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**LEARNERS' UNDERSTANDING AND EXPERIENCES OF BULLYING AT A PRIMARY
SCHOOL IN THE WESTERN CAPE**

by

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Thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree

Master of Education

in the Faculty of Education and Social Sciences

at the Cape Peninsula University of Technology

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**Mowbray
January 2014**

ABSTRACT

This study aimed to determine learners' understanding and experiences of the different types of bullying and to examine the extent of bullying and roles they have been exposed to in various types of bullying. The research question was: What are primary school learners' understanding and experiences of bullying?

Literature indicates that bullying can be executed in direct and indirect forms (Olweus, 1993:10; Boulton et al., 2002:354; Hunter & Boyle, 2002:324; Piskin, 2003:556; Lee, 2004:9). Direct bullying can be defined as relatively open attacks on a victim (Boulton et al., 2002:354) that are carried out face to face and may include pushing, kicking and fighting (Lee, 2004:10). Indirect bullying can be defined as being more subtle and less direct (Boulton et al., 2002:354) and will include behaviour such as social isolation and exclusion from a group.

This study used the Olweus Intervention Method (1995), which offers a theoretical framework that could help the researcher find meaning in respect of the roles of the bully, victim and bystander. Urie Bronfenbrenner's ecological theory (Bronfenbrenner, 1998:993-1027) of human development was used as a lens for understanding bullying. Bronfenbrenner places child development within four different interacting levels, for example, the microsystem, mesosystem, exosystem and macrosystem (Sigelman & Schaffer, 1995:87).

The researcher used a mixed-method research design as it could provide a better understanding of how learners understand their experiences of bullying – whether they were the victim, bully or witness. The total sample comprised 296 Intermediate Phase learners. The study began with a quantitative method, testing the understanding of concepts, and using a questionnaire for learners, and thereafter concluded with a qualitative method comprising a small number of learners (interviews with a focus group), exploring their experiences of bullying. The quantitative data was analysed by means of descriptive statistics to present simple summaries about the sample and the measures. The responses were recorded in frequency tables and percentages were calculated to determine general trends. The qualitative data was systematically organised into themes and patterns to bring meaning to the themes by telling a story. Information obtained from respondents was treated as highly confidential and the research findings were presented with integrity.

The results indicated that most learners have not been exposed to bullying as victims, although a high number of incidences were reported. Older boys were mostly involved in incidences of physical violence. Of significance is the fact that the main kind of bullying was that of emotional bullying. Table 4.7 shows that mostly boys are teased (37.0%), while Table 4.16 shows teasing others mostly occurs between learners of the same age (30.4%). On the other hand, Table 4.17 reveals that mostly girls are prone to spread rumours about others (17.5%) of the same age as themselves (26%) and fall prey to this type of emotional bullying.

DECLARATION

I, Dawn Alice Johnson, declare that the contents of this thesis represent my own unaided work, and that the thesis has not previously been submitted for academic examination towards any qualification. Furthermore, it represents my own opinions and not necessarily those of the Cape Peninsula University of Technology.

.....

Signed

.....

Date

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I wish to thank:

- My daughter, Tercia Johnson, and my husband, Marvin Johnson, the two most precious jewels in my life, who are always by my side and whose love and support know no limits.
- My Supervisor, Dr Beatrice Thuynsma, for her guidance, encouragement and support.
- Ms Elizabeth Van Aswegen, Language and bibliographic consultant, for her magnificent support and contributions to this thesis.
- Ms Corrie Uys, Statistical Consultant at CPUT, for kindly assisting with data analysis.
- Mr Chris Dumas, for kindly assisting with formatting of this thesis.
- The principal of the primary school where the study was conducted, for his kindness and endless support.
- The Intermediate Phase learners of 2009 for sharing their experiences on bullying.
- My dear mother, Sally Williams, for her unconditional love and support.
- Ms Chamelle de Silva, for assisting with every chapter of this thesis, and for generously sharing her wisdom, love and support.
- Christabel Rooi, for kindly sharing her wisdom, love and support.
- Ms Marilyn Mathee and Ms Valecia Wolmerans, my dearest friends, for their kindness in sharing ideas and books on bullying.
- Ms Wilhelmina Abrahams, my closest friend, for generously sharing her wisdom, love and support.
- My colleagues, for their magnificent support and contributions.

God, for giving me the ability and courage to persevere throughout the past five years of my studies.

DEDICATION

To my dear father, Andrew Williams, with love and in gratitude

(15 March 1940 – 21 November 1991)

and

To my dear mother, Sally Williams, with love and in gratitude

(16 July 1938 – 30 April 2010)

**With tears I saw you suffer,
I watched you fade away.
A part of me went with you,
When God took you away.**

Deeply missed by your children and grandchildren.

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GLOSSARY – related to bullying

Bullies	Bullies are those persons who intentionally inflict harm by their actions, words, and behaviour, and are thought to be lacking attention, power, love and competence.
Bullying	Bullying is defined as the intentional, repeated hurtful words or acts or behaviour committed by (in this study) a child or children against another child or children.
Bystanders	Bystanders witness the bullying incidences.
Power	The energy or strength that somebody or something has over a 'victim'.
Victims	Victims of bullying are those persons who are anxious, shy, insecure, and physically smaller and/or weaker than their peers.

ABBREVIATIONS

CEMIS	Centralised Educational Management Information System
CJCP	Centre for Justice and Crime Prevention
HOD	Head of Department
WCED	Western Cape Education Department

CHAPTER 1

BACKGROUND, PROBLEM STATEMENT AND OBJECTIVES OF THE RESEARCH

1.1 Introduction and background

Bullying is a serious problem that has increased in recent years in our schools (Brindley, 2010:2). According to Sullivan (2000:39-43), bullying is not a new phenomenon; it has been recognised as one of the main concerns in schools internationally, including Australia (Peterson & Rigby, 1999:483), the United States of America (Nansel et al., 2001:2094-2100), the United Kingdom (Smith & Shu, 2000:193-212), Norway (Olweus, 1993:14) and New Zealand (Adair et al., 2000).

In South Africa, schools are becoming more aware of the problems related to bullying and have recognised something should be done to create a safe school environment (Prinsloo, 2005:460). In a survey conducted by the Centre for Justice and Crime Prevention (CJCP) in 2009, cyber bullying was also identified as a rising issue, since one in five young South Africans admitted that they had bullied someone via text messaging, while a quarter actually had experienced bullying via text messaging (Baily, 2012:1). In addition, Rondganger (2012:1), in a survey of 1 726 learners aged 12 to 17, done by CJCP on cyber bullying in 2009, found that one in three young learners claimed to have been the victims of cyber bullying. The survey further showed that one quarter of the learners had experienced direct cyber bullying on their cell phones by means of text messages. It was also found that only one in five acknowledged they had bullied someone by means of text messaging.

Moreover, Adam (2013:1) refers to cyber bullying as a kind of cruel behaviour of social media that has become the new playing field for the bullies. She writes that teenagers contend that cyber bullying takes place on Twitter (23.8%), Facebook (92.6%), My Space (17.7%) and on Instant Messenger (15.2%). She further suggests that 65.8% of the learners respond online to the bullies, while 35% confront the bullies in person. However, some learners prefer to avoid coming to school (15.4%), while 4.5% retaliate. Statistics also reveal that 25% of the learners are victims of cyber bullying, two-thirds witness cyber bullying online, and only 10% of the parents are aware of the cyber bullying taking place at school.

Bullying among children can be defined as “the action of one child to hurt, threaten, intimidate, or embarrass another child” (Ladikos et al., 2003:1). Demaray and Malecki, (2003:471) suggest that bullying is an act of intentional behaviour which is harmful and hurtful. It includes (1) physical abuse, such as hitting and punching; (2) verbal abuse, such as teasing and name-calling; or (3) indirect actions, for example, exclusion from groups or spreading rumours. These actions are repeated by a person or group, who targets a weaker individual as the victim. Similarly, Sullivan et al. (2004:5) state: “Bullying can be physical or non-physical and can include damage to property.” They further describe that (1) physical bullying occurs through being bitten, hit, kicked, punched, scratched or by any form of physical attack, (2) non-physical bullying can be verbal or non-verbal bullying and includes abusive telephone calls, name-calling, racist remarks or teasing and spreading of untrue rumours, (3) damage to property includes ripping of clothing, damaging of school bags and books and destroying school property.

Bullying appears in different forms as indicated above and can easily cause harm if not addressed in time. A challenge in helping victims of bullying is the veil of secrecy surrounding bullying in primary schools. Many victims are afraid to tell someone about the bullying incidences. An adult therefore needs to shift the energy or strength that the bully has by working on empowering the victim. Educators should aim to bring bullying into the open by raising awareness of bullying and by encouraging victims to seek help by speaking up. We need to teach our learners to let someone know when they don't feel safe at school or about being bullied. It is for this reason that educators should identify how all kinds of bullying behaviour begin, in order to stop it from occurring. It would also be helpful to introduce rules to prevent bullying behaviour in schools and to continually communicate that it will not be accepted or tolerated (Prinsloo, 2005:457). School rules maintain order and build an environment of security and discipline within the school. It is therefore necessary to have school rules in place to make learners and parents aware of the school's educational aims with regard to bullying behaviour.

Section 8 of the *South African School's Act No. 84 of 1996* provides basic provision for the adoption of a code of conduct to develop an orderly, safe learning environment for learners in schools and to promote teaching and learning. *The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa* (South Africa, 1996a: Section 28 [1] [9]: Children's Rights) declares “every child has the right to be protected from maltreatment, neglect, abuse or degradation”. These very important sections of legislation indicate that children's rights and safety are prioritised by government.

According to De Wet (2005:82), the Department of Education (DoE, 1998:6) also makes provision for the protection of learners against physical and mental harm, contending that “every learner has the right to non-violence and the freedom and security of a person”. Schools are legally empowered to ensure that these rights are fulfilled for every learner. The act of bullying directly impacts on these provisions in the *South African School’s Act No. 84 of 1996* (South Africa, 1996). Learners’ rights and freedom are threatened by bullies’ aggressive behaviour that affects the victim’s physical, social and emotional wellbeing.

Zeelie (2004:66-67) notes that schools are “accountable and need to be proactive in behaviour policy and implementation thereof”. However, educators need training to develop and implement educational policies and practices (Prinsloo, 2005:464). As soon as measures are put in place to put a stop to bullying, schools will be a much safer and more pleasant environment for learners. Educators should therefore be empowered to meet the challenges of bullying behaviour in such a way that such anti-social behaviour does not impact negatively on or impede the learning process.

1.2 Background to the research

As a Grade 4 educator at a school on the Cape flats in the Western Cape, the researcher found that many Grade 4 learners were bullied by older learners. This prompted the researcher to investigate learners’ understanding and experiences of bullying as the researcher was concerned that learners who physically attack others could inflict injury and cause psychological harm. Bullying often results in learning barriers, absenteeism, high failure rates of victims and in victims who quit their schooling career (Vorster, 2002:29).

In a survey conducted by a non-government organisation at the primary school where the researcher teaches in Cape Town, 89% of the learners indicated that they were physically attacked by other learners, 56% indicated they bullied others while only 11% of the learners reported bullying incidences to an educator (Sylvester, 2005:5). The fact that 11% reported the incidences is an indication that many learners in the school are suffering in silence while exposed to the trauma of bullying. Although physical assault may occur as an incident in isolation, and may not necessarily be “repeated over time” to quantify as bullying, it could be the beginning of bullying behaviour if not stopped immediately. As an educator, the researcher is concerned that bullying is having a significant effect on more than half of the learners at the school.

De Wet (2005:83) found in a study among 207 scholars done in Gauteng by Ladikos et al. (2003:5), that 60.9% of the learners reported being bullied at school in 2002. According to the Centre for School Quality and Improvement, 90% of the learners at a Johannesburg school had been bullied the previous year. Further research confirms that only a small number of incidences of bullying are reported (Cullingford & Brown, 1995:11-16) and many victims keep their suffering a secret (Simanton et al., 2000:4). Bullying flourishes in environments of secrecy, as bullies threaten their victims with more bullying if they report the bullying incidences. According to a report in an American newspaper, the *Antelope Valley Times*, there is an atmosphere of “don’t talk about the bullying or don’t bring it up kind of thing” (Daly, 2012:1).

After years of teaching, the researcher noticed that some learners experiencing bullying behaviour created problems for educators as well as for other learners in class. However, as Prinsloo (2005:452) posits:

Bullying behaviour can also be caused by the way educators teach, the educator’s behaviour and many interruptions. The attitude of the principal and class teachers has an important influence on the attitude and behaviour of the learners in the school.

Moreover, community conditions and attitudes where violence is common and children are exposed to aggressive behaviour can also promote bullying. This can result in bullying behaviour that is carried into the school and onto the playground by learners.

Such behaviour is a concern for school management as it compromises the safety of the learners. As educators, it is our duty to ensure the safety and the security of learners. This sense of duty includes responsibilities for the physical and psychological safety of the learner (Bray, 2005:133). With good planning, organisation, and control and policy guidelines, the school should attempt to change learner behaviour. The teachers and learners are then motivated to deliver their best in a protected environment.

Learners cannot be well behaved all the time. At the primary school where the researcher teaches, learners’ complaints are recorded in a classroom incident book (Appendix G). This incident book gives the teacher an idea of how often learners are bullied at school. Recorded incidences are immediately dealt with and all interventions are recorded. An analysis of the incident book indicated that bullying by older learners takes place during break time in the playground and in the toilets. The incident book also helps the teacher to identify the bullies, victims and bystanders at the school and how serious bullying really is.

The researcher observed that educators experienced disruptive and aggressive behaviour from learners at the site where this study was conducted. An educator mentioned that it is time for the school to revisit their safety policy in order to reduce disruptive and aggressive behaviour. Intervention strategies that educators could keep in mind include positive reinforcement. According to Prinsloo (2005:460), educators at primary schools use reinforcements such as sweets, happy face or star stickers, puppet shows, or being class leader for a day/week to strengthen positive behaviour and discourage negative behaviour. For punishment, educators employ the removal of rewards or privileges. This is widely used and helps to encourage learners against bullying behaviour since corporal punishment is legally prohibited in South Africa. Teachers could also make use of time-out procedures by isolating disruptive learners within the classroom.

The researcher would like to have a greater understanding of the extent of learners' exposure to various types of bullying, be able to recognise and respond effectively to bullying behaviour, gain knowledge of new and effective strategies to reduce bullying behaviour when it occurs, and learn how to empower learners to deal with and report incidences to prevent and stop bullying. The researcher hopes to find ways to create an environment where everyone understands that bullying behaviour is unacceptable, harmful and preventable and to promote positive behaviour, instead. It is against this background that this study explores learners' understanding and experiences of bullying.

1.3 The purpose of the study & the research question

With this study the researcher will attempt to understand the role of the bully, victim and bystander as experienced by learners. The purpose of the study is to ascertain learners' experiences of the different types of bullying, explore the extent of their exposure to different types of bullying and to examine what can be done to reduce bullying. Exploring and understanding learners' own responses to the various types of bullying and investigating the extent of their exposure to different bullying types could be a step in preventing bullying or curtailing it if it does occur.

The research question for this study is: What are primary school learners' understanding and experiences of bullying? This main question is subsequently further subdivided to include learners' understanding of various types of bullying and experiences of the roles they have been exposed to (bully, victim and bystander).

1.4 Research methodology

The researcher identified a primary school in the Western Cape to conduct the research. The primary school classes range from Grade 4 to 7, with approximately 600 learners. The school accommodates a diverse group of learners from African countries such as Zimbabwe, Democratic Republic of Congo, Angola, Rwanda and South Africa.

A mixed-method design was used in this study in an attempt to provide a better understanding than either purely quantitative or qualitative research methods could generate. Using both methods helped to reduce researcher bias and allowed data to be integrated more successfully. This approach also enabled the researcher to gain an insight into learners' understanding and experiences of the different types of bullying and the extent of their exposure to various types of bullying. The study commenced with a questionnaire for learners which was used as an instrument to gather data on learners' experiences of the different types of bullying that could inform their understanding of the problem. This was followed by a qualitative approach involving an exploration of learners' experiences of bullying with a small number of individuals by means of focus group interviews.

A closed-response format questionnaire was used. Learners had to choose between the predetermined options indicating an understanding of direct and indirect bullying and had to indicate to what extent they had been exposed to various forms of bullying. The responses were collated and analysed using statistical methods on the SPSS 17 software package to determine general trends. With the help of a statistical analyst, the researcher was able to systematically organise the data. Learners from Zimbabwe, Democratic Republic of Congo, Angola and Rwanda had English and Afrikaans as a first and second Additional Language (the languages in which the questionnaire was drafted) and this may also have influenced their understanding and interpretation of questions. This may have resulted in the large number of "incomplete questions" on the questionnaire.

The interviews with a focus group of Intermediate Phase learners were used as a conversation to stimulate learners to relate and share their experiences with peers. This approach enabled the researcher to gain an understanding and insight into learners' experiences of bullying at school level. At the time of the study, respondents 1 and 2 were in Grade 4 (girls), respondents 3 (girl) and 4 (boy) were in Grade 5, and respondents 5 (girl) and 6 (boy) were in Grade 6.

To comply with ethical standards, the researcher sought approval from the Western Cape Education Department (WCED) and from the school principal (Appendix C) to conduct the study at the selected school. Once the WCED (Appendix A) had granted permission for the study, respondents to the study could be sourced and informed with consent letters to parents (Appendix D) and verbal consent with learners to inform them of all the aspects of the research.

The researcher made arrangements to meet with the principal and staff members to discuss the aims of the study. Parents had to complete and return the consent forms to the class teachers. It was agreed that completed consent letters be sent to the principal's office for collection by the researcher. Information obtained from respondents was treated with confidentiality and the research findings are presented honestly, and without bias.

1.5 Limitations of the study

The questionnaires were administered to Grades 4 to 6 learners only, that is, the Intermediate Phase learners who were able to relate to experiences of bullying. Most of these learners would have spent at least three to five years in this school environment and were therefore familiar with and informed on the issue of bullying as a topic dealt with in the Life Skills subject. The study was conducted at one school only and thus the results cannot be generalised.

1.6 Outline of the chapters

Chapter 1 provides the introduction and background to the problem, and the purpose of the study, as well as the actual research question. It further outlines the research design and method by which the research was conducted.

In **Chapter 2**, concepts are clarified by offering definitions and explanations of different types of bullying. This chapter also describes the degree of learners' exposure to various forms of bullying. It also includes a review of relevant literature on the probable causes of bullying and how such problems may be addressed.

Chapter 3 describes in more detail the research design and methodology as outlined in Chapter 1 of this study.

Chapter 4 presents the data that was collected in the research. It interprets the findings, contains a detailed analysis of these, and a summary of a few general trends. Data collected is organised into themes and patterns to give meaning to the themes.

Chapter 5 maps the recommendations and suggestions for reducing bullying at schools, in the hope that these will offer insights into how learners understand and experience bullying.

1.7 Conclusion

Bullying is harmful and creates a learning environment that is not safe and is unpleasant. Asking learners about their understanding and experiences of bullying is a significant step in ensuring that bullying is recognised and dealt with effectively. I trust that this study will offer insight into how learners understand bullying, since this can be of benefit to educators, and assist them in their efforts to create a safe place on and off the school grounds.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

The purpose of Chapter 2 is to clarify the terms to be used in this study, provide a review of the literature in South Africa, and cover learners' understanding and experiences of the different types of bullying and to what extent they have been exposed to the various types of bullying worldwide. Then, factors that cause bullying behaviour and the effects of bullying on the victims will be discussed. Thereafter, the study will focus on the role of the educator and discuss the importance of the school's code of conduct. The chapter will then outline the theories of Daniel Olweus, which offer a theoretical framework that will help the researcher establish the roles of the bully, victim and bystander. Urie Bronfenbrenner's ecological theory (Bronfenbrenner, 1998:993-1027) of human development is used as a lens for understanding bullying.

2.2 Clarification of concepts

This section outlines how this study will use the terms 'bullying', 'the victim' and 'the bully', based on research in the field. In order to address the issue of bullying, it is critical to clearly understand how bullying, the victim and the bully are defined and explained by researchers. These concepts will be dealt with separately to highlight differences that could provide a clearer understanding of the issue at hand.

2.2.1 Bullying

Futterman (2004:27) notes: "Bullying is an action that leaves the victim feeling afraid, powerless, incompetent, and ashamed." Additionally, Rigby (1996:15) describes bullying as "repeated oppression, psychological or physical, of a less powerful person by a more powerful person or a group of persons". Olweus (1993:9) contends that bullying is repetitious and occurs over time, while noting "a student is being bullied or victimized when he or she is exposed, repeatedly and over time, to negative actions on the part of one or more students". Sullivan et al. (2004:3) agree, stating "bullying is a negative act by one or more people against another person or people usually over a period of time". Another very important point made by Swearer et al. (2008:165) is that "bullying is the act of someone hurting or scaring another person on purpose and ... the victim has a difficult time defending him/herself". It is

evident in these definitions that bullying demonstrates an imbalance of power and is continuously repeated. Thus, bullying is an intentional act and is deliberate and purposeful.

This study thus uses the term 'bullying' to mean deliberate, repeated harmful oppression, psychological or physical, by a more powerful person or group of a less powerful person or group. The similarity between the abovementioned definitions is that the physical and/or psychological intimidation occurs repeatedly over time and as a result can negatively affect the victims, bullies and bystanders. Victims may show symptoms such as physical injuries, mood changes and schoolwork that declines (Sullivan et al., 2004:12).

2.2.2 Bully

According to Krige et al. (2000:19), "the bully is an attacker with a dominant personality who needs to feel powerful and in control, and feels little empathy with victims". Haynie et al. (2001:44) note that bullies are particularly high-risk cases for having depression symptoms and poor school functioning. This study refers to and understands the term 'bully' in terms of the above definition of Krige et al. (2000:19), and takes into account the multiple factors that lead a child to bully as well as the risks a child faces by engaging in bullying behaviour.

2.2.3 Victim

A victim of bullying is someone who is hurt or injured by somebody repeatedly over a period of time (*Concise Oxford English Dictionary*, 2010:660). Kriger et al. (2000:19), describe victims of bullying as "anxious, shy, insecure, physically smaller and/or weaker than their peers". Scheithauer et al. (2006:261-275), on the other hand, describe victims of bullying as passive and submissive, showing low self-worth, loneliness, a tendency to blame themselves for their difficult times and as children who find social situations difficult.

Victims often lack the support of a group, which can lead to a continued feeling of poor self-worth, depression, and social problems (Nansel et al., 2001:22; Sullivan et al., 2004:17). Similarly, victims are described as "anxious and insecure ... cautious and sensitive" (Olweus, 1995:197). In addition to the above definitions of victims, Smokowski and Kopasz (2005:104) reveal that victims may come "from families that tend to be overprotective and sheltering".

This may cause victims to become loners who are listless or unhappy (Sullivan et al., 2004:12). For this reason, family influences such as loving acceptance, attention and education form an important part in the child's life, because without these, a child may

develop emotional problems and have a poor attitude towards schoolwork. This study acknowledges all these points and uses the term 'victim' to indicate a target of bullying at school by a more powerful person or group.

2.3 Types of bullying

Bullying can occur in both direct and indirect forms (Lee, 2004:9). A bully might say nasty things about someone, grab other learners' things, tease someone or leave a learner out of a group on purpose. Understanding the various types of bullying can help prevent bullying and stop it before it occurs.

2.3.1 Direct bullying

According to Boulton et al. (2002:354) and Lee (2004:10), direct bullying can be defined as "a relatively open attack on a victim that is carried out face to face and may include pushing, kicking and fighting". Similarly, Woods and Wolke (2004:136) explain: "Direct bullying includes direct aggressive acts such as hitting, kicking, pinching, taking belongings or money, pushing or shoving, or direct verbal abuse." These are all ways that learners engage in direct physical bullying.

Another common type of direct bullying is verbal bullying. Verbal bullying involves teasing, mocking, name-calling, threatening, and taunting by other learners (Beane, 2000:56). Sharp et al. (2000:37-46) believe that this type of bullying is also seen as "more hurtful in terms of the consequences, including feelings of depression, low self-worth, loneliness, anxiety and severe difficulties with social relationships in adulthood". Bullying thus displays power relations, which may or may not be those of an older or stronger person imposing his/her will on a younger or weaker person.

The potential for bullying as playfulness may occur in groups (only the friends present) through teasing. Learners who are bullying may say that they are "only teasing", while the victim may experience it as bullying or as an unpleasant experience. There is a difference between 'teasing' and bullying. Teasing occurs when friends act in a way where they have fun together without hurting each other physically. Bullying, on the other hand, occurs when children are not really friends with each other; they then act in a way where there is a desire for power and begin to hurt each other physically or emotionally. Bullying also shows an imbalance of power of a person or group, and is repeated over and over again.

Vally (2005:8) clarifies the difference between ‘teasing’ and ‘bullying’ (Table 2.1). Vally contends the perpetrator of ‘teasing’ is someone who cares, and the person is made fun of in an amusing way. According to him, the ‘victim’ may enjoy the playful act and the teaser will stop if the victim is upset. In contrast to this, Vally also explains that ‘bullying’ occurs when the victim does not enjoy the playful act because the teasing becomes worse and the bully does not want to stop.

Table 2.1: The difference between teasing and bullying

Teasing	Bullying
Being made fun of in a good, amusing way, which the ‘victim’ may enjoy.	The victim does not enjoy teasing.
Usually done by somebody who cares.	Teasing can get worse and become bullying.
Everyone has a turn to tease (self/others).	Teasing is one-sided.
If the ‘victim’ is not happy or is hurt, the teasers will stop, as they did not mean to hurt the victim.	Teasers don't stop.

(Vally, 2005:8)

2.3.2 Indirect bullying

Boulton et al. (2002:354) state that indirect bullying can be defined as “being more subtle and less direct and includes behaviour such as social isolation and exclusion from a group”. Emotional bullying occurs mostly as indirect bullying and it includes spreading rumours, gossiping about a learner and social exclusion (Shangkuan Koo, 2011:1). According to Butler et al. (2009:85), cyber bullying, as a more recent form of bullying, is a type of bullying that occurs when the perpetrator intends to cause emotional or physical harm to the victim. This kind of bullying can constitute the deliberate and hurtful actions of a more powerful person or group perpetrated on a less powerful person or group, and occurs again and again. She also suggests that the bully chooses “to hide his or her identity to place the victims in a powerless position where they are unable to fight back, [and] unable to protect themselves as they feel hurt, vulnerable and embarrassed”.

Cyber bullying is one of the foremost social media means of bullying in which learners engage these days. In a study conducted by the National Crime Prevention Council (2009:1), it was stated that cyber bullying is on the rise and involves text messages or images that are hurtful, embarrassing or threatening via the use of cell phones, emails and instant messaging. They further suggest that cyber bullying can also include creating websites such as MySpace or Facebook to post harmful information or images about someone that may destroy friendships. In addition, Rondganger (2012:1) mentions in a survey conducted by the National Crime Prevention Council on cyber bullying in 2009, that the most important reasons for cyber bullying are “the intentions of revenge, amusement, out of boredom and to get a response from their victims”.

Learners in the primary school at the time of data collection in March 2010 had little access to electronic media at home; at school electronic media are used under supervision. A shift has since emerged and cyber bullying has become more aggressive. However, cyber bullying did not form part of this study, as the learners at the school surveyed in this study, did not allude to such activities. Therefore, cyber bullying was not included in this study in 2010.

2.4 The extent of bullying

From the literature it is clear that bullying is both direct and indirect; it is acknowledged that it is serious and can be harmful, and should be dealt with immediately when it occurs. It is therefore important to determine the extent of bullying in schools.

An increase in bullying behaviour in schools was noted in Chapter 1. Two nationwide studies on the prevalence of bullying were conducted in Australian schools. One study by Peterson and Rigby (1999:483) involved about 38 000 learners between the ages of 8 and 17, while another study was conducted by Cross et al. (2009:181) with 7 418 school children between the ages of 9 and 14 years. The findings by Peterson and Rigby reveal that 23.5% of the learners reported being bullied at least once a week, compared with the findings of Cross et al., of 16% who reported being bullied at least once a week. This indicates a drop in the occurrence of bullying in Australian schools.

In a United States national survey, 13% reported they bullied others, 11% reported being victims of bullies, and another 6% said that they both bullied others and were bullied themselves (Nansel et al., 2001:2094-2100). An additional study of American junior high and high school children, by Adair et al. (2000), found that 81% of students witnessed bullying at

their schools. Only 21% reported it to an adult. Other research reveals that around 30% of bullying victims do not tell (Rivers & Smith, 1994).

In a United Kingdom study on bullying conducted by Osborn (2007) with 1 140 learners between the years 2002 and 2007, a decrease in bullying at school was discerned. However, findings reported by Molcho et al. (2009:225-234), showed an increase in bullying behaviour among peers between the ages of 11 and 15.

In a study conducted in Norway, of the 568 000 learners, 9% of the study's respondents and about 7% were bullying others once a week (Olweus, 1993:13). According to Olweus (1993:19), boys are expected to be more involved in bullying behaviour than girls, and also to be victims of bullies. On the other hand, Roland (2011) found in a survey of 1 200 to 5 000 Norwegian learners, an increase of 6,2% in peer victimisation (being bullied or bullying others) from Grades 5 to 9 between 2004 and 2008. However, Roland et al. (2010:41-45) also confirms a decrease in peer victimisation between 2001 and 2004.

As mentioned in Chapter 1, a research project done in Gauteng, South Africa, among 207 participants, found that 60.9% of the participants had been bullied at school in 2002 (Ladikos et al., 2003:10-12, cited by De Wet, 2005:83). In a more recent study on bullying conducted by the University of South Africa's Youth Research Unit among 3 371 learners, it was found that of the 34% of the participants surveyed in Gauteng and 901 learners surveyed in the Western Cape, 30% were victims of bullying between 2010 and 2012 (Louw, 2012:3).

The above studies show that bullying is fairly common internationally. From the literature, it is apparent that learners bully others directly or indirectly. This could include physical aggression, sexual harassment, social isolation, spreading rumours, etc. It is also important to note that learners are not just victims of incidences of bullying, but also listeners and spectators of physical and verbal bullying. Ascertaining the extent of bullying behaviour is one thing, but understanding the factors that cause this problem is as important.

2.5 Factors that cause bullying behaviour

In this section, attention will be turned to the factors that cause bullying behaviour. Learners may display antisocial behaviour and emotional problems for different reasons and these can be caused by factors that are either intrinsic or extrinsic (Prinsloo, 2005:450). Intrinsic factors are factors arising from the child him/herself, for example, personality traits, abilities, etc.,

while extrinsic factors are those factor in the environment that impact learner behaviour that may result in bullying.

2.5.1 Individual factors

Individual factors include personality styles and interpersonal behaviours. Olweus (1997:495-510) states that, "learners with an impulsive personality are more inclined to develop into a bully because of his/her behaviour".

According to Smith and Sharp (1994), "physical bullying is much more common in early childhood than later, and what is identified as bullying gradually becomes less and less apparent as children become older". On the other hand, personal attributes like a lack of assertiveness or self-esteem and/or specific disabilities can contribute to a learner being a victim (Krige et al., 2000:46).

2.5.2 Home factors

Prinsloo (2005:450) states:

The home environment in South Africa fails to a large extent to pay attention to their children and parents neglect their responsibility to teach their children norms and values and to serve as role models.

She further suggests that learners who are rejected at home are much more likely to show unacceptable behaviour than learners who receive love and encouragement.

According to Weeks (2001:167-168), bullying behaviour often first appears within the home environment where the earliest symptoms like lies, disobedience and verbal or physical aggressiveness towards family members can be observed. Hence, learners need love, acceptance, attention and the necessary education. The lack of these places learners at greater risk of engaging in bullying behaviour; such learners also are often faced with barriers to learning.

Weeks (2005:39) points out a few circumstances in which learners may be deprived of the love and attention they need. He suggests that the "parent may quarrel continually, is an alcoholic or is depressed, is a single parent or [is a] grandparent where one person carries the responsibility for child care or is too busy to care for their children".

Learners are at greater risk of engaging in bullying behaviour when they come from homes where there is a lack of communication and little emotional support from parents.

2.5.3 School factors

Prinsloo (2005:449) contends “there is a general climate of undisciplined behaviour which results in the disempowerment of educators and a lack of effective teaching and learning in South African schools”. Furthermore, Nansel et al. (2001:2094-2100) claim: “Some teachers make fun of, make threats or intimidate students to maintain control of their classroom, raising the fear and nervousness of other learners.”

A teacher’s lack of motivation and enthusiasm in the learning process may lead to learners underperforming and misbehaving in schools. Prinsloo (2005:455) states:

The teachers’ attitudes have an important influence on the behaviour of learners, which can be worsened by the method of instruction or the educator’s attitude towards learners. Their lack of motivation, enthusiasm and interest in the learners encourages negative behaviour such as bullying at school.

Prinsloo (2005:452) further asserts, “teachers should have the necessary knowledge and skills to observe and assess bullying behaviour and the ability to design suitable strategies to prevent misbehaviour”.

2.5.4 Community conditions

According to Weeks (2005:40), “the environment in which children grow up plays an important role in the way their behaviour develops”. For example, learners who grow up in an environment where they are exposed to bullying behaviour may act violently to deal with differences or conflicts. This falls in line with Bronfenbrenner’s theory (Bronfenbrenner, 1998:993) of human development where he emphasises the relations between child development and interacting systems within the social environment. According to his systems theory, the family, the school and the community and the interactions between them are important influences in the life of the child.

Understanding the factors and influences, for example, the child’s personality or the environment, can help prevent bullying and curtail it when it does happen. Family factors may consist of violent behaviour towards the child by the parent. Individual factors may include certain personality styles and interpersonal behaviours. School factors refer to the

social setting at school, which is shown by this study's findings to play a key role in the occurrence of behavioural problems. Community conditions and attitudes where violence is widespread and children are exposed to aggressive behaviour can also encourage bullying.

2.6 The effects of bullying

The effects of bullying on the victims, bystanders and even the bullies themselves, also warrant attention. According to Sullivan et al. (2004:6), victims of bullying may feel "angry, scared, depressed, disempowered, hateful, hurt, hopeless or vengeful". Bullying is a problem that can affect the ability of the victims to progress academically, socially and emotionally (Sullivan et al., 2004:18). In a young democracy like South Africa, this could have far-reaching consequences as the education system is struggling to include all citizens and provide equal opportunities to all learners.

Victims of bullying may feel insecure and think there must be something wrong with them. They may become anxious, cautious, withdrawn, and isolated from their peers. They may even lose self-confidence and not want to go to school. The effects bullying behaviour have on victims can be categorised twofold: those on the victim's physical health and those on the victim's psychological wellbeing.

Effects of bullying on physical health will be discussed first. These include physical ailments such as frequent illnesses, headaches and migraines, sleeping disorders, digestive problems and study difficulties. This discourse will be followed by an analysis of the psychological effects of bullying on learners.

2.6.1 Physical effects on the victim

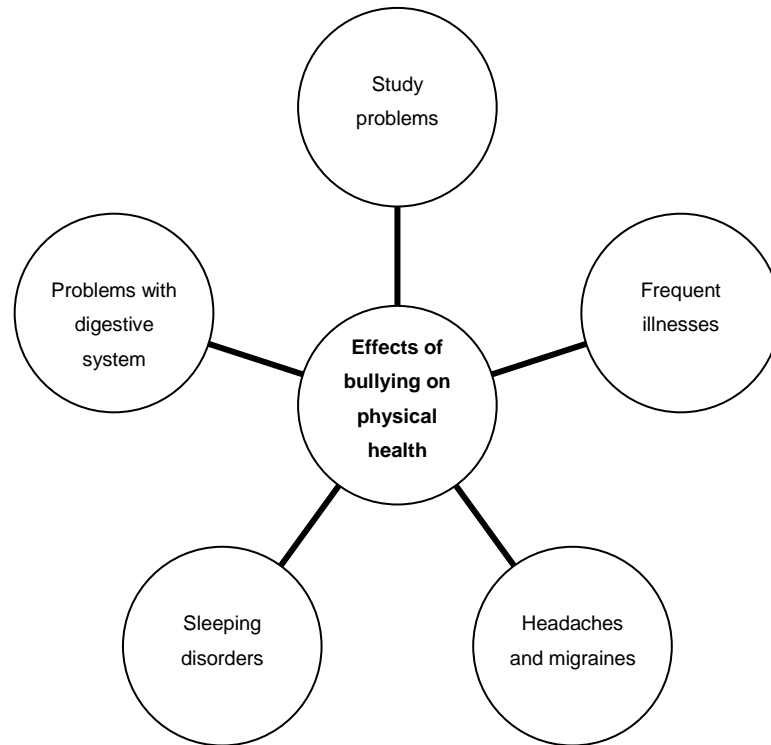


Figure 2.1: Physical effects on the victim

Physical effects of bullying on the victim refer to aggressive behaviour that can affect the learners physically as defined in Chapter 1. Physical aggression may lead to physical harm such as scratches, bruising or torn clothing. Figure 2.1 gives a graphic representation of the effects of bullying on the physical health of the victim, as identified by Garrett (2003:68). Frequent illnesses on the graphic representation may include viral infections, especially flu and fever, colds, coughs or respiratory infections. Victims may complain of headaches and migraines or have sleeping disorders by “having nightmares, waking up early and more tired”.

Another physical effect of bullying on the victim, according to Garrett (2003:68), is that victims experience problems with their digestive systems by having irritable bowel syndrome and stomach aches. As a result of poor concentration, victims could also experience study problems.

2.6.2 Psychological effects on the victim

Psychological bullying can be defined as something that was inflicted on purpose or with malicious intent to cause emotional turmoil. Below is a graphic representation of the psychological effects on the victim, as identified by Garrett (2003:69).

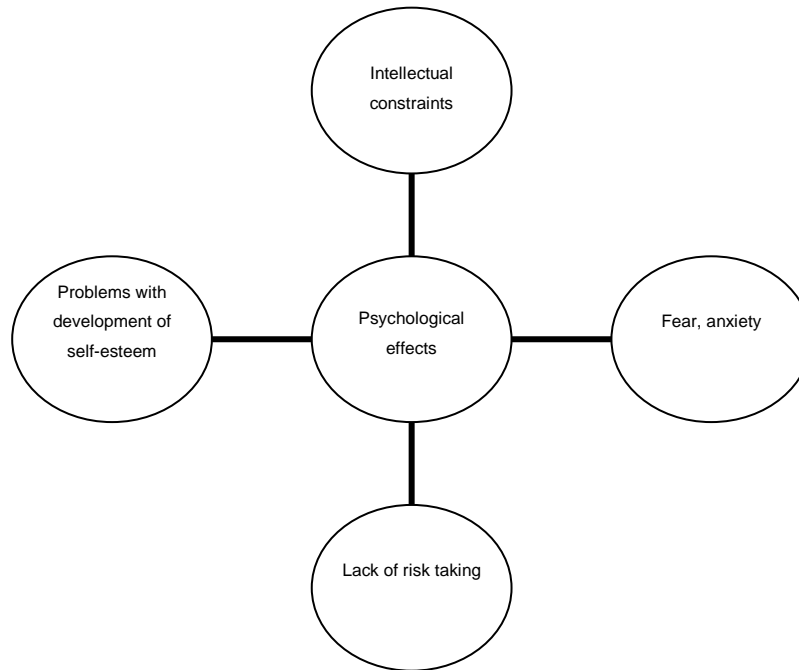


Figure 2.2: Psychological effects on the victim

Figure 2.2 illustrates that victims may experience intellectual constraints as a result of continual emotional stress and therefore victims may show a decline in marks. Another psychological effect on the victim is that of fear, for example, of the bus ride to and from school or of going to the bathroom or to less supervised areas at the school. Such anxieties may then result in physical symptoms, for example, irritable bowel syndrome or even nightmares.

Garrett (2003:69) claims that victims have spoken about bullying as leaving a person “bruised” inside. According to Garrett, victims who are emotionally affected in this way may become hesitant to take social, intellectual, emotional or vocational risks as learners or adults. Psychological effects can last for years, if not addressed. According to Garrett (2003:69), “the loss in self-esteem lasts all the way into their adult lives”. Psychological effects may include having problems with development of self-esteem, which may affect the

learning process of the victims. In view of this, it is important for this study to focus on the role of educators who have an important impact on the lives of the learners in their care.

2.7 Role of educators

According to Oosthuizen and Roos (2004b:61), “South African educators have an important task to ensure the safety and the protection of learners in their care because they act *in loco parentis* (in place of a parent)”. Teachers therefore have a responsibility to care for and help the victims of bullying and, as far as possible, prevent bullying behaviour from happening.

Since teachers have such an impact on the lives of learners, they need to be trained with knowledge, skills, and an attitude to meet the responsibility of care for learners properly. It is important that they recognise problem situations, handle these situations responsibly, and know how to refer learners for further support. Prinsloo (2005:460) suggests “educators should certainly guard against over-reacting and should rather act appropriately, for example making use of intervention such as referrals to a counsellor or use positive reinforcement”.

2.8 School code of conduct

To maintain a quality school environment that is safe and bully-free, Zeelie (2004:29) proposes a code of conduct as an important instrument. A school’s code of conduct outlines procedures for maintaining supportive and safe environments that cater for all learners. The *South African Schools Act, 1996 (Act 84 of 1996)*, Section 8(1) (South Africa, 1996b), requires school governing bodies to draw up a code of conduct for learners in consultation with learners, parents and educators. In terms of Section 8(5), a code of conduct has to make provision for the interests of the learner and any other party involved in disciplinary procedures.

Oosthuizen and Roos (2004a:38) state that a code of conduct is a “clearly drafted set of rules which may act as code of conduct between learners themselves and learners and educators to emphasize the correctness of appropriate behaviour”. It is important that schools provide all learners with the school’s code of conduct to make sure that learners follow the rules that they have seen, discussed and agreed to. A school’s code of conduct encourages good behaviour and therefore describes what an offence is and what the consequences for offences are (Bray, 2005:134). Everyone will then know what actions will be taken for certain offences, for example, bullying.

This study deems it important to highlight the use of a school code of conduct as it enables schools to include an anti-bullying policy in which schools can state clearly that bullying is taken seriously and that consequences will be applied should it happen. The purpose of an anti-bullying policy is to help establish a safe environment by providing clear rules and procedures for dealing with bullying on a regular, consistent and on-going basis (Krige et al., 2000).

2.9 The importance of a school safety plan and bullying

Besides the school's code of conduct, every school is expected to have an effective safety plan that complies with all the requirements set out in the *Occupational Health and Safety Act, 1993 (Act No. 85 of 1993)* (DoL, 1993). A safety plan should contain safety measures in order to make the school environment safe and bully-free (Squelch, 2001:138). A school safety plan should clearly indicate how learners should be supervised all the time. This makes it possible for teachers to keep an eye on the behaviour of the learners and be able to stop any bullying or dangerous play. When an educator is not in the class to supervise the learners, the learning process is disturbed and unsuitable behaviour may occur. Learners can hurt one another or break the property of the school. To prevent any form of bullying or unruly behaviour, an educator therefore has to be present in the classroom and not leave the learners unsupervised.

The playground, on the other hand, is another place where the learners are in danger of harassment and bullying. As a result, it is important to mention the control of the playground in the safety plan. To manage the playground, a duty roster for the staff has to be in place. In order to control bullying in the playground, an intervention plan is required that involves all the learners, parents and staff members to ensure that all learners can learn in an environment that is safe and secure. In this way, the probability of incidences will be reduced on the playground. The school is liable for the protection of the learner, which means that the safe-school plan, including the school rules, should be reviewed and updated on a regular basis so that teaching and learning can take place successfully in a safe and secure school environment.

2.10 Legislation

South Africa has a number of laws and regulations, some for the protection of children and others specifically for learners. The *Child Care Amendment Act No. 96 of 1996* (South Africa, 1996c) requires educators to report all incidences or suspicions of a learner's ill treatment, as well as incidences of a learner's suffering from injuries that may have been caused deliberately. Educators have regular contact with learners and therefore should easily be able to notice signs of ill treatment of children if they are trained to recognise it.

Section 10 of the *South African Schools Act* (South Africa, 1996b) provides for the protection of learners against physical and mental harm. However, schools need guidelines for educators that provide the extent to which educators have the authority to protect victims from bullies at school. In line with this, Section 142 of the *Children's Act 2005 (Act No. 38 of 2005)* (South Africa, 2005) provides guidelines for the occurrence of emotional, physical, psychological or sexual abuse, including aggression and active or passive bullying.

Subsequently, Section 41 of the *Amendment Act of 2007* (South Africa, 2007) makes further provision for the protection of children from harm, neglect, and abuse. Additionally, the *Consolidated Children's Act of South Africa 2010* made it possible to protect children's rights against bullying by another child. These guidelines thus ensure the safety and protection of learners from possible injury or harm.

2.11 Theoretical framework

This study was developed through examining the internationally recognised Olweus Bullying Prevention Programme. The theory of Daniel Olweus offered a theoretical framework that helped the researcher understand the roles of the bully, victim and bystander. By examining more closely the roles of the bully, victim and bystander in the Olweus Method, the researcher gained a deeper understanding of these roles, with the expectation that a clearer picture would evolve that could assist educators in their efforts to create safe classrooms and schools.

2.11.1 The Olweus Theory

Daniel Olweus (1993:1-2) has conducted research and interventions in the area of bully and victim problems among children at school and among youth for around 30 years. The Olweus Bullying Prevention Theory (Olweus, 1993, 2001b) is a method for working towards reducing bullying behaviour in schools. It also describes how learners may be engaged in a bullying situation, as a victim, bully or bystander. Olweus (1993, 2001b:3-20) believes that one should avoid labelling someone a “bully” and prefers to look at particular bullying behaviours revealed by that person.

Coloroso (2003:4) suggests that labels could be used as identifiers of various roles that individuals may adopt at different times. She also makes use of the terms ‘the bully’, ‘the bullied’ and ‘the bystander’; to shed light on how the child performs at that moment, instead of labelling the child permanently.

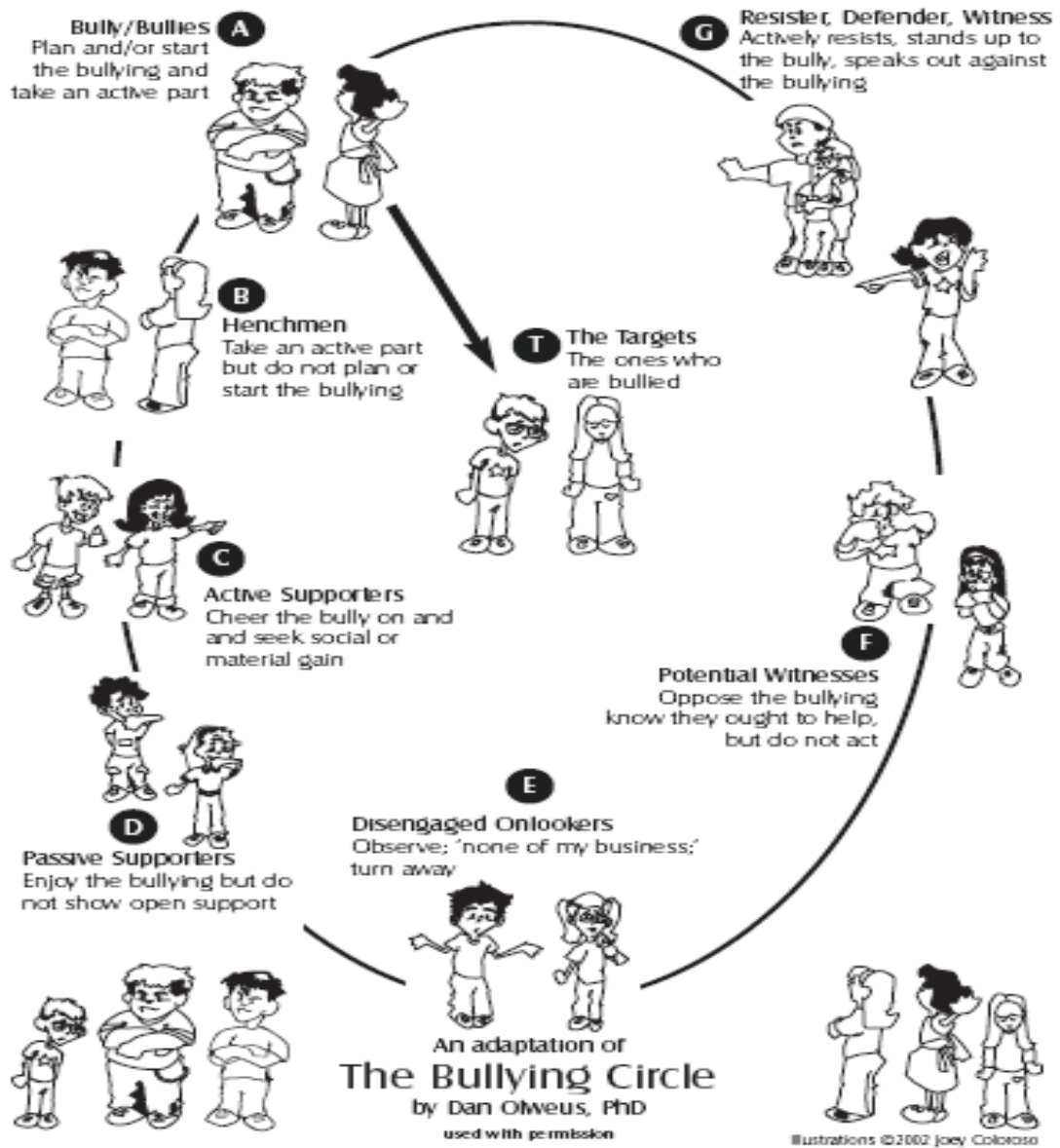


Figure 2.3: An adaptation of The Bullying Circle (Olweus, 2002)

Figure 2.3 outlines the "Bullying Circle" developed by Olweus in 2002. It represents the different ways in which learners in a school are involved in or affected by bullying. Learners may possibly play a number of roles including that of an attacker, victim, supporter (Limber, 2007) and bully-victim (Holt et al., 2007:345-360). The rest of the learners, called bystanders, are also affected by the bullying. The following role players are presented in the Olweus Bullying Circle.

A in the Olweus' Bullying Circle (2002), refers to the bully as the one who starts the bullying, that is, the perpetrator taking an active leadership role. Olweus (2001a:3-15) points out that bullies are often popular and like to be seen in a core group. They hardly ever bully on their own. If they are part of a group, they prefer other bullies to be present to boost their confidence. The bully thus causes harm or distress to the victim and demonstrates power in a group of a stronger and/or older person on a younger and/or weaker person. Bullies in the Bullying Circle who take an active part in the bullying incident often blame others and show very little remorse for their behaviour.

B in the Bullying Circle shows that lead bullies often have followers or 'henchmen' who usually do not start the bullying, but are helpful to the bully and participate in it. The 'henchmen' are therefore actively involved in the bullying incident. However, these henchmen, as they are referred to in the Bullying Circle, are not the ones who plan the bullying.

C indicates the active supporters who applaud the bullying and simultaneously look for social or material gain. This way, as active supporters, they expand their group of friends.

D shows that there are also passive supporters in the Bullying Circle who support the bullying by enjoying and cheering the bullying on but do not join in. In this fashion, they watch the incident that occurs but do not openly support the bullies.

E refers to disengaged onlookers in the Bullying Circle. These onlookers are not together with the bullies because they play the role of the spectators in the bullying incident. They will turn away because they feel that the argument or fight has nothing to do with them.

F shows that the Bullying Circle also includes potential witnesses who are against the bullying and who know they are supposed to help. However, these potential witnesses do not act.

G points out the resister who actively refuses to go along with the fighting or argument as well as the defender who stands up to the bully. Then there is the witness who does not hesitate to speak out against the bullying. Bullying by the role players in the Bullying Circle may involve physical behaviour such as hitting, kicking, or stealing from the victim, plus verbal abuse, for example, name-calling, insults, racist remarks or threats. More indirect bullying includes spreading true or untrue stories about the victim or excluding them from groups (Griffiths & Jones, 2006:94). It is against this background that the study deems it

necessary to understand why learners bully and to identify the victims and bystanders (Griffiths & Jones, 2006:96).

2.11.2 Why learners bully others

According to Griffiths and Jones (2006:96), learners might bully or be bullies' henchmen because they are encouraged to bully by friends who make them believe it is just a "bit of fun" or they may live with people who abuse them in some way. They may thus believe this is how one socialises by cheering on the bullying. On the other hand, they may have been a victim of bullying or have a strong wish to control others.

2.11.3 Identifying the victim

Victims may have few friends, or may seem unhappy and despondent (Krige et al., 2000:19). According to Dooboy and Clay (2008:56-58), "worldwide up to 50% of learners are faced with the complex social dilemma of bullying in schools, as either bullies or victims". Victims occasionally retaliate with no chance of 'winning' the fight against the bully (Griffiths & Jones, 2006:97). Victims of bullies can be any shape or size, girl or boy. Sullivan et al. (2004:12) suggest that victims may show one or more of the following symptoms after they are bullied: they have physical injuries, their clothing is ripped or missing, they have mood changes, their schoolwork declines, they are hesitant to go to school or are frequently absent or they are loners.

2.11.4 Identifying the bystander

According to Sullivan et al. (2004:15), we often think of bullying as involving two people, the 'bully' and the 'victim', but most of the time there is a third group of people involved, the 'bystanders'. Bystanders in the Bullying Circle feel responsible, uncomfortable or helpless to stop the bullying from taking place (Adair et al., 2000:207). However, they play an important part in the Bullying Circle as they witness the bullying incidents.

Bystanders are 'possible defenders' but may be scared to tell somebody about the unpleasant incident they witnessed because they feel the bully might hurt them. This concurs with Salmivalli et al. (2005:467) who suggest that bystanders are those "who witness the bullying but do nothing to stop it". Bystanders also may not take a stand because they think the bullying situation has nothing to do with them. Salmivalli (1999:453) states that bystanders who witness the bullying may take on various roles, such as

being part of an encouraging audience, laughing or making encouraging gestures, acting as an outsider by not taking sides but quietly condoning the bullying or acting as a defender by comforting the victim or standing up for him or her.

Coloroso (2003:46) contends: “How bystanders respond to both the bully and the target has a tremendous influence on how emboldened the bully becomes and/or how weak the target gets.” Some bystanders are against the bullying and think they ought to help but don’t, as indicated in the Bullying Circle (Figure 2.1). Through examining the Bullying Circle in the Olweus Bullying Prevention Programme and looking more closely at the roles of the bully, victim and bystander, the researcher found a much better understanding of how the bully, victim and bystander operate in a bullying situation.

2.11.5 Bronfenbrenner’s ecological theory

Bronfenbrenner’s ecological systems theory of human development (Bronfenbrenner, 1998: 993-1027) is included in this study as it can offer a deeper understanding of the phenomenon of bullying by exploring its causes and effects at the different levels of interaction systems. Bronfenbrenner’s theory places child development at four different levels of interacting systems, highlighting that what happens in one system, affects or is affected by other systems.

The model (Figure 2.4) is an illustration of the ecological systems approach that highlights the relationships between different role players in a child or any human’s development or life. This is in agreement with Marais and Meier (2010:41-57), who mention that bullying is “another disruptive behaviour that affects the emotional and the physical experiences of learners” at school level. The educator should therefore have knowledge of learner development to protect learners from any social and emotional trauma.

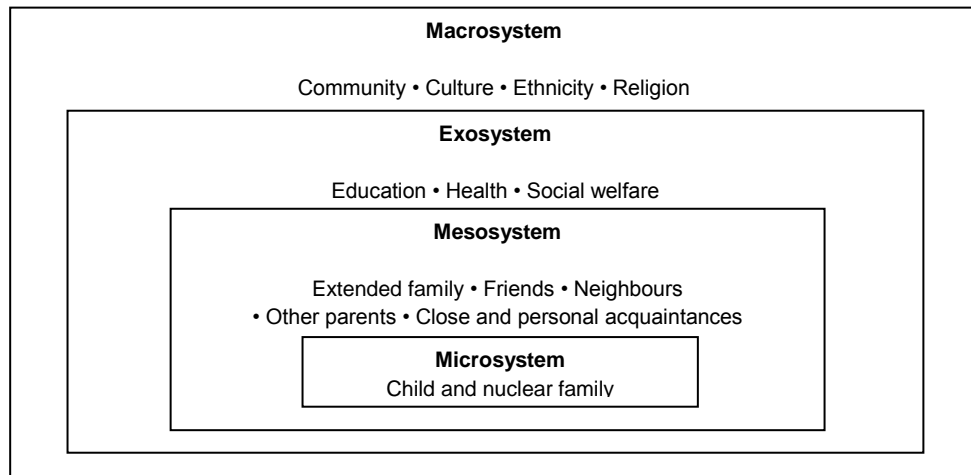


Figure 2.4: An illustration of Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory
(Swart & Phasha, 2005:215)

2.11.5.1 Microsystem

Bronfenbrenner describes the microsystem as “a pattern of activities, social roles, and interpersonal relationships experienced by the developing person in a given face-to-face setting” (Lerner, 2005:xvii). As such, microsystems are the immediate environments where interactions take place. One microsystem for a learner may be a home setting with parents and siblings, while another microsystem may comprise the school with teachers and peers. Thus, changes in the home or school environment may prompt children to start bullying with others.

2.11.5.2 Mesosystem

The mesosystem refers to the system in which microsystems speak to one another, for example, the interaction between the family system, school system and peer group system. The functioning of these individual systems has an effect on the other systems they interact with. For example, the quality of a learner's home environment might affect his or her school performance or confidence with peers, which may lead to bullying behaviour. Swart and Pettipher (2005:11) suggest a “learner may develop bullying behaviour from a variety of factors experienced in any of his or her microsystems”.

2.11.5.3 Exosystem

Swart and Pettipher (2005:11) describe the exosystem as a system of environments in which the learner is not directly involved. They also suggest that a parent's tense relationship with

an employer may not affect the learner directly but could affect the quality of the parent's relationship with the learner. Examples of environments in the exosystem include the education system and health services, social welfare, media, support groups, recreation, housing, and employment. For example, the employment setting or situation can affect a learner's wellbeing in the microsystem of the learner's home.

A situation in the economic exosystem may influence the learners indirectly and cause bullying. Learners may steal lunch or belongings of other learners or feel jealous of their more privileged peers (Weeks, 2005:38), and as a result develop bullying behaviour.

2.11.5.4 Macrosystem

The macrosystem refers to the attitudes, beliefs and values of a particular society. These are both influenced by and have an impact on the other systems (Swart & Pettipher, 2005:12). This system helps us to understand the complexity of the family as a system and how the child functions within the family and society. Societies where learners are exposed to violence and upheaval encourage violent behaviours in learners from an early age (Weeks, 2005:38-39), which may lead to bullying behaviour.

The core principle of an ecological system is that various systems or levels interact and influence one another and the role players involved in them. Bronfenbrenner's theory places the development and behaviour of the child as the key points of the interacting systems. These systems are in continuous interaction but are in turn affected by the child's behaviour.

2.12 Learner development

It is important for this study to include the development of learners because bullying can have long-lasting mental effects on the bullied if not addressed. Learners who are bullied are often already physically and emotionally weaker, and bullying exacerbates emotions that are already there.

According to Weeks (2005:24), learner development takes place in specific phases in the primary school years and at a later stage in the secondary school years. This study wishes to focus mainly on learners' behaviour in the Intermediate Phase at the primary school level. In the primary school setting, learners' emotional strength of mind is put to the test because they are expected to leave their family members when going to school, learn to work with others, work on their own, and try to control their feelings.

At the primary school stage, learners may begin to feel insecure by questioning themselves and realising that they may not be the best in the school. The primary school phase is also the phase where their peers become more important in their lives, as they want to be accepted by their peers or risk feeling rejected and lonely. Feelings of insecurity inside and outside the classroom can create behavioural problems such as bullying. According to Weeks (2005:30) insecure learners may “become bullies or show other behavioural problems such as stealing or lying to try and impress their peer group”.

2.13 Conclusion

The researcher defined bullying concepts in Chapter 2, discussed the different types of bullying and the extent of exposure to the various forms of bullying at school level. The chapter also provided a review of the literature covering the theories of Daniel Olweus and Urie Bronfenbrenner. Chapter 2 further discussed the role of educators and the importance of the school’s code of conduct. In Chapter 3 the researcher substantiates the reasons for an interpretive framework. This chapter concludes with the process of data collection and the issues of validity and reliability.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

The researcher presents the purpose of the research, the methodological framework and research design for the study in this chapter. Both quantitative and qualitative methods were used and are explained in the research. The issue of validity and reliability are also addressed and the chapter concludes with a discussion of how the data was analysed.

3.2 Purpose of the research

This study aims to determine learners' experiences of various types of bullying, to explore the extent of their exposure to a variety of bullying types, and to examine methods to reduce bullying. An investigation of learners' understanding and experiences of bullying is a step in probing their understanding of the forms of bullying and whether they were the victim, perpetrator or witness.

3.2.1 Main research question

The main research question for this study is: What are primary school learners' understanding and experiences of bullying?

Sub-research questions

It was felt that sub-questions in this study would allow for a more in-depth understanding of how often learners are bullied in school. To obtain answers to the research question, this study is guided by the following sub-questions:

- What is the learners' understanding of being a victim, bully or witness?
- What are the primary school learners' experiences of the different types of bullying?
- To what extent have they been exposed to the various types of bullying?

3.3 Methodological framework

The focus is on an interpretive research paradigm as it allows the researcher to understand the learners' understanding of what is happening around them in terms of bullying.

3.3.1 Interpretive research paradigm

This study examines what learners think or feel is happening at school by exploring their experiences of the different types of bullying. It also looks at the extent to which they have been exposed to the various types of bullying.

According to Pearse (1983:158), a paradigm is a perception or viewpoint about "how the world is constructed". Johnson and Onwuegbuzie (2004:14) suggest that there are two kinds of research paradigms, namely quantitative research (numbers and point of view of researcher) and qualitative research (words and points of view of respondents). The researcher decided to combine the two paradigms and use a mixed-method research process. By doing this, the study was able to employ the strengths of both types of research and limit the weaknesses of each (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004:14).

According to Howe (1992:236), the qualitative research paradigm is also known as an interpretive research paradigm. Interpretive research aims to understand individuals' insights into what is going on around them. According to Henning et al. (2004:21), interpretive research is "concerned with meaning". This study thus sought to understand definitions of bullying and learners' understanding of different types of bullying related to personal bullying experiences.

McMillan and Schumacher (2006:12) posit that quantitative research is about measuring the relationships between variables and construct statistical models to explain what was observed. The quantitative approach was deemed appropriate to this study as it should allow the researcher to gain an understanding of how the learners experience bullying.

For this reason it was found fitting to use a mixed-method approach. By combining both paradigms, the researcher should be able to make sense of the learner's experiences of the different kinds of bullying as he or she describes it, and compare learners' accounts of bullying with figures gained from quantitative research.

3.4 Research design

Research design is a plan for choosing a sample, research site and data collection, and should provide the most valid answers possible to the research questions (McMillan & Schumacher, 1993:157). In support of this definition, Fouché and De Vos (2005:100-110) describe research design as the plan of how the research intends to be conducted.

Creswell and Plano Clark (2011:5) state: “A mixed-method research design is a method that focuses on collecting, analyzing and combining both quantitative and qualitative data in a single study.” A mixed-method design was used in this study, as it allowed the researcher to delve into the deliberate and harmful actions of a more powerful person or group on a less powerful person or group occurring repeatedly over time. An initial quantitative method of a questionnaire for learners was administered. This was followed by a qualitative method, that is, interviews with a focus group on learners’ experiences of bullying.

3.4.1 Mixed method designs

According to McMillan and Schumacher (2006:407), there are three types of mixed-method designs, namely sequential explanatory, sequential exploratory, and concurrent triangulation.

- In sequential explanatory designs, quantitative methods are employed first, followed by qualitative methods.
- In sequential exploratory designs, qualitative methods are employed first, followed by quantitative methods.
- In concurrent triangulation designs, quantitative and qualitative techniques are used together.

In this study a sequential explanatory design was used, since the study commenced with a quantitative method by using questionnaires to explore learners’ experiences of bullying: whether they are a victim, bully or bystander. This was followed by a qualitative method, using focus group interviewing as a data collection method. More detailed experiences of the different types of bullying could be generated in the interview session to gauge learners’ understanding of the terminology and obtain insight into their personal experiences.

A mixed-method design helps in reducing researcher bias and allows data to be measured and analysed more successfully (McMillan & Schumacher, 2006:407). To ensure accurate interpretations of learners' experiences of bullying, this section points out the characteristics of a mixed-method approach, compared with quantitative and qualitative methods alone.

3.4.2 Mixed method approach

- **Advantages and disadvantages of mixed-method approach**

According to Creswell and Plano Clark (2011:12), advantages of the mixed-method approach include “giving meaning and context to statistics by using words, pictures and stories”. Similarly, one can use numbers to add accuracy to words, pictures and stories. Creswell and Plano Clark (2011:12) further contend that the mixed-method approach “helps a researcher answer a broader and more complete choice of questions”. However, the mixed-method approach has disadvantages: it is time consuming, practically more difficult, complex in respect of data collection and analysis, relatively new and resource intensive (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011:14).

3.4.2.1 Quantitative method

- **Definition**

Creswell (2003:19) states:

A quantitative approach is one in which the investigator primarily uses post-positivist claims for developing knowledge (i.e. cause and effect thinking, reduction to specific variables and hypotheses and questions, use of measurement and observation, and the test of theories).

A quantitative research method was considered suitable for this study because it would enable the researcher to gain an understanding of and answers to how learners understand their experiences of bullying, whether as victim, bully or witness.

- **Characteristics of the quantitative method**

McMillan and Schumacher (2006:12) note “quantitative research quantifies the relationships between variables by constructing statistical models to explain the findings”. All aspects of the study are carefully designed before data are collected.

3.4.2.2 Qualitative method

- **Definition**

Denzin and Lincoln (2000:3) suggest that qualitative researchers study things in their “natural settings, attempting to make sense of or interpret phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them”. In support of this, Henning et al. (2004:3), describe qualitative studies as “aiming for depth of understanding rather than quantity”. Fraenkel and Wallen (2006:15, 431) note that a qualitative researcher “in general attempts to become wrapped up in the research process, collect data in the form of words and not numbers and use interviews, field notes, and audio-recordings, for example”.

- **Characteristics of the qualitative method**

This study is in agreement with the definitions of the qualitative research method as its aim is to gain a deeper understanding of learners’ experiences of bullying, whether as a bully, victim or bystander. The researcher adopted and used two research techniques, the study took place in the natural setting at school, and it used several methods that are interpretive.

3.5 Piloting

The researcher piloted the questionnaire (Appendix E) with an Intermediate Phase group of learners at a school which did not form part of the study. The pilot sample of 250 Intermediate Phase learners (boys and girls) consisted of 65 Grade 4 learners, 87 Grade 5 learners and 98 Grade 6 learners who completed the questionnaires in English and Afrikaans. The pilot study was conducted two weeks before the actual test. The idea of the pilot study was to determine how long respondents took to complete the questionnaire, whether all questions and instructions were clear, and whether to take away any items which did not generate usable data.

The pilot study was successful, as nothing needed to be changed on the questionnaire. This concurs with McMillan and Schumacher (2006:206), who claim that “the pilot test provides a means of assessing the length of the interview and will give the researcher some idea of the ease with which the data can be summarised”.

3.6 Data collection procedure

The study started with a quantitative instrument in which learners were asked for their experiences of the different types of bullying (questionnaire survey for learners), followed by a qualitative method involving detailed exploration with a few individuals in a focus group interview. The focus group was selected depending on the frequency of their responses to the questions in the questionnaire. These learners in the focus group indicated on the questionnaire that they “mostly” experienced the different types of bullying. Using both methods in this study was deemed to provide a better understanding and more relevant answers than using only one research method.

3.6.1 Setting

The researcher identified a school in Retreat, Western Cape, as a site of data collection for the research. The school principal explained that the school was situated in a community characterised by poverty, drug abuse, violence at home and violence in the community. One teacher mentioned that children in circumstances of poverty, drug abuse and violence are “vulnerable and feel isolated, and are very often victims of physical and emotional abuse and bullying”.

The principal also mentioned that the school comprised a diverse group of learners from various African countries such as Zimbabwe, Democratic Republic of Congo, Angola, Rwanda and South Africa. This is captured on the school’s Centralised Educational Management Information System (CEMIS). This system monitors the movement of learners in and out of schools in the Western Cape. The grades range from Grade 4 to Grade 7, and the school accommodates approximately 600 learners.

Before starting with the study, approval to conduct the research at the school was sought from the WCED (Appendix A), the school principal (Appendix B) and thereafter from the parents (Appendix C) before data collection commence. The researcher met with the principal and staff in the staffroom to inform them of the aims of the study and how the school could benefit from it. Both the principal and staff were very enthusiastic about the research since bullying was a problem at the school.

3.6.2 Sampling

To answer the research question, the researcher identified all the Intermediate Phase learners at a primary school in the Western Cape. These learners are familiar with bullying and informed about the phenomenon in the Life Orientation subject and therefore information-rich on the issue of bullying. As a result, they have enough exposure to the terminology during the Intermediate Phase, and thus should know what it is all about. The criterion for inclusion in this study was therefore that the participants could relate to experiences of bullying, either as a victim, bully, or witness. Criterion sampling involved reconsidering and studying “all cases that meet some predetermined criterion of importance” (Patton, 2002:238). Similarly, McMillan and Schumacher (2006:326) state, “criterion samples are chosen because they are likely to be knowledgeable and informative about the phenomena the researcher is investigating”. The researcher deemed it necessary to use the criterion samples that had been exposed to the concept of bullying during Life Skills lessons and therefore were able to give a fair comment on their understanding and experiences of bullying.

The total sample comprised 296 learners, which includes 78 Grade 4 learners, 119 Grade 5 learners and 99 Grade 6 learners.

3.7 Data collection method

3.7.1 Questionnaires

The first instrument used in this study was a questionnaire. The Delaware Bullying Questionnaire was adapted to the South African context to explore learners’ understanding and experiences of bullying and to what extent they have been exposed to various types of bullying. The Delaware Bullying Questionnaire covers a variety of issues related to understanding whether you are a bully, victim or bystander, the frequency of bullying types, power relations, and gender, as well as reporting and location of bullying.

To conduct the questionnaires, arrangements were made with the identified school, learners, educators and principal. Consent letters were issued to parents on the 14th of August 2009 to inform the parents and learners of all aspects of the research. Information obtained was treated with confidentiality.

Administrative procedures were agreed upon. The questionnaires (Appendix E) were administered to the learners by their teachers in Grades 4 to 6 during a regular classroom period. This took place in their natural school setting, that is, in their own classrooms. The questions were carefully compiled in the language of instruction, English or Afrikaans. The questionnaire was translated into Afrikaans because one Grade 6 class was a dual-medium class. The process was arranged for the 7th of September 2009 and was done during the Reading period so that the Intermediate Phase learners could complete the questionnaires.

Learners used pencils provided to complete the questionnaires. Teachers read the instructions on the questionnaires to the learners. It was agreed that completed questionnaires be sent to the principal's office for collection by the researcher.

The researcher decided to make use of a closed-response Likert-scale format where the item response selections were provided. There were 25 questions, each providing six possible responses. "Likert-type items use different response scales and provide great flexibility because the descriptors on the scale vary to fit the nature of the question" (McMillan & Schumacher, 2006:199). 'Scale in the Likert scale refers to the total sum of the responses in the question. The questions were set in a way to answer the research question: What are primary school learners' understanding and experiences of bullying? The understanding of bullying in the questionnaire refers to the categories "how others treat you" and "how you treat others") as a bully, victim or bystander and the experiences of bullying refer to exposure to different types of bullying.

Learners could choose between these predetermined responses on the questionnaire. Closed-form items (also called structured or closed-ended) are best for obtaining demographic information and data that can be categorised easily (McMillan & Schumacher, 2006:197). This study found the Likert scale useful as it allows the researcher to determine the overall extent of the learners' experiences of bullying. The advantage of using the Likert scale is that it does not have a straightforward 'yes' or 'no' answer, but rather provides the learners with potential options to choose from. A disadvantage of using the Likert scale is that respondents may not give accurate answers because they might be embarrassed or do not understand the questions.

Learners were asked to write their names on the questionnaires to enable the researcher to select a focus group for the interview. However, learners' names are not revealed in this report, to maintain confidentiality.

3.7.2 Focus group interview

The second instrument used in this study was a semi-structured group interview (Appendix F). With this semi-structured interview the researcher could obtain detailed information from the focus group on their understanding of bullying, whether they were a victim, bully or witness. McMillan and Schumacher (2006:206) note, "Semi-structured questions have no choices from which the respondents select an answer. Rather, the question is phrased to allow for individual responses."

The researcher made use of a focus group because the interview involved direct interaction between the researcher and the interviewees (McMillan & Schumacher, 1993:250). The interview was conducted in a classroom at the research site in Retreat on the 25th of March 2010 with a focus group of six learners who were selected depending on the frequency of their responses in the questionnaire (that is, indicating that they were bullied most of the time or mostly bullied others on a daily basis).

At the reception desk the secretary was very polite and said the principal was expecting the researcher. When the researcher arrived, the principal welcomed her with a warm smile and led her to the classroom of the HOD to organise a space for her, as there was no classroom available owing to limited space. The HOD made arrangements immediately so that she could conduct the interview with the focus group.

The focus group was chosen in relation to the category "how others treat you" on the questionnaire. In this category, the focus group mainly pointed out that they were 'constantly' bullied either by being hit, kicked, pushed, teased, and called names, or rumours were spread about them. As a result, these learners were able to share their experiences of bullying. The researcher assured learners in the focus group that they would not be subjected to any embarrassment or loss of self-esteem, given the fear and intimidation associated with bullying, as the focus group might consist of victims and bullies in the same group. The focus group consisted of two boys and four girls: two girls in Grade 4, one boy and one girl in Grade 5, and one boy and one girl in Grade six. Respondents 1 and 2 were Grade 4 learners; respondents 3 and 4 were Grade 5 learners; and respondents 5 and 6 were Grade 6 learners. The focus group responses were transcribed verbatim.

Fraenkel and Wallen (2005:455) suggest that interviewing is the most significant method of data collection that qualitative researchers make use of. However, an interview can be time-consuming and learners could feel uncomfortable or be unwilling to co-operate. Yet, an

advantage of conducting a semi-structured interview is that the researcher can acquire in-depth information about the relevant topic. Thus, learners in the focus group could share their experiences of bullying by a more powerful person or group of a less powerful person or group occurring repeatedly over time.

The interview procedure was explained beforehand to the principal and staff. On the day of the interview, the procedure was also explained to the learners with regard to how they had been identified to be part of the interview process. With the permission of the principal, a tape recorder was used. McMillan and Schumacher (2006:207) recommend that several researchers may use taped answers to analyse data and estimate reliability, which was done in this study by the researcher and a colleague. A tape recorder was deemed necessary to check that data from the interview was accurately represented. The researcher managed the process to ensure confidentiality.

3.8 Logistical constraints

The timeframe in which data collection occurred ran over a period of six months. This period was agreed upon based on WCED guidelines (Appendix B). During this period, the researcher experienced difficulty in completing the interview with the focus group owing to a taxi strike and the H1N1 flu (swine flu) scare during the third term of 2009.

An extension date for the interview was requested and approved by the WCED (Appendix B). However, on the day of the interview, certain learners of the focus group went on a class outing and the interview had to be rescheduled for the 25th of March 2010.

The researcher also experienced difficulty in securing a classroom for the interviews because of limited classroom space at the school. The HOD resolved the problem by combining two classes to make room for the focus group interview.

3.9 Ethical considerations

Gravetter and Forzano (2003:59) define research ethics as the responsibility of researchers to be honest and respectful to all individuals who are participating in the study. As this study deals with a potentially sensitive emotional topic, the researcher endeavoured to be as ethical and considerate of respondents as possible.

To comply with ethical standards, the researcher sought approval from the WCED (Appendix A) and from the selected school to conduct the research (Appendix C) before collecting any data. All learners and their parents were informed (Appendix D) of all the aspects of the research and consent was obtained to conduct the study with the learners at the school.

McMillan and Schumacher (2006:122) note that “confidentiality is ensured by making sure that the data cannot be linked to individual subjects by name by using a system to link names to data that can be destroyed”. This was done in this study by asking learners to write their names on the questionnaires for the researcher to decide on a focus group for the interview. However, to maintain confidentiality, the learners’ names are not revealed in this study. Instead numbers are used for the focus group.

Babbie (2005:63) cautions researchers that social science research should never injure people being studied. The researcher ensured that this study did not harm the focus group learners in any way and the information sought is presented with integrity. In addition to this, McMillan and Schumacher (2006:339) emphasise “a sense of caring and fairness must be part of the researcher’s thinking, actions and personal morality”. The researcher took care to conduct the research with empathy, and to remain unbiased when interviewing bullies and victims together in the focus group; furthermore, the findings were presented in an ethically considerate manner.

3.10 Researcher’s journal

A research journal was kept for the duration of the data collection and analysis process. Journal entries were recorded immediately after each interviewee spoke. These journal entries included notes on the researcher’s comments on the learners and recollections of how they behaved and spoke during the interviews. The entries also included reflections on the research site, as well as the reception by the principal and staff of the Intermediate Phase learners.

The notes in the researcher’s journal were helpful in allowing the researcher to recall the context of what the learners said in the interviews and take account of any distractions or comments the researcher felt were important to the findings. Finally, the researcher listened for emerging patterns and themes during the process of conducting the interviews. Points of view on patterns and themes were recorded in the researcher’s journal and these notes formed the starting point for the data analysis process of the interview.

3.11 Validity and reliability

McMillan and Schumacher (2006:104) define the term 'validity' as "the degree to which scientific explanations of phenomena match reality. It refers to the truthfulness of findings and conclusions". Gorman and Clayton (1997) define 'reliability' as the degree to which a measurement procedure yields similar answers time after time and define 'validity' as the degree to which it gives the right answer.

To ensure validity and reliability, the researcher ensured that the information collected was true and represented an accurate picture that was transparent and clear, so that the researcher could follow the same method and produce comparable results.

The researcher tested the issue of reliability by using a statistical test method in this study. The pilot test (questionnaire) was conducted with all Intermediate Phase learners from another school who did not form part of the study. The researcher evaluated the scores of both Intermediate Phase groups to test for consistency and repeatability of answers that were similar. As a result, the researcher determines whether the test appears to measure what it is intended to measure. If it works, the test is valid at this point and may be inspected further to find out whether the test is valid and may be used in other contexts.

The issue of validity is tested by using a semi-structured interview method with a focus group to answer the sub-research questions. These questions pertain to learners' experiences of different types of bullying and the extent to which learners have been exposed to various forms of bullying. Using this measure by delving into the learners' experiences of bullying, the researcher was able to obtain authentic findings and conclusions of bullying by a more powerful person or group of a less powerful person or group occurring repeatedly over time.

3.12 Data analysis

Data analysis involves extrapolating what was observed, listened to and understood prior to and during the data collection period so that one can make sense of what one has learned (Glesne & Peshkin, 1992:127). In support of this definition, Merriam (1998:178) describes data analysis "as a process of obtaining sense from the data".

Quantitative data in this study was analysed by using descriptive statistics that provide simple summaries about the sample and the measures. The responses were counted and percentages were calculated to determine general trends. All analysis was done using the

SPSS 17 computer software package, a statistical data analysis tool. Qualitative data was recorded manually, by using a recording device to analyse the data. By using a mixed-method approach in this study, the researcher had the opportunity to generate a better understanding of how learners understand whether they are a victim, bully or bystander.

In this study, accepted levels of significance reported are as follows: The five per cent level of significance includes all chi-square values where $p = 0.05$. A chi-square contingency test was done in this study to see if there was any statistical significant difference in the responses by the three grades (Grades 4, 5 and 6). A p-value corresponding to the chi-square value less than 0.05 shows that there is a statistically significant association between two variables, that is, boys being bystanders or girls being perpetrators of name-calling. In contrast, a probability value greater than 0.05 shows no significant difference or association.

With the assistance of a statistical analyst, the researcher systematically organised the data into themes and patterns using frequency tables, bringing meaning to the themes by telling a story, and writing it all down so that others could read what she had learned. Maykut and Morehouse (1994:127) state that themes and categories are not predetermined but emerge from data itself. Some notes were taken to record perceptions of the learners and recollections of how they behaved and spoke during the interviews. The researcher listened to audio-recordings to analyse the focus group data and stored it in a computer file. The results are presented objectively by summarising the findings, so that respondents will be able to understand the material in order to increase the probability of acceptance of the conclusions.

3.13 Conclusion

The researcher explained the research design and the method of data collection in this chapter in detail. The use of a mixed-method design is important to generate information in an attempt to obtain an in-depth understanding of learners' experiences of bullying. The advantages and disadvantages of the data collection method in relation to the aims of the research question were also mentioned. Concepts such as reliability, validity, and ethics were explained in the context of this research study.

Chapter 4 will focus on the results of the collected data generated by means of the questionnaire and focus group interview. The findings of the research will also be presented in the form of tables with discussions highlighting the most important elements.

CHAPTER 4

RESEARCH FINDINGS, DISCUSSIONS AND INTERPRETATIONS

4.1 Introduction

The aim of this chapter is to present the research findings by using frequency tables and cross-tabulations. This chapter further discusses and interprets the learners' interview responses with a focus group in response to the research question: What are primary school learners' understanding and experiences of bullying? As a result, a deeper understanding of how learners understand their experiences of bullying will be gained, whether they were the victim, bully or witness.

4.2 Research findings and discussion

This section will present the findings of the questionnaire with a brief discussion on each category in the questionnaire, that is, how others treat you (being bullied), how you treat others (being a bully) and your experiences as a bystander. The presentation gives the researcher a clearer understanding of how learners identify with bullying. This is followed by a presentation and discussion of the responses of the interview with a focus group of learners on their experiences of bullying.

4.2.1 Section A: The questionnaire

Data obtained from a questionnaire was generated from all Intermediate Phase learners at a primary school in the Western Cape. Questions were carefully compiled in the language of instruction (English and Afrikaans) and learners were required to circle the responses of their choice to the questions. The questionnaire in this study consists of a behavioural Likert-type scale with a range of six answers to choose from. Bullying can comprise deliberate and harmful actions of a more powerful person or group on a less powerful person or group, occurring repeatedly. The purpose of the first three questions of the questionnaire was to obtain demographic information from the Intermediate Phase learners. Thereafter, the questionnaire was divided into three categories: Category One consisted of questions on "how others treat you" (being bullied), Category Two included questions on "how you treat others" (being a bully) and Category Three examined questions on "what learners have heard or seen" (being a bystander). These categories are presented in the form of frequency tables and cross-tabulation tables with brief references to the content of the tables.

4.2.1.1 Demographics

The first three questions of the questionnaire requested demographic information and these results are presented in the frequency table below. The total sample of 296 learners in this study consisted of Intermediate Phase learners.

Table 4.1: Grade in school

Grade		Frequency	Valid percentage	Cumulative percentage
Valid	4A	39	13.2	13.2
	4B	39	13.2	26.4
	5A	40	13.5	39.9
	5B	40	13.5	53.4
	5C	39	13.2	66.6
	6A	13	4.4	70.9
	6A (Afr)	15	5.1	76.0
	6B	35	11.8	87.8
	6C	36	12.2	100.0
Total		296	100.0	

At the time of this study, 26.4% of learners in Grade 4, 40.2% in Grade 5 and 33.5% in Grade 6 completed the questionnaire. The Grade 6A class was a dual-medium class of 28 learners of whom 13 were English-speaking and 15 were Afrikaans-speaking learners. The questionnaire was thus made available in both these languages. The rest of the learners were all in English-medium classes.

Table 4.2: Age

Age		Frequency	Valid percentage	Cumulative percentage
Valid	9	25	8.5	8.5
	10	68	23.1	31.6
	11	81	27.6	59.2
	12	85	28.9	88.1
	13	27	9.2	97.3
	14	8	2.7	100.0
Total		294	100.0	
Incomplete questions		2		
Total		296		

The majority of the learners were eleven or twelve years old (56.5%), while 31.6% of the learners were aged nine and ten. The 13 and 14-year-olds comprised 11.9% of the total population at the time of the study.

Table 4.3: Gender

Gender		Frequency	Valid percentage	Cumulative percentage
Valid	Male	145	49.2	49.2
	Female	150	50.8	100.0
Total		295	100.0	
Incomplete Questions		1		
Total		296		

The gender distribution of the learners was almost even. The sample comprised slightly more females (50.8%) than males (49.2%) who responded. One learner did not indicate gender at the time of this study and is therefore missing on the system.

Summary of demographics of learners

The first three tables summarise the demographics of the learners. Of the learners who participated in the study, 26.4% (78) were in Grade 4 and completed the questionnaire at the time of this study. Of the remainder of the learners, 40.2% (119) were in Grade 5 and 33.5% (99) in Grade 6 (Table 4.1).

Some of the learners in Grade 6A answered the questions in Afrikaans and the rest of the learners in all grades completed the questionnaire in English. These learners were selected for this study as most of them in the Intermediate Phase have had exposure to the concepts of bullying and are able to read and understand instructions. They would therefore be able to give a fair comment on their understanding of bullying. At the time of this study, the ages of respondents ranged from 9 to 14 years (Table 4.2). The gender distribution of the learners was virtually identical, representing (50.8%) females and (49.2%) males.

4.2.1.2 Understanding of bullying (frequency tables)

Frequency tables are used in this study to show a statistical record of how often each value in a set of data occurs. Thus, the frequency tables summarise the data and show a list of categories with the types of responses as well as the numbers of learners responding to each category.

A basic statistical analysis was undertaken to gather information from learners who reported their understanding of bullying by indicating how often they had been bullied at school. Their understanding of the types of bullying included being hit, kicked, pushed, spreading of rumours, name-calling or teasing, while being robbed of their money, snacks or lunch was also investigated.

4.2.1.2.1 Research findings on being bullied

Table 4.4: Being hit (Q6)

Q6. How often do other learners bully you by hitting you in school?		Frequency	Valid percentage	Cumulative percentage
Valid	1. Every day or always	43	15.0	15.0
	2. Once or twice a week	53	18.5	33.6
	3. Once or twice per month	25	8.7	42.3
	4. Once or twice per year	35	12.2	54.5
	5. Never	130	45.5	100.0
Total		286	100.0	
Incomplete question		10		
Total		296		

Of the 286 learners who completed the questions correctly, 53 (18.5%) reported that they had been bullied by other learners hitting them once or twice a week, while 130 (45.5%) indicated that they had never been bullied by others hitting them at school.

Ten of the 296 learners did not complete this question on being hit in the questionnaire. This number also includes occasions where more than one response was circled.

Table 4.5: Being kicked (Q7)

Q7. How often do other learners bully you by kicking you in school?		Frequency	Valid percentage	Cumulative percentage
Valid	1. Every day or always	33	11.6	11.6
	2. Once or twice a week	54	19.0	30.6
	3. Once or twice per month	28	9.9	40.5
	4. Once or twice per year	40	14.1	54.6
	5. Never	129	45.4	100.0
Total		284	100.0	
Incomplete question		12		
Total		296		

Fifty-four (19.0%) of the learners reported that they had been kicked more than once a week by other learners, while 45.4% of the learners reported that they had never been kicked by another learner at school.

Table 4.6: Being pushed (Q8)

Q8. How often do other learners bully you by pushing you in school?		Frequency	Valid percentage	Cumulative percentage
Valid	1. Every day or always	75	26.6	26.6
	2. Once or twice a week	66	23.4	50.0
	3. Once or twice per month	21	7.4	57.4
	4. Once or twice per year	21	7.4	64.9
	5. Never	99	35.1	100.0
Total		282	100.0	
Incomplete question		14		
Total		296		

Fourteen of the 296 learners did not answer this question on being pushed. The highest frequency, that is, 35.1% of the 282 learners who answered the question, indicated that they had never been pushed by other learners at school. However, 75 (26.6%) indicated that they were pushed on a daily basis.

Table 4.7: Being teased (Q9)

Q9. Who has bullied you by teasing you at school?		Frequency	Valid percentage	Cumulative percentage
Valid	1. Mostly boys	84	37.0	37.0
	2. Mostly girls	19	8.4	45.4
	3. Both girls and boys	40	17.6	63.0
	4. Younger than me	8	3.5	66.5
	5. Older than me	61	26.9	93.4
	6. The same age as me	15	6.6	100.0
Total		227	100.0	
Incomplete question		69		
Total		296		

Of the 227 learners, 84 (37.0%) reported teasing mostly by boys, while 61 (26.9%) reported teasing by learners who were older than they were.

A large percentage of the 296 learners is omitted from the system (69), and as a result could not be counted. Thirty-four were girls and thirty-five were boys who circled two of the options instead of one and could therefore not be recorded. These learners probably wanted to indicate that it was not just boys and/or girls who teased them but boys and/or girls who teased and who were either older or younger than they were.

The above question should perhaps have allowed learners to mark two responses: gender (girls/boys) and age (older/younger/ same age) separately.

Table 4.8: Spreading rumours about you (Q10)

Q10. Who has bullied you by spreading rumours about you at school?		Frequency	Valid percentage	Cumulative percentage
Valid	1. Mostly boys	41	19.0	19.0
	2. Mostly girls	69	31.9	50.9
	3. Both girls and boys	34	15.7	66.7
	4. Younger than me	3	1.4	68.1
	5. Older than me	38	17.6	85.6
	6. The same age as me	31	14.4	100.0
Total		216	100.0	
Incomplete question		80		
Total		296		

Of the 216 learners who answered this question on “spreading rumours about you”, 69 (31.9%) reported that mostly girls had bullied them by spreading rumours about them.

Responses in the questionnaire revealed that 80 learners were omitted from the system owing to incomplete responses. This phenomenon was not found in the pilot study – otherwise the above question would possibly have been changed to allow learners to mark two responses: gender (girls/boys) and age (older/younger/same age).

Table 4.9: Being called names (Q11)

Q11. Who has bullied you by calling you names at school?		Frequency	Valid percentage	Cumulative percentage
Valid	1. Mostly boys	86	36.1	36.1
	2. Mostly girls	32	13.4	49.6
	3. Both girls and boys	59	24.8	74.4
	4. Younger than me	3	1.3	75.6
	5. Older than me	38	16.0	91.6
	6. The same age as me	20	8.4	100.0
Total		238	100.0	
Incomplete question		58		
Total		296		

The highest frequency, that is, 36.1% of the learners, reported that mostly boys bullied them by calling them names at school compared with the second highest frequency of 13.4% of learners who said that mostly girls called them names.

Together, half of the learners (49.5%) indicated that they had been called names by both boys and girls. Learners also confirmed that learners older than they were (16.0%) called them names.

Table 4.10: Times of and places for being bullied (Q12)

Q12. The places and times where you have been bullied by other learners		Frequency	Valid percentage	Cumulative percentage
Valid	1. On the way to school	23	9.3	9.3
	2. In the toilets	20	8.1	17.3
	3. In the corridors	20	8.1	25.4
	4. During lessons	42	16.9	42.3
	5. On the way home	99	39.9	82.3
	6. On the bus	44	17.7	100.0
Total		248	100.0	
Incomplete question		48		
Total		296		

Of the 248 learners, 99 (39.9%) indicated that they had been bullied by other learners on their way home from school, while 44 (17.7%) indicated they had been bullied on the bus.

Simultaneously, 20 (8.1%) of the learners reported that they had been bullied by other learners in the passages and another 20 (8.1%) in the toilets at school.

The remainder of the learners comprised 42 (16.9%) who claimed that they had been bullied in class during lessons. This is even more disconcerting as this could be interpreted to mean that bullying occurs in the presence of the teachers.

Table 4.11: Giving up lunch, snacks or money (Q13)

13. How often have you been bullied into giving up your lunch, snacks or money?		Frequency	Valid percentage	Cumulative percentage
Valid	1. Every day or always	30	10.8	10.8
	2. Once or twice a week	24	8.6	19.4
	3. Once or twice per month	4	1.4	20.8
	4. Once or twice per year	17	6.1	26.9
	5. Never	204	73.1	100.0
Total		279	100.0	
Incomplete question		17		
Total		296		

Of 279 learners, 73.1% indicated that they had never been bullied into giving up their lunch, snacks or money at school. Yet, almost a quarter of the learners (19.4%) responded that they had been bullied into giving up their lunch, snacks or money daily (10.8%) and/or more than once a week (8.6%).

Table 4.12: Whom have you told? (Q14)

Q14. If you have been bullied this year, whom have you told?		Frequency	Valid percentage	Cumulative percentage
Valid	1. A teacher	50	19.2	19.2
	2. My mother	79	30.3	49.4
	3. My father	22	8.4	57.9
	4. My sister or brother	15	5.7	63.6
	5. My friends	28	10.7	74.3
	6. Nobody	67	25.7	100.0
Total		261	100.0	
Incomplete question		35		
Total		296		

Seventy-nine (30.3%) of the 261 learners reported that they had told their mothers that they had been bullied at school, trusting them more than the teachers (19.2%). However, the second highest percentage in the table was 25.7% of learners, who told nobody about being bullied at school.

Summary on being bullied

Information was gathered from learners who reported how frequently they had been bullied by others at school. Types of bullying included direct and indirect bullying such as being hit, kicked, pushed, teased, spreading rumours, name-calling or teasing, as well as being 'robbed' of their money, snack or lunch. Response options for the first few questions ranged from 1 (every day) to 5 (never) in the category 'how others treat you' to obtain a significant indication of their understanding of the frequency of bullying at school. There were some questions which not all learners completed. The results have been computed as percentages for only of those who responded.

Being hit

Of the 286 learners who reported that they had been hit by others, 53 (18.5%) indicated that they were hit more than once a week (Table 4.4). Of the rest, 130 (45.5%) indicated that they had never been bullied by others hitting them at school.

Being kicked

Fifty-four (19.0%) of learners of the sample were kicked more than once a week by other learners at school. Yet, the largest percentage of the learners (45.4%) reported that they had never been kicked by another learner at school (Table 4.5).

Being pushed

Of the 282 learners who answered the question, 35.1%, this is the highest frequency (Table 4.6), indicated that they had never been pushed by other learners at school. Half (50%) of the 282 learners indicated that they were pushed by other learners daily and/or more than once a week. More children are bullied by being pushed than by any other form of physical bullying.

Being teased

Of the 227 learners, 84 responded to the option that they had been teased mostly by boys. However, 61 indicated that they were teased by learners who are older than they are (Table 4.7).

Rumours being spread

Sixty-nine (31.9%) of the 216 learners who answered this question (Table 4.8), reported that mostly girls bullied them by spreading rumours about them. While boys seemed prone to teasing and calling names, girls were the ones who spread rumours about others at school.

Being called names

Learners indicated that they had been called names by mostly boys (36.1%), which is the highest frequency compared to girls (13.4%) calling them names at school (Table 4.9). At the same time, learners indicated that learners older than them called them names (16.0%).

Giving possessions to bullies

Of the 279 learners who responded, 10.8% indicated that they had been bullied into giving up their lunch, snacks or money almost every day or always, while 73.1% had never experienced this kind of bullying (Table 4.11).

Where bullying happens

Of the learners, 39.9% indicated that they had been bullied by other learners on their way home from school and 17.7% indicated they had been bullied on the bus. Learners could not indicate whether they had been bullied in more than one place or had never been bullied. The question should possibly have allowed learners these options (Table 4.10).

Reporting of bullying

Of significance is the fact that (30.3%) of the 261 learners told their mothers when reporting bullying, trusting them more than the teachers (19.2%), while only a few told their fathers (8.4%) about their bullying incidences.

The second highest percentage in Table 4.12 is that of 25.7% learners who reported to nobody about being bullied at school. This is a problem because not telling anyone about the bullying will make victims suffer even more. There is also the possibility that a learner could have told more than one person or both parents about being bullied but the question does not allow that option.

4.2.1.2.2 Research findings on being a bully

In this part of the questionnaire, the learners had to report on their own behaviour as bullies. They had to choose from options that ranged from (1) every day or always, (2) once or twice a week, (3) once or twice per month, (4) once or twice a year to (5) never in the category “how you treat other learners”. The following results were found.

Table 4.13: Hitting others (Q 15)

Q15. How often do you bully others by hitting them in school?		Frequency	Valid percentage	Cumulative percentage
Valid	1. Every day or always	26	9.6	9.6
	2. Once or twice a week	43	15.8	25.4
	3. Once or twice per month	14	5.1	30.5
	4. Once or twice per year	26	9.6	40.1
	5. Never	163	59.9	100.0
Total		272	100.0	
Incomplete question		24		
Total		296		

At the time of answering the questionnaire, 163 of the learners confirmed that they had never bullied others by hitting them at school. This represents 59.9% of the learners in the Intermediate Phase, while 43 (15.8%) reported that they bullied others by hitting them more than once a week.

Table 4.14: Kicking others (Q 16)

Q16. How often do you bully others by kicking them in school?		Frequency	Valid percentage	Cumulative percentage
Valid	1. Every day or always	19	6.9	6.9
	2. Once or twice a week	35	12.8	19.7
	3. Once or twice per month	8	2.9	22.6
	4. Once or twice per year	21	7.7	30.3
	5. Never	191	69.7	100.0
Total		274	100.0	
Incomplete question		22		
Total		296		

Of the 274 learners, 69.7% reported that they never bullied other learners by kicking them. In contrast to this, 54 (19.7%) of the learners indicated that they bullied others daily (6.9%) and more than once a week (12.8%) by kicking them.

Table 4.15: Pushing others (Q 17)

Q17. How often do you bully other learners by pushing them in school?		Frequency	Valid percentage	Cumulative percentage
Valid	1. Every day or always	31	11.2	11.2
	2. Once or twice a week	39	14.1	25.4
	3. Once or twice per month	19	6.9	32.2
	4. Once or twice per year	24	8.7	40.9
	5. Never	163	59.1	100.0
Total		276	100.0	
Incomplete question		20		
Total		296		

Of the 276 learners, 14.1% indicated that they had pushed other learners more than once a week, whereas 59.1% reported that they had never bullied learners by pushing them.

Table 4.16: Teasing others (Q 18)

Q18. Who have you bullied by teasing them at school?		Frequency	Valid percentage	Cumulative percentage
Valid	1. Mostly boys	40	18.7	18.7
	2. Mostly girls	31	14.5	33.2
	3. Both girls and boys	24	11.2	44.4
	4. Younger than me	20	9.3	53.7
	5. Older than me	34	15.9	69.6
	6. The same age as me	65	30.4	100.0
Total		214	100.0	
Incomplete question		82		
Total		296		

The gender indicated in this table shows that mostly boys (18.7%) were teased. Teasing mostly occurs between learners of the same age (30.4%).

Eighty-two of the 296 learners are missing from the system and as a result could not be counted. Forty were girls and 42 were boys who circled two of the options instead of one and could therefore not be recorded. The results would be the same amount if counted in both categories. These learners probably wanted to indicate that it was boys and/or girls who were either older or younger than they were who teased them.

Again, the above question should perhaps have allowed learners to mark two responses: gender (girls/boys) and age (older/younger/ same age).

Table 4.17: Spreading rumours about others (Q19)

Q19. Who have you bullied by spreading rumours about them at school?		Frequency	Valid percentage	Cumulative percentage
Valid	1. Mostly boys	31	15.5	15.5
	2. Mostly girls	35	17.5	33.0
	3. Both girls and boys	21	10.5	43.5
	4. Younger than me	17	8.5	52.0
	5. Older than me	44	22.0	74.0
	6. The same age as me	52	26	100.0
Total		200	100.0	
Incomplete question		96		
Total		296		

At the time of this study, 26% of the learners indicated they had spread rumours about others of the same age at school. Of the 200 learners, 35 (17.5%) reported that they had spread rumours mostly about girls at school.

The same reason applies here where responses to the questionnaire revealed that 96 learners were missing in the system. Yet again, this phenomenon was not found in the pilot study; otherwise the above question would have been amended to allow learners to mark two responses: gender (girls/boys) and age (older/younger/same age).

Table 4.18: Calling others names (Q 20)

Q20. Who have you bullied at school by calling them names?		Frequency	Valid percentage	Cumulative percentage
Valid	1. Mostly Boys	62	30.0	30.0
	2. Mostly Girls	21	10.1	40.1
	3. Both Girls And Boys	34	16.4	56.5
	4. Younger Than Me	21	10.1	66.7
	5. Older Than Me	24	11.6	78.3
	6. The Same Age As Me	45	21.7	100.0
Total		207	100.0	
Incomplete question		89		
Total		296		

Sixty-two learners indicated that they had bullied mostly boys by calling them names. Calling names occurs mostly between learners of the same age (21.7%).

Table 4.19: Times and places others are bullied (Q 21)

Q21. The places and times where you have bullied other learners?		Frequency	Valid percentage	Cumulative percentage
Valid	1. On the way to school	23	11.1	11.1
	2. In the toilets	11	5.3	16.4
	3. In the corridors	19	9.2	25.6
	4. During lessons	28	13.5	39.1
	5. On the way home	88	42.5	81.6
	6. On the bus	38	18.4	100.0
Total		207	100.0	
Incomplete question		89		
Total		296		

The highest percentage of learners, that is 42.5%, reported that they had bullied learners on their way home from school, while 18.4% indicated they bullied learners on the bus. On the

other hand, 13.5% indicated they bullied learners during lessons and 11.1% bullied learners on their way to school.

Table 4.20: Others give up lunch, snacks or money (Q 22)

Q22. How often have you bullied other learners into giving up their lunch, snacks or money?		Frequency	Valid percentage	Cumulative percentage
Valid	1. Every day or always	11	4.1	4.1
	2. Once or twice a week	11	4.1	8.3
	3. Once or twice per month	3	1.1	9.4
	4. Once or twice per year	4	1.5	10.9
	5. Never	237	89.1	100.0
Total		266	100.0	
Incomplete question		30		
Total		296		

Of 266 learners, 89.1% learners confirmed that they had never bullied other learners into giving up their lunch, snacks or money, while 4.1% indicated they had bullied learners daily in addition to once or twice a week for their lunch, snacks or money.

Summary on being a bully

Hitting, kicking and pushing others

Learners had to choose from options that ranged from (1) every day or always, to (5) never, in the category on being a bully. When examining the results for this section, it was found that most learners do not physically bully others.

- 59.9 % of the learners said that they never hit others,
- 69.7% said that they never kicked others, and
- 59.1% said that they never pushed others.

However, collectively 25.4% revealed that they hit, 19.7% kicked, and 25.4% pushed other learners daily and/or more than once a week.

Of significance is the fact that one out of every four learners hits and pushes others at school and that physical and direct bullying appears to be a problem.

Teasing, spreading rumours and calling others names

Learners had to choose from options that ranged from (1) mostly boys, (2) mostly girls, (3) both girls and boys, (4) younger than me, (5) older than me, to (6) the same age as me in the category on 'being a bully'. On examining the results for this section, it was found that mostly boys were teased by others (18.7%). However, the highest score (30.4%) in Table 4.17 is that of the learners who have bullied others the same age by teasing them.

Taking possessions from others

The findings suggest that 89.1% of learners have never bullied other learners into giving up their lunch, snacks or money. Of the 266 learners, 8.3% indicated they bullied learners at least once a week, and up to every day, for their lunch, snacks or money (Table 4.20). This kind of bullying is less frequent than all the other types of bullying explored in this study.

Times and places where others are bullied

Others are bullied mostly on their way home (42.5%) and on the bus (18.4%). However, some are also bullied on their way to school (11.1%), during lessons (13.5%) and in the toilets (5.3%). Learners are also bullied in places such as in the corridors (9.2%).

4.2.1.2.3 Research findings on being a bystander

In this section, learners had to report on the bullying they had seen and heard, by choosing from the following responses: (1) every day or always, (2) once or twice a week, (3) once or twice per month, (4) once or twice a year, and (5) never, in the category on 'being a bystander'.

As mentioned before it was decided to combine the options 'every day' and 'always' into one option after the data was collected, since these two options were deemed very similar.

Table 4.21: Seen others being hit (Q 23)

Q23. How often have you seen another learner bully others by hitting them?		Frequency	Valid percentage	Cumulative percentage
Valid	1. Every day or always	141	51.3	51.3
	2. Once or twice a week	51	18.5	69.8
	3. Once or twice per month	14	5.1	74.9
	4. Once or twice per year	22	8.0	82.9
	5. Never	47	17.1	100.0
Total		275	100.0	
Incomplete question		21		
Total		296		

Of the 275 learners, 51.3% indicated that they had seen another learner hitting others day after day in contrast with 17.1% of the learners who indicated they had never seen another learner hitting others.

Table 4.22: Heard about others being teased (Q 24)

Q24. How often have you heard another learner bully others by teasing them?		Frequency	Valid percentage	Cumulative percentage
Valid	1. Every day or always	138	50.2	50.2
	2. Once or twice a week	43	15.6	65.8
	3. Once or twice per month	16	5.8	71.6
	4. Once or twice per year	19	6.9	78.5
	5. Never	59	21.5	100.0
Total		275	100.0	
Incomplete question		21		
Total		296		

At the time of answering the questionnaire, 181 (65.8%) of the learners collectively confirmed that they had heard another learner teasing others daily (50.2%) and/or more than once a week (15.6%) at school. Teasing thus occurs on a regular basis at school. On the other

hand, the number of learners who reported that they had never heard any teasing was 59 (21.5%), which is also of relevance to teachers.

Table 4.23: What you have done (Q 25)

Q25. What have you done when you have heard or seen another learner being teased or called names in the school?		Frequency	Valid percentage	Cumulative percentage
Valid	1. Reported the incident to a teacher	114	44.4	44.4
	2. Walked away and ignored it	37	14.4	58.8
	3. Helped the bully	6	2.3	61.1
	4. Helped the person being bullied	60	23.3	84.4
	5. Laughed	11	4.3	88.7
	6. Watched	29	11.3	100.0
Total		257	100.0	
Incomplete question		39		
Total		296		

Of the 257 learners, 114 (44.4%) had told their teacher when they had heard or seen another learner being teased or called names at school compared with 37 (14.4%) of the learners who observed the bullying but walked away or ignored it.

On the other hand, 60 (23.3%) indicated they helped the person being bullied by speaking out about being a witness, while 29 (11.3%) of the learners just stood there and watched but did not act by reporting it; 11 (4.3%) watched and laughed by taking the role of an active supporter who enjoys the bullying but does not show open support for the victim.

Summary on being a bystander

Seen others being hit

Of the 275 learners who completed this question, 51.3 % indicated that they had seen another learner hitting others daily.

Heard about others being teased

Of the 275 learners, 50.2% confirmed that virtually daily they heard a learner teasing others at school. However, 15.6 % of the learners indicated they heard about others being teased at least once or twice a week.

What you have done about the bullying

Results show that at least 44.4% of the learners who witnessed the bullying, reported the incident to a teacher when they heard or saw another learner being teased or called names at school. The findings further suggest that 23.3% indicated they helped the victim (Table 4.23), while 14.4% of the learners played the role of disengaged onlookers by just walking away or ignoring the bullying incident. A minority of potential witnesses (11.3%) just stood there and watched, although they knew they were supposed to help but did not act, while 4.3% of passive supporters watched and laughed by enjoying the bullying, but did not show open support.

4.2.1.3 Understanding bullying (Cross-tabulations)

Cross-tabulations show the relationships between two or more variables, whereas a frequency table provides the distribution of one variable. This study makes use of cross-tabulation as it shows the number of respondents (the Intermediate Phase learners), who answered two or more questions at the same time. It is therefore important to make use of cross-tabulation by grade, as it shows differences between bullying statistics across grades. In particular, the researcher wanted to ascertain if the younger children (Grade 4s) were bullied more than the older learners (Grade 6s), as it appeared to be the case from the researcher's experience at the school.

4.2.1.3.1 Research Findings on being bullied

Table 4.24: Being hit (Grade 4 – 6)

Q6. How often do other learners bully you by hitting you in school?		Grade Recorded			Total
		4	5	6	
1. Every day or always	Count	14	17	12	43
	% within grade recorded	18.4%	15.0%	12.4%	15.0%
2. Once or twice a week	Count	7	25	21	53
	% within grade recorded	9.2%	22.1%	21.6%	18.5%
3. Once or twice per month	Count	6	5	14	25
	% within grade recorded	7.9%	4.4%	14.4%	8.7%
4. Once or twice per year	Count	4	16	15	35
	% within grade recorded	5.3%	14.2%	15.5%	12.2%
5. Never	Count	45	50	35	130
	% within grade recorded	59.2%	44.2%	36.1%	45.5%
Total	Count	76	113	97	286
	% within grade recorded	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	21.223 ^a	8	.007
N of Valid Cases	286		

a. 0 cells (.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 6.64.

There is a statistically significant difference by grade as to how often learners are bullied by being hit at school. The results reveal that 9.2% of Grade 4s, 22.1% of Grade 5s and 21.6% of Grade 6s were hit more than once a week at school. However, 59.2% of Grade 4s, 44.2% of Grade 5s and 36.1% of Grade 6 learners indicated that they had never been hit. Grade 4s showed the highest score on the table (59.2%), disclosing that learners never hit them at school, while the lowest score of 4.4% on the table pertained to Grade 5s, who indicated that they were hit at least once or twice a month.

Table 4:25: Being kicked (Grade 4 – 6)

Q7. How often do other learners bully you by kicking you in school?		Grade Recoded			Total
		4	5	6	
1. Every day or always	Count	13	11	9	33
	% within grade recorded	16.9%	9.7%	9.6%	11.6%
2. Once or twice a week	Count	9	24	21	54
	% within grade recorded	11.7%	21.2%	22.3%	19.0%
3. Once or twice per month	Count	4	9	15	28
	% within grade recorded	5.2%	8.0%	16.0%	9.9%
4. Once or twice per year	Count	6	18	16	40
	% within grade recorded	7.8%	15.9%	17.0%	14.1%
5. Never	Count	45	51	33	129
	% within grade recorded	58.4%	45.1%	35.1%	45.4%
Total	Count	77	113	94	284
	% within grade recorded	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	19.281 ^a	8	.013
N of Valid Cases	284		

a. 0 cells (.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 7.59.

At grade level, 9 (11.7%) Grade 4 learners, 24 (21.2%) Grade 5 learners and 21 (22.3%) Grade 6 learners indicated they had been bullied more than once a week by being kicked at school. At the same time, 58.4% of Grade 4s versus 45.1% of Grade 5s and 35.1% of Grade 6s reported they had never been kicked.

In addition to this, Table 4.25 shows that 16.9% of the Grade 4s were kicked almost every day, Grade 5s, 9.7% and Grade 6s, 11.6%.

On perusing the table one can conclude that Grade 4s and 5s, with the highest score on the table, were never kicked by others.

Table 4.26: Being pushed (Grade 4 – 6)

Q8. How often do other learners bully you by pushing you in school?		Grade Recorded			Total
		4	5	6	
1. Every day or always	Count	25	29	21	75
	% within grade recorded	33.3%	26.1%	21.9%	26.6%
2. Once or twice a week	Count	15	22	29	66
	% within grade recorded	20.0%	19.8%	30.2%	23.4%
3. Once or twice per month	Count	5	8	8	21
	% within grade recorded	6.7%	7.2%	8.3%	7.4%
4. Once or twice per year	Count	3	10	8	21
	% within grade recorded	4.0%	9.0%	8.3%	7.4%
5. Never	Count	27	42	30	99
	% within grade recorded	36.0%	37.8%	31.3%	35.1%
Total	Count	75	111	96	282
	% within grade recorded	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	7.466 ^a	8	.487
N of Valid Cases	282		

a. 0 cells (.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 5.59.

The probability value (P value) is greater than 0.05 so there is no significant difference in the way that learners are being pushed at grade level.

Learners being pushed every day at grade level (33.3% of Grade 4s, 26.1% of Grade 5s and 21.9% of Grade 6s) show no significant difference at grade level because the difference between each is greater than 0.05 and so is the difference of every option in this table.

Table 4.27: Bullied to give up snacks, lunch or money (Grade 4 – 6)

Q13. How often have you been bullied into giving up your lunch, snacks or money?		Grade Recorded			Total
		4	5	6	
1. Every day or always	Count	6	13	11	30
	% within grade recorded	7.9%	11.8%	11.8%	10.8%
2. Once or twice a week	Count	5	8	11	24
	% within grade recorded	6.6%	7.3%	11.8%	8.6%
3. Once or twice per month	Count	1	2	1	4
	% within grade recorded	1.3%	1.8%	1.1%	1.4%
4. Once or twice per year	Count	2	7	8	17
	% within grade recorded	2.6%	6.4%	8.6%	6.1%
5. Never	Count	62	80	62	204
	% within grade recorded	81.6%	72.7%	66.7%	73.1%
Total	Count	76	110	93	279
	% within grade recorded	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	6.455 ^a	8	.596
N of Valid Cases	279		

a. 4 cells (26.7%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 1.09.

The probability value (P value) is greater than 0.05, so there is no significant difference in the way that learners bully others into giving up their snacks, lunch or money at grade level.

The number of learners bullied into giving up their snacks, lunch or money every day (7.9% of Grade 4s, 11.8% of Grade 5s and Grade 6s) shows no significant difference at grade level because the difference between each is greater than 0.05 and so is the difference in every option in this table.

Table 4.28: Reporting bullying (Grade 4 – 6)

Q14 If you have been bullied this year, whom have you told?		Grade Recoded			Total
		4	5	6	
1. A teacher	Count	19	15	16	50
	% within grade recorded	25.7%	15.2%	18.2%	19.2%
2. My mother	Count	24	31	24	79
	% within grade recorded	32.4%	31.3%	27.3%	30.3%
3. My father	Count	4	9	9	22
	% within grade recorded	5.4%	9.1%	10.2%	8.4%
4. My sister or brother	Count	6	5	4	15
	% within grade recorded	8.1%	5.1%	4.5%	5.7%
5. My friends	Count	3	13	12	28
	% within grade recorded	4.1%	13.1%	13.6%	10.7%
6. Nobody	Count	18	26	23	67
	% within grade recorded	24.3%	26.3%	26.1%	25.7%
Total	Count	74	99	88	261
	% within grade recorded	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	9.512 ^a	10	.484
N of Valid Cases	261		

a. 1 cells (5.6%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 4.25.

The probability value (P value) is greater than 0.05, so there is no significant difference as to whom they have told that they have been bullied.

Learners in the grade levels reporting to a teacher (25.7% of Grade 4s, 15.2% of Grade 5s and 18.2% of Grade 6s), mother, father, sister or brother, friends or to nobody, shows no significant difference at grade level because the difference between each is greater than 0.05 in every option in this table.

Summary on being bullied

Information was gathered from learners who reported how often they had been bullied by others at school. Types of bullying included being hit, kicked, pushed, teased, spreading rumours, name-calling or teasing, as well as being divested of their money, snack or lunch across the grades.

Response options for the first few questions ranged from 1 (every day) to 5 (never) in the category 'how others treat you'.

The following results have been computed as percentages of those who responded.

Of Grade 6s, 21.6% are hit more than once a week while only 9.2% of Grade 4s are hit at least once or twice a week. 11.7% of Grade 4 learners versus 21.2% of Grade 5 and 22.3% of Grade 6 learners are bullied more than once a week by being kicked at school.

However, the incidence of never being kicked changes among grades, levelling out to:

- 58.4% in Grade 4;
- 45.1% in Grade 5; and
- 35.1% in Grade 6.

Significantly more Grade 6s (23.6%) are forced into giving possessions to bullies daily and/or more than once a week than Grade 4s (14.5%). This shows that bullying is not just a problem of older children targeting younger ones, but for a number of types of bullying measured in this study, it is actually worse in Grade 6.

4.2.1.3.2 Research findings on being a bully

Table 4.29: Hitting others (Grade 4 – 6)

15. How often do you bully others by hitting them in school?		Grade Recoded			Total
		4	5	6	
1. Every day or always	Count	6	11	9	26
	% within grade recorded	8.0%	10.5%	9.8%	9.6%
2. Once or twice a week	Count	14	16	13	43
	% within grade recorded	18.7%	15.2%	14.1%	15.8%
3. Once or twice per month	Count	4	4	6	14
	% within grade recorded	5.3%	3.8%	6.5%	5.1%
4. Once or twice per year	Count	3	16	7	26
	% within grade recorded	4.0%	15.2%	7.6%	9.6%
5. Never	Count	48	58	57	163
	% within grade recorded	64.0%	55.2%	62.0%	59.9%
Total	Count	75	105	92	272
	% within grade recorded	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	8.558 ^a	8	.381
N of Valid Cases	272		

a. 2 cells (13.3%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 3.86.

The probability value (P value) is greater than 0.05, so there is no significant difference in the grade levels at which learners bully others by hitting them at school.

Table 4.30: Kicking others (Grade 4 – 6)

16. How often do you bully others by kicking them in school?		Grade Recoded			Total
		4	5	6	
1. Every day or always	Count	3	8	8	19
	% within grade recorded	4.1%	7.5%	8.6%	6.9%
2. Once or twice a week	Count	11	9	15	35
	% within grade recorded	14.9%	8.4%	16.1%	12.8%
3. Once or twice per month	Count	0	5	3	8
	% within grade recorded	.0%	4.7%	3.2%	2.9%
4. Once or twice per year	Count	3	7	11	21
	% within grade recorded	4.1%	6.5%	11.8%	7.7%
5. Never	Count	57	78	56	191
	% within grade recorded	77.0%	72.9%	60.2%	69.7%
Total	Count	74	107	93	274
	% within grade recorded	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	12.753 ^a	8	.121
N of Valid Cases	274		

a. 3 cells (20.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 2.16.

The probability value (P value) is greater than 0.05, so there is no significant difference in the grade levels at which learners bully others by kicking them at school.

Learners in the grade levels who kick others show no significant difference at grade level because the difference between each is greater than 0.05 in every option in this table.

Table 4.31: Pushing others (Grade 4 – 6)

17. How often do you bully other learners by pushing them in school?		Grade Recorded			Total
		4	5	6	
1. Every day or always	Count	10	13	8	31
	% within grade recorded	13.3%	12.3%	8.4%	11.2%
2. Once or twice a week	Count	9	13	17	39
	% within grade recorded	12.0%	12.3%	17.9%	14.1%
3. Once or twice per month	Count	2	7	10	19
	% within grade recorded	2.7%	6.6%	10.5%	6.9%
4. Once or twice per year	Count	3	14	7	24
	% within grade recorded	4.0%	13.2%	7.4%	8.7%
5. Never	Count	51	59	53	163
	% within grade recorded	68.0%	55.7%	55.8%	59.1%
Total	Count	75	106	95	276
	% within grade recorded	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	12.269 ^a	8	.140
N of Valid Cases	276		

a. 0 cells (.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 5.16.

The probability value (P value) is greater than 0.05, so there is no significant difference in the grade levels at which learners bully others by pushing them at school.

Table 4.32: Times and places bullying others (Grade 4 – 6)

Q21 The places and times where you have bullied other learners?		Grade Recorded			Total
		4	5	6	
1. On the way to school	Count	9	10	4	23
	% within grade recorded	18.8%	11.6%	5.5%	11.1%
2. In the toilets	Count	2	4	5	11
	% within grade recorded	4.2%	4.7%	6.8%	5.3%
3. In the corridors	Count	4	5	10	19
	% within grade recorded	8.3%	5.8%	13.7%	9.2%
4. During lessons	Count	1	12	15	28
	% within grade recorded	2.1%	14.0%	20.5%	13.5%
5. On the way home	Count	24	32	32	88
	% within grade recorded	50.0%	37.2%	43.8%	42.5%
6. On the bus	Count	8	23	7	38
	% within grade recorded	16.7%	26.7%	9.6%	18.4%
Total	Count	48	86	73	207
	% within grade recorded	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	22.840 ^a	10	.011
N of Valid Cases	207		

a. 4 cells (22.2%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 2.55.

The probability value is less than 0.05, which means there is a statistical difference. The highest incidences of bullying occur outside the school premises. It takes place on the way to school, on the way home and on the bus. At grade level, 50 % of Grade 4 learners reported they had bullied other learners on their way home, while 37.2% in Grade 5 and 43.8% in Grade 6 indicated that they had bullied others on their way home. During lessons there is also a greater percentage in Grade 6 (20.5%) than in Grade 4 (2.1%) of bullying taking place during lessons.

Table 4.33: Bullying others to give up lunch, snacks or money (Grade 4 – 6)

Q22. How often have you bullied other learners into giving up their lunch, snacks or money?		Grade Recorded			Total
		4	5	6	
1. Every day or always	Count	2	3	6	11
	% within grade recorded	2.8%	2.9%	6.7%	4.1%
2. Once or twice a week	Count	2	6	3	11
	% within grade recorded	2.8%	5.7%	3.4%	4.1%
3. Once or twice per month	Count	1	2	0	3
	% within grade recorded	1.4%	1.9%	.0%	1.1%
4. Once or twice per year	Count	2	0	2	4
	% within grade recorded	2.8%	.0%	2.2%	1.5%
5. Never	Count	65	94	78	237
	% within grade recorded	90.3%	89.5%	87.6%	89.1%
Total	Count	72	105	89	266
	% within grade recorded	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	7.604 ^a	8	.473
N of Valid Cases	266		

a. 12 cells (80.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .81.

The probability value (P value) is greater than 0.05, so there is no significant difference in the way that learners bully others into giving up their lunch, snacks or money at school.

Summary on being a bully

Self-confessed bullies, according to the data obtained from the questionnaire, indicated no significant difference in the way that learners in different grades bully others, by hitting them, kicking them or pushing them, thus physical bullying was understood and experienced in all grades.

Also no significant difference was reported in the way that learners bully others into giving up their lunch, snacks or money. The places and times that learners identified as prevalent for bullying at school also has no significant difference, as the probability value (P value) is greater than 0.05. However, the probability value of the times and places where others were bullied (Table 4.32), is less than 0.05, which means there is a statistical difference. The highest incidence of bullying on the way home occurs among Grade 4 learners (50%), while Grade 6s reported 43.8% and Grades 5s reported 37.2%. They thus don't fight at school but off the school premises.

4.2.1.3.3 Research findings on being a bystander

Table 4.34: Seen others being hit (Grade 4 – 6)

23. How often have you seen another learner bully others by hitting them?		Grade Recoded			Total
		4	5	6	
1. Every day or always	Count	42	47	52	141
	% within grade recorded	55.3%	43.9%	56.5%	51.3%
2. Once or twice a week	Count	8	26	17	51
	% within grade recorded	10.5%	24.3%	18.5%	18.5%
3. Once or twice per month	Count	3	6	5	14
	% within grade recorded	3.9%	5.6%	5.4%	5.1%
4. Once or twice per year	Count	7	10	5	22
	% within grade recorded	9.2%	9.3%	5.4%	8.0%
5. Never	Count	16	18	13	47
	% within grade recorded	21.1%	16.8%	14.1%	17.1%
Total	Count	76	107	92	275
	% within grade recorded	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	8.988 ^a	8	.343
N of Valid Cases	275		

a. 2 cells (13.3%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 3.87.

There is a significant statistical difference in how often a learner has seen another learner hitting others on a daily basis between Grade 6s (56.5%), Grade 4s (55.3%) and Grade 5s (43.9%). Grade 6s have seen others being hit more often than the other two grades. The largest incidences of bystanders when physical bullying occurs are thus found in Grade 6.

Table 4.35: Heard about others being teased (Grade 4 – 6)

Q24. How often have you heard another learner bully others by teasing them?		Grade Recoded			Total
		4	5	6	
1. Every day or always	Count	44	42	52	138
	% within grade recorded	58.7%	38.9%	56.5%	50.2%
2. Once or twice a week	Count	3	23	17	43
	% within grade recorded	4.0%	21.3%	18.5%	15.6%
3. Once or twice per month	Count	4	9	3	16
	% within grade recorded	5.3%	8.3%	3.3%	5.8%
4. Once or twice per year	Count	5	8	6	19
	% within grade recorded	6.7%	7.4%	6.5%	6.9%
5. Never	Count	19	26	14	59
	% within grade recorded	25.3%	24.1%	15.2%	21.5%
Total	Count	75	108	92	275
	% within grade recorded	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	18.583 ^a	8	.017
N of Valid Cases	275		

a. 1 cells (6.7%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 4.36.

There is a significant statistical difference in respect of how often learners heard of another learner being teased day after day between Grade 4s (58.7%), Grade 6s (56.5%) and Grade

5s (38.9%). Grade 4s heard more about other learners being teased than learners in the other two grades.

Table 4.36 What you have done (Grade 4 – 6)

Q25 What have you done when you have heard or seen another learner being teased or called names in the school?		Grade Recoded			Total
		4	5	6	
1. Reported the incident to a teacher	Count	31	48	35	114
	% within grade recorded	44.3%	48.5%	39.8%	44.4%
2. Walked away and ignored it	Count	10	9	18	37
	% within grade recorded	14.3%	9.1%	20.5%	14.4%
3 Helped the bully	Count	2	1	3	6
	% within grade recorded	2.9%	1.0%	3.4%	2.3%
4. Helped the person being bullied	Count	20	25	15	60
	% within grade recorded	28.6%	25.3%	17.0%	23.3%
5. Laughed	Count	1	5	5	11
	% within grade recorded	1.4%	5.1%	5.7%	4.3%
6. Watched	Count	6	11	12	29
	% within grade recorded	8.6%	11.1%	13.6%	11.3%
Total	Count	70	99	88	257
	% within grade recorded	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	11.469 ^a	10	.322
N of Valid Cases	257		

a. 6 cells (33.3%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 1.63.

The probability value (P value) is greater than 0.05, so there is no significant difference in respect of what learners have done about hearing and seeing another learner being teased or called names at school.

Summary on being a bystander

Seen others being hit

In the category 'what you have seen or heard', the responses to the first question, 'How often have you seen others being hit?' reveal that there is a statistically significant difference by grade with regard to how often learners have seen another learner bully others by hitting them daily (Table 4.34):

- 56.5% in Grade 6;
- 55.3% in Grade 4; and
- 43.9% in Grade 5

From these results, one can conclude that Grade 6s as bystanders have seen others being hit more often than the other two grades. The Grade 6 learners are thus more aggressive in their physical bullying of other learners.

Another difference occurs where learners indicated they had never seen others being hit. The incidences reported represent:

- 21.1% in Grade 4;
- 16.8% in Grade 5; and
- 14.1% in Grade 6

Compared with the other two grades, the results show that mostly Grade 4s have never seen others being hit. This data confirms the inverse results reported on in actually having witnessed or heard of fights at school, where the Grade 4s have had least exposure (although a high percentage of 21.1%) to seeing 'hitting' occurring at school.

Heard about others being teased

The responses to the second question, 'How often have you heard about others being teased?' reveal that there is a statistically significant difference by grade with regard to how often learners have heard about another learner being teased daily:

- 56.5% in Grade 6;
- 38.9% in Grade 5; and
- 58.7% in Grade 4

The younger learners (Grade 4s) are the ones who mostly heard about others being teased. The Grade 6 learners, again, are the most likely to engage in this (emotional) form of bullying. They are thus not only more prone to physical bullying, but also to emotional bullying.

What you have done

When analysing the results for this section, it was found that most learners indicated that they had reported incidences to teachers:

- 48.5% in Grade 5;
- 44.3% in Grade 4; and
- 39.8% in Grade 6

Grade 5s mostly had reported an incident to a teacher compared with Grade 4s and Grade 6s, yet in Grade 6 reporting declines to below 40%.

Of significance and worrying, are a number of learners in Grade 4 to 6 who indicated that they actually laughed and watched the incident happening instead of reporting or helping the victim (Grade 6s with highest percentage).

However, more learners helped the victims than those who helped the bully. The Grade 4s (28.6%), Grade 5s (25.3%) and Grade 6s (17.0%) helped more the person being bullied compared to Grade 4s (2.9%), Grade 5s (1.0%) and Grade 6s (3.4%) who helped the bully.

On the other hand, others walked away and ignored the bullying. The Grade 6s show a higher percentage of learners walking away and ignoring the bullying compared with those who did nothing or encouraged the bullies by laughing or watching:

- 20.5% in Grade 6;
- 14.3% in Grade 4; and
- 9.1% in Grade 5

4.2.2 Section B: The focus group Interview

4.2.2.1 Introduction

A focus group interview was conducted with six Intermediate Phase learners. These learners were selected depending on the frequency of their responses, to delve into their understanding of bullying experiences. The focus group was selected in relation to the category 'how learners treat you' on the questionnaire. Sampling was done purposively to be representative of all three grades and included girls and boys (English and Afrikaans).

Respondents 1 and 2 were two girls in Grade 4 at the time of the interview. Respondents 3 (girl) and 4 (boy) were representatives from the Grade 5 class and respondents 5 (girl) and 6 (boy) were in Grade 6 when the focus group interview was conducted.

For research purposes, learners were required to write their names on the questionnaires to select a focus group for interviews. However, when presenting the respondents' responses within this study, their names are not revealed to maintain confidentiality.

Learners had the opportunity for verbal interaction with the interviewer and other interviewees. Direct quotations are used in this section. The language of the learners includes slang and pronunciation to illustrate the authenticity and sincerity of learners. Translations are done verbatim.

4.2.2.2 Findings: Experiences of bullying of the focus group interview

The interview with the focus group included aspects of research on different types of bullying to gain insight into learners' understanding of being a victim, bully or witness. The interview presentation below also provides data that was collected and analysed to obtain an

understanding of the responses on how learners understand and experience bullying. The interview data is included as an addendum (Appendix F).

4.2.2.3 Discussions and interpretations: Experiences of bullying

- **What is your understanding of the term ‘bullying’?**

Learners’ understanding of the term ‘bullying’ refers to whether they experience bullying as a bully, victim or bystander. Six learners were interviewed and gave their own interpretations of the term ‘bullying’ and highlighted most of the elements that the literature mentioned.

One of the learners described bullying as, “bullying happens when you stop someone in the toilets and want to fight with them” (Respondent 4). This learner could thus be identified as a bully. Respondent 6 offered his interpretation from a possible bystander’s point of view by saying that bullying “happens in school when bigger ones fight with the smaller ones and wait for them after school”. A Grade 6 learner (Respondent 5) interpreted bullying from a possible victim’s point of view: “bullying is when they take your stuff from you without asking you”.

The type of bullying that emerged when the focus group described their understanding of the term ‘bullying’ was that of experiencing physical bullying that includes hitting: “bullying is when they hit you” (Respondent 1), pushing and kicking, “bullying means to push and kick, when they want to fight, Miss” (Respondent 2) and fighting, “bullying happens when you stop someone in the toilets and want to fight with [them]” (Respondent 4). Respondent 6 pointed out that bullying “happens in school when bigger ones fight with the smaller ones and wait for them after school”. This correlates with Boulton et al. (2002:354) who suggest that physical bullying is carried out face-to-face and includes pushing, kicking, harassing and fighting. Again, as clarified before, bullying can be deliberate harmful actions of a more powerful person or group towards a less powerful person or group repeated over time.

- **How do you feel about bullying in your school?**

When asked how learners in the focus group felt about bullying in their school, a variety of responses were elicited. A Grade 5 learner expressed experiencing feelings of sadness or feeling “scared and alone or powerless” and said: “I feel bad; Miss, because it’s small children and they get sad because it’s the big ones here that bully the small ones” (Respondent 4). They are continually hurting, frightening, or intimidating the weaker ones.

This is corroborated by Coloroso (2003:18): “The bully strikes out at those who have bullied them and at weaker children.”

Respondent 5 further stated: “Miss, the big ones think they are cool, now they bully the small ones to show how strong they are, they wanna [want to] be the best at school that’s why they hit the small ones.” This behaviour makes younger learners feel powerless, especially when they have to walk home from school and older ones interfere with them “for no reason”. This once again highlights that physical and/or psychological intimidation occurs repeatedly over time.

The two themes that emerge most prominently from the responses to their *feelings about bullying* in school are that the respondents see bullying as wrong and unacceptable behaviour, while in general older children or stronger or more powerful children prey on younger children.

On the other hand, Respondent 6 came across as a supportive bystander saying that, “we must help each other and we mustn’t bully each other”. In addition, Respondent 1 expressed that, “everybody must be friends and play with each other and mustn’t bully each other”. This is an indication of a social element of unity, being friends and identification with the victims. ‘Helping’ or ‘help’ are terms that surfaced from time to time during the focus group interview.

- **How do you feel about being bullied?**

When asked how learners in the focus group felt about their experiences of being bullied or being the victim, they expressed that they felt intimidated to a point where they no longer felt happy at school, as explained by Respondent 5, that, “you feel scared, you feel alone, and you don’t want to go home cause you scared they gonna take your stuff”. The bullies purposely intimidate the younger learners because they know the younger ones are physically smaller and weaker, and therefore powerless. These victims endure feelings of anxiety, insecurity and lack of self-esteem because bullies are often stronger and bigger than the ones they bully. Bullies create problems for educators as well as for other learners in class.

Name-calling seems to be a more prevalent form of bullying experiences in the focus group in respect of this question. Respondent 1 expressed a feeling of being hurt because of the name-calling, saying that, “it’s mostly the Africans and the boys who hit the girls in class and they like to call you names like hum ... that one boy he keeps on calling me big mouth and I

don't like it". However, Olweus (1993:19) states that boys are often guilty of more physical forms of bullying. Yet again, as defined before, bullying occurs when one child or a group of children keeps on hurting another with words or actions. These bullies play the role of passive bullies by not always taking part in the bullying, but verbally bully others by calling them names. The victims do not always understand why they are being bullied. However, Coloroso (2003:43) mentions reasons why children are bullied, which include: the new child, the child who is unwilling to fight, the child who is shy, the child who is quiet and sensitive, and the child who is the youngest.

Respondent 3 experienced being exposed as a victim and feeling isolated because the bullies start the bullying by swearing at the younger ones. "I don't think it's nice because when you don't wanna give them something then they kick you or hit you and they swear you out sometimes" (Respondent 3). On the other hand, the bullies sometimes have their followers or 'henchmen' as referred to in the Bullying Circle (Olweus, 2002), who take an active part in the bullying but do not initiate or plan the bullying.

In contrast, Respondent 6, speaking on behalf of others, did not take sides with regard to what was said about the bullying but rather wished for bullies, victims and bystanders to help or support one another: "we must be friends with each other and we mustn't bully each other". The response hints at building relationships instead of creating separation among learners or groups.

- **How do you think other learners cope with bullying?**

Respondent 1 said that some learners experience trauma and suffer in isolation to the point where they feel like killing themselves (suicidal tendencies),

"Some of them cry then they go to the toilet then they want to hang themselves up and some of the times then others want to come then they talk to the others they say: 'Don't kill yourself' ... they are rude then they 'skel' (scold) the children out" (Respondent 1).

This indicates that other children (bystanders) feel sorry for the victims of bullying and try to support them. Coping strategies mentioned included involving an authority or comfort figure (teacher, mother), running away (and then retaliating, from a distance) and considering suicide. This kind of behaviour can easily give rise to suicides as mentioned in the Olweus Theoretical Framework (Olweus, 1993:1-2), where three boys in Norway committed suicide as a result of being subjected to bullying behaviour.

The respondents also mentioned that the bullies took their belongings by scratching in their school bags without asking them and then throwing the contents away. The bully shows intense dislike by throwing victims' things away, which might be directed at ownership or possessions. This was mostly done by older learners who bullied younger ones. The younger learners would then just stand there and cry.

“They don't cope, Miss. The bullies chase them after school, Miss ... then they do bad stuff with the children, Miss. They scratch in their bags and throw their things away, Miss” (Respondent 5).

Of significance is that the statistics in the questionnaire with a larger sample size and a greater degree of anonymity reveal that bullying is worse in Grade 6, as they contradict the findings of the interview with a much smaller focus group who reported that it is mostly the Grade 4s who are bullied. This could mean that the Grade 6s are not talking, as shown in Table 4.36. The Grade 6s don't report an incident to a teacher (39.8%), they walk away and ignore it (20.5%), they 'helped' the bully (3.4%), they 'helped' the victim (17.0%), they laughed (5.7%) and they watched (13.6%) when they heard or saw another learner being teased or called names. Interestingly, more Grade 6s helped the victim than those who helped the bully.

4.2.2.4 Discussions and interpretations: Frequency of bullying

- **How often are learners bullied in the same grade?**

The *frequency of bullying* in the same grade was explored in this question. It was reported that the younger ones mostly experience bullying on a daily basis: “Miss, the Grade 5s, 6s and 7s bully the Grade 4s” (Respondent 1). On the other hand, three of the six learners indicated that bullying occurred virtually 'every day' (Respondents 3, 5 & 6). A few of the learners in the group focused on the frequency of bullying but emphasised that the younger learners were bullied most frequently (thus not necessarily learners of the same age group – grade level - as it is reported to be a rare occurrence). This could also mean that the learners do not know the names of the bullies, possibly because they are in different grades or classes and thus cannot report to the teachers.

- **How often are learners bullied by older learners?**

The responses to this question indicate that bullying of younger learners by older learners happens almost every day, as expressed by Respondent 1:

“Older ones even become physical with the younger ones like every day then the children play here, then most of the Grade 7s come and they say ... mind out of the way then they push the children and go on with the children.”

Older learners go as far as threatening some learners for their possessions, as revealed by Respondent 3:

“The older learners bully the small ones uhm ... in the mornings and when it is interval when they buy stuff at the tuck shop then the big ones say give your stuff now, give your money ... then they hit the children.”

The intimidation and scaring tactics of the older learners thus occur during school time on a regular basis (interval), on the premises and in close proximity to adults (at the tuck shop).

- **How often are learners bullied in the classroom?**

According to one of the respondents, the bullies wait for the teacher to leave the classroom to start with their bullying, as expressed by Respondent 5:

“Miss, the children look for names then the other child will say why do you write my name then they say: ‘you gonna see after school, I’m gonna [going to] kill you after school’ and then there’s big fights in the class. Then after school they bring their scissors, Miss, then they want to stab each other, Miss.”

This is an indictment of teachers who leave learners open to abuse and vulnerable to others’ intimidation, although these teachers may think they are empowering learners by giving them titles (as prefects/monitors) or the authority to act (writing down names of perpetrators/bullies).

Respondent 6 mentioned that each time the teacher left the classroom children were intimidated or bullied: “when the teachers are out they just come to you and ask for a pencil and they say they will get you after school and this happen every time the teacher goes out”.

Bullying incidences increase when there are no educators to supervise learners inside the classroom and it appears that the monitors become victims when the teachers leave the learners unattended. Respondent 1 pointed out:

“Miss every day and sometimes when my Miss is not there and then they bully the children especially the girls and the children that look for talkers in the class and if they ... and if they ... and if they see that you are not sitting in the right place and then ... and then ... a child comes and then they hit the girl or the boy because they wrote their names on the black board as one of the talkers in class.

4.2.2.5 Response to bullying

- **How does the teacher respond to bullying when it has been reported?**

The data reveals that the learners’ response to bullying is to report the incident to a teacher. Statistical data reveals that Grade 5s show the highest frequency (48.5%) of reporting incidences compared to Grade 6s with the lowest frequency (39.8%) of reporting bullying incidences to the teachers. During the focus group interview, learners revealed that the teacher on the other hand, responds to bullying by calling the HOD to give the bullies a parent letter, “sometimes and then ... my teacher calls the Head of Department to come get the children in the class and give a parent letter” (Respondent 1).

Some teachers respond by sending the bullies to the principal who then speaks to them and reminds them of the rules of the school: “sometimes my teacher just calls the principal or the HOD”. Respondent 6 expressed that the teacher says, “dié kinders is baie ombeskof” (these children are very rude). Teachers over all seem to refer issues of bullying to the HOD. Teachers thus rarely take responsibility for discipline in their own classrooms.

How teachers respond to bullying when it has been reported is an important element in the study, as it will have implications for learners’ behaviour and understanding of the seriousness of bullying behaviour, since it cannot be tolerated at school as it is an infringement of other learners’ rights.

- **How do your parents respond to you being bullied or you bullying others?**

Statistical data in Table 4.4 reveals that learners are bullied physically by being hit more than once a week (18.5%), kicked more than once a week (19.0% in Table 4.5) and pushed on a daily basis (26.6% in Table 4.6). Learners are also bullied emotionally (Table 4.7) by being teased, mostly by boys (37.0%), rumours being spread, mostly by girls (17.5% in Table 4.17), and being called names, mostly by boys (36.1% in Table 4.9) by those older than them (16.0% in Table 4.9). Interview responses show that most of the learners in the focus group bully others or are victims of bullying, as expressed by Respondent 3: “when I bully someone

then my mommy hits me then I run away. When others bully me, my parents do nothing sometimes". Some parents punish their children while other parents do absolutely nothing. Other parents decide to go to school to report the bullying incidences to the principal as expressed by Respondent 5: "Miss they say they are coming to school then they will sort it out", while Respondent 1 says that the parent comes to school the following day to speak to the principal:

"Sometimes when the uhm ... children bully me then after school I tell my daddy and when the child walks past my house then my daddy skel [scolds] the child out and then the next day he come[s] to the school and tells the principal."

Statistical data further reveals learners physically bully others by hitting them (Table 4.13) more than once a week (15.8%), in Table 4.14, kicking them (12.8%) and in Table 4.15 pushing them (14.1%). Table 4.16 reveals that emotional bullying occurs by teasing mostly boys at school (18.7%) and it occurs between learners of the same age (30.4%). In addition, Table 4.17 shows that spreading rumours about mostly girls (17.5%) the same age as they are (26%) occurs, while Table 4.18 shows calling mostly boys names (30.0%) the same age as themselves (21.7%). In the focus interview group, Respondent 4 says: "When I bully, my parents say my brother must tell the principal."

Parents doing nothing can affect the child's trust in adults and his/her behaviour emotionally or mentally, as suggested in the systems theory of Bronfenbrenner (1998:993-1027). Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory emphasises the interaction between the child's development and the systems within the social environment. In reporting bullying incidences, learners have to interact with the family, school or the members of the community, so that the issues can be addressed.

Some parents and teachers have good relationships with their children by listening to them when reporting an incident. A supportive parent or teacher within the system may boost the child's self esteem and sense of security and will encourage the child to tell. The model is therefore useful in viewing the interaction with each other (as family, school and community) because they are important influences in each other's lives.

- **How do you respond to bullying?**

The responses of learners show that they had different ways of *responding to bullying*. Some indicated that they told their parents. Mostly mothers were regarded as confidantes, "I go tell my mommy or go tell my teacher what they do to a person" (Respondent 2). Another child

said he told his father who said that he would go to the police station to report the bullies, “when I tell my father then he says he will lay a case against them” (Respondent 5). The father of Respondent 5 retaliated by offering a counter attack on the family.

Surprisingly, teachers were only sometimes the first point of call when learners were in distress as expressed by Respondent 1, “most of the time when I tell my teacher, my teacher doesn’t want to listen to me”. This is an indication that the teacher is uncommitted and distances him/herself from the situation. The teacher did not offer solutions to the problem, which possibly made the bullying even worse for the victim and bystanders, and could lead to increased instances of bullying at school.

More surprisingly, was that some learners said that they were too scared (emotional trauma) to tell the teacher, they would rather cry because the bully would fight with them after school, “I don’t ... when they ... bully me, I cry ... I don’t want to tell my teacher or anyone I want to kill myself ... sometimes (Respondent 3). This means the bullying continues and can become physical or violent; there is no one to protect them after school, which can result in helplessness. However, if incidences are reported to teachers, they are compelled to act (safety policies) and to involve the parents of the bullies in any further actions of bullying behaviour at school because teachers are otherwise legally liable if anything more serious occurs and they did not respond.

- **Are the rules for bullying behaviour discussed with learners?**

Respondent 1 alleges that the rules for bullying behaviour are not being discussed with learners, only with members of the governing body: “No Miss, only sometimes when the people of the school governing body come then they tell the teachers to tell the learners.” However, Respondent 2 says that the rules for bullying are discussed, “Yes, always by the principal who give[s] them parent letters”. Another learner indicated that the learners do not always pay attention to these rules as expressed by Respondent 3, “yes, sometimes but the learners don’t listen”.

The principal and HOD discourage inappropriate behaviour by issuing letters to parents and detention slips but it seems the learners do not always obey the rules of the school as suggested by Respondent 6: “Yes, Miss the HOD gives them detention if they don’t behave in class.” The principal also reminds the learners of the ‘suggestion box’ where learners may place the name of the bully with a suggestion of a form of punishment for the bully as suggested by Respondent 5, “Yes, Miss there is a new thing going around: the suggestion

box, Miss if anyone bullies you then you have to put their name in there, Miss then the teachers will talk to them.”

Learners not obeying rules need to be made aware that bullying is not allowed in school. All staff members need to be vigilant, especially when they are on playground duty during the week. The suggestion box is a good idea as it gives the principal an idea of who the perpetrators are and what the victim proposes as punishment or deterrent for the bullying behaviour.

- **What do you think could be done to stop bullying at your school?**

Statistical data suggests learners do report bullying to a teacher with the intention of stopping bullying, with the highest frequency of reporting for Grade 5s (48.5%), and Grade 4s (44.3%) and Grade 6s with the lowest frequency (39.8%) of reporting incidences. However, the Grades 6s, with the highest frequency of the grades in Table 4.36, walked away and ignored (20.5%), laughed (5.7%) and watched (13.6%) bullying incidences taking place. During the interview with the focus group, learners suggested that the principal or the teachers arrange for a counsellor to visit the school and discuss the problem with all learners as suggested by Respondent 1: “The counsellor can come and they can talk to the whole school and say we must all stop the bullying so that the children can all feel welcome at the school and we are all a family.”

Respondent 5 suggests, “you must get all the bullies together, Miss, and then the counsellor and the police must talk to them and tell them if they gonna [going to] bully again, then they are gonna go to prison, Miss”. This is an indication that the police should be contacted to talk to the learners at one of the assemblies at school.

One respondent suggested that one way to stop bullying is to refer the bullies to the school governing body so that these bullies can be suspended from school as a consequence of bullying. “When your mommy comes to school, then the principal can talk to the governing body and they can send them away” (Respondent 6). This is in line with Olweus (1993:315), who suggests that bullying problems may be reduced with supervision and necessary intervention strategies to change the climate of the school.

Learners’ suggestions to stop bullying displayed an interesting variety of thought that would have wide-ranging consequences for all stakeholders. This was to an extent also in terms of their personal experiences not only at school, but also in their communities.

Summary on findings

A mixed-method approach was used in this study to determine learners' understanding and experiences of the different types of bullying and to examine the extent and roles they have been exposed to in various types of bullying. It begins with a quantitative method, using questionnaires to explore their understanding, whether they a victim, bully or bystander, followed by a qualitative method, interviewing a focus group for more detailed experiences of the different types of bullying.

Before the research was conducted, it was assumed that older children bully younger children more than they are bullied themselves. Respondents confirmed this perception in the interview, reporting that the older children bully the younger ones with much greater frequency. The Grade 6s (36.1%) are hit less frequently, while the Grade 4s (59.2%) are hit more often.

Of significance is the fact that the main kind of bullying was that of physical bullying. Pushing occurred most of all, as Table 4.6 indicated that half (50%) of the learners are being pushed collectively on a daily basis and/or more than once a week. Emotional bullying is another form of bullying that learners experienced. Table 4.7 shows that mostly boys are teased (37.0%) and Table 4.16 shows that teasing others occurs mostly between learners of the same age (30.4%). On the other hand, Table 4.17 reveals that mostly girls were prone to spread rumours about others (17.5%) of the same age (26%), and fall prey to this type of emotional bullying.

There is also an indication that many victims are keeping bullying a secret because only some of the learners reported the name-calling and teasing to an educator (lowest percentage are Grade 6s with 39.8%) as shown in Table 4.36. The results in Table 4.11 indicate that most learners have not been exposed as victims to giving possessions to bullies (73.1%), although a high number of other incidences were reported. These learners want to bully and play a leading role by behaving as they do. Bullies also have their followers or henchmen who act in a supportive role toward the bullying, take an active part, but do not really play a leading role or initiate the bullying. The victims were exposed to the trauma of being bullied. Statistically, there is also an indication that many victims in the school are suffering in silence because the second highest percentage in Table 4.12 is that of learners who reported to no one that they were being bullied (25.7%). In addition, Table 4.12 reveals that bystanders also felt more comfortable telling their parents, hoping they would resolve the problem of bullying. Victims told their mothers (30.3%) and a minority told their fathers (8.4%)

about being bullied at school. A major challenge for teachers in helping victims of bullying is to unveil the aspect of secrecy surrounding bullying. Fear, embarrassment, and shame make many victims hesitant to tell their teachers or parents about bullying incidences as revealed in the interview results.

However, bystanders or 'defenders' as they are referred to in the Bullying Circle, did not like the bullying and therefore tried to help by reporting it to a teacher as expressed in Table 4.23 (44.4%). While teachers are in a position to assist, it appears that bystanders only report serious incidences where learners are physically injured, while less serious cases go unheeded. Interview responses, on the other hand, revealed that parents contacted the school principal to deal with bullying behaviour at school. The principal would issue such disruptive learners with detention slips when they displayed unacceptable bullying behaviour.

Learners experiencing bullying as a bully, victim or bystander, can be affected emotionally and mentally because bullying generally constitutes deliberate and harmful actions of a more powerful person or a group, perpetrated on a less powerful person or group, and occurring repeatedly over time. Weeks (2005:40) suggests that the environment where children grow up plays an important role in the way their behaviour develops. For example, children who grow up in a community where violent acts are common, learn to resolve differences or conflicts violently. Similarly, according to Bronfenbrenner's theory (1998:993) of human development, the family, the school and the community, and the interactions between them, are important influences in the child's life. For example, any changes that take place within the child's home or in the school environment may affect the child in such a manner that he or she may start to bully others.

4.2.3 Conclusion

In this chapter, the researcher presented the data collected in the research. The chapter contains a detailed analysis of the findings as well as an outline of general themes. Data collected is systematically organised into themes and patterns, thus bringing meaning to these themes by telling a story and writing it all down so that others can comprehend the primary school learners' understanding and experiences of bullying as a bully, victim or bystander. Chapter 5 will map out the conclusions emanating from the findings, and give recommendations on how to reduce bullying in schools.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSIONS OF FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

Chapter 1 presented the introduction and background to the issue of bullying at school. The introduction outlined the importance of the research and the research aims. The research questions were clearly stated, indicating the main focus of Intermediate Phase learners' understanding and experiences of bullying at school. In Chapter 2 the researcher defined concepts related to bullying, discussed the different types of bullying, and the extent of exposure to the various forms of bullying at school level. Chapter 2 also provided a review of the literature covering the theoretical frameworks of Daniel Olweus and Urie Bronfenbrenner's theories on bullying and child development. In Chapter 3 the process of data collection was described in detail. Concepts such as reliability, validity and ethics were clarified in the context of this research study.

Chapter 4 focused on the results of the collected data and the findings of the research in response to the research question: What are primary school learners' understanding and experiences of bullying? The research was aimed at gaining a deeper understanding of how learners perceive their experiences of bullying, whether they were the victim, bully or witness. The aim of the study was attained with a mixed-method approach using a questionnaire for learners as an instrument to gather data on learners' understanding of being a bully, victim or bystander, as well as with a focus group of six learners exploring learners' experiences of bullying. Results revealed that learners had a very good understanding of the dynamics of bullying and their roles as a bully, victim or bystander. Of significance were learners' reflections on their personal experiences of bullying.

Chapter 5 will represent conclusions drawn from the findings of bullying experiences of Intermediate Phase learners at the primary school in the Western Cape where the research was conducted. Furthermore, conclusions and recommendations are made that are linked specifically to the findings on bullying at this school.

5.2 Conclusions

A better understanding of the learners' experiences of the different types of bullying and the extent of the learners' exposure to various forms of bullying could be obtained. Thus, the researcher concludes that the findings gave a deeper understanding of learners' interpretations of the role of the bully, victim and bystander.

In reflecting on the responses of the questionnaire with Intermediate Phase learners, it is clear that bullying is a matter of concern and cannot be ignored. Based on the evidence, learners indicated that others were directly or indirectly bullying them; other learners admitted to being bullies. Of significance is the fact that the main kinds of bullying that occur among learners are physical assault (53.2%), reflected in Tables 4.4 & 4.5, and name-calling (36.1%), indicated in Table 4.9. There is also an indication that many victims at the school are suffering in silence because only some of the learners reported the bullying incidences to an educator or a parent.

The victims were exposed to the trauma of being bullied, while others also mentioned that they themselves had bullied someone at school. Some of these bullies were previously or unwittingly victims. These incidences might play a role in their becoming bullies. Influences from social networks, gangs or groups in the community may also contribute to learners becoming bullies. Violence at home, in the community and in the media also has a negative impact on learners' behaviour because they model what they see and hear most of the time. The causes of bullying were not researched in this study, but would certainly warrant further investigation.

The focus group interview was conducted with six learners where learners had the chance to verbally interact with the interviewer and other interviewees. The focus group consisted of two boys and four girls: two girls in Grade 4, one boy and one girl in Grade 5, and one boy and one girl in Grade 6. This interaction could be regarded as the most significant part of the study as it shed light on learners' experiences and could confirm or negate what had been revealed in the questionnaires.

The frequency of bullying in the same grade was explored. A few of the learners in the group focused on the frequency of bullying, but emphasised that the Grade 4s, the smallest sample, were bullied most frequently by the learners in the higher grades. Three of the six learners indicated that bullying occurred basically 'every day' (Respondents 3, 5 & 6).

One of the victims (Respondent 3) said that bullies start the bullying by swearing at the younger ones. Another respondent (Respondent 6) was neutral with regard to the bullying incident and wished that bullies, victims and bystanders could help or support each other and the “friends”. The responses of learners show that they told their parents, and mostly mothers were regarded as confidantes. Thereafter, teachers are told about the bullying, yet teachers largely seem to refer matters of bullying to the HOD or the principal.

The two themes that emerge most prominently are that the respondents see bullying as wrong, and that it is older children who dominate and bully younger children.

Of significance is that the learners reported in the interview that it was mostly the Grade 4s who were bullied, but the figures in the findings of the questionnaire revealed that bullying is almost as bad and in many cases worse for the Grade 6s. Why the results appear to be different in the two data sets could be either because the interviewees weren't truthful, or the questionnaire respondents weren't honest about their experiences of bullying. Another reason might be that the one method consisted of a much larger sample size (questionnaire), compared with the other method with a smaller focus group (interview).

The most important finding of the research is that older learners (in Grade 6) are bullied as much as the younger children (Grade 4) in the study. However, before the research was conducted, it was assumed that the older learners bullied the younger ones more than they were bullied themselves. In addition, respondents in the interview reported that the older learners bullied the younger ones with greater frequency.

5.3 Recommendations

Recommendations in this study include suggestions to adopt a whole-school approach to bullying, to develop an anti-bullying policy and to foster partnerships between the school and parents. This study further suggests a programme to develop staff, training in working with a victim and a bully, encouraging responsibilities of peers and the implementation of a token economy programme.

5.3.1 A whole-school approach

A recommendation is that a whole-school approach in the form of training workshops can be run to prevent bullying behaviour. This approach can bring together behavioural and emotional development strategies from a range of approaches to provide educators, parents

and caregivers with skills that can assist when working with children who present bullying behaviour. Topics could include: conflict management, self-esteem and behaviour management, the development of a code of conduct, and a whole-school positive behaviour approach.

An intervention plan or programme that involves all the learners, parents, and school staff, could assist to ensure that all learners can learn in an environment that is safe and secure. The following possible solutions are recommended to prevent or reduce bullying at school:

- Ensure that bullying is mentioned in the school's code of conduct.
- Teachers can work with learners in class to develop rules against bullying.
- Different forms of bullying should be identified and described by teachers.
- Teachers should establish a positive, friendly, and trusting relationship with the class and each individual child to ensure that victims will report incidences of bullying.
- Involve parents who will assist educators to monitor and supervise during breaks.
- Appoint learners as monitors to watch for bullying during breaks.
- Train the monitors in what to look for and to whom to report.
- Have group counselling sessions to address issues such as self-esteem.
- A questionnaire can be distributed to the learners to help them become aware of the bullying problem.
- Establish an anti-bullying committee consisting of staff, parents and learners to plan awareness and prevention activities.

Schools could arrange parent workshops, supply resources, and make genuine attempts to engage parents in important decisions related to diversity training and education. Educators therefore need to be provided with the tools they need to develop and implement educational and officially valid policies and practices. Once this process is well under way, the school stands a better chance of keeping learners safe and secure.

5.3.2 Anti-bullying policy

To guarantee the protection of all learners within the school, it is expected, as required by the *South African School's Act No. 84 of 1996* (South Africa, 1996), that every school develop a safety that includes bullying as a sub-section. This study wishes to recommend that schools insert an anti-bullying clause as part of the school's code of conduct which schools could use when they draw up a safety policy.

The purpose of an anti-bullying policy is to help establish a safe and happy environment by providing clear rules and procedures for dealing with bullying behaviour on a regular, consistent and on-going basis (Krige et al., 2000). Learners have the right to learn in a safe, secure environment that is free from bullying. The teachers, learners, and parents need to plan to create a community in which everybody feels valued and protected. They also need to protect children against bullying and provide support for the victims, bullies, bystanders and parents. The enforcement of an anti-bullying policy, developed together with the school community, can assist the school to monitor and prevent bullying behaviour.

5.3.3 Fostering partnerships between the school and parents

The South African Child Gauge (Kibel et al., 2010:25) notes that the *Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, Act No. 108 of 1996*, Section 12(1) (c) categorically states “everyone has the right to freedom and security of the person, including the right to be free from all forms of violence”. To achieve this ideal, the researcher recommends that educators, learners and parents all be involved and be prepared to work towards developing and implementing strategies to prevent misbehaviour. This can be done through strategic planning.

Schools are really in need of partnerships that involve the community to help reduce the problem of bullying in school. Parent involvement influences learner attendance, attitude towards school, self-esteem and fosters improvement in behaviour. Parent involvement has many advantages, but the teacher should know exactly how to make use of this involvement. The researcher recommends that teachers who want to make use of parents to assist them with behavioural problems, need to inform parents of their role in the partnership through planning, organising, and guiding these parents.

The researcher further recommends an effective implementation of strategies to reduce bullying behaviour at school with the necessary monitoring of activities and evaluation strategies reflected in Table 5.1.

Table 5.1: Bullying strategy for reducing bullying

Activity	Responsible Person	Outcome
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arrange sessions for Grade 6 learners to be trained as monitors and prefects to assist with reducing of bullying 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grade 6 educators • Grade 7 educators 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inform parents • Assist Grade 6 learners in implementation of sessions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish a committee to plan awareness and prevention of bullying • Parent meeting to discuss school's Code of Conduct. Monitor learner behaviour 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Principal and all staff members 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Involve staff, parents, and learners • Inform school Governing body and parents • Form home – school relations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Group counselling sessions for self-esteem 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Educator support team co-ordinator • Social worker 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inform all educators and parents • Monitoring of sessions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workshop on developing a whole-school positive behaviour approach. • Implementation of approach 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WCED officials • Bullying behaviour committee 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide educators, parents and caregivers with skills to assist with bullying behaviour • Monitoring implementation of whole-school approach
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluation strategies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Principal • All educators 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluation strategies

The training of learners as monitors and prefects (refer to bullying strategy) to identify and assist with monitoring of bullying behaviour not only in class, but also in the toilets, the passages or on the playground during break, is further recommended to make learners accountable and responsible for one another's wellbeing.

5.3.4 Staff development programme

A concern found in this study was that teachers often leave their classrooms unsupervised. Teachers who are not in their classes and do not adhere to playground duty rosters give learners the opportunity for bullying behaviour. The recommendation is that on-going staff development on classroom management be implemented.

5.3.5 Training in working with a victim and a bully

Recommendations for working with a victim and a bully are important in this study because learners pointed out the problems of bullying they are faced with both on and off the school premises, especially with older learners who bully the younger ones. A possible recommendation for this problem is to separate playing areas on the school premises to

avoid conflict between older and younger learners or have different gates and toilets to separate the older from the younger learners. However, these may not be practical as it is a reasonably small school, but could possibly be a solution to the bullying problem if explored.

The problem of girls' gossiping behaviour could be solved if teachers actively address group dynamics in class by rotating group members to foster inclusivity, especially in the diverse classroom setting.

Recommendations for dealing with boys' aggression could include sporting activities by playing together instead of against one another. Physical activities, for example, cleaning classrooms and school premises on a regular basis, could further enhance collaboration of learners and teachers since these are the areas where bullying takes place. By giving learners classroom duties, for example, positions of authority, including being responsible for classroom discipline, would change the power dynamics and result in positive outcomes.

Recommendation for dealing with victims could be to teach them to remain calm and focused, while bystanders could be taught to help or support the victims by reporting the incident. Teachers and parents could encourage victims to seek assistance and speak up and could try to assure them that they will be protected from further harm.

To deal with bullies, the educator could remove the bully immediately to a time-out corner in the classroom away from the bullying situation and investigate the incident. The teacher then reminds the bully of the consequences set out in the school's code of conduct. Thereafter, the educator could try to change the behaviour of the bully with positive reinforcement strategies.

All the bullies, followers, defenders and bystanders are to be involved in the intervention plan. The educator could then suggest counselling if necessary or use developmental programmes to help the bullies. Contact with the parents could be made to inform them of the incidences to ensure the school is a bully-free zone.

5.3.6 Peer responsibility

Peers are often present when bullying is perpetrated on the playground and in the classroom. Peers often want to help, but don't know how, as revealed in the findings of this study. Sometimes they do intervene and this can stop the bully in his or her tracks. There is

huge potential in involving learners when taking action. Peers or friends who take action could be helpful to reduce bullying behaviour.

The researcher recommends that the school develop a 'telling' environment to gain learner support. Peers should be taught to encourage victims to develop a 'telling' environment and motivate learners to report the bullying. Krige et al. (2000:12) suggest that learners need to be with their peers and become friends with them. In this way the victims' friends can help them to stand up against the bully by encouraging the victims to tell a teacher or a parent. Tackling bullying in school is critical and it is important that activities like the buddy system take place throughout the school to reduce the possibility of bullying.

5.3.7 Implementation of a token-economy programme

The researcher recommends that another intervention strategy educators can implement with younger learners is the *token economy programme* (Burke, 1992:100). A learner earns tokens for displaying a wide variety of appropriate classroom behaviours, including task completion, responding to instructions, and showing respect to others. Tokens can be used at a later time to buy books, pens, pencils, etc. In addition the learner can lose tokens for displaying disruptive behaviours. Each learner can earn, spend or lose tokens in an individualised manner and therefore a token-economy programme can be a valuable method for promoting positive behaviour and decreasing negative behaviour.

5.4 Suggestions for further research

A whole-school community approach is needed to address bullying behaviour. Teachers, learners, and parents could all be involved in developing and implementing a plan agreed on. Research could therefore look into teachers' understanding and implementation of useful strategies in preventing bullying behaviour in primary schools.

It would also be useful to research whether all primary and high schools do in fact have an anti-bullying policy in place at their schools and how schools could be assisted to develop implementation plans.

I would also suggest that researchers explore the prevalence of the secrecy element of bullying in Western Cape primary schools and reasons why victims are afraid to tell. As noted previously, the earlier that bullying problems are recognised and addressed in

constructive ways, the greater the chances of helping learners escape victim, bystander and bullying roles.

5.5 To conclude

Having looked at the phenomenon of bullying, the researcher identified the following concerns that warrant further attention. Although learners have a good understanding of what bullying entails and have ample experiences of bullying behaviour and its prevalence at school:

- Educators often seem unaware of bullying at school and shun their responsibilities.
- There seems to be a lack of interest among parents and school staff to address bullying.
- It appears that learners are unaware of their responsibility to report or stop bullying.

If these circumstances are not changed and a collective effort is not made to address bullying at school, the problem will persist and the cycle will be perpetuated in society.

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APPENDIX A

40 Yellowstone Crescent
Coniston Park
7945
08 June 2009

The Director: Education Research
Western Cape Education Department
Private Bag x9114
CAPE TOWN
8000

Dear Dr Cornelissen

Application for Research in M.Ed

My name is Dawn Johnson and I am currently engaged in a Masters degree in Education, at the Cape Peninsula University of Technology in Mowbray. My research area focuses on school bullying, with a particular emphasis on exploring the learners' understanding of bullying, whether they were the bully, the victim or bystander. I hereby seek your permission to do a research study at a primary school on the Cape flats of the Western Cape.

The title is: Learners' understanding of bullying at a primary school in the Western Cape
My research question is: What is the primary school learners' understanding and experiences of bullying?

The sample of respondents that will provide the necessary information regarding the aim of the study will be the Intermediate Phase learners who are purposefully selected because they will be able to give a fair comment on their understanding of bullying and most of these learners would have spent at least three to five years in their school environment. The total sample comprised 296 learners. The focus group will comprise 6 learners, 2 learners from each grade depending on the frequency of their responses.

The measuring instruments I intend to use to gather data are: A questionnaire for learners in which concepts are tested and an interview with a focus group for detailed exploration with a few individuals on their experiences of bullying. Interviews will be conducted without any outside influence from the researcher; hence the responses will be unbiased.

Once I have been granted permission from the WCED I will inform the respondents of the study and will issue consent letters to parents to inform the parents of all the aspects of the research, information obtained from them will be treated with confidentiality and the research findings will be presented honestly. I hope that this study will offer insight into how learners understand bullying because this can be a benefit to educators to assist them in their efforts to create safe classrooms within the school.

Thanking you in anticipation.

Yours faithfully
Dawn Johnson
Student Number: 207029091

APPENDIX B

Navrae
Enquiries **Dr RS Cornelissen**
Imibuzo
Telefoon
Telephone **(021) 467-2286**
IFoni
Faks
Fax **(021) 425-7445**
IFeksi
Verwysing
Reference **20090624-0052**
ISalathiso



Wes-Kaap Onderwysdepartement

Western Cape Education Department

ISebe leMfundo leNtshona Koloni

Mrs Dawn Johnson
40 Yellowstone Crescent
CONISTON PARK
7945

Dear Mrs D. Johnson

RESEARCH PROPOSAL: LEARNERS' UNDERSTANDING OF BULLYING AT A PRIMARY SCHOOL IN THE WESTERN CAPE.

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 **25th June 2009 to 26th March 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: Ronald S. Cornelissen
for: **HEAD: EDUCATION**
DATE: 25th June 2009

MELD ASSEBLIEF VERWYSINGSNOMMERS IN ALLE KORRESPONDENSIE / PLEASE QUOTE REFERENCE NUMBERS IN ALL CORRESPONDENCE /
NCEDA UBHALE IINOMBOLO ZESALATHISO KUYO YONKE IMBALELWANO

GRAND CENTRAL TOWERS, LAER-PARLEMENTSTRAAT, PRIVAATSAK X9114, KAAPSTAD 8000
GRAND CENTRAL TOWERS, LOWER PARLIAMENT STREET, PRIVATE BAG X9114, CAPE TOWN 8000

WEB: <http://wced.wcape.gov.za>

INBELSENTRUM /CALL CENTRE

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VEELICE SKOLENDRASE SKOLEN ☎ 0200 45 46 47

APPENDIX C

40 Yellowstone Crescent
Coniston Park
7945
08 June 2009

Dear Mr. C. Jansen (School Principal)

Application for Research in M.Ed

My name is Dawn Johnson and I am an educator at Steenberg Primary School. I am currently engaged in a Masters degree, in Education, at the Cape Peninsula University of Technology in Mowbray. My research area focuses on school bullying, with a particular emphasis on exploring the learners' understanding of bullying, to investigate the forms of bullying learners are experiencing and to what extent they were exposed to the various forms. I hereby seek your permission to do a research study on learners' understanding of bullying at your school.

The sample of respondents that will provide the necessary information regarding the aim of the study will be the Intermediate Phase learners who are purposefully selected because they will be able to give a fair comment on their understanding of bullying and most of these learners would have spent at least three to five years in their school environment. The total sample comprised 360 learners (120 learners per Grade x 3 Grades in the phase). The focus group will comprise 6 learners, 2 learners from each grade depending on the frequency of their responses.

The measuring instruments I intend to use to gather data are: A questionnaire for learners in which concepts are tested and an interview with a focus group for detailed exploration with a few individuals on their experiences of bullying. Interviews will be conducted without any outside influence from the researcher; hence the responses will be unbiased.

Once I have been granted permission from the WCED I will inform the respondents of the study and will issue consent letters to parents to inform the parents of all the aspects of the research, information obtained from them will be treated with confidentiality and the research findings will be presented honestly. I hope that this study will offer insight into how learners understand bullying because this can be a benefit to educators to assist them in their efforts to create safe classrooms within the school.

The supervisor of this project is Dr. B. Thuynsma.

Thanking you in anticipation.

Yours faithfully
Dawn Johnson
Student Number: 207029091

I hereby give the researcher permission for the questionnaires and interviews to be conducted.

Principal:  C. JANSEN

Date: 02-11-2009

APPENDIX D

40 Yellowstone Crescent
Coniston Park
7945
08 June 2009

Dear Parent (s)

Letter of permission to Parents

My name is Dawn Johnson and I am an educator at a Primary School. I am currently engaged in a Masters degree, in Education, at the Cape Peninsula University of Technology in Mowbray. My research area focuses on school bullying, with a particular emphasis on exploring the learners' understanding of bullying. I hereby seek your permission to do a research study within the 3rd term on your child's understanding of bullying at school.

The sample of respondents will be the Intermediate Phase learners who will be able to give a fair comment on their understanding of bullying and most of these learners would have spent at least three to five years in their school environment. The total sample comprised 360 learners (120 learners per Grade x 3 Grades in the phase) and your child is part of this group.

I intend to conduct a questionnaire for learners in which concepts are tested and an interview with a focus group for detailed exploration with a few individuals on their experiences of bullying. Interviews will be conducted without any outside influence from the researcher; hence the responses will be unbiased. I will inform the respondents of all the aspects of the research, information obtained from them will be treated with confidentiality and the research findings will be presented honestly. I hope that this study will offer insight into how learners understand bullying because this can be a benefit to educators to assist them in their efforts to create safe classrooms within the school.

Yours faithfully

Dawn Johnson

Please Return Reply Slip:

I, Mr. / Mrs. / Ms _____ hereby provide consent for my child _____ to participate in a questionnaire survey and / or to be interviewed conducted by the educator of the Research study.

Parent/Guardian

Date

APPENDIX E

Definition: Bullying is when one child, or a group of children, keeps hurting another child with words or actions. It can be deliberate and harmful actions of a more powerful person or group on a less powerful person or group occurring repeatedly over time. Bullying can be hitting, kicking, or the use of force in any way. It can be teasing, making rude gestures, name calling or leaving you out of a group.

Directions: Answer all the questions. Think about all the questions carefully. Accurate information will help us to know how best to stop bullying happening. For research purposes learners will be required to write their names on the questionnaires but their names will not be revealed to maintain confidentiality. You just need to circle the correct answer! Below is a blank space for your name.

Name: _____

START HERE: Basis Information

1. School:.....
2. Grade:.....
3. Date:
4. Age:.....
5. I am a boy or a girl. (Circle one)

How others treat you:

6. How often do other learners bully you by **hitting** you in school?

a. every day	b. once or twice a week	c. once or twice per month
d. once or twice a year	e. never	f. always

7. How often do other learners bully you by **kicking** you in school?

a. every day	b. once or twice a week	c. once or twice per month
d. once or twice a year	e. never	f. always

8. How often do other learners bully you by **pushing** you in school?

a. every day	b. once or twice a week	c. once or twice per month
d. once or twice a year	e. never	f. always

9. Who has bullied you by **teasing** you at school?

a. mostly boys	b. mostly girls	c. both boys and girls
d. younger than me	e. older than me	f. the same age as me

10. Who has bullied you by **spreading rumours** about you at school?

a. mostly boys	b. mostly girls	c. both boys and girls
d. younger than me	e. older than me	f. the same age as me

11. Who has bullied you by **calling you names** at school?

a. mostly boys	b. mostly girls	c. both boys and girls
d. younger than me	e. older than me	f. the same age as me

12. The places and times where you have been bullied by other learners:

a. on the way to school	b. in the toilets	c. in the corridors
d. during lessons	e. on the way home	f. on the bus

13. How often have you been bullied into giving up your lunch, snacks or money?

a. every day	b. once or twice a week	c. once or twice per month
d. once or twice a year	e. never	f. always

14. If you have been bullied this year, whom have you told?

a. a teacher	b. my mother	c. my father
d. my sister or brother	e. my friends	f. nobody

How you treat others:

15. How often do you bully others by **hitting** them in school?

a. every day	b. once or twice a week	c. once or twice per month
d. once or twice a year	e. never	f. always

16. How often do you bully others by **kicking** them in school?

a. every day	b. once or twice a week	c. once or twice per month
d. once or twice a year	e. never	f. always

17. How often do you bully other learners by **pushing** them in school?

a. every day	b. once or twice a week	c. once or twice per month
d. once or twice a year	e. never	f. always

18. Who have you bullied by **teasing** them at school?

a. mostly boys	b. mostly girls	c. both boys and girls
d. younger than me	e. older than me	f. the same age as me

19. Who have you bullied by **spreading rumours** about them at school?

a. mostly boys	b. mostly girls	c. both boys and girls
d. younger than me	e. older than me	f. the same age as me

20. Who have you bullied at school by **calling them names**?

a. mostly boys	b. mostly girls	c. both boys and girls
d. younger than me	e. older than me	f. the same age as me

21. The places and times where you have bullied other learners?

a. on the way to school	b. in the toilets	c. in the corridors
d. during lessons	e. on the way home	f. on the bus

22. How often have bullied other learners into giving up their lunch, snacks or money?

a. every day	b. once or twice a week	c. once or twice per month
d. once or twice a year	e. never	f. always

What you have seen and heard:

23. How often have you seen another learner bully others by **hitting** them?

a. every day	b. once or twice a week	c. once or twice per month
d. once or twice a year	e. never	f. always

24. How often have you heard another learner bully others by **teasing** them?

a. every day	b. once or twice a week	c. once or twice per month
d. once or twice a year	e. never	f. always

25. What have you done when you have heard or seen another learner being teased or called names in the school?

a. report the incident to a teacher	b. walk away and ignored it	c. I helped the bully
d. helped the person being bullied	e. I laughed	f. I watched

Thank You!

Boelie Vraelys Intermediêre Fase

Definisie: Boelie is wanneer een kind of 'n groep kinders 'n ander kind aanhoudelik seer maak deur lelike woorde of aksies te gebruik. Dit kan opsetlike of skadelike aksies wees wat deur 'n magtige persoon of groep teenoor 'n minder magtige persoon of groep uitgevoer word oor 'n herhaaldelike tydperk. Boelie kan slaan, skop of forseerd wees, terg wees, name skree, snaakse opmerkings maak of iemand uit die groep sluit.

Leiding: Beantwoord al die vrae en dink eers mooi oor die vrae. Antwoorde wat akkuraat en opreg is, sal ons die beste help om boelie te op die skool te stop. Vir navorsing doeleindes sal leerders hul name op die Vraelys moet skryf, maar hul name sal streng vertroulik gehou word. Jy moet net 'n sirkel om die korrekte antwoord se letter maak! Hieronder is 'n spasio vir jou naam.

Naam: _____

BEGIN HIER: Basiese Informasie

1. Skool:..... 2. Graad:.....
3. Datum: 4. Ouderdom:.....
5. Ek is 'n seun of 'n meisie. (Sirkel een)

Hoe ander leerders jou behandel:

6. Hoe dikwels boelie ander leerders jou op die skool deur jou te **slaan**?

a. elke dag	b. een of twee maal 'n week	c. een of twee maal 'n maand
d. een maal of twee maal 'n jaar	e. nooit	f. altyd

7. Hoe dikwels boelie ander leerders jou op die skool deur jou te **skop**?

a. elke dag	b. een of twee maal 'n week	c. een of twee maal 'n maand
d. een maal of twee maal 'n jaar	e. nooit	f. altyd

8. Hoe dikwels boelie ander leerders jou op die skool deur jou rond te **stoot**?

a. elke dag	b. een of twee maal 'n week	c. een of twee maal 'n maand
d. een maal of twee maal 'n jaar	e. nooit	f. altyd

9. Wie boelie jou op die skool deur jou te **terg**?

a. meestal seuns	b. meestal meisies	c. beide meisies en seuns
d. jonger as ek	e. ouer as ek	f. dieselfde ouderdom as ek

10. Wie boelie jou op die skool deur **stories** van jou te **versprei**?

a. meestal seuns	b. meestal meisies	c. beide meisies en seuns
d. jonger as ek	e. ouer as ek	f. dieselfde ouderdom as ek

11. Wie boelie jou op die skool deur jou **name** te **skree**?

a. meestal seuns	b. meestal meisies	c. beide meisies en seuns
d. jonger as ek	e. ouer as ek	f. dieselfde ouderdom as ek

12. Die **plekke** en **tye** waar jy deur ander leerders geboelie was:

a. oppad skool toe	b. in die toilette	c. in die gange of op die trappe
d. gedurende lesure	e. oppad huis toe	f. op die bus

13. Hoe dikwels was jy geboelie vir jou **middagete**, jou **peuselhappie** of vir jou **geld**?

a. elke dag	b. een of twee maal 'n week	c. een of twee maal 'n maand
d. een maal of twee maal 'n jaar	e. nooit	f. altyd

14. As jy al hierdie jaar geboelie was, vir wie het jy vertel?

a. 'n onderwyser	b. jou ma	c. jou pa
d. jou suster of broer	e. jou vriende	f. niemand

Hoe jy ander leerders behandel:

15. Hoe dikwels boelie **jy** ander leerders op die skool deur hulle te **slaan**?

a. elke dag	b. een of twee maal 'n week	c. een of twee maal 'n maand
d. een maal of twee maal 'n jaar	e. nooit	f. altyd

16. Hoe dikwels boelie **jy** ander leerders op die skool deur hulle te **skop**?

a. elke dag	b. een of twee maal 'n week	c. een of twee maal 'n maand
d. een maal of twee maal 'n jaar	e. nooit	f. altyd

17. Hoe dikwels boelie **jy** ander leerders op die skool deur hulle **rond te stoot**?

a. elke dag	b. een of twee maal 'n week	c. een of twee maal 'n maand
d. een maal of twee maal 'n jaar	e. nooit	f. altyd

18. Wie boelie jy op die skool deur hulle te **terg**?

a. meestal seuns	b. meestal meisies	c. beide meisies en seuns
d. jonger as ek	e. ouer as ek	f. dieselfde ouderdom as ek

19. Wie boelie jy op die skool deur **stories** van hulle te **versprei**?

a. meestal seuns	b. meestal meisies	c. beide meisies en seuns
d. jonger as ek	e. ouer as ek	f. dieselfde ouderdom as ek

20. Wie boelie jy op die skool deur vir hulle name te skree?

a. meestal seuns	b. meestal meisies	c. beide meisies en seuns
d. jonger as ek	e. ouer as ek	f. dieselfde ouderdom as ek

21. Die plekke en tye waar jy ander leerders boelie?

a. oppad skool toe	b. in die toilette	c. in die gange of op die trappe
d. gedurende lesure	e. oppad huis toe	f. op die bus

22. Hoe dikwels boelie jy ander leerders vir hulle **middagete, peuselhappie of geld**?

a. elke dag	b. een of twee maal 'n week	c. een of twee maal 'n maand
d. een maal of twee maal 'n jaar	e. nooit	f. altyd

Wat jy sien en hoor:

23. Hoe dikwels sien jy 'n leerder boelie ander leerders deur hulle te **slaan**?

a. elke dag	b. een of twee maal 'n week	c. een of twee maal 'n maand
d. een maal of twee maal 'n jaar	e. nooit	f. altyd

24. Hoe dikwels hoor jy 'n leerder boelie ander leerders deur hulle te **terg**?

a. elke dag	b. een of twee maal 'n week	c. een of twee maal 'n maand
d. een maal of twee maal 'n jaar	e. nooit	f. altyd

25. Wat doen jy wanneer jy hoor of sien 'n leerder word **name geskree** of **geterg** op die skool?

a. Ek rapporteer dit by 'n onderwyser	b. Stap weg en ignoreer dit	c. Ek help die boelie
d. Ek help die persoon wat geboelie word	e. Ek lag	f. Ek hou dit dop

Baie Dankie!!

APPENDIX F

The following interview is to be conducted with a focus group selected from the Intermediate Phase learners. With a structured interview the researcher can acquire in-depth information from the focus group on their understanding of bullying and it also allows verbal interaction. The researcher would like to know what learners understand about bullying in their school. Their answers to the questions below will help us to stop bullying in their school.

1. What is your understanding of the term 'bullying'?
2. How do you feel about bullying in your school?
3. How do you feel about being bullied?
4. How do you respond to bullying?
5. How often are learners bullied in the same grade?
6. How often are learners bullied by older learners?
7. How do you think other learners cope with bullying?
8. How often are learners bullied in the classroom?
9. How does the teacher respond to bullying when it has been reported?
10. Are the rules for bullying behaviour discussed with learners?
11. How do your parents respond to you being bullied or you bullying others?
12. What do you think could be done to stop bullying at your school?

The researcher will seek to keep her personal values and beliefs and biases from influencing the process of data collection and analysing interviews. This study, by asking learners about their understanding and experiences of bullying, is a significant step in ensuring that educators are becoming aware of the types of bullying incidents.

Thank You!!!

APPENDIX G: Bullying incident report (Pseudonym is used)

Micah Lee Court 4b 2012

- 26/01/12 Micah-lee knocks on the desk while completing Maths activity
- 02/02/12 Micah-lee whistles in class ~ Demerit slip
- 10/02/12 Micah-lee swears at a Grade 6 learners during break. The learner in Grade 6 took their soccer ball from them. (Teacher reported incident to the Grade 6 learner's teacher).
- 20/02/12 Micah-lee fights with a Grade 7 learner after school while waiting for his taxi driver.
- 23/02/12 Teacher reported incident to the principal. Both learners received letters for parents to come to school. Parents were informed and ^{both} learners went to detention on Friday 24/02/12
- 16/03/12 A Grade 7 learner pushed Micah-lee and a few boys around during break because he thinks one of them threw him with a stone. The Grade 7 learner was reported to the Class Teacher and came to apologise to the boys. The boys did not push back. They came to report it.
- 16/04/12 Micah-lee completes all his activities for the day. Teacher rewards him with an Australian pencil. He smiled and was happy.
- 19/07/12 A Grade 6 learner took Micah-lee's top from him during break time and insists it belongs to him. The top was then handed in at the office as learners are not allowed to play with tops during break.
- 07/09/12 Micah-lee went to the toilet before 2nd Break. A Grade 7 learner came in and snatched Micah-lee from behind for no reason. Micah-lee came crying and the incident was reported at the office. The Grade 7 boy's parents were informed and the matter was resolved. The boy got detention that same day with his parents consent.

APPENDIX H: Focus group Interview Responses

A focus group interview was conducted with six Intermediate Phase learners to explore their understanding of bullying experiences. The focus group consisted of two boys and four girls: two girls in Grade 4, one boy and one girl in Grade 5, and one boy and one girl in Grade six. Respondent 1 and 2 are Grade 4 learners; respondents 3 and 4 are Grade 5 learners and respondents 5 and 6 are Grade 6 learners.

Findings of interview questions were presented as follows:

- **What is your understanding of the term 'bullying'?**

Respondent 1: *Bullying is when they hit you, Miss.*

Respondent 2: *Bullying means to push and kick, when they want to fight, Miss.*

Respondent 3: *Bullying is when they tell you they will get you after school, Miss.*

Respondent 4: *Bullying happens when you stop someone in the toilets maybe, Miss and want to fight with, Miss.*

Respondent 5: *Bullying is when they take your stuff from you without asking you.*

Respondent 6: *Bullying happens in school when bigger ones fight with the smaller ones and wait for them after school.*

- **How do you feel about bullying in your school?**

Respondent 1: *Everybody must be friends and everybody must play with each other and mustn't uhm... bully each other.*

Respondent 2: *Everybody mustn't bully uhm.*

Respondent 3: *I don't think bullying is right at our school because everybody should feel welcome at school.*

Respondent 4: *I feel bad, Miss, because its small children and they get sad because it's the big ones here that bully the small ones.*

Respondent 5: *Miss, the big ones think they cool, now they bully the small ones to show how strong they are, they wanna be the best on the school that's why they hit the small ones.*

Respondent 6: *We must help each other, we must help each other and we mustn't bully each other.*

- **How do you feel about being bullied?**

Respondent 1: *Uhm, it's mostly the Africans and the boys who hit the girls in class and they like to call you names like uhm... that one boy he stays calling me big mouth and I don't like it.*

Respondent 2: *I don't feel well about being bullied because if you wanna bully them back and then they say no, but I didn't bully you and that, Miss.*

Respondent 3: *I don't think it's nice because when you, when they, when you don't wanna give them something then they kick you or hit you and then they swear you out sometimes.*

Respondent 4: *Miss, you must respect one another, Miss.*

Respondent 5: *You feel scared, you feel alone, and you don't want to go home because you scared they gonna take your stuff, Miss. They scared when you walk in the road they are going to hit you badly, Miss.*

Respondent 6: *They mustn't bully you, they must be friends with you.*

- **How do you cope with bullying?**

Respondent 1: *Most of the time when I tell my teacher then my teacher doesn't want to listen to me.*

Respondent 2: *I go tell my mommy or I go tell the teacher what they do to a person.*

Respondent 3: *I don't... When they... bully me, I cry... I don't want to tell my teacher or anyone, I want to kill myself... sometimes.*

Respondent 4: *I'm scared, Miss to tell the teacher because I'm scared they are gonna hit me, Miss. If you tell the teacher they tell you they gonna get you after school then they hit you, Miss.*

Respondent 5: *When I tell my father then he says he will lay a case against them.*

Respondent 6: *I don't go tell my mommy or my teacher I hit them back or I ... go tell my Miss in class then my Miss say I must go tell my mommy.*

- **How often are learners bullied in the same grade?**

Respondent 1: *Miss, the Grade 5s and 6s bully the Grade 4s.*

Respondent 2: *Mostly the Grade 6s they always bully the Grades 4s and the 5s. They say: "Sien jy hulle wil my niks gee nie," dan sê hulle, "dan gaan ek jou nou seermaak," soe is hulle...*

(Do you see, they want to give me nothing? Then they say that they will hurt us, that's the way they are).

Respondent 3: *I think they are being bullied everyday in the same Grade because they seem to be rude to the Grade 4s.*

Respondent 4: *The Grade 6s think they are the best on the school so they can bully the Grade 5s and the Grade 4s.*

Respondent 5: *In Grade 4 they bully the children, Miss. In Grade 4 they bully the children because they are the smallest, Miss. They do this every day.*

Respondent 6: *They bully smaller Grades every day.*

- **How often are learners bullied by older learners?**

Respondent 1: *Uhm... Like everyday then the children play here, then most of the Grades 6s come and they say... mind out of the way then they push the children and go on with the children.*

Respondent 2: *Uhm... everyday like...they do it to the children. Every day they must let the children feel welcome here in this place even if you black or white.*

Respondent 3: *The older learners bully the small ones uhm... in the mornings and when it is interval when they buy stuff at the tuck shop then the big ones say give your stuff now, give your money...Then they hit the children.*

Respondent 4: *Older learners bully the Grades 4s at least 5 times a day...They take off the children's stuff especially those from a different country.*

Respondent 5: *Miss, on a few occasions the big ones come and tell the small ones you can't play here and throw them with stones, Miss. That happens every day, Miss.*

Respondent 6: *I think... everyday. This happens every morning and every interval.*

- **How do learners cope with bullying?**

Respondent 1: *Some of them cry then they go to the toilet then they want to hang themselves up and some of the times then others want to come then they talk to the others they say: don't kill yourself... they are rude then they skel (scold) the children out.*

Respondent 2: *Uhm... Sometimes and then uhm...the children don't make you feel welcome because it's always the big ones that hurt them and put them always in detention and that's why the learners don't want to be here anymore at the school because they don't feel welcome here.*

Respondent 3: *Other learners don't cope well because the children bully them and then the children don't want to come to this school and then they cry and they don't want to tell their Miss.*

Respondent 4: *Sometimes, Miss the learners run away then they pick up stones then they throw the bullies and hide from the bullies, Miss.*

Respondent 5: *They don't cope, Miss the bullies chase them after school, Miss then they do bad stuff with the children, Miss. They scratch in their bags and throw their things away, Miss.*

Respondent 6: *Sometimes they cry then the teacher says you must go tell your mommy then ... sometimes your mommy come to school.*

- **How often are learners bullied in the classroom?**

Respondent 1: *Miss, every day and sometimes when my Miss is not there and then they bully the children especially the girls and the children that look for talkers in the class and if they... and if they ...and if they see that you not sitting in the right place and then... and then... a child comes and then they hit the girl or the boy because they wrote their names on the black board as one of the talkers in class.*

Respondent 2: *Sometimes and then uhm...they need a pencil and you don't want to give them a pencil because you don't have a pencil bag or sometimes uhm... they write your name on the board then that person says "hello xhosa hoekom skryf djy my naam op die bord cause ek het niks vir jou gedoen nie (Hello Xhosa, why do you write my name on the board as a talker? I did nothing to you), then they fight with the children in the class.*

Respondent 3: *When my Miss is gone then the boys make a noise and then they start to fight with the girls then the girls tell my Miss then my Miss skel (scold) the boys out then after school the boys bully the girls.*

Respondent 4: *Miss sometimes you ask the children for a ruler to use and they say no then the children get cross and they hit them this happen about uhm...twice a day.*

Respondent 5: *Miss, the children look for names of talkers in the class nuh then the other child will say why you write my name as one who talked in class then they say you gonna see after school I'm gonna (going to) kill you after school and then there's big fights in the class. Then after school they bring their scissors, Miss. Then they want to stab each other, Miss.*

Respondent 6: *When the teachers are out they just come to you and ask for a pencil and they say they will get you after school and this happen every time the teacher goes out.*

- **How does the teacher respond to bullying when it has been reported?**

Respondent 1: *Sometimes and then... my teacher calls HOD and she says the HOD must come get the children in the class and give a parent letter.*

Respondent 2: *My teacher told us if they back chat my teacher will give them a parent letter and sometimes the children get a parent letter then they tear it up and then they want to go tell us "djy kan ma vir juffrou gaan sê want ek issie bangie en djy gaan sien agter skool gaan ek jou lekker seer maak" (You can tell teacher, I'm not afraid and I will show you that I will hurt you after school.) ... and when they phone the parents then they say "mammie ek hettie daai gedoen nie, my juffrou lieg" (They deny that they ever did something to you and that the teacher is lying).*

Respondent 3: *My Miss... skel (scold) them out and then she hit them and then she sends them to the HOD for the day.*

Respondent 4: *My teacher sends them to the principal and they must go home, Miss. The HOD hits the bullies when he's finished he gives them letters and tell them don't come to school if your parents don't come with you to school.*

Respondent 5: *Miss, the HOD hits them then he gives them parent letter and then he says don't come back till your teacher comes. If you come... if you come he says I'm gonna (going to) give you lekka until your mother comes, Miss.*

Respondent 6: *Sometimes my teacher just calls the principal or the HOD then my teacher says "die kinders is baie ombeskof"... (These children are very rude).*

- **Are the rules for bullying behaviour discussed with learners?**

Respondent 1: *No, Miss only sometimes when the people of the School Governing Body come then they tell the teachers to tell the learners.*

Respondent 2: *Yes, always by the principal who give them parent letters.*

Respondent 3: *Yes, sometimes but the learners don't listen.*

Respondent 4: *Yes, Miss sort of.*

Respondent 5: *Yes, Miss there is a new thing going around: the suggestion box, miss if anyone bullies you then you have to put their name in there, miss then the teachers will talk to them.*

Respondent 6: *Yes, Miss the HOD gives them detention if they don't behave in class.*

- **How do your parents respond to you being bullied or you bullying others?**

Respondent 1: *Sometimes when the uhm... children bully me then after school I tell my daddy and when the child walks pass my house then my daddy skel (scold) the child out and then the next day he come to the school and tell the principal.*

Respondent 2: *Uhm ...Like... sometimes when I bully uhm...some children then my parents uhm... uhm... my parents give me a punishment and I must do my punishment and then I say "Nie ek gaanit ti doen nie en dan sê ek nie dji kanit doen". Miss, then they say they come tell my teacher.*

Respondent 3: *When I bully someone then my mommy hits me then I run away. When others bully me my parents do nothing sometimes.*

Respondent 4: *When I bully my parents say my brother must tell the principal.*

Respondent 5: *Miss, they say they coming to school then they will sort it out, Miss.*

Respondent 6: *Sometimes I bully other children then my mommy skel (scold) me out and she gives me a hiding and when they bully me then my mommy phone their parents.*

- **What do you think could be done to stop bullying at your school?**

Respondent 1: *The...The...uhm...the counsellor can come and they can talk to the whole school and say we must all stop the bullying the children because the children can all feel welcome at the school and we are all a family.*

Respondent 2: *Uhm... uhm...If they can get your counsellor and they must say: "Why must you bully your brother or sister in the school because in Gods' eyes they are your brother and your sister, we all a family even if you black or brown or white".*

Respondent 3: *If I must stop bullying other children then the children won't bully other children because we all a family.*

Respondent 4: *Miss, the police must put them one day in jail, Miss.*

Respondent 5: *You must get all the bullies together, Miss and then the counsellor and the police must talk to them and tell them if they gonna (going to) bully again then they are gonna go to prison, Miss.*

Respondent 6: *When your mommy come to school then the principal can say talk to the governing body and they can send them away.*

APPENDIX I: Declaration of editing

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ACADEMIC WRITING

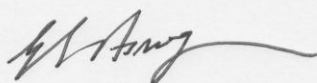
Linguistic proofreading and editing of:

Research proposals
Conference and journal papers
Theses, dissertations, technical reports

Bibliographies
Bibliographic citation
Literature searching

The master's thesis by Ms DA Johnson

has been proofread and edited, and the candidate has been advised to make the recommended changes.



ES van Aswegen
17 January 2014