

BULLYING IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS: TEACHERS' PERSPECTIVES AND EXPERIENCES

by
Martha Margaretha Kruger
BEdPsych

*Thesis presented in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of
Education in Educational Psychology in the Faculty of Education at Stellenbosch
University*



Supervisor: Prof Estelle Swart
Faculty of Education
Department of Educational Psychology

December 2011

DECLARATION

By submitting this thesis electronically, I declare that the entirety of the work contained therein is my own, original work, that I am the sole author thereof (save to the extent explicitly otherwise stated), that reproduction and publication thereof by Stellenbosch University will not infringe any third party rights and that I have not previously in its entirety or in part submitted it for obtaining any qualification.

Signed:

Date:

ABSTRACT

Bullying seems to be a pervasive problem in most secondary schools and teachers have the daily task of dealing with it. Not only do teachers have to unravel the complex dynamics of bullying, they also often have to navigate a school climate and culture that is not conducive to addressing bullying. In South Africa, there are many unique contextual factors which impact on teachers' management of bullying, such as community violence overflowing into the school, increased administrative load and limited support from school management, parents and education authorities. Therefore, teachers' abilities to conceptualise bullying, recognise and respond to incidents of bullying, and their knowledge of the nature and extent of bullying behaviour impact greatly on anti-bullying strategies.

The theoretical framework which informed this study is the social context perspective which drew on views from both social constructionism and the bio-ecological framework. The social context perspective emphasises the interactions between individuals and the systems as delineated in the bio-ecological model. Furthermore, this study did not aim to reveal the "truth" about school bullying. The intention has rather been to provide a comprehensive picture as was portrayed by the participants in this study. This picture included the nature and extent of bullying in their secondary school, the teachers' perspectives and experiences of bullying, and proposed prevention and intervention strategies which they aim to implement at their school. In keeping with the constructionist nature of the process of inquiry, a qualitative, interpretivist research approach was used. Purposive sampling was used to identify potential participants who were then asked to volunteer to be part of the study. Data was generated through semi-structured interviews with individuals and focus groups. Furthermore, the constant comparative method was used to analyse the data.

The research findings indicated that the teachers experience and perceive a wide variety of bullying behaviours which take place at various sites, both within and outside the school grounds and that involve a diverse range of individuals within the school community. Furthermore, the teachers conveyed several factors which they experienced as maintaining bullying and highlighted their perceived effects thereof. In addition to this, the participants shared knowledge about their teaching practices and suggested a few strategies on how to deal with bullying more effectively in their school community.

Keywords: School bullying, bullying behaviour, cyberbullying, workplace bullying, teachers, secondary school

OPSOMMING

Afknoery word beskou as 'n deurlopende probleem in hoërskole en onderwysers moet die gevolge daarvan daagliks hanteer. Onderwysers moet nie net die komplekse dinamiek van afknoery ontrafel nie, maar worstel ook met 'n skoolklimaat en -kultuur wat nie toepaslik is om afknoery te bekamp nie. In Suid-Afrika is daar unieke kontekstuele faktore wat 'n invloed het op hoe onderwysers afknoery hanteer. Dit sluit onder andere in die geweld wat oorvloei vanuit die gemeenskap na die skool, verhoogde administratiewe werklading asook beperkte ondersteuning van die skool se bestuurspan, ouers en die onderwysowerhede. Daarom speel onderwysers se vermoëns om afknoery te konseptualiseer, insidente van afknoery te herken en daarop te reageer, asook hulle kennis van afknoegedrag 'n groot impak op anti-afknoery strategieë.

Hierdie studie word gekonseptualiseer vanuit 'n sosiaal-konstruktivistiese en bio-ekologiese perspektief. 'n sosiale kontekstperspektief beklemtoon die interaksies tussen individue en die sisteme wat uiteengesit is in die bio-ekologiese model. Die doel van hierdie studie was nie om die "waarheid" oor afknoery in die skool te openbaar nie. Dit was eerder om die deelnemers se perspektief in diepte te analiseer en beskryf. 'n Kwalitatiewe, interpretivistiese navorsingsbenadering is daarom gevolg. 'n Doelgerigte steekproef is gebruik om potensiële deelnemers te identifiseer en hulle is gevra om vrywillig deel te neem aan die studie. Data is gegenereer deur semi-gestruktureerde individuele en fokusgroeponderhoude. Verder is die konstante vergelykende metode gebruik om die data te analiseer.

Die navorsingsbevindinge het aangedui dat die onderwysers 'n wye verskeidenheid afknoegedrag van diverse groepe en individue binne en buite die skoolterrein ervaar. Die onderwysers het verskeie faktore identifiseer wat afknoery moontlik instandhou en het die moontlike gevolge van afknoery uitgelig. Laastens het die deelnemers kennis oor hulle onderwyspraktyke gedeel en voorstelle gemaak oor hoe om afknoery meer effektief in hul skoolgemeenskap te hanteer.

Sleutelwoorde: Afknouery in die skool, afknougedrag, kuber-afknouery, afknouery in die werkplek, onderwysers, hoërskool

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to firstly, thank all the teachers who participated in this study. I am grateful to have had the opportunity to listen to your experiences and, in writing up these experiences, to “give back” to your school. I hope that these findings and recommendations will be helpful to you in facilitating the change that you all strive to achieve.

I am grateful to my supervisor, Professor Estelle Swart. Your insight and guidance have been invaluable to me.

I would like to thank my parents, Jaco and Cecile, my brother, Johan, and my family for their unfailing support during the writing of this thesis. Thank you for all your love and encouragement.

My heart-felt appreciation to my thesis-buddy, Julie. You kept me focused and motivated and have been a guiding light to me during this (long and arduous) process. Thank you also to the Megaw family for your interest and care.

I would like to sincerely thank Verena for her excellent work in editing this thesis. Your contribution is deeply appreciated by this Afrikaans girltjie.

I am grateful to Isabel for the lovely colourful illustrations. I really feel that you made this somewhat boring thesis come alive.

Lastly, I would like to dedicate this thesis to my grandmother, Martha. I love you very much and I am proud to be your namesake.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

TITLE PAGE	i
DECLARATION	ii
ABSTRACT	iii
OPSOMMING	v
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	vii
TABLE OF CONTENTS	viii
CHAPTER ONE	
CONTEXT AND RATIONALE OF THE STUDY	1
1.1 BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY	1
1.2 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK	3
1.3 PROBLEM STATEMENT	8
1.3.1 Research questions	9
1.3.2 Aims of the research	11
1.4 PROCESS OF INQUIRY	11
1.5 REVIEW OF KEY CONCEPTS	13
1.5.1 Bullying	14
1.5.2 Bullying behaviour	14
1.5.3 ‘Engaging in bullying behaviour’ and ‘target of bullying’	14
1.5.4 Bystander	15
1.5.5 Workplace bullying	15
1.5.6 The secondary school	16
1.6 STRUCTURE OF THESIS	16
1.7 CONCLUSION	17
CHAPTER TWO	
LITERATURE REVIEW	18
2.1 INTRODUCTION	18
2.2 WHAT IS SCHOOL BULLYING	18
2.2.1 Conceptualisation of bullying	19

2.2.2	Bullying in the secondary school phase	23
2.2.3	School violence	24
2.2.4	Cyberbullying	26
2.2.5	Workplace bullying in the school context	30
2.3	WHAT IS THE NATURE AND EXTENT OF BULLYING?	32
2.3.1	Types of bullying	32
2.3.1.1	<i>Verbal bullying</i>	33
2.3.1.2	<i>Physical bullying</i>	33
2.3.1.3	<i>Relational bullying</i>	33
2.3.1.4	<i>Sexual bullying</i>	34
2.3.1.5	<i>Homophobic bullying</i>	34
2.3.2	Individuals engaging in bullying behaviour	35
2.3.2.1	<i>Learner-on-learner bullying behaviour</i>	35
2.3.2.2	<i>Teacher-on-learner bullying behaviour</i>	36
2.3.2.3	<i>Learner-on-teacher bullying behaviour</i>	38
2.3.2.4	<i>Principal-on-teacher bullying behaviour</i>	39
2.3.3	Sites of bullying	40
2.3.4	Effects of bullying	41
2.4	TEACHERS' PERSPECTIVES AND EXPERIENCES OF BULLYING	43
2.4.1	Teachers' conceptualisations of bullying	43
2.4.2	Teachers' awareness, recognition, attitudes and responses	44
2.5	PREVENTION AND INTERVENTION	46
2.5.1	Effects of school climate on school bullying	46
2.5.2	Creating a positive school environment	48
2.5.3	Safe schools	49
2.5.4	Whole-school intervention and policies	50
2.6	CONCLUSION	52
CHAPTER THREE		
RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY		53
3.1	INTRODUCTION	53
3.2	MY RESEARCH PARADIGM	53
3.2.1	Paradigm	53
3.2.2	Postmodernism	54

3.2.3	Social constructionism	56
3.3	THE BELIEF SYSTEM THAT INFORMED THE STUDY	57
3.3.1	Axiology	58
3.3.1.1	<i>Reflexivity</i>	58
3.3.1.2	<i>Other-focus</i>	60
3.3.1.3	<i>Power relations in research</i>	61
3.3.2	Ontology	62
3.3.3	Epistemology	63
3.3.4	Methodology	64
3.4	TRUSTWORTHINESS OF THE STUDY	66
3.5	ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS	68
3.6	GENERATING DATA	71
3.6.1	Entering the field	71
3.6.2	Sampling	72
3.6.3	Interviewing	73
3.6.4	Focus groups	76
3.6.5	Recording the data	78
3.7	DATA MANAGEMENT	79
3.7.1	Data analysis and interpretation	79
3.8	CONCLUSION	85
 CHAPTER FOUR		
RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION		86
4.1	INTRODUCTION	86
4.2	EXPOSITION OF RESEARCH FINDINGS	87
4.2.1	The nature and extent of bullying	87
4.2.1.1	<i>How the teachers conceptualise bullying</i>	87
4.2.1.2	<i>Types of bullying</i>	89
4.2.1.3	<i>Individuals engaging in bullying behaviour</i>	91
4.2.1.4	<i>Sites of bullying</i>	95
4.2.1.5	<i>Teachers' personal childhood experiences of bullying</i>	96
4.2.2	Personal and contextual factors that maintain bullying	97
4.2.2.1	<i>Personal maintaining factors</i>	98
4.2.2.2	<i>Contextual maintaining factors</i>	99

4.2.3	Effects of bullying	102
4.2.3.1	<i>School truancy, school refusal and leaving the school</i>	103
4.2.3.2	<i>Academic performance and bullying</i>	103
4.2.3.3	<i>Suicidal ideation and suicide attempts</i>	104
4.2.3.4	<i>Extreme acts of violence</i>	104
4.2.4	Proposed strategies to deal effectively with bullying	105
4.2.4.1	<i>Whole-school approach</i>	105
4.2.4.2	<i>Procedures and policies</i>	105
4.2.4.3	<i>Facilitating awareness</i>	107
4.2.4.4	<i>Discussion forums</i>	108
4.3	DISCUSSION OF RESEARCH FINDINGS	109
4.3.1	Introduction	109
4.3.2	Teachers' perspectives and experiences of bullying	109
4.3.2.1	<i>The nature and extent of bullying</i>	110
4.3.2.2	<i>Personal and contextual factors that maintain bullying</i>	114
4.3.2.3	<i>Effects of bullying</i>	117
4.4	CONCLUSION	118
 CHAPTER FIVE		
CONCLUDING REMARKS, RECOMMENDATIONS, LIMITATIONS AND STRENGTHS		120
5.1	INTRODUCTION	120
5.2	CONCLUDING REMARKS	121
5.3	RECOMMENDATIONS	122
5.4	LIMITATIONS AND STRENGTHS OF THE STUDY	131
5.5	SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH	133
5.5	CONCLUDING REFLECTIONS	134
 REFERENCES		136

LIST OF ADDENDA

Addendum A: Permission to conduct study from the Western Cape Education Department	165
Addendum B: Letter granting ethical clearance for study from Stellenbosch University	167
Addendum C: Principal's permission form as provided to the principal of the school	169
Addendum D: Informed consent form as provided to research participants	171
Addendum E: Interview guide for focus group interviews	175
Addendum F: Interview guide for individual interviews	177
Addendum G: Audit trail	179
Addendum H: Excerpt from the transcription of the first focus group interview	181
Addendum I: Excerpts from reflective journal	188

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1.1:	The theoretical framework	3
Figure 1.2:	A bio-ecological model of bullying	6
Figure 3.1:	A schematic presentation of the process of inquiry	57
Figure 3.2:	The topics addressed during the focus group interviews	78
Figure 5.1:	Elements of a school as organisation	124
Figure 5.2:	The social competence development and bullying prevention model	125

LIST OF TABLES

Table 2.1:	Forms of cyberbullying	28
Table 3.1:	Demographic information about research participants	71
Table 3.2:	Themes and categories related to interviews with participants	82
Table 4.1:	Summary of the themes and categories	86
Table 4.2:	Summary of the types and forms of bullying	111

CHAPTER ONE

CONTEXT AND RATIONALE OF THE STUDY

1.1 BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

In the Western Cape, metal detectors and security cameras were installed at 109 high-risk schools in 2009 (Prince, 2010, p. 1). A high-risk school is geographically located in a gang-infested area where gang involvement, violence, vandalism and crimes occur (Western Cape Education Department, 2003, p. 3). While these measures are a necessary means of making schools into safe learning environments, they are no substitute for a sustained attitudinal and behavioural change regarding bullying. Repeated media coverage of high-profile episodes of school violence has increased public awareness and concern (Jones, 2009, p. 1; Mkalipi, 2009, p. 2; Potgieter, 2010b, p. 1; Potgieter & Pretorius, 2010, p. 8). However, these incidents of extreme and violent acts are comparatively rare. Nevertheless, these episodes are continually increasing in severity and impetus in certain “high-risk” areas in the Western Cape (Bester & Du Plessis, 2010, pp. 204-205). On the other hand, it is the less extreme anti-social behaviour such as bullying that has become predominantly prevalent in today's school culture, but with equally devastating consequences that negatively affect the lives of learners, parents, teachers, school management and other school staff.

Various surveys conducted in the Western Cape amongst learners and teachers found that the majority of schools reported problems with fighting, physical violence and bullying among learners, as well as the intimidation of teachers by learners, and learners by teachers (Dawes, Long, Alexander & Ward, 2006, p. 31; Education Labour Relations Council [ELRC], 2005, p. xix; Eliasov & Frank, 2000, pp. 1-4; Reddy et al., 2003, p. 29; The Presidency, 2009, pp. 96-97). Potential factors giving rise to these problems are aggressive behaviour as a result of increasing drug and alcohol use (Burton, 2008b, pp. 45-48; Dawes et al., 2006, pp. 32-33; Morojele, Parry & Brooke, 2009, p. 1; Plüddemann, Parry, Bhana, Harker, Potgieter & Gerber, 2003, pp. 3-4; Reddy et al., 2003, pp. 44-47), gangsterism overflowing from communities into schools (Dawes et al., 2006, pp. 34-36; Eliasov & Frank, 2000, p. 2; Lewis, 2010, p. 1; Reddy et al., 2003, p. 32), and learners emulating anti-social behaviours

observed in their communities (Bester & Du Plessis, 2010, p. 222; Burton, 2008a, pp. 18-19; Fredericks, 2009, p. 1).

Donald Grant, Western Cape Minister of Education, stated that “a school is the window of the community where it is located” (Potgieter, 2010a, p. 11). The implication of which correlates with literature which suggests that schools situated in communities with high crime rates and low socio-economic status have a higher percentage of school violence (Astor, Benbenishty & Estrada, 2009, p. 424; Van der Westhuizen & Maree, 2009, p. 57). This illustrates the pervasiveness of violence in the environment in which these schools are situated. Violent offences predominantly include gender and sexual violence (Anagnostopoulos, Buchanan, Pereira & Lichty, 2009, p. 519; Burton, 2008b, pp. 20-22; De Wet, Jacobs & Palm-Forster, 2008, pp. 97-98; Leach, 2006, pp. 1138-1141; Leach & Sitaram, 2007, p. 264; O’Higgins-Norman, 2009, pp. 389-390; Prinsloo, 2006, p. 305; Wilson, 2008, p. 2), the use of corporal punishment by teachers (Burton, 2008b, pp. 28-29; Leoschut, 2009, pp. 51-52; Leoschut & Burton, 2006, pp. 62-63; Maree, 2000, pp. 4-7; Maree, 2005, pp. 15-16; Maree & Cherian, 2004, p. 72), racial or cultural violence (De Wet, 2003, p. 90; South African Human Rights Commission [SAHRC], 2008, p. 9), and violence per se (De Wet, 2003, p. 89; Nesor, 2005, p. 62; SAHRC, 2008, pp. 12-13; Zulu, Urbani, Van der Merwe & Van der Walt, 2004, p. 170).

More specifically, bullying is at the foundation of a hierarchy of violent acts and is thus embedded in the broader picture of the increasing violence in South Africa (Maree, 2005, p. 15; Morrison, 2007, p. 8). According to Sullivan, Cleary and Sullivan (2004, p. 4), “bullying is a negative and often aggressive or manipulative act or series of acts by one or more people against another person or people usually over a period of time”. Furthermore, bullying is argued to be “abusive and is based on an imbalance of power” (Sullivan et al., 2004, p. 5). As all bullying is not predominantly physically violent in nature, it is important to distinguish between three main types of bullying. These are physical, verbal, and relational bullying (Colorosa, 2008, pp. 15-17) (See 2.3.1). Because bullying forms the basis of most violent offences, there has never been a stronger need to reduce school bullying and create safe schools than at present.

1.2 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Theories are constructed suppositions or systems of ideas intended to explain a phenomenon (Tulloch, 1996, p. 1620). In many instances, we as researchers construct models of reality through the studies we conduct. According to the *Reader's Digest Oxford Complete Wordfinder*, 'frameworks' are structural frames (Tulloch, 1996, p. 593). Frameworks therefore serve as a foundation upon which something is based. The theoretical framework of the study is seen as a structure that can explain the findings of a study. It presents a theory which explains why the problem under study exists. The theory also provides "the theoretical perspective of the lived experiences" regarding the topic that is being studied (Munhall & Chenail, 2008, p. 7). Thus, the theoretical framework is a theory that serves as a basis for conducting research (Sevilla, Ochave, Punsalan, Regala & Uriarte, 1992, p. 55).

As illustrated in Figure 1.1, the theoretical framework in relation to the particular research problem can be described as "a set of interlocking frames" (Merriam, 2009, p. 67-68). Merriam (2009) notes that the first frame, the theoretical framework, can be defined as "the body of literature, the disciplinary orientation that you draw upon to situate your study" (p. 68). The second frame, namely the problem statement, is firmly embedded within the whole framework. Lastly, the purpose of the study is within the problem statement and can be seen as the third frame in this trio of interconnected frames (Merriam, 2009, pp. 68-69).

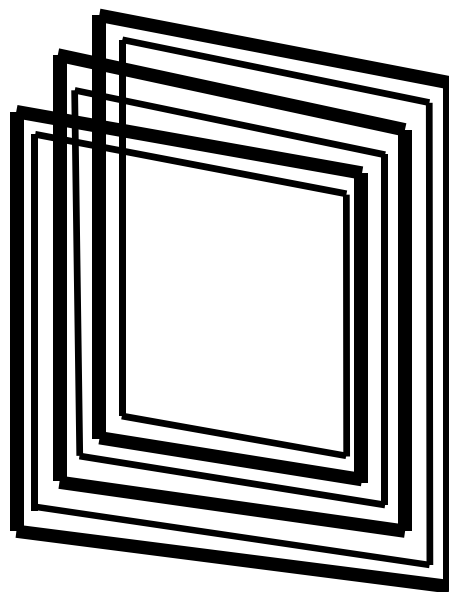


Figure 1.1: The theoretical framework

The theoretical framework on which this study is based is the social context perspective. This perspective draws on views of both social constructionism and bio-ecological theory (See 3.2.3). According to Donald, Lazarus and Lolwana (2006, p. 33) social constructionism and the bio-ecological theory are valuable in helping to understand how individuals relate to their social contexts. Furthermore, individuals are “seen as shaped by and as active shapers of their social contexts” (Donald et al., 2006, p. 33). Thus, in an attempt to understand bullying behaviour, it is helpful to view the complex relationships, different social contexts, influences and interactions within which individuals function, through social constructionism and a bio-ecological perspective (Monks & Coyne, 2011 p. 1).

According to Bronfenbrenner (1977, p. 515), there are four interconnected levels of systems that interact in the social context. These systems are the microsystem, mesosystem, exosystem and macrosystem (See Figure 1.2). Donald et al. (2006, p. 41) state that these four systems are also in constant interaction with the chronosystem. Bronfenbrenner (1994, p. 1645) asserts that the microsystem, or immediate environment, includes patterns of daily activities, social roles and interpersonal relationships within an individual’s direct environment. Significant proximal interactions within the microsystem include interactions between learners, teachers, the school, peer groups and the family (Donald et al. 2006, pp. 41-42). Bronfenbrenner (2005, p. 6) referred to these interactions as proximal processes. These proximal processes are of particular importance and relevance to my study as they refer to the patterns of interactions in which the individual is an active participant within a particular setting, namely the school community (Espelage & Swearer, 2010, p. 61; Swart & Pettipher, 2011, p. 12). Of greatest significance here is the interaction between individuals and those closest to them (Swearer & Doll, 2001, p. 19).

The microsystem is the “complex of relations between the developing person and environment in an immediate setting containing that person” for example, the school or home-setting (Bronfenbrenner, 1977, p. 515). The way in which these microsystems interact with each other or the social environment is referred to as the mesosystem, for example, peer groups in schools (Bronfenbrenner, 2005, p. 46). The exosystem refers to aspects of the individual’s environment in which the individual does not actively participate, but includes events which affect the individual, for example, the activities of teachers at school (Espelage & Swearer, 2010, p. 62). The

macrosystem refers to belief systems underlying a particular society or culture and would include political, cultural and religious ideologies and values to name but a few. These may be influenced by, or have an influence on, any of the other systems as well as on the individual. The chronosystem “encapsulates the dimension of *time* and how it relates specifically to the interactions between these systems and their influences on individual development” (Swart & Pettipher, 2011, p. 15).

There are four interacting dimensions, which are fundamental to Bronfenbrenner's revised bio-ecological model. These are “person characteristics, proximal processes, systems/contexts and time” (Swart & Pettipher, 2011, p. 11). What defines this model is that it is no longer a purely ecological model (taking only the reciprocal relationships between contexts into consideration), but rather a *bio*-ecological model that emphasises within person characteristics in interaction with contexts, as well as between the contexts themselves. This new model recognises the process, or point of interface, in the interaction between the organism and the environment as being of primary importance. An understanding of proximal processes is imperative when considering bullying from a bio-ecological perspective. These proximal processes involve not only the relevant systems, but also the person characteristics of the individual as well as those of the people in these systems (Swart & Pettipher, 2011, p. 11).

Person characteristics of the individual and other people in their environment are emphasised in the new model. Bronfenbrenner saw person characteristics as consisting of dispositions, ecological resources and demand characteristics. These person characteristics and proximal processes act over time within the context of different systems, and provide critical contributing factors to the development of an individual (Bronfenbrenner, 2005, p. 7). Furthermore, time is pertinent as it influences person characteristics, proximal processes and context. Change therefore occurs over a period of time not only within a person, but also in the environment (Donald et al., 2006, p. 41).

The bio-ecological perspective is particularly useful for understanding bullying within the school context as this behaviour does not occur in isolation (Espelage & Swearer, 2010, p. 61). Rather, bullying can be seen as complicated social exchanges between individuals and their broader social environment (Espelage & Swearer, 2010, p. 61;

Swearer, Espelage, Vaillancourt & Hymel, 2010, p. 42). De Wet (2010b, p. 1458) notes that Bronfenbrenner's approach addresses norms, beliefs, social systems as well as the individual risk factors that create the conditions in which bullying occurs. Furthermore, Hamarusa and Kaikkonen (2008, pp. 333-334) note that bullying is embedded in the cultural norms, values and social status of the whole community in which a school is situated. Research supports the notion that bullying is influenced reciprocally by the individual, family, peer group, school, community and society (Espelage & Swearer, 2010, p. 62; Swearer & Espelage, 2004, p. 3). In other words, there is a reciprocal influence between the different systems of the bio-ecological model. Figure 1.2 is used to illustrate this reciprocity between the systems related to bullying.

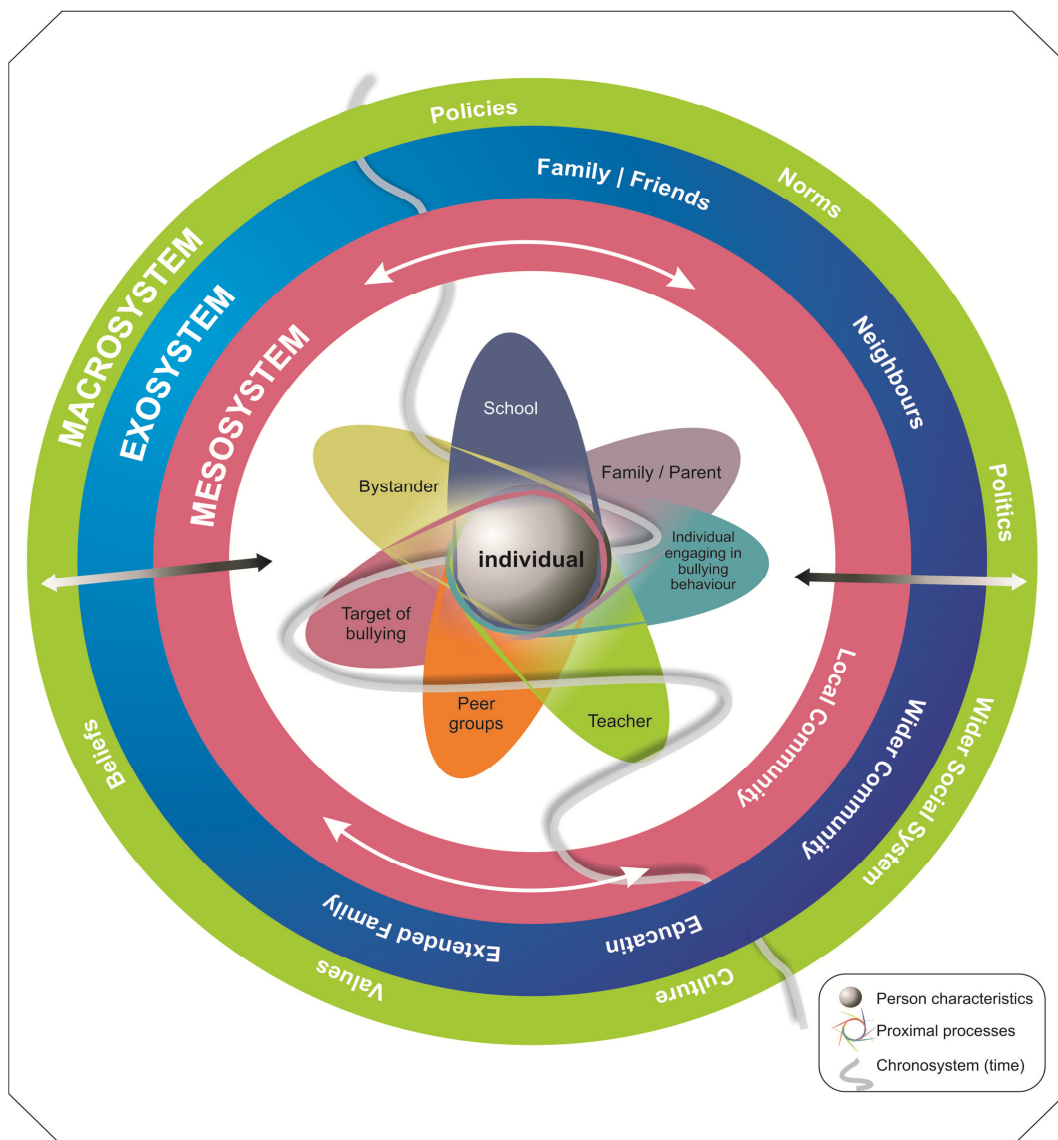


Figure 1.2: A bio-ecological model of bullying

According to constructivist theory, truth is socially constructed by the individual constructing and reconstructing knowledge (Donald et al., 2006, p. 84). Gergen (1999) argues that the individual creates a “world of experience” (p. 236). The mind thus creates a world as the individual experiences or conceptualises it (Gergen, 1999, p. 236). Therefore constructivist theory proposes that multiple realities exist because every individual constructs their own reality. An example of this is how discrepancies may occur when several individuals relay their accounts of an identical event (Barbour, 2008, p. 28).

Constructivism and social constructionism can be used interchangeably as both theories stress that truth is socially constructed by individuals (Gergen, 1999, p. 237). Freedman and Combs (1996) state that the focus shifts from “how an individual person constructs a model of reality from his or her individual experience, to focusing on how people interact with one another to construct, modify, and maintain what their society holds to be true, real, and meaningful” (p. 27). Taking on a postmodern, social constructionist worldview therefore offers useful ideas about knowledge. Namely that reality are socially constructed, constituted through language, organised and maintained through narratives, and that there are no essential truths (Freedman & Combs, 1996, p. 22). Kaethe Weingarten (1991) writes that “in the social constructionist view, the experience of self exists in the ongoing interchange with others [...] the self continually creates itself through narratives that include other people who are reciprocally woven into these narratives” (p. 289). Freedman and Combs (1996, p. 16) add that the individuals’ social realities are continuously constructed in interaction with each another.

Social constructionism relates directly to the process of inquiry which I employed during this research study. The process of inquiry identified nine individuals from a secondary school in the Western Cape. These individuals were selected because they had indicated that they had experienced bullying within their school (See 3.6.2). These individuals therefore have multiple realities that help them to understand their own worldviews. As a result, my positioning as researcher also needs to be influenced by social constructionism and its notion that “what is real” is socially constructed by these individuals in relation to their own world views (Gergen, 1999, p. 236). The implication of which is that participants may have differences in opinion when describing the nature of bullying within a single secondary school.

1.3 PROBLEM STATEMENT

The problem statement describes the context for the study (Wiersma & Jurs, 2009, pp. 29-31). It aims to identify what knowledge exists about the topic, what apparent gap there is in the stream of knowledge, what aspect of the topic the study focuses on, why it is important to have this knowledge, as well as the specific purpose of the study (Merriam, 2009, p. 68). This section therefore aims to identify the relevant gap in knowledge regarding bullying, followed by a discussion of the focus, importance and specific purpose of this study.

De Wet (2005c, p. 705) maintains that the goal of creating safe schools cannot be achieved unless the issue of bullying is effectively addressed. Research interest in bullying is ever-increasing in South Africa as attempts are made to understand the construct of bullying and to address the issues related to it (De Wet, 2005b, pp. 87-88; De Wet, 2005c, p. 721; Greeff & Grobler, 2008, p. 127; Liang, Flisher & Lombard, 2007, pp. 169-170; MacDonald & Swart, 2004, p. 34; Maree, 2005, p. 28; Nesor, Ovens, Van der Merwe, Morodi & Ladikos, 2003, pp. 146-148; Nesor, Ovens, Van der Merwe, Morodi, Ladikos & Prinsloo, 2004a, pp. 152-153; Nesor, Ovens, Van der Merwe, Morodi, Ladikos & Prinsloo, 2004b, pp. 45-46; Smit, 2003, p. 33; Swart & Bredekamp, 2009, pp. 421-422). These studies focus mainly on learners' perspectives and experiences of bullying, as well as intervention strategies.

There have been limited studies, both internationally (Bauman & Del Rio, 2006, p. 219; Benefield, 2004, p. 22; Blase & Blase, 2006, p. 123; Blase, Blase & Du, 2008, p. 263; Fox & Stallworth, 2010, p. 927; James, Lawlor, Courtney, Flynn, Henry & Murphy, 2008, p. 160; Maunder, Harrop & Tattersall, 2010, p. 263; Menesini, Fonzi & Smith, 2002, p. 393; Naylor & Cowie, 1999, p. 467; Naylor, Cowie, Cossin, De Bettencourt & Lemme, 2006, p. 553; Nicolaidis, Toda & Smith, 2002, p. 105; Pervin & Turner, 1998, p. 4; Rigby & Bagshaw, 2003, p. 535; Sahin, 2010, p. 127; Twemlow, Fonagy, Sacco & Brethour, 2006, p. 187; Whitted & Dupper, 2008, p. 329; Yoon, Bauman, Choi & Hutchinson, 2011, pp. 323-234) and locally (Bester & Du Plessis, 2010, p. 222; Dawes et al., 2006, pp. 30-31; De Wet, 2003, p. 89; De Wet, 2005a, pp. 44-45; De Wet, 2006a, p. 11; De Wet, 2006b, p. 61; De Wet, 2007a, p. 10; De Wet, 2007b, p. 59; De Wet, 2010a, p. 103; De Wet, 2010b, p. 1458; De Wet, 2010c, p. 189; Leoschut, 2009, pp. 49-51) that focus on teachers' perspectives regarding the

nature and extent of learner-on-learner and learner-on-teacher bullying, including the degree to which teachers are involved in learner-targeted bullying and teacher-on-teacher bullying, as well as the nature and extent of learner and teacher targeted bullying by principals.

Although the policy framework cannot be analysed in detail due to the limited scope of the study, I found it to be essential to briefly refer to existing policies and legislation that protect learners and teachers. These are the Constitution of South Africa Act 108 of 1996 (RSA, 1996a, Section 9, 10, 12, 14, 24, 28, 29, 33, 36), the South African Schools Act 84 of 1996 (RSA, 1996b, Section 8, 10, 20(1)(g), 21(1)(a), 30), Children's Act 8 of 2005 (RSA, 2005, Section 6, 8, 9, 18), and Signposts for Safe Schools (Department of Education, 2002, Section 2). This legislation and these policies are essential for a safe school environment. Learners and teachers therefore have clearly stated constitutional and legal rights, and obligations pertaining to school safety (See 2.5.3; 2.5.4).

What is evident from the above-mentioned studies is that bullying is prevalent in most secondary schools. In addition to this, literature shows that learners, teachers, and principals are targeted by other individuals, but also engage in bullying behaviour themselves. These aspects will be discussed in greater depth in chapter two. However, there is presently insufficient information describing Western Cape teachers' experiences of, perceptions on, or recognition of school bullying. The present study was undertaken for this reason and aims to contribute to the under-explored field of secondary school bullying within the context of the Western Cape.

1.3.1 Research questions

Literature identifies bullying as a problem in schools - a behaviour which has a negative influence on the overall school climate, as well as on the rights of learners and teachers to learn and teach in a safe environment (De Wet, 2006b, p. 61; De Wet, 2010b, p. 190; Monks & Coyne, 2011, p. 1; Osher, Bear, Sprague & Doyle, 2010, p. 54; Steyn & Naicker, 2007, p. 1). According to Carney and Merrel (2001, p. 364), prevalence rates show that bullying behaviour is an undesirable reality which occurs across different cultures and in various educational settings. The prevention of bullying, as well as the interventions concerned, is difficult for most Western Cape

secondary schools due to the numerous challenges experienced in their school contexts (Livesey et al., 2007, p. vi).

The sample school provides a co-educational setting that serves a diverse configuration of learners from various communities. The school's diversity made it an ideal sample population for the study as the research did not aim to represent a specific gender, cultural, or racial demographic. Most importantly, the school's mission statement and creed reflects a strong ethos of respect and an anti-bullying stance, from which I correctly assumed that they might be open to the research study. This specific school was chosen as, aside from it striving to cultivate these characteristics, it is the closest school to where I live. Furthermore, it was important to consult teachers, as opposed to learners, for this study as they have opportunities to experience and observe bullying within the school setting. In addition, previous studies in the Western Cape have focused mainly on the perspectives and experiences of learners regarding bullying behaviour. The study also had to be focussed due to the limited scope required. From the initial literature study conducted, it became clear that there is a lack of research on teachers' perspectives and experiences of bullying in the Western Cape. The purpose of this inquiry was consequently to do research that would fill this apparent knowledge gap. The central research question was therefore:

How do teachers perceive and experience bullying in a secondary school in the Western Cape?

In order to gain insight into teachers' perceptions and experiences of bullying, the study was guided by the following secondary research questions:

- 1) What is bullying?
- 2) What is the nature and extent of bullying in the secondary school phase?
- 3) How do teachers view and deal with bullying in this phase?
- 4) What recommendations can be made for the recognition of, intervention in, and prevention of secondary school bullying?

1.3.2 Aims of the research

The aim of this research was to explore and describe teachers' perspectives on, and experiences of, bullying in a secondary school in the Western Cape. Furthermore, the purpose of the study was to generate knowledge on how these perspectives could be used to intervene and prevent school bullying in this and similar contexts. The secondary goals aimed:

1. To conduct an in-depth literature review into the construct, nature and extent and intervention of bullying in schools, and more specifically, secondary schools.
2. To conduct an in-depth literature review into the recognition of bullying behaviour, as well as the prevention and intervention thereof in secondary schools.
3. To conduct semi-structured interviews and focus group interviews with teachers with the purpose of ascertaining how teachers view and deal with bullying in a specific secondary school in the Western Cape province.
4. To make suggestions and recommendations concerning the management of bullying. This will firstly include recommendations for the specific school where the research was conducted and be based on suggestions made by the teachers involved. Secondly, it will include general recommendations for use in other secondary schools with similar contexts which will be based on an integration of the research findings with the existing literature.

1.4 PROCESS OF INQUIRY

The decision to study teachers' perceptions of bullying was influenced by the view that teachers have sufficient opportunity to observe learners, fellow teachers, school managers and other relevant staff for relatively long periods of time in different school settings. Teachers, who know their learners and have a relationship with their school colleagues, are likely to be the people who are most familiar with the scope of bullying during and after school hours (De Wet, 2006a, p. 62). Furthermore, an important aspect of this study is for teachers to have the opportunity to gain insight into their teaching practices regarding bullying (MacDonald & Swart, 2004, p. 41).

In keeping with the constructionist nature of the process of inquiry, that is explored in the study, a qualitative, interpretivist research approach was used. This approach

recognises that meaning is not derived from an objective truth which is waiting to be discovered, but is rather subjectively constructed as human beings interpret and give meaning to their experiences and their interactions in their world (Merriam, 2009, p. 13). The primary goal of basic qualitative research is therefore to uncover and interpret these meanings (Merriam, 2009, p. 5) (See 3.2.3).

In order to achieve the above mentioned goals, I purposefully selected a sample of participants because I wanted to “discover, understand and gain insight” into the occurrence of school bullying, and therefore had to select participants from which the most information about the research topic could be ascertained (Merriam, 2009, p. 77). With the use of purposive sampling, possible participants were non-randomly identified and asked to volunteer to be part of the study (See 3.6.2). In order for these teachers to be selected, they had to be willing to participate and have indicated that they have had some experience of bullying. This was important as the methodological aim of this study required a small sample that would produce knowledge in the form of a rich and detailed description (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000, p. 10). This would assist in providing greater understanding and insight into teachers’ experiences and perceptions of bullying in secondary schools.

On negotiating entry (Flick, 2009, pp. 106-110) into this school, I respected participants’ right to choose whether or not to participate in the study. In order for participants to make an informed choice, it was my responsibility as researcher to describe the activities in which they would be involved should they consent (O’Leary, 2005, p. 73). This was to ensure that the participants fully comprehended what was expected of them before the study was initiated (See 3.6.1).

As bullying is considered to be a sensitive research topic, I ensured that I had a good understanding of what is meant by the term ‘sensitive research’. Furthermore, I gained specific knowledge on how to conduct research on a sensitive topic and became aware of the potential problems and issues that may arise by conducting such research. Lee (1993, p. 4) notes that sensitive topics can be defined as “research which potentially poses a substantial threat to those who are or have been involved in it”. Sensitive research thus has the potential to affect every stage of the process, from the formulation of the research problem to the findings of a study (Lee, 1993, p. 1). This definition also suggests that the possibility exists that sensitive

research can impact on all of the people who are involved in it, including researchers. I therefore had to critically examine the potential for harm to myself and the participants (Dickson-Swift, James & Liamputtong, 2008, p. 2; Dickson-Swift, James, Kippen & Liamputtong, 2009, p. 62). It was important for me as researcher to build rapport and a trusting relationship with the participants by having more than one interview. Dickson-Swift et al. (2008, p. 8) state that if a researcher is able to build a relationship with the participants that is based on reciprocity and personal involvement, then this may positively impact on their willingness to disclose sensitive information. I also had to disclose the purpose of the study fully and explain how the data would be used (Fisher & Anushko, 2008, p. 97).

While conducting this research, I experienced empathy for the participants as I was aware that their experiences regarding bullying, or certain aspects of the dynamics that might exist between role-players in the school, could be difficult to disclose (Sampson & Thomas, 2003, p. 176). Another possibility was that they might not want to portray themselves or other role-players in the school in a negative light. In addition, the potential existed that some of the participants may have engaged in bullying behaviour themselves, or have felt guilty about not intervening when they observed bullying. Furthermore, I was aware of the possibility that the participants may somehow be changed by the process (Dickson-Swift et al., 2008, p. 10).

Data were generated during one-on-one individual interviews and focus group sessions during the second and the third term of the 2010 school year (Addendum G). These interviews were transcribed verbatim and the constant comparative method was used for data analysis (Merriam, 2009, p. 30). This method of inductive, qualitative analysis methodically compares and contrasts associated patterns in the data (Barbour, 2008, p. 217) (See 3.7.1). The research process will be discussed in-depth in chapter three.

1.5 REVIEW OF KEY CONCEPTS

A review of the key concepts is essential as various definitions exist to explain basic concepts concerning bullying. However, I will only explain core concepts and then describe other concepts in the relevant sections of chapter two.

1.5.1 Bullying

Alternative definitions of bullying are researched in the literature review. Based on these definitions, I have elected to define bullying in this study as intentional hurtful behaviour that has the potential to be carried out “repeatedly and over time”, and is characterised by an imbalance of social power that results in injury, intimidation, or humiliation of a targeted individual (Olweus, 1999, p. 11; Rigby, 2004, p. 288; Yoon et al., 2011, pp. 312-313) (See 2.2.1). For the purposes of this study, the term bullying refers to the dynamics between the following role-players, namely learner-on-learner, teacher-on-learner, learner-on-teacher, teacher-on-teacher and principal-on-teacher (See 2.3.3).

1.5.2 Bullying behaviour

As is further explained in the literature review, the term ‘bullying’ includes bullying behaviour that may be verbal, physical, relational, workplace-related or cyber in nature. A context of bullying refers to ‘the individual engaging in bullying behaviour’, ‘the target of the bullying’, and ‘the bystander who witnesses the bullying behaviour’ (See 2.3.2).

1.5.3 ‘Engaging in bullying behaviour’ and ‘target of bullying’

Beverly Title (2001) states that “just as an individual’s name-calling can affect another’s concept of self-worth, so can the use of labels when discussing bullying” (p. 5). Individuals may integrate the label ‘bully’ or ‘victim’ into their definition of “who I am” (Title, 2001, p. 5). It can become something that cannot be changed about the individual. It is therefore very important that when talking about bullying, one uses language such as ‘individuals who engage in bullying behaviours’ and ‘individuals who are targets of bullying’ rather than calling someone a ‘bully’ or a ‘victim’ (Downes & Gilligan, 2007, p. 432). The terms ‘engaging in bullying behaviour’ and ‘targets of bullying’ have been used wherever possible in this text. These terms are more particular, and in my opinion, refer to a specific aspect of bullying rather than an all-encompassing term that may define the totality of the lived experience of people or the totality of their identities.

It is maintained that attaching the label of 'bully' to an individual can be detrimental to them receiving support and can make it difficult for these individuals to change. It must be remembered that bullying is a learned behaviour, and as such, can be changed (Title, 2001, p. 5). In addition, Mathews (2002, p. 9) notes that to separate the bullying behaviour from the individuals themselves assists them in realising that the behaviour does not define them, and that they can choose whether or not to engage in bullying behaviour.

Furthermore, there is a school of thought that advocates the use of the term 'target' instead of 'victim' (Title, 2001, p. 5). The rationale behind which is to highlight not only the malice of the individual engaging in bullying behaviour, but also to emphasise that this individual should be held accountable for the bullying that takes place - not the target of bullying (Downes & Gilligan, 2007, p. 432). The emotive term 'victim' implies powerlessness and passivity and tends to further victimise the target of bullying (Morgan, 2011, p. 16).

1.5.4 Bystander

Bullying is not isolated to the interactions between the target(s) and individual(s) engaging in bullying behaviour. It affects many, if not all, witnesses to the bullying (Twemlow, Fonagy & Sacco, 2010, p. 78). When individuals participate in bullying behaviour, or take on the role of the bystander without intervening, they enable bullying to become the norm, thus creating a culture of bullying within the school (Unnever & Cornell, 2003, p. 7). Although bullying affects some targets in isolation, it typically occurs within a larger social context, thereby implicating bystanders in bullying behaviours as well (Pugh & Chitiyo, 2011, p. 1). Trach, Hymel, Waterhouse and Neale (2011, p. 116) highlight some strategies that bystanders use when they do intervene in bullying situations: taking direct action, seeking assistance, and supporting the target. Therefore, bystanders can either reinforce or deter bullying behaviour (Twemlow et al., 2010, p. 79).

1.5.5 Workplace bullying

The concept of workplace bullying is relevant to this study because workplace bullying is as prevalent in the school context as it is in workplaces of similar size and complexity (Benefield, 2004, p. 22). Horton (2011, p. 271) suggests that the school is an environment which may provide multiple opportunities for workplace bullying. De Wet (2010a) notes that workplace bullying is evident in the interpersonal interactions between individuals, or between an individual and a group who work together (p.113). Workplace bullying can be present in schools between teachers, the school management (for example, the principal, governing body and heads of departments), additional staff (for example, occupational therapists and educational psychologists), as well as parents and learners (De Wet, 2010b, p. 1451; Fox & Stallworth, 2010, p. 927). Furthermore, workplace bullying is described as behaviour which intends to harm the target, infringes on teachers' rights and code of conduct, and exists within a relationship of power inequality (Blase et al., 2008, p. 265). In this study I have divided workplace bullying into three categories, namely learner-on-teacher bullying, teacher-on-teacher bullying, and principal-on-teacher bullying (See 2.2.5; Table 4.2).

1.5.6 The secondary school

According to the Department of Education (2008, p. 2), education in the secondary school phase in South Africa is divided into two bands, namely the General Education and Training (GET) and Further Education and Training (FET) bands. Secondary schools consist of grades eight to twelve, and generally serve learners from thirteen to nineteen years of age (Department of Basic Education, 2010, p. 9).

1.6 STRUCTURE OF THESIS

This research has been presented in the following way:

Chapter one describes the background and theoretical framework within which the study is placed. The problem statement, which includes the research questions and aims of the research, is discussed. Furthermore, an overview of the process of inquiry is then followed by a review of a few key concepts in this study.

Chapter two provides an in-depth overview of existing literature on the topic of school bullying as it relates to this qualitative study. It focuses on a broad definition of school bullying and its nature and extent. Furthermore, it also reviews teachers' perspectives and experiences of bullying and the prevention, recognition and intervention thereof.

Chapter three describes the research process, including the researcher's paradigm, research methodology and methods of data generation. It also stresses the trustworthiness and ethical considerations that informed the study.

Chapter four presents the research findings in the form of themes and categories which emerged during data analysis. These findings are then discussed in the light of existing literature.

Chapter five provides concluding remarks and reflections, as well as the recommendations proposed by the participants. The limitations and strengths of the study are discussed and suggestions are made for future research on school bullying.

1.7 CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this chapter aimed to discuss the background and context of the study. It served to outline the theoretical framework underlying this study and highlight its purpose. Furthermore, it provided a brief overview of the process of inquiry and offered a summary of the key concepts regarding school bullying.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION

The literature review aims to expose the reader to research that has already been generated around the topic and describe the existing body of knowledge. The body of knowledge is thus seen as the context within which the current study is placed (Babbie & Mouton, 2001, p. 565). This context provides a platform for further discussion and the positioning of research findings (Kaniki, 2006, p. 19). In addition, the literature review aims to provide the contextual basis for the particular focus of the research within the general topic being studied (Mertens, 2005, p. 88). The literature review therefore aims to contribute to the body of knowledge on the research topic by “advancing, refining or revising what is already known” (Merriam, 2009, p. 72).

The current literature review is based on the social context perspective of this study which draws from views of both the social constructionism and bio-ecological frameworks. The social context perspective emphasises the interactions between individuals and the systems which are delineated in the bio-ecological model (See Figure 1.2). This study focuses more specifically on proximal processes, which not only involve relevant systems, but also the person characteristics of the individuals within these systems. Furthermore, this literature review does not aim to reveal the “truth” about school bullying (Freedman & Combs, 1996, p. 22). My intention has rather been to provide a comprehensive picture as is portrayed in existing literature. This picture includes the nature and extent of bullying in secondary schools, teachers’ perspectives and experiences of bullying as well as the prevention and intervention strategies regarding school bullying.

2.2 WHAT IS SCHOOL BULLYING?

There are various aspects to the definition of the concept ‘bullying’ (Rigby, 2002, p. 29). It is essential to clearly describe the concept of school bullying, including the terms of aggression and school violence, cyberbullying, and workplace bullying from

the outset of this study and according to existing literature (Bauman & Del Rio, 2006, p. 219).

Research, both internationally and nationally, shows that bullying is a pervasive problem that infiltrates schools throughout the world (Cornell & Mayer, 2010, p. 10-11; Naser et al., 2003, pp. 129-130; Orpinas & Horne, 2010, p. 49; Smit 2003, p. 27; Thornberg, 2010, p. 311; Townsend, Flisher, Chikobvu, Lombard, & King, 2008, p. 29). Therefore, most schools face numerous challenges related to bullying behaviour which impact on learning and teaching within the school context (De Wet, 2006a, p. 61; Osher et al., 2010, p. 48; Swearer et al., 2010, p. 38). Bullying in the school setting takes place in the interaction between individuals and their contexts. The school environment can therefore play an essential role in encouraging and maintaining bullying behaviours (Oh & Hazler, 2009, p. 307). Furthermore, bullying has the capacity to impact on individuals' "social, emotional, psychological and educational development" and must be addressed (Collins, McAleavy & Adamson, 2004, p. 55).

2.2.1 Conceptualisation of bullying

Heinemann (1972) is frequently recognised as being the first to theorise the Swedish term for bullying, 'mobbing' or 'mobbing' (Forsman, 2006, p. 132; Horton, 2011, p. 268; Lagerspetz, Björkqvist, Berts & King, 1982, p. 45; Olweus, 2010, p. 9; Orton, 1982, p. 172). According to Olweus (2010, p. 9), the term 'mobbing' was first used by Lorenz (1966), an ethologist, who wrote about aggression amongst animals, and had a special interest in how certain animals are collectively attacked by another group of animals. Heinemann (1972) defined bullying as the "group's collective aggressiveness towards an individual or group of individuals who provoke or attract this aggressiveness" (p. 7). It was thus established that bullying is a group phenomenon. However, Olweus (1978, p. 4) queried Heinemann's view on the perceived coherent nature of the group, and instead wanted to discriminate between the role-players who participate in bullying situations. Furthermore, he questioned the appropriateness of the term 'mobbing' to describe the nature of peer harassment that occurred in school settings (Olweus, 2010, p. 9). Olweus (1978, p. 4) was thus concerned about who was responsible for the situation arising, while Heinemann (1972, p. 7) was interested in understanding how particular situations were more

conducive to bullying. Therefore, a shift was made from focusing on the specific situation to emphasising the behavioural characteristics of the different role-players involved in the bullying (Horton, 2011, p. 268).

Research into school bullying has tended to focus on the situation as the cause of bullying, but recent studies considered the possibility that bullying is conducted during social processes of group inclusion and exclusion (Horton, 2011, p. 269). The emphasis is therefore placed on bullying as being context-dependent. If, as research suggests, school bullying is widely prevalent, then it seems inconceivable that bullying emanates from the behavioural characteristics of individuals. Therefore, researchers propose that rather than assuming individuals to be “evil-minded”, it may be more useful to understand school bullying as a social phenomenon involving “ordinary” individuals in particular situations (Horton, 2011, p. 269). The question thus changes from “What is wrong with those individuals who engage in bullying behaviour?” to “Why do individuals do what they do?” This links directly to the bio-ecological approach where interaction takes place between systems (See Figure 1.2). From this argument one must then explore the nature of the proximal processes in the school context.

School bullying is often perceived as pro-active aggression. Research shows that the intentionality of bullying usually refers to aggressiveness and the intention to cause harm (Guerin & Hennesy, 2002, p. 3; Myburgh & Poggenpoel, 2009, p. 449; Rigby, 2010, p. 14). Literature states that aggressive acts, while they do not always lead to physical harm, are linked to the risk of harm, threats and the perception of fear and vulnerability (Rabrenovic, Kaufman & Levin, 2004, p. 116). However, minor acts of aggression may escalate into major incidents of violence between individuals (De Wet, 2006a, p. 14). It is therefore argued that bullying is a grouping of aggressive behaviour as it is often repeatedly directed towards individuals who are incapable of defending themselves efficiently against aggressive behaviour (Myburgh & Poggenpoel, 2009, p. 449). Horton (2011, p. 269) states that by questioning the aggressive intent of bullying, attention is thus placed on the social processes involved. There has therefore been a movement away from the view that the intention of bullying is aggression, it rather focuses on the intention of bullying and the role it plays in the power relations of particular contexts (Horton, 2011, p. 269). An individual is thus not simply aggressive, passive or provocative, but instead has to

navigate a range of power relations. The ways in which this is done may have profound consequences for the extent to which these individuals are involved in bullying.

Recent research has shown that bullying is relational and situational, that is to say, not an individual problem but one with social and cultural dimensions (Danby & Osvaldsson, 2011, p. 255). It therefore refers to Bronfenbrenner's proximal processes discussed in 1.2. Furthermore, it is argued that to understand the social processes of bullying one requires an understanding of bullying as a group interactional process, as well as how such an interaction is part of the power relations within both the immediate context of the school and the wider society (Danby & Osvaldsson, 2011, p. 256). It is argued that the power relations within which bullying occurs are determined by social relationships, and not power differences. For example, Horton (2011) states that a learner's "greater confidence, assertiveness, verbal dexterity or social or manipulative skill is most likely contingent on their position within the social relations of which they are a part" (p. 270). It is thus not an inherent power difference that brings about a dynamic of bullying; it rather is the social construction of power dynamics that create a context of bullying.

There have been numerous debates in the media regarding initiation or hazing at schools, the various rituals and other activities to initiate a person into a group, and whether or not these can be considered to be forms of bullying (Maphumulo, 2009, p. 3). Reports from various individuals in the school context suggest that intimidation masquerades as being initiation-linked and is still commonplace in most schools. Serrao (2009, p.3) emphasises that some of these incidents of initiation can be very serious. Initiation that involves pain or humiliation, and where there is an imbalance of power, qualifies as bullying and not just innocent rites of passage (Allan & Madden, 2008, pp. 9-10). Furthermore, research shows that school bullying includes criminal offences against individuals or school property, as well as incivility, such as rudeness and lack of respect towards learners, teachers, other school staff and school management (Maree, 2005, p. 16; Rigby, 2002, pp. 29-30). These forms of bullying disrupt the positive climate of a school environment and are a central component to bullying in the school context. Bullying behaviour is therefore influenced by the culture and climate, positive or negative, of the school environment (De Wet, 2006b, p. 61).

Olweus (1993) argues that targets of bullying are “bullied or victimized when exposed, repeatedly and over time, to negative actions” (p. 9). Furthermore, a negative action occurs “when someone intentionally inflicts, or attempts to inflict, injury or discomfort upon another” (Olweus, 1993, p. 9). Negative actions can be executed verbally (Oh & Hazler, 2009, p. 292; Stassen Berger, 2007, p. 94), physically (Bauman & Del Rio, 2006, pp. 219-220; Rigby, 2004, p. 288; Thornberg, 2010, p. 311), or relationally (Liang et al., 2007, p. 162; Swart & Bredekamp, 2009, p. 407), and includes non-verbal (Maree, 2005, p. 16; Sanders & Phye, 2004, p. 65), emotional (De Wet, 2006b, p. 62; Sahin, 2010, p. 127; Sullivan et al., 2004, p. 5), sexual (De Wet, 2006b, p. 62; Nesper et al., 2003, p. 128) and psychological forms of bullying (Glew, Fan, Katon & Rivara, 2008, p. 123; Hampel, Manhal & Hayer, 2009, p. 485). Furthermore, these negative behaviours can vary extensively in nature and severity (Monks & Coyne, 2011, p. 4; Orpinas & Horne, 2010, p. 49).

According to Olweus (1993), “the term bullying is not used when two [individuals] of approximately the same strength are fighting or quarrelling” (p. 10). The targets of bullying are characterised by their inability to defend themselves against individuals who engage in bullying behaviour (Hampel et al., 2009, pp. 474-475; Olweus, 2010, p. 9; Smith, Singer, Hoel & Cooper, 2003, p. 176) with the target of bullying feeling inferior to those engaging in bullying behaviour (Swearer et al., 2010, p. 40). Therefore, it is argued that bullying occurs in a relationship that is typified by an unequal power distribution (Horton, 2011, p. 274; Kert, Coddling, Shick Tryon & Shiyko, 2010, p. 193; Olweus, 1993, p. 10). In addition to this, Smith and Sharp (1994) define bullying as being “a systematic abuse of power” (p. 2). This definition acknowledges the repetitive nature of bullying and implies that an imbalance of power exists between individuals who engage in bullying behaviour and those who are the targets of bullying (Cheng, Chen, Ho & Cheng, 2011, p. 227; Monks & Coyne, 2011, p. 3; Oh & Hazler, 2009, p. 292; Olweus, 2010, p. 9; Sanders & Phye, 2004, p. 64).

It is also reported that “bullying is unpredictable behaviour that appears to strike without pattern” (Sullivan et al., 2004, p. 2). Furthermore, it is argued that this negative behaviour is not deliberately provoked by the target of bullying (Nesper et al., 2003, p. 127). Research shows that it may rather be as a result of the context, the characteristics of the individuals who engage in bullying behaviour or those of the

targets of bullying, cultural expectations, as well as vulnerabilities on the part of the targets of bullying (Smorti, Menesini & Smith, 2003, pp. 417-418). This argument is of particular importance in this study.

Although there is no formal agreement on the definition of bullying, most researchers agree that there are three major elements that define bullying (Harris & Hathorn, 2006, p. 51; Olweus, 2007, p. 2). Firstly, bullying is intentional, hurtful behaviour (Orpinas & Horne, 2010, p. 49; Yoon et al., 2011, pp. 312-313). Secondly, it has the potential to be carried out “repeatedly and over time” (Rigby, 2004, p. 288). Lastly, it is characterised by an imbalance in social power that results in injury, intimidation or the humiliation of a targeted individual (Olweus, 1999, p. 11; Olweus, 2010, p. 15).

2.2.2 Bullying in the secondary school phase

Research shows that bullying impacts on adolescent individuals’ well-being and social functioning (Oh & Hazler, 2009, p. 291). Newman and Newman (2009, pp. 321-325) state that there is no other stage of development in which changes occur as speedily and erratically as in adolescence. Adolescents pass through a process that differs between individuals and causes “rapid physical development, changes of mood, crises of identity, and skirmishes into peripheral and extreme areas of human behaviour” (Sullivan et al., 2004, p. 27). These developmental changes therefore relate to the pertinent social systems that influence bullying. What is particularly significant for this study is that bullying has the power to isolate, exclude and push individuals to the fringes of social groups and school communities. When individuals are socially rejected in this way, it increases their vulnerability to further bullying (Newman & Newman, 2009, p. 338).

The onset of adolescence largely coincides with learners’ shift into secondary school (Sullivan et al., 2004, p. 27). Transitions can be problematic, and in most cases, children face the two major transitions of entering puberty and starting a new school at the same time. Many also suddenly have a new peer group and a different school system (Jindal-Snape & Foggie, 2008, p. 16; Swearer, 2011, p. 3). When learners enter the secondary school phase, they are therefore likely to be undergoing physical changes and be confronted by haphazard social expectations and behaviours (Sullivan et al., 2004, p. 47). Adolescents are dominated by a need to belong and are

constantly checking their normalcy in the peer group (Newman & Newman, 2009, pp. 338-339). Research shows that bullying behaviour is more prevalent during school transitions, for example the transition between primary and secondary school, and tends to decrease throughout secondary schooling (Collins et al., 2004, p. 67; Pellegrini et al., 2010, p. 199; Swearer, 2011, p. 3; Tenenbaum, Varjas, Meyers & Parris, 2011, p. 264). However, studies have found that direct physical bullying becomes less while verbal and relational methods increase during the secondary school phase (Rigby, 2007, p. 38). In addition, research suggests that adolescents show less empathy towards their victims than younger children, and that bullying behaviour can become more severe if it continues into late adolescence and adulthood (Menesini, Modena & Tani, 2009, p. 117; Sullivan et al., 2004, p. 8).

In conclusion, schools encompass great imbalances of power that are present at a time when individuals are at their most vulnerable to abuse from their peers (Rigby, 2002, p. 73). Schools are also seen as influential “socialising and enculturation agents” (MacDonald & Swart, 2004, p.34). Therefore, it is crucial that bullying is addressed because schools play a critical role in the shaping of “perception and expectations about the self and life” (Lee, 2001, p. 30).

2.2.3 School violence

Bullying is viewed as the most common form of violence at schools and negatively affects both the school environment and the teaching process (ELRC, 2005, p. xix; Sahin, 2010, p. 129). Research shows that the term bullying is not synonymous with that of school violence (Astor, Guerra & Van Acker, 2010, p. 70). However, bullying may be related to a particular form of violent behaviour, or even occur between individuals with equal power and on a one-time basis (Carlisle & Rofes, 2007, p. 17; Liang et al., 2007, p. 162). Cremin (2003) defines violence as the “intentional use of physical and psychological force or power, threatened or actual, against oneself, another person, [or] against a group or community that results in injury, death, psychological harm, mal-development or deprivation” (p. 930).

According to Smorti et al. (2003, p. 418), the term ‘violence’ has developed an exaggerated meaning which encompasses acts of assault, extortion, theft, vandalism and incivility. In addition to these acts, any circumstances that generate a climate in

which individual learners or teachers experience threats or fear while in the school context, can be defined as school violence (Ma, 2001, p. 352). School violence also refers to verbal-, physical- and relational- aggression, sexual and emotional abuse, as well as antisocial behaviours (De Wet, 2007a, p. 61; Somech & Oplatka, 2009, p. 425). These antisocial behaviours range in severity from aggressive behaviours such as verbal insults and social exclusion, to more extreme forms of violence including weapon use, sexual assault and gang violence (Astor et al., 2010, p. 70).

Eliasov and Frank (2000, p. 36) conducted a survey of school violence in twenty schools in the Cape Metropolitan area and found that violence was prevalent in both primary and secondary schools. They found the possession of weapons to be a major problem in all the schools, with fighting, physical violence and vandalism reported in 95 percent of the schools. In addition, assault occurred on a regular basis in 60 percent of the schools and gangsterism was present in 50 percent of the schools. The interest in school violence has greatly increased public awareness and concern ever since (Prince, 2010, p. 1). Although there has been a considerable increase in the incidence of school violence in the Western Cape since 2009, it has been reported that most of these incidences occurred in 109 high risk schools and could be directly linked to gang violence (Maritz, 2010, pp. 14-15; Fredericks, 2009, p. 1). According to Senosi (2003), "lack of economic opportunity, shortages of social services, lack of family stability, ineffective parenting, lack of positive role models, pervasiveness of violence as a form of problem-solving, access to weapons and illegal substances, intolerance, and lack of community support" contribute to the prevalence of violence in South African schools (p. 40). As it is argued that the school is a window of the community where it is situated, it is important to take the wider context into consideration (Potgieter, 2010a, p. 11).

Lastly, there is an underlying prevalence of bullying in today's school culture - with devastating consequences that affect negatively the lives of learners, teachers, school management and other school staff. If bullying is not addressed appropriately, opportunities arise for extreme incidences of school violence to flourish. This may have negative consequences for the targets of violence, individuals who engage in school violence, observers of school violence, the general school climate, and the overall functioning of the school (Somech & Oplatka, 2009, p. 425).

2.2.4 Cyberbullying

In the era of the cyber generation, cyberbullying has emerged as the latest form of relational bullying through the use of modern technological devices such as mobile phones and the internet (McGuckin, Cummins & Lewis, 2010, p. 83; Monks & Coyne, 2011, p. 7; Rogers, 2010, p. 7). Research on this topic is ever expanding because the vast majority of young people use these devices on a daily basis (Cassidy, Jackson & Brown, 2009, p. 398; Colorosa, 2008, pp. 205-206; Danby & Osvaldsson, 2011, p. 257; Hinduja & Patchin, 2011, p. 23; Kreutzer, 2009, p. 2; Monks & Coyne, 2011, pp. 7-8; Slonje & Smith, 2008, p. 147).

There are a number of characteristics which characterise cyberbullying. Firstly, it is extremely difficult to escape cyberbullying because it exceeds the immediate boundaries of the school environment (Cowie & Jennifer, 2008, p. 10; Slonje & Smith, 2008, p. 148). The question has been raised as to when cyberbullying is considered to be an in-school or out-of-school matter (Patchin & Hinduja, 2006, p. 148; Reid, 2010, p. 22). According to Bissonette (2009, p. 8), instances of in-school and out-of-school cyberbullying both impact on school safety as well as on learning and teaching within the school environment. Therefore, even if cyberbullying originates out-of-school, the relational effect frequently carries over into the school environment as it mostly involves conflict between learners who know each other from school (Hinduja & Patchin, 2011, p. 25; Ybarra & Mitchell, 2004, p. 1313). Secondly, cyberbullying extends to a vast and unknowable number of bystanders within a peer group, the school context and the wider community (Cowie & Jennifer, 2008, p.10; Jacobs, 2010, p. 16; Slonje & Smith, 2008, p. 148). Thirdly, individuals who engage in bullying behaviour have a certain degree of anonymity and imperceptibility that protects them from being implicated in the cyberbullying (Cowie & Jennifer, 2008, p.10; Hinduja & Patchin, 2011, p. 22; Slonje & Smith, 2008, p. 148).

Research shows that various technologies are used to intentionally hurt individuals, and that instances tend to occur repetitively (Cowie & Jennifer, 2008, p. 10; Hinduja & Patchin, 2011, p. 21; Slonje & Smith, 2008, p. 153). Cyberbullying can be viewed as repetitive when a message, photograph or video-clip is taken once and sent to more than one individual who in turn forward this to other people, or alternatively upload the material onto a website. Every time someone accesses this site or material,

it can be viewed as repetition (Juvonen & Gross, 2008, p. 496). Cyberbullying can take place on a multitude platforms. Some examples include: bullying by text messages, pictures, video-clips or voice recordings on mobile phones; the use of cameras or video cameras, digital voice recorders, MP3 and MP4 players, and iPod's and iPad's; phone calls; electronic mail (email), otherwise known as hate-mail; chat rooms; instant messaging via mobile phone or Internet sites; bash boards, (the nickname for an online bulletin board or virtual chat room); hacking into someone else's social networking profile or stealing their passwords; interactive sites such as Formspring on Facebook or Chatroulette; online polling or rating websites; blogging sites; virtual worlds; online social gaming and personal or public websites (Bissonette, 2009, p. 5; Cowie & Jennifer, 2008, p.10; Hinduja & Patchin, 2009, p. 31; Hinduja & Patchin, 2011, p. 21; Trolley & Hanel, 2010, p. 8).

Furthermore, there are a variety of social networking sites such as Facebook, MySpace and Twitter, as well as anti-social networking sites such as Snubster, EnemyBook and HateBook, which are being used as a means of bullying (Beckstrom, 2008, p. 284; Hinduja & Patchin, 2008, pp. 131-132; Hinduja & Patchin, 2011, p. 21; Patchin & Hinduja, 2010b, p. 198). Salacious websites like OuToilet and RateMyTeachers.Com are just two examples of web pages where peers, learners or teachers spread hateful rumours and malicious gossip about other learners, teachers or school management. These sites create an ethical and moral dilemma around privacy for those who are targets of cyberbullying (Reid, 2010, p. 22). In addition to this, Cowie and Jennifer (2008) note that some of the types of cyberbullying that individuals engage in are "vilification and defamation, social exclusion or peer rejection, unauthorised publication of private information or images, identity theft, unauthorised access and impersonation, and manipulation" (p.10). Table 2.1 is used to illustrate the different forms of cyberbullying.

Table 2.1: Forms of cyberbullying

DIFFERENT FORMS	DEFINITION
Cyberstalking	Repeated, intense messages are sent that include harassment, threats of harm or intimidation. As well as engaging in activities that make individuals fear for their safety (Bissonette, 2009, pp. 5-6).
Cyberthreat	A cyberthreat is online material that threatens or raises concerns about violence against others, suicide or other self-harm. This can be divided into two forms: direct threats (e.g. actual threats to hurt someone or to commit suicide) or distressing material (e.g. online material showing how certain individuals may be considering hurting someone, hurting themselves or committing suicide) (Willard, 2007, p. 3).
Denigration	Spreading or posting gossip, lies or rumours about someone to damage their reputation or friendships (Willard, 2007, pp. 2-3).
Exclusion	Intentionally and cruelly excluding someone from an online group, chat room, virtual world or online game (Willard, 2007, pp. 2-3).
Flaming	Online arguments using electronic messages with aggressive or vulgar language (Willard, 2007, p. 2).
Happy-slapping	This links traditional bullying with cyberbullying. In happy-slapping incidents, an unsuspecting person is recorded being harassed or bullied in a way that usually involves some form of physical abuse. The resulting digital photo or video is uploaded to a website or sent around for public viewing. With the growth of Flickr and YouTube, this form of cyberbullying has gradually become more common (Hinduja & Patchin, 2009, pp. 39-40)
Harassment	Repeatedly sending abusive, insulting or rude messages, photos or videos (Rogers, 2010, pp. 17-18).
Impersonation	Breaking into someone's account or pretending to be someone else and sending or posting material to get that person in trouble or danger, or to damage that person's reputation or friendships (Bissonette, 2009, pp. 5-6).
Outing	Disclosing someone's secrets or embarrassing information, photos or videos online without their consent (Bissonette, 2009, pp. 5-6).
Photoshopping	The term applies to image or photo modifications or alterations made using software programmes. The main subject is placed in a compromising or embarrassing context or scene (Hinduja & Patchin, 2009, p. 35)
Sexting	It is the act of engaging in sexual activity via mobile phones or the Internet. It includes the exchange of messages of a sexual nature, nude photographs and videos, or photographs or videos of sexual intercourse (Trolley & Hanel, 2010, p. 5).

Trickery	Talking someone into revealing secrets or embarrassing information and then publishing it online (Rogers, 2010, pp. 17-18).
Trolling	Is directed at the subject of discussion. Trolls attempt to incite arguments, controversy, and disruption in online social contexts. This is done by posting messages that are often cruel and insulting, but other times are simply inaccurate, ridiculous, irrelevant, or obtuse. Trolls are malicious, or act maliciously, because they intentionally attempt to provoke unproductive reactions from others (Hinduja & Patchin, 2009, pp. 37-38)

Research shows that relational bullying (2.3.1.3) is more prevalent amongst secondary school learners than primary school learners (Slonje & Smith, 2008, p. 147; Weir, 2010, p. 22). The threat of cyberbullying increases with age as older learners have easier access to the internet and mobile phones (Patchin & Hinduja, 2010b, pp. 198-199; Slonje & Smith, 2008, p. 148). It is important to note that the latest technologies are constantly infiltrating through to younger age groups and that the development of newer technologies is quickly changing the nature and extent of cyberbullying (Slonje & Smith, 2008, p. 153). It is asserted that due to the ever-evolving nature and incidence of cyberbullying, the extent to which teachers and parents are aware of its occurrence and different forms is limited (Cassidy et al., 2009, p. 383; Waasdorp, Pas, O'Brennan & Bradshaw, 2011, p. 130). Furthermore, research shows that a large percentage of learners do not report incidents of cyberbullying and only a few learners use digital tools to prevent online bullying incidents from occurring (Juvonen & Gross, 2008, p. 496). It is therefore important to look at the wider picture of who might be involved in cyberbullying.

It is argued that individuals who engage in cyberbullying can be seen as anonymous predators who hide behind their mobile phones or computer screens (Colorosa, 2008, p. 208). They are said to stalk their prey from any place and at any time, which leaves the target with little means of escape (Rogers, 2010, p. 13). According to Colorosa (2008), "the ability to inflict pain anonymously, and with such a wide audience to reinforce the humiliation, often emboldens the [individual who engages in cyberbullying] to inflict far greater damage to the target than would have been imaginable in a face-to-face encounter" (p. 210). Research has found that the nature and extent of cyberbullying, as well as the demographics and profile of an individual who engages in cyberbullying, differ from their offline counterparts (Rogers, 2010, p.

8). Considering that the nature and extent of cyberbullying is different to 'traditional bullying', special attention needs to be paid in order to curb cyberbullying.

Technology is ever advancing - and so is the nature and extent of cyberbullying. The laws which are in place to protect learners, teachers and school managers are currently out-dated and lag behind the threat of cyberbullying (Jacobs, 2010, p. xii). These laws need to be updated regularly, and to be done so rapidly, in order to keep up with the pace of new developments in the phenomenon of cyberbullying. In South Africa the legal landscape is changing as legislators propose solutions involving more intensive action by schools (Bissonette, 2009, p. 8). In 2010, the Protection from Harassment Bill was introduced, and under this new piece of legislation, cyber stalking is considered to be illegal and makes it punishable by law (Farish & Brien, 2011, p. 1).

Furthermore, as relational bullying often commences at school level, schools need to take action to address cyberbullying to ensure the safety and well-being of the school community (Cassidy et al., 2009, pp. 398-399; Reid, 2010, p. 22;). As such, prevention programmes that focus on bullying, especially cyberbullying, can be integrated into the school curriculum (Patchin & Hinduja, 2010a, p. 614). Adopting proactive strategies that improve learners' behaviour in online environments could help to empower targets of cyberbullying to report incidents to teachers, school management and their parents. In conclusion, the creation of an inclusive, welcoming and responsible school culture and the development of programmes to teach learners about cyberbullying and its effects are worthwhile goals for schools in this decade, as is actively dissuading individuals who engage in bullying behaviour from acting out in cyberspace (Cassidy et al., 2009, p. 400).

2.2.5 Workplace bullying in the school context

As indicated in chapter one, the concept of workplace bullying is relevant to this study as it is as prevalent in the school context as it is in most workplaces of parallel size and complexity (Benefield, 2004, p. 22). Research shows that teachers, school management and other school staff are exposed to bullying behaviour during and after school hours (De Wet, 2010c, p. 189; Farmer, 2011, p. 196). It is argued that there are collective factors that add to teachers' being targeted in the workplace

(Korkmaz & Cemaloglu, 2010, p. 5). These include organisational culture, climate and relationships, leadership styles of principals, excessive workload, the role of the Department of Basic Education and trade unions, and individual characteristics (Cemaloglu, 2007, p. 791; De Wet, 2010b, pp. 1453-1457; Korkmaz & Cemaloglu, 2010, p. 5). Furthermore, Kitt (2009) states that workplace bullying “involves the systemic erosion of a person’s capacity to contribute to the organisation in which they work” (p. 991). This, in turn, has negative consequences for the targets of bullying behavior and the educational organisation in which the bullying behaviour takes place. In addition to this, Vega and Comer (2005) describe workplace bullying as a “pattern of destructive and generally deliberate demeaning of co-workers or subordinates” (p.109). Therefore, workplace bullying can be characterised by its intent, frequency, duration, misuse of power, and the inability of the targets of bullying behaviour to defend themselves (De Wet, 2010a, pp. 113-114).

Blase and Blase (2006, p. 127) indicate that the term ‘workplace bullying’ describes a variety of behaviours that can be narrowed down to four main types. These include a harm to professional standing (for example, public humiliation or “put downs”, excessive or unfounded criticism of work abilities or personal life, unreasonable job demands, stealing credit for another's work, compelling teachers to resign, or to intimidate them with possible discharge); harm to personal position (for example, dismissing an individual's feelings or thoughts, "dirty looks", snubbing or ignoring, “the silent treatment”, lying, offensive name-calling, blaming, violations of physical space, finger pointing, unfriendly behaviour, slamming and throwing objects, sexual harassment or unwanted physical contact, and angry outbursts); social exclusion (for example, withholding resources, information or obstructing opportunities, initiating malicious rumours and gossip, innuendo and social isolation); and destabilisation (for example, unreasonable workload, unwarranted pressure, pointless disruptions, ignoring teachers’ accomplishments, favouritism, not returning phone calls, and behaviour that implies a master-servant relationship) (Blase & Blase, 2002, p. 677; Blase & Blase, 2003, pp. 382-383; Blase & Blase, 2006, p. 128; Cowie, Naylor, Rivers, Smith & Pereira, 2002, pp. 34-35; Farmer, 2011, p. 196; Jennifer, Cowie & Ananiadou, 2003, pp. 490-491; Rayner & Hoel, 1997, p. 183). These types of workplace bullying undermine the integrity and confidence of teachers, school managers and other school staff, and have the potential to drastically reduce efficiency (Cowie, et al., 2002, p. 34).

Research into workplace bullying within the school context has focused mainly on identifying the behavioural forms that bullying may take (Saunders, Huynh & Goodman-Delahunty, 2007, p. 340; Vega & Comer, 2005, p. 101); measuring the frequency with which bullying behaviours occur (Salin, 2009, p. 40; Smith, 1997, p. 249); documenting the negative consequences that bullying has (Kitt, 2009, p. 991; Smith et al., 2003, p. 175); studying the perceptions and experiences of workplace bullying (Jennifer et al., 2003, p. 489); analysing the relationship between the demographic characteristics of teachers and their exposure levels to bullying (Cemaloglu, 2007, p. 798); and identifying those who are likely to participate in workplace bullying (Saunders et al., 2007, p. 341; Smith, 1997, p. 249).

Smith (1997, p. 253) states that school bullying should take account of the organisational climate and structure of the school environment. In schools and workplaces, the organisational climate and structure contributes to the occurrence of bullying (Beale & Hoel, 2011, p. 5). The existence of an anti-bullying policy in the school as workplace, as well as the increased quality of the staff's working environment, can effectively reduce the incidences of both school and workplace bullying (Cowie, et al., 2002, p. 35; Smith et al., 2003, p. 176). Korkmaz and Cemaloglu (2010) found that there is a "high level of workplace bullying when [the] school climate and culture do not support collaborative learning, when there is not much knowledge-sharing, and when open communication among personnel is lacking" (p. 25). There is therefore a direct link between the features of workplace bullying and the organisational climate and culture. It can therefore be concluded that existing collaborative learning climates within educational organisations are broken down by workplace bullying (Korkmaz & Cemaloglu, 2010, p. 25).

2.3 WHAT IS THE NATURE AND EXTENT OF BULLYING?

2.3.1 Types of bullying

There are many types of bullying which range from teasing to intimidation, physical abuse to sexual harassment, damaging school property to stealing personal belongings, and socially excluding others. The most widespread forms of overt bullying occur as direct and negative insults, derogatory comments, being teased, and being physically attacked. The most prominent forms of relational bullying are

spreading rumours and social isolation (Harris & Hathorn, 2006, p. 51). Hence, bullying occurs in various forms, and distinctions can be made between the following types of bullying.

2.3.1.1 Verbal bullying

The most prevalent form of bullying is verbal in nature. Harris and Hathorn (2006, p. 52) found that bullying occurs when individuals are called hurtful names, threatened or teased. In addition, Harris and Petrie (2002, p. 47) report that learners are often bullied through the use of insulting comments which refer to race, ethnicity, religion, disability, gender or sexual orientation. Furthermore, graffiti: on school property that portrays hateful or cruel speech, is also defined as verbal bullying (Harris & Hathorn, 2006, p. 52).

2.3.1.2 Physical bullying

Physical bullying is a direct form of bullying. It involves hitting, tripping other individuals on purpose, kicking, punching, damaging property, extortion or blackmail, taking other individuals' belongings or stealing school property, physical assault, corporal punishment, as well as threats of physical violence. Physical bullying occurs when one individual physically injures another on purpose, with the intention of harassing, threatening or humiliating them. Research shows that direct, physical bullying is easier for teachers and school managers to identify than relational bullying (Harris & Hathorn, 2006, pp. 51-52).

2.3.1.3 Relational bullying

The term 'relational bullying' refers to psychological and emotional types of bullying. This includes bullying behaviours such as giving hurtful nicknames, making humiliating remarks, spreading rumours, mocking, passing notes which contain cruel statements, gossiping, and intimidating others by staring or giving threatening looks (Whitted & Dupper, 2008, p. 336). Social ostracisation is another form of relational bullying and it occurs when individuals are made to feel alone or outside the norm group. As explained in 2.2.4, cyberbullying is regarded as the latest form of relational bullying (Aluede, Adeleke, Omoike & Afen-Akpaída, 2008, p. 154). It involves the

spreading of rumours and the sending harassing emails and text messages, photos or videos (See Table 2.1). Cyberbullying can occur in or outside of the school, but its consequences permeate the school environment (Weir, 2010, p. 20).

2.3.1.4 Sexual bullying

According to De Wet et al. (2008, pp. 98-99), sexual bullying can take place in the form of verbal, physical or relational bullying. It includes unwanted sexual jokes, taunts about sexual body parts, sexual comments, advances, and the displaying of sexual material. Teasing regarding someone's sexual orientation or starting rumours about their sexual activities, as well as the passing of unwanted notes or pictures about sex are also seen as forms of sexual bullying (Wilson, 2008, p. 2). Furthermore, physically intrusive behaviours such as brushing up against, or grabbing, someone in a sexual way; forcing someone to engage in unwanted sexual behaviours; pulling at clothing in a sexual way or pulling clothing down or off; and "flashing" (in other words, exposing oneself in an indecent manner) or "mooning" (the act of displaying one's bare buttocks by removing one's clothing) other individuals are all considered forms of sexual bullying (Prinsloo, 2006, pp. 306-307, Wilson, 2008, p. 3). Sexual bullying should be seen as a very serious issue and is considered to be sexual harassment (Prinsloo, 2006, p. 306).

2.3.1.5 Homophobic bullying

Homophobic bullying relates to sexual harassment. Swearer et al. (2010, p. 40) note that many lesbian, gay, bisexual, transsexual, intersex and questioning (LGBTIQ) individuals experience high levels of victimisation at school. This includes physical and verbal harassment, teasing, isolation and stigmatization, and physical assault by other individuals (Espelage, 2011, p. 65; Espelage & Swearer, 2008, p. 155). Research shows that learners, teachers, school management and other school staff are targets of homophobic bullying (Swearer et al., 2010, p. 41). In many instances, LGBTIQ individuals experience homophobic bullying for being themselves. Literature shows that many LGBTIQ individuals worldwide hide their sexuality at school out of fear of being targeted because the school itself, or individuals within the school, discriminate on grounds of sexual orientation (Espelage, 2011, p. 65; Espelage &

Swearer, 2008, p. 156; O'Higgins-Norman, 2009, p. 381; Swearer, Turner, Givens, & Pollack, 2008, p. 170).

Furthermore, studies have found that many LGBTIQ learners report that school staff make homophobic remarks in school and intervene less when homophobic remarks are made in comparison to racist or sexist remarks (Espelage & Swearer, 2008, p. 155; Swearer et al., 2008, p. 170). Moreover, the lack of response from other learners and teachers to homophobic remarks plays a role in maintaining a school environment that is unsupportive of LGBTIQ learners and compromises their basic rights to safety and education (Espelage, 2011, p. 66). Lastly, research shows that even without being a direct target of homophobic bullying, individuals may experience increased psychological distress, anxiety, depression, and isolation in schools where anti-LGBTIQ language, attitudes and behaviours are present (Conoley, 2008, p. 217; Espelage, Aragon, Birkett & Koenig, 2008, p. 213; Espelage & Swearer, 2008, p. 157; Swearer et al., 2008, p. 170).

2.3.2 Individuals engaging in bullying behaviour

2.3.2.1 *Learner-on-learner bullying behaviour*

Learner-on-learner bullying occurs when one or more individuals engage in bullying behaviour that targets one or more peers. Research shows that peer-on-peer bullying is prevalent across genders (Athanasziades & Deliyanni-Kouimtzis, 2010, p. 335; Cheng et al., 2010, p. 193; Kert et al., 2010, p. 201). However, several studies found that the forms of bullying differ between male and female learners (Greeff & Grobler, 2008, p. 140). Literature suggests that male learners experience more physical forms of bullying behaviour than female learners (Athanasziades & Deliyanni-Kouimtzis, 2010, p. 335). A possible reason for this is that male individuals may experience a need to establish their dominance within social groups by using their physical strength (Greeff & Grobler, 2008, p. 140).

Research shows that learners are more often targeted by other learners in their class because of the lack of physical space and the perceived permanence of the situation (Greeff & Grobler, 2008, p. 140). Furthermore, learners are expected to follow a pre-determined timetable dictating where and when they should be and accompanied by

certain individuals. Learners' movements are thus heavily restricted, making it difficult to avoid bullying in such settings (Horton, 2011, p. 271). Also, although learner-on-learner bullying has been found to occur between learners from the same class and grade, it is not limited to these groups (Kert et al., 2010, p. 201).

According to existing literature, bullying behaviour between peers is a way of gaining social power, status or popularity in the school setting (Duncan & Owens, 2011, 306; Hamarus & Kaikkonen, 2008, p. 333; Thornberg, 2011, p. 260). Because targets of bullying are perceived to be different or deviant to the norm (Thornberg, 2011, p. 262), bullying behaviour forces all learners in the community to follow the cultural norms that it creates (Hamarus & Kaikkonen, 2008, p. 333). However, Thornberg (2010, p. 320) argues that bullying occurs as a reaction to deviance. For example, learners may be targeted because of their sexual orientation or gender identity because these behaviours are deemed as deviant or disgusting among other learners, and are therefore used as stigmatising labels in bullying situations (Duncan & Owen, 2011, p. 312; Thornberg, 2011, p. 261).

Furthermore, research suggests that bullying occurs within the context of perceived friendships (Daniels, Quigley, Menard & Spence, 2010, p. 78; Mishna, Wiener & Pepler, 2008, p. 549; Wei & Jonson-Reid, 2011, p. 253). However, only a few studies have directly researched friends' involvement in bullying (Daniels et al., 2010, p. 78; Mishna, 2004, p. 242; Mishna et al., 2008, p. 549; Wei & Jonson-Reid, 2011, p. 248). Research shows that when friends are regarded as a separate group of peers from those who engage in bullying behaviour, the complexity of human relations and the possibility of being targeted by one's own friends are undervalued (Wei & Jonson-Reid, 2011, p. 248). Literature states that bullying within friendships is difficult to distinguish from conflict within a friendship and actual bullying. Bullying by friends therefore seems to confound the complexity of identifying and responding to bullying (Mishna et al., 2008, p. 568).

2.3.2.2 *Teacher-on-learner bullying behaviour*

There have been few studies to date on the nature and extent of teachers engaging in bullying behaviour directed at learners in the South African context, and more specifically in the Western Cape. Literature shows that there is evidence that

teachers engage in bullying behaviour directed at learners on a daily basis (De Wet, 2006b, p. 67; Smith, 2004, p. 98). Furthermore, teachers enable bullying behaviour “through beliefs such as denial, minimisation, rationalisation, justification, blame, avoidance”, as well as “attitudes of disparity and incompetence” (Harris & Hathorn, 2006, p. 50). In addition, research shows that learners who are targets of bullying behaviour can develop feelings of victimisation and alienation, potentially resulting in psychological, behavioural, social and academic problems, as well as attempted or actual suicide (Groenewald, 2010, p. 14; Murray-Harvey, 2010, p. 112; Nel, 2010, p. 14).

McEvoy (2005, p. 3) states that teachers have a certain amount of authority over learners in the learner-teacher relationship, and that some teachers exert power and instil fear in such a way that learners feel intimidated. Learners in such settings are not encouraged to challenge ideas or to think for themselves. Because of the vast power differential that exists between teachers and learners, learners find that they have little or no ability to defend themselves (Whitted & Dupper, 2008, p. 331). Furthermore, it was found that when learners try to defend themselves against cruel statements or physical aggression from a teacher, there are usually punitive consequences, for example detention or suspension from school for being disrespectful towards an authority figure (Whitted & Dupper, 2008, p. 339).

When a teacher engages in bullying behaviour towards learners in the classroom, it is very likely that there will be an audience. James et al. (2008, p. 169) found that because of the potential public nature of teacher-on-learner bullying behaviour, the humiliation experienced by learners can increase. It also has the potential to make learners more susceptible to other types of bullying, such as learner-on-learner bullying behaviour. Bystanders who observe bullying behaviour are less likely to intervene between a teacher and a learner without involving another adult. According to McEvoy (2005, p. 3) bullying behaviours by teachers send a message of fear to the other learners which increases their vulnerability to abuse and victimisation.

Although legislation protects minors from physical and emotional abuse at the hands of parents or guardians (RSA, 2005, pp. 32-33), these legal protections do not always follow learners into the school setting. For example, Whitted and Dupper (2008, p. 338) state that 70 percent of the respondents in their study reported that

bathroom privileges were withheld at least once, and 38 percent reported bathroom privileges being withheld on four or more occasions. This finding suggests that the use of the bathroom is viewed as a privilege, not as a right in many classrooms. There are a number of reasons why teachers do not allow learners to leave the classroom to go to the bathroom. However, denying them use of a toilet can have serious, long-lasting physical and psychological consequences, including overflow incontinence, urinary tract infections, constipation, stool impaction, overextension of the bladder muscle, weakening of the brain–bladder or brain–bowel signals, renal failure, uremic poisoning, and anxiety (Bluestein, 2001, pp. 311-312). It is therefore argued that although teachers have the right to maintain discipline in schools, they do not have the right to misuse their authority in maintaining discipline and control (Maree, 2005, p. 16; Whitted & Dupper, 2008, p. 339).

2.3.2.3 *Learner-on-teacher bullying behaviour*

Pervin and Turner (1998) define learner-on-teacher bullying as “persistent, intentional, vigorous abuse of the teacher, swearing or mocking the teacher, knowingly ignoring the teacher, making personal comments about the teacher, or damaging the teacher’s property” (p. 4). Therefore, learners who engage in learner-on-teacher bullying behaviour challenge teachers’ authority by means of disruptive behaviour (Pervin & Turner, 1998, p. 4). Furthermore, disruptive behaviour can be seen as any behaviour or act that disrupts the flow of the lesson, the process of teaching, or that distracts others from participating in the lesson (De Wet, 2006b, p. 63). Therefore, misbehaviour of learners develops into bullying behaviour when they challenge teachers’ “authority in order to disempower them” (De Wet, 2010c, p.198). Teachers experience bullying behaviour as learner misbehaviour which includes learners making noise, teasing other learners, learners leaving their seats or the classroom without permission, talking constantly or making sounds, teasing and humiliating teachers, inattention, non-cooperation, deliberately ignoring the teacher, refusing to follow instructions or failing to complete assignments, lack of preparation, insolence, intimidation, harassment, verbal abuse, destroying or defacing school or personal property, theft of personal belonging or school property, and physical or sexual assault (De Wet, 2010c, pp. 194-195; James et al., 2008, p. 161; Prinsloo, E., 2005, p. 455).

Furthermore, literature states that quality learning and teaching is not possible in a school setting where teachers are targeted by learners, fellow teachers or the school management (De Wet, 2010c, p. 190). In addition to this, teachers who are the targets of bullying lack passion and zest for the teaching profession and their learners and have increased disciplinary problems in the school environment. They may also experience a breakdown in learning and teaching, as well as a general disintegration in the collaborative relationship between fellow teachers, and between teachers and school management (De Wet, 2010c, p. 197). Action therefore needs to be taken in order to reduce bullying behaviour towards teachers so that optimal learning and teaching can take place in the school context.

2.3.2.4 *Principal-on-teacher bullying behaviour*

De Wet (2010b, p. 1458) reports that local research findings correlate with international research in that the nature and extent of principal bullying behaviour has the same characteristics as workplace bullying. De Wet (2010b) states that bullying has been “found to correlate with dissatisfaction with management, role conflicts, a low degree of control over one’s work situation, monotonous and unchallenging work and with an organisation climate characterised by little encouragement for personal growth” (p. 1453). Principal-on-teacher bullying behaviour is depicted as persistent abuse of power that may have negative outcomes for teachers (De Wet, 2010b, p. 1451).

Research shows that principals engage in bullying behaviour directed at teachers by disregarding teachers' thoughts, needs, and feelings; not supporting teachers; denying resources and opportunities; verbally abusing and publicly ridiculing them; showing favouritism; unethical conduct; personal scrutiny; theft and destruction of personal belongings or educational resources; unreasonably adding to teachers' already demanding workload; levelling unwarranted and unfair criticism; setting them up to fail; subjecting them to social and professional isolation; lacking empathy towards them; deceit; intimidation and coercion; issuing unwarranted written warnings; unfair professional evaluations; forcing them to resign, reassigning them and even threatening them with dismissal harassment of a physical and sexual nature; as well as racism (Blase & Blase, 2002, p. 677; Blase & Blase, 2003, pp. 382

383; Blase & Blase, 2004, pp. 160-164; Blase et al., 2008, p. 291; De Wet, 2010a, p. 103).

2.3.3 Sites of bullying

The phenomenon of bullying within the school context cannot be fully understood without taking the social situation in which it takes place into account (Cowie & Jennifer, 2008, p. 7). According to existing research, bullying is more prevalent during school hours and occurs in certain public places (Vaillancourt et al., 2010, p. 40). These include classrooms, hallways, playgrounds/school yards, gymnasiums, cafeterias, changing rooms, bathrooms, halls, parking lots, taxis, buses, during break times outside and inside, organised sporting events, during extra-mural activities, in front of school, at the back of the school, and en route to and from school (DeVoe, Kaffenberger & Chandler, 2005, p. 14; Lee, 2004, p. 68; Vaillancourt et al., p. 40).

In addition, Rigby (2002, p. 195) notes that some places and conditions create an environment in which bullying behaviour flourishes. Sullivan et al. (2004) maintain that "bullying can and does occur anywhere" (p. 11). Research shows that bullying can occur in close proximity to teachers (Sahin, 2010, p. 131). It is argued that teachers have ample opportunity to observe bullying behaviour, for relatively long periods of time. However, the majority of research shows that most teachers underestimate the incident rate and extent of bullying (Dake, Price, & Telljohann, 2003, pp. 173-174; De Wet, 2006b, p. 62). In addition, the disparity between perceptions and actual occurrences of bullying incidents can be attributed to the fact that teachers may lack access to many contexts of peer interactions, and therefore inaccurately rate bullying behaviour (De Wet, 2005b, p. 83). This may, however, explain why bullying behaviour is often viewed differently by learners and teachers (Maunder et al., 2010, p. 263).

Furthermore, adult supervision tends to decrease when learners move from primary to secondary school (Swearer et al., 2010, p. 39). Adults who supervise learners in schools can inadvertently enable bullying behaviour when they create unsupervised times and spaces, as well as being unresponsive to reports of bullying behaviour (Olweus, 1999, p. 24). Therefore, schools should increase their supervision in locations where it is reported that bullying most often takes place (Vaillancourt et al.,

2010, p. 42). It is therefore argued that knowing where and when bullying occurs is crucial for intervention and prevention efforts (Vaillancourt et al., 2010, p. 48).

2.3.4 Effects of bullying

A number of studies suggest that bullying affects the wider environment in which it occurs, strengthening the rationale for this study. Therefore, the target of bullying, the individual who engages in bullying behaviour, the bystanders, parents, families, teachers, school management, school and wider community may all be affected (Horton, 2011, p. 273) (See Figure 1.2). Furthermore, it is argued that the experience of bullying, in whatever form it may take, can have serious immediate, short- and long-term effects on the well-being of all the individuals involved (Frisén & Bjarnelind, 2010, p. 597; Pugh & Chitiyo, 2011, p. 1; Rigby, 2007, p. 58; Tenenbaum et al., 2011, p. 264; Wei & Jonson-Reid, 2011, p. 245).

Research shows that individuals who are involved in bullying can develop psychological and social difficulties such as, low self-esteem (Frisén & Bjarnelind, 2010, p. 601; Thornberg, 2010, p. 311), depression (Farmer, 2011, p. 198; Fleming & Jacobsen, 2009, pp. 130-131; Konishi, Hymel, Zumbo & Li, 2010, p. 21; Menesini et al., 2009, p. 115; Wei & Jonson-Reid, 2011, p. 245; Ybarra & Mitchell, 2007, p. 1314; Yoon et al., 2011, p. 313), anxiety (Farmer, 2011, p. 198; Konishi et al., 2010, p. 21; Menesini et al., 2009, p. 115; Wei & Jonson-Reid, 2011, p. 245; Yoon et al., 2011, p. 313), stress (Frisén & Bjarnelind, 2010, p. 601), loss of confidence (Hampel et al., 2009, p. 485), insecurity (Rigby, 2007, p. 51), post-traumatic stress disorder (Farmer, 2011, p. 198), panic attacks (Farmer, 2011, p. 198), mistrust of others (Thornberg, 2010, p. 311), withdrawal (Konishi et al., 2010, p. 21; Menesini et al., 2009, p. 115), aggression (Hampel et al., 2009, p. 485), poor social adjustment (Konishi et al., 2010, p. 21), interpersonal violence (Thornberg, 2010, p. 311; Totura, Green, Karver & Gesten, 2009, p. 195), substance and alcohol abuse (Totura et al., 2009, p. 195; Yoon et al., 2011, p. 313), suicidal ideation, attempted or actual suicide (Hinduja & Patchin, 2010, p. 206; Kim, Leventhal, Koh & Boyce, 2009, p. 15), as well as develop feelings of worthlessness, alienation, isolation, loneliness or helplessness (Konishi et al., 2010, p. 21; Thornberg, 2010, p. 311; Wei & Jonson-Reid, 2011, p. 245; Yoon et al., 2011, p. 313). In addition, the outcomes of bullying can have negative somatic effects which include headaches, stomach aches, bodily pain, dizziness, disturbed

sleep, insomnia and tiredness (Farmer, 2011, p. 198; Frisén & Bjarnelind, 2010, p. 597; Thornberg, 2010, p. 311; Vanderbilt & Augustyn, 2010, p. 318).

Bullying also has negative outcomes for individuals' attachment to school, their concentration and academic performance (Wei & Jonson-Reid, 2011, p. 245). Furthermore, research about peer victimisation found that learners who are targets of bullying lack friends and support networks, are often more vulnerable to being targeted by other individuals, and are often rejected and socially isolated by peers (Blazer, 2005, p. 4; Cheng et al., 2010, p. 198; Vanderbilt & Augustyn, 2010, p. 318; Wei & Jonson-Reid, 2011, pp. 245-246). In addition, individuals who are continually involved in bullying behaviour tend to have increased school absenteeism, show greater rates of school truancy and tend to avoid school more as bullying increases (Cheng et al., 2010, p. 194; Rigby, 2007, p. 52; Totura et al., 2009, p. 196; Vanderbilt & Augustyn, 2010, p. 316). Research shows that the accumulation of these adverse effects eventually leads to these individuals dropping out of school and poor academic performance (Glew, Fan, Katon, Rivara & Kernic, 2005, p. 127; Hinduja & Patchin, 2011, p. 22; Rigby, 2007, p. 54; Swearer, 2011, p. 4; Swearer et al., 2010, pp. 38-39; Tenenbaum et al., 2011, p. 265; Totura et al., 2009, pp. 196-197; Townsend et al., 2008, p. 29; Vanderbilt & Augustyn, 2010, p. 316).

These negative effects are not only evident during adolescence, but can last into adulthood (Gardner, Buder & Buder, 2008, p. xxiv; Menesini et al., 2009, p. 127; Vanderbilt & Augustyn, 2010, p. 315; Wei & Jonson-Reid, 2011, p. 245). Studies suggest that participants experience greater levels of anxiety, shame and relational difficulties as adults (Carlisle & Rofes, 2007, p. 16). Furthermore, research found that individuals who were involved in bullying behaviour during adolescence are at a higher risk of having difficulties with psychosis, depression, low self-esteem, aggression, abuse, violence, substance and alcohol abuse, suicidal ideation, and attempted and actual suicide (Vanderbilt & Augustyn, 2010, pp. 316-317).

2.4 TEACHERS' PERSPECTIVES AND EXPERIENCES OF BULLYING

2.4.1 Teachers' conceptualisations of bullying

Studies have shown that teachers identify bullying as the main problem in their schools (Harris & Willoughby, 2003, p. 5). Teachers' definitions of what constitutes bullying are critical in an assessment of teachers' responses to bullying behaviour. Research suggests that teachers' conceptual definitions differ from the common elements of academic definitions of bullying (Mauder et al., 2010, p. 264). Several studies show that teachers agree that an imbalance of power and intentionality exist in bullying (Mishna, Scarcello, Pepler & Wiener, 2005, p. 722), while others report that teachers do not always include the power differential or intentionality of bullying in their definitions thereof (Mauder et al., 2010, p. 264; Naylor et al., 2006, p. 553). Furthermore, only a few studies found that teachers define bullying as repetitive behaviour (Mauder et al., 2010, p. 264).

Research indicates that most teachers recognise that bullying can take multiple forms, but that they consider physical bullying to be the most severe form when compared to verbal or relational bullying (Dake et al., 2003, p. 177; Sahin, 2010, p. 133). Furthermore, several studies report that teachers find it difficult to recognise name-calling, the spreading rumours, intimidation, taking other people's belongings and social exclusion as bullying, and that their intervention strategies may vary for the different types of bullying (Bauman & Del Rio, 2005, p. 430; Naylor et al., 2006, pp. 555-556). If teachers, for example, do not define name-calling or social isolation as bullying, this behaviour may be dismissed by them as not being serious enough to warrant intervention (Ellis & Shute, 2007, p. 653). Therefore, Mauder et al. (2010, p. 275) recommend that information about all forms of bullying be circulated to every member of a school community so that different bullying behaviours receive equal attention and are treated with equivalent importance.

2.4.2 Teachers' awareness, recognition, attitudes and responses

There is a lack of research on teachers' understanding of bullying, including their attitudes, recognition, awareness and responses (Sahin, 2010, p. 131). These factors need to be considered in order to understand and effectively address bullying in the school context (Mishna et al., 2005, p. 719).

Research shows that most teachers are unaware of the extent, or report lower incidences, of bullying behaviours than what actually occurs in their schools (Flynt & Morton, 2008, p. 189; Mishna et al., 2005, p. 723). This has significant implications for the recognition of and response to bullying incidents. Moreover, adults may have difficulty recognising bullying behaviour because of the complex dynamics involved (Mishna et al., 2005, p. 719). Teachers are faced with difficulties in deciding whether or not a situation they have witnessed, or were told about, was one of bullying. Furthermore, teachers' attitudes to tackling bullying behaviour at schools has a profound impact on the school climate and the rate of bullying incidents. Schools with teachers who have a mostly positive and proactive stance towards bullying prevention and intervention tend to have a lower prevalence of bullying than those whose teachers do not have a particular position toward bullying (De Wet, 2005a, p. 46). Literature states that bullying occurs less when teachers discuss bullying with their learners, are able to recognise bullying behaviour and show a willingness to deal with it, whereas a lack of teacher interest in bullying results in an unsuitable reaction that may cause an escalation in bullying behaviour (Lee, Buckthorpe, Craighead & McCormack, 2008, p. 172).

Research stresses that teachers' personal experiences of bullying impact on how they respond to incidents of bullying (Holt, Keyes & Koenig, 2010, p. 125). One study reports that teachers experienced bullying in their childhood, with some of these individuals reporting that the effects persisted into adulthood (Carlisle & Rofes, 2007, p. 16). In addition, several teachers felt that their own experiences sensitised them more to the complex nature of bullying and the need to be vigilant to the signs of bullying. They were also more likely to encourage learners to disclose bullying (Mishna et al., 2005, p. 729; Piotrowski & Hoot, 2008, p. 357). Wiseman (2003, p. 8) states that teachers should be guided to understanding the link between their experiences of bullying and their responses to it. Teachers are, after all, human

beings with feelings, and the influence of past bullying experiences would be brought to bear in their daily encounters with bullying behaviour (Morgan, 2011, p. 28).

Research identifies teachers as important agents who need to be involved in responding to bullying, and emphasises the impact that teachers' perceptions regarding the level of bullying may have on this response. Responses to bullying are influenced by teacher efficacy, empathy and perceptions of seriousness and can predict teachers' adherence to an anti-bullying programme (Bauman & Del Rio, 2005, p. 431; Yoon, 2004, p. 40). Teachers' perceptions regarding the seriousness of bullying incidents therefore have a major impact on how, or if, they intervene (Ellis & Shute, 2007, p. 660; Gardner et al., 2008, p. xviii; Holt et al., 2010, p. 123; Mishna et al., 2005, p. 731). Not only this, but when teachers do intervene, they use more lenient strategies in situations they perceive to be less serious (Ellis & Shute, 2007, p. 650). In addition to this, a sense of empathy for a learner's situation has an influence how they respond to incidents (Holt et al., 2010, p. 124; Mishna et al., 2005, p. 733; Totura et al., 2009, pp. 196-197; Yoon, 2004, p. 40).

Also of great significance are teachers' attitudes to supporting their schools' bullying programme. Studies have shown that teachers' level of commitment to the school's intervention and prevention programmes will strongly impact on the rate of bullying incidents (Juvonen, Graham & Schuster, 2003, p. 1236; O'Moore, 2000, p. 110). Teachers' perceptions of the staff's participation in reducing bullying, their own childhood experiences of bullying, their emotional involvement, and the amount of information or knowledge they have play a vital role in determining whether teachers participate in anti-bullying programmes (Dake et al., 2003, p. 178; James et al., 2008, p. 161; Mishna et al., 2005, p. 719). Furthermore, Ellis and Shute (2007, p. 650) report that if a school's anti-bullying policy is in direct contrast to a teacher's moral stance, it is less likely that he or she will adhere to such a policy. It is argued that justice orientation, which focuses on fairness, rules and care orientation, and which focus on understanding relationships and the needs of others, are two forms of moral reasoning which influence teachers' attitudes towards bullying (Ellis & Shute, 2007, p. 650; Holt et al., 2010, p. 125).

Furthermore, the combination of teachers' lack of knowledge and reported lack of systemic support must be considered when trying to address bullying (Mishna et al.,

2005, p. 731). It is argued that to reduce bullying in the school environment, proactive strategies such as equipping teachers with the necessary skills to respond effectively to bullying behaviour, are needed (Anagnostopoulos et al., 2009, p. 547). However, the majority of literature reports that teachers do not know how to deal with bullying and have received little or no training on the management of bullying behaviour (Bauman, Rigby & Hoppa, 2008, p. 850; Mishna et al., 2005, p. 727). Sherer and Nickerson (2010, p. 225) argue that the two main approaches to involving school staff in reducing bullying behaviour include providing staff with appropriate training and increasing adult supervision. Anagnostopoulos et al. (2009) indicate that “this may require that schools have on-going training on the contents of the anti-bullying policy, current legal statutes, and national trends, such as the upsurge in cyber bullying” (p. 547). Lastly, it is vital for the whole staff to have regular opportunities to communicate about the types of incidents that occur, who is involved in the bullying behaviour, what intervention strategies were used, how effective it was, and then co-ordinate unified responses (James et al., 2008, p. 168).

2.5 PREVENTION AND INTERVENTION

2.5.1 Effects of school climate on school bullying

Research shows that the benefits of a positive school climate contribute to more consistent attendance, higher learner achievement, teacher morale and staff co-operation (Cowie & Jennifer, 2008, p. 98; Hinduja & Patchin, 2011, p. 26). The fundamental component in reducing school bullying is to create a positive school climate that fosters caring behaviours (Harris & Hathorn, 2006, p. 50). Orpinas and Horne (2010) define a positive school climate as follows:

“An organisation’s climate encompasses values, communication and management, rules and regulations, ethical practices, reinforcement of caring behaviours, support for academic excellence and characteristics of the physical environment. A school with a positive climate is inviting and learners and teachers feel energised to perform at their best. Such an environment will increase the sense of connectedness to peers and belonging in the school, and learners will perform better academically; thus, reducing the likelihood of aggressive behaviours.” (p. 49)

Educational psychologists and other role-players can only intervene effectively if they understand what bullying is. Furthermore, teachers play a critical role in the management of bullying and in influencing the school climate, by both modelling appropriate behaviours and dealing effectively with bullying (Swearer, 2011, p. 5; Thorsborne & Vinegrad, 2009, p. 114). When teachers and learners participate in bullying behaviour, or take on the role of the bystander, they enable bullying to become the norm, thus creating a culture of bullying within the school and exacerbating the problem of bullying (Kasen, Johnson, Chen, Crawford & Cohen, 2011, p. 161; Unnever & Cornell, 2003, p. 7). In addition, schools are responsible for providing a safe and supportive school environment where all learners and teachers can participate equally, without discrimination and fear (Hinduja & Patchin, 2011, p. 26; James et al., 2008, pp. 168-169; Twemlow et al., 2006, p. 188).

Gultig (2002, p. 25) refers to a functional school environment as being associated with order, consensus and clear lines of responsibility in a well-organised and supportive climate, whereas a dysfunctional school is one of disorder with disempowered teachers in an environment of low morale. In a functional school setting bullying behaviour is not tolerated, the self-esteem of learners is promoted, ideal conditions for learning and teaching are set, and sound personal relationships are valued by the school ethos (Cowie & Jennifer, 2008, p. 98). In this setting, teachers must demonstrate emotional support, create a warm and caring atmosphere, maintain a strong focus on academics and learning, and a foster learners' self-esteem (Hinduja & Patchin, 2011, p. 27). In the absence of such an environment, the social aberration of bullying will flourish. Furthermore, it may become ingrained into the school culture and self-perpetuate, affecting all aspects of school life (MacDonald & Swart, 2004, p. 37) (See Figure 5.1).

The school climate thus has an impact on incidents of bullying behaviour as well as the response of teachers to bullying situations. Bullying behaviour thrives in a negative school climate where effective leadership is absent (Gendron, Williams & Guerra, 2011, p. 161). Research has shown that teachers may attempt to lower the frequency of bullying behaviour in such settings, but in the absence of a co-operative and goal-orientated environment, these ventures often fail (Cowie & Jennifer, 2008, p. 118). Therefore, the beliefs and values of a school manifest in the frequency and quality of interactions between different role-players (Holt et al., 2010, p. 124). In the

positive school environment of functional schools, bullying is rare, and when it does occur, it is dealt with in a caring and supportive environment. The whole school staff therefore plays an important role in creating a positive or negative school climate (Maunder & Tattersall, 2010, p. 125; Swearer, Peugh, Espelage, Siebecker, Kingsbury & Bevins, 2006, p. 260).

2.5.2 Creating a positive school environment

School bullying negatively impacts on the school environment and contributes to a climate of fear which may lead to teachers and learners feeling discontent (Bauman & Del Rio, 2006, p. 219). Positive school environments, as described in 2.5.1, keep bullying from thriving, and have consistently been found to reduce rates of bullying effectively (Ma, 2001, p. 353). It is imperative that the whole school community and educational psychologists working in schools understand the complex bio-ecological environment in which bullying takes place, so that teachers, school managers and other school staff can support learners in managing bullying behaviour (Astor et al., 2010, p. 69). Research shows that inconsistent support may have negative effects across the entire system (Holt et al., 2010, p. 119; Swearer, 2011, p. 5). The intricacy of the problem appears to require a bio-ecological, or whole systems approach, in order to address the complex nature and extent of bullying behaviour effectively (Yoon, 2004, p. 40) (See Figure 1.2).

Learners and teachers report that bullying rarely occurs in classrooms where teachers are perceived as being actively involved and engaged with learners - academically as well as personally (Anagnostopoulos et al., 2009, p. 547). Such teachers are characterised by their proactive approach to dealing with social interactions and responding to inappropriate behaviours, further demonstrating the essential and powerful role teachers can have in reducing the prevalence of bullying. Furthermore, it is essential that schools evaluate the physical structures to identify places where bullying occurs and implement strategies to target these areas, including an increased presence of adults in those places (Sherer & Nickerson, 2010, p. 218). Although many acts are committed within sight of teachers, it has been found that the most violent acts are often committed in "less structured" locations where staffs are rarely present (Anagnostopoulos et al., 2009, p. 548).

In conclusion, if bullying in schools is to cease, the attitudes of the whole school community needs to change towards bullying behaviour. This can be accomplished through staff development and by opening up forums in which the school community can engage in discussions about bullying (Harris & Hathorn, 2006, p. 56).

2.5.3 Safe schools

The safe school environment has to “reflect a sense of care, cohesiveness and synergy that bonds people together, direct communication that is open and honest, equitable distribution of influence and power, innovativeness, adaptability and problem-solving adequacy” (Swart & Pettipher, 2001, p. 32). A safe school environment is “a place where students can learn and teachers can teach in a warm and welcoming environment, free of intimidation and fear of violence” (Stevens, Wyngaard & Van Niekerk, 2001, p. 148). In addition, Neser (2005) observes that a safe school “is free of danger and where there is an absence of possible harm, a place in which [...] [teachers] and learners may [...] teach and learn without fear of ridicule, intimidation, harassment, humiliation, or violence” (p. 5). Therefore, a safe school should be physically and relationally safe. This ensures that a culture of bullying is eradicated and a positive school environment is established. Griffiths and Weatherilt (2002) describe the characteristics that are evident in safe schools: These schools have

“quality leadership, a solution-focused approach, a vision and culture that strives for excellence in learning and teaching, democratic processes that encourage active citizenship, an ongoing ethos of review and ongoing planning for improvement, involve the whole school community in planning, plans that are comprehensive range of strategies across all levels of operation: preventative measures, early intervention and case management, policies and plans that are communicated and applied, and applied the strategies to all settings including whole-school, playground and the classroom” (pp. 3-4).

A safe school offers an “active and engaged environment” (Sullivan et al., 2004, p. 59). In addition, safe schools promote diversity in learners and teachers and create a positive school culture that is founded on collaboration and respect. In such settings, social and academic learning and teaching can thrive.

According to Oosthuizen (2005, pp. 70-71), the term *in loco parentis*, pertains to teachers who have a legal duty to ensure the safety of learners in their care. Therefore, teachers have a duty to protect and promote the learners' rights to effective education and basic human rights (De Wet, 2007b, p. 60). According to the *in loco parentis* statute, teachers have to maintain order and discipline and adhere to the duty of care. In addition to this, schools have to reduce the potential dangers that learners may be exposed to by taking pro-active steps in ensuring that there are safety measures, or school policies, in place to protect all learners (Prinsloo, I. J., 2005, p. 6). Furthermore, school governing bodies have a legal duty to ensure the safety of all learners, teachers, school managers and other school staff, as well as to adopt a code of conduct (RSA, 1996b, Section 8(1)). The code of conduct should set out the expectations and standards of behaviour, put necessary procedures in place for dealing with threats to safety and security, and protect the school from bullying and other possible dangers. However, for school governing bodies to fulfil their duties they need to be equipped with adequate training, skills and resources (Squelch, 2001, p. 149).

2.5.4 Whole-school intervention and policies

It is argued that schools are institutions that consist of interconnected elements (MacDonald & Swart, 2004, p. 36). Each of these elements need to function effectively, otherwise a negative ripple effect spreads through each element and influences the functioning of the whole school (Davidoff & Lazarus, 2002, p. 19) (See Figure 5.1). A whole-school approach is recommended to ensure the effective functioning of the school and is an essential framework within which the elements of prevention and intervention can be co-ordinated at different levels (Cowie & Jennifer, 2008, p. 30; Ma, 2001, p. 354). The focus of a whole-school approach is therefore on the school as an organisation and community (Cowie & Jennifer, 2005, pp. 33-35). This approach includes fostering a paradigm shift on the issue of bullying among all school staff; creating opportunities for the whole school community to participate in information sessions about bullying; adopting anti-bullying policies; providing intervention for targets of bullying and individuals who engage in bullying behaviour; and offering supportive training for teachers, school managers and other school staff (Bauman et al., 2008, p. 851; Dake et al., 2003, p. 353). This is where I feel

educational psychologists can play a vital role in facilitating this paradigm shift and supporting schools in the process of managing and addressing bullying.

Research suggests that bullying is a complex problem that requires anti-bullying strategies to address every aspect surrounding the problem of bullying (Sherer & Nickerson, 2010, p. 217). There are a number of these strategies that aim to change the broader school environment. A whole-school anti-bullying policy provides a framework that guides the school in addressing the problem of bullying. According to Rigby (1995, p. 2), an anti-bullying policy should include a statement in the school policy which indicates the school's aim to prevent bullying behaviour; provide a clear and comprehensive definition of bullying; be applicable to learners and school staff; describe what intervention strategies can be used in various circumstances; and to encourage the whole school community to engage in discussions about bullying. When developing an anti-bullying policy, it is important to acknowledge relationships and environments in which bullying can flourish (Pugh & Chitiyo, 2011, p. 2). The extent of the problem is therefore societal as well as individual (See Figure 1.2). It is argued that the success of any anti-bullying programme depends on a proactive, consistent whole-school approach that involves ongoing consultation with representatives of all the members of the school community (Cowie & Jennifer, 2008, p. 120). In addition, this policy must be regularly disseminated and discussed throughout the school. Such discussions can be facilitated by means of the code of conduct, school assemblies, classroom discussions, poster displays, drama activities, training opportunities and workshops for learners, school staff and parents (Cowie & Jennifer, 2008, p. 121; Mestry, Van der Merwe & Squelch, 2006, p. 57).

In conclusion, MacDonald and Swart (2004, p. 53) argue that to create safer schools and deal with bullying effectively, bullying policies need to be put in place to ensure that schools take ownership and become proactive in their strategies. Furthermore, an anti-bullying policy can be used to symbolise the school's positive environment - but when it only exists on paper, it is worthless. All signatories to the policy have to be involved to curb bullying behaviour, and then continue monitoring the situation to ensure that the prevention and intervention strategies are effective (Morgan, 2011, p. 20).

2.6 CONCLUSION

Bullying seems to be a pervasive problem in most secondary schools and it is the teachers that are faced with the task of dealing with it on a daily basis. Not only do teachers have to unravel the complex dynamics which encompass bullying, they often have to navigate a school climate and culture that is not conducive to addressing bullying. As the teachers find themselves in a uniquely South African context, there are many contextual factors, such as violent communities overflowing into the school environment, increased administrative load, limited support from school management, parents and education authorities, which impact on teachers' management of bullying. Therefore, teachers' ability to conceptualise bullying, recognise and respond to incidents of bullying and their knowledge of the nature and extent of bullying behaviour impact greatly on anti-bullying strategies. Furthermore, it emerged from this literature review that there is a need for research on teachers' perspectives and experiences of bullying in the Western Cape.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

According to Merriam (2009, p. 14), the focus of qualitative research is mainly on understanding how individuals make sense of their lives and describe the meaning-making process. The process of meaning-making is inductive in nature and the product of the process is richly descriptive. Understanding and meaning are derived from how individuals interpret their experiences, construct their worlds and the meaning they ascribe to their experiences (Merriam, 2009, p. 5). In qualitative research the researcher is the primary instrument of data generation and analysis. “Qualitative researchers stress the socially constructed nature of reality, the intimate relationship between the researcher and what is studied, and the situational constraints that shape inquiry” (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005a, p. 10). Qualitative researchers emphasise that values form an important part of the nature of inquiry and therefore seek knowledge on how experiences are socially created and how individuals give meaning to these experiences.

In this chapter I aim to explain the paradigm of the study, the principles which make up the paradigm, the ethics involved in the research process as well as the process of inquiry, which includes methods of generating data and data management.

3.2 MY RESEARCH PARADIGM

3.2.1 Paradigm

According to Guba (1990), a paradigm is “a basic set of beliefs that guides action” (p. 17). Denzin and Lincoln (2005a) state that a “set of beliefs and feelings about the world and how it should be understood and studied” forms the researcher’s paradigm or world view (p. 22). A paradigm is therefore a conceptual framework that addresses questions such as “What is the nature of knowledge?”, “What sources of knowledge warrant our attention?”, “How confident can we be that we know something?”, “What should the relationship between researcher and practice be?” (Willis, 2007, p. x). I took these important questions into consideration because they correlate with my

own basic beliefs. Furthermore, these questions helped me to describe the paradigm from which I view the world (Mertens, Holmes & Harris, 2009, p. 87).

Paradigms can be seen as “human constructions” (Denzin & Giardina, 2009, p. 16). My paradigm enabled me to merge different stories from various individuals to form one thought. I then had the opportunity to formulate different ideas from this one thought. This paradigm, or interpretive framework, encompassed my axiological, ontological, epistemological and methodological principles (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005b, p. 183). These principles can be defined in the following ways: The term ‘axiology’ refers to one’s “assumption[s] about the nature of ethical behaviour” (Mertens et al., 2009, p. 87), while ontology raises basic questions about the nature of reality and the nature of the human being in the world. Epistemology makes an assumption about the nature of knowledge, and implies an ethical-moral stance toward the world and the self as researcher. Methodology focuses on the best means for acquiring knowledge about the world. (Mertens et al., 2009, pp. 87-88). According to Denzin and Giardina (2009, p. 18), paradigm and methodology operate as opposite sides of the same coin. Side one: a paradigm discourse drives the methodology. Side two: the methodological models drive the paradigm discourse. The middle of the two extremes is referred to as an excluded middle: the space of politics and moral discourse.

3.2.2 Postmodernism

The postmodernism discourse is difficult to define as there are many contradictory views on this paradigm. One view is that postmodernism is a value judgment with ethical and political implications, while another is that postmodern researchers resist the closed, “totalizing” conceptualisation of things (Clegg & Slife, 2009, p. 23). These aspects made it difficult for me as a novice researcher to define the postmodern discourse fully. I have therefore attempted to describe my understanding of the aspects of postmodernism that are significant to this study. I consider specific, localised and contextual details that are pertinent to this particular study, and am aware that this is only a single and incomplete representation of the possible discourses around postmodernism. Freedman and Combs (1996) compare the modernist discourse with that of postmodernism as follows:

“Postmodern [researchers] believe that there are limits on the ability of human beings to measure and describe the universe in any precise, absolute, and universally applicable way. ...They choose to look at specific, contextualised details rather than grand generalizations, differences rather than similarity. While modernist thinkers tend to be concerned with facts and rules, postmodern [researchers] are concerned with meaning” (pp. 20-21).

Although this explanation offers only one view of postmodernism, I found that it resonated with my beliefs and therefore positioned myself in a postmodern paradigm, which informed my research practice. Postmodernism is not understood by conceptualising things as postmodern, but rather by engaging in practices that are postmodern (Clegg & Slife, 2009, p. 23). Postmodern practices thus offer multiple ways of being, which led to my decision to work interpretivistically.

Interpretivism is based on the postmodern premise that there are multiple realities. According to Freedman and Combs (1996, p. 22), a postmodern paradigm states that realities are socially constructed, constituted through language, organised and maintained through narratives, and that there are no essential truths. Due to my positioning within the postmodern paradigm, I focused on how the language I use constitutes my world and beliefs. It is also through the medium of language that other individuals construct their views and reality. “To postmodern [researchers], the only worlds that people can know are the worlds we share in language, and language is an interactive process, not a passive receiving of truths” (Freedman & Combs, 1996, p. 28).

It is argued that the objectivity of the modernist worldview disregards the specific, localised meanings created by individuals, and that those individuals are reduced to mere objects that are seen as submissive and immobilised recipients of the researcher’s knowledge and expertise (Freedman & Combs, 1996, p. 21). I worked from an interpretivist approach and sought methods that would assist me in gaining a deeper understanding into the relationships between individuals and their environment, as well as of the roles played by individuals in creating the social fabric of which they form part (Willis, 2007, p. 194). A central theme of postmodernism is therefore that it favours an interpreted reality and steps away from subjective or objective stances (Clegg & Slife, 2009, p. 25).

“For the postmodern [researcher], the subjective and the objective are inseparable and together constitute any given meaning. In this sense, all meaning – all experience - is inherently and inescapably interpretive, and bias is not only inevitable but also a basic element of all knowledge practices. To say that all knowledge is biased, is to claim that any meaning making activity is directed by values and interpretive contexts. Fact and value are inseparable” (Clegg & Slife, 2009, p. 33).

The core belief of the postmodern paradigm is that reality is socially constructed (Willis, 2007, p. 97). This is based on the argument that reality cannot be entirely known, nor can truth be defined (Rubin & Rubin, 2005, p. 27). Therefore, as I situated myself within a postmodern paradigm, I recognised that knowledge is situation- and context-bound.

3.2.3 Social constructionism

An essential principle of the postmodern paradigm which formed the foundation of my approach to research is that reality arises through social interaction and the development of shared meaning and communication (Willis, 2007, p. 192). Realities are constructed by individuals as they live them and through interaction with other individuals (Freedman & Combs, 1996, p. 23). A postmodern view helped me to see that there are no essential realities and truths, and thus, multiple perceptions of realities exist (Merriam, 2009, p. 92; Roulston, 2007, p. 21). As I worked from an interpretive perspective, I constructed my own knowledge and reality through my interactions with others (Merriam, 2009, p. 8). It was important to me as interpretive researcher to be aware of apparent contradictions that surfaced, not in the context of an individual’s account, but in relation to two opposing accounts of the same event (Barbour, 2008, p. 28). In addition, Alvesson (2002, p. 4) states that no objective observations exist; observations are rather socially situated in the worlds of the observer and the observed.

According to Willis (2007, p. 96), researchers who subscribe to a constructivist position believe that individuals form their understanding of the world through experience and maturation. In other words, constructivists believe that each individual constructs meaning in his or her own mind. I subscribe to a social constructionist position which believes that different realities are created by various individuals as they interact in a social environment (Willis, 2007, p. 96). I therefore

believe that meaning-making is a negotiated process that occurs when individuals interact with one another. By positioning myself within the social constructionist paradigm, I became aware of the dynamic nature of these multiple realities. I looked outwards to interactions, discourses and shared meanings. I acknowledged that the interview process is where individuals socially interact.

3.3 THE BELIEF SYSTEM THAT INFORMED THE STUDY

As was previously discussed, the belief system consists of the four principles of axiology, ontology, epistemology and methodology which provide a framework for this research study (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005b, p. 183). These principles are closely related and cannot be viewed in isolation when doing qualitative research. These principles not only influenced the way in which this research study was conducted, but also play an important role in how I approach the world in general (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000, p. 18). Figure 3.1 serves to provide a schematic presentation of the process of inquiry which will be discussed in-depth in the following sections.

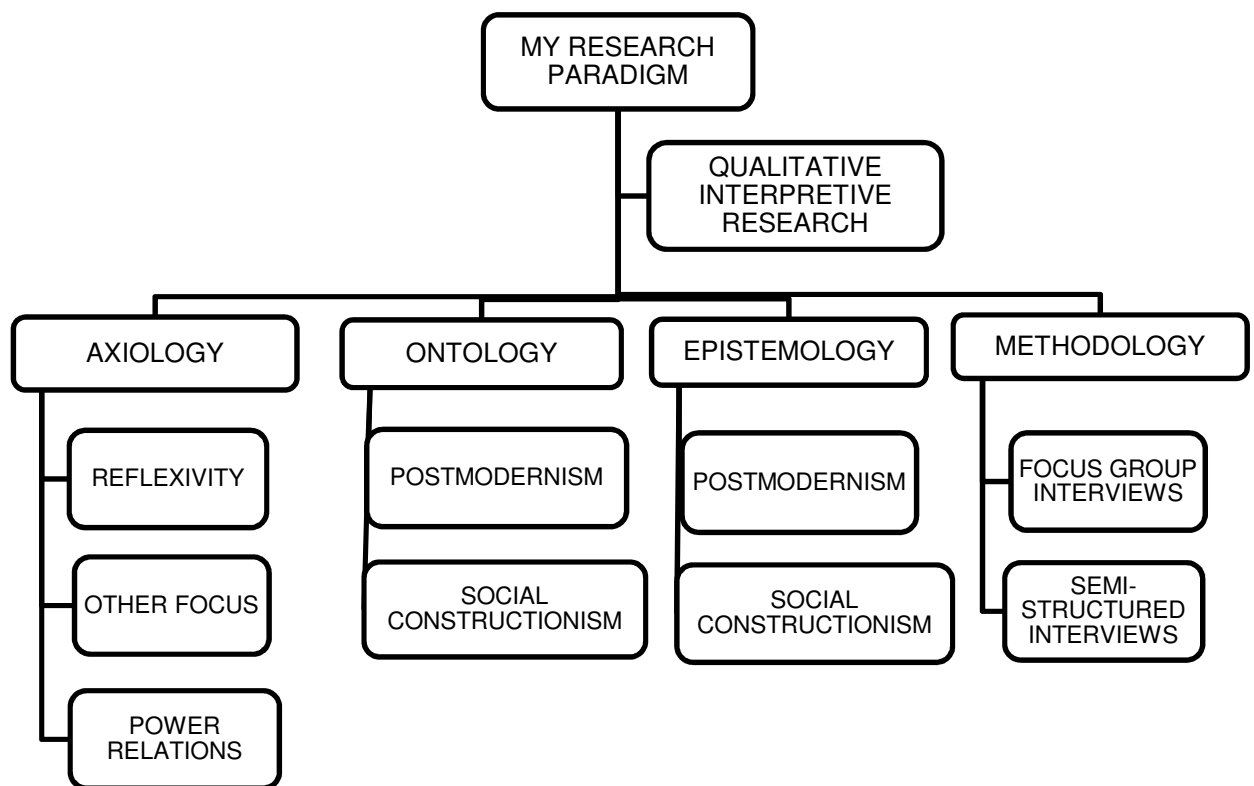


Figure 3.1: A schematic presentation of the process of inquiry

3.3.1 Axiology

Axiology can be seen as a branch of philosophy that focuses on the study of the nature of values and value judgments (Ryan & Cooper, 2010, p. 293). This philosophical study of value is the collective term for ethics and investigates the 'goodness' in individual and social conduct (Babor, 2006, p. 143). Values are an important aspect of the research inquiry process and contribute to decisions regarding the choice of a research problem; the paradigm and theoretical framework on which the research is based; the methods of generating and managing data; the context; as well as the format for the presentation of findings (Guba & Lincoln, 2005, p. 197).

Mertens et al. (2009, p. 88) state that the axiological assumption asks, "What is considered ethical or moral behaviour?" In other words, how does this study contribute to social justice and the maintenance of human rights? I had to ask these questions of myself as researcher and consider how my morals may influence on the research study. Axiology therefore forms part of the basis of the philosophical dimensions of a paradigm (Guba & Lincoln, 2005, p. 200) and thus guides research decisions (Mertens et al., 2009, p. 89). A postmodern axiology is as difficult to define as a postmodern paradigm. As I considered the axiology that forms the basis of my research, I became aware that ethics are personal and internal, not external to the postmodern paradigm from which I conducted this research.

I have organised my discussion on axiology around reflexivity, other-focus, and power relations. These aspects are embedded within postmodern ethics and guided the way in which this study was conducted, so that this research could contribute to social justice and the maintenance of human rights.

3.3.1.1 Reflexivity

Reflexivity "implies reflection and thoughtfulness" and is a multifaceted term that has an impact on both the theoretical foundations and feasibility of a qualitative research study (King & Horrocks, 2010, p. 125). Reflexivity in qualitative research explores the interconnected relationship between knowledge, experience, research roles and the social world (Ben-Ari & Enosh, 2010, p. 152; King & Horrocks, 2010, p. 125). It is

argued that the researcher, as self, is an instrument in the research process and therefore needs to be critically reflected on (Guba & Lincoln, 2005, p. 210). This refers to the multiple selves that researchers bring to a study. As researcher, I had to come to terms “with the multiple identities that represent the fluid self” that I bring to the research setting (Guba & Lincoln, 2005, p. 210). King and Horrocks (2010) state the following:

“Each of these selves has the potential to be present in the research, having a part to play in the production of knowledge. Therefore, a central facet of reflexivity is to consider how we might account for these different selves and the part they played in co-constructing the qualitative interview and our research more generally” (p. 135).

As researcher, I also bring my own individual morality to the research, including my perceptions, feelings, positions and principles regarding specific topics. This is important to consider as the way in which ethical principles are implemented and acted upon during the process of inquiry relies upon the philosophies of individual morality. King and Horrocks (2010) note the following:

“Our moral outlook has been shaped by the different experiences, events, and social and cultural locations [which] constitute our lives. Morality is therefore not merely a matter of simple universal dichotomies such as good and bad or right and wrong. Rather, we each have our own individual moral viewpoints which, although not necessarily consistent and coherent, we nonetheless feel strongly about” (p. 104).

Reflexivity is seen as the ability of the researcher to consciously “refer to themselves in relation to the production of knowledge” (Roulston, 2010, p. 116). It is argued that “any gaze is always filtered through the lenses of language, gender, social class, race, and ethnicity” (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000, p. 19). The lenses which have filtered my gaze, or perception of knowledge, include language abilities (my own and that of the participants), gender, class, racial, ethnic, cultural and national origins, status, age and education. As a qualitative researcher it is important for me to reflect on my own practices and biases, as well as to be constantly aware of my own unconscious purposes. In addition, I acknowledge my subjective position in relation to my research topic and research participants (Roulston, 2010, p. 116). It is particularly useful to consider these positions as it increases one’s awareness regarding the complex relationships and interactions which can develop during the research

process. Furthermore, it is argued that there are four strategies which can be used to demonstrate reflexivity within the research process (Roulston, 2010, p. 120). These include subjective statements, journal writing, others interviewing the researcher, and analysis of the researcher's data, journals and field notes.

Throughout this study I made use of a research journal in which I first chronicled my thoughts and ideas about possible research topics, knowledge gaps in the research and possible ways of addressing them. These ideas were then formulated into my research proposal. I also used this journal to note my reflections after each interview. This included summarising the topics that we had addressed and recording my personal experiences. In addition to this, I documented my observations concerning the physical environment of the school and the surrounding community, my initial impressions of the principal and the staff upon gaining entry into the school, as well as the specific group dynamics that I witnessed during the focus group interviews. I also used the journal to record certain questions that I felt needed to be addressed or required further exploration in later interviews (See Addendum I). Furthermore, this journal served to assist me during the writing up of the research study as I noted possible connections between the data in the transcriptions and existing literature.

As a qualitative researcher, I actively shaped and managed the way in which interactions between me and the participants unfolded. It was therefore important for me to acknowledge that I, as researcher, unavoidably co-constructed the events that took place.

3.3.1.2 *Other-focus*

It is argued that for the postmodern researcher, research activity encompasses ethical issues (Clegg & Slife, 2009, p. 36). It is essential in qualitative research to commit to both an insistent, ethical self-examination and an unflinching sensitivity to our relation with the other. In most research, the 'other' is generally regarded as an impersonal subject (Clegg & Slife, 2009, p. 34). However, other-focused research ideally aims to provide a research environment which generates rich participant narratives where "the respondents become active agents, the creators of the worlds they inhabit and the interpreters of their experiences" (Maracek, Fine, & Kidder, 2001, p. 34). There are additional ethical dimensions of self-other relations, which

include reflexivity, reciprocity, empathy and mutuality. These qualities are all evident in a caring relationship, particularly one in which “genuine exchange, interdependence, mutual responsibility, and communitarianism” are engrained (Lincoln, 2009, p. 155) (See 1.4).

In doing other-focused research, there are certain essential ethical implications to keep in mind. It is argued that postmodern researchers are aware that the interpretation of data is inevitable in research. Interpretation thus becomes the domain of not only the researcher as “author”, but of the participants and readers as well (Clegg & Slife, 2009, p. 36). Furthermore, data challenge these interpretations, thereby allowing for alternative, albeit frequently unstated, interpretations (Lincoln, 2009, p. 156). In addition, there is a greater need for “sensitivity to the power relations” of the research context and the relationships within these settings (Clegg & Slife, 2009, p. 36) (See 3.6.1).

3.3.1.3 *Power relations in research*

“In a philosophical sense, discussions surrounding ethics almost inevitably return to issues of power: power between persons and power relations connected to institutions, historical circumstance, economics, gender, social location, race class, sexual orientation, cultural backgrounds and experiences, actual location, and a market logic of relations” (Lincoln, 2009, p. 152).

It is argued that researchers are entangled in a labyrinth of power relations, from which it is impossible to separate oneself and one’s action (White & Epston, 1990, p. 22). During the research process I became aware that I too was experiencing “the effects of power, and exercising this power in relation to others” (White & Epston, 1990, p. 22). Therefore, I was unable to take a benevolent view of my own practices. I rather took a view in which I assumed that I was continually participating in power relations with participants, and in so doing, attempted to evaluate and reflect on my own practices (White & Epston, 1990, p. 29). It is therefore argued that this view will enable me as researcher to identify possible negative effects and limitations of the research (White & Epston, 1990, p. 29). Consequently, in Addendum one I reflect on these notions and the choices made and describe the actual effect of these decisions in practice. It is important to note that some choices were intentional, while others

only occurred during the process itself, or in hindsight as I reflected on the process of inquiry.

Postmodern researchers therefore show sensitivity to power relations which involve sensitivity to how we expose participants to our research. The status of the participants is exceptionally significant to the postmodern researcher, and therefore meaning-making can only take place when the participants are valued (Clegg & Slife, 2009, p. 35). One of the main features of postmodern research is for research to be done *with* rather than *on* people (Clegg & Slife, 2009, p. 35; Thomson & Gunter, 2011, p. 17). Therefore, in conducting this research I took a flexible approach that allowed the participants and I to research their experiences and perspectives collaboratively, as opposed to imposing a rigid agenda of questioning on them (Paulus, Woodside & Ziegler, 2010, p. 852).

3.3.2 Ontology

Ontology is defined as the “nature of reality” (Merriam, 2009, p. 9). It is argued that ontology represents our views about what constitutes the social world as well as our approach to studying it (Barbour, 2008, p. 295). It is therefore argued that without a point of view on the nature of social realities, it would be difficult to reflect on what can be considered to be pertinent knowledge in research (King & Horrocks, 2010, p. 8).

Therefore, the question I asked myself was, “How do I know what is real?” (Mertens et al., 2009, p. 88). In a modern research context, the researcher would identify variables and measure aspects of those variables in an attempt to look for an objective truth. In other words, what is real within some level of defined probability, or truth as defined within a complex cultural context. But within a postmodern research context, truth is considered to be subjective and reality believed to be socially constructed (Mertens et al., 2009, p. 92). According to Guba (1990), “realities exist in the form of multiple mental constructions which are socially and experientially based, local and specific, dependent for their form and content on the person who holds them” (p. 27). The ontological question, “What is real?” is thus understood in context (Willis, 2007, p. 9).

Ontology and epistemology are closely related concepts in qualitative research. It is thus important to consider how my own ontological beliefs impact on what I perceive to be knowledge. These beliefs in turn had an influence on how I generated and made sense of the data (King & Horrocks, 2010, p. 10). Hence, I believe that there is no objective truth that is waiting to be discovered through my research study, a belief that was realised by working out from a postmodern, social constructionist paradigm. Instead, meanings come into existence out of the participants' engagement with the social world during processes of social exchange, such as those that took place in the context of the focus group and individual interviews (King & Horrocks, 2010, p. 22).

3.3.3 Epistemology

Epistemology is defined as the “nature of knowledge” (Merriam, 2009, p. 9). It is argued that epistemology indicates “our theories of knowledge, how we come to know the world and our ideas about the nature of evidence and knowledge” (Barbour, 2008, p. 294). In addition, epistemology relates to “what we know about reality and how we can know it” (Willis, 2007, p. 10).

The term *epistemological integrity* is used when referring to the connections between the nature of the research, the questions that are asked and the design and methods used (Marshall & Rossman, 2006, p. 55). Developing this kind of integrity involves thinking through the values, ideals, principles and rules by which the phenomenon under investigation can become known to the researcher (King & Horrocks, 2010, p. 8).

Based on the underpinnings of the theoretical framework of social constructionism, I made the assumption that social reality is constructed through language which creates accounts of events (King & Horrocks, 2010, p. 20). I also made the assumption that knowledge is brought into being through a verbal exchange between participants and the researcher. From this perspective, the researcher can be seen as the co-creator of knowledge (Burr, 2003, p. 5), and I therefore had to consider my own contribution to the construction of meaning. King and Horrocks (2010) state that:

“Rather than objects having meaning in the world that exists independently from our conscious interpretations of them, our interpretations/representations construct objects. Language is conceptualised as being productive. This means that language has the potential to construct particular versions of reality. It is hardly surprising that the rise of social constructionism and related critical approaches has to some extent challenged the foundation of existing knowledge, necessitating a radical rethink of what we consider knowledge to be” (pp. 21-22).

It is important to note that knowledge is historically and culturally located, which means that at different times and places, contradictory interpretations of the same phenomena can exist (King & Horrocks, 2010, p. 22). In evaluating my own contribution to the construction of meaning, it was essential for me as researcher to make use of reflexivity (See 3.3.1.1).

During the research process it was important to consider reliable methods of constructing such knowledge. Therefore, epistemology, or how we know what we know, is central to any methodological approach and in establishing what counts as knowledge.

3.3.4 Methodology

Methodology can be defined as the assumptions that underlie various approaches to, and implications for, conducting research and the development of theory (Barbour, 2008, p. 295). It is argued that particular positions inform the research design, data generating methods and the researcher’s stance on reflexivity (Roulston, 2010, pp. 118-119). In keeping with the social constructionist nature of the process that was applied in the study, a qualitative, interpretivist research approach was used. Qualitative research covers various disciplines, research fields and subject matters in the process of inquiry (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005a, p. 2) and is anything but a straight-forward process (Bernard & Ryan, 2010, p. xvii).

Qualitative research situates the observer in the world, and representations such as field notes and interviews are used to interpret the world around the researcher (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005a, p. 3). These representations help the researcher to attempt to make sense of the meanings individuals bring to the research setting and

then to describe the world of the participants through their own experiences (Merriam, 2009, p. 220).

It is argued that qualitative research can be of particular use to the social studies due to multiple realities (Flick, 2009, p. 12). In addition, qualitative research acknowledges the existence of 'multiple voices' and seek to recognise and capture these as opposed to seeking one final view and recording it (Barbour, 2007, p. 33). Qualitative research thus explores various meanings and ways "in which perspectives are socially constructed by participants" (Barbour, 2007, p. 60). In addition, qualitative research seeks to acquire knowledge about how individuals construct the world around them, what they are doing or what is happening to them that provide rich and thick descriptions (Kvale, 1996, p. x). Therefore, qualitative research aims to understand a specific context (Willis, 2007, p. 189).

The qualitative method one chooses to use has to generate data about the reality of a concept in an ethical manner and one needs to feel confident that realities of the participants have been captured (Mertens et al., 2009, p. 8). Due to my positioning within the postmodern paradigm, I viewed the world through a variety of individuals' eyes. Due to my position within the postmodern paradigm and interpretivist methodology, research methods which believe that there are multiple versions of reality were used to generate data. The semi-structured interviews enabled participants to describe their individual understanding and experiences (King & Horrocks, 2010, p. 16).

Qualitative research is inherently multi-method in focus (Flick, 2009, p. 452). However, the use of a hybrid of methods, or triangulation, produces new and additional insights into the phenomenon in question. It is argued that the dominant metaphor for qualitative research should be one of a crystal, rather than the triangle which is commonly used to describe triangulation:

"Crystals grow, change and are altered, but they are not amorphous. Crystals are prisms that reflect externalities and refract within themselves, creating different colours, patterns, and arrays casting off in different directions. What we see depends upon our angle of repose" (Richardson & St. Pierre, 2005, p. 963).

It is argued that the researcher is provided with an expanded, multifaceted understanding of a topic through crystallisation. “Paradoxically, we know more and doubt what we know. Ingeniously, we know there is always more to know” (Richardson & St. Pierre, 2005, p. 3). Therefore, the concept of crystallisation includes different perspectives, asks different questions, seeks different sources, and uses different methods (Babbie & Mouton, 2001, p. 227; Mertens et al., 2009, p. 96). As it is argued that the researcher’s view has no more validity than the views of the participants, it was important for me to represent these multiple views in the findings (Rubin & Rubin, 2005, p. 27). Through crystallisation, every participant and researcher’s *voice* can be valued and listened to (Holloway & Biley, 2011, p. 970). Guba and Lincoln (2005, p. 212) note that “these voices are clear, personal, vocal and interior interacting subjectivities”. Because these *voices* are multi-faceted, it is difficult to display oneself while concurrently writing participants’ accounts of events and presenting their selves (Guba & Lincoln, 2005, p. 209; Holloway & Biley, 2011, p. 972). There are thus multiple approaches to the research study and several different points of view (Mertens et al., 2009, p. 96). It can be argued that as qualitative researchers we are telling our version of the participants’ understandings (Geertz, 2000, p. xxi). That is why the theoretical assumptions of the researcher inform the design of the research, as well as data analysis (Roulston, 2010, p. 3).

3.4 TRUSTWORTHINESS OF THE STUDY

“Choosing a qualitative research design presupposes a certain view of the world that in turn defines how a researcher selects a sample, generates data, analyses data, and approaches issues of validity, reliability, and ethics” (Merriam, 2009, p. 165). As I worked from a postmodern world view, this statement becomes somewhat of a conflicting issue. From the modernist paradigm, the criteria of validity, reliability and generalisability assist in quality control of a qualitative study (Merriam, 2009, p. 209). However, when one works from a subjective and contextualised postmodern paradigm, it is often argued that these criteria are less applicable due to the nature of the process of inquiry. Instead it is argued that the concepts ‘*credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability*’ have replaced criteria of internal and external validity, reliability, and generalizability (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005a, p. 24). Trustworthiness can be seen as the main criterion of how ‘good’ qualitative research is conducted and should therefore be evident in a study (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p.

290). The four criteria, namely credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability, are interconnected and interdependent beneath the umbrella term of 'trustworthiness' (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 296). Furthermore, a study cannot be deemed credible unless it is believed to be transferable, and cannot be considered dependable unless it is thought to be credible (Babbie & Mouton, 2001, p. 277).

Credibility can be defined as reality correlating with the research findings (Merriam, 2009, p. 213). In addition, Babbie and Mouton (2001) question whether there is "compatibility between the constructed realities and those that are attributed to them" (p. 277). This study aims to report on how participants understand their world, and it is important for me to be aware that they construct their own realities. Credibility can be achieved through the process of crystallisation, and by going back to the participants and having them check both the data and the interpretation thereof (Babbie & Mouton, 2001, p. 277). King and Horrocks (2010, p. 163) refer to this process as participant feedback and it forms part of data analysis. Participant feedback assisted me in assessing participants' meaning-making by asking how the interpretation fitted their lived experiences, and gave the participants the opportunity to make corrections to what they had said or to add supplementary information. It was also important for me to go back to the participants because I am aware that realities are constantly changing, and it may be possible that the participants' perspectives may have altered in the period between the last focus group and the follow-up session. Participant feedback thus serves as an ethical criterion because participants can have a stronger voice on how their realities are represented than would otherwise have been the case (King & Horrocks, 2010, p. 163).

Transferability refers to the degree to which the findings can be used with similar populations in other contexts (Babbie & Mouton, 2001, p. 277). As opposed to focusing on how generalisable the findings of the study may be, the findings are rather defined by the particular context in which they occurred (Merriam, 2009, p. 223). It is argued that the researcher does not assert that knowledge from one context will necessarily apply to other contexts - or to the same context at a later stage (Babbie & Mouton, 2001, p. 277). Therefore, the responsibility of transferring the findings, from one context to another, rests on the readers of the study (Babbie & Mouton, 2001, p. 277). Thick descriptions and purposive sampling are strategies which can be used to increase transferability (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 296).

According to Denzin (2001), rich, thick descriptions generate circumstances in order for “interpretations and understanding” to take place (pp. 116-117). If the researcher plays a role in producing thick descriptions, the reader then has the opportunity to transfer this knowledge from one context to another (Gobo, 2008, p. 197). I have attempted to provide rich, thick descriptions, of both the meanings and contexts, or realities, of each participant in this study. In addition, transferability was further enabled through the use of purposive sampling (See 3.6.2).

Dependability looks at whether the findings are consistent with the data generated (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 296). As there is an overlap between credibility and dependability, there can be no dependability without credibility. Therefore, for dependability to be found in a study, credibility should also be demonstrated (Babbie & Mouton, 2001, p. 278). Crystallisation and an audit trail are strategies that can be used to increase dependability (Merriam, 2009, p. 222). The audit trail documents the progression of the researcher’s data-analysis as well as how the study was conducted (King & Horrocks, 2010, pp. 165-165; Merriam, 2009, p. 223). In this study, dependability involved the examination of every step of the process of inquiry and included an analysis of whether the process was pertinent and relevant. This process was enabled by using an audit trail (Addendum G).

Confirmability refers to the “degree to which the findings are products of the focus of the inquiry and not the biases of the researcher” (Babbie & Mouton, 2001, p. 278). An audit trail can be used to determine both dependability and confirmability (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, pp. 309-310). There are various categories of data that can be reviewed to conduct an audit trail. In this particular study these included audio recordings of interviews, written field notes, summaries and condensed notes, themes that were developed, findings and conclusions, trustworthiness notes, personal notes, observation forms, and preliminary schedules (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, pp. 309-310). Confirmability was established by recording every step of the process of inquiry.

3.5 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Denzin and Lincoln (2005a, p. 21) note that we have, in actual fact, already moved on from the postmodern moment. As there is often a blurring of paradigms most studies use modernist guidelines when it comes to ethical considerations related to

research. Although I have preferred to use postmodern views on ethics, I have not totally disregarded the more common modernist guidelines. Although the modernist ethical guidelines are relevant, they are limited in that they do not explore the broader, deeper questions which emerge from postmodern thought. Ethical considerations are crucial to the research process and ensure that data analysis and interpretations are led by the data and no other interest that could potentially be harmful or exploitative (Fisher & Anushko, 2008, p. 97). As researchers are “inevitably part of the studies that they conduct” (Roulston, 2010, p. 115), it was important for me to use guidelines in order to conduct research in an ethical manner. Herewith follows a discussion on how I have attempted to follow these ethical procedures in this study.

The research policy of Stellenbosch University specifies that “research involving direct interaction with human subjects, or the capturing of any personal information, should go through a process of ethical clearance” (Senate Research Ethics Committee, 2009, p. 5). I therefore had to obtain ethical clearance before I could commence with this study. This process involved extensive documentation on how the research practices would adhere to certain ethical guidelines. This included an explanation of how I planned to protect the research participants and school from being identified or harmed due to the nature of such a sensitive topic (See 1.4). After obtaining ethical clearance from Stellenbosch University (Addendum B), I applied for permission from the Western Cape Education Department (WCED) to conduct this study in the specific school. The WCED approved the study, but stipulated specific conditions to which I, as researcher, adhered (Addendum A).

Lincoln (2009, p. 152) notes that there are multiple, overlapping principles that guide ethical practice. As this study aims to contribute to social justice and the maintenance of human rights, the basic ethical principles of beneficence, non-maleficence, respect for the dignity of persons, and justice were used to ensure that the research study was conducted with integrity (Flick, 2009, p. 37). Beneficence and non-maleficence aim to decrease the likelihood, severity and consequences of harm occurring to research participants (Allan, 2008, p. 293). As researcher, I attempted to anticipate any possible problems and minimise the risk of them occurring. Respect relates to the way in which participants are treated with respect, dignity, courtesy and agency. Justice refers to the procedures which are reasonable, non-exploitative and carefully

considered as well as being fairly administered (Lincoln, 2009, p. 152). Research which is both just and beneficial to participants is called the intentional ethics of reciprocity (Swartz, 2011, p. 49). The purpose of which is to “give back” ownership of knowledge to the participants of the study (Swartz, 2011, p. 49).

Informed consent involves telling participants about the purpose of the study, the possible benefits of their involvement and the risks they may encounter (Kvale, 2007, p. 27). According to Milne (2005), informed consent is based on the premise that consent is “knowledgeable, exercised in [a] non-coercive situation, and made by competent individuals” (p. 2). I was able to obtain informed consent as I ensured that the participants were autonomous and I respected their dignity (Allan, 2008, p. 288). This process was enabled as I explained exactly what the research would entail and informed them of their right to refuse to participate. Therefore, participants were involved voluntarily, were not deceived or coerced into participating and were aware of their right to withdraw from the study at any time, without any negative consequence to themselves (O’Leary, 2005, p. 73). In other words, even if they agreed to volunteer, they could decide to withdraw from the study without at a later stage. Of the nine teachers who volunteered, one withdrew after the first focus group session.

Confidentiality and anonymity assist in ensuring that individuals and the setting cannot be identified in the thesis and subsequent reports or papers (Barbour, 2008, p. 81). As the study focused on a sensitive topic, I had to be careful of the descriptions I attributed to the individuals or the setting because this could possibly lead to the identification of participants or the school setting. To ensure confidentiality and anonymity, I made use of pseudonyms and kept the contact details and documents pertaining to the study secure and protected by an encrypted password on my personal computer. Participants were informed about who has access to the transcripts, and what their rights were in accessing these transcripts and the analysis of the interviews (Kvale, 2007, p. 27). That said, there are certain limits to confidentiality and I cannot guarantee that anonymity and confidentiality will not be breached.

3.6 GENERATING DATA

3.6.1 Entering the field

Site selection was an important aspect of entering the field and generating data (Marshall & Rossman, 2006, pp. 74-75). This specific school was chosen because it is a co-educational setting with a diverse configuration of learners from various communities. In addition, the school was open to participating in the research study. The school was founded in 1926 in a community which was mainly populated by people who would later be classified as “coloured”. It served a racially mixed population of learners, with the majority of learners being “coloured”. With the implementation of the Group Areas Act and forcible removals, the community in which this school was situated became a “white group area”, but the racial configuration of the school did not change. From this time until the present learners have commuted from the so-called “coloured” and “black” areas to attend the school. At present the school serves 942 learners and has a staff component of 39 teachers. The teachers are from various ethnic origins and the school takes pride in not classifying them according to racial categories. The teachers’ ages and years of experience range widely, with the average years of experience being 16.

Upon gaining access to the school, I conducted two separate interviews with the principal. I received some resistance from the principal as gatekeeper due to his concerns regarding the benefit of this study to the school. After presenting the information from my research proposal and application to the ethical committee, and thorough explanation was given on the possible benefits their participation could have for the school. After the second meeting, permission was granted to proceed with the research.

Before commencing with focus group interviews and individual interviews, I gave the staff a summary of the study’s purpose and asked teachers (from Grade 8 to 11) to consider volunteering for this study. At this point it was necessary to describe the activities in which the participants could be asked to engage during the research process (O’Leary, 2005, p. 73). This was to ensure that the participants fully comprehended what was expected of them before the initiation of the study. As was discussed in chapter one, it was important for me to consult teachers for this study as

they have opportunities to experience and observe bullying within the school setting. Furthermore, previous studies in the Western Cape focused mainly on the perspectives and experiences of learners regarding bullying behaviour. Out of the teachers involved with Grade 8 and 11 learners, nine teachers from various grades volunteered to be part of this study (See Table 3.1).

During the first focus group session I began to build sustaining and trusting relationships with the participants and fully disclosed the details of the process and the conditions of their participation, including their right to withdraw from the study (Fisher & Anushko, 2008, p. 97). It remained important to me throughout the research process to inform the participants of their rights and ensure that I was indeed adhering to the agreement that we had made during the first focus group session.

Table 3.1: Demographic information about research participants

Participant	Age	Gender	Home language	Years of teaching experience	Years at present school	Teaching Phase (GET/FET)
Participant 1	57	Female	English	6	6	GET/FET
Participant 2	32	Female	Afrikaans	9	8	GET/FET
Participant 3	54	Female	English	31	6	GET/FET
Participant 4	32	Female	Afrikaans	6	4	GET/FET
Participant 5	29	Female	English	4	3	GET/FET
Participant 6	45	Female	English	24	6	GET/FET
Participant 7	27	Female	English	4	4	GET/FET
Participant 8	46	Female	English	22	6	GET/FET
Participant 9	58	Male	Afrikaans	36	3	GET/FET

3.6.2 Sampling

Purposive sampling was therefore used to select the participants for this study. As I wanted to “discover, understand, and gain insight” into the phenomenon of school bullying, I selected a purposive sample of participants from which the most information could be ascertained (Merriam, 2009, p. 77). As this was a narrow study only eight to ten teachers from the body of teachers within a single secondary school in the Western Cape was required. Furthermore, Krueger and Casey (2009, p. 2)

state that participants should share specific characteristics which relate to the study's topic. The participants who were selected by means of purposive sampling met certain criteria, that is to say they had certain experiences or characteristics in common in relation to the study's focus. In order for these teachers to be selected, they had to be willing to participate and should have indicated that they have some experience of bullying. This was important due to the methodological aim of this study which required a small sample that would produce knowledge in the form of rich and detailed descriptions (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000, p. 10). This would hopefully provide greater understanding and insight into teachers' experiences and perceptions of bullying in secondary schools.

According to King and Horrocks (2010, p. 66), the goal of interviews is to "facilitate an active discussion and the sharing of understandings and views, while at the same time ensuring that the data generated are able to meet the aims of the research". Consequently, the participants who are selected are crucial to meeting the aims of research and facilitating the conversation to generate relevant and valuable data. In addition, Barbour (2007, p. 58) states that "purposive sampling allows for the data to be interrogated purposefully, that is, in order to carry out systematic comparisons".

3.6.3 Interviewing

The qualitative interview is useful in exploring the ways in which participants experience and understand their social world (Kvale, 2007, p. 9). Through qualitative interviewing, the qualitative researcher has access to the world of the participants, "who in their own words, describe their activities, experiences and opinions" (Kvale, 2007, p. 9). Qualitative interviewing can assist the researcher in reconstructing events in which they did not participate, thereby gaining deeper understanding (Rubin & Rubin, 2005, p. 3). However, it is argued that qualitative interviewing is only a single method of data generation (Merriam, 2009, p. 88). Multiple and different types of interviews should therefore be done rigorously.

The process of interviewing is "both an art and a science" (Barbour, 2008, p. 113). DeMarrais (2004) defines an interview as "a process in which a researcher and participant engage in a conversation focused on questions related to a research study" (p. 54). Interviewing creates an opportunity where the researcher can enter

into the participants' perspectives (Patton, 2002, p. 341). As the aim of interviews is to understand the participants' perceptions, experiences and understandings of bullying, open questions are useful to provide a structure for participants "to answer in their own words" (Roulston, 2010, p. 16). It is therefore argued that interviews "may be a rare and enriching experience" which give participants the opportunity to gain novel insights into their life situations (Kvale, 2007, p. 14). As my study aimed to understand teachers' perceptions and experiences of bullying, focus group and individual semi-structured interviews were conducted. These methods gave participants the opportunity to express their thoughts in their own words. During these interviews, I attempted to create a platform where spontaneous discussion could take place during which the participants could gain insight into their perceptions and experiences regarding bullying.

King and Horrocks (2010, p. 3) suggest that the style of the qualitative interview is flexible and open-ended, and focuses on participant's actual experiences more than their beliefs and opinions. Semi-structured interviews are flexible and the researcher can alter the order of the topics addressed (Bernard & Ryan, 2010, p. 29). Semi-structured interviews were used in this study because it uses open-ended questions which give the participants greater freedom to discuss issues that are of importance to them, rather than the researcher determining the agenda of what they think to be important (Barbour, 2007, p. 33; Barbour, 2008, p. 17). Semi-structured interviews refer to an interview guide which list a number of questions (Roulston, 2010, p. 15). The interviews were guided by these questions, but there was no predetermined order or specific wording (Merriam, 2009, p. 89). Rubin and Rubin (2005) note that "to achieve richness and depth of understanding, those engaged in qualitative interviews listen for and then explore key words, ideas, and themes using follow-up questions to encourage the interviewee to expand on what he or she has said" (p. 13). I therefore made use of probes to follow up on each question to attain a further description or deeper understanding (Roulston, 2010, p. 15).

Due to my postmodern positioning, I am aware that as a researcher I bring various conversational styles to the interview process as I engage with individual participants on various topics (Roulston, 2010, p. 5). The manner in which I think about the qualitative interview has implications for the structuring of interviews, the types of questions that are asked, and how data are analysed and represented (Roulston,

2010, p. 51). As I went into the interview process, with the view of gaining knowledge from the participants, I realised the truth of the following statement:

“On the one hand, the interviewer can take a detached or neutral position in relation to research participants, aiming for the generation of “objective” knowledge; while on the other hand, interviewers can see themselves as co-constructors of knowledge, and may strive to develop collaborative relationships with interviewees” (Roulston, 2010, pp. 51-52).

Therefore, I strove to co-construct knowledge in collaboration with the participants, rather than taking a neutral position to generate objective knowledge. Consequently, semi-structured interviews are an exemplary method for data-generation as researchers aim to analyse how participants perceive and make sense of their experiences.

The advantages of using semi-structured interviews are that the researcher and participant can engage in conversation whereby initial questions can be modified in the light of the participants’ responses. In addition, there is more room for flexibility as the researcher can probe fascinating and significant areas which arise during the interview (Smith & Osborn, 2008, p. 57). Furthermore, semi-structured interviews allow for participants to introduce novel issues that the researcher had not thought of, thereby enriching the data collected (Smith & Osborne, 2008, pp. 58-59). It is argued that the disadvantages of semi-structured interviews are that data-analysis can be difficult, and that the researcher has less control over the interviewing situation (Smith & Osborne, 2008, p. 59). Due to the nature of my positioning in postmodernism, having less control over the interview situation was not viewed as being a disadvantage as my aim was to collaboratively generate data with the participants. I therefore decided that the advantages of using semi-structured interviews were greater than the disadvantages and would yield the best results for the type of research that I was conducting.

3.6.4 Focus groups

Focus groups are interviews “on a topic with a group of people who have knowledge of the topic” (Merriam, 2009, p. 93). The topic is thus the “focus” of the group discussion (Stewart, Shamdasani & Rook, 2009, p. 590). Krueger and Casey (2009) state that a focus group is unique in terms of its “purpose, size, composition and procedures” (p. 2). Focus groups can be particularly useful and effective when addressing topics that are regarded as sensitive, although consideration should be given to both the research design and ethical considerations (Barbour, 2007, p. 18). It is argued that researchers working with sensitive topics “must be able to effectively facilitate [a discussion] in such a way that group members feel comfortable in expressing opinions that diverge from those of others” (Roulston, 2010, p. 42). As a result, I had to create a relaxed atmosphere, in which participants felt comfortable to discuss sensitive topics (See 1.4).

Focus groups may give rise to active debate which may help to clarify contradictions and encourage participants “to collectively address topics to which, as individuals, they may have previously devoted little attention” (Barbour, 2008, p. 134). Focus groups may thus encourage openness and give voice to concerns of participants that are otherwise hushed (Barbour, 2007, p. 27). If the researcher is actively attentive to, and encouraging of, the group interaction, any discussion within a group can be called a focus group (Kitzinger & Barbour, 1999, p. 20). Therefore, I had to facilitate a discussion in which the participants involved not only directed their comments towards me, but also each other. My role within the focus group was therefore to ask questions, listen intently, keep the conversation on track and involve all the participants.

It was vital to the interaction of the group to create a calm and relaxed atmosphere in the opening moments of the focus group sessions, thereby setting a comfortable tone for participants’ interactions (Roulston, 2010, p. 47). An additional advantage to using semi-structured interviews during the focus groups was that it facilitated rapport building.

I made use of debriefing at the end of the focus group interviews due to the sensitive nature of the topic (King & Horrocks, 2010, p. 78) (See 1.4). It is argued that

participants should be given the opportunity during the interviews, or at a later date, to request that any of their comments be erased from the transcripts (Barbour, 2007, p. 93). The opportunity to erase or alter any comments made during the interview sessions was given to the participants during the participant feedback session conducted after data analysis.

Data are therefore socially constructed within the interaction of the focus group (Merriam, 2009, p. 94). Patton (2002) notes that the purpose of focus groups is for participants to “consider their own views in the context of the views of others” (p. 386). This contributes to the researcher gaining information-rich data in a specific social context. Furthermore, focus groups provide understanding into *public* views or discourses which may differ from the *private* views expressed in one-to-one interviews (Barbour, 2007, p. 47).

I have used the term ‘focus group interviews’ as it describes the group process used to generate data in this research most aptly. This relates directly to the two reasons that I chose focus group interviews as a method. The first relates to the possibilities presented by group interaction, and the second to addressing power dynamics in the research setting. In addition, data generation by means of a focus group discussion is a process of active social construction of meaning and reality (Barbour, 2007, p. 37; Merriam, 2009, p. 94). In choosing a method of data generation, I did not want to underestimate the potential power of the questions asked, nor of the dialogue generated (Watkins & Mohr, 2001, p. 28).

Nine participants were present and participated in the first focus group interview. During the second and third focus group interviews, only eight participants were involved. There was one group of teachers who took part in four different focus group interviews. Three participants then volunteered to participate in individual interviews. All the interviews took place on the school premises, after school hours, at times indicated as being most suitable to the participants. Each of the focus group and individual interviews were approximately an hour in duration. I made use of semi-structured interview guides for the focus group and individual interviews (See Addenda E and F). Figure 3.2 aims to provide a summary of the topics that were addressed during the focus group interviews.

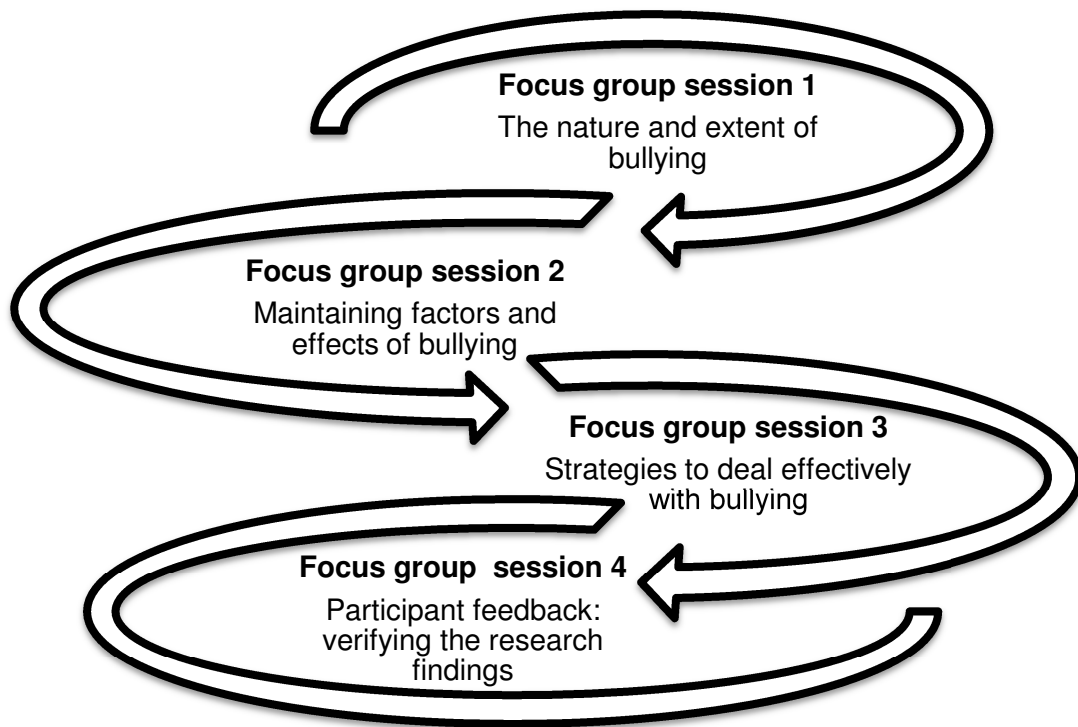


Figure 3.2: The topics addressed during the focus group interviews

3.6.5 Recording the data

It is argued that the way in which researchers choose to represent audio-recorded data is embedded in their theoretical assumptions about research and the ethical considerations taken (Roulston, 2010, p. 105). The interviews were digitally voice recorded with the permission of the participants. The recordings were transcribed verbatim (Bernard & Ryan, 2010, p. 49). It is argued that verbatim transcriptions of recordings offer the greatest database for analysis (Merriam, 2009, p. 109). "During transcription, interviewers re-listen to their interviews, review the topics discussed, and begin the process of interpreting interview data and generating preliminary analyses" (Roulston, 2010, p. 105). Taking notes during the interview further helped to identify the participants while transcribing, assisted in reflecting on the interesting aspects of the interview, and gave voice to non-verbal expressions that would otherwise not have been picked up on the digital recording (Kvale, 1996, p. 161). Rubin and Rubin (2005, pp. 13-14) state these non-verbal expressions may assist in the interpretation of data and enhancing the richness of themes during data analysis. An excerpt of a transcribed interview is provided in Addendum H to reveal the process of coding. Both the focus group and individual interviews were made into

hard copies and stored safely at the researcher's home. The only other person with access to the transcriptions is Professor Estelle Swart, my thesis supervisor.

3.7 DATA MANAGEMENT

3.7.1 Data analysis and interpretation

Through the process of data analysis, the researcher makes "sense" or ascribes meaning to the data (Merriam, 2009, p. 175). The process of ascribing meaning to the data encompasses the interpretation and merging thereof, based on what participants noted during the interviews and what the researcher has read and observed (Merriam, 2009, p. 176). The purpose of the study determines the depth of data-analysis (Krueger & Casey, 2009, p. 114). As the purpose of this study is narrow, data analysis had to be methodical, substantiated, and incessant (Krueger & Casey, 2009, p. 115).

It is noted that by investigating documents, field notes or interview transcripts, the researcher discovers "patterns" and descriptive units that contribute to the generation of data (Roulston, 2010, p. 150). It is argued that data analysis and data generation are coinciding activities in qualitative research (Merriam, 2009, p. 165). Therefore, the process of data generation and data analysis is re-occurring and active (Merriam, 2009, p. 169). This suggests that data analysis starts even before data generation, and continues throughout the research process (Bernard & Ryan, 2010, p. 109). Rubin and Rubin (2005) state that analysis in responsive interviewing takes place in two phases and can be described as follows:

"In the first, you prepare transcripts; find, refine, and elaborate concepts, themes and events; and then code the interviews to be able to retrieve what the interviewees have said about the identified concepts, themes, and events. In the second phase several paths are followed. You can compare concepts and themes across the interviews or combine separate events to formulate a description of the setting. In doing so, you seek to answer your research question in ways that allow you to draw broader theoretical conclusions" (p. 201).

The method of data analysis used in this study is the constant comparative method (Glaser & Strauss, 1967, p. 1). It is noted that this method is "inductive and

comparative” (Merriam, 2009, p. 175). It relies on “constantly comparing and contrasting” data, with the purpose of identifying and explaining certain patterns that arise (Barbour, 2008, p. 293). This method also uses findings of other studies to contextualise one’s own findings by emphasising and looking to explain similarities and differences (Krueger & Casey, 2009, p. 125).

Coding can be defined as the codes or categories used during data analysis which are applied to the data. The data is then compared with previous occurrences and also coded (Roulston, 2010, p. 156). Coding is thus seen as “a system for organising and managing data” (Merriam, 2009, p. 173). The data get an assigned code - which allows for its retrieval for the purpose of comparison - that represents a certain aspect of the data (Barbour, 2008, p. 293). Coding brings different parts of the research together and this information is then reviewed to further develop the topic (Richards, 2009, p. 94). Themes are the broad codes assigned to the main issues arising in data. These are then used in order to organise data, with reference to related sub-categories (Barbour, 2008, p. 296). Themes come both from data and our prior theoretical understanding of the characteristics of the topic being studied (Bernard & Ryan, 2010, p. 55).

In exploring the perceptions and experiences of participants, I followed the following steps:

- Data-analysis started during the literature review phase of the research. It continued through the focus group and individual interviews, as well as during the process of transcribing of the interviews. The documents for Informed consent, reflective journal entries, themes from the literature review, and field notes of my observations and reflections were then added to the transcribed data (See Addenda C, D and I).
- All the transcribed data were read to get an over-all impression of the content and to further identify important areas of interest in the interviews. The data were then re-read a few times to start identifying units of meaning and to become as familiar as possible with the data.
- As I began working through the data, allocated codes to the units of meaning. I assigned clear and consistent definitions to these codes to ensure that they

referred to the same subject throughout all sources of data (See Addenda H and I).

- The associated codes were then categorised and these categories labelled. Themes were revealed from these categories, with each theme serving as a foundation for an argument (See Table 3.2).

The following steps recommended by Smith and Osborn (2008, p. 67) were also followed:

- The left-hand margin was used to note important comments.
- The right-hand margin was used to document emerging themes.
- The data was re-read numerous times, to ensure that there was sustained engagement with the data and to increase my familiarity with the content. Initial notes were transformed into concise phrases capturing the essence of the data.
- Emergent themes were listed once the transcripts had been analysed. Themes were initially ordered according to the sequence in which they appeared in the transcripts.
- The second list involved a more analytic ordering as I attempted to make connections between themes. Themes were grouped together and checked against the participant's actual words. Next, a table of themes was compiled where groups were given names representing the subordinate themes. In addition, main subordinate themes were identified (Table 3.2).
- Final themes were now translated into a narrative account where themes were explained, illustrated and nuanced (Chapter four).

Table 3.2: Themes and categories related to interviews with participants

THEMES	CRITERIA FOR INCLUSION	CATEGORIES	SUB-CATEGORIES
1. The nature and extent of bullying	Data that indicated the teachers' conceptualisation of the nature and extent of bullying, which included the types, sites and the individuals who are involved in bullying behaviour.	Conceptualisation of bullying	Aggressive behaviour Subtle behaviour Occurs on continuous basis Makes others uncomfortable Makes others feel aggrieved Threatens individuals Makes individuals feel unsafe Makes individuals feel insecure Intimidation Individuals are made to feel that they don't belong Different forms of bullying
		Types of bullying	Verbal bullying Physical bullying Relational bullying
		Individuals engaging in bullying	Learner-on-learner bullying Learner-on-teacher bullying Teacher-on-learner bullying Teachers-on-teacher bullying Principal-on-teacher bullying

		<p>Sites of bullying</p>	<p>Playground Classrooms Bus Hall Toilets Tuck shop On way to school On way from school Sport fields On school grounds At learners' home At learners friends' home Outside school gates</p>
		<p>Teachers' personal childhood experiences of bullying</p>	<p>Nature of bullying has changed since teachers were in school Teachers were targets of bullying Teachers engaged in bullying behaviour Effect of bullying stayed with them for the rest of their lives Bullying is worse now than ever before</p>
<p>2. Personal and contextual factors that maintain bullying</p>	<p>Data that indicated the context and characteristics of individuals who engage in bullying behaviour or who are the targets of bullying, as well as cultural expectations and vulnerabilities on the part of the targets of bullying.</p>	<p>Personal maintaining factors</p>	<p>Different personality types Poor self-esteem Vulnerability Academic Performance Insecurity</p>

		Contextual maintaining factors	Aggression Dominance Maladaptive coping strategies School factors: Teachers' awareness of and reactions to bullying Family factors: Abusive or aggressive home-environment Parenting styles Social factors: Group dynamics Violent communities
3. Effects of bullying	Data that indicated direct effects of bullying on individuals' living and learning. These included suicide, truancy, school refusal and dropping out of school, academic failure, and a spiral of events leading to extreme acts of violence.	School truancy, school refusal and leaving the school Academic performance and bullying Suicidal ideation and attempted suicide Extreme acts of violence	
4. Proposed strategies to deal effectively with bullying	Data that indicated prevention and intervention strategies that were suggested by the teachers, namely whole-school approach, procedures and policies, facilitating awareness and discussion forums.	Whole-school approach Procedures and policies Facilitating awareness Discussion forums	

3.8 CONCLUSION

This chapter focused on discussing the principles underlying the paradigm from which this research was conducted. In addition, the trustworthiness of the study and the carefully chosen ethical considerations were deliberated. Lastly, the methods of data generation and data management were considered. The findings of the research will now be presented and discussed in chapter four.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 INTRODUCTION

In chapter one I discussed how this study aimed to answer the following research question:

- How do teachers perceive and experience bullying in a secondary school in the Western Cape?

In endeavouring to answer this question, I divided the primary research question into four secondary questions as follows:

- What is bullying?
- What is the nature and extent of bullying in the secondary school phase?
- How do teachers view and deal with bullying in this phase?
- What recommendations can be made for the recognition of, intervention in, and prevention of secondary school bullying?

An exposition of the identified themes and categories will be presented in this chapter in answer to the research questions. In addition to this, the research findings will be discussed in terms of the existing literature in answer to the research questions. Categories which emerged from the data analysis are grouped into four main themes. These are presented in Table 4.1.

Table 4.1: Summary of the themes and categories

Themes	Categories
1. The nature and extent of bullying	Conceptualisation of bullying Types of bullying Individuals engaging in bullying Sites of bullying Teachers' personal childhood experiences of bullying
2. Personal and contextual factors that maintain bullying	Personal maintaining factors Contextual maintaining factors

3. Effects of bullying	School truancy, school refusal and leaving the school Academic performance and bullying Suicidal ideation and attempted suicide Extreme acts of violence
4. Proposed strategies to deal effectively with bullying	Whole-school approach Procedures and policies Facilitating awareness Discussion forums

4.2 EXPOSITION OF RESEARCH FINDINGS

The research findings will be presented according to the themes identified in Table 1.4, namely the nature and extent of bullying, personal and contextual factors that maintain bullying, effects of bullying, and proposed strategies to deal effectively with bullying. These four themes emerged during data analysis and reflect the perceptions and experiences of the teachers in this particular context who participated in this study. The narratives portrayed in this chapter are taken from the data generated during the data collection process. These include the three focus group interviews, one follow-up focus group session to verify the findings, and three individual interviews conducted with three of the participants (See Figure 3.2).

4.2.1 The nature and extent of bullying

The teachers who participated in this research study had definite views regarding the nature and extent of bullying. These views comprise the teachers' conceptualisation of bullying, distinguish between different types of bullying, identify sites of bullying and individuals who engage in bullying, and describe their own personal experiences of bullying. Each of these categories will now be discussed in more detail.

4.2.1.1 *How the teachers conceptualise bullying*

According to the teachers, bullying does occur in the school's community and context. A perception expressed during focus group and individual interviews was that individuals intimidate others, either verbally, physically or relationally. In addition, cyberbullying was highlighted as a more recent form of bullying that has caused

immense problems between learners at their school. These views were summarised in the following words of Participant 1 (P-1):

“I mean physical, for example the grade 8’s [go] to the tuck shop and the older boys take their money, pressurising and threatening them to give them certain things. And then there is also the cyberbullying which is the internet, Facebook, MXIT. There is verbal bullying and physical pushing and shoving on the stairs, and emotional bullying, isolating learners in the classroom.”

This perception was supported by a number of teachers who stated that bullying takes the form of both aggressive and more subtle behaviours. The participants described that some learners are pushed or shoved on the stairs, or physically beaten up, while in other circumstances they receive intimidating looks or verbal threats. One teacher summarised this more subtle behaviour in the following way:

“When I mean subtle, it is that notion of excluding: you are different so we won’t talk to you. We won’t include you in anything. There are a few things that come up in all the classes that I teach. They sit in isolation somewhere, and very often that isolation then becomes the way that they identify themselves. I’m a loner, so I will stay there. Because they have been made to feel that they don’t belong.” (P-7)

Furthermore, several teachers expressed the view that subtle and aggressive bullying occurs when an individual is made to feel unsafe, uncomfortable or insecure. According to the participants, bullying can also make individuals feel threatened, humiliated or aggrieved by the behaviour. Although bullying occurs on a frequent and continual basis, the degree to which the teachers observe bullying behaviour, or intervene, varies. Some of the participants reported that they deal with incidents of bullying on a daily basis. Others said that they are not aware of, or do not observe, incidents regularly. A number of teachers identified the repetitive and constant nature of bullying behaviour as being what affects most learners negatively. This is best described in the words of Participant 6: “That is what [bullying] is: you’re breaking down another’s spirit when you bully them.” An interesting perception was that although not all the teachers observe bullying directly, most are under the impression that it is a common occurrence in their school. Participant 3 indicated that “the fact is [that] when you speak to teachers, everybody has a story about a different incident of bullying. Which would suggest that it is very common”.

In summary, the teachers defined bullying as behaviour that is intimidating, humiliating, threatening, aggressive or subtle and that individuals who are targeted are made to feel unsafe, insecure, uncomfortable and aggrieved. The participants further highlighted the existence of a power imbalance and expressed the perception that bullying occurs on a frequent basis. The teachers added that the repetitive nature of further bullying has negative effects on the individuals who are targeted.

4.2.1.2 Types of bullying

The teachers identified three main types of bullying which include verbal, physical and relational bullying.

i) Verbal bullying

The participants identified several forms of verbal bullying which transpire in the school context. These include name-calling, murmuring, joking, negative or derogatory commentary, taunting, threatening, labelling, coercion, extortion, ridiculing, blaming and gossiping. In addition to this, the participants emphasised that verbal bullying occurs with varying degrees of severity and that the effects should not be underestimated. The data indicated that teachers feel that verbal bullying occurs quite frequently between learners and is commonly observed in the classroom. One teacher described an incident of verbal bullying they had observed:

“What I found was that there are some of the girls in the class who openly bully this child. [Or] what I call bullying, because if anything goes wrong then they say, ‘Miss, it was this child’, or if I say anything happened, and you know it couldn’t have been this child, then they say, ‘Miss, it was [...]’”
(P-2)

ii) Physical bullying

The teachers indicated that there are numerous forms of physical bullying that occur in the school’s context and wider community. These include pushing, shoving, punching, kicking, fighting, and extortion of personal property or money. Although incidents of physical bullying were reported, several teachers stated that physical bullying is not as prominent and evident as verbal and relational bullying. Participant

1 shared this experience of physical bullying: “I had a Grade 8 learner, he would come to me and he would cry. There is a grade 10 learner who would wait for him after school, ruff him up, and take his money.”

According to the participants, physical bullying is more prevalent on the playground during break time or before school and outside the school grounds. Furthermore, when the teachers observe physical bullying, they usually have to intervene physically: “When [you are] on playground duty, you are called, because there is an incident that has happened” (P-3). Furthermore, teachers indicated that some learners who are targets of bullying behaviour, or who are continually provoked, have a tendency to retaliate physically. The individuals, who engage in bullying behaviour, thus became the targets. The repetitive nature of provocation and bullying is clearly evident in the following description:

“Very often you find a case where someone is provoked, provoked, provoked, and bullied, bullied, bullied and then someone turns around and slaps them. And that is a different type of aggression and it should never turn into something like that.” (P-7)

In addition to this, sexual bullying was identified by the teachers as another form of physical bullying. According to the participants, a recent development in the school has been that the grade 8 females are coercing the grade 8 males to have sexual intercourse with them. As one participant illustrated with the following statement:

“The other thing that is going around is sexual bullying. Where the girls are forcing the boys to have sex with them. The boys come and tell me that the girls are forcing them to have sex with them.” (P-1)

iii) *Relational bullying*

A number of teachers suggested that relational bullying is a subtle, underhanded form of bullying. According to the participants, social isolation or social exclusion from a peer group is seen as one of the most prevalent forms of relational bullying. The participants reported that social isolation is used to make peers feel that they do not belong. In addition to this, sniggering, giggling and the exchanging of looks, occasionally referred to as “vuil kyk” [dirty look], are also prominent forms of relational bullying. The teachers voiced the perception that relational bullying is malevolent and

can be more damaging to a person's psyche than physical bullying. Furthermore, participants portrayed relational bullying as being more prevalent amongst females, but emphasised that it is not uncommon for males to engage in it either. The teachers reiterated that relational bullying is a popular and frequently used method of bullying as, according to the participants, it leaves no physical evidence. The essence of relational bullying and how it differs from physical bullying was expressed as follows:

"You would think that it applies more to females, but the boys do it as well. You find that the boys do the same thing. It is not gender specific anymore. It is that: I am going to undermine everything you do, and I am going to make you feel as small as I possibly can. Without injuring you, because if I harm you, they have evidence against me. But if I just keep pushing at you, and pushing at you, and pushing you down, they can't prove that I am doing that. But if I hit you, you have a mark on your face, and people can see that I hit you. There is evidence to the fact that I bullied you." (P-7)

As was previously discussed, cyberbullying has become a prominent form of bullying in recent years. The teachers identified many forms of cyberbullying that are used by learners in their school. These include slanderous comments, harassment or denigration using SMSs or MXIT, the social networking site Facebook, and an Internet chat-room called OuToilet. The data also indicate that teachers feel that cyberbullying is more prevalent among learners in grade 8 and 9. Participant 1 illustrated an experience of cyberbullying in the following way:

"We do have a problem with cyberbullying. Where the learners post the ugliest messages on Facebook and MXIT. I have had a grade 11 learner where a boy in grade 12 invited her on a date via MXIT. She said 'Okay, I will check it out' and she met him and then told him, 'Look, let's be friends', and he didn't like that. So he turned around and wrote terrible stuff about her on MXIT and Facebook."

4.2.1.3 *Individuals engaging in bullying behaviour*

Teachers indicated that many individuals engage in bullying behaviour within the school context. These bullying behaviours are carried out in different ways, including learner-on-learner, teacher-on-learner, learner-on-teacher, teacher-on-teacher and principal-on-teacher.

i) *Learner-on-learner bullying behaviour*

The perceptions expressed by most teachers were that learner-on-learner bullying behaviour occurs across various grades, as well as within a specific grade. However, participants maintained that grade 8 and 9 learners are more susceptible to being targeted because they are the youngest and newest members of the school. Participant 2 summarised these views in the following way:

“Generally I think it could happen across the board, within classes, within a certain setting, within a certain age group perhaps as well. It could be younger or older learners, or within a certain age group.”

Furthermore, not only does bullying occur between individuals, but also between a group and an individual or vice versa. This perception was expressed by several participants, indicating that these teachers are of the opinion that bullying happens on a one-to-one basis, but also between one or more individuals. Teachers emphasised that learner-on-learner bullying behaviour is not restricted to male-on-male and female-on-female bullying. This perception was reinforced by various participants who explained that bullying is prevalent across genders. In addition to the above-mentioned perceptions, the participants conveyed that friends frequently engage in bullying behaviour towards their own friends. The data suggest that bullying within friendships takes multiple forms and has negative outcomes for the targeted individuals. This is best described in the following narrative:

“It is not just the girls who do it to him. The boys do it to him as well. And yes, he is a little bit ditsy. He is a sweet child, and the funny thing is that they don't exclude him from anything. They are his friends. But still, when anything happens, it is, 'He did it.' What does this child then understand? Is this now how friends are supposed to treat each other? It just becomes this social mess for these children. They think that, 'Okay, that is fine. They are my friends and they say these things about me, but that is okay.'”
(P-7)

ii) *Learner-on-teacher bullying behaviour*

In terms of learner-on-teacher bullying, there seem to be a wide range of forms that the teachers did not initially classify as bullying behaviour. These include disruption of lessons, learners speaking rudely to other learners and teachers, naughtiness,

making noise, not doing work, throwing things in class, disrespecting the teacher and preventing the teacher from teaching. These opinions were corroborated by Participant 6 in the following way:

“I think all of us, at some point or another, get bullied by the learners. Not that we necessarily see it as bullying, but as them being naughty or disruptive. I haven’t thought about it in that way before.”

iii) *Teacher-on-learner bullying behaviour*

A perception expressed by several of the participants was that some teachers engage in bullying towards learners. The teachers stated that verbal and relational bullying are two prominent forms of teacher-on-learner bullying behaviour. In terms of prevalence, the participants described that teacher-on-learner bullying behaviour is common among male teachers who engage in bullying behaviour towards female learners. The following extract illustrates the pervasiveness of this:

“Teachers and learners? I don’t know to what extent [this type of bullying happens], but there have been complaints, especially about male-on-female, and I would consider that bullying. Odd comments, unnecessary comments making female learners feel uncomfortable. And I think with some males, it is also a cultural thing. They come from a patriarchal society, and that focus runs through the school.” (P-3)

The participants highlighted the perception that definite power relations exist between teachers and learners. Some participants indicated that during the interviews they came to the realisation that they engage in bullying behaviour towards learners. One teacher in particular described wanting learners to conform to certain rules and that they pick on them until they co-operate. However, the extent to which teachers engage in bullying behaviour is not clear. Several teachers expressed that it is not common practice for learners to report incidences where they have been targeted by a teacher. Participant 5 related the following example:

“I have been sitting here thinking that maybe some of the things that I have been saying to my older learners are a form of bullying. There is a very fine line between having a joke, and then it not being a joke anymore. So between teachers and individual learners too. There may be a shared joke in the classroom, but when does the joke start irritating the person.

They don't feel comfortable saying, 'Miss, please stop doing that, or saying that.' So that must be a form of teacher-to-learner bullying."

iv) *Teacher-on-teacher bullying behaviour*

In terms of prevalence, the participants described that teacher-on-teacher bullying behaviour is not a common occurrence in their school, although it has been known to take place. In addition to this, some teachers stated if it does occur, then they are not necessarily aware of it. Prominent forms of teacher-on-teacher bullying behaviour, is the misuse of position, threats, demands, manipulation and coercion. One participant shared a story about an incident in which they engaged in bullying behaviour towards a fellow teacher:

"I just realised that I have bullied a teacher before. It is just that I needed learners to play softball and it was at the time that they had dance rehearsals. Another teacher and I, in our position as teachers, bullied the leader of the dance group to let the children go to softball, and then to still let them in the dance when they had to perform. Even though it was her ruling that if you are not here today, you can't dance. If you look at it, I coerced, I manipulated a situation, yes. And was it for the greater good? Maybe. I guess you have to be aware of your position as a teacher." (P-5)

v) *Principal-on-teacher bullying behaviour*

A perception voiced during interviews was that principal-on-teacher bullying behaviour was rife in the school context. The teachers reported that they are targeted by the principal in that he gives certain teachers extra work, shows favouritism and makes unreasonable demands of certain teachers. This view is summarised in the following words of Participant 2:

"The principal bullies the teachers. The reason is that maybe he is under the impression that we don't do enough at school. Or that you don't have enough on your plate, so to speak. So then he will give you extra work to do, and I find that even those who aren't doing as much, maybe because they are his favourites, I don't know, and others are just picked on and given extra work to do." (P-2)

This perception was supported by several teachers who highlighted that principal-on-teacher bullying behaviour includes threats to your position. This is conveyed in a

serious way or in a more subtle form, such as a joke. Furthermore, withholding crucial information about learners from teachers is seen as another form of principal-on-teacher bullying behaviour. The teachers asserted that they feel that the principal purposively keeps important information from them, a perception which elicited quite strong emotions in some of the participants. One participant related this example:

“There is another case, maybe it is a form of bullying from the principal’s side. Because I’ve got a learner in my class who hasn’t been in school for two weeks. The parents have come in to speak to the principal. He still hasn’t come back to me and told me what has happened. Other teachers of this learner have come to ask me, ‘Where is the learner?’ I stand there with a mouth full of teeth, because I can’t answer them. And that makes me angry, it upsets me.” (P-3)

Several of the teachers described the principal as controlling and authoritative. A number of the participants expressed that they are made to feel insignificant and voiceless during their interactions with the principal. In addition to this, teachers indicated that bullying predominantly occurs between the principal and staff who are younger, less experienced teachers. This perception was asserted by several teachers who feel that a power inequality exists between them and the principal.

4.2.1.4 Sites of bullying

The teachers reported that bullying occurs relatively frequently at various sites, within the school community. According to the participants, bullying occurs in corridors, toilets, on the playground, on the sport field, at the tuck shop, in the hall, in front of the school, on the way to and from school, at learners’ and friends’ homes, and on the bus. Several of the participants also expressed that bullying occurs in the classroom with the teacher present. However, the perception exists that bullying is more prevalent in classrooms where teachers are perceived by learners to be less effective in classroom management. This opinion was described in the following way:

“I think it just occurs basically anywhere. I can definitely see it in the class. I can see it walking, when you are doing playground duty. So I think basically where ever there is an opportunity for somebody to bully, I think that is where it is going to happen” (P-2)

In addition, teachers stated that bullying occurs outside the school grounds and within the wider community. One participant highlighted this by conveying the following narrative to illustrate the pervasiveness of bullying and how it extends outside the boundaries of the school:

“There was a case where a boy was followed home and beaten up in front of his house. Both were learners from this school. So there is no limit in terms of restrictions to what happens in classroom, or on the field, or on the playground, in the toilets, their home or when walking home.” (P-6)

4.2.1.5 *Teachers’ personal childhood experiences of bullying*

Several of the teachers who participated in this study expressed that they had personal experiences of bullying during their childhood. One of the participants had been a learner at the same school at which they now teach, and described themselves as vocal, opinionated and a high-achiever. This teacher compared their experience of school to one of the learners who is being targeted by a group of individuals:

“I don’t know - being back here now at this school and being in the classroom, particularly bullying in this case. And to see how different it is now and from when I was at school here. Because I was that kind of child. I was exactly the same vocal, got good marks. But no one ever thought to bully me. It was actually the quiet ones that would be getting bullied. And then I guess the culture has changed, because when I was at school. When did I matriculate, nine years ago? It is not even a full decade, okay. And I mean those of us who were smart and were vocal never got picked on. Because the bully knew if they would pick on us, we would just turn around and tell them off.” (P-7)

The teachers shared recollections of their experiences when they were at school. Some conveyed that they had been targets of bullying, while others reported that they engaged in bullying behaviour. A number of teachers voiced that they experienced bullying when they were at school, and that these occurrences affected them on both a physical and emotional level. Some participants pointed out that the effect of bullying can stay with one for the rest of one’s life. Others stated that although they engaged in bullying behaviour when they were at school, it is something that they feel guilty about as adults. One teacher reported that they would

not have engaged in bullying behaviour if they had known about the effect it can have on a person:

“Looking back, we were all bullied at school, come to think about it. We feared certain teachers, we would laugh at certain learners. So looking at it, if you don’t have a strong personality, then it is really going to affect you emotionally. And you carry that with you for the rest of your life. And the person that bullies you just goes on with his life. So that is what I am trying to tell the learners. We have all been bullied at some stage. I think of myself when I studied music. I was still at primary school. I used to bully this boy. I used to take this boy’s book without asking. I am ashamed today if I think about this.” (P-1)

There was an overall agreement between the teachers who felt that bullying behaviour has worsened since they were learners at school. This perception was strengthened by various teachers who feel that the severity and methods used, for example modern technology, to engage in bullying behaviour towards other learners, as well as external circumstances in the wider community, play a role in the learners’ lives.

4.2.2 Personal and contextual factors that maintain bullying

Once it was established that bullying is a problem in the school, it was important to see which factors, according to the teachers, could be maintaining bullying behaviour. I found it to be essential to examine these factors from the bio-ecological perspective as it illustrates the interaction between the proximal processes, person characteristics, context and time (See Figure 1.2). When this approach is applied to bullying behaviour, it is evident that interaction occurs not only because of characteristics of the individual who is targeted or who engages in bullying behaviour. It is also as a result of the actions of peers and teachers, the physical characteristics of the school grounds, family factors, cultural, and even community factors. Using this model as a framework, I have categorised the maintaining factors that were identified into personal and contextual factors.

4.2.2.1 *Personal maintaining factors*

Proximal processes are referred to as the point of interface in the interaction between an individual and their environment. The bio-ecological approach identifies person characteristics as those which “influence the direction and power of proximal processes” (Swart & Pettipher, 2011, p. 12). These person characteristics can be distinguished into three types, namely dispositions, ecological resources and demand characteristics. Personal factors thus relate to aspects of bullying behaviour that exist within and between individuals which maintain bullying behaviours. Teachers reported that the reasons why a certain individual is targeted, and not another, are multifaceted. A perception expressed during interviews was that learners are targeted for being different from the norm. Participants highlighted that when learners show their individuality, they are seen as different to the majority of learners. This particular perception lends them to being targeted by other individuals. Participant 2 states that “there is this perception that everyone must be painted with the same brush. When you start to show some instances of being different, then you could be bullied.”

Another perception voiced by the participants was that individuals with poor self-esteem, or those with certain vulnerabilities about them, have difficulty coping with bullying. According to the teachers, these individuals are targeted more often than other individuals who are perceived to have stronger personalities. The participants indicated that individuals who are the targets of bullying do not necessarily have well-adjusted coping strategies to deal with the bullying behaviour. They further maintained that these individuals may also lack assertiveness or conflict-management skills. Furthermore, learners are targeted because they are perceived to as being either academically strong or weak. This was expressed in the following way:

“I think the problem with bullying as a whole is that there is no one pattern. There is no one type of child that gets bullied. You know, maybe you look a little different and you get bullied, maybe you are smarter than everybody else. You get good marks and they need to make fun of you because you are a nerd. Then, it is you are dumb and we need to make fun of you because you do not catch on to things.” (P-7)

The participants are of the opinion that insecurity, low self-esteem and dominance could be personal maintaining factors within the individual who engages in bullying behaviour. Participant 2 summarised these views as follows:

“I think that it is insecurity from the bully’s side. I think it is insecurities and not feeling good about yourself. Now you need to have other people feel bad as well. It’s maybe dominance issues, I need to dominate, I need to show who I am. Also maybe insecurities coming from home. Perhaps he has seen dad bullying mom.” (P-2)

4.2.2.2 Contextual maintaining factors

The bio-ecological perspective is particularly useful for understanding bullying within the school context. Bullying behaviour does not occur in isolation. It is comprised of complex exchanges between individuals and involves their broader social environments. Contextual factors are systems that form part of the immediate environment in which individuals exist and actively participate, such as the family or school. For the purpose of this study, the data has been grouped under school, family and social factors.

i) School factors

Most of the teachers noted that the episodes of bullying of which they are aware, are only the tip of the iceberg. They feel that there are many incidents of which teachers are not aware, especially when it involves cyberbullying. Participants reported that it is easier to identify incidents of bullying in their register classes. The perception was expressed that teachers have better relationships with learners in their register classes and have a greater understanding of the dynamics which exist between these peer groups. Furthermore, a number of teachers expressed that they find it especially challenging when they have not observed bullying first-hand and have then had to intervene. This view was summarised by the following participant’s description:

“I found it difficult to deal with it too, because I wasn’t actually witnessing the events. They were happening in other classes or outside of school. It is incredibly difficult, especially when an educator isn’t a witness to what is actually happening, and you have to go on hearsay from both sides. Of

course, the bullies are going to gang up and have their story all settled, and the one half is obviously on their own.” (P-5)

Teachers described that it was difficult to recognise certain forms of bullying because classes are overcrowded and they are inundated with work. Some participants suggest that particular teachers hear about bullying more frequently because their subject lends itself to this. For instance, the Life Orientation teachers are more frequently approached than teachers with other subjects. The teachers noted that learners find it difficult to approach and inform them about bullying incidences. According to the participants, the individuals’ friends will come to tell about bullying occurrences rather than the target themselves. The participants noted that learners who are targeted engage in hushing. This may, in their experience, contribute to learners feeling apprehensive as they are scared that the bullying might get worse if they tell on them. The learners are thus told to keep quiet and not tell any of the staff. Only when the bullying behaviour becomes serious do those learners or their friends report it to the teachers.

The most common reactions of teachers to bullying behaviour involves working directly with the individuals involved, going directly to the class teacher of those involved and reporting the behaviour to the head of department, grade head or the principal:

“It very much depends on the relationship between the teacher and the learners. If there is somebody that I teach, I will in fact speak to them at length. It’s only the relationship with the learner really that can impact greatly, because you know them and you can talk with them. But after I had spoken to the learner, then I will report the incident to management.”
(P-3)

The participants noted that some teachers do not intervene when they are confronted with incidents of bullying. In their opinion, these teachers do not have the time or the necessary skills to deal with bullying behaviour. This view is summarised by Participant 1:

“I think some teachers are only here to teach, they are not experts, and they don’t have the skill. And I think for me being much older. I do try and listen, and I can’t always go to the chief.”

According to the participants, there is no formal position on bullying in their school. Therefore, the teachers deal with incidents of bullying on an individual basis. Although they have referred cases to the principal, in their experience, this strategy does not work and they receive little or no feedback from the principal about what has transpired from the intervention. Furthermore, some of the teachers report that their reactions and stance on bullying is different to those of the principal and those of other teachers. Some teachers feel that they disagree with the message that they perceive the school to be sending out about bullying.

During the interviews it was evident that there are varying levels of empathy among the teachers towards learners who engage in bullying behaviour. These varying levels of empathy are best described by Participant 6:

“Remember the program that we had in the hall last year. The principal referred in assembly to that play. What freaks me out, or what irritates me to no end, was the message of that troop of that programme and I think it was that we had to understand that the bully has problems, they have issues. I think you can't say he is bullying, shame. They say there needs to be a way in which I deal with the bully and a way in which I deal with the victim. The bully must never be made to feel that he is special, but his circumstances are special. That is why I was so disturbed by that remark. They say we need to understand why people bully. I don't think a child of 14 or 15 needs to understand, or wants to understand why they are being bullied. All they want is for it to stop. And now you tell me that I should play psychologist and social worker for a bully, shame. So that was such a confusing message for me from the platform of our school hall. And I'm disturbed that the principal would refer to that message. Because that's just crazy. I'm not going to go, 'Ja you have problems.' We all have problems.”

ii) ***Family factors***

According to the teachers, difficult home circumstance is a family factor that maintains bullying behaviour. Where a learner either observes or experiences abusive behaviour which can possibly lead to individuals engaging in bullying behaviour towards other learners. The views of the teachers can be summarised by the following participant's description:

“Often, it is factors at home that cause the perpetrator to bully. But now you don’t see those factors that cause the bullying. And sometimes I think that it could possibly be aggressive behaviour that they see at home and they are imitating that.” (P-3)

Another family factor that can maintain bullying is the parenting styles of an individual’s parents or guardians. The participants described that children who have been brought up in a different way from the majority of learners are often more susceptible to bullying. Participant 6 described these opinions in the following way:

“The child that stands a chance of being bullied is the child who might have been reared differently, reared to deal with issues differently than the rest of the class. Their parents have reared them differently, so they get treated differently. And you can pick up those kids. They come into the classroom and they get ridiculed.”

iii) ***Social factors***

The teachers emphasised group dynamics as important social factors. Group dynamics play a huge role in who is targeted, and by whom. Participants perceived the group dynamics of bullying to consist of the following: groups of learners who target specific individuals, one learner who targets a range of other individuals, and older learners who target younger learners. Several teachers voiced that learner-on-teacher bullying behaviour was especially prevalent among the grade 8 learners. Another important social factor which came to light during the interviews was violence in the community. The participants perceived violence to be rife in some of the communities in which learners live. The teachers expressed the perception that the violent acts which are modelled in their communities are brought with learners to school, and then acted out in the school context.

4.2.3 Effects of bullying

The teachers identified several effects caused by bullying. This data will be presented according to these perceived effects which include school truancy, school refusal and leaving the school, academic performance, suicidal ideation and attempted suicide, and extreme acts of violence.

4.2.3.1 School truancy, school refusal and leaving the school

The teachers stated that school truancy and school refusal are common effects of bullying. Learners do not want to come to school because of the bullying that they endure at school. This leads to these learners staying away from school. Feigning illnesses is the most prominent excuse learners use to stay away from school. Furthermore, learners, as well as teachers, have left or had the intention of leaving the school because they were targeted by learners from the school:

“We have one teacher who is leaving. The minute she walks into a class there is this noise, and they are not working, and they are throwing paper balls, and they are bad mouthing the other learners. And just no respect - she can't teach them. But when I walk in there, or look through the window, they are just all quiet.” (P-1)

4.2.3.2 Academic performance and bullying

Another effect of bullying is that certain learners feel pressure to fit in with their peers, which in some cases leads to a decrease in their academic performances. The participants indicated that there have been incidences where learners were bullied for being vocal about their opinions and for being academically strong. These learners were forced to become less opinionated, stop answering questions and stop achieving academically. Several teachers shared their narratives about a female learner who, according to their perceptions, started failing in some of her subjects to fit in with her peers:

“I think it got to a breaking point for that particular learner in the March control test last year. When she didn't write her Life Sciences paper but wrote on the question paper that she was trying to answer, a little note explaining her feelings and what all this taunting and bullying is actually doing to her.” (P-2)

“The child goes, ‘I will then try to fit in. This is what I need to do to be accepted. Let me just do this to fit in. What are your standards? I just need to do that so that I no longer am the target.’ She has just sort of fitted in so that she is no longer the target of them, of the bullying.” (P-6)

4.2.3.3 *Suicidal ideation and suicide attempts*

Several participants noted that there have been incidents of bullying where learners were targeted and the learners attempted suicide, or reported suicidal ideation. According to the teachers' perceptions, the bullying was of such a nature that the learners being targeted were not able to cope with it. One participant reported that one learner had attempted suicide a number of times over an extended period of time because he was being targeted by another learner in his class:

“The only bad experience that I encountered was last year with a boy in my register class. He was bullied verbally by another boy in the same class, to the extent where this boy tried to commit suicide three times during the course of last year. When I investigated the case, the other group that was taunted by the same boy, knew how to deal with it. They could cope with it. But in this boy's case, I don't think he had the personality to handle that. He must have poor self-esteem, most likely, and for him the taunting was devastating. It was reported to the office, the parents of the perpetrator were called in, and apparently this year it is occurring again. And he has attempted suicide again.” (P-3)

4.2.3.4 *Extreme acts of violence*

The teachers described a number of incidents of bullying where an individual had been targeted for an extended period of time. Their perceptions were that at a stage the target retaliated and struck out towards the individual who initially engaged in the bullying behaviour. In addition to this, the participants expressed that there have been incidents of what they perceived to be subtle, or less serious bullying, that escalated into extreme acts of violence. The participants expressed concern over the fact that certain incidences of bullying are escalating into extreme acts of violence:

“How can we stop or prevent it from continuing, or escalating into something bigger? We have had a girl here with this bullying thing, verbal bullying and pushing and shoving. And then she came with this gang and they waited for this boy outside of school and they wanted to beat him up.” (P-1)

4.2.4 Proposed strategies to deal effectively with bullying

The teachers identified various strategies which may assist them in dealing with bullying in their school context. In addition to this, the participants made recommendations for the school's way forward. These include a whole-school approach, the design and implementation of procedures and policies, facilitating awareness of bullying, and the use of discussion forums.

4.2.4.1 *Whole-school approach*

The teachers indicated that a whole-school approach is needed to address bullying within their school. This perception was reinforced by several teachers who suggested that the school needs to stand together as a united force against bullying. In the participants' opinion, for such an approach to thrive, the whole school community needs to be included in any decision-making processes and needs to subscribe fully to the approach.

“It will be necessary for us to stop the bullying, to change the culture in the school. And that won't just come from a group of teachers, but rather we should workshop the entire staff and perhaps incorporate this whole process in the way we teach, see how we can fit it into our lessons, if possible. It is not just a L.O. thing. It should be collective action in order to change the behaviour of the learner.” (P-3)

Not only this, but there need to be joint discussions about the policies and procedures that need to be followed. Support structures must also be made available, not only for the learners, but for the staff as well. Furthermore, a safe school environment needs to be created where every staff member and learner knows their rights and responsibilities.

4.2.4.2 *Procedures and policies*

A perception expressed during the interviews was that the school has no formal policies or procedural strategies targeting bullying in place. The participants maintained that there are no formal structures in place to assist them in dealing with incidents of bullying. In addition, the teachers reported that they feel inadequately equipped to deal with incidents:

“We don’t really come together as a staff to discuss issues. Nothing is written down. So we are definitely not following procedure, and for me that is cause for concern. So we need to work out a policy or some kind of strategies as to how, as a school, you will tackle the issue.”(P-3)

Policies that aim to clamp down on bullying and serve as guidelines on how to deal with certain incidences was highlighted as an important and necessary method. Furthermore, policy or procedural documents should be made available to everyone in the school environment. The teachers are of the opinion that such policies should include a definition of bullying, the different types of bullying, the role-players involved in bullying behaviour, what the possible causes are, and possible intervention strategies that can be utilised when incidences occur. The views of the teachers are summarised by the following participant’s description about the spiralling nature of bullying:

“I feel strongly that you do not know how a person that is being bullied may turn around. You know what is happening in America. You know it’s a reality. And I always say that sometimes we put our heads in the sand, and we always try to make things go away and not think about it so that it disappears. But the reality is there. And it could come, ‘hulle sê spyt kom altyd te laat’ [they say that regret always comes too late]. I think we need to put structures in place so we don’t have a learner coming in, who has been so depressed because he has been bullied, and then he comes in and hurts somebody at school. We need to fix this.” (P-2)

The participants noted that clear reporting methods are essential for documenting the bullying incident and the intervention process, as well as establishing available structures in the school. The teachers further perceived that commitment and dedication from all staff, management, parents and learners is essential in developing anti-bullying procedures and policies. They described it as a process, rather than a once-off meeting, or the creation of a single document. This opinion was best described by Participant 1 in the following way:

“I think we really need to put structures in place whereby learners know who they can go to. So maybe there must be some process that they can follow. It must be in very clear terms as to: this is the process, this is the first person to whom I speak, this is the chain of command. And we ourselves in fact should know how to deal with the bullying.”

The participants stated that a committee could also be formed which deals specifically with incidences of bullying:

“We are talking about a disciplinary committee, right. And I think that it can go there. But disciplinary to me seems to be for punishment. But we need to have a body where we can go, ‘Okay, this is happening, how can we resolve it? How can we stop or prevent it from continuing or escalating into something bigger?’” (P-1)

The participants suggested that counselling be recommended for the target and the individual engaging in bullying behaviour. The teachers maintained, however, that therapeutic services are not readily available at their school as their counsellor was overstretched with current cases.

4.2.4.3 *Facilitating awareness*

The participants identified that the running of anti-bullying campaigns could be an essential method in addressing bullying adequately. These campaigns should be aimed at creating awareness in the whole-school. These views were summarised in the following words:

“There is this need to create awareness amongst the teenagers, because there are some teenagers that are not aware. And they have been behaving like this since they can remember. Kids need to be made aware that there are consequences for certain kinds of behaviour. Creating a campaign for awareness for a firm initiative focused on bullying, and to create a heightened awareness, and all of that has to be done at the same time. We need to be committed as the people who run the school to act according to procedures.” (P-1)

According to the participants, workshops and talks run by knowledgeable professionals, not only for the learners but for the whole staff, is a good way to continually receive information about new methods on how to deal with bullying effectively. Participant 8 noted that “for me, I want to know not about punishment, but how to stop bullying”. The teachers suggested that slogans, posters, essays and poetry can be useful in raising awareness and will help include learners in anti-bullying campaigns. Furthermore, the participants stated that different subjects can be used to raise awareness on bullying behaviour. Several teachers had already

begun to incorporate the topic of bullying into their lesson plans, classroom activities, oral assignments and examination papers. The teachers are of the opinion that the curriculum should be used to make learners more aware of bullying. Furthermore, the participants stressed that it is important to engage parents in meetings about bullying so that they can be more aware of incidences that occur at school and assist in its prevention.

4.2.4.4 Discussion forums

According to the teachers, they do not have a forum to discuss issues in the school. In hindsight, the participants feel that the process of having focus group sessions, created forums in which they had the opportunity to focus on one particular issue and discuss it in more detail. These participants agreed that such forums can be created to talk not only about bullying, but about other important issues which occur within the school.

“What was good for me about our meeting is that when we left here we discussed bullying amongst ourselves. And I think this is the first time ever that I discussed a topic with fellow educators. Previously, yes, with management because when you are made aware of something you go and report it, but you never just have the time to just entertain the discussion ourselves.” (P-3)

“There was a forum that was created. I was thinking, there are so many other issues happening at school and that this kind of forum is so helpful. Where we can talk and discuss, we didn’t really know what other people experience in their classrooms. We actually need to talk amongst ourselves about our classrooms.” (P-6)

Several of the participants, after leaving the focus group sessions, tried to make learners more aware of bullying. Some opened up forum discussions in their Life Orientation periods, others had informal classroom discussions about the different types of bullying, and a number of teachers talked to individual learners about bullying.

4.3 DISCUSSION OF RESEARCH FINDINGS

4.3.1 Introduction

The theoretical framework, on which this study is based is the social context perspective (See 1.2). This perspective draws on views from both social constructionism and bio-ecological theory. These perspectives are particularly useful for understanding how individuals relate and interact with one another in their social contexts. It is helpful to view complex relationships, influences and interactions within which individuals function through a social constructivism and bio-ecological perspective in an attempt to understand bullying behaviour. Furthermore, school bullying exists within a context and is therefore influenced by the dynamics between different role players (See Figure 1.2; Figure 5.1).

This section therefore aims to place the research findings into the context of the theoretical framework and literature. It is necessary, before initiating the discussion of the research findings, to re-examine the problem statement within the context of its theoretical framework. This study aimed to explore and describe teachers' perspectives and experiences of bullying. Furthermore, the purpose of the study was to generate knowledge on how these perspectives could be used for the recognition of, intervention in, and prevention of school bullying. The recommendations of this study and those of the participants will be presented in chapter five. Therefore, data will be discussed in both chapters four and five.

4.3.2 Teachers' perspectives and experiences of bullying

As the research findings suggest, the teachers described bullying as a pervasive problem within the school environment (Cornell & Mayer, 2010, p. 10-11; Monks & Coyne, 2011, p. 3; Thornberg, 2010, p. 311). It is therefore necessary to consider the nature and extent of bullying, personal and contextual factors that maintain bullying, and effects of bullying when reflecting on the participants' perceptions and experiences of bullying within this context.

4.3.2.1 *The nature and extent of bullying*

The data from this study seem to suggest that teachers define bullying-related terms in various ways and according to their personal experience. The participants are of the opinion that bullying can be defined as behaviour that is intimidating, humiliating, threatening, aggressive or subtle. These findings are supported by a body of literature (Hampel et al., 2009, p. 474; Jimerson, Swearer & Espelage, 2010, p. 1; Myburgh & Poggenpoel, 2009, p. 449; Olweus, 1999, p. 11; Rigby, 2004, p. 288; Smith et al., 2003, p. 176; Swearer et al., 2010, p. 40; Yoon et al., 2011, pp. 312-313). The fact that these teachers' definitions of bullying included subtle behaviours is contradictory to a wide range of literature which found that teachers do not consider subtle or non-physical behaviours to be synonymous with bullying (Bauman & Del Rio, 2005, p. 430; Ellis & Shute, 2007, p. 660; Mishna et al., 2005, p. 724; Twemlow et al., 2010, p. 79).

According to the teachers, individuals who are targeted are made to feel unsafe, insecure, uncomfortable and aggrieved by this behaviour. This opinion is maintained in the literature and states that bullying behaviour is linked to the intention of harm, threats, and the perception of fear and vulnerability (Jimerson et al., 2010, p. 1; Monks & Coyne, 2011, p. 4; Rabrenovic et al., 2004, p. 116). The teachers highlighted the existence of a power imbalance when they defined bullying between learners, learners and teachers, as well as between teachers and school management (Cheng et al., 2011, p. 235; Jimerson et al., 2010, p. 1; Kert et al., 2010, p. 193; Monks & Coyne, 2011, p. 3; Olweus, 1993, p. 10; Olweus, 2010, p. 9). In addition, the teachers expressed that bullying occurs on a frequent and continuous basis, and that the repetitive nature or the threat of further bullying may have negative effects on individuals (Cheng et al., 2011, p. 227; Rigby, 2004, p. 288). This definition thus integrates the repetitive nature of bullying, and implies an imbalance of power between individuals. In this study, repetition was highlighted as being an imperative facet of bullying, whereas some literature states that some teachers do not mention repetition as being integral to bullying (Mishna et al., 2005, p. 724). Other studies, however, emphasise the repetitive nature of bullying and stressed that the idea of repetition or threat of further bullying exists in malicious behaviour (Gardner et al., 2008, p. xvi; Oh & Hazler, 2009, p. 292).

The teachers identified three main types of bullying which include verbal, physical and relational bullying. Cyberbullying is another form of bullying which was identified by the teachers in this study. The participants indicated that it has become more prevalent in recent years, especially among the grade 8 and 9 learners. According to existing literature, in schools today learners and teachers are being targeted using modern technology such as the Internet and cell phones to intimidate, harass, threaten, stalk, ridicule, humiliate, taunt, impersonate, exclude, trick, and spread rumours (Bissonette, 2009, p. 5; Gardner et al., 2008, p. xv; Hinduja & Patchin, 2009, p. 35; McGuckin et al., 2010, p. 83; Rogers, 2010, p. 7; Trolley & Hanel, 2010, p. 5; Willard, 2007, p. 2). The types of bullying which were reported by the participants are summarised in Table 4.2.

Table 4.2: Summary of the types and forms of bullying

Type	Various forms
Verbal bullying	Name-calling, murmuring, joking, negative commenting, derogatory commenting, taunting, threatening, labelling, coercion, extortion, ridiculing, blaming and gossiping
Physical bullying	Pushing, shoving, punching, kicking, fighting, extortion of personal property or money, and sexual coercion.
Relational bullying	Social isolation, social exclusion, sniggering, giggling, and exchanging of looks.
Cyberbullying	Slanderous comments, harassment and denigration.
Workplace bullying¹	Disruption of lessons, learners speaking rudely to other learners and the teacher, naughtiness, making noise, not doing work, throwing things in class, disrespecting the teacher, preventing the teacher from teaching, misuse of position, threats, demand, manipulation and coercion, giving teachers extra work, showing favouritism, making unreasonable demands, threatening your position, withholding crucial information, purposively keeping information from them, and making them feel insignificant and voiceless.

However, the teachers differed as to the degree of severity between the types of bullying, but noted that the effects of each form should not be underestimated. The participants asserted that relational bullying is malevolent and can be more damaging to an individual than physical bullying. Research indicates that the perception of seriousness is linked to teacher involvement in bullying incidents (Ellis & Shute,

¹ In this study I have divided workplace bullying into three categories, namely, learner-on-teacher bullying, teacher-on-teacher bullying, and principal-on-teacher bullying.

2007, p. 660). In other words, if a teacher does not perceive a certain incident to be serious enough to intervene, this may have negative impacts on those involved (Bauman & Del Rio, 2005, p. 431). This research study's finding is similar to several studies on teachers' perceptions of the severity or seriousness of bullying (Ellis & Shute, 2007, p. 661; Gardner et al., 2008, p. xviii; Mishna et al., 2005, p. 731). Furthermore, the teachers emphasised that physical bullying is not as evident as verbal and relational bullying. This is in direct contradiction to existing literature which states that teachers are not as aware of verbal and relational bullying as they are of physical bullying (Dake et al., 2003, p. 177; Ellis & Shute, 2007, p. 661).

In terms of the research findings, the individuals who engage in bullying behaviour are learners, teachers and the principal. The perception is that learner-on-learner bullying behaviour occurs across grades as well as within one specific grade, and the teachers maintained that grade 8 learners are more susceptible to being targeted. Literature suggests that bullying becomes more pervasive as learners enter secondary school (De Wet, 2005b, p. 86; Gardner et al., 2008, p. xiv). The data suggests that bullying is prevalent across genders and occurs between one or more individuals which correlates with existing literature (Kert et al., 2010, p. 201; Swearer, 2011, p. 3). Participants perceived that bullying occurs frequently in friendships and has negative effects on the individuals who are targeted. This is evident in the literature which demonstrates that bullying behaviour can occur in relationships between friends (Danby & Osvaldsson, 2011, p. 255; Daniels et al., 2010, p. 78; Mishna et al., 2005, p. 549; Wei & Jonson-Reid, 2011, p. 244).

Teacher-on-learner bullying behaviour is perceived to be rife with male teachers bullying female learners. Verbal and relational bullying appear to be the two most prominent forms in which teachers engage. It also became clear that some teachers engaged in bullying behaviour because they wanted learners to conform to their rules. Literature finds that when teachers engage in bullying behaviour, or target learners, it diminishes their credibility (Mishna et al., 2005, p. 733). It may also affect the bullying ethos and behaviour in the school (James et al., 2008, p. 170). Furthermore, because of the power dynamic that exists between learners and teachers, it is uncommon for learners to report incidences of bullying, or to speak out about the injustice that is being done to them.

The data seem to suggest that teacher-on-teacher bullying behaviour is not particularly prevalent in the school. Participants observed that although they are not necessarily aware of teacher-on-teacher bullying, there have been reported incidents. According to the research findings, principal-on-teacher bullying behaviour is rife in the school. The data reveal that the younger, less experienced teachers are reportedly targeted more often, and that several teachers feel that a power differential exists between them and the principal. This opinion is reinforced by the literature where workplace bullying is often characterised by harm to one's professional standing, harm to one's personal position, social exclusion and destabilisation, as well misuse of power (Blase & Blase, 2006, p. 128; De Wet, 2010a, pp. 113-114; Farmer, 2011, p. 196) (See Table 4.2).

The data highlight that bullying in this context occurs frequently at various sites in the school context and within the wider community. The teachers stated that bullying occurs in this school's corridors, toilets, on the playground, on the sport field, the tuck shop, hall, classrooms, in front of the school, on the way to and from school, at learners' and friends' homes, and on the bus. The participants reported that bullying is more prevalent in classrooms where learners perceive the teachers to be weaker. Literature suggests that bullying takes place in areas which are not well supervised, while other studies found that it occurs in the classroom with the teacher present (Sahin, 2010, p. 131; Thornberg, 2011, p. 263). A further implication of knowing where and when bullying occurs is that supervision in these locations where bullying reportedly takes place can be increased, a critical strategy for prevention and intervention efforts (DeVoe et al., 2005, p. 14; Vaillancourt et al., 2010, p. 42).

The teachers who participated in this study expressed that they all had personally experienced bullying during their childhood. Being involved in bullying seemed to affect them on a physical and emotional level, and some emphasised that this effect can stay with one into adulthood. This is particularly evident in literature which states that several teachers who were targeted as children, felt that the effects persisted and that these experiences made them more sensitive to, and aware of, the nature and extent of bullying (Carlisle & Rofes, 2007, pp. 24-25; Mishna et al., 2005, p. 729; Vanderbilt & Augustyn, 2010, pp. 316-317). Those who engaged in bullying behaviour at school expressed feelings of guilt or shame as adults, and stated that if they had known what effect it could have on another individual, that they would not

have participated in it. According to the findings, the nature and extent of bullying is worse now than when the participants were at school. The teachers in this study attribute this to the use of modern technology, as well as to the role the wider community plays in learners' lives.

4.3.2.2 *Personal and contextual factors that maintain bullying*

Once it was established that bullying exists as a problem in the school, it was important to see how bullying behaviour is maintained. The maintaining factors identified were categorised into personal and contextual factors. The data from this study seem to suggest that teachers perceive bullying behaviour to be multifaceted in nature which correlates with the literature (Orpinas & Horne, 2010, p. 49). The participants highlighted the perception that individuals are targeted for being different to the norm. Another perception is that individuals with poor self-esteem, or particular vulnerabilities, are more susceptible to being targeted. Other literature has similarly found an association between low self-esteem and being susceptible to bullying (Shamos, 2009, p. 319). According to the teachers' experiences, these individuals do not have well-adjusted coping strategies, and lack the necessary assertiveness and conflict-management skills. As was evident in the findings, individuals seem to be targeted because they are perceived to be academically stronger or weaker. The research findings indicate that insecurity, low self-esteem and dominance are three issues that teachers believe individuals who engage in bullying behaviour may experience. Literature similarly finds that these characteristics may result in an individual targeting other individuals (Prinsloo, 2008, p. 34).

In terms of the research findings, it is evident that the participants perceive the observed incidents of bullying to be only the tip of the iceberg. Teachers assert that there are many incidents of which they are not aware due to the challenge of recognising certain forms of bullying in overcrowded classes and their high workload. The data seem to suggest that when teachers have better relationships with learners, they are more likely to be aware of the group dynamic in a class. The findings highlight that teachers find it challenging to intervene when they have not observed the incident first-hand. This opinion is reinforced within the body of existing literature which emphasises that teachers find interventions particularly demanding when they have not witnessed an incident (Mishna et al., 2005, p. 728). The research findings,

therefore, suggest that teachers' awareness of incidents of bullying and group dynamics, as well as the observation of incidents first-hand, has an influence on intervention. In addition to this, literature finds that by developing an awareness of the complexity of bullying, teachers become more observant and alert to incidents which, in turn, may contribute to learners disclosing or reporting bullying to teachers (Holt et al., 2010, p. 123; Mishna et al., 2005, p. 734).

The data support that some teachers hear about incidences more frequently as their teaching subject lends itself better to disclosure, while other teachers are more likely to be approached after class or school. However, research findings show that learners find it difficult to disclose bullying. This view is reinforced by the literature which finds that learners may be reluctant to disclose their situations due to secrecy, fear, powerlessness, shame, self-blaming, retaliation, uncertainty and expectations regarding the effectiveness of adult intervention (Danby, Butler & Emmison, 2011, p. 337; De Wet, 2005b, p. 87; Mishna & Alaggia, 2005, p. 217; Rigby & Bauman, 2007, p. 6; Tenenbaum et al., 2011, p. 264). As is evident in the data, teachers have the perception that learners are instructed to keep quiet and not tell others that they are being targeted. Many studies emphasise a culture of secrecy which exists in schools and contributes and maintain bullying (MacDonald & Swart, 2004, p. 45; Tenenbaum et al., 2011, p. 281; Thornberg, 2011, p. 263). Only when bullying escalates do learners or their friends tend to report it to teachers or the principal. The data found that the most common reactions to bullying, in the teachers' experience, are to involve the learners who are directly involved; to report it to the class teacher of the involved learners; to report it to the head of department or of the grade; or to the principal. In terms of the research findings, it is evident that participants perceive that some teachers do not intervene when they are confronted with incidents of bullying because they do not have the time, or lack the ability to deal with bullying incidents. This opinion is corroborated by the literature that shows that without specific training, teachers have a poor understanding of bullying and how to manage it (Bauman & Del Rio, 2005, p. 431; Bauman et al., 2008, p. 850; James et al., 2008, p. 161).

As the school had no formal procedure guidelines to assist teachers, they have to deal with bullying using their own methods. The research findings suggest that when cases are referred to the principal, they receive little or no feedback about the progress of the case. According to the literature, many teachers lack the ability to

deal fully with incidents due to pressure to cover the curriculum and lack of systemic support, combined with inadequate training on how to address and manage bullying behaviour (Holt et al., 2010, p. 124; Mishna et al., 2005, p. 734). It also came to light that teachers react differently, and somewhat inconsistently, towards incidents of bullying. In addition to this, some participants disagree with the message that they perceive the school to be propagating about bullying. According to existing literature, if a school's stance on bullying is in direct contrast to a teacher's moral stance, it is less likely that he or she will adhere to such a policy (Ellis & Shute, 2007, p. 650). It is evident that varying degrees of empathy exist among the teachers towards learners who engage in bullying behaviour and those who are targeted. These findings correspond with literature which highlights empathy as a main factor that influences how teachers depict and respond to incidents and learners, as well as how they implement anti-bullying campaigns (Mishna et al., 2005, p. 733). This is important when considering that teacher identification and response to bullying behaviours has been found to be related to the degree to which teachers are empathetic toward targets of bullying, perceive bullying to be a serious problem, feel efficacious in dealing with bullying, and implement programmes (Holt et al., 2010, pp. 123-124; Mishna et al., 2005, p. 731; Totura et al., 2009, pp. 196-197; Yoon, 2004, p. 40).

According to the research findings, contextual maintaining factors can make learners more susceptible to bullying, or lead to individuals engaging in bullying behaviour. One of these contextual factors is that of difficult home circumstances which may include observing or experiencing abusive behaviour and the effect of different parenting styles. This is corroborated by the literature which finds that parenting styles and family disharmony are two features of family life that are particularly influential on the social development of bullying behaviour (Morrison, 2007, p. 15).

Furthermore, group dynamics also play a role in who is targeted and by whom. Existing literature shows that adults may have difficulty recognising bullying behaviour due to the complex dynamics involved (Mishna et al., 2005, p. 719). Participants perceive the group dynamics of bullying to consist of the following: a groups of learners who target specific individuals; one learner who targets a range of other individuals; and older learners who target younger learners. The data reveal that teachers perceive violence in the communities from which learners come to contribute to the violence being acted out in the school context. Other literature has

similarly found an association between violence in the community and violence in South African schools (Potgieter, 2010a, p. 11; Senosi, 2003, p. 40; Somech & Oplatka, 2009, p. 425). The literature states that societal influences such as exposure to violence in one's community and the viewing of violence in the media can result in individuals acting aggressively at school and engaging in bullying behaviour (Rigby, 2010, p. 5).

4.3.2.3 *Effects of bullying*

As became evident in the presentation of the research findings, the teachers identified several effects which they perceive to be caused by bullying. The participants indicated that school truancy, school refusal and individuals leaving the school are common effects of bullying. It is argued that learners refuse to come to school, or that they make up excuses to stay away from school because they are trying to avoid bullying behaviour. In addition to this, bullying contributes to learners and teachers leaving, or having the intention to leave, the school because they cannot cope with the bullying. This opinion is supported in literature which has documented that individuals who are targeted are at risk for school disengagement and avoidance, truancy and lowered academic participation in their efforts to avoid being targeted. Furthermore, school avoidance generally has a negative correlation with learners' motivation and interest in school (De Wet, 2005b, p. 82; James et al., 2008, p. 162; Totura et al., 2009, p. 196).

A further implication of bullying is that learners feel pressurised to fit in with their peers, and this may lead to a decrease in their academic performance. This view is maintained in the literature which finds significant links between school bullying and academic performance (Jimerson et al., 2010, p. 1; Konishi et al., 2010, p. 21; Murray-Harvey, 2010, p. 122). As is evident in the research findings, these learners are sometimes forced to stop voicing their opinions, speaking up in class and achieving academically. This opinion is reinforced by existing literature in that social norms, popularity and social position are three key concepts in being included with a group (Thornberg, 2011, p. 262). It is argued that social norms exist among learners and that social exclusion and isolation are the consequences of non-conformity to these norms (Hamarus & Kaikkonen, 2008, p. 342; Thornberg, 2011, p. 258). This suggests that learners who are targeted for being academically strong, may start

achieving poorly because they want to belong to a group and conform to the norms of this group. A decline in academic performance is, therefore, often seen as a response to bullying (Athanasiaades & Deliyanni-Kouimtzi, 2010, p. 328; Totura et al., 2009, p. 196).

Furthermore, the current study found that suicidal ideation and attempted suicide are tragic results which may come from being targeted. This research finding suggests that the bullying can be of such a nature that certain learners are not able to cope with it. The participants stressed that some individuals attempted suicide a number of times due to the bullying they endure. This opinion is reinforced in the literature which shows that bullying is a risk factor for suicidal ideation and suicide attempts (Bonanno & Hymel, 2010, p. 432; Epstein & Spiro, 2010, p. 202; Kim et al., 2009, p. 27; Menesini et al., 2009, p. 116). Furthermore, research shows that cyberbullying is also associated with an increase in suicidal ideation (Patchin & Hinduja, 2010a, p. 216). Therefore, a suicide prevention and intervention component is essential within comprehensive anti-bullying programmes in schools (Hinduja & Patchin, 2010, p. 216).

Lastly, another perceived outcome of bullying are extreme acts of violence. This was evident in cases where individuals had been targeted for an extended period of time, and eventually retaliated violently against the individual who had engaged in bullying behaviour towards them. Similarly, there were some situations which had been perceived as involving subtle, or less serious, bullying that escalated into extreme acts of violence. Other literature has also found that subtle or less serious bullying can escalate into extreme acts of violence (De Wet, 2006b, p. 14; Mishna & Allagia, 2005, p. 217; Tenenbaum et al., 2011, p. 281).

4.4. CONCLUSION

The main themes which emerged during data analysis included the nature and extent of bullying, personal and contextual factors that maintain bullying, the effects of bullying and proposed strategies to deal effectively with bullying. These findings reflect the perceptions and experiences of the participants as was discussed in light of the existing literature. Chapter five will focus on the concluding remarks and

reflections, recommendations, limitations and strengths related to the study, and suggestions for future research.

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUDING REMARKS, RECOMMENDATIONS, LIMITATIONS AND STRENGTHS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

This research study aimed to explore and describe teachers' perspectives on, and experiences of, bullying in a secondary school in the Western Cape. Furthermore, the purpose of this study was to generate knowledge on how these perspectives can be used for the recognition of, intervention in, and prevention of school bullying. The decision to study teachers' perceptions of bullying was influenced by the view that teachers have multiple opportunities to observe learners, their colleagues, school managers and other relevant staff for relatively long periods of time, in many settings. Therefore, teachers who know their learners and have a relationship with their colleagues are likely to be the people who are most familiar with the scope of bullying during and after-school hours. In addition to this, an important goal of this study was to give the teachers who participated in the study the opportunity to gain insight into their teaching practices regarding bullying.

In keeping with the social constructionist nature of the process explored in the study, a qualitative and interpretive research approach was used. This approach assisted me in recognising that different realities are created by various individuals as they interact in their social environment. This provided me with insight into how the participants interpreted and gave meaning to their experiences, thereby allowing me to gain an understanding of their perceptions and experiences regarding bullying.

In this chapter I make recommendations that can be developed for the school where the research was conducted, as well as for use in other secondary schools. These recommendations have been made based on an integration of suggestions made by the teachers as became clear during data analysis, and general recommendations from existing literature. Furthermore, the limitations and strengths of the study, as well as suggestions for further research, will be discussed. Lastly, I conclude with my reflections on the research study.

5.2 CONCLUDING REMARKS

The theoretical framework which informed this study is the social context perspective which drew on views from both social constructionism and the bio-ecological framework. The social context perspective emphasises the interactions between individuals and the systems as delineated in the bio-ecological model (See Figure 1.2). This study focused more specifically on proximal processes, which not only involve relevant systems, but also the person characteristics of individuals within these systems. Furthermore, this study did not aim to reveal the “truth” about school bullying (Freedman & Combs, 1996, p. 22). My intention has rather been to provide a comprehensive picture as was portrayed by the participants in this study.

This picture included the nature and extent of bullying in their secondary school, the teachers’ perspectives and experiences of bullying, and proposed prevention and intervention strategies which they aim to implement at their school. The research findings indicated that the teachers experience and perceive a wide variety of bullying behaviours which take place at various sites, both within and outside the school grounds and that involve a diverse range of individuals within the school community. Furthermore, the teachers conveyed several factors which they experienced as maintaining bullying and highlighted their perceived effects thereof. In addition to this, the participants shared knowledge about their teaching practices and suggested a few strategies on how to deal with bullying more effectively in their school community.

Most of the findings of this study are similar to international and national literature on the topic of bullying in secondary schools. However, some of the findings were in contrast to what has been found in existing research (See 4.3). The current study aimed to contribute to the underexplored field of secondary school bullying in the context of the Western Cape. These results may, therefore, serve to contribute to the body of existing literature on bullying and should be interpreted contextually (See 3.2.2). These findings could also assist teachers, school management, educational psychologists, school counsellors and the Department of Basic Education in understanding and recognising the nature and extent of bullying, identifying contributing factors that maintain bullying, and understanding the possible effects of bullying. Finally, the recommendations can be used to construct, and/or adjust,

prevention and intervention programmes and policies aimed at reducing bullying in the school environment to lessen the deleterious effects of bullying on all parties involved.

5.3 RECOMMENDATIONS

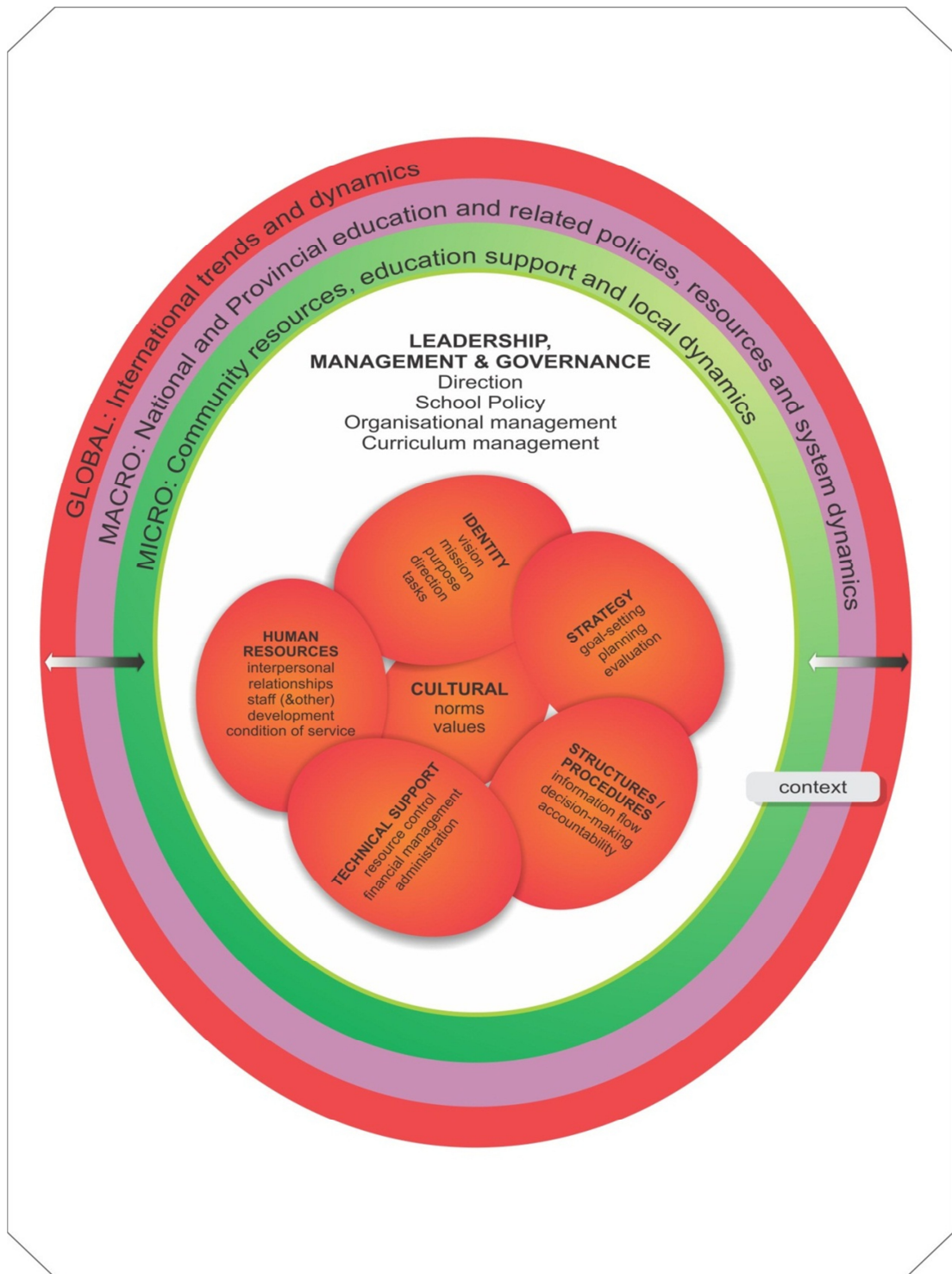
In this section I focus on the recommendations made by the teachers and as found in existing literature. These recommendations are aimed at the school where the research was conducted, but can also be applied in other secondary school settings. These include the following:

The teachers indicated that a whole-school approach is needed to address bullying within their school. This view is supported in the literature which stresses that a whole-school approach has the potential to generate a positive school climate and address the social environment and culture surrounding bullying (Bradshaw & Waasdorp, 2011, pp. 44-45; Cowie & Jennifer, 2008, p. 46; Garringer, 2008, p. 6; Gendron et al., 2011, p. 161; Maunder & Tattersall, 2010, p. 125; Rogers, 2007, p. 14; Thornberg, 2011, p. 265). The whole-school approach aims to develop supportive school environments that promote belonging, caring and respect between different systems within the school community on a long-term basis (Stephens, 2011, p. 391). A safe, supportive and inclusive whole-school approach therefore has positive values and relationships, as well as congruent policies and practices (Garringer, 2008, p. 6; Griffiths, 2007, p. 40; Maunder & Tattersall, 2010, p. 125; Roffey, 2010, p. 164).

However, the participants suggest that for such an approach to be effective, the school community needs to adopt a united front against bullying and include all role-players in decision-making processes. Literature stresses that schools need to involve key role-players from the school and wider community in the development of a whole-school approach to understand, prevent and deal with bullying (Rigby & Griffiths, 2010, p. 354; Sherer & Nickerson, 2010, p. 223). The need is therefore for all role-players within the school community to understand the complex bio-ecological environment in which bullying takes place and to play a role in managing this behaviour (See Figure 1.2). However, the participants cautioned that for such an approach to be effective, the person characteristics of those role players first need to be taken into account. In other words, each of the involved individuals first need to

subscribe to a whole-school approach, and actually want to reduce bullying in their school community. Literature highlights that all individuals involved need to 'buy-in' to the process as this is critical to the success of any anti-bullying effort, especially multifaceted whole-school approaches which can be difficult to implement without high levels of commitment and dedication from those involved (Bradshaw & Waasdorp, 2011, pp. 47-48; Rigby & Thomas, 2010, p. 45).

Furthermore, literature stresses that schools are complex systems because they are human organisations (Donald et al., 2006, p. 121). The systems which make up the school community reciprocally influence one another on a continual basis. For example, if new policies are mandated by the government (on macro level) this may have a direct influence on the leadership and governance, teaching practices, and learners within a specific school, as well as on the education support services from the Department of Basic Education (on micro level). This example is used to demonstrate how one system directly affects another, phenomenon referred to as a "ripple effect" (Davidoff & Lazarus, 2002, p. 19). A school has certain elements which characterise its contexts and include, for example, its culture, policies, identity and human resources (Lazarus, Daniels & Engelbrecht, 1999, p. 63). The context also includes the micro, macro and global contexts within which schools are located. The main elements of a school as an organisation are captured in Figure 5.1. All of these elements have to function optimally for the organisation as a whole to develop positively and effectively (Donald et al., 2006, p. 121).



(Adapted from Davidoff & Lazarus, 2002, p. 18; Donald et al., 2006, p. 122; Lazarus et al., 1999, p. 63)

Figure 5.1: Elements of a school as organisation

Research shows that the benefit of increasing school safety, and reducing school bullying, is an improved school climate (Gendron et al., 2011, p. 161; Vaillancourt et al., 2010, p. 48). Orpinas and Horne (2006, p. 79) developed the 'Social Competence Development and Bullying Prevention' model to provide an organised and

comprehensive view of the critical components necessary for bullying prevention. The model has two components which are illustrated in Figure 5.2. The outer circle reflects the school and emphasises eight characteristics that promote a positive school climate, including excellence in teaching, school values, awareness of strengths and problems, policies and accountability, caring and respect, positive expectations, support for teachers, and the physical environment (Orpinas & Horne, 2010, p. 49). The model further stresses six aspects, namely character, social skills, mental health and learning abilities, awareness, emotions and cognitions, pertaining specifically to the individual on which the school can focus. These two components are viewed as critical areas which must be taken into account when promoting a positive school climate and reducing bullying (Orpinas & Horne, 2006, p. 80).

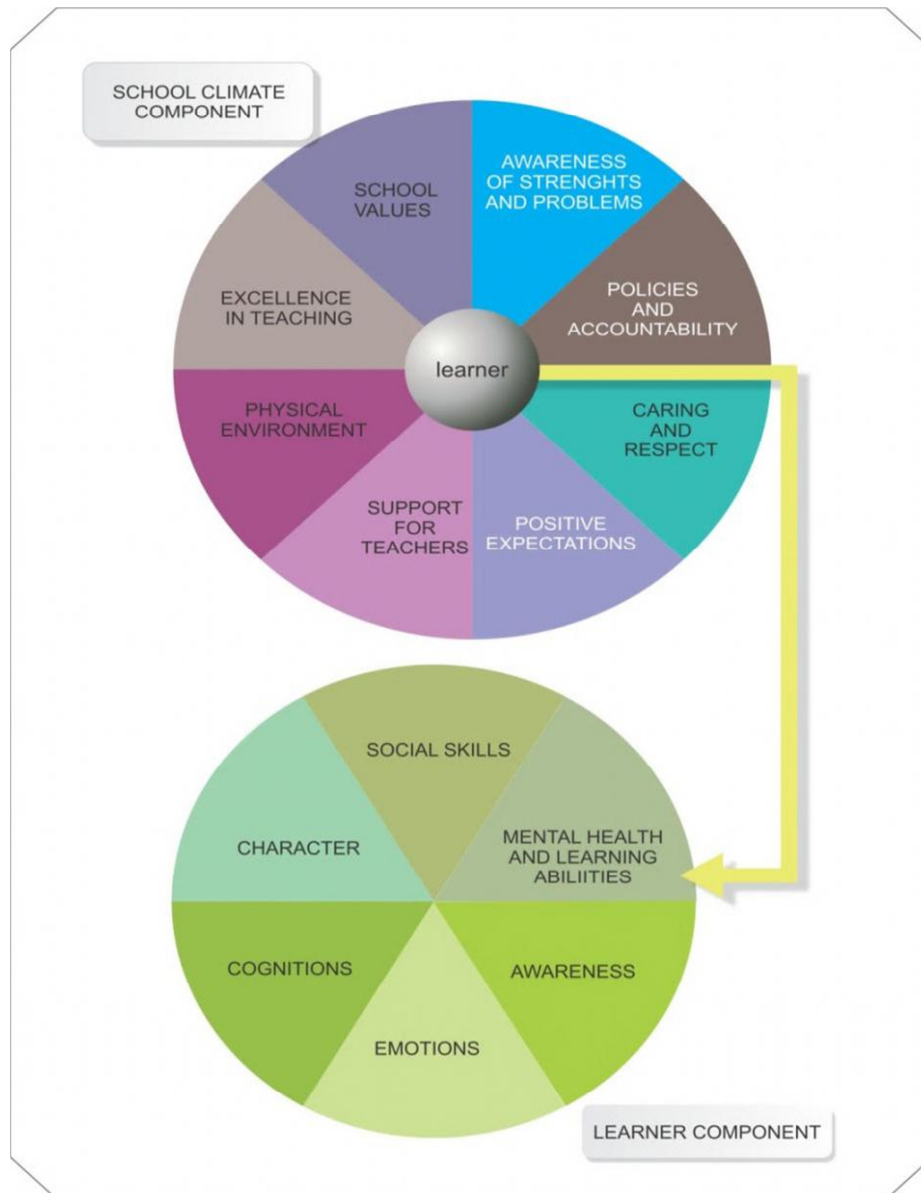


Figure 5.2: Social competence development and bullying prevention model

Participants clearly indicated that procedures and policies aiming at the eradication of bullying should be created, implemented, and made available to everyone in the school environment. Literature states that there is a definite need for the development of policies which draw upon evidence-based practices that have been proven to be effective, as well as the utilisation of intervention-based research such as restorative justice (Farrington & Ttofi, 2009, p. 85; Morrison, 2007, p. 121; Roffey, 2010, p. 164; Roffey, 2011, p. 130; Thorsborne & Vinegrad, 2009, p. 9) and the method of shared concern (Griffiths, 2007, p. 45; Pikas, 2002, p. 307; Rigby, 2010, p. 87; Rigby & Griffiths, 2010, p. 10; Rigby & Thomas, 2010, p. 38). Therefore, clear and functional anti-bullying policies and procedures are essential elements of a successful whole-school prevention and intervention approach (Bradshaw & Waasdorp, 2011, pp. 44-45; Mestry et al., 2006, p. 55; Roffey, 2010, p. 164).

Literature further emphasises that anti-bullying initiatives should bring together experts from various disciplines, and in co-operation with them, utilise their expertise in developing anti-bullying programmes and policies (Farrington & Ttofi, 2009, p. 84). I feel strongly that educational psychologists should play a pertinent role in addressing bullying behaviour within the school community. Educational psychologists have a wide range of expertise, and should therefore not only assist schools in developing, implementing and sustaining anti-bullying initiatives, but also play a role in the development of policies concerning bullying on either a provincial or national level. Furthermore, educational psychologists can play an important preventative role in the whole-school environment and engage in the building of supportive psycho-social learning and teaching environments, as well as contribute to on-going staff development (De Jong, 2000, p. 349). However, due to the unique South African context where there is a shortage of educational psychology services. It is important for the educational psychologist not to work only at the level of individual schools, but to strive to widen their intervention to a community level.

The participants suggested that anti-bullying policies should provide structure and serve as guidelines for teachers and school management on how to deal with bullying behaviour. Literature supports this opinion and indicates that policies should encompass all bullying incidents. Policies should therefore not only focus on bullying behaviour between learners, but also on other dynamics in the school context, such as learner-on-teacher, teacher-on-learner, teacher-on-teacher, and principal-on-

teacher bullying (Ellis & Shute, 2007, p. 661; James et al., 2008, p. 161). In addition to this, it is essential to provide information about the effects of bullying and to stress the importance of responding to bullying in an immediate and consistent manner (Ellis & Shute, 2007, p. 661; Sherer & Nickerson, 2010, p. 223). Furthermore, literature emphasises that when prevention and intervention programmes are implemented, they need to be evaluated on a systemic basis (Farrington & Ttofi, 2009, p. 81). The school should therefore determine for whom, and why, these programmes work and then modify aspects which are found to be ineffective (Rubin-Vaughn, Pepler, Brown & Craig, 2011, p. 174).

The teachers perceived that a great deal of commitment is needed from everyone in the school community when developing anti-bullying programmes and policies. Most importantly, the participants emphasised that the development, implementation, and evaluation of such anti-bullying programmes should be viewed as a process. According to literature, an important element of anti-bullying programmes which are associated with a decrease in bullying, is the duration and intensity of the programme (Farrington & Ttofi, 2009, p. 80). In other words, anti-bullying programmes need to be intensive and long-lasting in order to have an impact on bullying behaviour. Therefore, an extensive time period is needed to create an appropriate school ethos which deals efficiently with bullying behaviour (Farrington & Ttofi, 2009, p. 81).

Literature highlights that in order to develop and implement effective bullying prevention and intervention programmes, one must understand the bio-ecology that establishes and maintains bullying behaviours (Swearer & Espelage, 2004, p. 1). Most intervention- and prevention-based research suggests that anti-bullying programmes should include all the systems of the bio-ecological model (Greif Green, Dunn, Johnson, & Molnar, 2011, p. 142) (See Figure 1.2). To ensure the success of anti-bullying programmes, these initiatives should go beyond the scope of the school and target wider systematic factors such as families, the Department of Basic Education as well as national policies (Farrington & Ttofi, 2009, p. 84; Minton & O'Moore, 2008, p. 9) (See Figure 5.1). Furthermore, research highlights that a number of contextual factors, such as school management and leadership, learner and staff attitudes, and the availability of resources, can impact on the quality of the programme implementation. Therefore, considerable pre-implementation planning is needed to garner staff support and buy-in for anti-bullying programmes and then to

integrate these programmes with existing support services in the wider community (Bradshaw & Waasdorp, 2011, pp. 47-48).

Literature has similarly found that teachers and school managers are at the forefront of addressing bullying by the modelling of appropriate behaviours, and dealing effectively with incidents of bullying (James et al., 2008, p. 170; Mishna et al., 2005, p. 734; Thorsborne & Vinegrad, 2009, p. 114). The attitudes and responses towards incidences of bullying are important. The school culture has the potential to become less tolerant towards bullying if the whole staff is seen to have unsupportive attitudes towards this behaviour, as well as taking active intervention when it does occur (Holt & Keyes, 2010, p. 124). In addition, staff, parents and other adults involved in learners' lives model positive relationship skills and attitudes, and should therefore promote and create contexts in which positive peer interactions exist. Craig, Pepler and Blais (2007) state that "by observing the interpersonal dynamics in learners' lives, adults can construct social experiences in ways that protect and support the development of healthy relationships and minimise the likelihood of bullying" (p. 475).

The teachers indicated that they did not know how to intervene and manage bullying behaviour. The participants reported that they did not receive training on how to manage bullying, and expressed the desire for training or workshops pertaining to the subject. According to literature, the majority of staff feel that more training is required to enhance their skills on how to respond effectively to bullying (Rigby & Griffiths, 2010, p. 354). Furthermore, literature stresses that schools need to provide continual support for staff and parents by providing them with ongoing, practical training (Bauman et al., 2008, p. 851; Rigby & Griffiths, 2010, p. 354). Consistent with the philosophy of a whole-school approach, literature states that responding to bullying requires team work (Rigby & Bauman, 2007, p. 7). Incidences should therefore be reported to school management, teachers, parents or guardians, and even anti-bullying committees. After bullying has been reported to the relevant individuals, collaborative action should be taken to manage these occurrences (Rigby & Bauman, 2007, p. 7). The teachers also recommended that clear reporting methods should be used to document bullying incidences and record the intervention processes implemented. Literature highlights that schools need to set up reporting structures and recording procedures to document incidents of bullying (Sherer & Nickerson, 2010, p. 224). Furthermore, whole staff should be used to supervise less structured

locations where bullying is more likely to occur (Gulemetova, Drury & Bradshaw, 2011, p. 14; Rogers, 2007, p. 203; Sherer & Nickerson, 2010, p. 223).

The teachers indicated that creating awareness across the whole-school community is essential in adequately addressing bullying. They noted that whole-school anti-bullying campaigns and workshops are useful methods which aim to facilitate awareness and provide important information about bullying. This opinion is supported by literature which found that more knowledge, education and training is critical to addressing and managing bullying (Alsaker, 2004, p. 303; Anagnostopoulos et al., 2009, p. 574; Mishna et al., 2005, p. 724; Sherer & Nickerson, 2010, p. 225). The teachers suggested that experts in the field, such as educational psychologists, can be invited for talks or workshops with the learners and the whole staff. In addition, the participants noted that discussion forums provide opportunities to discuss important issues. These may serve to facilitate discussion among the staff and engage learners in discussions within the classroom, or even on different platforms within the wider school community.

The teachers were also of the opinion that parents have an important role to play in the development of an anti-bullying awareness campaign, policies and procedures. This view is corroborated by literature which finds that parent training or meetings are significantly related to a decrease in bullying behaviour (Farrington & Ttofi, 2009, p. 84; Garringer, 2008, p. 4; Mestry et al., 2006, p. 57). Furthermore, literature stresses that families also play a critical role in bullying prevention by providing emotional support in promoting the disclosure of bullying incidents and in fostering coping skills (Bradshaw & Waasdorp, 2011, p. 45). These findings suggest that efforts should be made to sensitise parents to the issue of bullying through educational presentations, training on how to approach and communicate with their children about bullying, teacher-parent meetings, and by involving them in bullying prevention and intervention efforts (Bradshaw & Waasdorp, 2011, p. 45). There are also important bullying prevention activities that can take place at community level, such as awareness-making campaigns and anti-bullying marches. These initiatives can assist members of the wider community to intervene when they see bullying and to become actively involved in school- and community-based prevention and intervention activities (Bradshaw & Waasdorp, 2011, p. 45).

The participants suggested that slogans, posters, essays and poetry can be used to foster awareness and include learners in the anti-bullying campaigns. The teachers indicated that the curriculum should be utilised to raise awareness among learners. This can be facilitated by addressing bullying in different lesson plans, classroom activities, oral assignments and examination papers. Literature states that anti-bullying educational activities with learners are effective anti-bullying strategies (Sherer & Nickerson, 2010, p. 223). Research has found that classroom management, and how teachers respond to bullying behaviour, contributes to its existence (Allen, 2010, p. 12). Allen (2010) states that “teachers need to come to the classroom with skills that allow them to establish a culture that proactively minimises [bullying] and at the same time allows them to intervene in positive, educative, and effective ways” (p. 12). Therefore, effective classroom management and consistent responses to incidents are critical in providing safer and more supportive environments which are characterised by lower rates of bullying behaviour and a positive climate (Bradshaw & Waasdorp, 2011, p. 44; Mestry et al., 2006, p. 56).

The teachers were of the opinion that forming a specific committee that deals with incidences of bullying on a regular basis would be essential to reducing bullying. Counselling was also suggested by the teachers for individuals who engage in bullying behaviour and for the targets of bullying. However, the participants noted that this is not a realistic suggestion for their school because their counsellor is inundated with work and has serious time constraints. Literature states that individual counselling for both the target and the individual who engaged in bullying are some methods that have previously been used in schools and have rendered positive results (Sherer & Nickerson, 2010, p. 222). As there is lack of therapeutic and counselling services, and teachers are already stretched to their limit, intervention strategies need to be implemented on a higher level, namely the Department of Basic Education, in order to have a wider impact.

According to the teachers, cyberbullying has become a huge problem in their school, and is rife among grade 8 and 9 learners. However, according to the teachers, there are no policies or practices in place to deal with this type of bullying. Literature notes that as methods of bullying change with advances in technology, so do prevention and intervention policies and procedures (Rigby & Griffiths, 2010, p. 354). The Protection from Harassment Bill (RSA, 2010) has been proposed to deal with cyber

stalking on a national level. However, the Department of Basic Education should review their existing policies on bullying, and update these documents to include the nature and extent of cyberbullying. Furthermore, these policies need to take into account that cyberbullying can occur at school, or originate outside of school, but ultimately result in the substantial disruption of learning and teaching. The school is therefore well within the legal authority to intervene. Literature finds that the most important preventative method is the education of everyone in the school community about responsible internet interactions (Hinduja & Patchin, 2011, p. 25).

5.4 LIMITATIONS AND STRENGTHS OF THE STUDY

Due to the nature of this study, the scope had to be focused and was therefore limited to working within a single secondary school with a small sample of teachers. Widening the sample and conducting the research in multiple schools in different areas of the Western Cape may yield interesting data concerning the contextual nature and extent of school bullying, and would have helped to increase the trustworthiness of the research findings.

Due to the limited scope of the thesis, the study only used data generating methods aimed at gaining insight into teachers' meaning-making processes. However, the use of other methods such as observation during various times of the day in the classroom and around the school grounds, may have enhanced the research findings by providing additional information regarding classroom management, sites where bullying occurs, and the culture of the school.

Furthermore, the study focused only on the perceptions and experiences of teachers. Although it is important to consider teachers' perspectives on bullying, teachers are only a single system within the school community. Generating data from learners, school management, other school staff, parents and other individuals in the school community, may yield different - and possibly critical - perceptions and experiences regarding bullying.

An effect of the research was the shift some teachers described in their views and actions regarding bullying. For instance, some participants indicated that they had become more aware of specific group dynamics that exist between learners' peers,

while others came to the realisation that they themselves were participating in bullying behaviour. Therefore, the research process offers evidence of the teachers' ability to examine and change their views and behaviours concerning bullying. An important goal of this study was to increase knowledge regarding educational practice and theory so that teachers could reflect and learn about their practices. Several teachers indicated that participating in the research study was beneficial as it provided them with an opportunity to reflect on these practices and become more aware of bullying behaviour. Two participants illustrated this view in the following narratives:

"We are privileged in a sense to have had this opportunity to talk about this issue, and to realise that other teachers struggle with the same things. I am concerned that there is no procedure in place and this isn't just concerning for the learners involved, but also for us as teachers. We don't know what to do." (P-1)

"The fact that we had this opportunity will be cherished. Sometimes you go through the motions every day, but you don't really get time to sit and think about it, because there is so much else and you just get bombarded with so many things. So for me, our sessions that we had: it just makes you think about the fact that bullying in schools is such a reality. I think there are things that we can incorporate into our school. It would help teachers to maybe identify, to look more closely at the dynamics of classrooms. To be able to get a way forward, how do we deal with bullying, and all of that." (P-2)

A further strength of this study was the emphasis on the bio-ecological approach as it implies that bullying occurs in interactions between the multiple systems which make up the school context. All of these systems can therefore be capitalised on to help create change. Due to the nature and structure of the research design, this study gained insight into the perceptions and experiences of teachers with regards to bullying in the school context. This insight is important as it provides important information which can be used to direct policy and support from the Department of Basic Education. Furthermore, research in this field may serve as a database for further studies on bullying.

5.5 SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

A number of knowledge gaps in existing literature became evident in the light of the research findings of this study. There is definitely a need for further research that focuses on specific aspects of bullying. This will increase the depth and breadth of the foundation of research for addressing bullying within the school environment.

Much of what is currently known about bullying prevention and intervention is limited to how learners and teachers perceive bullying and the actions they take in response to such behaviour. As discussed in the previous section, researching all the members of the school community's perceptions and experiences of school bullying may be beneficial to creating, implementing and evaluating necessary and effective prevention and intervention procedures. Therefore, it is important to consider conducting a similar study to the one under discussion, but one where representatives of all members of the school community participate.

Evidence-based research should be conducted on specific prevention and intervention methods. The effectiveness of anti-bullying policies and programmes should be investigated in prospective longitudinal studies in diverse contexts. Armed with a theoretically driven and data-based model of bullying prevention, researchers can not only significantly reduce attitudes and perceptions supportive of bullying, but create meaningful and sustainable behaviour change. Linkage between research and practice is therefore important in eradicating bullying within the school context.

Research indicates a strong link between bullying and poor academic achievement, social adjustment and the well-being of individuals. A possibility for further research is to conduct a study on the short- and long-term effects of bullying on various individuals from diverse contexts. Research into the effects of bullying is crucial as it serves to stress the seriousness of bullying, and this in turn may give rise to a sense of urgency in addressing bullying in the school community.

Further research is needed to determine whether sites of bullying vary systematically according to age, gender, race, culture, peer groups or school contexts. Moreover, these sites may change over time and in response to increased supervision. Knowing where and when bullying occurs may help to enhance the understanding of the

processes involved in bullying. This will also assist in determining the effectiveness of school-based efforts to address bullying, as well as to determine if the bullying behaviour simply shifts to other locations and less observable forms of bullying due to the increased supervision.

The role of the bystander has been largely overlooked in the research on bullying. It is evident that bystander behaviour is an important determinant of bullying. Therefore, research into the different roles of the bystander, and how bystanders may contribute to and reduce bullying, is much needed. Another possibility is to research the perspectives and experiences of parents or guardians, families and individuals from the wider communities concerning bullying.

There is a great need for research on cyber- and workplace bullying, not only in the Western Cape, but the whole of South Africa. At present, there is not much known about these two forms of bullying in the secondary school context. Research specifically pertaining to cyberbullying is needed to investigate the nature and extent of the problem within the school context, but also as to how cyberbullying extends to outside the school setting. Furthermore, to effectively address and manage cyber- and workplace bullying, policies and procedural strategies need to be made available and be implemented by the whole school community.

5.5 CONCLUDING REFLECTIONS

While writing I came across a quote from President Barack Obama speaking at a conference on bullying prevention on 10 March 2011:

“As adults, we all remember what it was like to see kids picked on in the hallways or in the schoolyard. And I have to say, with big ears and the name that I have, I wasn’t immune. I didn’t emerge unscathed. But because it’s something that happens a lot, and it’s something that’s always been around, sometimes we’ve turned a blind eye to the problem. We’ve said, “Kids will be kids.” And so sometimes we overlook the real damage that bullying can do, especially when young people face harassment day after day, week after week.”

This quote made me realise once again that no one escapes the effects of bullying untouched, not even if you are the president of the United States of America. I was

further reminded of the harm that bullying can inflict. I find it disturbing and shocking that the effects of bullying can be so severe that some individuals, seeing no other solution, are driven to suicide. This leads me to question what is being done about bullying in our schools. From the literature review it would appear that little is formally being done in South African schools to combat bullying, and where policies are in place, they appear to be superficial, unsuitable and out-dated.

The detrimental effects of bullying are a harsh reality and urgent action is needed. When considered in light of the bio-ecological approach, I realise the importance of action at the level of all systems, including awareness raising; creating, implementing and evaluating policies; adequate training; further professional development; and instigating prevention and intervention programmes. It is important to include all the systems in the school community, from the macro- to the micro-system, because bullying is embedded in the cultural norms, values and social status of the whole community in which schools are situated. Furthermore, it is important to note that bullying does not occur in isolation. The whole-school, its ethos and vision, the local community and socio-political climate, as well as the history and experiences of individuals, all have an impact (Roffey, 2011, p. viii).

While bullying seems to be a pervasive problem in most secondary schools, there is a lack of policies and anti-bullying programmes with which to target bullying. Therefore, systematic and continuous research is needed to address the topic of bullying, particularly with regards to effective prevention and intervention strategies. There is a need for school staff to be trained in approaches which deal effectively with bullying behaviour in order to address it in their schools. Furthermore, the Department of Basic Education needs to create policy documents and training workshops focused on this topic. In conclusion, educational psychologists and other professionals have a social and professional responsibility to share their knowledge and expertise with schools and teachers to assist school communities in addressing bullying.

REFERENCES

- Allan, A. (2008). *Law and ethics in psychology: An international perspective*. Somerset West: Inter-Ed Publishers.
- Allan, E. J., & Madden, M. (2008). *Hazing in view: College students at risk, National Study of Student Hazing*. Retrieved December 18, 2010, from www.hazingstudy.org/publications/hazing_in_view_web.pdf
- Allen, K. P. (2010). Classroom management, bullying, and teacher practices. *The Professional Educator*, 34(1), 1-15.
- Alsaker, F. D. (2004). Bernese program against victimization in kindergarten and elementary school. In P. K. Smith, D. Pepler, & K. Rigby (Eds.), *Bullying in schools: How successful can intervention be?* (pp. 289-306). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Aluede, O., Adeleke, F., Omoike, D., & Afen-Akpaída, J. (2008). A review of the extent, nature, characteristics and effects of bullying behaviour in schools. *Journal of Instructional Psychology*, 35(2), 151-158.
- Alvesson, M. (2002). *Postmodernism and social research*. Buckingham: Open University Press.
- Anagnostopoulos, D., Buchanan, N. T., Pereira, C., & Lichty, L. F. (2009). School staff responses to gender-based bullying as moral interpretation: An exploratory study. *Education Policy*, 23(4), 519-553.
- Astor, R. A., Benbenishty, R., & Estrada, J. N. (2009). School violence and theoretically atypical schools: The principal's centrality in orchestrating safe schools. *American Education Research Journal*, 46(2), 423-461.
- Astor, R. A., Guerra, N., & Van Acker, R. (2010). How can we improve school safety research? *Educational researcher*, 39(1), 69-78.
- Athanasiades, C., & Deliyanni-Kouimtzi, V. (2010). The experience of bullying among secondary school students. *Psychology in the Schools*, 47(4), 328-341.
- Babbie, E., & Mouton, J. (2001). *The practice of social research*. Cape Town: Oxford University Press.
- Babor, E. R. (2006). *Ethics: The philosophical discipline of action*. Manila: Rex Books.

- Barbour, R. S. (2007). *Doing focus groups*. London: Sage.
- Barbour, R. S. (2008). *Introducing qualitative research: A student guide to the craft of doing qualitative research*. London: Sage.
- Bauman, S., & Del Rio, A. (2005). Knowledge and beliefs about bullying in schools: Comparing pre-service teachers in the United States and the United Kingdom. *School Psychology International, 26*(4), 428-442.
- Bauman, S., & Del Rio, A. (2006). Pre-service teachers' responses to bullying scenarios: Comparing physical, verbal, and relational bullying. *Journal of Educational Psychology, 98*(1), 219-231.
- Bauman, S., Rigby, K., & Hoppa, K. (2008). US teachers' and school counsellors' strategies for handling school bullying. *Educational Psychology, 28*(7), 837-856.
- Beale, D., & Hoel, H. (2011). Workplace bullying and the employment relationship: Exploring questions of prevention, control and context. *Work, employment and society, 25*(1), 5-18.
- Beckstrom, D. C. (2008). State legislation mandating school cyberbullying policies and the potential threat to students' free speech rights. *Vermont Law Review, 33*(2), 283-320.
- Ben-Ari, A., & Enosh, G. (2010). Process of reflectivity: Knowledge construction in qualitative research. *Qualitative Social Work, 10*(2), 152-171.
- Benefield, J. (2004). *Teachers - the new targets of schoolyard bullies? New Zealand Post Primary Teachers' Association*. Retrieved December 18, 2010, from <http://www.ppta.org.nz/index.php/collective-agreements/health-a-safety/1031-violence-bullying>
- Bernard, H. R., & Ryan, G. W. (2010). *Analyzing qualitative data: Systematic approaches*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Bester, S., & Du Plessis, A. (2010). Exploring a secondary school educator's experiences of school violence: A case study. *South African Journal of Education, 30*(2), 203-229.
- Bissonette, A. M. (2009). *Cyberlaw: Maximizing safety and minimizing risk in classroom*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin.
- Blase, J., & Blase, J. (2002). The dark side of leadership: Teacher perspectives of principal mistreatment. *Educational Administration Quarterly, 38*(5), 671-727.

- Blase, J., & Blase, J. (2003). The phenomenology of principal mistreatment: Teachers' perspectives. *Journal of Educational Administration*, 41(4), 367-422.
- Blase, J., & Blase, J. (2004). School principal mistreatment of teachers. *Journal of Emotional Abuse*, 4(3), 151-175.
- Blase, J., & Blase, J. (2006). Teachers' perspectives on principal mistreatment. *Teacher Education Quarterly*, 33(4), 123-142.
- Blase, J., Blase, J., & Du, F. (2008). The mistreated teacher: A national study. *Journal of Educational Administration*, 46(3), 263-301.
- Blazer, C. (2005). *Literature review on bullying*. Retrieved July 20, 2011 from <http://www.drs.dade.schools.net/Reports/Bullying.pdf>
- Bluestein, J. (2001). *Creating emotionally safe schools: A guide for educators and parents*. Deerfield Beach, FL: Health Communications.
- Bonanno, R. A., & Hymel, S. (2010). Beyond hurt feelings: Investigating why some victims of bullying are at greater risk for suicidal ideation. *Merrill-Palmer Quarterly*, 56(3), 420-440.
- Bradshaw, C. P., & Waasdorp, T. E. (2011). *Effective strategies in combating strategies*. The White House conference on bullying prevention manual (pp. 43-49). Retrieved July 20, 2011, from http://www.stopbullying.gov/references/white_house_conference/white_house_conference_materials.pdf
- Bronfenbrenner, U. (1977). Toward an experimental ecology of human development. *American Psychologist*, 32(7), 513-531. Retrieved June 20, 2011, from <http://www.uncq.edu/hdf/facultystaff/Tudge/Bronfenbrenner%201977.pdf>
- Bronfenbrenner, U. (1994). Ecological models of human development. In T. Husen & T. N. Postlethwaite (Eds.), *The international encyclopedia of education* (2nd ed., pp. 1643-1647). New York, NY: Elsevier Science.
- Bronfenbrenner, U. (2005). The bioecological theory of human development. In Bronfenbrenner, U. (Ed.), *Making human beings human: Bioecological perspectives on human development* (pp. 3-15). London: Sage.
- Burr, V. (2003). *Social constructionism*. London: Routledge.
- Burton, P. (2008a). Learning to fear, fearing to learn: Measuring the extent of school violence. *South African Crime Quarterly*, 26(4), 15-20.

- Burton, P. (2008b). *Merchants, skollies and stones: Experiences of school violence in South Africa*. Monograph Series 4. Cape Town: Centre for Justice and Crime Prevention.
- Carlisle, N., & Rofes, E. (2007). School bullying: Do adult survivors perceive long-term effects? *Traumatology, 13*(1), 16-26.
- Carney, A. G., & Merrell, K. W. (2001). Bullying in schools: Perspectives on understanding and preventing an international problem. *School Psychology International, 22*(3), 364-382.
- Cassidy, W., Jackson, M., & Brown, K. N. (2009). Sticks and stones can break my bones, but how can pixels hurt me? Students' experiences with cyber-bullying. *School Psychology International, 30*(4), 383-402.
- Cemaloglu, N. (2007). The exposure of primary school teachers to bullying: An analysis of various variables. *Social behavior and personality, 35*(6), 789-802.
- Cheng, Y., Chen, L., Ho, H., & Cheng, C. (2011). Definitions of school bullying in Taiwan: A comparison of multiple perspectives. *School Psychology International, 32*(3), 227-243.
- Cheng, Y., Newman, I. M., Qu, M., Mbulo, L., Chai, Y., Chen, Y., & Shell, D. F. (2010). Being bullied and psychosocial adjustment among middle school students in China. *Journal of School Health, 80*(4), 193-199.
- Clegg, J. W., & Slife, B. D. (2009). Research ethics in the postmodern context. In D. M. Mertens, & P. E. Ginsberg (Eds.), *The handbook of social research ethics* (pp. 23-38). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Collins, K., McAleavy, G., & Adamson, G. (2004). Bullying in schools: A Northern Ireland study. *Educational Research, 46*(1), 55-71.
- Coloroso, B. (2008). *The bully, the bullied, and the bystander*. (2nd ed.). New York, NY: HarperCollins.
- Conoley, J. C. (2008). Sticks and stones can break my bones and words can really hurt me. *School Psychology Review, 37*(2), 217-220.
- Cornell, D. G., & Mayer, M. J. (2010). Why do school order and safety matter? *Educational Researcher, 39*(1), 7-15.
- Cowie, H., & Jennifer, D. (2008). *New perspectives on bullying*. Berkshire: Open University Press.

- Cowie, H., Naylor, P., Rivers, I., Smith, P. K., & Pereira, B. (2002). Measuring workplace bullying. *Aggression and Violent Behaviour, 7*(2), 33-51.
- Craig, W., Pepler, D., & Blais, J. (2007). Responding to bullying: What works? *School Psychology International, 28*(4), 465-477.
- Cremin, H. (2003). Violence and institutional racism in schools. *British Educational Research Journal, 29*(6), 928-939.
- Dake, J. A., Price, J. H., & Telljohann, S. K. (2003). The nature and extent of bullying at school. *Journal of School Health, 73*(5), 173-180.
- Danby, S., Butler, C. W., & Emmison, M. (2011). "Have you talked with a teacher yet?": How helpline counselors support young callers being bullied at school. *Children & Society, 25*(1), 328-339.
- Danby, S., & Osvaldsson, K. (2011). Bullying: The moral and social orders at play. *Children & Society, 25*(1), 255-257.
- Daniels, T., Quigley, D., Menard, L., & Spence, L. (2010). "My best friend always did and still does betray me constantly": Examining relational and physical victimization within a dyadic friendship context. *Canadian Journal of School Psychology, 25*(1), 70-83.
- Davidoff, S., & Lazarus, S. (2002). *The learning school: An organisation development approach*. (2nd ed.). Cape Town: Juta & Co.
- Dawes, A., Long, W., Alexander, L., & Ward, C. L. (2006). *A situation analysis of children affected by maltreatment and violence in the Western Cape. Report for the Research Directorate, Department of Social Services & Poverty Alleviation, Provincial government of the Western Cape*. Cape Town: Human Sciences Research Council Press.
- De Jong, T. (2000). The role of the school psychologist in developing a health-promoting school. *School Psychology International, 21*(4), 339-357.
- Department of Basic Education. (2010). *Education statistics in South Africa 2009*. Retrieved July 12, 2011, from www.education.gov.za/LinkClick.aspx?Fileticket=8RQsvgahSgA%3d&tabid=93&mid=1131
- Department of Education. (2002). *Signposts for safe schools: Enabling safe and effective teaching and learning environments*. Braamfontein: Centre for the Study of Violence and Reconciliation.

- Department of Education. (2008). *Education for all (EFA) country report: South Africa*. Retrieved July 12, 2011, from <http://www.education.gov.za/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=rJwNOU9f82I%3D&tabid=452&mid=1034>
- DeMarrais, K. (2004). Qualitative interview studies: Learning through experience. In K. DeMarrais, & S. D. Lapan (Eds.), *Foundations for research: Methods of inquiry in education and social sciences* (pp. 51-68). London: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Denzin, N. K. (2001). *Interpretive interactionism*. (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Denzin, N. K. & Giardina, M. D. (2009). Introduction: Towards a politics of hope. In N. K. Denzin, & M. D. Giardina (Eds.), *Qualitative inquiry and social justice* (pp. 11-50). Walnut Creek, CA: Left Coast Press.
- Denzin, N. K., & Lincoln, Y. S. (2000). Introduction: The discipline and practice of qualitative research. N. K. Denzin, & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *Handbook of qualitative research* (2nd ed., pp. 1-28). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Denzin, N. K., & Lincoln, Y. S. (2005a). Introduction: The discipline and practice of qualitative research. In N. K. Denzin, & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *The Sage handbook of qualitative research* (3rd ed., pp. 1-32). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Denzin, N. K., & Lincoln, Y. S. (2005b). Paradigms and perspectives in contention. In N. K. Denzin, & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *The Sage handbook of qualitative research* (3rd ed., pp. 183-190). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- DeVoe, J. F., Kaffenberger, S., & Chandler, K. (2005). *Student reports of bullying: Results from the 2001 school crime supplement to the National Crime Victimization Survey*. Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics. Retrieved March 6, 2011, from <http://www.nces.ed.gov/pubs2005/2005310.pdf>
- De Wet, N. C. (2003). Eastern Cape educators' perceptions of the causes and the scope of school violence. *Acta Criminologica*, 16(3), 89-106.
- De Wet, N. C. (2005a). Educator recognition of and intervention in school bullying situations: The perspectives and experiences of Free State educators and learners. *Acta Criminologica*, 18(2), 44-56.
- De Wet, N. C. (2005b). The nature and extent of bullying in Free State secondary schools. *South African Journal of Education*, 25(2), 82-88.

- De Wet, N. C. (2005c). The voices of victims and witnesses of school bullying. *Koers*, 70(4), 705-725.
- De Wet, N. C. (2006a). Educators' perceptions, experiences and observations of school violence in Lesotho. *Acta Criminologica*, 19(3), 12-28.
- De Wet, N. C. (2006b). Free State educators' experiences and recognition of bullying at schools. *South African Journal of Education*, 26(1), 61-73.
- De Wet, N. C. (2007a). Educators as perpetrators and victims of school violence. *Acta Criminologica*, 20(2), 10-42.
- De Wet, N. C. (2007b). Free State educators' perceptions and observations of learner-on-learner, learner-on-educator and educator-on-learner school violence. *Education as Change*, 11(1), 59-85.
- De Wet, N. C. (2010a). School principals' bullying behaviour. *Acta Criminologica*. 23(1), 96-117.
- De Wet, N. C. (2010b). The reason for and the impact of principal-on-teacher bullying on the victim's private and professional lives. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 26(7), 1450-1459.
- De Wet, N. C. (2010c). Victims of educator-targeted bullying: A qualitative study. *South African Journal of Education*, 30(2), 189-201.
- De Wet, N. C., Jacobs, L., & Palm-Forster, T. (2008). Sexual harassment in Free State schools: An exploratory study. *Acta Criminologica*, 21(1), 97-122.
- Dickson-Swift, V., James, E. L., Kippen, S., & Liamputtong, P. (2009). Researching sensitive topics: Qualitative research as emotion work. *Qualitative Research*, 9(1), 61-79.
- Dickson-Swift, V., James, E. L., & Liamputtong, P. (2008). *Undertaking sensitive research in the health and social sciences: managing boundaries, emotions and risks*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Donald, D., Lazarus, S., & Lolwana, P. (2006). *Educational psychology in social context*. (3rd ed.). Cape Town: Oxford University Press.
- Downes, P., & Gilligan, A. L. (2007). *Beyond educational disadvantage*. Dublin: Institute of Public Administration.

- Duncan, N., & Owens, L. (2011). Bullying, social power and heteronormativity: Girls' constructions of popularity. *Children & Society, 25*(1), 306-316.
- Education Labour Relations Council. (2005). *Educator supply and demand in the South African public education system: Integrated report. Report prepared by a research consortium comprising the Human Sciences Research Council, the Medical Research Council of South Africa and the Mobile Task Team on the impact of HIV/Aids on education of the University of KwaZulu-Natal*. Cape Town: Human Sciences Research Council Press.
- Eliasov, N., & Frank, C. (2000). *Crime and violence in schools in transition: A survey of crime and violence in twenty schools in the Cape Metropole and beyond*. Cape Town: Institute of Criminology, University of Cape Town.
- Ellis, A. A., & Shute, R. (2007). Teacher responses to bullying in relation to moral orientation and seriousness of bullying. *British Journal of Educational Psychology, 77*(3), 649-663.
- Epstein, J. A., & Spirito, A. (2010). Gender-specific risk factors for suicidality among high school students. *Archives of Suicides Research, 14*(3), 193-305.
- Espelage, D. L. (2011). *Bullying and the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, questioning community*. The White House conference on bullying prevention manual (pp. 65-71). Retrieved July 20, 2011, from http://www.stopbullying.gov/references/white_house_conference/white_house_conference_materials.pdf
- Espelage, D. L., & Swearer, S. M. (2008). Addressing research gaps in the intersection between homophobia and bullying. *School Psychology Review, 37*(2), 155-159.
- Espelage, D. L., & Swearer, S. M. (2010). A social-ecological model for bullying prevention and intervention: Understanding the impact of adults in the social ecology of youngsters. In S. R. Jimerson, S. M. Swearer, D. L. Espelage (Eds.), *Handbook of bullying in schools: An international perspective* (pp. 61-72). New York, NY: Routledge.
- Espelage, D. L., Aragon, S. R., Birkitt, M., & Koenig, B. W. (2008). Homophobic teasing, psychological outcomes, and sexual orientation among high school students: What influence do parents and schools have? *School Psychology Review, 37*(2), 202-216.
- Farish, L., & Brien, T. (2011, March 9). Online bullies to face music for harassment. *Street News Services*, p. 1. Retrieved 9 August, 2011, from http://www.streetnewsservices.org/news/2011/march/feed_271/online-bullies-to-face-music-for-harassment.aspx

- Farmer, D. (2011). Workplace bullying: An increasing epidemic creating traumatic experiences for targets of workplace bullying. *International Journal of Humanities and Social Science*, 1(7), 196-203.
- Farrington, D. P., & Ttofi, M. M. (2009). *School-based programs to reduce bullying and victimization*. Campbell Systematic Reviews, 6. Oslo: Campbell Co. Retrieved May 23, 2010, from <http://www.campbellcollaboration.org/lib/download/718/>
- Fisher, C. B., & Anushko, A. E. (2008). Research ethics in social science. In P. Alasuutari, L. Bickman, & J. Brannen (Eds.), *The Sage handbook of social research methods* (pp. 95-114). London: Sage.
- Fleming, L. C., & Jacobsen, K. H. (2009). Bullying and symptoms of depression in Chilean middle school students. *Journal of School Health*, 79(3), 130-137.
- Flynt, S., & Morton, R. (2008). Alabama elementary principals' perceptions of bullying. *Education*, 129(2), 187-191.
- Flick, U. (2009). *An introduction to qualitative research*. (4th ed.). London: Sage.
- Forsman, A. (2006). The work against peer bullying. In A. Ahonen, K. Kurtakko & E. Sohlman (Eds.), *School, culture and well-being* (pp. 53-67). Rovaniemi: University of Lapland.
- Fox, S., & Stallworth, L. E. (2010). The battered apple: An application of stressor-emotion-control/support theory to teachers' experience of violence and bullying. *Human Relations*, 63(7), 927-954.
- Fredericks, I. (2009, August 4). 60 School stabbings in just 6 months: 28 in period last year MEC to meet police bosses. *Cape Argus*, p. 1.
- Freedman, J., & Combs, G. (1996). *Narrative therapy: The social construction of preferred realities*. New York, NY: W.W. Norton & Co.
- Frisén, A., & Bjarnelind, S. (2010). Health-related quality of life and bullying in adolescence. *Acta Paediatrica*, 99(4), 597-603.
- Gardner, O., Buder, E., & Buder, S. (2008). *Letters to a bullied girl: Messages of healing and hope*. New York, NY: HarperCollins.
- Garringer, M. (2008). *Case studies in youth mentoring: Bullying prevention and intervention*. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education. Retrieved July 18, 2011 from http://www.educationnorthwest.org/webfm_send/297

- Geertz, C. (2000). *Available light: Anthropological reflections on philosophical topics*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Gendron, B. P., Williams, K. R., & Guerra, N. G. (2011). An analysis of bullying among students within schools: Estimating the effects of individual normative beliefs, self-esteem, and school climate. *Journal of School Violence, 10*(2), 150-164.
- Gergen, K. J. (1999). *An invitation to social construction*. London: Sage.
- Glaser, B. G., & Strauss, A. L. (1967). *The discovery of grounded theory: Strategies for qualitative research*. New Jersey, NJ: Transaction Publishers.
- Glew, G. M., Fan, M., Katon, W., & Rivara, F. P. (2008). Bullying and school safety. *The Journal of Pediatrics, 152*(1), 123-128.
- Glew, G. M., Fan, M., Katon, W., Rivara, F. P., & Kernic, M. A. (2005). Bullying psychosocial adjustment, and academic performance in elementary school. *Archives of Pediatric Adolescent Medicine, 159*(11), 1026-1031.
- Gobo, G. (2008). Re-conceptualizing generalization: Old issues in a new frame. In P. Alasuutari, L. Bickman, & J. Brannen (Eds.), *The Sage handbook of social research methods* (pp. 193-213). London: Sage.
- Greeff, P., & Grobler, A. A. (2008). Bullying during the intermediate school phase: A South African study. *Childhood, 15*(1), 127-138.
- Greif Green, J., Dunn, E. C., Johnson, R. M., & Molnar, B. E. (2011). A multilevel investigation of the association between school context and adolescent nonphysical bullying. *Journal of School Violence, 10*(2), 133-149.
- Griffiths, C. (2007). *Repairing peer dynamics: Effective school responses to bullying incidents*. National council against bullying conference Melbourne, November 2007. Retrieved July 24, 2011, from <http://www.ncab.org.au/Assets/Files/Griffiths,%20C,%20peer%20dynamics.pdf>
- Griffiths, C., & Weatherilt, T. (2002). *The safe school, friendly school accreditation project*. Perth: Education Department of Western Australia. Retrieved April 29, 2011, from <http://www.isca.edu.au/html/PDF/conf%202002/griffiths%20paper.pdf>
- Groenewald, C. (2010, May 30). Boelie gedrag in laerskool: Seun wil sy lewe neem uit vrees. *Rapport*, p. 14.

- Guba, E. G. (1990). The alternative paradigm dialog. In E. G. Guba (Ed.), *The paradigm dialog* (pp. 17-30). Newbury Park, CA: Sage.
- Guba, E. G., & Lincoln, Y. S. (2005). Paradigmatic controversies, contradictions and emerging confluences. In N. K. Denzin and Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *The Sage handbook of qualitative research* (3rd ed., pp. 191-216). London: Sage.
- Guerin, S., & Hennessy, E. (2002). *Aggression and bullying*. Oxford: BPS Blackwell.
- Gulemetova, M., Drury, D., & Bradshaw, C. P. (2011). *Findings from the National Education Association's nationwide study on bullying: Teachers' and education support professionals' perspectives*. The White House conference on bullying prevention manual (pp.11-20). Retrieved July 20, 2011, from http://www.stopbullying.gov/references/white_house_conference/white_house_conference_materials.pdf
- Gultig, J. (2002). *Being a teacher: Professional challenges and choices (Learning guide)*. Cape Town: Oxford University Press.
- Hamarusa, P., & Kaikkonen, P. (2008). School bullying as a creator of pupil peer pressure. *Educational Research, 50*(4), 333-345.
- Hampel, P., Manhal, S., & Hayer, T. (2009). Direct and relational bullying among children and adolescents: Coping and psychological adjustment. *School Psychology International, 30*(5), 474-490.
- Harris, S., & Hathorn, C. (2006). Texas middle school principals' perceptions of bullying on campus. *NASSP Bulletin, 90*(1), 49-69.
- Harris, S., & Petrie, G. (2002). A study of bullying in the middle school. *NASSP Bulletin, 86*(633), 42-53.
- Harris, S., & Willoughby, W. (2003). Teacher perceptions of student bullying behaviour. *ERS Spectrum, 21*(13), 4-11.
- Heinemann, P. P. (1972). *Bullying. Group violence among children and adults*. Stockholm: Nature and Culture.
- Hinduja, S., & Patchin, J. W. (2008). Personal information of adolescents on the Internet: A quantitative content analysis of MySpace. *Journal of Adolescence, 31*(1), 125-146.
- Hinduja, S., & Patchin, J. W. (2009). *Bullying beyond the schoolyard: Preventing and responding to cyberbullying*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.

- Hinduja, S., & Patchin, J. W. (2010). Bullying, cyberbullying, and suicide. *Archives of Suicide Research, 14*(3), 206-221.
- Hinduja, S., & Patchin, J. W. (2011). *Overview of cyberbullying*. The White House conference on bullying prevention manual (pp.21-32). Retrieved July 20, 2011, from http://www.stopbullying.gov/references/white_house_conference/white_house_conference_materials.pdf
- Holloway, I., & Biley, F. C. (2011). Being a qualitative researcher. *Qualitative Health Research, 21*(7), 968-975.
- Holt, M. K., Keyes, M. A., & Koenig, B. W. (2010). Teachers' attitudes toward bullying. In D. L. Espelage, & S. M. Swearer (Eds.), *Bullying in North American schools* (2nd ed., pp. 119-131). New York, NY: Routledge.
- Horton, P. (2011). School bullying in social and moral orders. *Children & Society, 25*(1), 268-277.
- Jacobs, T. (2010). *Teen cyberbullying investigated: Where do your rights end and consequences begin?* Minneapolis, MN: Free Spirit Publishing.
- James, D. J., Lawlor, M., Courtney, P., Flynn, A., Henry, B., & Murphy, N. (2008). Bullying behaviour in secondary schools: What roles do teachers play? *Child Abuse Review, 17*(3), 160-173.
- Jennifer, D., Cowie, C., & Ananiadou, K. (2003). Perceptions and experience of workplace bullying in five different working populations. *Aggressive behavior, 29*(6), 489-496.
- Jimerson, S. R., Swearer, S. M., & Espelage, D. L. (2010). International scholarship advances science and practice addressing bullying in schools. In S. R. Jimerson, S. M. Swearer, D. L. Espelage (Eds.), *Handbook of bullying in schools: An international perspective* (pp. 1-6). New York, NY: Routledge
- Jindal-Snape, D., & Foggie, J. (2008). A holistic approach to primary secondary transitions. *Improving Schools, 11*(1), 5-18.
- Jones, M. (2009, September 16). Another stabbing at city school. *Cape Times*, p. 1.
- Juvonen, I., Graham, S., & Schuster, M. A. (2003). Bullying among young adolescents: The strong, the weak, and the troubled. *Pediatrics, 112*(6), 1231-1237.
- Juvonen, J. & Gross, E. F. (2008). Extending the School Grounds? Bullying Experiences in Cyberspace. *Journal of School Health, 78*(9), 496-505.

- Kaniki, A. M. (2006). Doing an information search. In M. Terre Blanche, K. Durrheim, & D. Painter (Eds.), *Research in practice: Applied methods for the social sciences* (2nd ed., pp. 18-32). Cape Town: University of Cape Town Press.
- Kasen, S., Johnson, J. G., Chen, H., Crawford, T. N., & Cohen, P. (2010). School climate and change in personality disorder symptom trajectories related to bullying: A prospective study. In D. L. Espelage & S. M. Swearer (Eds.), *Bullying in North American schools* (2nd ed., pp. 161-181). New York, NY: Routledge.
- Kert, A. S., Coddling, R. S., Shick Tryon, G., & Shiyko, M. (2010). Impact of the word "bully" on the reported rate of bullying behaviour. *Psychology in the Schools*, 47(2), 193-204.
- Kim, Y. S., Leventhal, B. L., Koh, Y., Boyce, W. T. (2009). Bullying increased suicide risk: Prospective study of Korean adolescents. *Archives of Suicide Research*, 13(1), 15-30.
- King, N., & Horrocks, C. (2010). *Interviews in qualitative research*. London: Sage.
- Kitt, J. M. (2009). Facing up to workplace bullying in the context of schools and teaching. In M. De Souza, L. J. Francis, J. O'Higgins-Norman, & D. Scott (Eds.), *International handbook of education for spirituality, care and wellbeing* (pp. 991-1019). London: Springer.
- Kitzinger, J., & Barbour, R. S. (1999). Introduction: The challenge and promise of focus groups. In R. S. Barbour, and J. Kitzinger (Eds.), *Developing focus group research: Politics, theory and practice* (pp. 1-20). London: Sage.
- Konishi, C., Hymel, S., Zumbo, B. D., & Li, Z. (2010). Do school bullying and student-teacher relationships matter for academic achievement? A multilevel analysis. *Canadian Journal of School Psychology*, 25(1), 19-39.
- Korkmaz, M., & Cemaloglu, N. (2010). Relationship between organizational learning and workplace bullying in learning organizations. *Education Research Quarterly*, 33(3), 3-38.
- Krueger, R. A., & Casey, M. A. (2009). *Focus groups: A practical guide for applied research*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Kreutzer, T. (2009). *Internet and online media usage on mobile phones among low-income urban youth in Cape Town. Mobile 2.0: Beyond Voice?* Pre-conference workshop at the International Communication Association (ICA) Conference Chicago, 20-21 May 2009. Retrieved 27 March, 2011, from [http://tinokreutzer.org/mobile/internetonlinemediainusage\(ica\).pdf](http://tinokreutzer.org/mobile/internetonlinemediainusage(ica).pdf)

- Kvale, S. (1996). *Interviews: An introduction to qualitative research interviewing*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Kvale, S. (2007). *Doing interviews*. London: Sage.
- Lagerspetz, K. M., Björkqvist, K., Berts, M., & King, E. (1982). Group aggression among school children in three schools. *Scandinavian Journal of Psychology*, 23(1), 45-52.
- Lazarus, S., Daniels, B., & Engelbrecht, L. (1999). The inclusive school. In P. Engelbrecht, L. Green, S. Naicker, & L. Engelbrecht (Eds.), *Inclusive Education in action in South Africa* (pp. 45-68). Pretoria: Van Schaik.
- Leach, F. (2006). Researching gender violence in schools: Methodological and ethical considerations. *World Development*, 34(6), 1129-1147.
- Leach, F., & Sitaram, S. (2007). Sexual harassment and abuse of adolescent schoolgirls in South India. *Education, Citizenship and Social Justice*, 2(3), 257-277.
- Lee, C. (2004). *Preventing bullying in schools: A guide for teachers and other professionals*. London: Paul Chapman Publishing.
- Lee, R. M. (1993). *Doing research on sensitive topics*. London: Sage.
- Lee, W. O. (2001). Moral perspectives on values, culture and education. In J. Cairns, D. Lawton, & R. Gardner (Eds.), *Values, culture and education: World yearbook of education 2001* (pp. 27-45). London: Kogan Page.
- Lee, C., Buckthorpe, S., Craighead, T., & McCormack, G. (2008). The relationship between the level of bullying in primary schools and children's views of their teachers' attitudes to pupil behaviour. *Pastoral Care in Education*, 26(3), 171-180.
- Leoschut, L. (2009). *Running nowhere fast: Results of the 2008 National Youth Lifestyle Study*. Monograph Series 6. Cape Town: Centre for Justice and Crime Prevention.
- Leoschut, L., & Burton, P. (2006). *How rich the rewards: Results of the 2005 National Youth Victimization Study*. Monograph Series 1. Cape Town: Centre for Justice and Crime Prevention.
- Lewis, E. (2010, October 26). Teen gangs target city schoolchildren. *Cape Argus*, p. 1.
- Liang, H., Flisher, A. J., & Lombard, C. J. (2007). Bullying, violence, and risk behaviour in South African school students. *Child Abuse & Neglect*, 31(2), 161-171.

- Lincoln, Y. S. (2009). Ethical practices in qualitative research. In D. M. Mertens, & E. G. Ginsberg (Eds.), *The handbook of social research ethics* (pp. 150-169). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Lincoln, Y. S., & Guba, E. G. (1985). *Naturalistic Inquiry*. Beverly Hills, CA: Sage.
- Livesey, G. E., McAleavy, G. J., Donegan, H. A., Duffy, J., O'Hagan, C., Adamson, G., & White, R. (2007). *The nature and extent of bullying in schools in the North of Ireland*. Northern Ireland statistics and research agency: Department of Education. Retrieved 23 June, 2010, from http://www.deni.gov.uk/no_46_second_edition.pdf
- Lorenz, K. Z. (1966). *On aggression*. London: Methuen & Co.
- Ma, X. (2001). Bullying and being bullied: To what extent are bullies also victims? *American Educational Research Journal*, 38(2), 351-370.
- MacDonald, H., & Swart, E. (2004). The culture of bullying at a primary school. *Education as Change*, 8(2), 33-55.
- Maphumulo, S. (2009, February 23). Support for brutal initiations in South Africa continues. *The Star*, p. 3.
- Maracek, J., Fine, M., & Kidder, L. (2001). Working between two worlds: Qualitative methods and psychology. In D. L. Tolman, & M. B. Miller (Eds.), *From subjects to subjectivities: A handbook of interpretive and participatory methods* (pp. 29-41). New York, NY: New York University Press.
- Maree, J. G. (2000). What cannot be endured must be cured: Untying the Gordian knot of violence in South African schools. *Acta Criminologica*, 13(3), 1-13.
- Maree, J. G. (2005). Bending the neck to the yoke or getting up on one's hind legs? Getting to grips with bullying. *Acta Criminologica*, 18(2), 16-33.
- Maree, J. G., & Cherian, L. (2004). Hitting the headlines...Lifting the veil on corporal punishment in South Africa. *Acta Criminologica*, 17(3), 72-85.
- Maritz, L. (2010, January 8). Op die Skoolbank, *Vrouekeur*, pp. 14-15.
- Marshall, C., & Rossman, G. B. (2006). *Designing qualitative research*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

- Mathews, D. J. (2002). *101 support group activities for teenagers who bully: Grades 6-12. A leader's manual for secondary educators and other professionals*. Minnesota, MN: Hazelden Foundation.
- Maunder, R. E., Harrop, A., & Tattersall, A. J. (2010). Pupil and staff perceptions of bullying in secondary schools: Comparing behavioural definitions and their perceived seriousness. *Educational Research*, 53(3), 263-282.
- Maunder, R. E., & Tattersall, A. J. (2010). Staff experiences of managing bullying in secondary schools: The importance of internal and external relationships in facilitating intervention. *Educational & Child Psychology*, 27(1), 116-128.
- McEvoy, A. (2005). *Teachers who bully students: patterns and policy implications*. Paper presented at the Hamilton Fish Institute's Persistently Safe Schools Conference, Philadelphia. Retrieved March 6, 2011, from <http://www.stopbullyingnow.com/teachers%20who%20bully%20students%20McEvoy.pdf>
- McGuckin, C., Cummins, P. K., & Lewis, C. A. (2010). f2f and cyberbullying among children in Northern Ireland: Data from the Kids Life and Times Surveys. *Psychology, Society & Education*, 2(2), 83-96.
- Menesini, E., Fonzi, A., & Smith, P. K. (2002). Attribution of meanings to terms related to bullying: A comparison between educator's and learner's perspectives in Italy. *European Journal of Psychology of Education*, 17(4), 393-406.
- Menesini, E., Modena, M., & Tani, F. (2009). Bullying and victimisation in adolescence: Concurrent and stable roles and psychological health symptoms. *The Journal of Genetic Psychology*, 170(2), 115-133.
- Merriam, S. B. (2009). *Qualitative research: A guide to design and implementation*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Mertens, D. M. (2005). *Research and evaluation in education and psychology: Integrating diversity with quantitative, qualitative and mixed methods*. (2nd ed.). London: Sage.
- Mertens, D. M., Homes, H. M., & Harris, R. L. (2009). Transformative research and ethics. In D. M. Mertens, & P. E. Ginsberg (Eds.), *The handbook of social research ethics* (pp. 85-101). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Mestry, R., Van der Merwe, M., & Squelch, J. (2006). Bystander behaviour of school children observing bullying. *SA-eDUC JOURNAL*, 3(2), 46-59.

- Milne, C. (2005). On being authentic. A response to "no thank you, not today": Supporting professional relationships in large qualitative studies. *Forum: Qualitative Social Research*, 6(3), 1-4.
- Minton, S. J., & O'Moore, A. M. (2008). The effectiveness of a nationwide intervention programme to prevent and counter school bullying in Ireland. *International Journal of Psychology and Psychological Therapy*, 8(1), 1-12.
- Mishna, F. (2004). A qualitative study of bullying from multiple perspectives. *Children & Schools*, 26(4), 234-247.
- Mishna, F. & Alaggia, R. (2005). Weighing the risks: A child's decision to disclose peer victimization, *Children and Schools*, 27(4), 217-226.
- Mishna, F., Scarcello, I., Pepler, D., & Wiener, J. (2005). Teachers' understanding of bullying. *Canadian Journal of Education*, 28(4), 718-738.
- Mishna, F., Wiener, J., & Pepler, D. (2008). Some of my best friends - experiences of bullying within friendships. *School Psychology International*, 29(5), 549-573.
- Mkalipi, M. (2010, October 30). Pupils' knife battle! 15-year-old arrested for attacking schoolmate. *Daily Sun*, p. 2.
- Monks, C. P., & Coyne, I. (2011). A history of research into bullying. In C. P. Monks, & I. Coyne (Eds.), *Bullying in different contexts* (pp. 1-11). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Morgan, B. I. (2011). *Teachers' attitudes with regard to bullying at a high school in the Cape Metropole*. Unpublished Master's Thesis. Cape Town: Cape Peninsula University of Technology.
- Morojele, N. K., Brook, J. S., & Kachieng'a, M. A. (2006). Perceptions of sexual risk behaviours and substance abuse among adolescents in South Africa: A qualitative investigation. *AIDS Care*, 18(3), 215-219.
- Morrison, B. (2007). *Restoring safe school communities: A whole school response to bullying, violence and alienation*. Sydney: The Federation Press.
- Munhall, P. L., & Chenail, R. J. (2008). *Qualitative research proposals and reports: A guide*. (3rd ed.). Sudbury, MA: Jones and Bartlett Publishers.

- Murray-Harvey, R. (2010). Relationship influences on students' academic achievement, psychological health and well-being at school. *Educational and Child Psychology*, 27(1), 108-119.
- Myburgh, C., & Poggenpoel, M. (2009). Meta-synthesis on learners' experience of aggression in secondary schools in South Africa. *South African Journal of Education*, 29(4), 445-460.
- Naylor, P., & Cowie, H. (1999). The effectiveness of peer support systems in challenging school bullying: The perspectives and experiences of teachers and pupils. *Journal of Adolescence*, 22(4), 467-479.
- Naylor, P., Cowie, H., Cossin, F., De Bettencourt, R., & Lemme, F. (2006). Teachers' and pupils' definitions of bullying. *British Journal of Educational Psychology*, 76(3), 553-576.
- Nel, C. (2010, May 30). Trane na skelwoorde op "network-sonder-grense". *Rapport*, 14.
- Neser, J. (2005). An exploration of learners' views on certain aspects of school safety. *Acta Criminologica*, 18(3), 61-81.
- Neser, J., Ovens, M., Van der Merwe, M., Morodi, R., & Ladikos, A. (2003). Bullying in schools: A general overview. *Acta Criminologica*, 16(1), 127-157.
- Neser, J., Ovens, M., Van der Merwe, M., Morodi, R., Ladikos, A., & Prinsloo, J. (2004a). The observation of bullying in schools by learners. *Acta Criminologica*, 17(1), 139-153.
- Neser, J., Ovens, M., Van der Merwe, M., Morodi, R., Ladikos, A., & Prinsloo, J. (2004b). The victims of bullying in schools. *Acta Criminologica*, 17(3), 28-47.
- Newman, B. M., & Newman, P. R. (2009). *Development through life: A psychosocial approach*. (10th ed.). Belmont, CA: Wadsworth Cengage Learning.
- Nicolaidis, S., Toda, Y., & Smith, P. K. (2002). Knowledge and attitudes about school bullying in trainee educators. *British Journal of Educational Psychology*, 72(1), 105-118.
- Obama, B. H. (2011). *White House conference on bullying prevention*. Retrieved July 20, 2011, from <http://www.stopbullying.gov/the-press-office/2011/03/10/remarks-president-and-first-lady-white>
- Oh, I., & Hazler, R. J. (2009). Contributions of personal and situational actors to bystanders' reactions to school bullying. *School Psychology International*, 30(3), 291-310.

- O'Higgins-Norman, J. (2009). Straight talking: Explorations on homosexuality and homophobia in secondary schools in Ireland. *Sex Education, 9*(4), 381-393.
- O'Leary, Z. (2005). *Researching real-world problems: A guide to methods of inquiry*. London: Sage.
- Olweus, D. (1978). *Aggression in the schools: Bullies and whipping boys*. Washington, DC: Hemisphere Press.
- Olweus, D. (1993). *Bullying at school: What we know and what we can do*. Oxford: Blackwell.
- Olweus, D. (1999). Sweden. In P.K. Smith, Y. Morita, J. Junger-Tas, D. Olweus, R. Catalano, & P. Slee. (Eds.), *The nature of school bullying: A cross-national perspective* (pp. 7-27). London: Routledge.
- Olweus, D. (2007). *The Olweus bullying questionnaire*. Center City, MN: Hazelden.
- Olweus, D. (2010). Understanding and researching bullying: Some critical issues. In S. R. Jimerson, S. M. Swearer, D. L. Espelage (Eds.), *Handbook of bullying in schools: An international perspective* (pp. 9-33). New York, NY: Routledge
- O'Moore, M. (2000). Critical issues for educator training to counter bullying and victimization in Ireland. *Aggressive Behaviour, 26*(1), 99-111.
- O'Moore, M. & Kirkham, C. (2001). Self-esteem and its relationship to bullying behaviour. *Aggressive Behaviour, 27*(4), 269-283.
- Oosthuizen, I. J. (2005). The educator's duty of care. In I. J. Oosthuizen (Ed.) *Safe schools* (pp. 68-91). Pretoria: Centre for Education Law and Education Policy.
- Orpinas, P., & Horne, A. M. (2006). *Bullying prevention: Creating a positive school climate and developing social competence*. Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.
- Orpinas, P., & Horne, A. M. (2010). Creating a positive school climate and developing social competence. In S. R. Jimerson, S. M. Swearer, D. L. Espelage (Eds.), *Handbook of bullying in schools: An international perspective* (pp. 49-60). New York, NY: Routledge.
- Orton, W. T. (1982). Mobbing. *Public Health, 96*(3), 172-174.
- Osher, D., Bear, G. G., Sprague, J. R., & Doyle, W. (2010). How can we improve school discipline? *Educational Researcher, 39*(1), 48-58.

- Patchin, J. W., & Hinduja, S. (2006). Bullies move beyond the schoolyard: A preliminary look at cyberbullying. *Youth Violence and Juvenile Justice*, 4(2), 148-169.
- Patchin, J. W., & Hinduja, S. (2010a). Cyberbullying and self-esteem. *Journal of School Health*, 80(12), 614-621.
- Patchin, J. W., & Hinduja, S. (2010b). Trends in online social networking: Adolescent use of MySpace over time. *New Media & Society*, 12(2), 197-216.
- Patton, M. Q. (2002). *Qualitative research and evaluation methods*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Paulus, T. M., Woodside, M., & Ziegler, M. F. (2010). "I tell you, it's a journey, isn't it?" Understanding collaborative meaning making in qualitative research. *Qualitative Inquiry*, 16(10), 852-862.
- Pellegrini, A. D., Long, J. D., Solberg, D., Roseth, C., DuPuis, D., Bohn, C., & Hickey, M. (2010). Bullying and social status during school transitions. In S. R. Jimerson, S. M. Swearer, & D. L. Espelage (Eds.), *Handbook of bullying in schools: An international perspective* (pp. 199-210). New York, NY: Routledge.
- Pervin, K., & Turner, A. (1998). A study of bullying of teachers by pupils in an inner London school. *Pastoral Care in Education*, 16(4), 4-10.
- Pikas, A. (2002). New developments of the Shared Concern Method. *School Psychology International*, 23(3), 307-336.
- Piotrowski, D. & Hoot, J. (2008). Bullying and violence in schools: What teachers should know and do. *Childhood Education*. 84(6), 357-363.
- Plüddemann, A., Parry, C. Bhana, A., Harker, N., Potgieter, H., & Gerber, W. (2003). Monitoring alcohol and drug abuse trends in South Africa (July 1996 – June 2002). South African Community Epidemiology Network on Drug Use. *Research Brief*, 5(2b), 1-12.
- Potgieter, M. (2010a, May 28). Skêre afgeneem na skool-stekery. *Die Burger*, p. 11.
- Potgieter, M. (2010b, March 2). Woede oor Kaapse skole. *Die Burger*, p. 1.
- Potgieter, M. & Pretorius, K. (2010, March 4). Leerder van moord aangekla na stekery. *Die Burger*, p. 8.
- Prince, L. (2010, May 16). Geweld tref skole. *Rapport*, p. 1.

- Prinsloo, E. (2005). Addressing challenging behaviour in the classroom. In E. Landsberg, D. Krüger, & N. Nel (Eds.), *Addressing barriers to learning: A South African perspective* (pp. 449-465). Pretoria: Van Schaik.
- Prinsloo, I. J. (2005). How safe are South African schools? *South African Journal of Education, 25*(1), 5-10.
- Prinsloo, I. J. (2008). The criminological significance of peer victimization in public schools in South Africa. *Child Abuse Research, 9*(1), 27-36.
- Prinsloo, S. (2006). Sexual harassment and violence in South African schools. *South African Journal of Education, 26*(2), 305-318.
- Pugh, R., & Chitiyo, M. (2011). The problem of bullying in schools and the promise of positive behaviour supports. *Journal of Research in Special Education Needs*. (Online version of record published before inclusion in an issue). Retrieved June 1, 2011, from <http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/j.1471-3802.2011.01204.x>.
- Rabrenovic, G., Kaufman, C. G., & Levin, J. (2004). School violence: Causes, consequences, and interventions. In S. T. Holmes & R. M. Holmes (Eds.), *Violence: A contemporary reader* (pp. 115-132). New Jersey, NJ: Pearson Education.
- Rayner, C., & Hoel, H. (1997). A summary review of literature relating to workplace bullying. *Journal of Community and Applied Social Psychology, 7*(3), 181-191.
- Reddy, S. P., Panday, S., Swart, D., Jinabhai, C. C., Amosun, S. L., & James, S., ... Van den Borne, H. W. (2003). *Umthenthe Uhlaba Usamila - The South African Youth Risk Behaviour Survey 2002*. Cape Town: South African Medical Research Council.
- Reid, K. (2009). The rise of social networking sites. *Education Journal, 119*(1), 22.
- Republic of South Africa (RSA). (1996a). *Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, Act 108 of 1996*. Pretoria: Government Printing Works.
- Republic of South Africa (RSA). (1996b). *South African Schools Act, Act 84 of 1996*. Pretoria: Government Printing Works.
- Republic of South Africa (RSA). (2005). *Children's Act No. 38 of 2005*. Pretoria: Government Printing Works.
- Republic of South Africa (RSA). (2010). *Protection from Harassment Bill of 2010*. Pretoria: Government Printing Works.

- Richardson, L., & St. Pierre, E. A. (2005). Writing: A method of inquiry, In N. K. Denzin, & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *The Sage handbook of qualitative research* (3rd ed., pp. 959-978). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Rigby, K. (1995). What schools can do about bullying. *The Professional Reading Guide for Educational Administrators*, 17(1), 1-5.
- Rigby, K. (2002). *New perspectives on bullying*. London: Jessica Kingsley Publishers.
- Rigby, K. (2004). Addressing bullying in schools. Theoretical perspectives and their implications. *School Psychology International*, 25(3), 287-300.
- Rigby, K. (2007). *Bullying in schools and what to do about it*. Melbourne: ACER Press.
- Rigby, K. (2010). *Bullying interventions in schools: Six basic approaches*. Melbourne: ACER Press.
- Rigby, K., & Bagshaw, D. (2003). Prospects of adolescent students collaborating with educators in addressing issues of bullying and conflict in schools. *Educational Psychology*, 23(5), 535-546.
- Rigby, K., & Bauman, S. (2007). What teachers think should be done about cases of bullying. *Professional Educator*, 6(4), 4-8.
- Rigby, K., & Griffiths, C. (2010). *Applying the method of shared concern in Australian schools: An evaluative study*. Canberra: Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations. Retrieved March 2, 2011, from <http://www.deewr.gov.au/Schooling/NationalSafeSchools/Documents/covertBullyReports/MethodOFSharedConcern.pdf>
- Rigby, K., & Thomas, E. B. (2010). *How schools counter bullying policies and procedures in selected Australian schools*. Melbourne: ACER Press.
- Roffey, S. (2010). Content and context for learning relationships: A cohesive framework for individual and whole school development. *Education & Child Psychology*, 27(1), 156-167.
- Roffey, S. (2011). *The new teacher's survival guide to behaviour*. (2nd ed.). London: Sage.
- Rogers, B. (2007). *Behaviour Management: A whole-school approach*. (2nd ed.). London: Paul Chapman Publishing.
- Rogers, V. (2010). *Cyberbullying: Activities to help children and teens to stay safe in a texting, twittering, social networking world*. London: Jessica Kingsley Publishers.

- Roulston, K. (2010). *Reflective interviewing: A guide to theory and practice*. London: Sage.
- Rubin, H. J., & Rubin, I. S. (2005). *Qualitative interviewing: The art of hearing data*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Rubin-Vaughn, A., Pepler, D., Brown, S., & Craig, W. (2011). Quest for the Golden Rule: An effective social skills promotion and bullying prevention programme. *Computers & Education*, 56(1), 166-175.
- Ryan, K., & Cooper, J. M. (2010). *Those who can, teach*. Boston, MA: Wadsworth Cengage Learning.
- Sahin, M. (2010). Teachers' perceptions of bullying in high schools: A Turkish study. *Social Behavior and Personality*, 38(1), 127-142.
- South African Human Rights Commission. (2008). *Report on the public hearing on school-based violence*. Cape Town: South African Human Rights Commission.
- Salin, D. (2009). Organisational responses to workplace harassment: An exploratory study. *Personnel Review*, 38(1), 26-44.
- Sampson, H., & Thomas, M. (2003). Risk and responsibility. *Qualitative Research*, 3(2), 165-189.
- Saunders, P., Huynh, A., & Goodman-Delahunty, J. (2007). Defining workplace bullying behaviour professional lay definitions of workplace bullying. *International Journal of Law and Psychiatry*, 30(4/5), 340-354.
- Sanders, C. E., & Phye, G. D. (2004). *Bullying: Implications for the classroom*. San Diego, CA: Elsevier Academic Press.
- Senate Research Ethics Committee. (2009, March 20). *Research Ethics @ SU*. Retrieved April 2, 2011, from www.sun.ac.za/research/en/ethics/general-information
- Senosi, N. (2003). Violence in South African schools. *Quarterly Review of Education and Training in South Africa*, 10(4), 40-48.
- Serrao, A. (2009, February 20). Brutal hazing includes allegations of sodomy, sexual abuse. *The Star*, p. 3.
- Sevilla, C. G., Ochave, J. A., Punsalan, T. G., Regala, B. P., & Uriarte, G. G. (1992). *Research methods*. (Rev. ed.). Quezon City: REX Printing Co.

- Shamos, J. (2009). But it makes you tough...doesn't it? Everyone goes through it...right? The myths and truths behind bullying and self-esteem. *African Journal of Psychiatry*, 12(4), 319-320.
- Sherer, Y. C. & Nickerson, A. B. (2010). Anti-bullying practices in American schools: Perspectives of school psychologists. *Psychology in the Schools*, 47(3), 217-229.
- Slonje, R., & Smith, P. K. (2008). Cyberbullying: Another main type of bullying? *Scandinavian Journal of Psychology*, 49(2), 147-154.
- Smit, M. E. (2003). The bully/victim problem in schools. *Acta Criminologica*, 16(4), 81-88.
- Smith, J. A., & Osborn, M. (2008). Interpretative phenomenological analysis. In J. A. Smith (Ed.), *Qualitative psychology: A practical guide to research methods*. (2nd ed., pp. 53-80). London: Sage.
- Smith, P. K. (1997). Bullying in life-span perspective: What can studies of school bullying and workplace bullying learn from each other? *Journal of Community & Applied Social Psychology*, 7(3), 249-255.
- Smith, P. K. (2004). Bullying: Recent developments. *Child and Adolescent Mental Health*, 9(3), 98-103.
- Smith, P. K., & Sharp, S. (1994). *School bullying: Insights and perspectives*. London: Routledge.
- Smith, P. K., Singer, M., Hoel, H., & Cooper, C. L. (2003). Victimization in the school and the workplace: Are there any links? *British Journal of Psychology*, 94(2), 175-188.
- Smorti, A., Menesini, E., & Smith, P. K. (2003). Parents definitions of children's bullying in a five-country comparison. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology*, 34(4), 417-432.
- Somech, A., & Oplatka, I. (2009). Coping with school violence through the lens of teachers' role breadth: The impact of participative management and job autonomy. *Educational Administration Quarterly*, 45(3), 424-449.
- Squelch, J. M. (2001). Do school governing bodies have a duty to create safe schools? *Perspectives in Education*, 19(4), 137-149.
- Stassen Berger, K. (2007). Update on bullying at school: Science forgotten? *Developmental Review*, 27(1), 90-126.

- Stephens, P. (2011). Preventing and confronting school bullying: A comparative study of national programmes in Norway. *British Education Research Journal*, 37(3), 381-404.
- Stevens, G., Wyngaard, G., & Van Niekerk, A. (2001). The safe schools model: An antidote to school violence? *Perspectives in Education*, 19(2), 145-158.
- Stewart, D. W., Shamdasani, P. N., & Rook, D. W. (2009). Group depth interviews: Focus group research. In L. Bickman, & D. J. Rog (Eds.), *The Sage handbook of applied social research methods* (2nd ed., pp. 589-616). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Steyn, J., & Naicker, M. K. (2007). Learner, educator, and community views on school safety at Strelitzia secondary school. *Acta Criminologica*, 20(3), 1-20.
- Sullivan, K., Cleary, M., & Sullivan, G. (2004). *Bullying in secondary schools. What it looks like and how to manage it*. London: Paul Chapman Publishing.
- Swart, E., & Bredekamp, J. (2009). Non-physical bullying: Exploring the perspectives of Grade 5 girls. *South African Journal of Education*, 29(3), 405-425.
- Swart, E., & Pettipher, R. (2001). Changing roles for principals and educators. In P. Engelbrecht, & L. Green. (Eds.), *Promoting learner development* (pp. 30-44). Pretoria: Van Schaik.
- Swart, E., & Pettipher, R. (2011). Perspectives on inclusive education. In E. Landsberg, D. Krüger, & E. Swart (Eds.), *Addressing barriers to Learning: A South African perspective*. (Rev. ed., pp. 3-27). Pretoria: Van Schaik.
- Swartz, S. (2011). 'Going deep' and 'giving back': Strategies for exceeding ethical expectations when researching amongst vulnerable youth. *Qualitative Research*, 11(1), 47-68.
- Swearer, S. M. (2011). *Risk factors for and outcomes of bullying and victimization*. The White House conference on bullying prevention (pp. 3-10). Retrieved July 20, 2011, from http://www.stopbullying.gov/references/white_house_conference/white_house_conference_materials.pdf
- Swearer, S. M., & Doll, B. (2001). Bullying in schools: An ecological framework. *Journal of Emotional Abuse*, 2(2/3), 7-23.
- Swearer, S. M., & Espelage, D. L. (2004). Introduction: A social-ecological framework of bullying among youth. In D. L., Espelage, & S. M., Swearer (Eds.), *Bullying in American*

schools: A social-ecological perspective on prevention and intervention (pp. 1-12). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

- Swearer, S. M., Espelage, D. L., Vaillancourt, T., & Hymel, S. (2010). What can be done about school bullying? Linking research to educational practice. *Educational Researcher*, 39(1), 38-47.
- Swearer, S. M., Peugh, J., Espelage, D. L., Siebecker, A. B., Kingsbury, W. L., & Bevins, K. S. (2006). A Socio-ecological model for bullying prevention and intervention in early adolescence: An exploratory examination. In S. R. Jimerson & M. J. Furlong (Eds.), *The handbook of school violence and school safety: From research to practice* (pp. 257-274). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Swearer, S. M., Turner, R. K., Givens, J. E., & Pollack, W. S. (2008). "You're so gay!" Do different forms of bullying matter for adolescent males? *School Psychology Review*, 37(2), 160-173.
- Tenenbaum, L. S., Varjas, K., Meyers, J., & Parris, L. (2011). Coping strategies and perceived effectiveness in fourth through eighth grade victims of bullying. *School Psychology International*, 32(3), 263-287.
- The Presidency. (2009). *Situational analysis of children in South Africa (2007-2008)*. Cape Town: The Children's Institute, University of Cape Town.
- Thomson, P., & Gunter, H. (2011). Inside, outside, upside down: The fluidity of academic research 'identity' in working with/in school. *International Journal of Research & Methods in Education*, 34(1), 17-30.
- Thornberg, R. (2010). Schoolchildren's social representations on bullying causes. *Psychology in the schools*, 47(4), 311-327.
- Thornberg, R. (2011). "She's weird!" – The social construction of bullying in school: A review of qualitative research. *Children & Society*, 25(1), 258-267.
- Thorsborne, M., & Vinegrad, D. (2009). *Restorative justice pocketbook: How to resolve disciplinary matters by enabling those involved to repair the harm done to people and relationships*. Alresford: Teachers' Pocketbooks.
- Title, B. B. (2001). *Bullying an overview for educators*. Minnesota, MN: Hazelden Foundation.

- Totura, C. M., Green, A. E., Karver, M. S., & Gesten, E. L. (2009). Multiple informants in the assessment of psychological, behavioural, and academic correlates of bullying and victimization in middle school. *Journal of Adolescence*, *32*(2), 193-211.
- Townsend, L., Flisher, A. J., Chikobvu, P., Lombard, C., & King, G. (2008). The relationship between bullying behaviours and high school dropout in Cape Town, South Africa. *South African Journal of Psychology*, *38*(1), 21-32.
- Trach, J., Hymel, S., Waterhouse, T., & Neale, K. (2010). Bystander responses to school bullying: A cross-sectional investigation of grade and sex differences. *Canadian Journal of School Psychology*, *25*(1), 114-130.
- Trolley, B. C., & Hanel, C. (2010). *Cyber kids, cyber bullying, cyber balance*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin.
- Tulloch, S. (Ed.). (1996). *Reader's Digest Oxford Complete Wordfinder: A unique and powerful combination of dictionary and thesaurus*. London: The Reader's Digest Association.
- Twemlow, S. W., Fonagy, P., & Sacco, F. C. (2010). The etiological cast to the role of the bystander in the social architecture of bullying and violence in schools and communities. In S. R. Jimerson, S. M. Swearer, D. L. Espelage (Eds.), *Handbook of bullying in schools: An international perspective* (pp. 73-86). New York, NY: Routledge.
- Twemlow, S. W., Fonagy, P., Sacco, F. C., & Brethour, J. R. (2006). Teachers who bully students: A hidden trauma. *International Journal of Social Psychiatry*, *52*(3), 187-198.
- Unnever, J. D., & Cornell, D. G. (2003). The culture of bullying in middle school. *Journal of School Violence*, *2*(2), 5-27.
- Vaillancourt, T., Brittain, H., Bennett, L., Arnocky, S., McDougall, P., Hymel, S., ... Cunningham, L. (2010). Places to avoid: Population-based study of students reports of unsafe and high bullying areas at school. *Canadian Journal of School Psychology*, *25*(1), 40-54.
- Vanderbilt, D., & Augustyn, M. (2010). The effects of bullying. *Paediatrics and Child Health*, *20*(7), 315-320.
- Van der Westhuizen, C. N., & Maree, J. G. (2009). The scope of violence in a number of Gauteng schools. *Acta Criminologica*, *22*(3), 43-62.

- Vega, G., & Comer, D. R. (2005). Sticks and stones may break your bones, but words can break your spirit: Bullying in the workplace. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 58(1/3), 101-109.
- Waasdorp, T. E., Pas, E. T., O'Brennan, L. M., & Bradshaw, C. P. (2011). A multilevel perspective on the climate of bullying: Discrepancies among students, school staff, and parents. *Journal of School Violence*, 10(2), 115-132.
- Watkins, J. M., & Mohr, B. J. (2001). *Appreciative inquiry: Change at the speed of imagination*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass/Pfeiffer.
- Western Cape Education Department (WCED). (2003). *Procedural manual for managing safety and security within WCED institutions*. Cape Town: Western Cape Education Department.
- Wei, H., & Jonson-Reid, M. (2011). Friends can hurt you: Examining the coexistence of friendship and bullying among early adolescents. *School Psychology International*, 32(3), 244-262.
- Weingarten, K. (1991). The discourses of intimacy: Adding a social constructionist and feminist view. *Family Process*, 30(3), 285-305.
- Weir, K. (2010, November 26). Mean teens. *Current Science Weekly Reader*, pp. 20-21.
- Wiersma, W., & Jurs, S. G. (2009). *Research methods in education: An introduction*. (9th ed.). Boston, MA: Allyn & Bacon.
- White, M., & Epston, D. (1990). *Narrative Means to Therapeutic Ends*. New York, NY: W.W. Norton & Co.
- Whitted, K. S., & Dupper, D. R. (2008). Do teachers bully students? Findings from a survey of students in an alternative education setting. *Education and Urban society*, 40(3), 329-341.
- Willard, N. E. (2007). Cyberbullying and cyberthreats: Responding to the challenge of online social aggression, threats, and distress. Retrieved February 20, 2011, from www.cyberbully.org/cyberbully/docs/cbctparents.pdf
- Willis, J. W. (2007). *Foundations of qualitative research: Interpretive and critical approaches*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

- Wilson, F. (2008). *Gender based violence in South African schools. Directions in educational planning: Symposium to honour the work of Françoise Caillods*. Paris: International Institute for Educational Planning.
- Wiseman, R. (2003). Wider worlds of student bullying. *The Education Digest*, 68(5), 4-11.
- Ybarra, M. L., & Mitchell, K. J. (2004). Online aggressor/targets, aggressors and targets: A comparison of associated youth characteristics. *Journal of Child Psychology and Psychiatry*, 45(7), 1308-1316.
- Yoon, J. (2004). Predicting teacher interventions in bullying situations. *Education and Treatment of Children*, 27(1), 37-45.
- Yoon, J., Bauman, S., Choi, T., & Hutchinson, A. S. (2011). How South Korean teachers handle an incident of school bullying. *School Psychology International*, 32(3), 312-329.
- Zulu B. M., Urbani, G., Van der Merwe, A., & Van der Walt, J. L. (2004). Violence as an impediment to a culture of teaching and learning in some South African schools. *South African Journal of Education*, 24(2), 70-175.

ADDENDUM A

Navrae
Enquiries **Dr A.T Wyngaard**
IMibuzo
Telefoon
Telephone **021 467 9272**
IFoni
Faks
Fax **(021) 425-7445**
IFeksi
Verwysing
Reference **20100224-0044**
ISalathiso



Wes-Kaap Onderwysdepartement

Western Cape Education Department

ISebe leMfundo leNtshona Koloni

Ms Martha Kruger
69 Douglascarr Street
Bellville
7530

Dear Ms Kruger

RESEARCH PROPOSAL: BULLYING IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS: TEACHERS' PERSPECTIVES AND EXPERIENCES

Your application to conduct the above-mentioned research in schools in the Western Cape has been approved subject to the following conditions:

1. Principals, educators and learners are under no obligation to assist you in your investigation.
2. Principals, educators, learners and schools should not be identifiable in any way from the results of the investigation.
3. You make all the arrangements concerning your investigation.
4. Educators' programmes are not to be interrupted.
5. The Study is to be conducted from **22 February 2010 to 30 April 2010**.
6. No research can be conducted during the fourth term as schools are preparing and finalizing syllabi for examinations (October to December).
7. Should you wish to extend the period of your survey, please contact Dr R. Cornelissen at the contact numbers above quoting the reference number.
8. A photocopy of this letter is submitted to the principal where the intended research is to be conducted.
9. Your research will be limited to the list of schools as forwarded to the Western Cape Education Department.
10. A brief summary of the content, findings and recommendations is provided to the Director: Research Services.
11. The Department receives a copy of the completed report/dissertation/thesis addressed to:
The Director: Research Services
Western Cape Education Department
Private Bag X9114
CAPE TOWN
8000

We wish you success in your research.

Kind regards.

Signed: Audrey T Wyngaard

for: **HEAD: EDUCATION**

DATE: 23 February 2010

ADDENDUM B



UNIVERSITEIT•STELLENBOSCH•UNIVERSITY
jou kennisvenoot • your knowledge partner

9 April 2010

Tel.: 021 - 808-9183
Enquiries: Sidney Engelbrecht
Email: sidney@sun.ac.za

Reference No. 291/2010

Ms MM Kruger
Department of Educational Psychology
University of Stellenbosch
STELLENBOSCH
7602

Ms MM Kruger

APPLICATION FOR ETHICAL CLEARANCE

With regards to your application, I would like to inform you that the project, *Bullying in secondary schools: teachers' perspectives and experiences*, has been approved on condition that:

1. The researcher/s remain within the procedures and protocols indicated in the proposal;
2. The researcher/s stay within the boundaries of applicable national legislation, institutional guidelines, and applicable standards of scientific rigor that are followed within this field of study and that
3. Any substantive changes to this research project should be brought to the attention of the Ethics Committee with a view to obtain ethical clearance for it.

We wish you success with your research activities.

Best regards



Sidney Engelbrecht
.....
MR SF ENGELBRECHT

Secretary: Research Ethics Committee: Human Research (Non-Health)



ADDENDUM C

**STELLENBOSCH UNIVERSITY
PRINCIPAL'S PERMISSION FOR RESEARCH**

I, Mr/Ms [...], principal of [...] High School/Secondary School, hereby consent to the research that Retha Kruger intends to carry out at [...] High School/Secondary School.

I understand the nature of the research and that the participating teachers will be involved in an interview process that will not be intrusive or invade their privacy in any way.

I understand that all information obtained during the research will be treated confidentially and the anonymity of the school and the participating teachers will be ensured.

I am also aware that the participants may refuse to answer any questions during the interview process and that they may withdraw from the study at any time, with no adverse consequences.

SIGNATURE OF PRINCIPAL

DATE

SIGNATURE OF RESEARCHER

DATE

ADDENDUM D

**STELLENBOSCH UNIVERSITY
CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH**

Bullying in secondary schools: Teachers' perspectives and experiences.

You are asked to participate in a research study conducted by Retha Kruger, MEd Psychology student, from the Department of Educational Psychology at Stellenbosch University. The results will be contributed to a thesis. You were selected as a possible participant in this study because it requires the perspectives and experiences of teachers within a single secondary school.

1. PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of this research is to explore educators' perspectives on, and experiences of bullying in a secondary school in the Western Cape. Furthermore, the study aims to generate knowledge on how their perspectives can be used for the recognition of, intervention in, and prevention of school bullying.

2. PROCEDURES

If you volunteer to participate in this study, we would ask you to do the following things: Participate in an individual interview concerning the theme of bullying and in a focus group discussion, which will take the form of interactive workshops. The sessions will be held at your school in the afternoons at times that are convenient to you. The process will take a total of 2-3 hours of your time spread over a period of 4 weeks.

3. POTENTIAL RISKS AND DISCOMFORTS

There are no foreseeable risks, discomforts, or inconveniences that this study presents.

4. POTENTIAL BENEFITS TO SUBJECTS AND/OR TO SOCIETY

Bullying is prevalent in many secondary schools and presents a challenge for most teachers. This study aims to give insight into school bullying and how teachers' perspectives can be used for the recognition of, intervention in, and prevention of school bullying. It can therefore benefit you, as a teacher by assisting you to empower yourself in facing this challenge of school bullying.

5. PAYMENT FOR PARTICIPATION

The participant will not receive payment for participating in the study.

6. CONFIDENTIALITY

Any information that is obtained in connection with this study and that can be identified with you will remain confidential and will be disclosed only with your permission or as required by law. Confidentiality will be maintained by means of storing the data securely on the researcher's personal computer and it will be encrypted with a password. The researcher and her supervisor are the only people who will have access to the data. The data obtained during the study will be recorded on a digital voice recorder and will then be transcribed verbatim by the researcher. You will have access to the digital recordings of the interviews so that you may verify or amend your responses and comments. These recordings and transcriptions will be kept for 3 years before it will be destroyed. The names and identifying details of the participating teachers and the school will not be used in the resulting thesis or any publication.

7. PARTICIPATION AND WITHDRAWAL

You can choose whether to be in this study or not. If you volunteer to be in this study, you may withdraw at any time without consequences of any kind. You may also refuse to answer any questions you don't want to answer and still remain in the study. The investigator may withdraw you from this research if circumstances arise which warrant doing so.

8. IDENTIFICATION OF INVESTIGATORS

If you have any questions or concerns about the research, please feel free to contact:

Ms Retha Kruger (Principal Investigator)
021 910 3238
14578913@sun.ac.za

Prof. Estelle Swart (Supervisor)
021 808 2305/6
estelle@sun.ac.za

9. RIGHTS OF RESEARCH SUBJECTS

You may withdraw your consent at any time and discontinue participation without penalty. You are not waiving any legal claims, rights or remedies because of your participation in this research study. If you have questions regarding your rights as a research subject, contact Mrs Maléne Fouché (021 808 4623) at the Unit for Research Development.

SIGNATURE OF RESEARCH PARTICIPANT

The information above was described to me by Retha Kruger in English and I am in command of this language or it was satisfactorily translated to me. I was given the opportunity to ask questions and these questions were answered to my satisfaction.

I hereby consent voluntarily to participate in this study. I have been given a copy of this form.

NAME OF PARTICIPANT

SIGNATURE OF PARTICIPANT

DATE

SIGNATURE OF INVESTIGATOR

I declare that I explained the information given in this document to _____. He/she was encouraged and given ample time to ask me any questions. This conversation was conducted in English.

SIGNATURE OF INVESTIGATOR

DATE

ADDENDUM E

FOCUS GROUP SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW SCHEDULE (SESSIONS 1-3)

1. INTRODUCTION AND PRELIMINARIES

- 1.1 Introduce self
- 1.2 Motivation: explanation of purpose of interview
- 1.3 Confidentiality and anonymity
- 1.4 Format
- 1.5 Length of interview
- 1.6 Digital voice recorder
- 1.7 Questions
- 1.8 Informed Consent

2. DEFINITION OF BULLYING

- 2.1 Tell me about bullying at your school.

3. NATURE AND EXTENT OF BULLYING IN THE SECONDARY SCHOOL PHASE

- 3.1 Describe the types of bullying occur at the school? (Describe specific examples)
- 3.2 Where does bullying take place?
- 3.3 Who are involved in the bullying? (Between learners, between learners and teachers, between teachers/school management/other staff?) Examples
- 3.4 In your opinion, what are the causes of bullying?

4. METHODS OF DEALING WITH BULLYING

- 4.1 What are some reactions to bullying incidents? (Teachers, learners, parents, management)
- 4.2 What methods could be utilised to deal effectively with bullying incidents?

5. ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS

- 5.1 Are there any questions that are important that I did not ask?

ADDENDUM F

SEMI-STRUCTURED INDIVIDUAL INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

1. INTRODUCTION AND PRELIMINARIES

- 1.1 Motivation: explanation of purpose of interview
- 1.2 Confidentiality and anonymity
- 1.3 Format
- 1.4 Length of interview
- 1.5 Digital voice recorder
- 1.6 Questions
- 1.7 Informed Consent

2. DEFINITION OF BULLYING

- 2.1 Tell me about bullying in your school.
- 2.2 How would you define bullying?

3. NATURE AND EXTENT OF BULLYING IN THE SECONDARY SCHOOL PHASE

- 3.1 What types of bullying occur at your school?
- 3.2 What do you think causes bullying in your school?
- 3.3 How frequent is bullying in your school?
- 3.4 At which age or grade does bullying occur most?
- 3.5 Where does bullying occur most in your school?
- 3.6 What is the nature and extent of bullying? (between learners, between learners and teachers, between teachers/school management/other staff?)

4. METHODS OF DEALING WITH BULLYING

- 4.1 Can you describe in detail some of the incidents of bullying that you have personally observed?
- 4.2 How do you react to incidents of bullying? And other teachers?
- 4.3 What methods would you propose that teachers in your school could use to deal effectively with bullying?

5. ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS

- 5.1 Are there any questions that are important that I did not ask?

ADDENDUM G

AUDIT TRAIL				
DATE	ACTION	SITE	PEOPLE INVOLVED	RESULT
22-01-10	Ethical application form Informed consent form Interview guide Research proposal		Supervisor Ethical committee (University of Stellenbosch)	Application to the ethical committee for permission to conduct research
25-01-10	Application to Western Cape Education Department (WCED)		Supervisor Ethical committee WCED	Application to WCED for permission to conduct research in a school setting
23-02-10	Approval from the WCED for permission to conduct research		Supervisor Ethical committee WCED	Application to conduct research in a school setting approved by the WCED
19-03-10	Negotiating entry: telephonically	School	Principal	Set up a meeting with principal
22-03-10	Negotiating entry: meeting with principal	School	Principal	Approval from principal to conduct study
11-04-10	Approval letter from the Ethical committee		Supervisor Ethical committee	Application to conduct research was approved by the ethical committee
12-04-10	Meeting with prospective volunteers	School	Teachers (Grades 8 – 11)	9 teachers volunteered for the study
13-04-10	Focus Group Interview	School	Teachers	Transcriptions
20-04-10	Focus Group Interview	School	Teachers	Transcriptions
19-05-10	Focus Group Interview	School	Teachers	Transcriptions
27-04-10	Individual Semi-structured Interview	School	Teachers	Transcriptions
28-04-10	Individual Semi-structured Interview	School	Teachers	Transcriptions
29-04-10	Individual Semi-structured Interview	School	Teachers	Transcriptions
30-03-11	Focus Group Interview	School	Teachers	Transcriptions

ADDENDUM H

COMMENTS	EXCERPT FROM THE TRANSCRIPTION OF THE FIRST FOCUS GROUP INTERVIEW	CODING
<p>Interesting to hear teachers saying that they realised they all have experiences of bullying.</p> <p>Bredenkamp (2007) study on bullying among girls</p> <p>Extortion and intimidation by older learners.</p> <p>Told not to tell – culture of secrecy (MacDonald & Swart, 2006)</p> <p>Suicide (effect of bullying) - studies</p> <p>What intervention is happening from office side?</p>	<p>R: Can you please tell me about bullying in your school? (Laughter)(Turning towards each other, hand and shoulder gestures of “I don’t know” to one another).</p> <p>P1: Well there is some social isolation in my class (long pause).</p> <p>R: So there is some social isolation in your class, would you like to tell us some more about that?</p> <p>P1: There is some social isolation in my class, especially amongst the girls.</p> <p>R: Yes.</p> <p>P1: Where they group together and they will isolate one of the learners in the class and maybe in a lesson the learner would get up to say something and there is all these giggles, and sniggers and looks that they exchange. And then also name-calling which involved a boy.</p> <p>R: Was he calling names or was he been called names?</p> <p>P1: No he was called names by one of the girls. So there is the tuck shop episode where the senior grades take the juniors’ money.</p> <p>R: OK</p> <p>P8: Or they get them to buy them something.</p> <p>P2: Simply in terms of one of the learners says something that a group of learners are maybe doing that is not right then that group of learners will normally bully the learner who saw them and bully them in such a way that they don’t how can I say what is that word I am looking for (someone shouted out “tell on them”) tell on them, so to speak. So they will use just like a verbal threat or actually physically maybe beating them up or something to that effect, ja.</p> <p>P3: The one bad experience that I encountered was last year, with a boy in my register class. He was bullied verbally by another boy in the same class, to the extent where this boy tried to commit suicide three times during the course of last year. When I investigated the case the other group that was taunted by the same boy, knew how to deal with it, they could cope with it. But in this boy’s case, in the victims’ case I don’t think he had the personality to handle that. He must have poor self-esteem, most likely, and for him the taunting was devastating. It was reported to the office, the parents of the perpetrator where called in, but apparently this year it is occurring again.</p> <p>R: Are the boys in the same class this year too.</p> <p>P3: Same grade, in different class, I had a special request that they would be split up this year, but I don’t know if it is during happening in break</p>	<p>TYPES: Relational</p> <p>TYPES: Relational</p> <p>INVOLVED: Female</p> <p>INVOLVED: Grp-Ind</p> <p>TYPES: Relational</p> <p>TYPES: Verbal</p> <p>TYPES: Verbal</p> <p>INVOLVED: M-F</p> <p>Sen-Jun</p> <p>SITES: Tuck shop</p> <p>TYPES: Physical</p> <p>INVOLVED: Grp-Ind</p> <p>CONTEXTUAL: not tell</p> <p>TYPES: Verbal</p> <p>TYPES: Physical</p> <p>TYPES: Physical</p> <p>INVOLVED: M-M</p> <p>EFFECTS: Suicide</p> <p>INVOLVED: Ind-Grp</p> <p>PERSONAL: Coping skills</p> <p>PERSONAL: Poor self-esteem</p> <p>REPORTING: Office, Parents</p> <p>DEFINITION: Re-occurring</p> <p>INTERVENTION: Split learners</p>

<p>Teacher referred to it as vicious cycle. He is targeted, doesn't want to come to school. Learners are preying on the fact that this boy does not want to come to school then he is targeted some more.</p> <p>Learners are targeted in the classroom in front of teacher. Teachers recognise different types.</p>	<p>time that the taunting happens.</p> <p>P4: I have got a case, at this very moment, of a boy who is supposedly bullied, and maybe the supposedly I am using that word because it is been reported at the office. It is normally other children who have other issues; it is the weak ones, the vulnerable ones. They already he didn't actually want to come to school. And somewhere along the way, somebody is preying on that. So how to deal with that and he is feinting all kinds of illnesses, because he doesn't want to come to school, but it's not the only reason why he doesn't want to come to school, partly it is the bullying. So it is a vicious cycle at the moment.</p> <p>P3: It is an excuse maybe?</p> <p>P4: It is an excuse for not coming to school, so he isn't really dealing with the real problem.</p> <p>P5: I have only been here for relatively a short time, only for a year. In my registration class last year there was one boy who was being bullied by others learners, as was mentioned these boys already seem to have a vulnerability or some sort of soft spot about them. I found it difficult to deal with it, because I wasn't actually witnessing the events, they were happening in other classes or outside of school. So for me to actually, and it was mentioned to the principal and the parents were called in. But it is incredibly difficult, especially when an educator isn't a witness to what is actually happening, and you have to go on hearsay from both sides and of course the bullies are going to gang up and have their story all settled, and the one half are obviously then on their own. But this year it seems to be much better. They have sort of more accepted him in the classroom as he is, even though he is still not a 100% comfortable being at the school.</p> <p>R: Was this boy new?</p> <p>P5: Ja, he came in last year.</p> <p>P6: What I have experienced in one class is a case where, where a child is different in that the child is smarter, more insightful. As, as teachers we pick on that and sometimes we seem to give that child a little more attention, because the child actually makes sense in what he or she is saying. But what I also found in this case is that a particularly a group of boys would gang up on this particular person simply because she was smarter. Trying to all the time to get her down, get her to be quiet, get her not to have these insightful answers, and things like that. So she has these excellent answers and whenever she would do that there would be some kind of murmuring, and whenever she would excel there would be some kind of negative comment, but it wasn't this kind of physical beating you up. But it was this constant emotional bullying of this child and then what does one do? Because there are</p>	<p>SITES: Break time</p> <p>REPORTING: Office</p> <p>PERSONAL: Issues, weak, vulnerable</p> <p>EFFECTS: School refusal</p> <p>EFFECTS: Feinting illnesses</p> <p>EFFECTS: School truancy</p> <p>INVOLVED: Grp-Ind</p> <p>PERSONAL: vulnerable, soft spot</p> <p>CONTEXTUAL: Not witnessing - diff</p> <p>SITES: Other classes</p> <p>SITES: Outside School</p> <p>REPORTING: Principal, Parents</p> <p>CONTEXTUAL: Not witnessing-two sides</p> <p>PERSONAL: new learner</p> <p>PERSONAL: Smart, insightful</p> <p>INVOLVED: Grp-Ind, M-F</p> <p>PERSONAL: Smart</p> <p>DEFINITION: get down, to be quiet</p> <p>SITES: Classroom</p> <p>TYPES: Verbal</p> <p>TYPES: Relational</p> <p>DEFINITION: Constant</p>
--	--	---

<p>Teacher shared that they don't know how to deal with bullying if it occurs.</p> <p>Different observations or opinions about who gets targeted.</p> <p>Different factors why individuals get targeted. Multi-faceted.</p>	<p>times that you have to intervene and you need to put a stop to it. It is just that one has to do it so constantly, and you also need to not have the child herself feel, "O, gosh Miss is taking more notice of me". Because that will put her in a bad position, cos now everybody else will also get on to the case. So then being sensitive to that and making others aware of that they are breaking another's spirit. Because that is what it is you're breaking down another's spirit when you bully them. When it happens it is such a constant thing. It is their own inadequacies that they act out of in this group. That has been a concern of mine, because I got this class this year, and have them next year as well. And how to go about it.</p> <p>P2: I think because we teach the same class I think it gets to a breaking point for that particular learner in the March control test last year. When she actually didn't write her Life Science paper and she wrote and this was on the question paper that she was trying to answer right and this is an A-candidate student and at the end she wrote a little note explaining her feelings and what all this taunting, bullying is actually doing to her. So I think that was the breaking point for her. But I think I don't know how other teachers are feeling, but I think this year it has gone a little bit better. It seems to be a little bit better.</p> <p>P8: I have observed the opposite, where the top learners are not normally targeted. It seems to be the weaker learners that are being targeted. I am trying to establish what could be motivating the discrimination in the targeting learners. Why they wouldn't target the top and why the mediocre ones would be targeted.</p> <p>R: That is quite interesting, because now we have two very different views about the possible causes of bullying, with the two arguments being stronger learners vs. weaker learners and weaker learners vs. stronger learners. What do you all think?</p> <p>P7: I think the problem with bullying as a whole is that there is no one pattern. There is no type of child that gets bullied. You know maybe you look a little different and you get bullied, maybe you are smarter than everybody else. You get <i>get good marks</i>, they need to make fun of you because you are a nerd. Then it is you are dumb and we need to make fun of you, because you do not catch things. It happens in class and it is so multi-faceted that one particular learner in one of the classes that I teach she doesn't catch on as quickly as the others. So the minute she says anything or to ask a question. Then all the learners are so like this or like that. And because of that she feels bad about it. It is all these different things. The really smart one will say, but I know this and then he or she will get bullied as well. Also there is this very underhanded, bullying can come in so many different forms. But I find</p>	<p>INTERVENTION: Don't know what to do.</p> <p>INTERVENTION: Aware</p> <p>DEFINITION: breaking another's spirit</p> <p>PERSONAL: Own inadequacies</p> <p>EFFECTS: Academics</p> <p>REPORTING: Writing a note on a test paper</p> <p>PERSONAL: weaker academically, mediocre</p> <p>PERSONAL: No one pattern</p> <p>PERSONAL: Look different</p> <p>PERSONAL: Smarter, dumb</p> <p>PERSONAL: Do not catch on</p> <p>TYPES: Verbal</p> <p>DEFINITION: Aggrieved</p> <p>TYPES: Relational</p>
---	---	--

<p>Teachers are very aware of relational bullying – can be more damaging than physical bullying.</p> <p>Teacher noted that learners target other learners relationally so that there isn't any physical evidence - contrast to literature (teachers note physical bull)</p> <p>Teacher doesn't know how to address bullying</p>	<p>that that underhanded bullying, that sniggering and that nastiness. I don't know, for that it is malicious bullying that happens, and that can be more damaging than just beating someone up. You would think that it applies more to females, but the boys do it as well.</p> <p>P6: What is it that the boys do?</p> <p>P7: This underhandedness</p> <p>P8: I have experienced the same thing. I have found that girls are more structured in their attack.</p> <p>P7: But that is the thing. But you find that the boys do the same thing. It has become that it is not gender specific anymore. It is that, I am going to undermine everything you do, and am going to make you feel as small as I possibly can. Without injuring you, because if I harm you, they have evidence. They have evidence against me. But if I just keep pushing at you, and pushing at you, and pushing you down. They can't prove that I am doing that, you know. But if I hit you, you have a mark on your face, and people can see that I hit you. There is evidence to the fact that I bullied you.</p> <p>P1: Just to getting back to the person we spoke about earlier that was being bullied. I taught that class last year. The learner wanted to leave school, and I know the principal called me in and I had to address that class. And we had a lesson on low self-esteem. And when I go over that lesson, I get them to write down, why do you feel like that. Because I'm sorry to say it, but some of the people in our community some of the people do have low self-esteem and it just carries on and on and we hand it over to our next generation. And that is one of the problems.</p> <p>P2: In one of the grade 9 classes I have noticed, this is the first year that I'm taking this class, so I didn't teach them last year. I had noticed that there is this ditsy, nutty kind of boy. Not that he is overtly nutty. He is always on the backburner so to speak. But in that you can also see that he is a bit, he doesn't always take notice, you know he has got that type of personality. What I found was that there are some of the girls in the class who actually openly bully this child. From what I call bullying, because if anything goes wrong then they say "Miss it was this child", or if say anything that happened, and you know and it couldn't have been this child then they say, "Miss it was...". You know that type of thing. That is what I found in this one class. I don't know how to address it, all I can tell them is, you know, watch yourself you know, you are hurting this boy's feelings and that type of thing. Further than that I don't know. (long pause)</p> <p>R: Does anyone have anything to add. (long pause) OK, so maybe just to</p>	<p>DEFINITION: Many forms</p> <p>DEFINITION: Malicious & Damaging</p> <p>INVOLVED: M & F</p> <p>TYPES: Relational</p> <p>DEFINITION: Attack</p> <p>INVOLVED: F-F</p> <p>INVOLVED: M-M</p> <p>CONTEXTUAL: Not gender specific</p> <p>DEFINITION: Undermine & small</p> <p>TYPES: Relational</p> <p>EFFECTS: Leave</p> <p>INTERVENTION: Meeting with principal, address whole class, lesson on low self-esteem</p> <p>CONTEXTUAL: Community factors</p> <p>PERSONAL: Ditsy, nutty, doesn't take notice</p> <p>INVOLVED: Grp-Ind F-M</p> <p>TYPES: Verbal</p> <p>INTERVENTION: Speak to the whole class about bullying</p>
---	---	--

<p>Teachers experience or share the same view of other teachers when they teach the same class.</p> <p>Friendships and bullying (when normal conflict & when bullying) – Wei & Jonson-Reid, 2011</p> <p>Targeted for being yourself.</p> <p>Family factors – parenting style/household</p>	<p>summarise, we have talked a bit about the bullying you experience, and touched on maybe some of the causes. I know we have discusses some of the types of bullying that occurs at your school. Does anyone have some more specific examples to add?</p> <p>P7: Well there is subtle bullying. When I mean like subtle, it is that notion of excluding, you are different so we won't talk to you. We won't include you in anything. There are a few things that come up in all the classes that I teach. They sit in isolation somewhere, and very often that isolation then becomes the way that they identify themselves. I'm a loner, so I will stay there. Because they have been made to feel that they don't, that they don't belong. And then also as what they said about this one class, I think I teach the same class. And what I have noticed that as well it is not just the girls who do it, the boys do it to him as well. And yes he is a little bit ditsy. He is a sweet child, and the funny thing is that they don't exclude him from anything. They are his friends but still when anything happens it is "he did it". And then I just go that it couldn't have been him, because he is standing right in front of me. And this is what I don't understand. What does this child then understand is this now how friends are supposed to treat each other. It just, I don't know, it becomes this social mess for these children. They think that ok that is fine, they are my friends and they say these things about me but that is ok. And I think that that is something that I have experienced in that particular class specifically, ja.</p> <p>P6: What I have found strange is that the whole thing about being different, you can't, one tends to express one's individuality. They want to be creative in who they are. But for the child who dares to show that side of his or her personality. You just stand a chance of being ridiculed or humiliated by the rest of them. Because you don't fit into that perfect little picture of what a teenager should be like. That is my experience. The child that stands a chance of being bullied is the child that might have been reared differently, reared to deal with issues differently than what the rest of the class. Their parents have reared them differently. So they get treated differently, and you can pick up those kids. And they come into the classroom and they get ridiculed.</p> <p>P6: And I have a case that I mentioned earlier. The child goes, "I will then try to fit in". This is what I need to do to be accepted. Let me just do this and fit in, what are your standards, I just need to do that so that I no longer am the target. That is what I have experienced. She has just sort of fitted in, so that she is no longer the target of them, of the bullying.</p> <p>P2: If we just take a look at her marks as well, her marks have actually dropped a lot since last year. If you just look at her this year's March</p>	<p>TYPES: Relational</p> <p>SITES: Classroom</p> <p>EFFECTS: Isolate, lonely</p> <p>DEFINITION: Don't belong</p> <p>INVOLVED: F-M, M-M</p> <p>INVOLVED: Friends targeting friends</p> <p>CONTEXTUAL: Friendship, social mess</p> <p>PERSONAL: Being different, individual personality</p> <p>TYPES: Verbal/Relational</p> <p>PERSONAL: don't fit with picture of teen</p> <p>CONTEXTUAL: Reared differently, Parental styles</p> <p>TYPES: Verbal</p> <p>EFFECTS: Fit in, be accepted</p> <p>EFFECTS: Academic failure</p>
--	---	--

<p>This learner had to become dumber & get into trouble to be more acceptable to her peers.</p>	<p>results, it's very much different. And I think that is the reason she needed to fit in. And then I notice with her the place where she sits in class, she has actually moved herself to the back now, as well. And I would, I would even had to have had reprimand her on a few occasions, because she would, she would be talking to her friends. And that is not something that she would have done last year. So, I think that could have been one of the reasons for her to fit in, ja. [someone says it's easier to fit in like that]</p> <p>P3: There are smarter learners in that class, but they are maybe not as vocal as she is.</p> <p>P6: Yes, that is the difference. That she has opinions, because they shut up about their opinions they are not targeted, but she has the and initially she wasn't scared of voicing that opinions, but now I think she is that is the plan. Because I have also noticed that she is not up the top, where she should be in achieving what she could. So I think she has gotten tired and I think.</p> <p>P8: I think it is peer pressure or group pressure, subscribed to their views of doing things.</p> <p>P6: But I also think it's to do with survival in order for me to survive. I have been very trouble by that thing. I have felt that, I have tried to address the issue with them. The issue isn't necessarily about her, it is about them. Why do they have this thing about let's attack something that is excellent and good.</p> <p>R: Is this continuing then?</p> <p>P2: She is not as vocal as she was. She is not readily giving answers or giving her opinion about something as well. So maybe, because she has done that, now she is not a target anymore.</p> <p>P8: Maybe she is more accepted now?</p> <p>P2: Ja, now she is more accepted.</p>	<p>EFFECTS: Needed to fit in</p> <p>EFFECTS: Peer pressure – naughty</p> <p>PERSONAL: Vocal</p> <p>PERSONAL: Having opinions</p> <p>EFFECTS: Academic failure</p> <p>EFFECTS: Peer pressure</p> <p>INTERVENTION: Have discussion with whole class</p> <p>DEFINITION: Attack on ind characteristics</p> <p>EFFECTS: Not as vocal, academic failure</p> <p>EFFECTS: Fit in to norm set out by other learners</p>
---	--	--

ADDENDUM I

EXCERPTS FROM MY RESEARCH JOURNAL

14 April 2010

We had our first focus group interview today. I took some muffins and juice, which I feel really helped to create a relaxed atmosphere. We chatted casually and I had the opportunity to get to know them a little bit better. I thought about what I had read a week or two ago about the researcher who should aim to develop mutuality and flatten the power gradient when working with other people. The article went on to say how by showing respect to people, you as researcher should be eager to learn, not flaunt your knowledge and not trample on people's dignity in the course of your research. This statement came to mind as we were putting some tables in a circle and I got all professional armed with my digital voice recorder and semi-structured interview guide. I decided in the first moment of the interview that I don't want to be perceived of as the all-knowing intellectual of life. I wanted to express to the teachers that they have the knowledge within them and I am but the mere recipient of this information. The one who will in the end write it up, but it is their knowledge that they share not only with me, but one another, and of course the readers of this study.

After I asked the first question, "Tell me about bullying in your school", there was dead silence and then the teachers started turning to one another, shrugging their shoulders and laughing. There I was thinking, "Oh, no they are not aware of any bullying going on, and here I am sitting trying to research their experiences and perspectives of bullying". This thought was quickly erased when the first teacher started talking, I must say I was tremendously relieved. It was quite an interesting experience listening to the teachers' experiences with bullying in their school. I was also struck with how their experiences were similar to existing literature that I have recently been reading. After today's session, I feel so energised and excited about the research and working with the teachers.

24 April 2010

We had our second focus group session on the 20th of April. I feel a definite relationship forming between the teachers and myself. They showed interest in me personally, and it was quite easy for me to ask them about themselves. Looking back on this session I am quite glad that almost a week had gone by from the time we saw one another last. From what the teachers were saying it would seem that the first session really had an impact on their teaching practices and their views on bullying in their school. Some teachers informally started speaking to the learners in their classes about bullying, and especially cyberbullying. Another teacher put a passage about bullying into one of her test papers. There were a number of things that I found quite exciting about the research project. Firstly, I was overjoyed to see how passionate the teachers were speaking about making changes regarding bullying in their school. Secondly, a number of teachers indicated that they were grateful for the opportunity to participate in this study, because they never get the opportunity to discuss concerning issues, such as bullying, with other teachers. They indicated that they want to create a forum, similar to the one that was created through this research study, to address this and other issues in the school. Lastly, it was rewarding to hear that one teacher had found an article, in the past week, on learners bullying teachers and stated that she found it very interesting. On Tuesday 20 April 2010, I recorded in my field notes "as an outsider coming into their school, not knowing the teachers very well, I feel a different energy radiating from the teachers. It was like meeting a whole different group of teachers for the first time today. These teachers are fired up. They want to start addressing bullying in their school. They want to start taking action immediately." I hope that they can take something valuable from the next session, in which we will discuss possible strategies on how to deal with bullying in their school.

30 March 2011

As the study asked for participant feedback, I needed to have another session with the teachers so that they could verify the findings, which I had transcribed. It has been almost a year since I last visited the school. However, in these past months I have kept the teachers updated with information about the writing up progress through email. I found it quite surprising that it was so easy for me to return to the school and found that the teachers and I easily picked up where we last left off. When I first met the teachers I expressed a need that the purpose of this research was to give back to the school. During this session we engaged in interesting conversations regarding the research findings and how the teachers have become more aware and more readily respond to incidents of bullying. The school has also acquired a new principal, since the last time that I visited the school. According to the teachers, this person is open to change and is very forward thinking. However, they said that change is not easy, they are inundated with work and they receive little support from the Department of Basic Education. I am currently doing my last six months of my internship at one of the education districts and hear these same complaints at many other schools I work at.

From what the teachers were saying I just realised once again that in the South African context we need to start thinking outside the box about prevention and intervention, because bullying is a problem in our schools. The teachers face very unique barriers in addressing barriers, and what can be done to address these barriers so that they and all the other systems in the school community can start addressing bullying? This made me wonder about my role as an educational psychologist, especially one that has been researching the field of bullying. "What can I do at the Department of Education while I am still working there? What can I do to bring about change? Can I run workshops with the whole staff? What about preventative work? What about running anti-bullying campaigns in one school or even a whole district? What is being done to equip teachers with the necessary skills to address and manage bullying? Could restorative justice be an answer to intervening? How does one get involved in creating policies?" There are still a lot of questions that I need to answer, but I hope in the process of doing so that I can give something back not only to this particular school, but to more schools who are in dire need of assistance.