linking structural characteristics to crime in socially disorganized communities. In A.R. Piquero, *The handbook of criminological theory,* (pp. 121-136). Chichester: John Wiley & sons.

Lasky, S. (2005). A sociocultural approach to understanding teacher identity, agency and professional vulnerability in a context of secondary school reform. *Teaching and Teacher Education, 21,* 899–916. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2005.06.003

Lawrence, P. (2000). Violence, Suffering, Amman: The Work of Oracles in Sri Lanka's Eastern War Zone. In V. Das, A. Kleinman, M. Ramphele, & P. Reynolds (Eds.), *Violence and subjectivity* (pp. 171–204). Berkeley: University of California Press.

Levchak, P. J. (2021). Pulling levers in New Haven, CT: an analysis of the TimeZup initiative and its impact on murder, robbery, and assault. *Policing: An International Journal, 44*(5), 875–892. https://doi.org/10.1108/PIJPSM-09-2020-0158

Lilly, R. J., Cullen, F. T., & Ball, R. A. (2019). *Criminological Theory: Context and Consequences* (7th ed.). Thousand Oaks (CA): SAGE Publications.

Liska, A. E., & Warner, B. D. (1991). Functions of crime: a paradoxical process. *American Journal of Sociology, 96*(6), 1441–1463. https://doi.org/10.1086/229692

Liu, J. (1993). *The functions of crime: a theory and a research agenda* [Doctoral dissertation, State University of New York at Albany]. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses Global.

REFERENCES

Lorion, R. & Saltzman,W. (1993). Children's exposure to community violence: Following a path from concern to research to action. In D. Reiss, J. E. Richters, M. Radke-Yarrow, & D. Scharff (Eds.), *Children and violence* (pp. 55–65). New York: Guilford Press.

Manso, B. P., & Dias, C. N. (2018). *A guerra: A ascensão do PCC e o mundo do crime no Brasil.* São Paulo: Todavia.

Marciales Mogollón, S.C. & Vega Romero, M.J. (2019). *Evaluación del impacto del programa para la resolución de conflictos Hermes en los colegios de Bogotá, a nivel académico y de clima escolar.* Bogotá, Colombia: Universidad de los Andes.

Mariz, C. Loreto (1994). *Coping with Poverty: Pentecostals and Christian Base Communities in Brazil.* Philadelphia: Temple University Press.

Markowitz, F. E., Bellair, P. E., Liska, A. E., & Liu, J. (2001). Extending social disorganization theory: modeling the relationships between cohesion, disorder, and fear*. *Criminology, 39*(2), 293–319. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1745-9125.2001.tb00924.x

McCoy, D.C., Dormal, M., Cuartas, J., Carreira dos Santos, A., Fink, G. & Brentani, A. (2023). The acute effects of community violence on young children's regulatory, behavioral, and developmental outcomes in a low-income urban sample in Brazil. *The Journal of Child Psychology and Psychiatry, 65*(5), 620–630. https://doi.org/10.1111/jcpp.13799

McDaniel, D. & Sayegh, C. (2020). Gang violence prevention efforts: a public health approach. In: J.S. Wormith, L.A. Craig & T.E. Hogue (Eds.), *The Wiley handbook of what works in violent risk management: theory, research and practice.* (pp. 265-277). Hoboken (NJ): John Wiley & Sons Ltd.

McLeroy, K. R., Norton, B. L., Kegler, M. C., Burdine, J. N., & Sumaya, C. V. (2003). Community-based interventions. *American Journal of Public Health, 93*(4), 529–533. https://doi.org/10.2105/AJPH.93.4.529

Miles, M.B., & Huberman, A.M. (1994). *Qualitative data analysis: An expanded sourcebook.* Thousand Oaks: SAGE Publications.

Monchinski, T. (2010). *Education in Hope. Critical pedagogies and the Ethic of care.* New York: Peter Lang Publishing.

Mora, M. (2007). Zapatista Anticapitalist Politics and the "Other Campaign". *Latin American Perspectives, 34*(2), 64–77. https://doi.org/10.1177/0094582X06299086

Mullins, C. (2013). *Holding your square. Masculinities, streetlife and violence.* New York: Routledge.

Noddings, N. (2008). Caring and peace education. In M. Bajaj (Ed.), *Encyclopedia of Peace Education* (pp. 87–91). Charlotte (NC): Information Age Pub.

Noddings, N. (2012). The caring relation in teaching. *Oxford Review of Education, 38*(6), 771–781. https://doi.org/10.1080/03054985.2012.745047

Noguera, P. E. (1995). Preventing and producing violence: a critical analysis of responses to school violence. *Harvard Educational Review, 65*(2), 189–212. https://doi.org/10.17763/haer.65.2.e4615g5374044q28

O'Donnell, D. A., Roberts, W. C., & Schwab-Stone, M. E. (2011). Community violence exposure and post-traumatic stress reactions among Gambian youth: the moderating role of positive school climate. *Social Psychiatry and Psychiatric Epidemiology, 46*(1), 59–67. https://doi.org/10.1007/s00127-009-0162-x

Öhman, M. & Quennerstedt, M. (2008). Feel good—be good: subject content and governing processes in physical education, *Physical Education and Sport Pedagogy, 13*(4), 365-379. https://doi.org/10.1080/17408980802353339

Outwater, A. H., Abraham, A. G., Iseselo, M. K., Sekei, L. H., Kazaura, M. R., & Killewo, J. (2021). Entrepreneurship, beekeeping, and health training to decrease community violence in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania: a pilot study for an intervention trial. *Pilot and Feasibility Studies, 7*(183). https://doi.org/doi:10.1186/s40814-021-00920-1

Overstreet, S. (2000). Exposure to community violence: defining the problem and understanding the consequences. *Journal of Child and Family Studies, 9*(1), 7–25. https://doi.org/10.1023/A:1009403530517

Padilla, F.M. (1992). *The gang as an American enterprise.* New Brunswick (NJ): Rutgers University Press.

Page, J. S. (2004). Peace Education: Exploring Some Philosophical Foundations. *International Review of Education, 50*(1), 3–15. https://doi.org/doi:10.1023/b:revi.0000018226.19305.6c

Papachristos, A.V. & Kirk, D.S. (2015). Changing the street dynamic: Evaluating Chigago's group violence reduction strategy, *Criminology & Public Policy, 14* (3), 525-558. https://doi.org/10.1111/1745-9133.12139

Pels, T. (2003). *Respect van twee kanten. Een studie over last van Marokkaanse jongeren.* Assen: Koninklijk van Gorcum BV.

Penglase, B. R. (2014). *Living with Insecurity in a Brazilian Favela: Urban Violence and Daily Life.* London: Rutgers University Press.

Perlman, J. (2010). *Favela: Four Decades of Living on the Edge in Rio de Janeiro.* New York: Oxford University Press.

Petrosino, A., Turpin-Petrosino, C., Hollis-Peel, M. E., & Lavenberg, J. G. (2013). 'Scared Straight' and other juvenile awareness programs for preventing juvenile delinquency. *Cochrane Database of Systematic Reviews, 2013*(4), CD002796. https://doi.org/10.1002/14651858.CD002796.pub2

Picard-Fritsche S. & Cerniglia L. (2013). *Testing a Public Health Approach to Gun Violence: An Evaluation of Crown Heights Save Our Streets, a Replication of the Cure Violence Model.* New York: Center for Court Innovation.

Pino, A. (2007). Violencia Educação e Sociedade: um olhar sobre o Brasil contemporâneo. *Educação & Sociedade, 28*(100), 763–785. https://doi.org/10.1590/S0101-73302007000300007

Pinzon-Salcedo, L. A., & Torres-Cuello, M. A. (2018). Community Operational Research: Developing a systemic peace education programme involving urban and rural communities in Colombia. *European Journal of Operational Research, 268*(3), 946–959. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ejor.2017.11.040

Pitts, J. (2008). *Reluctant Gangsters: The changing face of youth crime.* Cullompton: Willan Publishing.

Philip, T.M., Bang, M. & Jackson, K. (2018) Articulating the "How," the "For What," the "For Whom," and the "With Whom" in Concert: A Call to Broaden the Benchmarks of our Scholarship, *Cognition and Instruction, 36*(2), 83-88. https://doi.org/10.1080/07370008.2018.1413530

Raja, S., Rabinowitz, E. P., & Gray, M. J. (2021). Universal screening and trauma informed care: Current concerns and future directions. Families, *Systems, & Health, 39*(3), 526–534. https://doi.org/10.1037/fsh0000585

Ronald, K., & Roskelly, H. (2001). Untested Feasibility: Imagining the Pragmatic Possibility of Paulo Freire. *College English, 63*(5), 612–632. https://doi.org/10.2307/379047

Sampson, R. J., Raudenbush, S.W., & Earls, F. (1997). Neighborhoods and violent crime: A multilevel study of collective efficacy. *Science, 277*, 918–924. https://doi.org/10.1126/science.277.5328.918

Sampson, R. J., & Raudenbush, S. W. (1999). Systematic social observation of public spaces: A new look at disorder in urban neighborhoods. *American Journal of Sociology, 105*(3), 603-651. https://doi.org/10.1086/210356

Santos, S. M., Barcellos, C., Sá Carvalho, M., & Flôres, R. (2001). Detecção de aglomerados espaciais de óbitos por causas violentas em Porto Alegre, Rio Grande do Sul, Brasil, 1996. *Cadernos de Saúde Pública, 17*(5), 1141–1151.

Schwartz, S. B. (1987). Plantations and peripheries, c. 1580–c. 1750. In L. Bethell (Ed.), *Colonial Brazil* (pp. 67-144). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Shade, P. (2006). Educating Hopes. *Studies in Philosophy and Education, 25*(3), 191–225. https://doi-org.proxy.library.uu.nl/10.1007/s11217-005-1251-2

Shields, N., Nadasen, K., & Pierce, L. (2008). The effects of community violence on children in Cape Town, South Africa. *Child Abuse & Neglect, 32*(5), 589–601. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chiabu.2007.07.010

Sibinga, E. M., Webb, L., Ghazarian, S. R., & Ellen, J. M. (2015). School-Based Mindfulness Instruction: An RCT. *Pediatrics, 137*(1), e20152532. https://doi.org/10.1542/peds.2015-2532

Sichel, C. E., Javdani, S., Ueberall, S., & Liggett, R. (2019). Leveraging youths' digital literacies: The E-Responder social media violence interruption model and pilot evaluation. *Journal of Prevention & Intervention in the Community, 47*(2), 76–89. https://doi.org/10.1080/10852352.2019.1582145

Sichel, C. E., Javdani, S., Shaw, S., & Liggett, R. (2020). A role for social media? A community-based response to guns, gangs, and violence online. *Journal of Community Psychology, 49*(3), 822–837. https://doi.org/10.1002/jcop.22369

Skogan, W.G. (2011). Community-based partnerships and crime prevention. *Criminology & Public Policy, 10* (4), 987–990.

Smith, P.K., Ananiadou, K., & Cowie, H. (2003). Interventions to reduce school bullying. *Canadian Journal of Psychiatry, 48*(9), 591–599. https://doi.org/10.1177/070674370304800905

Solem, M., Helgeland, M., Brannen, J. & Phoenix, A. (2020). Transitions to Adulthood of 'At Risk' Young Men: New Analysis from Two Norwegian Qualitative Longitudinal Studies. *Children & Society, 34*(3), pp. 220-233. https://doi.org/10.1111/chso.12369

Sorsdahl, K., Davies, T., Jensel, C., Oberholzer, D., Gelberg, L., & van der Westhuizen, C. (2021). Experiences and Perceived Benefits of a Youth Skateboarding Program in South Africa: From the Physical to Emotional and Beyond. *Journal of Adolescent Research, (OnlineFirst)*, 1–26. https://doi.org/10.1177/07435584211052983

Spencer, J. (2000). On not becoming a "terrorist": problems of memory, agency, and community in the Sri Lankan conflict. In V. Das, A. Kleinman, M. Ramphele, & P. Reynolds (Eds.), *Violence and subjectivity* (pp. 120–140). Berkeley: University of California Press.

Spradley, J.P. (1980). *Participant observation.* New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston.

REFERENCES

Stahlberg, S.G. (2021). *The Dark Side of Competition: Organized Crime and Violence in Brazil* (Doctoral dissertation, Johns Hopkins University). https://jscholarship.library.jhu.edu/server/api/core/bitstreams/cab346f5-3e03-4f40-9447-18b93f008d24/content

Steele, L. G. (2011). "A gift from God": Adolescent motherhood and religion in Brazilian favelas. *Sociology of Religion, 72* (1), 4–27. https://doi.org/10.1093/socrel/srq079

Stewart, E.A. & Simons, R.L. (2010). Race, code of the street, and violent delinquency: a multilevel investigation of neighborhood street culture and individual norms of violence. *Criminology, 48*(2), 569–605. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1745-9125.2010.00196.x

Strauss, A., & Corbin, J. M. (1998). *Basics of qualitative research. Techniques and procedures for developing grounded theory.* Thousand Oaks (CA): Sage Publications, Inc.

Sullivan, T. N., Farrell, A. D., Sutherland, K. S., Behrhorst, K. L., Garthe, R. C., & Greene, A. (2021). Evaluation of the Olweus Bullying Prevention Program in US Urban Middle Schools Using a Multiple Baseline Experimental Design. *Prevention Science, 22,* 1134–1146. https://doi.org/doi:10.1007/s11121-021-01244-5

Swartz, S. (2010). 'Moral ecology' and 'moral capital': tools towards a sociology of moral education from a South African ethnography. *Journal of Moral Education, 39* (3), 305-327. https://doi.org/10.1080/03057240.2010.497611

Taliep, N., Ismail, G., & Bulbulia, S. (2021). Fidelity of implementation of the building bridges mentoring intervention to prevent violence among youth in low income settings. *International Journal of Injury Control and Safety Promotion, 29*(1), 1–14. https://doi.org/10.1080/17457300.2021.1995441

The World Bank. (2004). *Inequality and economic development in Brazil.* Retrieved from http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/456611468744062519/pdf/301140PAPER0Inequality0Brazil.pdf

Thomson, R., Henderson, S. & Holland, J. (2003). Making the Most of What You've Got? Resources, Values and Inequalities in Young Women's Transitions to Adulthood. *Educational Review, 55*(1), 33-46. https://doi.org/10.1080/00131910303249

Thomson, R. (2007). The Qualitative Longitudinal Case History: Practical, Methodological and Ethical Reflections. *Social Policy and Society, 6*(4), https://doi.org/10.1017/S1474746407003909

Tol, W.A., Song, S., & Jordans, M.J.D. (2013). Annual Research Review: Resilience in children and adolescents living in areas of armed conflict: A systematic review of findings in low- and middle-income countries. *The Journal of Child Psychology and Psychiatry, 54*(4), 445–460. https://doi.org/10.1111/jcpp.12053

Tolan, P. H., Sherrod, L. R., Gorman-Smith, D., & Henry, D. B. (2004). Building protection, support, and opportunity for inner-city children and youth and their families. In K. I. Maton, C. J. Schellenbach, B. J. Leadbeater, & A. L. Solarz (Eds.), *Investing in children, youth, families and communities: Strengths-based research and policy* (pp. 193–211). Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.

UNESCO. (2017). *School violence and bullying. Global status report.* Retrieved from https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000246970

Ungar, M. (2011). The social ecology of resilience. Addressing contextual and cultural ambiguity of a nascent construct. *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry, 81*, 1-17. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1939-0025.2010.01067.x

UNICEF. (2016). *The state of the world's children 2016. A fair chance for every child.* New York: UNICEF. Retrieved from https://www.unicef.org/media/50076/file/UNICEF_SOWC_2016-ENG.pdf

United Nations (2023). *The Sustainable Development Goals Report 2023: Special Edition. Towards a Rescue Plan for People and Planet.* https://sdgs.un.org/documents/sustainable-development-goals-report-2023-53220

United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). (2013). *Atlas do desenvolvimento humano no Brasil.* RM Salvador. Retrieved from http://www.atlasbrasil.org.br/2013/pt/perfil_rm/salvador

United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. (2020). *World drug report 2020. Booklet 3: Drug supply.* https://wdr.unodc.org/wdr2020/en/drug-supply.html

Van Damme, E. (2017). Gangs in the DRC and El Salvador: towards a third generation of gang violence interventions? *Trends in Organized Crime, 21*(4), 343–369. https://doi.org/doi:10.1007/s12117-017-9316-5

Van den Brink, G. (2006). *Geweld als uitdaging. De betekenis van agressief gedrag bij jongeren.* Amsterdam: Uitgeverij SWP.

Van Dijk, A., de Haan, M., & de Winter, M. (2019). Armoured with morality: Parental perspectives on moral education in the violent context of Brazilian slums. *Journal of Moral Education, 49*(4), 436–453. https://doi.org/10.1080/03057240.2019.1646635

Van Dijk, de Haan & de Winter (2020). Voicing versus silencing: education for peace in contexts of violence. *International Journal of Educational Research, 102*, 101581. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijer.2020.101581

Van Dijk, A., de Haan, M., & de Winter, M. (in press). Educational Responses Towards Community Violence: A Critical Analysis of Perspectives on Causes and Solutions

Van Wyk, J. A. (2022). Is Violence, Violence no Matter Where it Strikes? Adjudicated Boys,Thwarted Belongingness, Perceived Burdensomeness, and Acquired Capability for Suicide. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence, 37*(21–22), NP20816–NP20846. https://doi.org/10.1177/08862605211055080

Vanden, H.E. (2007). Social Movements, Hegemony, and New Forms of Resistance. *Latin American Perspectives, 34*(2), 17-30. https://doi.org/10.1177/0094582X06299082

Vetter, A., Faircloth, B. S., Hewitt, K. K., Gonzalez, L. M., He, Y., & Rock, M. L. (2022). Equity and Social Justice in Research Practice Partnerships in the United States. *Review of Educational Research, 92*(5), 829–866. https://doi.org/10.3102/00346543211070048

Voisin, D. R., & Berringer, K. R. (2015). Interventions Targeting Exposure to Community Violence Sequelae Among Youth: A Commentary. *Clinical Social Work Journal, 43*(1), 98–108. https://doi.org/doi:10.1007/s10615-014-0506-1

Wang, X. (2017). Cultivating morality in Chinese families – Past, present and future. *Journal of Moral Education, 46* (1), 24-33. https://doi.org/10.1080/03057240.2017.1291416

Wang, X., Bernas, R. & Eberhard, P. (2012). When a lie is not a lie. Understanding Chinese working-class mothers' moral teaching and moral conduct. *Social Development, 21* (1), 68-87. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-9507.2011.00619.x

Webb, D. (2013). Pedagogies of hope. *Studies in Philosophy and Education, 32*, 397-414. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11217-012-9336-1

Webster, D.W., Mendel Whitehill, J., Vernick, J.S., Parker, E.M. (2012). *Evaluation of Baltimore's Safe Streets Program: Effects on Attitudes, Participants' Experiences, and Gun Violence.* Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins Cent. Prev. Youth Violence.

Weerman, F.M. (1998). *Het belang van bindingen. De bindingstheorie als verklaring van verschillen en veranderingen in delinquent gedrag.* Groningen: Wolters-Noordhoff.

Weijers, I. (2020). Wetenschappelijke perspectieven op jeugdcriminaliteit. In: I. Weijers (Ed.), *Jeugdcriminologie. Achtergronden van jeugdcriminaliteit.* (pp. 95–142). Den Haag: Boom Criminologie.

Welsh, R. O., & Little, S. (2018). The School Discipline Dilemma: A Comprehensive Review of Disparities and Alternative Approaches. *Review of Educational Research*, 88(5), 752–794. https://doi.org/10.3102/0034654318791582

Wilkins, N., Tsao, B., Hertz, M., Davis, R., Klevens, J. (2014). *Connecting the Dots: An Overview of the Links Among Multiple Forms of Violence.* Atlanta, GA: National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Oakland, CA: Prevention Institute. Retrieved from https://www.preventioninstitute.org/publications/connecting-dots-overview-links-among-multiple-forms-violence

Williams, D., Currie, D., Linden, W., & Donnelly, P. (2014). Addressing gang-related violence in Glasgow: A preliminary pragmatic quasi-experimental evaluation of the Community Initiative to Reduce Violence (CIRV). *Aggression and Violent Behavior, 19*(6), 686–691. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.avb.2014.09.011

Williams, H. M. A. (2017). Teachers' nascent praxes of care: potentially decolonizing approaches to school violence in Trinidad. *Journal of Peace Education, 14*(1), 69–91. https://doi.org/10.1080/17400201.2016.1245656

Wilson, J.M. & Chermak, S. (2011). Community-driven violence reduction programs: Examining Pittsburg's One Vision One Life. *Criminology & Public Policy, 10*(4), 993–1027. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1745-9133.2011.00763.x

World Health Organization (WHO). (2014). *Global status report on violence prevention 2014.* Retrieved from https://www.who.int/violence_injury_prevention/violence/status_report/2014/en/

Yablon, Y. B. (2015). Positive school climate as a resilience factor in armed conflict zones. *Psychology of Violence, 5*(4), 393–401. https://doi.org/10.1037/a0039600

Young, A. A. (2004). *The minds of marginalized black men. Making sense of mobility, opportunity, and life chances.* Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Nederlandse samenvatting

Hoe wapen je kinderen tegen geweld in de buurt? Hoe bied je weerstand in een omgeving vol gevaren? En hoe creëer je een alternatief toekomstperspectief ondanks deze obstakels? Dit proefschrift beschrijft de resultaten van een etnografische studie naar het opgroeien en opvoeden van jeugd in een gewelddadige buurtomgeving, vanuit de perspectieven van onderwijzers, moeders en jongeren in Braziliaanse sloppenwijken. Hoewel er veel interventies worden ontwikkeld om geweld in buurten en de schadelijke impact ervan op jongeren en hun omgeving tegen te gaan, worden de gemeenschappen waar deze interventies plaatsvinden hier lang niet altijd bij betrokken. Vaak blijven de perspectieven van mensen die leven in gewelddadige omstandigheden onderbelicht. Het doel van deze studie is om een beter begrip te creëren van de complexe dynamiek van geweld in buurten vanuit het lokale perspectief van de gemeenschap. Door meer inzicht te creëren in de manier waarop opvoeders en jongeren omgaan met en weerstand bieden aan geweld in hun buurt, beoogt deze studie tot waardevolle inzichten te komen voor de ontwikkeling van educatieve interventies in deze contexten. Momenteel zijn deze interventies regelmatig gericht op het 'verhelpen' van veronderstelde gebreken en tekortkomingen van individuele jongeren of hun ouders. Dit kan als een problematische aanpak worden beschouwd omdat het suggereert dat zij persoonlijk verantwoordelijk zijn voor de buurtomstandigheden. Bovendien reduceert een dergelijke aanpak geweld in buurten tot een individueel probleem, waarbij systemische en maatschappelijke aspecten buiten beschouwing worden gelaten. Tegen die achtergrond is deze studie erop gericht om via een etnografische benadering een breder begrip van geweld in buurten te ontwikkelen en in beeld te brengen wat de potentie van lokale educatieve praktijken en gemeenschapsinitiatieven kan zijn om verandering te realiseren.

Dit proefschrift bestaat uit vier deelstudies die gezamenlijk een antwoord bieden op de centrale vraag: *Wat kunnen we leren van de strategieën die opvoeders en jongeren ontwikkelen in een gewelddadige buurtomgeving om met geweld om te gaan en weerstand te bieden tegen geweld? En hoe kan inzicht in hun strategieën bijdragen aan de ontwikkeling van educatieve interventies en het realiseren van verandering via educatieve oplossingen, die de contextuele dynamiek van geweld niet over het hoofd zien?* De deelstudies benaderen deze vraag vanuit verschillende perspectieven, waarbij eerst de literatuur is bestudeerd (Hoofdstuk 2) en vervolgens de perspectieven van onderwijzers (Hoofdstuk 3), moeders (Hoofdstuk 4) en jongeren (Hoofdstuk 5) aan bod komen. De dataverzameling heeft plaatsgevonden op basis van etnografisch veldwerk in de periode 2015-2022 in drie sloppenwijken in de Braziliaanse stad Salvador da Bahia, bestaande uit participerende observatie en diepte-interviews met onderwijzers, moeders en jongeren.

Het eerste hoofdstuk van dit proefschrift dient als algemene inleiding, waarin naast een toelichting op de aanleiding, het doel en de onderzoeksmethoden, een nadere beschrijving van de context van Braziliaanse sloppenwijken wordt gegeven. In reactie op de afwezigheid van publieke diensten, de sociale ongelijkheid en het toenemende geweld hebben

bewoners zich georganiseerd in gemeenschapsorganisaties om hun levensomstandigheden te verbeteren. De drie lokale gemeenschapsorganisaties waar dit onderzoek plaatsvond en de educatieve projecten die zij hebben opgezet (zoals kleuterscholen en sportprogramma's), zijn daar een voorbeeld van. Gerelateerd aan deze context, zet ik in de inleiding de belangrijkste theoretische oriëntaties waar dit proefschrift op voortbouwt uiteen. In de eerste plaats gaat het om theorie over straatcultuur en sociale processen in geweldscontexten, alsmede theorieën over de asymmetrische relatie tussen dominante en niet-dominante culturen. Ten tweede gaat het om theoretische benaderingen over de mogelijkheden en onmogelijkheden om actief te handelen ('agency') en verzet te bieden in geweldscontexten. Ik breng deze benaderingen samen om te pleiten voor een meer holistisch en systemisch begrip van geweld in buurten, en om te analyseren hoe opvoeders en jongeren – ondanks structurele beperkingen – onder de oppervlakte verschillende vormen van verzet ontwikkelen tegen geweld en sociale ongelijkheid. Vanuit een perspectief op verzet en weerstand dat transformatie van de bestaande realiteit centraal stelt, leg ik de verbinding met de potentiële waarde van een 'pedagogiek van hoop' die aanmoedigt tot samenwerking aan gezamenlijke doelen en uitvoerbare idealen om zo sociale verandering te realiseren.

Hoofdstuk 2 presenteert de resultaten van een literatuuronderzoek naar het brede scala aan bestaande educatieve interventies die worden ingezet om geweld in buurten tegen te gaan. Ondanks de aanzienlijke hoeveelheid onderzoek en de uitgebreide verzameling interventieprogramma's is de bestaande kennis erg versnipperd. Er is weinig inzicht in welke typen benaderingen er zijn en hoe deze in verschillende contexten zouden kunnen worden toegepast. Deze literatuurstudie biedt een integraal overzicht van de verschillende benaderingen en een kritische analyse van de manier waarop interventies geweld in buurten proberen tegen te gaan. De studie laat zien hoe de manier van werken bij interventies samenhangt met verschillende theoretische oriëntaties op het ontstaan van geweld. Uit de resultaten blijkt dat de meeste interventies zich richten op individuele gedragsverandering of op groepsinteractie, terwijl interventiestrategieën die zich richten op verandering van sociale systemen ondervertegenwoordigd zijn. Ook blijkt dat over het algemeen de gemeenschap slechts in beperkte mate betrokken wordt bij het ontwerp en de uitvoering van interventies. Zeker de doelgroep van jeugd wordt nauwelijks gevraagd om hier actief aan bij te dragen. Dit gebrek aan participatie en de keuze voor interventies die gericht zijn op individuele gedragsverandering of (re)socialisatie van 'risicogroepen', lijkt samen te hangen met een theoretisch perspectief op 'community violence' dat uitgaat van een deficit in specifieke groepen jongeren, ouders en buurtbewoners. De term 'gemeenschapsgeweld' lijkt immers te suggereren dat het geweld uit de gemeenschap voortkomt. In het hoofdstuk wordt dan ook gepleit voor een conceptuele herziening van het begrip 'community violence' waarbij ook de rol van structurele mechanismen wordt geadresseerd.

De overige drie deelstudies presenteren vervolgens de perspectieven van onderwijzers, moeders en jongeren die wonen in Braziliaanse buurten waar veel geweld voorkomt. De deelstudies onderzoeken de strategieën die zij hebben ontwikkeld om met geweld in de buurt om te gaan en hier weerstand aan te bieden, met het doel om te leren van de gemeenschappen waar het om gaat. In Hoofdstuk 3 bekijken we hoe onderwijzers van gemeenschapsscholen hun onderwijsdoelen en -praktijken afstemmen op de buurtomgeving. Als tegenreactie op het geweld in de buurt ontwikkelen zij in hun dagelijkse praktijk een vorm van vredesonderwijs die is toegespitst op de lokale situatie. Ze blijken een focus op orde en strikte regels te combineren met aandacht en zorgzaamheid voor elkaar. Op deze manier proberen zij een 'cultuur van vrede' voor te leven en over te dragen. In tegenstelling tot de meeste curricula van vredesonderwijs die in geprivilegieerde contexten worden ontwikkeld, is het onderwijs van deze lokale leerkrachten van onderop vormgegeven. Daarbij maken zij actief gebruik van hun kennis en positie als leden van de buurtgemeenschap. Vanwege het geweld in de buurt achten zij een meer restrictieve aanpak met strikte handhaving van regels essentieel voor het realiseren van een vreedzame schoolomgeving. Voor een deel richten zij zich daarbij op het inperken en verbergen van geweld, bijvoorbeeld door iedere verwijzing naar bendegeweld of politiegeweld uit de schoolomgeving te bannen. Als buurtbewoners zijn de onderwijzers zich ervan bewust dat het openlijk bespreken van deze kwesties grote risico's met zich meebrengt. Op deze manier leren zij de kinderen om zich te houden aan de 'veiligheidsregel' dat er gezwegen wordt over alles wat met bendes te maken heeft. In zekere zin passen zij zich daarmee aan de buurtomgeving aan en blijft de status quo gehandhaafd. Daarentegen staat de nadruk die zij in hun onderwijspraktijk leggen op waarden als zorgzaamheid, vredelievendheid en dialoog, in sterk contrast met de buurtomgeving. Dit geldt ook voor hun uitgesproken missie om de kinderen een veilige schoolomgeving en een betere toekomst te bieden, waarin geweld geen plaats heeft. Met hun educatieve doelstelling om een cultuur van vrede te creëren, distantiëren zij zich expliciet van het geweld in de buurt. Op deze manier proberen ze ook – zonder de bestaande machtsverhoudingen in de buurt openlijk te confronteren – op impliciete wijze weerstand te bieden en te werken aan verandering door kinderen een alternatief te bieden. Dit zien we bijvoorbeeld terug in hoe leerkrachten liedjes die bendegeweld verheerlijken voorzien van een alternatieve, kindvriendelijke songtekst die een boodschap van zorgzaamheid voor elkaar overbrengt. Daarmee creëren zij een alternatieve werkelijkheid en maken zij gebruik van de populariteit van deze liedjes om het discours van geweld om te vormen en hun cultuur van vrede te promoten. We stellen dan ook dat hun strategieën feitelijk kunnen worden beschouwd als een vorm van verzet, die ondanks de risico's van geweld en de beperkingen die dat met zich meebrengt toch mogelijkheden voor verandering creëren. Daarmee zouden de strategieën van deze onderwijzers kunnen bijdragen aan indirecte modellen van vredeseducatie in conflictgebieden geteisterd door langdurig geweld, waar de omstandigheden geen directe verwijzing naar het conflict toelaten.

In Hoofdstuk 4 komen de perspectieven van moeders aan bod. Op basis van een analyse van hun opvoeddoelen, -strategieën en de waarden die daar voor hen aan ten grondslag liggen, bekijken we wat zij belangrijk vinden in de (morele) opvoeding van hun kinderen en hoe zij dit relateren aan de buurtomgeving. De resultaten laten zien dat moeders een 'meerstemmig' moreel kader hanteren in hun opvoeding. Dit wil zeggen dat zij zowel gebruik maken van opvoedstrategieën die gewoonlijk geassocieerd worden met 'straatcultuur' als van strategieën om juist afstand te nemen van en zich te verzetten tegen die 'straatcultuur'. Deze combinatie van strategieën houdt verband met hun twee belangrijkste opvoeddoelen: het aanleren van 'overlevingsvaardigheden' en het opvoeden van hun kinderen tot 'een goed mens'. In de eerste plaats is hun opvoeding gericht op het organiseren van een moreel tegenoffensief als reactie op de immoraliteit van de straat die zij ervaren. Moeders laten daarbij een sterk verantwoordelijkheidsgevoel zien om hun kinderen het onderscheid tussen goed en kwaad te leren. Tegelijkertijd richt hun opvoeding zich op aanpassing aan wat de buurtomgeving vereist, en leren ze hun kinderen strategieën om zichzelf te beschermen tegen de gevaren in de buurt. Dit zien we bijvoorbeeld terug in de nadruk die zij leggen op het aanleren van waakzaamheid en een bepaalde hardheid en strijdlust om moeilijkheden te doorstaan. Soms botsen deze twee opvoeddoelen van overleven en een 'goed mens' zijn, bijvoorbeeld wanneer het gaat over het belang om hun kinderen de regels van de straat te leren. Sommige moeders nemen daarbij een tegenstrijdige houding aan ten opzichte van geweld en agressie. Zij worstelen met de vraag in welke mate geweld een acceptabele manier is om conflicten op te lossen, zowel voor kinderen onderling als in de opvoedingspraktijk van ouders. Dreigen met of gebruiken van geweld wordt door sommige moeders als een noodzakelijk kwaad gezien: voor hun kinderen om zichzelf te verdedigen en voor opvoeders om hun kind op het rechte pad te houden. Op basis van deze analyses stellen we twijfels bij het idee van een homogene 'straatcultuur' in gemeenschappen die te maken hebben met veel geweld in de buurt. De analyses laten zien dat moeders in reactie op een gewelddadige buurtomgeving verschillende opvoedstrategieën combineren en enerzijds geweldspraktijken in de buurt overnemen terwijl zij zich hier anderzijds tegen afzetten. Op deze manier laveren moeders tussen de noodzaak om je onder de dagelijkse realiteit van geweld te handhaven, en hun pogingen om die realiteit te veranderen door hun kinderen op te voeden in een alternatief moreel kader en hen groot te brengen tot een goed mens.

Tot slot bespreekt Hoofdstuk 5 het perspectief van jongeren op het opgroeien in een buurtomgeving met veel geweld. Op basis van een meervoudige casestudy van zes jongeren die deelnemen aan sportprogramma's van een gemeenschapsorganisatie, wordt in beeld gebracht hoe zij strategieën ontwikkelen om weerbaar te worden en weerstand te bieden tegen geweld in de buurt. Door middel van een kwalitatieve longitudinale analyse van hun trajecten van adolescentie tot jongvolwassenheid, bekijken we hoe zij door de tijd heen een gevarieerde set van strategieën ontwikkelen om met geweld om te gaan en alternatieve

toekomstpaden creëren om afstand te nemen van geweld. Uit de resultaten blijkt dat naarmate de jongeren ouder worden, zij hun strategieën leren aan te passen aan de mate van controle en agency die zij ervaren. Door de tijd heen leren zij te accepteren dat het geweld in de buurt grotendeels buiten hun invloedssfeer ligt. Gaandeweg passen zij hun strategieën aan de buurtomstandigheden aan en ontwikkelen zij alternatieve routes om ondanks de obstakels in de buurtomgeving en de bredere maatschappij een betere toekomst te kunnen opbouwen. Hoewel de analyses laten zien dat geweld in de buurt een sterk ondermijnende impact heeft op de mate van agency die jongeren ervaren, tonen ze ook hoe de vastberadenheid van jongeren om controle te krijgen en alternatieve toekomstpaden te creëren, een uiting is van hun verzet tegen geweld en het sociale stigma dat aan de buurt kleeft. Door het snelle geld van drugshandel categorisch af te wijzen en te weigeren betrokken te raken bij bendes, verzetten jongeren zich tegen het bendegeweld zelf, maar ook tegen stereotypen die jongeren uit hun buurt als criminelen wegzetten. Ondanks ongelijke kansen en de vele obstakels die zij op hun pad naar de toekomst tegenkomen, waaronder hoge kosten voor een opleiding en een arbeidsmarkt die weinig kansen biedt, weigeren zij zich te conformeren aan de pessimistische verwachtingen van de samenleving. De omgeving van de sportprogramma's bleek een belangrijke bron te zijn voor die weerbaarheid en vastberadenheid, doordat het programma de jongeren een gezamenlijk moreel discours aanbiedt van discipline en toewijding om jezelf te ontwikkelen en omzien naar de ander. Aangemoedigd door een dergelijk alternatief moreel discours en een ondersteunende sociale omgeving, krijgen zij een alternatief voor de harde moraal van de straatomgeving aangereikt. Deze alternatieve levenshouding, gericht op geweldloosheid en persoonlijke verandering, geeft jongeren het gevoel dat ze een keuze hebben. Dit sterkt hen in de overtuiging dat zij weerbaar kunnen worden tegen het geweld in de buurt en hun leven een andere toekomstrichting kunnen geven.

In Hoofdstuk 6 worden een aantal belangrijke discussiepunten naar voren gebracht door de perspectieven van onderwijzers, moeders en jongeren samen te brengen en de bevindingen te beschouwen in het licht van de resultaten van de literatuurstudie. Wanneer we kijken naar patronen in de strategieën van onderwijzers, moeders en jongeren om met geweld in hun buurt om te gaan, komen er enkele interessante overeenkomsten naar voren. Deze overeenkomsten onderstrepen de voortdurende wisselwerking tussen overleven en verzet, tussen berusting en het verkrijgen van controle, tussen blokkades voor actief handelen en het blijven zoeken naar mogelijkheden om verandering teweeg te brengen. Deze wisselwerking tussen overleven en verzet kan worden verklaard door de beperkingen die een geweldscontext met zich meebrengt voor de agency die mensen ervaren. De angst voor en de risico's van geweld zorgen voor een zekere passiviteit en beperken de mogelijkheden voor actief verzet. De gevaren van het openlijk bespreekbaar maken van bende- en politiegeweld zorgen ervoor dat onderwijzers hun leerlingen over dit thema het zwijgen opleggen, dat moeders hun kinderen leren dat het soms beter is om weg te kijken, en dat jongeren hun aanvankelijke

ideeën voor collectieve actie om geweld de buurt uit te bannen leren te onderdrukken. Echter, de resultaten laten ook zien dat zelfs onder deze omstandigheden opvoeders en jongeren de hoop op verandering niet geheel opgeven. Ze ontwikkelen creatieve manieren om impliciet verzet te bieden tegen gewelddadige omstandigheden. Hun inspanningen kunnen worden samengevat als een gezamenlijk moreel tegenoffensief dat – in contrast met en als tegenreactie op de gewelddadige buurtomgeving – een cultuur van vrede beoogt te realiseren. Met een gezamenlijk moreel discours dat dialoog, geweldloosheid en zorg voor anderen bevordert en zich afzet tegen gewelddadige praktijken, streven zij naar verandering van deze realiteit zonder henzelf of anderen in gevaar te brengen en repercussies te vermijden. Het gezamenlijke karakter van dit tegenoffensief, waarbij opvoeders en jongeren deel uitmaken van een alternatieve gemeenschap die hen aanmoedigt om een toekomst te creëren die afstand neemt van drugsbendes en geweld, biedt een collectieve bron voor agency en hoop.

Op basis van de samengebrachte resultaten van de vier deelstudies worden in Hoofdstuk 6 vervolgens aanbevelingen geformuleerd voor de ontwikkeling en inzet van educatieve interventies in contexten van geweld. Deze aanbevelingen zijn toegespitst op een drietal elementen: 1) erkennen van de beperkte mogelijkheden voor agency en verzet in contexten van geweld en sociale ongelijkheid, 2) benutten en breder toepassen van de principes van lokale, impliciete vormen van verzet, en 3) versterken van lokale initiatieven voor gemeenschapsopbouw (community building). In het algemeen benadrukken al deze praktische implicaties de noodzaak van een meer diepgaande betrokkenheid van lokale gemeenschappen bij educatieve programma's, zodat deze goed zijn afgestemd op de realiteit van de wijk en om ervoor te zorgen dat mogelijkheden en obstakels voor verzet tegen geweld niet over het hoofd worden gezien.

Echter, ondanks het transformatieve potentieel van (impliciete) strategieën die lokaal en van onderop worden ontwikkeld, is er meer nodig om omstandigheden van geweld in de buurt te doorbreken en grotere transformaties tot stand te brengen. De resultaten van deze studie laten zien dat zelfs als mensen collectief georganiseerd zijn in gemeenschapsorganisaties, ze ernstig worden beperkt in hun mogelijkheden om in verzet te komen tegen de machtige structuren van lokale bendes, transnationaal georganiseerde misdaad en corruptie. Tegelijkertijd zorgen de ongelijke verdeling van middelen voor openbare veiligheid, een verhoogde blootstelling aan politiegeweld en de ongelijke toegang tot o.a. onderwijs en werkgelegenheid ervoor dat mensen in sloppenwijken onvoldoende beschermd worden tegen geweld en over weinig middelen beschikken om weerstand te bieden. Dergelijke dominante sociale structuren van ongelijkheid die de fundamentele behoeften van mensen aantasten, kunnen worden beschouwd als uitingen van structureel geweld die een essentieel obstakel vormen voor het tot stand brengen van vrede. Deze structuren van sociale ongelijkheid blijken echter nauwelijks onderwerp van bestaande educatieve interventies. Momenteel hanteren educatieve interventies hoofdzakelijk een

individuele benadering en zijn daarmee niet in staat om een oplossing te bieden voor een structureel en collectief sociaal probleem als geweld in buurten. Dit onderstreept de noodzaak van een kritische, meer systemische benadering die de grenzen van de buurt overstijgt en mede gericht is op het bestrijden van sociale, economische en politieke structuren die geweld (in zijn verschillende vormen) in stand houden. Dit vraagt in de eerste plaats om doelbewust overheidsbeleid gericht op het corrigeren van sociale onrechtvaardigheid en het mogelijk maken van gelijkwaardige deelname aan de samenleving. Hieronder valt o.a. gelijke toegang tot publieke middelen voor onderwijs, veiligheid, gezondheidszorg en infrastructuur, evenals een rechtvaardige behandeling door betrouwbare overheidsorganisaties. In de tweede plaats heeft een systemische benadering van geweld in buurten educatieve interventies nodig die in dialoog en samenwerking met diverse partners (waaronder ouders en jongeren zelf), ideeën ontwikkelen om systemische barrières op te heffen en gezamenlijk tot creatieve oplossingen te komen. Een optimistische en tegelijkertijd realistische 'pedagogiek van hoop' die participatie bevordert en mogelijkheden creëert voor collectieve en gedeelde vormen van agency zou hiervoor een belangrijke basis kunnen bieden. Een dergelijke transformatieve en hoopvolle educatieve benadering zou alle betrokkenen kunnen aanmoedigen om niet weg te kijken of je neer te leggen bij omstandigheden als een onontkoombaar lot, maar in verzet te komen tegen (de grenzen van) de bestaande realiteit en gezamenlijk een meer rechtvaardige en vreedzame buurt en samenleving te creëren.

English summary

How do you arm children against violence in the neighbourhood? How do you offer resistance in a context full of dangers? And how do you create an alternative future perspective despite these obstacles? This dissertation describes the results of an ethnographic study on the upbringing of youth in a violent neighbourhood context, from the perspectives of school educators, mothers and youth in Brazilian slums. Although many interventions have been developed to counter neighbourhood violence and its harmful impact on youth and their environment, the communities where these interventions take place are often not involved. Often, the perspectives of people living in violent circumstances remain underexposed. The aim of this study is to create a better understanding of the complex dynamics of neighbourhood violence from the local perspective of the community. By creating more insight in how educators and youth deal with and resist violence in their neighbourhood, this study aims to gain valuable insights for the development of educational interventions in these contexts. Currently, these interventions are often aimed at 'remedying' perceived shortcomings and deficiencies of individual young people or their parents. This can be considered a problematic approach because it suggests that they are personally responsible for the neighbourhood conditions. Moreover, such an approach reduces neighbourhood violence to an individual problem, ignoring systemic and societal aspects. Against this background, this study aims to develop a broader understanding of neighbourhood violence through an ethnographic approach and gain more insight into the potential of local educational practices and community initiatives to bring about change.

This dissertation is comprised of four studies that together provide an answer to the main research question: *What can we learn from the strategies educators and young people develop in a violent neighbourhood context to deal with and resist violence? And how can insight into such strategies inform the design and implementation of educational interventions and contribute to finding openings for transformation through educational solutions, without overlooking contextual dynamics of violence?* Each study contributes to answering this question from a different perspective, first reviewing the literature (Chapter 2) and subsequently investigating the perspectives of school educators (Chapter 3), mothers (Chapter 4) and young people (Chapter 5). Data was collected through ethnographic fieldwork in the period 2015-2022 in three slum neighbourhoods in the Brazilian city of Salvador da Bahia, consisting of participant observation and in-depth interviews with school educators, mothers and youth.

The first chapter of this dissertation serves as a general introduction, which describes the motivation, aim and methods of this research, and provides a description of the context of Brazilian slums. In response to absence of public services, social inequality and increasing violence, residents have organised themselves in community organisations to improve their living conditions. The three community organisations where this research took place and the educational projects they have initiated (such as preschools and sports programmes) are an example of such community initiatives. Related to this context, I provide a short description

of the main theoretical orientations this dissertation builds on and how I use them in the analyses. Firstly, I make use of theories about street culture and social processes in contexts of violence, as well as theories about the asymmetrical relationship between dominant and non-dominant cultures. Secondly, it concerns theoretical approaches about the possibilities and impossibilities of agency and resistance in contexts of violence. I bring these approaches together to argue for a more holistic and systemic understanding of neighbourhood violence, and to analyse how educators and youth—despite structural limitations—develop different forms of resistance to violence and social inequality beneath the surface. From a perspective on resistance that centralises transformation of existing realities, I connect these ideas to the potential value of a "pedagogy of hope" that encourages collaboration to work on shared goals and practicable ideals to realise social change.

Chapter 2 presents the results of a literature review of the broad range of current educational interventions to counter neighbourhood violence. Despite the considerable amount of research on the subject and the extensive collection of intervention programmes, the existing knowledge is extremely fragmented. There is little insight into the distinguishable approaches and how these might work in different contexts. The literature review in Chapter 2 provides a coherent overview of the different approaches and a critical analysis of the intervention strategies to counter violence in neighbourhoods. The study shows how intervention objectives and strategies are related to different theoretical orientations on the roots of violence. The results demonstrate that most interventions focus on changing individual behaviour or group interaction, while intervention strategies that focus on transformation of social systems are underrepresented. Also, the community is generally involved to a limited extent in the design and implementation of interventions. In particular young people are rarely invited to actively contribute. This lack of participation and the choice for interventions that focus on individual behavioural change or (re)socialisation of 'at-risk groups', seems to be related to a theoretical perspective on 'community violence' that assumes a deficit in specific groups of young people, parents and community members. The term 'community violence' seems to suggest that the violence originates from the community. The chapter therefore argues for a conceptual re-orientation of 'community violence' that also addresses the role of structural mechanisms.

The remaining three studies subsequently present the perspectives of school educators, mothers, and young people living in Brazilian neighbourhoods with high levels of violence. The studies examine how they develop strategies to deal with and resist violence in their neighbourhoods, in order to learn from the communities concerned. In Chapter 3, we examine how community school educators align their educational goals and practices with the neighbourhood context. In response to neighbourhood violence, they develop a type of peace education in their daily practice that is tailored to the local situation. They combine a focus on order and strict rules with a focus on attention and care for each other.

Through this combined approach, they aim to establish and transmit a 'culture of peace'. In contrast to most peace education curricula that have been developed in privileged contexts, the educational practice of these local school educators is shaped from the bottom up. They actively use their knowledge and position as members of the neighbourhood community. Due to violence in the neighbourhood, they consider a more restrictive approach with strict enforcement of rules essential for realising a peaceful school environment. In part, they focus on limiting and concealing violence, for example by banning any reference to gang violence or police violence from the school environment. As neighbourhood residents, the school educators are aware that openly discussing these issues entails great risks. By 'silencing' children's references, they teach them to adhere to the 'safety rule' that nothing to do with gangs is discussed. In doing so, in a sense they adapt to the neighbourhood environment and maintain the status quo. On the other hand, the emphasis they place on values such as caring, peacefulness and dialogue in their educational practice, stands in stark contrast to the neighbourhood context. This also applies to their explicit mission to offer the children a safe school environment and a better future, in which violence has no place. With their educational goal of establishing a culture of peace, they explicitly distance themselves from the violence in the neighbourhood. In this way, they implicitly also try to offer resistance and work towards change, without openly confronting existing power relations in the neighbourhood. This is reflected, for example, in how school educators provide songs that glorify gang violence with alternative, child-friendly lyrics that convey a message of caring for each other. In doing so, they create an alternative reality and use the popularity of these songs to transform the discourse of violence and promote their culture of peace. We therefore argue that their strategies can in fact be considered a form of resistance, which, despite the risks of violence and the limitations it entails, nevertheless create possibilities for change. In this way, the strategies of these school educators might contribute to indirect models of peace education in conflict areas affected by protracted violence, where conditions do not allow direct reference to the conflict.

Chapter 4 discusses mothers' perspectives. Based on an analysis of their parenting goals, strategies and underlying values, we look at what they consider important in the (moral) upbringing of their children and how they relate this to the neighbourhood context. The results show that mothers act within a 'multivocal' moral framework. This means that they make use of parenting strategies that are usually associated with 'street culture' as well as strategies to distance themselves from and resist 'street culture'. This combination of strategies is related to their two main parenting goals: teaching 'survival skills' and raising their children to be 'good people'. First, their parenting is aimed at organising a moral counteroffensive towards the perceived immorality of the streets. Mothers show a strong sense of responsibility to teach their children right from wrong. At the same time, their parenting focuses on adaptation to the demands of the neighbourhood context, and they teach their children

strategies to protect themselves from dangers and risks in the neighbourhood. This is reflected, for example, in the emphasis they place on learning vigilance and a certain toughness and perseverance to overcome difficulties. At times, these two parenting goals of survival and raising a 'good person' come into conflict, for example when it comes to the importance of teaching their children the rules of the street. Some mothers adopt an ambivalent attitude towards violence and aggression. They struggle with the question to what extent violence is an acceptable means to resolve conflicts, both for children among themselves and for parents in their parenting practices. Some mothers consider threatening or using violence a necessary evil: for their children to defend themselves and for parents to keep their child on the straight and narrow path. Based on these analyses, we question the idea of a homogeneous 'street culture' in communities that experience high levels of neighbourhood violence. The analyses show that mothers combine different parenting strategies in response to a violent neighbourhood context, adopting violent practices on the one hand and opposing them on the other. As such, mothers navigate between the need to deal with and survive within the daily reality of violence and their attempts to change that reality by educating their children in an alternative moral framework and raising them to be good people.

Finally, Chapter 5 discusses young people's perspectives on growing up in a neighbourhood context with high levels of violence. Based on a multiple case study of six young people who participate in community sports programmes, we investigate how they develop strategies to become resilient and resistant to violence in their neighbourhoods. Through a qualitative longitudinal analysis of their trajectories from adolescence to young adulthood, we examine how they develop a diverse set of strategies over time to deal with violence and create alternative future pathways to distance themselves from violence. Results show that as youth grow older, they learn to alter their strategies and match it to their perceived level of control and agency. Over time, they learn to accept neighbourhood violence as largely beyond their control. Along the way, they adapt their strategies in response to neighbourhood circumstances and develop alternative routes to construct a better future despite the obstacles their neighbourhood context and wider society present. While the analyses show that neighbourhood violence has a strong undermining impact on the level of agency young people experience, the results also demonstrate how their determination to gain control and create alternative future paths is an expression of young people's resistance to violence and the social stigma attached to their neighbourhood. By categorically rejecting the easy money of drug traffic and refusing to get involved in gangs, young people offer resistance to gang violence itself, but also to stereotypes that portray young people from their neighbourhood as criminals. Despite unequal opportunities and the many obstacles they face on their path to the future, including high education costs and a labour market that offers few opportunities, they refuse to conform to the pessimistic expectations of

society. The environment of the sports programmes proved to be an important source of this resilience and determination, by offering young people a shared moral discourse of discipline and dedication to develop yourself and care for others. Encouraged by such an alternative moral discourse and a supportive social environment, they are offered an alternative to the harsh morals of the street. This alternative attitude towards life, focused on nonviolence and personal change, gives young people the feeling that they have a choice. This strengthens their belief that they can resist and move away from violence in the neighbourhood and give their lives a different future direction.

Chapter 6 raises a number of important subjects of discussion by bringing together the perspectives of school educators, mothers and young people and considering the main findings in light of the results of the literature review. When looking at patterns in the strategies of school educators, mothers and young people to deal with violence in their neighbourhoods, some interesting similarities come to light. These similarities underline the constant interplay between survival and resistance, between resignation and maintaining control, between barriers to action and the continued search for opportunities to make a change. This interplay between survival and resistance can be explained by the limitations that a context of violence places on the opportunities for agency people experience. Fear and risks of violence create a certain passivity and limit the possibilities for active resistance. The dangers of openly discussing gang and police violence made school educators silence their pupils on the subject, made mothers teach their children that sometimes it is better to look away, and made young people learn to muffle their initial ideas for collective action to eradicate violence from their neighbourhoods. However, the results also show that even under these circumstances, educators and young people do not give up hope for change altogether. They develop creative ways to implicitly resist violent circumstances. Their efforts can be summarised as a shared moral counteroffensive that aims to create a culture of peace in contrast and resistance to the violent neighbourhood context. Through a shared moral discourse that promotes dialogue, nonviolence, and care for others, and that opposes violent practices, they strive to transform this reality without endangering themselves or others and avoiding repercussions. The collaborative nature of this counteroffensive, in which educators and youth feel part of an alternative community that encourages them to create a future that moves away from gangs and violence, provides a collective resource for agency and hope.

Based on the combined results of the four sub-studies, Chapter 6 then formulates practical implications for the design and implementation of educational interventions in contexts of violence. These recommendations focus on three elements: 1) acknowledging and recognising the limited possibilities for agency and resistance in contexts of violence and social inequality, 2) utilising and consolidating the principles of local, implicit strategies for resistance, and 3) strengthening local initiatives for community building. In general, all these practical implications emphasise the need for a more profound involvement of local

communities in educational programmes, so that they are well-attuned to the neighbourhood reality and to ensure that opportunities and obstacles for resistance to violence are not overlooked.

However, despite the transformative potential of implicit strategies developed locally and bottom-up, more is needed to break through conditions of neighbourhood violence and to bring about larger transformations. The results of this study show that even when people are collectively organised in community organisations, they are severely restricted in their possibilities to stand up to powerful structures of local gangs, transnational organised crime and corruption. At the same time, unequal distribution of resources for public safety, increased exposure to police violence and unequal access to education and employment, among other things, leave people in slum neighbourhoods insufficiently protected from violence and with few resources to offer resistance. Such dominant social structures of inequity that impair people's fundamental needs can be considered expressions of structural violence that present a crucial obstacle for establishing peace. However, as the literature review in Chapter 2 has underlined, these structures of social inequality are rarely the subject of existing educational interventions to counter neighbourhood violence. Currently, educational interventions mainly use an individual approach and therefore do not seem to offer a solution to a structural and collective social problem such as neighbourhood violence. This underlines the need for a critical, more systemic approach that transcends the boundaries of the neighbourhood and is also aimed at countering social, economic and political structures that perpetuate violence (in its various forms). This requires, first and foremost, deliberate public policy aimed at correcting social injustices and enabling equal participation in society. This includes, among other things, equal access to public resources for education, safety, health and infrastructure, as well as fair and equitable treatment by reliable government organisations. Secondly, a systemic approach to neighbourhood violence requires educational interventions that, in dialogue and collaboration with various partners (including parents and young people themselves), develop ideas to remove systemic barriers and jointly arrive at creative solutions. An optimistic and yet realistic 'pedagogy of hope' that promotes participation and cultivates opportunities for collective and shared forms of agency could provide an important basis. Such a transformative and hopeful educational approach could encourage all involved to not look away or surrender to circumstances as inescapable fate, but to resist (the limits of) existing realities and collectively create a more just and peaceful neighbourhood and society.

Resumo em português

Como se arma crianças contra violência no bairro? Como se oferece resistência em um contexto cheio de perigos? E como se cria uma perspectiva alternativa de futuro apesar desses obstáculos? Esta dissertação descreve os resultados de um estudo etnográfico sobre a educação de jovens em um contexto de bairro violento, a partir das perspectivas de educadores escolares, mães e jovens em assentamentos informais brasileiras. Embora muitas intervenções tenham sido desenvolvidas para combater a violência de bairro e seu impacto prejudicial sobre os jovens e seu ambiente, as comunidades onde essas intervenções ocorrem muitas vezes não são envolvidas. Muitas vezes, as perspectivas de pessoas que vivem em circunstâncias violentas permanecem subexpostas. O objetivo deste estudo é criar uma melhor compreensão da dinâmica complexa da violência de bairro a partir da perspectiva local da comunidade. Ao criar mais conhecimento sobre como educadores e jovens lidam e resistem à violência em seu bairro, este estudo visa obter informações valiosos para o desenvolvimento de intervenções educacionais nesses contextos. Atualmente, essas intervenções geralmente visam "remediar" insuficiências e deficiências percebidas de jovens individuais ou de seus pais. Isso pode ser considerado uma abordagem problemática porque sugere que eles são pessoalmente responsáveis pelas condições do bairro. Além disso, tal abordagem reduz a violência de bairro a um problema individual, ignorando aspectos sistêmicos e sociais. Nesse contexto, este estudo visa desenvolver uma compreensão mais ampla da violência de bairro por meio de uma abordagem etnográfica e obter mais conhecimento sobre o potencial das práticas educacionais locais e iniciativas comunitárias para promover mudanças.

Esta dissertação é composta por quatro estudos que juntos fornecem uma resposta à principal questão de pesquisa: O que podemos aprender com as estratégias que educadores e jovens desenvolvem em um contexto de bairro violento para lidar e resistir à violência? E como a compreensão de tais estratégias pode informar o plano e a implementação de intervenções educacionais e contribuir para encontrar aberturas para transformação por meio de soluções educacionais, sem negligenciar a dinâmica contextual da violência? Cada estudo contribui para responder a essa questão de uma perspectiva diferente, primeiro revisando a literatura (Capítulo 2) e seguidamente investigando as perspectivas de educadores escolares (Capítulo 3), mães (Capítulo 4) e jovens (Capítulo 5). Os dados foram coletados por meio de trabalho de campo etnográfico no período de 2015-2022 em três bairros de assentamentos informais na cidade brasileira de Salvador da Bahia, consistindo em observação participante e entrevistas em profundidade com educadores escolares, mães e jovens.

O primeiro capítulo desta dissertação serve como uma introdução geral, que descreve a motivação, objetivo e métodos desta pesquisa, e fornece uma descrição do contexto dos bairros de assentamentos informais no Brasil. Em resposta à ausência de serviços públicos, desigualdade social e aumento da violência, os moradores se organizaram em organizações comunitárias para melhorar suas condições de vida. As três organizações

comunitárias onde esta pesquisa ocorreu e os projetos educacionais que elas iniciaram (como pré-escolas e programas esportivos) são um exemplo dessas iniciativas comunitárias. Relacionado a este contexto, apresento uma breve descrição das principais orientações teóricas nas quais esta dissertação se baseia e como as utilizo nas análises. Primeiramente, faço uso de teorias sobre cultura de rua e processos sociais em contextos de violência, bem como teorias sobre a relação assimétrica entre culturas dominantes e não dominantes. Em segundo lugar, faço uso de abordagens teóricas sobre as possibilidades e impossibilidades de agência e resistência em contextos de violência. Eu reúno essas abordagens para argumentar por uma compreensão mais holística e sistêmica da violência de bairro, e para analisar como educadores e jovens — apesar das limitações estruturais — desenvolvem diferentes formas de resistência à violência e à desigualdade social abaixo da superfície. De uma perspectiva sobre resistência que centraliza a transformação de realidades existentes, eu conecto essas ideias ao valor potencial de uma "pedagogia da esperança" que encoraja a colaboração para trabalhar em objetivos compartilhados e ideais praticáveis para realizar a mudança social.

O Capítulo 2 apresenta os resultados de uma revisão da literatura sobre a ampla gama de intervenções educacionais atuais para combater a violência de bairro. Apesar da quantidade considerável de pesquisas sobre o assunto e da extensa coleção de programas de intervenção, o conhecimento existente é extremamente fragmentado. Há pouca percepção sobre as abordagens distinguíveis e como elas podem funcionar em diferentes contextos. A revisão da literatura no Capítulo 2 fornece uma vista de conjunto coerente das diferentes abordagens e uma análise crítica das estratégias de intervenção para combater a violência de bairro. O estudo mostra como os objetivos e estratégias de intervenção estão relacionados a diferentes orientações teóricas sobre as raízes da violência. Os resultados demonstram que a maioria das intervenções se concentra na mudança do comportamento individual ou da interação em grupo, enquanto as estratégias de intervenção que se concentram na transformação dos sistemas sociais são sub-representadas. Além disso, a comunidade geralmente está envolvida apenas até certo ponto no traçar do plano e na implementação das intervenções. Em particular, os jovens raramente são convidados a contribuir ativamente. Essa falta de participação e a escolha por intervenções que se concentram na mudança comportamental individual ou na (re)socialização de 'grupos de risco' parecem estar relacionadas a uma perspectiva teórica sobre 'violência comunitária' que assume um deficiência em grupos específicos de jovens, pais e membros da comunidade. O termo 'violência comunitária' parece sugerir que a violência tem origem na comunidade. O capítulo, portanto, argumenta por uma reorientação conceitual da 'violência comunitária' que também aborda a influência dos mecanismos estruturais.

Os três estudos restantes apresentam em seguida as perspectivas de educadores escolares, mães e jovens que vivem em bairros brasileiros com altos níveis de violência. Os estudos examinam como eles desenvolvem estratégias para lidar e resistir à violência em seus

bairros, a fim de aprender com as comunidades envolvidas. No Capítulo 3, examinamos como os educadores escolares comunitárias alinham seus objetivos e práticas educacionais com o contexto do bairro. Em resposta à violência no bairro, eles desenvolvem um tipo de educação para a paz em sua prática diária que é adaptada à situação local. Eles combinam um foco na ordem e regras rígidas com um foco na atenção e carinho para os outros. Por meio dessa abordagem combinada, eles visam estabelecer e transmitir uma "cultura de paz". Em contraste com a maioria dos currículos de educação para a paz que foram desenvolvidos em contextos privilegiados, a prática educacional desses educadores de escolas locais é formada de baixo para cima. Eles usam ativamente seu conhecimento do bairro e sua posição como membros da comunidade. Devido à violência no bairro, eles consideram essencial uma abordagem mais restritiva com aplicação rigorosa de regras para a realização de um ambiente escolar pacífico. Em parte, eles se concentram em restringir e ocultar a violência, por exemplo através de proibição de qualquer referência à violência de gangues ou violência policial no ambiente escolar. Como moradores do bairro, os educadores escolares estão cientes de que discutir abertamente essas questões envolve grandes riscos. Ao "silenciar" as referências das crianças, eles as ensinam a aderir à "regra de segurança" de que nada a ver com gangues é discutido. Ao fazer isso, em certo sentido, eles se adaptam ao ambiente do bairro e mantêm o status quo. Por outro lado, a ênfase que eles colocam em valores como cuidar do outro, paz e diálogo em sua prática educacional, contrasta fortemente com o contexto do bairro. Isso também se aplica à sua missão explícita de oferecer às crianças um ambiente escolar seguro e um futuro melhor, no qual a violência não tenha lugar. Com seu objetivo educacional de estabelecer uma cultura de paz, eles se distanciam explicitamente da violência no bairro. Dessa forma, eles implicitamente também tentam oferecer resistência e trabalhar em prol da mudança, sem confrontar abertamente as relações de poder existentes no bairro. Isso se reflete, por exemplo, na forma como os educadores escolares substituem as letras de músicas que glorificam a violência de gangues com letras alternativas, adequado para crianças, que transmitem uma mensagem de cuidado mútuo. Ao fazer isso, eles criam uma realidade alternativa e usam a popularidade dessas músicas para transformar o discurso da violência e promover uma cultura de paz. Portanto, argumentamos que suas estratégias podem, de fato, ser consideradas uma forma de resistência, que, apesar dos riscos da violência e das limitações que ela acarreta, ainda assim criam possibilidades de mudança. Dessa forma, as estratégias desses educadores escolares podem contribuir para modelos indiretos de educação para a paz em áreas de conflito afetadas por violência prolongada, onde as condições não permitem referência direta ao conflito.

O Capítulo 4 discute as perspectivas das mães. Com base em uma análise de seus objetivos e estratégias parentais, e valores subjacentes, examinamos o que elas consideram importante na educação (moral) de seus filhos e como elas relacionam isso ao contexto do bairro. Os resultados mostram que as mães agem dentro de um quadro moral "multivocal".

Isso significa que elas fazem uso de estratégias parentais que geralmente são associadas à "cultura de rua", bem como estratégias para se distanciarem e resistirem à "cultura de rua". Essa combinação de estratégias está relacionada aos seus dois principais objetivos parentais: ensinar "habilidades de sobrevivência" e criar seus filhos para serem "boas pessoas". Primeiro, sua educação visa organizar uma contraofensiva moral em relação à imoralidade percebida nas ruas. As mães mostram um forte senso de responsabilidade para ensinar aos seus filhos o certo e o errado. Ao mesmo tempo, sua educação se concentra na adaptação às demandas do contexto do bairro, e elas ensinam aos seus filhos estratégias para se protegerem de perigos e riscos no bairro. Isso se reflete, por exemplo, na ênfase que elas colocam no aprendizado da vigilância e em uma certa dureza e perseverança para superar as dificuldades. Às vezes, esses dois objetivos parentais de sobrevivência e criar uma "boa pessoa" entram em conflito, por exemplo, quando se trata da importância de ensinar aos filhos as regras da rua. Algumas mães adotam uma atitude ambivalente em relação à violência e à agressão. Elas lutam com a questão até que ponto a violência é um meio aceitável para resolver conflitos, tanto para as crianças entre si quanto para os pais em suas práticas parentais. Algumas mães consideram ameaçar ou usar a violência um mal necessário: para que seus filhos se defendam e para que os pais mantenham seus filhos no bom caminho. Com base nessas análises, questionamos a ideia de uma "cultura de rua" homogênea em comunidades que vivenciam altos níveis de violência de bairro. As análises mostram que as mães combinam diferentes estratégias parentais em resposta a um contexto violento na vizinhança, adotando práticas violentas por um lado e opondo-se a elas por outro. Dessa forma, as mães manobram entre a necessidade de lidar e sobreviver à realidade diária da violência e suas tentativas de mudar essa realidade, educando seus filhos em um quadro moral alternativa e criando-os para serem boas pessoas.

Finalmente, o Capítulo 5 discute as perspectivas dos jovens sobre crescer em um contexto de bairro com altos níveis de violência. Com base em um estudo de caso múltiplo de seis jovens que participam de programas esportivos comunitários, investigamos como eles desenvolvem estratégias para se tornarem resilientes e resistentes à violência em seus bairros. Por meio de uma análise longitudinal qualitativa de suas trajetórias da adolescência até o início da idade adulta, examinamos como eles desenvolvem um conjunto diversificado de estratégias ao longo do tempo para lidar com a violência e criar caminhos futuros alternativos para se distanciarem da violência. Os resultados mostram que, à medida que os jovens envelhecem, eles aprendem a alterar suas estratégias e a adaptá-las ao seu nível percebido de controle e agência. Com o tempo, eles aprendem a aceitar a violência no bairro como algo que está além do seu controle. Ao longo do caminho, eles adaptam suas estratégias em resposta às circunstâncias do bairro e desenvolvem rotas alternativas para construir um futuro melhor, apesar dos obstáculos apresentados pelo contexto do bairro e pela sociedade em geral. Embora as análises mostrem que a violência no bairro tem um forte impacto prejudicial no nível de agência que os jovens vivenciam, os resultados também demonstram como sua

determinação em ganhar controle e criar caminhos alternativos para o futuro é uma expressão da resistência dos jovens à violência e ao estigma social associado ao seu bairro. Ao rejeitar categoricamente o dinheiro fácil do tráfico de drogas e se recusar a se envolver em gangues, os jovens oferecem resistência à violência de gangues em si, mas também aos estereótipos que retratam os jovens de seu bairro como criminosos. Apesar das oportunidades desiguais e dos muitos obstáculos que enfrentam em seu caminho para o futuro, incluindo altos custos de educação e um mercado de trabalho que oferece poucas oportunidades, eles se recusam a se conformar com as expectativas pessimistas da sociedade. O ambiente dos programas esportivos provou ser uma fonte importante dessa resiliência e determinação, ao oferecer aos jovens um discurso moral compartilhado de disciplina e dedicação para se desenvolver e cuidar dos outros. Encorajados por tal discurso moral alternativo e um ambiente social de apoio, eles recebem uma alternativa à moral severa da rua. Essa atitude alternativa diante da vida, focada no princípio da não violência e na mudança pessoal, dá aos jovens a sensação de que têm uma escolha. Isso fortalece sua crença de que eles podem resistir e se afastar da violência no bairro e dar um rumo diferente às suas vidas.

O Capítulo 6 levanta uma série de assuntos importantes de discussão ao reunir as perspectivas de educadores escolares, mães e jovens e considerar as principais descobertas à luz dos resultados da revisão da literatura. Ao observar os padrões nas estratégias de educadores escolares, mães e jovens para lidar com a violência em seus bairros, algumas semelhanças interessantes vêm à tona. Essas semelhanças sublinham a interação constante entre sobrevivência e resistência, entre resignação e manutenção do controle, entre barreiras à ação e a busca contínua por oportunidades de fazer uma mudança. Esta interação entre sobrevivência e resistência pode ser explicada pelas limitações que um contexto de violência impõe às oportunidades de agência que as pessoas vivenciam. O medo e os riscos de violência criam uma certa passividade e limitam as possibilidades de resistência ativa. Os perigos de discutir abertamente a violência de gangues e da polícia fizeram com que os educadores escolares silenciassem seus alunos sobre o assunto, fizeram com que as mães ensinassem a seus filhos que às vezes é melhor desviar o olhar e fizeram com que os jovens aprendessem a abafar suas ideias iniciais de ação coletiva para erradicar a violência de seus bairros. No entanto, os resultados também mostram que, mesmo nessas circunstâncias, educadores e jovens não desistem completamente da esperança de mudança. Eles desenvolvem maneiras criativas de resistir implicitamente a circunstâncias violentas. Seus esforços podem ser resumidos como uma contraofensiva moral compartilhada que visa criar uma cultura de paz em contraste e em resistência ao contexto violento do bairro. Através de um discurso moral compartilhado que promove o diálogo, a não-violência e o cuidado com os outros, e que se opõe às práticas violentas, esforçam-se para transformar esta realidade sem pôr em perigo a si mesmos ou aos outros e evitando repercussões. A natureza colaborativa dessa contraofensiva, na qual educadores e jovens se sentem parte de uma comunidade alternativa

que os encoraja a criar um futuro que se afaste de gangues e violência, fornece um recurso coletivo para agência e esperança.

Com base nos resultados combinados dos quatro subestudos, o Capítulo 6 formula implicações práticas para o plano e implementação de intervenções educacionais em contextos de violência. Essas recomendações se concentram em três elementos: 1) reconhecer as possibilidades limitadas de agência e resistência em contextos de violência e desigualdade social, 2) utilizar e consolidar os princípios de estratégias locais e implícitas para resistência e 3) fortalecer iniciativas locais para construção de comunidade. Em geral, todas essas implicações práticas enfatizam a necessidade de um envolvimento mais profundo das comunidades locais em programas educacionais, para que estejam bem conciliadas com a realidade do bairro e para garantir que oportunidades e obstáculos para resistência à violência não sejam negligenciados.

No entanto, apesar do potencial de transformação de estratégias implícitas desenvolvidas localmente e de baixo para cima, algo mais é necessário para romper as condições de violência de bairro e provocar transformações maiores. Os resultados deste estudo mostram que, mesmo quando as pessoas são organizadas coletivamente em organizações comunitárias, elas são severamente restringidas em suas possibilidades de enfrentar estruturas poderosas de gangues locais, crime organizado transnacional e corrupção. Ao mesmo tempo, a distribuição desigual de recursos para a segurança pública, maior exposição à violência policial e acesso desigual à educação e emprego, entre outras coisas, deixam os moradores em bairros de assentamentos informais insuficientemente protegidas da violência e com poucos recursos para oferecer resistência. Essas estruturas sociais dominantes de desigualdade que prejudicam as necessidades fundamentais das pessoas podem ser consideradas expressões de violência estrutural que apresentam um obstáculo crucial para o estabelecimento da paz. Porém, como a revisão da literatura no Capítulo 2 destacou, essas estruturas de desigualdade social raramente são objeto de intervenções educacionais atuais para combater a violência de bairro. Atualmente, as intervenções educacionais usam principalmente uma abordagem individual e, portanto, não parecem oferecer uma solução para um problema social estrutural e coletivo, como a violência de bairro. Isso ressalta a necessidade de uma abordagem crítica e mais sistêmica que transcenda as fronteiras do bairro e também vise combater estruturas sociais, econômicas e políticas que perpetuam a violência (em suas várias formas). Isso requer, antes de tudo, uma política pública deliberada que visem corrigir injustiças sociais e permitir participação igualitária na sociedade. Isso inclui, entre outras coisas, acesso igualitário a recursos públicos para educação, segurança, saúde e infraestrutura, bem como tratamento justo e equitativo por organizações governamentais confiáveis. Em segundo lugar, uma abordagem sistêmica à violência de bairro requer intervenções educacionais que, em diálogo e colaboração com vários parceiros (incluindo pais e os próprios jovens), desenvolvam ideias para remover barreiras sistêmicas e cheguem em

conjunto a soluções criativas. Uma "pedagogia da esperança" otimista e, ainda assim, realista que promova a participação e cultive oportunidades para formas coletivas e compartilhadas de agência, poderia fornecer uma base importante. Tal uma abordagem educacional transformadora e esperançosa poderia encorajar todos os envolvidos a não desviar o olhar ou se render às circunstâncias como um destino inevitável, mas a resistir (aos limites das) realidades existentes e criar coletivamente bairros e sociedades mais justos e pacíficos.

Acknowledgements

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Looking back on the almost nine years I have been working on this PhD study, I can conclude that it was truly inspiring and formative, and at the same time extremely challenging. This dissertation is the final product of that lengthy but exciting process, which would not have been possible without the enduring support of many people around me. I want to thank all of them for their help, guidance and encouragement.

First of all, I would like to thank all the participants in this study and all the other people in Salvador who have supported me during my stay, who have helped me find my way and let me into their lives. Without you, this dissertation would not have been possible!
Estou muito grato por todas as pessoas que conheci durante meus tempos em Salvador. Todos os educadores, as mães, e os jóvens que participaram neste estudo, as equipes das associações que me fizeram sentir em casa, e todos aqueles que me convidaram para suas casas e suas vidas, incluindo aqueles que infelizmente não estão mais entre nós. Eu gostaria de fazer um agradecimento especial á diretora que desde o início me ajudou com tudo que precisava e me acolheu em sua familía: sou eternamente grato a você, você fez com que nunca me senti sola: uma amiga de verdade. Igualmente é dificíl expressar minha gratidão á querida família onde fiquei hospedada, que cuidava tão bem de mim e continua me recebendo de braços abertos toda vez que chego em Salvador. Me emocionou muito como vocês me receberam com tanta hospitalidade, sinto que ganhei mais uma família. A gentileza e hospitalidade das pessoas que conheci em Salvador sempre me surpreendeu. Me dê grande alegria quando puder receber vocês aqui na Holanda. Já têm onde ficar! Também queria agradecer especialmente á Lorena quem posso mencionar pelo nome. Você virou uma amiga e assistente de pesquisa inestimável que não apenas me ajudou com a transcrição das entrevistas mas também me ensinou muito sobre a história de Salvador, das comunidades e das questões sociais. Muito obrigado a todos vocês, por me fazer parte das esperanças e dificuldades que envolve crescer, criar e educar num contexto com muitas limitações. Continuo a ser inspirado e motivado por sua capacidade de imaginar um futuro mais brilhante e por seus esforços incansáveis para alcança-lo. Este livro está dedicado a vocês. Agradeço a todos por compartilhar suas histórias e me fazer parte da sua missão de, apesar das circunstâncias difíceis, fazer a diferença para as novas gerações. Foi e continua sendo um processo excepcionalmente formativo para mim.

Secondly, I would like to thank my supervisors, Maria de Haan and Micha de Winter for their engagement and support. Maria, without your trust and encouragement I would not have turned my ambition to return to Brazil into a PhD project. I cannot thank you enough for the faith you put in me, your critical and detailed feedback that always enabled me to improve my work and the time and effort you invested to help me move forward when I got stuck. Our shared interest for understanding how wider socio-cultural and historical conditions have an

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Thanks to all my other family members and friends who were always interested, who motivated me during the hard times, who asked patiently how things were going and were full of understanding if I arrived late again or missed parties and weekend plans because I was working on my PhD.

A special thanks to Mathilde, for going on that first adventure to Brazil together, an unforgettable experience that I will always cherish. Thank you for bringing me in touch with 'Stichting Vrienden van Kleutercentra Brazilië' and all the other people in your network (Paul, Dieuwertje, Euge) who helped me during this trajectory. I am so grateful for your continuous engagement and encouragement. Your friendship means a lot to me and has been essential for realising this dissertation!

And thank you Jerryl. For being proud of me. For being my spectacled computer expert. For ignoring my stubbornness and buying the office gear that I didn't think I needed. For being patient with this slow-moving turtle. For being encouraging although my PhD sometimes interfered with our future plans. For just being there. I cannot wait to write our next 'chapter' together!

About the author

Annelieke van Dijk (1987) was born in Middelburg where she spent her childhood in a diverse neighbourhood, living next door to neighbour children from Brazil. In 2005 she moved to Leiden to start her Bachelor in Pedagogical Sciences (major) and Cultural Anthropology and Development Sociology (minor) at Leiden University. After a gap year, working in child care and after-school programmes in the Netherlands and volunteering in a language school in Central America, in 2009 she switched to Utrecht University for a Masters in Youth, Education and Society where she could continue to study social educational issues from the multiple perspectives of anthropology, sociology and pedagogy. During her Masters she went to Brazil for the first time, spending 5 months in a children's cultural centre in a slum neighbourhood in Rio de Janeiro. Together with her class mate and friend Mathilde she conducted an ethnographic study focused on the transition process of the children attending this cultural centre and how they dealt with switching between the different environments of their homes, the neighbourhood and the centre.

After finishing her Masters, Annelieke started working as a researcher at Noorda en Co, an independent research institute focused on social youth issues. As a co-owner she currently still works there and is responsible for various projects, including the development and evaluation of youth interventions, training of youth professionals and advising municipalities and social organisations about innovation of youth policy and improvement of youth facilities. She has contributed to the development of the effective youth intervention Young Leaders, a pedagogical training programme for youth from socioeconomic disadvantaged neighbourhoods aimed at activating youth as positive role models for peers. The programme promotes their personal development, participation and sense of agency and encourages them to unite with other youth and use their skills and talents for the benefit of their own future and their neighbourhood. Annelieke is currently responsible for the evaluation and further development of the programme and the training of trainers.

Having cherished the wish to return to Brazil for some time, in 2015 Annelieke reached out to the Dutch foundation Stichting Vrienden van Kleutercentra Brazilië, that supports community preschools in the city of Salvador da Bahia. With the ambition to contribute as a researcher to a better understanding of the upbringing of youth in violent neighbourhood contexts, she started her PhD project as an external candidate (Buitenpromovendus) at Utrecht University. Her research proposal was granted with a Young Talent Scholarship by het Cultuurfonds, which offered an important financial contribution to the first months of field work in Brazil. During her stay Annelieke participated in a research group on sociocultural issues in education and psychology and followed a postgraduate course on identity development at the Federal University of Bahia (UFBA).

Since October 2016 she resumed her job at Noorda en Co, and continued to work on her PhD project at Utrecht University. She currently still works at Noorda en Co and recently became co-owner of the research institute. She is also a board member of Stichting Petite Cobi, that operates a dispensary and funds medical care for children and mothers in a rural area in Senegal.

Appendices

Chapter 2. Table 1.

Taxonomy of interventions in response to community violence with the aim of transformation

Intervention	Main perspective	Type of transformation	Level of intervention	Perception of youth	Level of community involvement	Outcome indicator	Citation
	• Educational • Criminological • Psychosocial health	• Qualification • Socialisation • Social reorganisation	• Individual • Group • Environment	• Victim • Offender	• Setting • Target • Resource • Agent	• Individual level • Interpersonal level • Community level	
QUALIFICATION							
Aulas en Paz	Educational	Qualification	Individual	Offender Victim	Setting	• Individual level: Victimisation; Aggression; Prosocial behaviour; Socio-emotional competencies; Positive parenting strategies	• Chaux et al. (2017)
Becoming A Man	Criminological	Qualification	Individual	Offender	Setting	• Individual level: Violent offenses; School engagement; High school graduation	• Heller, Shah, Guryan, Ludwig, Mullainathan & Polack (2017)

Intervention	Main perspective	Type of transformation	Level of intervention	Perception of youth	Level of community involvement	Outcome indicator	Citation
Child and Family Traumatic Stress Intervention	Psychosocial health	Qualification	Individual Group	Victim	None	• Individual level: PTSD symptoms • Interpersonal level Perceived social support	• Berkowitz, Stover & Marans (2011) • Voisin & Berringer (2015)
Entrepreneurial training programme in Tanzania	(Psychosocial) health	Qualification	Individual	Offender	Setting	• Individual level: Weekly income	• Outwater, Abraham, Iseselo, Helgesson Sekei, Kazaura & Killewo (2021)
Fit2Lead Youth Enrichment and Sports	Psychosocial health	Qualification	Individual	Victim Offender	Setting Resource (design)	• Individual level: Emotion regulation; Self-efficacy; Risk for anxiety and depression	• Goodman, Ouellette, D'Agostino, Hansen, Lee & Frazier (2020)
Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction (MBSR)	Psychosocial health	Qualification	Individual	Victim	Setting	• Individual level: Reduced internalising symptoms; Improved psychological functioning and coping	• Sibinga, Webb, Ghazarian & Ellen (2016) • Ali-Saleh Darawshy et al. (2020)
Scared Straight Program	Criminological	Qualification	Individual	Offender	None	• Individual level: Offending behaviour (arrest, conviction, police contact and self-reported offenses); Attitudes towards offending	• Petrosino, Turpin-Petrosino, Holles-Peel & Lavenberg (2013)

Intervention	Main perspective	Type of transformation	Level of intervention	Perception of youth	Level of community involvement	Outcome indicator	Citation
Sustainable Transformation of Youth in Liberia (STYL)	Criminological	Qualification	Individual	Offender	Setting Resource (staff)	• Individual level: Reduced anti-social behaviour (e.g. drug selling and other crime, fights, weapon carrying)	• Blattman, Jamison & Sheridan (2015)
QUALIFICATION AND SOCIALISATION							
All Stars	Educational	Qualification Socialisation	Individual Group	Offender	Resource (staff)	• Individual level: Violent behaviour; Attitudes towards violence; Substance use; School attachment;	• Harrington, Giles, Hoyle, Feeney & Yungbluth (2001)
Building Bridges Mentoring Intervention (BBMI)	Psychosocial health	Qualification Socialisation	Individual	Victim Offender	Setting Resource (staff & design)	• Individual level: Leadership skills; Knowledge on violence; Personal attitudes; Active citizenship	• Taliep, Ismail & Bulbulia (2021)
E-responder	Criminological	Qualification Socialisation	Individual Group	Offender	Resource	• Individual level: Social media self-efficacy • Interpersonal level: Interruption of violence-related online content (conflict de-escalation)	• Sichel, Javdani, Shaw & Liggett (2020) • Sichel, Javdani, Ueberall, Liggett (2019)

Intervention	Main perspective	Type of trans- formation	Level of intervention	Perception of youth	Level of community involve- ment	Outcome indicator	Citation
El Joven Noble	Psychosocial health	Qualification Socialisation	Individual	Offender	Setting Re- source (staff & design)	• Individual level: Violent behaviour; Non-violence self-effi- cacy; Endorsement of pro- gramme values (e.g. responsibility, honesty, support to others)	• Kelly, Lesser, Cheng, Oscós-Sánchez, Martinez, Pineda & Mancha (2010) • Ali-Saleh Darawshy et al. (2020)
Gang Reduc- tion and Youth Development Program	Criminological	Qualification Socialisation	Individual Group	Offender	Setting	• Community level: Violent crime (homicide, aggravated assault, rob- bery); Property crime (burglary, car theft, theft from vehicle)	• Brantingham, Tita & Herz (2021)
Indigo Youth Movement	Psychosocial health	Qualification Socialisation	Individual Group	Victim Of- fender	Setting Resource (staff)	• Individual level: Life skills (e.g. goal-set- ting); Stress coping Emotion regulation • Interpersonal level: Social norms; subculture /community skateboard- ers	• Sohrsdahl, Davies, Jensel, Oberholzer, Gelberg, van der Westhuizen (2021)

Intervention	Main perspective	Type of transformation	Level of intervention	Perception of youth	Level of community involvement	Outcome indicator	Citation
Olweus	Psychosocial health	Qualification Socialisation	Individual Group Environment	Victim Offender	Setting Resource (design)	• Individual level Aggression; Victimisation • Interpersonal level Positive peer interaction; Teacher support • Community level School climate; School safety	• Sullivan, Farrell, Sutherland, Behrhorst, Garthe & Greene (2021)
Glasgow/Cincinnati Community Initiative to Reduce Violence (CIRV)	Criminological	Socialisation Qualification	Individual Group	Offender	Setting	• Individual level: Criminal offending (violent and non-violent offenses); Weapon carriage	• Williams, Currie, Linden & Donnelly (2014)
Tratamiento Integral a Pandillas (TIP)	Criminological	Socialisation Qualification	Group Individual	Offender Victim	Setting Resource (staff)	• Individual level: Employment rates; Substance use assistance • Community level: Homicide rates	• Gutierrez-Martinez, Dario-Valencia & Santaella-Tenorio (2020)
SOCIALISATION							
Glen Mills School	Criminological	Socialisation	Group	Offender	None	• Individual level Recidivism rates; Employment/return to school; Attitudes towards authority figures	• Dubnov (1986) • Hilhorst & Klooster (2004)

Intervention	Main perspective	Type of transformation	Level of intervention	Perception of youth	Level of community involvement	Outcome indicator	Citation
Cure Violence	Criminological	Socialisation	Group Individual	Offender	Setting Resource (staff)	• Community level: Violence rates; Perception of safety; Attitudes towards violence	• Butts, Gouvis Roman, Bostwick & Porter (2015) • Skogan (2011) • Wilson & Chermak (2011) • Kennedy (2011) • Picard-Fritsche & Cerniglia (2013) • Cavanaugh, Branas & Formica (2021) • Webster, Mender Whitehill, Vernick & Parker (2012)
TimeZup (pulling levers strategy)	Criminological	Socialisation	Individual	Offender	Setting	• Community level: Violent crime (murder, robbery and violent assault)	• Levchak (2021)
KiVa Anti bullying Program	Educational	Socialisation	Group Individual	Victim Offender	Setting	• Individual level: Self-reported bullying; Self-reported victimisation; Anti bullying attitudes; Well being at school; Empathy towards victims; Self-efficacy for defending behaviour; • Interpersonal level: Participant roles in bullying situations	• Kärna, Voeten, Little, Poskiparta, Kaljonen & Salmivalli (2011)

Intervention	Main perspective	Type of transformation	Level of intervention	Perception of youth	Level of community involvement	Outcome indicator	Citation
SOCIAL REORGANISATION							
Abrindo Espaços	Educational	Qualification Social reorganisation	Individual Group	Victim	Setting Resource (staff)	• Individual level: Self-esteem Citizenship • Interpersonal level: Student-teacher relations • Community level: School climate School violence	• Waiselfisz & Maciel, 2003 • Jovchelovitch Noleto, Garcia Castro & Abramovay (2003)
Autonomous indigenous schools: Unisur	Educational	Social reorganisation Qualification	Individual Environment	Victim	Resource Agent	• Individual level: Creating critical dispositions; Ethnic-cultural identity formation; Access to higher education • Community level: Community improvement (i.e. community services); Change political relations; Social inclusion of minority youth	• De Buck (2021)

Intervention	Main perspective	Type of trans-formation	Level of intervention	Perception of youth	Level of community involvement	Outcome indicator	Citation
Hermes programme	Educational	Social reorganisation Qualification Socialisation	Environment Individual Group	Victim Offender	Resource (design)	• Individual level: Peaceful conflict-resolution attitudes and skills • Interpersonal level: Student-teacher relationships • Community level: Violence rates	• Pinzon-Salcedo & Torres-Cuello (2018) • Marciales Mogollón & Vega Rivera (2019)
Autonomous indigenous schools: Zapatista education	Educational	Social reorganisation	Environment Individual	Victim	Resource Agent	• Individual level: Critical thinking and analysis • Community level: Protecting rights and strengthening independence of indigenous communities	• Bajaj (2015) • Mora (2007)
Why are we so angry?	Psychosocial health	Social reorganisation	Environment Group Individual	Victim Offender	Setting Target Resource	• Individual level: Anger processing; Knowledge about police procedures • Interpersonal level: Trust in neighbours; Trust in law enforcement • Community level: Neighbourhood safety; Collective efficacy; Community improvements / addressed community needs (e.g. neighbourhood clean-up, locks and windows, lighting)	• Abdi (2021)

Chapter 2. Table S1.

Listing of reviewed articles

Article	Topic	Language	Country / Region	Search phase
Abdi, A. (2021). *Gun Violence as a Public Health Issue: Evaluating the Interventions of KC Mothers in Charge* (Thesis). University of Missouri.	Community violence Community building	English	USA	2
Abdul-Adil, J., & Suárez, L. M. (2022). The urban youth trauma center: A trauma-informed continuum for addressing community violence among youth. *Community Mental Health Journal,* 58, 334–342.	Community violence Psychosocial health Cross-sector cooperation	English	USA	2
Abt, T. & Winship, C. (2016). *What works in reducing community violence: a meta-review and field study for the Northern Triangle.* Washington DC: U.S. Agency for International Development.	Community violence Gang violence Violence reduction	English	Central America USA	1
Akers, R. L. (1996). Is differential association/social learning cultural deviance theory?. *Criminology,* 34(2), 229-247.	Criminological theory	English	USA	1
Ali-Saleh Darawshy, N., Gewirtz, A., & Marsalis, S. (2020). Psychological Intervention and Prevention Programs for Child and Adolescent Exposure to Community Violence: A Systematic Review. *Clinical Child and Family Psychology Review,* 23(3), 365–378.	Community violence Violence exposure	English	USA	1
Anderson, E. (1999). *Code of the street. Decency, violence and the moral life of the inner city.* New York: Norton & Co.	Community violence Street culture Social exclusion	English	USA	1

Article	Topic	Language	Country / Region	Search phase
Angenent, H. (1991). *Achtergronden van jeugd-criminaliteit*. Houten-Antwerpen: Bohn Stafleu van Loghum.	Youth crime Criminological theory	Dutch	Europe North America	1
van Dijk, de Haan & de Winter (2020). Voicing versus silencing: education for peace in contexts of violence. *International Journal of Educational Research, 102*, 101581.	Community violence Peace education Resistance	English	Brazil	1
Bajaj, M. (2015). 'Pedagogies of resistance' and critical peace education praxis. *Journal of Peace Education, 12*(2), 154–166.	Peace education Critical education Education and equity Resistance	English	USA Mexico India	1
Bar-Tal, D., & Rosen, Y. (2009). Peace Education in Societies Involved in Intractable Conflicts: Direct and Indirect Models. *Review of Educational Research, 79*(2), 557–575.	Peace education Violence exposure	English	World	1
Bellair, P. E. (2000). Informal surveillance and street crime: a complex relationship. *Criminology, 38*(1), 137–170.	Community violence Crime Community dynamics	English	USA	1
Berg, M.T., Stewart, E.A., Schreck, C.J. & Simons, R.L. (2012). The victim-offender overlap in context. Examining the role of neighbourhood street culture. *Criminology, 50*(2), 359–390.	Community violence Street culture	English	USA	1
Berger, R., Benatov, J., Abu-Raiya, H., Tadmor, C.T. (2016). Reducing prejudice and promoting positive intergroup attitudes among elementary-school children in the context of the Israeli–Palestinian conflict. *Journal of School Psychology, 57*, 53–72.	Peace education	English	Israel-Palestina	1

Article	Topic	Language	Country / Region	Search phase
Berkowitz, S. J., Stover, C. S., & Marans, S. R. (2010). The Child and Family Traumatic Stress Intervention: Secondary prevention for youth at risk of developing PTSD. *The Journal of Child Psychology and Psychiatry, 52*(6), 676–685.	Psychosocial health Violence exposure	English	USA	1
Berti Suman, A. (2020). Multi-stakeholder cooperation for safe and healthy urban environments: The case of citizen sensing. In: Van Montfort, C. & Michels, A. (Eds.), *Partnerships for Livable Cities.* (pp. 191–210). Cham: Palgrave MacMillan.	Community participation Crime prevention Community building	English	The Netherlands Japan	2
Biesta, G. J. J. (2012). *Goed onderwijs en de cultuur van het meten.* Den Haag, Nederland: Boom Lemma.	Educational theory Critical education	Dutch	Europe North-America	1
Biesta, G. J. J. (2015). *Het prachtige risico van onderwijs.* Culemborg, Nederland: Uitgeverij Phronese.	Educational theory Critical education	Dutch	Europe North-America	1
Blanco, E. (2011). Efectos escolares sobre los aprendizajes en México: una perspectiva centrada en la interacción escuela-entorno. *Papeles de población, 17*(69), 219–256.	Education and equity	Spanish	Mexico	1
Blattman, C., Jamison, J. C., & Sheridan, M. (2017). Reducing Crime and Violence: Experimental Evidence from Cognitive Behavioral Therapy in Liberia. *American Economic Review, 107*(4), 1165–1206.	Gang violence Crime reduction	English	Liberia	1

Article	Topic	Language	Country / Region	Search phase
Bleijenberg, C. E. (2021). *In gesprek of uitgepraat? Over de betekenis van gesprekken voor het verloop van lokale participatieprocessen* (Doctoral dissertation). Nijmegen: Radboud Universiteit Nijmegen.	Community participation Citizenship	Dutch	The Netherlands	2
Bol, M.W., Terlouw, G.J., Blees, L.W. & Verwers, C. (1998). *Jong en gewelddadig. Ontwikkelingen en achtergronden van de gewelds-criminaliteit onder jeugdigen*. Den Haag: WODC.	Youth violence Criminological theory	Dutch	The Netherlands USA	1
Bonne, S. L., Violano, P., Duncan, T. K., Pappas, P. A., Baltazar, G. A., Dultz, L, A, et al. (2021). Prevention of firearm violence through specific types of community-based programming: an eastern association for the surgery of trauma evidence-based review. *Annals of surgery, 274*(2), 298–305.	Gun violence Youth violence prevention	English	USA	2
Braga, A.A. & Weisburd, D.L. (2012). The effects of focused deterrence strategies on crime: A systematic review and meta-analysis of the empirical evidence. *Journal of Research in Crime and Delinquency, 49* (3), 323–358.	Gang violence Crime reduction Focussed deterrence	English	USA	1
Brantingham, P. J., Tita, G., & Herz, D. (2021). The Impact of the City of Los Angeles Mayor's Office of Gang Reduction and Youth Development (GRYD) Comprehensive Strategy on Crime in the City of Los Angeles. *Justice Evaluation Journal, 4*(2), 217–236.	Gang violence Crime reduction	English	USA	1

Article	Topic	Language	Country / Region	Search phase
Burde, D., Kapit, A., Wahl, R. L., Guven, O., & Skarpeteig, M. I. (2017). Education in Emergencies: A Review of Theory and Research. *Review of Educational Research, 87*(3), 619–658.	Violence exposure Peace education	English	World	1
Burgason, K. A., Thomas, S. A., Berthelot, E. R., & Burkey, L. C. (2014). Gats and Gashes: Street Culture and Distinctions in the Nature of Violence between Youth and Adult Offenders. *Deviant Behavior, 35*(7), 534–554.	Community violence Street culture	English	USA	1
Butts, J.A., Gouvis Roman, C., Bostwick, L. & J.R. Porter (2015). Cure Violence: A public health model to reduce gun violence. *Annual Review of Public Health, 36,* 39–53.	Gang violence Youth violence reduction	English	USA	1
Cavanaugh, S. M., Branas, C. C., & Formica, M. K. (2021). Community-Engaged and Informed Violence Prevention Interventions. *Pediatric Clinics of North America, 68*(2), 489–509	Community violence Violence reduction Community-based interventions	English	USA	2
Chaux, E., Barrera, M., Molano, A., Castellanos, M., Chaparro, M.P. & Bustamante, A. (2017). Classrooms in Peace Within Violent Contexts: Field Evaluation of Aulas en Paz in Colombia. *Prevention Science, 18,* 828–838.	Community violence Peace education	English	Colombia	1
Churchill, S. (1996). The decline of the nation-state and the education of national minorities. *International Review of Education, 42,* 265–290.	Education and equity Critical education	English	World	1

Article	Topic	Language	Country / Region	Search phase
Cima, M. (2016). *The Handbook of Forensic Psychopathology and Treatment.* Oxon/New York: Routledge.	Crime Psychopathology Youth violence reduction	English	The Netherlands USA Australia Germany	1
Coetzee, B.J., Gericke, H., Human, S., Stallard, P. & Loades, M. (2022). What should a Universal School-Based Psychoeducational Programme to Support Psychological Well-Being amongst Children and Young People in South Africa Focus on and how should it be Delivered? A Multi-Stakeholder Perspective. *School Mental Health, 14,* 189–200.	Community violence Psychosocial health	English	South Africa	2
Cohen, A.K. (1955). *Delinquent Boys. The Culture of the Gang.* New York: Free Press.	Gang violence Street culture Social exclusion Criminological theory	English	USA	1
Cook, D.D. & Spirrison, C.L. (1992). Effects of a Prisoner-operated Delinquency Deterrence Program, *Journal of Offender Rehabilitation, 17*(3-4), 89–100.	Gang violence Focussed deterrence	English	USA	1
Das, V., & Kleinman, A. (2000). Introduction. In V. Das, A. Kleinman, M. Ramphele, & P. Reynolds (Eds.), *Violence and subjectivity* (pp. 1–18). Berkeley: University of California Press.	Social dynamics of violence Resistance	English	World	1
De Buck, M.A. (2020). *At the Crossroads of Multiculturalism and Violence: Community Policing and Grassroots Education in Guerrero, Mexico.* (Doctoral dissertation). Utrecht: Utrecht University.	Critical education Social exclusion Resistance Community building	English	Mexico	2

Article	Topic	Language	Country / Region	Search phase
De Winter, M. (2012). *Socialization and civil society: How parents, teachers and others could foster a democratic way of life.* Rotterdam: Sense Publishers.	Citizenship education Critical education Social exclusion	English	World	2
Deetman, W., van der Lans, J. & Scherpenisse, R. (2011). *Doorzetten en loslaten. Toekomst van de wijkenaanpak. Deel 1: Eindrapportage.* Den Haag: Visitatiecommissie Wijkenaanpak.	Community building	Dutch	The Netherlands	2
Dubnov, W. L. (1986). The Glen Mills Project: Innovation in Juvenile Corrections. *Journal of Offender Counseling, Services & Rehabilitation, 10*(4), 87–105.	Youth violence prevention Crime reduction	English	USA	1
Evans, T. (2019). Kansas city's response to group related gun violence. *Lucerna, 14*, 44–69.	Gang violence Community-based interventions	English	USA	2
Evans, C. B., Stalker, K. C., & Brown, M. E. (2021). A systematic review of crime/violence and substance use prevention programs. *Aggression and Violent Behavior, 56*, 101513.	Community violence Crime prevention Substance use interventions	English	USA	2
Falconer, N. S., Casale, M., Kuo, C., Nyberg, B. J., Hillis, S. D., & Cluver, L. D. (2021). Factors That Protect Children From Community Violence: Applying the INSPIRE Model to a Sample of South African Children. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence, 36*(23–24), 11602–11629.	Community violence Violence exposure	English	South Africa	1
Fischman, G. (1988). Donkeys and Superteachers: Structural Adjustment and Popular Education in Latin America. *International Review of Education, 44*, 191–213.	Education and equity Critical education	English	Latin America	1

Article	Topic	Language	Country / Region	Search phase
Fowler, P. J., Tompsett, C. J., Braciszewski, J. M., Jacques-Tiura, A. J., & Baltes, B. B. (2009). Community violence: A meta-analysis on the effect of exposure and mental health outcomes of children and adolescents. *Development and Psychopathology, 21*(1), 227–259	Community violence	English	USA	1
Fox, A.M., Katz, C.M., Choate, D.E. & Hedberg, E.C. (2015). Evaluation of the Phoenix TRUCE Project: A Replication of Chicago CeaseFire, *Justice Quarterly, 32*(1), 85–115	Gang violence Youth violence reduction	English	USA	1
Freire, P. (2014). *Pedagogy of Hope: Reliving Pedagogy of the Oppressed (Bloomsbury Revelations)*. London: Bloomsbury Academic.	Education and equity Critical education	English	Brazil	1
Freire, P. (2018). *Pedagogy of the Oppressed (4th ed.)*. New York: Bloomsbury Academic.	Education and equity Critical education	English	Brazil	1
Gaias, L. M., Lindstrom Johnson, S., White, R. M., Pettigrew, J., & Dumka, L. (2019). Positive school climate as a moderator of violence exposure for Colombian a dolescents. *American Journal of Community Psychology, 63*(1-2), 17–31.	Community violence Violence exposure	English	Colombia	2
Gaias, L. M. , Lindstrom Johnson, S. & Molano, A. (2022). Amplification or Inoculation: Understanding the Interacting Effects of Political and Community Violence on Externalizing Behaviors. *Psychology of Violence, 12*(1), 11–21.	Community violence Violence exposure	English	Colombia	1

Article	Topic	Language	Country / Region	Search phase
García-Poole, C., Byrne, S., & Rodrigo, M. J. (2019). How do communities intervene with dolescents at psychosocial risk? A systematic review of positive development programs. *Children and Youth Services Review, 99,* 194-209.	Youth violence prevention	English	North America Europe Israel Uganda	1
Geboers, E., Geijsel, F., Admiraal, W. & Ten Dam, G. (2013). Review of the effects of citizenship e ducation. *Educational Research Review, 9*(2013), 158–173.	Citizenship education	English	World	1
Goodman, A. C., Ouellette, R. R., D'Agostino, E. M., Hansen, E., Lee, T., & Frazier, S. L. (2021). Promoting healthy trajectories for urban middle school youth through county-funded, parks-based after-school programming. *Journal of Community Psychology, 49*(7), 2795–2817.	Community violence Psychosocial health Sports-based interventions	English	USA	2
Gottfredson, M.R. & Hirschi, T. (1990). *A general theory of crime.* Stanford: Stanford University Press.	Criminological theory	English	North America Europe	1
Groenleer, M., Cels, S., & de Jong, J. (2020). Safety in the city: Building strategic partnerships in the fight against organized crime. In: Van Montfort, C. & Michels, A. (Eds.), *Partnerships for Livable Cities* (pp. 211-228). Cham: Palgrave MacMillan.	Crime reduction Cross-sector cooperation Community participation	English	The Netherlands	2
Gundara, J. (2008). Complex Societies, Common Schools and Curriculum: Separate is not Equal. In: Majhanovich, S., Fox, C., Kreso, A.P. (Eds), *Living Together*. Dordrecht: Springer.	Education and equity Critical education	English	UK USA	1

Article	Topic	Language	Country / Region	Search phase
Guterman, N. B., Haj-Yahia, M. M., Vorhies, V., Ismayilova, L., & Leshem, B. (2010). Help-Seeking and Internal Obstacles to Receiving Support in the Wake of Community Violence Exposure: The Case of Arab and Jewish Adolescents in Israel. *Journal of Child and Family Studies, 19*(6), 687–696.	Community violence Violence exposure	English	Israel-Palestina	1
Gutierrez-Martinez, M. I., Valencia, R. D., & Santaella-Tenorio, J. (2020). The holistic transformative street-street gang intervention impact and its association with homicide rates in Cali, Colombia. *Revista Criminalidad*, 62(3): 39–48.	Gang violence Crime prevention	English	Colombia	1
Haj-Yahia, M. M., Leshem, B., & Guterman, N. B. (2013). The Rates and Characteristics of the Exposure of Palestinian Youth to Community Violence. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence, 28*(11), 2223–2249.	Community violence Violence exposure	English	Israel-Palestina	1
Harrington, N.G., Giles, S.M., Hoyle, R.H., Feeney, G.J. & Yungbluth, S.C. (2001). Evaluation of the All Stars character education and problem behavior prevention program: effects on mediator and outcome variables for middle school students. *Health Education & Behavior, Vol. 28*(5), 533-546.	Youth violence prevention Moral education	English	USA	1
Heller, S. B., Shah, A. K., Guryan, J., Ludwig, J., Mullainathan, S., & Pollack, H. A. (2016). Thinking, Fast and Slow? Some Field Experiments to Reduce Crime and Dropout in Chicago*. *The Quarterly Journal of Economics, 132*(1), 1–54.	Youth violence reduction Crime reduction	English	USA	1

Article	Topic	Language	Country / Region	Search phase
Hendriks, J., & Stams, G. J. (2016). Forensisch orthopedagogische behandeling: een kritische beschouwing. *Orthopedagogiek: onderzoek en praktijk, 55*(9/10), 214-222.	Crime reduction Youth violence reduction	Dutch	The Netherlands	1
Hilhorst, N. & Klooster, E. (2004). *Programma-evaluatie van de Glen Mills School*. Den Haag: WODC.	Youth violence prevention Crime reduction	Dutch	The Netherlands	1
Hirschi, T. (1969). *Causes of Delinquency*. Berkeley: University of California Press.	Criminological theory	English	USA	1
Hyatt, J.M., Densley, J.A., Roman, C.G. (2021). Social Media and the Variable Impact of Violence Reduction Interventions: Re-Examining Focused Deterrence in Philadelphia. *Social Sciences,10*(5), 147.	Gang violence Focussed deterrence Cross-sector coopera-tion	English	USA	2
Ilan, J. (2015). *Understanding street culture. Poverty, crime, youth and cool*. London: Palgrave.	Community violence Street culture Social exclusion	English	World	1
Jacquet, V. (2017). Explaining non-participation in deliberative mini-publics. *European Journal of Political Research, 56*(3), 640-659.	Community participation Citizenship	English	Belgium	2
Jain, S., & Cohen, A. K. (2013). Behavioral Adaptation Among Youth Exposed to Community Violence: a Longitudinal Multidisciplinary Study of Family, Peer and Neighborhood-Level Protective Factors. *Prevention Science, 14*(6), 606–617.	Community violence Violence exposure	English	USA	1

Article	Topic	Language	Country / Region	Search phase
Johnston, V. (2010). An Ecuadorian Alternative: Gang Reintegration. In: Berman, E.G., Krause, K., LeBrun, E. & McDonald, G. (Eds.) *Small Arms Survey 2010. Gangs, groups and guns.* (pp. 209–227). Camebridge: Camebridge University Press.	Gang violence Crime reduction	English	Ecuador	2
Junger-Tas, J. (1996). Gezinsbeleid vanuit een justitieel perspectief. *Justitiële verkenningen, 22(6), 17-37.*	Youth crime Crime prevention	Dutch	The Netherlands USA UK	1
Kaplan, C., Valdez, A. & Cepeda, A. (2010). Getting Past Suppression: Street Gang Interventions. In: Berman, E.G., Krause, K., LeBrun, E. & McDonald, G. (Eds.) *Small Arms Survey 2010. Gangs, groups and guns.* (pp. 229–253). Camebridge: Camebridge University Press.	Gang violence Crime reduction	English	World	2
Kärnä, A., Voeten, M., Little, T.D., Poskiparta, E., Kaljonen, A., & Salmivalli, C. (2011). A large-scale evaluation of the KiVa anti-bullying program. *Child Development, 82,* 311–330.	School violence Anti-bullying interventions	English	Finland	1
Kaulingfreks, F. (2015). *Uncivil engagement and unruly politics: Disruptive interventions of urban youth.* (Doctoral dissertation). London: Palgrave Macmillan.	Youth violence Resistance Social exclusion	English	France UK The Netherlands	1
Kaulingfreks, F. (2016). Senseless violence or unruly politics? The uncivil revolt of young rioters. *Krisis, journal for contemporary philosophy, 1,* 4–18.	Youth violence Resistance Social exclusion	English	Europe	2

Article	Topic	Language	Country / Region	Search phase
Kelly, P. J., Lesser, J., Cheng, A. L., Oscós-Sánchez, M., Martinez, E., Pineda, D., & Mancha, J. (2010). A Prospective Randomized Controlled Trial of an Interpersonal Violence Prevention Program With a Mexican American Community. *Family & Community Health, 33*(3), 207–215	Youth violence prevention Interpersonal violence	English	USA	1
Klein, M. W. (2011). Comprehensive gang and violence reduction programs: Reinventing the square wheel. *Criminology & Public Policy, 10*(4), 1037–1044.	Gang violence Crime reduction	English	USA	2
Kennedy, D.M. (2011). Whither streetwork? The place of outreach workers in community violence prevention. *Criminology & Public Policy, 10*(4), 1045–1052.	Gang violence Crime reduction	English	USA	1
Kubrin, C.E. (2009). Social disorganization theory: Then, Now and in the Future. In: M.D. Krohn, A.J. Lizotte & G. Penly Hall (Eds.), *Handbook on crime and deviance.* (pp. 225–236). New York: Springer.	Community violence Community dynamics Criminological theory	English	USA	1
Latessa, E. (2011). Why the risk and needs principles are relevant to correctional programs (even to employment programs). *Criminology & Public Policy, 10*(4), 973.	Gang violence Crime reduction Employment programmes	English	USA	1
Levchak, P. J. (2021). Pulling levers in New Haven, CT: an analysis of the TimeZup initiative and its impact on murder, robbery, and assault. *Policing: An International Journal, 44*(5), 875–892.	Gang violence Focussed deterrence	English	USA	2

Article	Topic	Language	Country / Region	Search phase
Lilly, R. J., Cullen, F. T., & Ball, R. A. (2019). *Criminological Theory: Context and Consequences (7th ed.).* Thousand Oaks (CA): SAGE Publications.	Crime Criminological theory	English	USA	1
Liska, A. E., & Warner, B. D. (1991). Functions of crime: a paradoxical process. *American Journal of Sociology, 96*(6), 1441–1463.	Community violence Crime	English	USA	1
Lorion, R. & Saltzman,W. (1993). Children's exposure to community violence: Following a path from concern to research to action. In D. Reiss, J. E. Richters, M. Radke-Yarrow, & D. Scharff (Eds.), *Children and violence* (pp. 55–65). New York: Guilford Press.	Community violence Violence exposure	English	USA	1
Marciales Mogollón, S.C. & Vega Romero, M.J. (2019). *Evaluación del impacto del programa para la resolución de conflictos Hermes en los colegios de Bogotá, a nivel académico y de clima escolar.* Bogotá, Colombia: Universidad de los Andes.	Community violence Peace education	Spanish	Colombia	1
Markowitz, F. E., Bellair, P. E., Liska, A. E., & Liu, J. (2001). Extending social disorganization theory: modeling the relationships between cohesion, disorder, and fear*. *Criminology, 39*(2), 293–319.	Community violence Community dynamics	English	UK	1
Matjasko, J. L., Vivolo-Kantor, A. M., Massetti, G. M., Holland, K. M., Holt, M. K., & Cruz, J. D. (2012). A systematic meta-review of evaluations of youth violence prevention programs: Common and divergent findings from 25 years of meta-analyses and systematic reviews. *Aggression and Violent Behavior, 17*(6), 540-552.	Youth violence prevention	English	USA	1

Article	Topic	Language	Country / Region	Search phase
Mayfield, C.A., Siegal, R., Herring, M., Campbell, T., Clark, C.L., Langhinrichsen-Rohling, J. (2022). A Replicable, Solution-Focused Approach to Cross-Sector Data Sharing for Evaluation of Community Violence Prevention Programming. *Journal of Public Health Management and Practice, 28*(Supplement 1), S43-S53.	Community violence Cross-sector cooperation Hospital-based interventions	English	USA	2
McDaniel, D. D., Logan, J. E., & Schneiderman, J. U. (2014). Supporting gang violence prevention efforts: A public health approach for nurses. *Online Journal of Issues in Nursing, 19*(1), 3.	Gang violence Hospital-based interventions	English	USA	2
McDaniel, D. & Sayegh, C. (2020). Gang violence prevention efforts: a public health approach. In: J.S. Wormith, L.A. Craig & T.E. Hogue (Eds.), *The Wiley handbook of what works in violent risk management: theory, research and practice*. (pp. 265-277). Hoboken (NJ): John Wiley & Sons Ltd.	Gang violence Violence prevention	English	USA	1
McLeroy, K. R., Norton, B. L., Kegler, M. C., Burdine, J. N., & Sumaya, C. V. (2003). Community-based interventions. *American Journal of Public Health, 93*(4), 529–533.	Community-based interventions Public health interventions	English	USA	1
Monopoli, W. J., Myers, R. K., Paskewich, B. S., Bevans, K. B., & Fein, J. A. (2021). Generating a Core Set of Outcomes for Hospital-Based Violence Intervention Programs. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence, 36*(9–10), 4771–4786.	Violence prevention Hospital-based interventions Psychosocial health	English	USA	2

Article	Topic	Language	Country / Region	Search phase
Mora, M. (2007). Zapatista Anticapitalist Politics and the "Other Campaign". *Latin American Perspectives*, 34(2), 64–77.	Education and equity Critical education Resistance	English	Mexico	1
Nation, M., Chapman, D. A., Edmonds, T., Cosey-Gay, F. N., Jackson, T., Marshall, K. J. et al. (2021). Social and structural determinants of health and youth violence: shifting the paradigm of youth violence prevention. *American Journal of Public Health*, 111(S1), S28-S31.	Youth violence prevention Social exclusion	English	USA	2
Noguera, P. E. (1995). Preventing and producing violence: a critical analysis of responses to school violence. *Harvard Educational Review*, 65(2), 189–212.	School violence Education and equity	English	USA	1
Noguera, P. A. (2011). A Broader and Bolder Approach Uses Education to Break the Cycle of Poverty. *Phi Delta Kappan*, 93(3), 8–14.	Education and equity	English	USA	2
Noleto Jovchelovitch, M., Garcia Castro, M. & Abramovay, M. (2003). *Abrindo espaços: educação e cultura para a paz*. Brasília: UNESCO.	Community violence Peace education	Portuguese	Brazil	1
OECD (2012), *Equity and Quality in Education: Supporting Disadvantaged Students and Schools*. Paris: OECD Publishing.	Education and equity	English	World	1

Article	Topic	Language	Country / Region	Search phase
Oscós-Sánchez, M. Á., Lesser, J., Oscós-Flores, L. D., Pineda, D., Araujo, Y., Franklin, B., Hernández, J.A., Hernández, S. & Vidales, A. (2021). The effects of two community-based participatory action research programs on violence outside of and in school among adolescents and young adults in a Latino community. *Journal of Adolescent Health, 68*(2), 370-377.	Youth violence prevention Community-based interventions	English	USA	1
Østby, G., Urdal, H., & Dupuy, K. (2019). Does Education Lead to Pacification? A Systematic Review of Statistical Studies on Education and Political Violence. *Review of Educational Research, 89*(1), 46–92.	Peace education	English	World	1
Outwater, A. H., Abraham, A. G., Iseselo, M. K., Sekei, L. H., Kazaura, M. R., & Killewo, J. (2021). Entrepreneurship, beekeeping, and health training to decrease community violence in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania: a pilot study for an intervention trial. *Pilot and Feasibility Studies, 7*(183).	Community violence Employment programmes	English	Tanzania	2
Overstreet, S. (2000). Exposure to community violence: defining the problem and understanding the consequences. *Journal of Child and Family Studies, 9*(1), 7–25.	Community violence	English	USA	1
Ozer, E.J. (2006). Contextual Effects in School-Based Violence P revention Programs: A Conceptual Framework and Empirical Review. *Journal of Primary Prevention, 27,* 315–340.	School violence Violence prevention	English	USA	1

Article	Topic	Language	Country / Region	Search phase
Padilla, F.M. (1992). *The gang as an American enterprise.* New Brunswick (NJ): Rutgers University Press.	Gang violence Street culture Social exclusion Resistance	English	USA	1
Page, J. S. (2004). Peace Education: Exploring Some Philosophical Foundations. *International Review of Education, 50*(1), 3–15.	Peace education	English	World	1
Palma Priotto, E. & Wessler Boneti, L. (2009). Violência escolar: na escola, da escola e contra a escola. *Revista Diálogo Educacional, 9*(26), 161–179.	School violence	Portuguese	Brazil	1
Papachristos, A.V. & Kirk, D.S. (2015). Changing the street dynamic: Evaluating Chigago's group violence reduction strategy, *Criminology & Public Policy, 14* (3), 525-558.	Gang violence Youth violence prevention	English	USA	1
Pels, T. (2003). *Respect van twee kanten. Een studie over last van Marokkaanse jongeren.* Assen: Koninklijk van Gorcum BV.	Youth violence Social exclusion Resistance	Dutch	The Netherlands	1
Perlman, J. (2010). *Favela: Four Decades of Living on the Edge in Rio de Janeiro.* New York: Oxford University Press.	Community violence Community dynamics Social exclusion	English	Brazil	1
Petrosino, A., Turpin-Petrosino, C., Hollis-Peel, M. E., & Lavenberg, J. G. (2013). 'Scared Straight' and other juvenile awareness programs for preventing juvenile delinquency. *Cochrane Database of Systematic Reviews, 2013*(4), CD002796.	Gang violence Crime prevention	English	USA	1

Article	Topic	Language	Country / Region	Search phase
Picard-Fritsche S. & Cerniglia L. (2013). *Testing a Public Health Approach to Gun Violence: An Evaluation of Crown Heights Save Our Streets, a Replication of the Cure Violence Model.* New York: Center for Court Innovation.	Gang violence Youth violence reduction	English	USA	1
Pino, A. (2007). Violencia Educação e Sociedade: um olhar sobre o Brasil contemporâneo. *Educação & Sociedade, 28*(100), 763–785	Community violence Social exclusion	Portuguese	Brazil	1
Pinzon-Salcedo, L. A., & Torres-Cuello, M. A. (2018). Community Operational Research: Developing a systemic peace education programme involving urban and rural communities in Colombia. *European Journal of Operational Research, 268*(3), 946–959	Peace education Social exclusion	English	Colombia	1
Pitts, J. (2008). *Reluctant Gangsters: The changing face of youth crime.* Cullompton: Willan Publishing.	Gang violence Street culture	English	UK	1
Reidelberger, K., Raposo-Hadley, A., Greenaway, J., Farrens, A., Burt, J., Wylie, L. et al. (2021). Perceptions of violence in justice-involved youth. *Surgery open science, 5,* 14-18.	Youth violence prevention Hospital-based interventions Psychosocial health	English	USA	2
Ribeiro da Silva, F. & Gonçalves Assis, S. (2018). Prevenção da violência escolar: uma revisão da literatura. *Educação & Pesquisa, 44,* 1–13.	School violence	Portuguese	Latin America; North America	1
Roche J.S., Philyaw-Kotov, M.L., Sigel, E., et al (2022). Implementation of a youth violence prevention programme in primary care. *Injury Prevention, 28,* 231–237.	Youth violence prevention Public health interventions	English	USA	2

Article	Topic	Language	Country / Region	Search phase
Roman, C. G. (2021). An evaluator's reflections and lessons learned about gang intervention strategies: an agenda for research. *Journal of Aggression, Conflict and Peace Research, 13*(2/3), 148–167.	Gang violence Focussed-deterrence Cross-sector c ooperation	English	USA	2
Sampson, R. J., Raudenbush, S.W., & Earls, F. (1997). Neighborhoods and violent crime: A multilevel study of collective efficacy. *Science, 277,* 918–924.	Community violence Crime	English	USA	1
Shields, N., Nadasen, K., & Pierce, L. (2008). The effects of community violence on children in Cape Town, South Africa. *Child Abuse & Neglect, 32*(5), 589–601.	Community violence	English	South Africa	1
Sibinga, E. M., Webb, L., Ghazarian, S. R., & Ellen, J. M. (2015). School-Based Mindfulness Instruction: An RCT. *Pediatrics, 137*(1), e20152532	Community violence	English	USA	1
Sichel, C. E., Javdani, S., Ueberall, S., & Liggett, R. (2019). Leveraging youths' digital literacies: The E-Responder social media violence interruption model and pilot evaluation. *Journal of Prevention & Intervention in the Community, 47*(2), 76–89.	Gun violence Youth violence prevention Social media interventions	English	USA	2
Sichel, C. E., Javdani, S., Shaw, S., & Liggett, R. (2020). A role for social media? A community-based response to guns, gangs, and violence online. *Journal of Community Psychology, 49*(3), 822–837.	Gang violence Youth violence prevention Social media interventions	English	USA	2

Article	Topic	Language	Country / Region	Search phase
Silva-Laya, M., D'Angelo, N., García, E., Zúñiga, L. & Fernández, T. (2020). Urban poverty and education. A systematic literature review. *Educational Research Review, 29*(2020), 100280.	Education and equity	English	World	1
Skogan, W.G. (2011). Community-based partnerships and crime prevention. *Criminology & Public Policy, 10*(4), 987–990.	Gang violence Crime prevention	English	USA	1
Smith, P.K., Ananiadou, K., & Cowie, H. (2003). Interventions to reduce school bullying. *Canadian Journal of Psychiatry, 48*(9), 591-599.	School violence Anti-bullying interventions	English	North America Europe Australia	1
Sorsdahl, K., Davies, T., Jensel, C., Oberholzer, D., Gelberg, L., & van der Westhuizen, C. (2021). Experiences and Perceived Benefits of a Youth Skateboarding Program in South Africa: From the Physical to Emotional and Beyond. *Journal of Adolescent Research, (OnlineFirst)*, 1–26.	Community violence Psychosocial health Sports-based interventions	English	South Africa	1
Stewart, E.A. & Simons, R.L. (2006). Race, code of the street, and violent delinquency: a multilevel investigation of neighborhood street culture and individual norms of violence. *Criminology, 48*(2), 569–604.	Community violence Street culture Crime	English	USA	1
Storer, H. L., McCleary, J. S., & & Hamby, S. (2021). When it's safer to walk away: Urban, low opportunity emerging adults' willingness to use bystander behaviors in response to community and dating violence. *Children and Youth Services Review, 121*, 105833.	Community violence Dating violence	English	USA	2

Article	Topic	Language	Country / Region	Search phase
Sullivan, T. N., Farrell, A. D., Sutherland, K. S., Behrhorst, K. L., Garthe, R. C., & Greene, A. (2021). Evaluation of the Olweus Bullying Prevention Program in US Urban Middle Schools Using a Multiple Baseline Experimental Design. *Prevention Science*, 22, 1134–1146.	School violence Youth violence prevention Anti-bullying interventions	English	USA	2
Swaner, R. (2022). 'We Can't Get No Nine-to-Five': New York City Gang Membership as a Response to the Structural Violence of Everyday Life. *Critical Criminology*, 30(1), 95-111.	Gang violence Social exclusion	English	USA	2
Taliep, N., Ismail, G., & Bulbulia, S. (2021). Fidelity of implementation of the building bridges mentoring intervention to prevent violence among youth in low income settings. *International Journal of Injury Control and Safety Promotion*, 29(1), 1–14.	Youth violence prevention Mentoring interventions	English	South Africa	2
Thijs, F., Weerman, F. M., & van der Laan, P. H. (2018). *Literatuuronderzoek naar de effecten van de inzet van ex-gedetineerden als' ervaringsdeskundigen'*. Den Haag: WODC.	Crime prevention Youth violence prevention	Dutch	The Netherlands	1
Tinker, V. (2016). Peace education as a post-conflict peacebuilding tool. *All Azimuth: A Journal of Foreign Policy and Peace*, 5(1), 27-42.	Peace education	English	Northern Ireland Sri Lanka Nepal Bosnia-Herzegovina	2
UNESCO. (2017). *School violence and bullying. Global status report.*	School violence Moral education Anti-bullying interventions	English	World	1

Article	Topic	Language	Country / Region	Search phase
UNHCR/UNICEF (2020). Families on the run. https://familiesontherun.org/	Gang violence	English	Central America	1
UNICEF. (2016). *The state of the world's children 2016. A fair chance for every child.*	Violence exposure Peace education	English	World	1
Van Damme, E. (2017). Gangs in the DRC and El Salvador: towards a third generation of gang violence interventions? *Trends in Organized Crime, 21*(4), 343–369.	Gang violence	English	DRC El Salvador	1
Van den Brink, G. (2006). *Geweld als uitdaging*. Amsterdam: SWP.	Youth violence Interpersonal violence	Dutch	The Netherlands	1
Van de Wetering, S., & Kaulingfreks, F. (2020). Youths growing up in the French banlieues: Partners that make the city. In: Van Montfort, C. & Michels, A. (Eds.), *Partnerships for Livable Cities.* (pp. 251–270). Cham: Palgrave Macmillan.	Community building Youth participation Social exclusion	English	France	2
Van Eijk, C. (2020). Partnerships for safe cities: Community-safety initiatives in cities in the Netherlands and Belgium. In: Van Montfort, C. & Michels, A. (Eds.), *Partnerships for Livable Cities*. (pp. 167–190). Cham: Palgrave MacMillan.	Community building Community participation Crime prevention	English	The Netherlands Belgium	2
Van Houwelingen, P., Boele, A. & Dekker, P. (2014). *Burgermacht op eigen kracht. Een brede verkenning van ontwikkelingen in burgerparticipatie*. Den Haag: Sociaal Cultureel Planbureau.	Community participation Citizenship	Dutch	The Netherlands	2
Voisin, D. R., & Berringer, K. R. (2015). Interventions Targeting Exposure to Community Violence Sequelae Among Youth: A Commentary. *Clinical Social Work Journal, 43*(1), 98–108.	Community violence Psychosocial health	English	USA	1

Article	Topic	Language	Country / Region	Search phase
Waiselfisz, J.J. & Maciel, M. (2003). *Revertendo violências, semeando futuros: avaliação de impacto do Programa Abrindo Espaços no Rio de Janeiro e em Pernambuco.* Brasília: UNESCO.	Community violence School violence Peace education	Portuguese	Brazil	1
Was, C.A., Woltz, D.J. & Drew, C. (2006). Evaluating character education programs and missing the target: A critique of existing research. *Educational Research Review, 1*(2), 148–156.	Moral education School violence	English	USA	1
Watkins, J., Scoggins, N., Cheaton, B.M. et al. (2021). Assessing improvements in emergency department referrals to a hospital-based violence intervention program. *Injury Epidemiology, 8*(Suppl 1), 44.	Youth violence reduction Hospital-based interventions Cross-sector cooperation	English	USA	2
Webster, D.W., Mendel White-hill, J., Vernick, J.S., Parker, E.M. (2012). *Evaluation of Baltimore's Safe Streets Program: Effects on Attitudes, Participants' Experiences, and Gun Violence.* Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins Cent. Prev. Youth Violence.	Gang violence	English	USA	1
Weerman, F.M. (1998). *Het belang van bindingen. De bindingstheorie als verklaring van verschillen en veranderingen in delinquent gedrag.* Groningen: Wolters-Noordhoff.	Youth crime Criminological theory	Dutch	The Netherlands USA	1
Weijers, I. (2020). Wetenschappelijke perspectieven op jeugdcriminaliteit. In: I. Weijers (Ed.), *Jeugdcriminologie. Achtergronden van jeugd-criminaliteit.* (pp. 95–142). Den Haag: Boom Criminologie.	Youth crime	Dutch	Europe North-America	1

Article	Topic	Language	Country / Region	Search phase
WHO. (2014). *Global status report on violence prevention 2014.*	Interpersonal violence Violence prevention	English	World	1
Williams, D., Currie, D., Linden, W., & Donnelly, P. (2014). Addressing gang-related violence in Glasgow: A preliminary pragmatic quasi-experimental evaluation of the Community Initiative to Reduce Violence (CIRV). *Aggression and Violent Behavior, 19*(6), 686–691	Gang violence	English	UK	1
Wilson, J.M. & Chermak, S. (2011). Community-driven violence reduction programs: Examining Pittsburg's One Vision One Life. *Criminology & Public Policy, 10* (4), 993–1027.	Gang violence Crime reduction Youth violence reduction	English	USA	1
Winchester, L. (2008). La dimensión económica de la pobreza y precariedad urbana en las ciudades latinoamericanas: Implicaciones para las políticas del habitat. *EURE (Santiago), 34*(103), 27-47	Social exclusion Urban poverty Community-based interventions	Spanish	Latin America	1
Winck Iijima, D., & Rechia Schroeder, T.M. (2012). Pesquisa sobre violência escolar no Brasil. *Travessias, 6*(3), 1–17.	School violence	Portuguese	Brazil	1
Zimmerman, M. A., Bartholow, B. N., Carter, P. M., Cunningham, R. M., Gorman-Smith, D., Heinze, J. E., et al. (2021). Youth firearm injury prevention: Applications from the centers for disease control and prevention–funded youth violence prevention centers. *American Journal of Public Health, 111*(S1), S32-S34.	Youth violence prevention Gun violence Community-based interventions	English	USA	2

Article	Topic	Language	Country / Region	Search phase
Zubillaga, V., Llorens, M., & Souto, J. (2019). Micropolitics in a Caracas Barrio: The Political Survival Strategies of Mothers in a Context of Armed Violence. *Latin American Research Review, 54*(2), 429–443.	Community violence Parenting practices	English	Venezuela	1
Zuijderduin, S. (2015). *Onderwijs en subjectiviteit: aandacht voor subjectiviteit in het Onderwijsadvies van de Onderwijsraad: een documentanalyse.* Utrecht: Universiteit voor Humanistiek.	Educational theory Critical education	Dutch	The Netherlands	1

Chapter 5. Table S1. *Examples of interview questions*

PART A – Demographics
• Where were you born and where did you grow up? • What is your family composition? Who do you share a house with?
PART B – Perception of neighbourhood environment
• How would you describe living in this neighbourhood? • Can you tell something about how it was to grow up in this neighbourhood? Can you describe the neighbourhood when you were growing up here? • Do children in this neighbourhood play outside in the streets? • What do children learn in the streets? • Did you use to play outside in the streets when you were younger? Can you tell something about this, what did you learn? • Which role do you see for yourself in the education of children and youth from the neighbourhood? Do you serve as an example to other youth? • If so, what would you like the children and youth in the neighbourhood to learn from you?
PART C – Dealing with violence
• Do you think the neighbourhood is a safe environment for the children? Why or why not? • How can children and youth become resilient to violence? • What are your experiences? How did you become resilient? • Does the presence of violence in the streets affect the children in this neighbourhood? Does it impact the development of the children? If yes, in what way? • Has the presence of violence in the streets affected your development? Why /why not? If yes, in what way? • What kind of competences do youth need to grow up in this neighbourhood?

PART D – Experiences with community sports programme

• Is the environment of the street different from the environment of the community sports programme? In what way?

• Which values in your opinion apply to the streets?

• Which values in your opinion apply to the community sports programme?

PART E – Safe and unsafe places

• Can you think of one or two places in the neighbourhood where you liked to go as a child and where you felt safe? And can you think of one or two places in the neighbourhood where you felt unsafe?

     - Why did you feel safe/unsafe in this place?

     - Can you describe a memory this place holds for you?

     - Can you describe a specific moment when you felt safe/unsafe here?
      How did you react at the time?

     - Which skills have you learned in this place? How?

PART F – Transitions and turning points

• I would like to talk about some important (turning) points/moments in your life. Important moments that, now that you look back on them, had a lot of impact on your life. You can think of experiences or situations from which you have learned a lot, meetings with certain people, moments when you have become aware of the things that are important to you in life.

   If you had to choose the most important (turning) points/moments in your life, what moments would these be?

     - Could you describe this moment?

     - How old were you at the time?

     - Can you describe what you have learned from this moment? What quality/skill did you gain from this moment?

     - How has this moment affected the way your life is now?

     - Can you describe in one word what this moment means to you?

• Looking back at your childhood, which people in your life have had the most impact on you? How?

• What goals do you have for the future? How do you want to achieve these goals?

Chapter 5. Table S2. *Overview research questions and questions for analysis*

Main research question
Why did the participating young people, who are growing up in a violent neighbourhood, become resilient and resistant to community violence and what is the potential role of their participation in a community sports programme?
Sub questions and related questions for analysis
1. What is the youth's perception on the constraints and available resources in the (violent) neighbourhood context for their development and how does their perception change through time?
1.1 How do youth describe the neighbourhood context and the issue of violence? What are the differences between the first and last interview? **1.2** In which ways do they feel constrained or supported by their neighbourhood environment? What are the differences between the first and last interview? **1.3** How do they reflect on the impact of the neighbourhood context on youth in general and their personal trajectories in particular? What are the differences between the first and last interview? **1.4** What are their perspectives on the constraints and available resources to counter community violence and how are these related to the community context and public (social and safety) policy? What are the differences between the first and last interview?
2. Which strategies do the youth develop to acquire a sense of agency and resilience in response to violence in the neighbourhood context (including police violence and gang violence)? And how can their strategies be interpreted as acts of coping or resistance to violence in the neighbourhood context?
2.1 How do they reflect on needed competences or qualities to grow up in the (violent) neighbourhood context? What are the differences between the first and last interview? **2.2** What strategies do they describe to deal with violence in the neighbourhood context (i.e. to navigate the context). What are the differences between the first and last interview? **2.3** What strategies do they describe to prevent their involvement in violence in the neighbourhood context? What are the differences between the first and last interview? **2.4** How do they reflect on the external constraints and available opportunities for becoming resilient and resistant to violence in the neighbourhood context? What are the differences between the first and last interview? **2.5** How can their strategies be interpreted as acts of coping or resistance to violence in the neighbourhood context? **2.6** How do they make use of opportunities for agency to transform their personal situation and/or the neighbourhood context?

3. How do they construct their future plans through time and which available resources do they draw upon to create alternative future possibilities that move away from violence?

3.1 Which goals do they have for their future and how do they want to achieve these goals? What are the differences between the first and last interview?

3.2 What do they find important in life in terms of values, mottos and 'lessons in life' and how do they relate this to their environment? What are the differences between the first and last interview?

3.3 Which turning points did they experience in their lives and how can these be interpreted as transformative moments in their trajectories?

3.4 Which people in their environment had an important impact on their lives and future orientation and how do they reflect on this impact? What are the differences between the first and last interview?

4. How do they reflect on the impact of their participation in a community sports programme, in particular in relation to becoming resilient and resistant to the violent neighbourhood context?

4.1 How do they describe the environment of the community sports programme?

4.2 How do they describe their learning experiences in the community sports programme?

4.3 To what extent does their participation in the community sports programme play a role in the way they actively construct their lives (as analysed under sub question 3 in terms of future goals, turning points, outlook on life and social contacts)?

How do you arm children against violence in the neighbourhood? How do they learn to offer resistance in a context full of dangers and create alternative future perspectives? This dissertation describes the results of an ethnographic study on the upbringing of youth in a violent context, from the perspectives of school educators, mothers and young people in Brazilian slums.

The results show how educators and young people, despite limitations, create strategies to implicitly resist violence and construct alternative moralities. They constantly move between survival and resistance, between resignation and hope, and 'armour' themselves with a shared moral counteroffensive that opposes violence and promotes dialogue and care for others.

From a sociocultural-historical perspective on agency and social transformation, the study considers the importance of understanding the neighbourhood context and the potential of local initiatives to bring about change. The findings encourage profound involvement of local communities in intervention design to establish a transformative and hopeful educational approach to counter violence and collectively create more just and peaceful neighbourhoods and societies.