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BULLYING IN RURAL SCHOOLS: A COMPARISON BETWEEN BOYS AND GIRLS

By: Melinda Tonono
568698
Supervisor: Prof. Joseph Seabi

A Master's Thesis submitted to the Faculty of Humanities, School of Human and Community Development, Discipline of Psychology, for the Degree of Master of Education (Educational Psychology), University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, July 2017.

Declaration

I declare that this thesis is my own, unaided work. It is being submitted for the degree of Master of Education (Educational Psychology) at the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg. It has not been submitted before for any degree or examination in any other university.

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Melinda Tonono

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Date

Abstract

Bullying is a problematic phenomenon in South African schools, affecting victims and bullies in various ways. These can have far reaching consequences that can last for years. This research sought to investigate bullying in rural schools. It sought to investigate the existence of bullying in rural schools and to explore the nature of bullying in rural schools, with regards to gender. Using a cross-sectional survey research design, 200 learners from high schools in the Eastern Cape completed the Olweus Bully/Victim Questionnaire. Data obtained from the participants was analysed using Chi-Square Test of Independence for each question in the questionnaire. The results confirmed the existence of bullying in rural schools. All three forms of bullying (physical, verbal, psychological bullying) and cyberbullying were present in the schools. Both boys and girls are experiencing bullying. The implications of this study include feelings of a lack of safety in the school environment, which will invariably affect learners' academic and social progress. As such, more interventions should be designed to combat adverse effects of bullying.

Keywords: Bullying, rural schools, South Africa

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

Research indicates that bullying is a problematic phenomenon (Boyes, Bowes, Cluver, Ward & Badcock, 2014; Farmer, et al., 2012; Xaba, 2014). It has different effects on learners and these are evolving, with the advent of cyberbullying. Bullying is just as problematic in South African schools with research conducted at schools in the Western Cape showing that bullying affect learners in various ways (Townsend, Chikobvu, Lombard, & King, 2008). It can affect their experience of school as well as their performance at school potentially resulting in the learners dropping out (Townsend, et al., 2008). Bullying is also a problem in rural schools and as such, learners in rural schools are faced with similar problems (Mlisa, Ward, Flisher & Lombard, 2008; Ndebele & Msiza, 2014). A rural area is defined as a part of space that is less affected by the process of urbanisation and is associated with a more dispersed pattern of population distribution and economic activity (Grimes, 2000). In a South African sense, a rural area is any place that is not classified as urban (Statistics South Africa, 2012). This may comprise of tribal areas, commercial farms and informal settlements (Statistics South Africa, 2012).

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Bullying affects both victims and bullies in different ways, including lower self-esteem and increased absenteeism from school (Fekkes, Pijpers, & Verloove-Vanhornick, 2005). These can have far reaching consequences for victims, which can last for a number of years. The research conducted in international contexts has yielded useful information that can be used to understand bullying and its dynamics today. However, this information is not always

applicable to rural contexts in South Africa, as they are markedly different from urban settings. There has been some research on bullying in South Africa, however an overwhelming majority of it has been in urban settings (Dussich & Maekoya, 2007; Greeff & Grobler, 2008; Townsend, et al., 2008). Although bullying has been reported in urban schools (Dussich & Maekoya, 2007; Greeff & Grobler, 2008; Protogerou & Flisher, 2012; Timm & Eskell-Blokland, 2011; Townsend, et al., 2008), very little is known about the nature of bullying in South African rural schools. As such, the nature of bullying in rural schools needs further exploration. The Minister of Basic Education recently made a pronouncement that South Africa's learners are the most bullied in the world. This raises concerns about the high incidences of bullying in South African schools. Victims of bullying have been found to have increased absenteeism and higher drop-out rates (Hutzell & Payne, 2012; Isernhagen & Harris, 2004; Townsend et al., 2008). These have an effect on one's experiences of school and can be a motivating factor in finishing school.

1.3 Rationale

Limited research has been conducted on bullying in South African rural schools. As Mlisa, et al., (2008) and Ndebele and Msiza (2014) noted, there is a need for more understanding on the nature and dynamics of bullying at schools in rural South Africa. Previous research has been conducted in urban contexts and highlights the problem of bullying in South Africa, but it does not provide information on bullying in rural South Africa. Although urbanisation trends in South Africa are consistent with global trends, there is still a large percentage of the population that is still living in rural areas (National Treasury, 2011). With a sizable percentage of South Africans living in rural areas, bullying in rural schools is a social problem that deserves attention and necessitates well researched intervention. This makes

research into bullying at rural schools an important area that needs development. Results yielded from this research will provide such information to stakeholders, such as the Department of Basic Education, the Eastern Cape Department of Education, educators and parents and guardians of learners in rural areas. Investigating bullying in rural schools in South Africa is different because rural and urban schools have different factors, which learning and the school environment different (Spaull, 2012). As such, with different environments, teachers who have larger classes and thus less time to deal with other issues that face learners (Case & Deaton, 1999).

1.4 Aims

This research aimed to investigate the following:

1. The prevalence of bullying in rural schools.
2. Types of bullying behaviour present in rural schools.
3. The nature of bullying in rural schools, namely if there are any differences between bullying experienced and perpetrated by boys and girls, as well as between those in lower grades and those in higher grades.

1.5 Research Questions

As mentioned before, this research aimed to investigate bullying behaviour in a rural high school. The following research questions guided this study:

1. What is the prevalence of bullying in rural schools?
2. What types of bullying behaviour exist in these schools?

3. What is the nature of bullying in rural schools; what are the differences between gender and grades in bullying?

1.6 Brief Outline of Chapters

This report on the prevalence of bullying in rural school is divided into four chapters. The second chapter provides a review of literature that is related to bullying in rural schools. It provides an outline of what has been studied, thus indicating gaps in research. The third chapter discusses the methods followed in conducting the research. This includes the main research questions, sampling and sampling method, data collection, data analysis and ethical considerations. The final chapter sets out the findings of the study and provides a discussion of the findings, discusses the limitations of the current study, draws a conclusion and offers recommendations for future research.

CHAPTER 2: REVIEW OF LITERATURE

2.1 Introduction

Bullying has been researched extensively and the generation of this knowledge has allowed stakeholders to gain a better understanding of what bullying is, what bullying behaviour is, and the effects of bullying on both perpetrators and victims. This allows for better tools with which they can put interventions to prevent or stop bullying in schools. Research on rural bullying has also allowed for the nuance of being in a rural school to be better understood with respect to how this impacts bullying.

Research that has been conducted has contributed to knowledge about bullying in rural schools (Dulmus, Sowers & Theriot, 2006; Dulmus, Theriot, Sowers & Blackburn, 2002; Garmy, Vilhjálmsson & Kristjánsdóttir, 2017; Hopkins, Taylor Bowen & Wood, 2013; Stockdale, Hugaduambo, Duys, Larson & Sarvela, 2002). It cannot be ignored, however, that all of it has been carried out in developed nations. While rural places are considered not to be urban, there are different factors that play a role in making South African rural areas different from rural areas in the United States of America. South African rural areas are different in demographics compared to rural areas in the USA. People in South African rural areas live in places that have higher rates of poverty and little development (Gopaul, 2009). This makes the issues that children in South Africa are facing different from those faced by children in developing nations and this in turn makes the nature of bullying in rural schools different. It is thus important that bullying in South African rural schools be explored while considering the different qualities that rural schools in the developed world may not have.

Bullying is an increasing problem in South African schools and while research has been conducted in schools, it has been in urban settings. In addition to this, it seems that violence is an additional problem that South African schools face (Barnes, Brynard & de Wet, 2012; Barnes Brynard & de Wet, 2014; Le Roux & Mokhele, 2011; Mampane & Bouwer, 2011; Prinsloo, 2006, Ward, et al., 2012; Ward & van der Merwe, 2012; Zulu, Urbani, van der Merwe & van der Walt, 2006). Along with violence, research suggests that harassment – namely sexual harassment- is also a problem in South African schools (Harber & Mncube, 2011, Prinsloo, 2006).

2.2 Definition and Prevalence of Bullying

Bullying has been defined in many ways. Furniss (2000) understands bullying as deliberately hurtful behaviour that is repeated overtime with the victims being unable to defend themselves. Olweus (1993, as cited in Dulmus, Theriot, Sowers & Blackburn, 2004, p. 2) on the other hand states, "a student is being bullied or victimised when he or she is exposed, repeatedly and overtime, to negative actions on the part of one or more other students". It is stated that bullying involves power relations between learners and often occurs between people who do not have similar power (Kulig, Hall & Kalischuk, 2008; Rigby, 2004). Farrington (1993) further puts emphasis on power by defining bullying as the oppression of a less powerful person by a more powerful one.

The above definitions put emphasis on negative actions happening repeatedly over an amount of time. These definitions also emphasise power relations in that the bully is often powerful while the victim is powerless. Olweus's definition was used throughout the study. The definition used by Olweus encompasses the characteristics of bullying and provides a richer

understanding of bullying as it uses the term negative actions, which includes different kinds of behaviour. This is the understanding of bullying that will be used throughout this study.

Some areas of research into bullying in rural schools have investigated the prevalence and understanding of bullying. Stockdale, Hangaduambo, Duys, Larson and Sarvela (2002) examined the prevalence and correlates of bullying in seven rural elementary schools from the perspectives of students, parents and teachers in rural Illinois. Seven hundred and thirty-nine students, three hundred and sixty-seven parents and thirty-seven teachers completed the surveys. Findings suggested that children might not be certain of what bullying constitutes. They reported higher rates of being physically and verbally bullied but lower rates of being bullied. In addition, results suggested that students perceived higher rates of bullying than parents and teachers. While this research is helpful in trying to ascertain the nature and prevalence of bullying in rural Illinois, the results may speak to the difficulties that can be encountered when dealing with younger participants who must complete questionnaires. It is worth noting that the children may have been better able to reflect on whether they were bullied had they been older and better able to understand it.

Dulmus, Theriot, Sowers and Blackburn (2004) sought to examine the prevalence of school bullying in Appalachian schools in the United States of America. Using a sample of 192 students from three schools in Grade 3 to Grade 8, they sought to understand whether bullying is a bigger problem in rural schools than it is in urban schools. The participants completed a 56-item Olweus Bully/Victim Questionnaire. Dulmus and colleagues found that school bullying might be a bigger problem for rural schools than it is for urban schools. They however made this comparison with caution. Given the variations in the definition of bullying and the measures of frequency, they stressed caution in making comparisons (Dulmus, et al., 2004).

It is noted that Dulmus and her colleagues used children in lower grades. It is important to consider the cognitive stage in which children from Grade 3 to Grade 5 are, as this impacts on their ability to understand and reflect on bullying and bullying behaviour they may be experiencing or doing. Children in the aforementioned grades are in the concrete operational stage of cognitive development (Cockcroft, 2009). This means that they are concrete in their thinking and have not yet developed the ability to formulate, evaluate and test hypotheses. As they have not yet reached this stage of cognitive functioning, their ability to reflect on past actions and the ability to understand what bullying is may be limited. In addition to this, the small sample size hampers their ability to generalise the findings to the rest of rural America.

To date, the most notable research on bullying in rural schools in South Africa has been conducted by Mlisa, Ward, Flisher and Lombard (2008). Mlisa and her colleagues sought to investigate the prevalence of bullying in rural high schools as well as factors in the school and family domains that are associated with bullying (Mlisa, et al., 2008). They administered Communities that Care Youth Survey questionnaires to 1565 Grade 11 learners from forty-one schools in two districts in the Eastern Cape province. Two questions addressed bullying in the questionnaire and they asked if a respondent had been bullied at school in the past twelve months as well as if they had bullied anyone at school in the past twelve months. Results from the study suggested that there is indeed bullying in rural high schools in the Eastern Cape (Mlisa, et al., 2008). This research seems to have been an introduction into bullying research in rural high schools in South Africa. This research has highlighted gaps in the literature. Mlisa, et al. (2008) used measures that only asked two questions that are related to bullying. Thus, they aimed to investigate if there is indeed bullying in rural schools. Information obtained from this study, thus serves as an introduction into the problem of bullying in rural schools, but does not provide more information, with regards to prevalence and types of bullying behaviour.

Greeff and Grobler (2008) investigated bullying in the intermediate phase. Three hundred and sixty learners between Grade four and Grade six completed the Revised Olweus Bully/Victim Questionnaire. The aim of the study was to report on prevalence of bullying behaviour as experienced by and reported by learners in upper middle-class, single-sex, English medium primary schools in Bloemfontein. Results from this study suggested that there is bullying in these schools and over half of the participants reported being bullied. There were no significant differences in bullying behaviour with regards to grade, gender and ethnicity. This research was useful in exploring the prevalence of bullying; however, it was conducted in a school in an urban environment.

De Wet (2005) investigated the nature and extent of bullying in Free State schools. The aim of the study was to investigate the experiences of a group of Free State learners who were victims, aggressors as well as spectators and listeners of bullying (de Wet, 2005). A sample of 335 participants from secondary and combined schools in the Free State completed the Delaware Bullying Questionnaire. Results suggested that participants of both genders were mostly exposed to direct and second most to indirect verbal harassment (de Wet, 2005). Direct physical aggression seemed to be the third most common form of bullying to which boys were exposed. This study was useful in providing further information about bullying in South Africa; however, from an urban context. While this information contributes to the body of knowledge about bullying in South Africa, it does not provide information about the nature of bullying in rural South African schools, which this research hoped to do.

2.3 Types of Bullying

There are different ways in which individuals are bullied. Some ways are seemingly obvious while others are not. Three types of bullying behaviours have been identified, namely

physical, verbal and psychological behaviours. Physical forms of bullying may include kicking, hitting, throwing stones at the victim, pinching and taking their belongings while verbal forms of bullying include insulting, name calling, mocking, teasing and taunting and psychological forms of bullying include spreading rumours about the victim, dominating the victim and frightening the victim as well as cyberbullying (Flourentzou, 2010; Protogerou & Flisher, 2012; Rigby, 2004; Reason, Boyd & Reason, 2016). Girls tend to use the non-physical forms of bullying which are described as subtler, while boys tend to use physical forms of bullying (Anaya, 2015; Greeff & Grobler, 2008). Verbal forms of bullying are most common amongst both boys and girls (Anaya, 2015; Greeff & Grobler, 2008).

In addition to these types of bullying, Rigby (2007) distinguishes between malign and non-malign bullying. Malign bullying consciously seeks to harm someone while non-malign bullying does not necessarily seek to harm someone. Rigby (2007) continues to identify seven elements that make up malign bullying. These elements are the desire to hurt someone, the desire being expressed into action, someone being hurt and the victim being less powerful than the bully. More elements include the bullying takes place without justification, the repetition of bullying and all of this being conducted with enjoyment on the part of the bully. These all can take place whether the bullying is physical, verbal or psychological.

Hopkins, Taylor, Bowen and Wood (2013) investigated adolescents' understanding of aggression, bullying and violence. Fifty-seven participants took part in focus groups within which they were asked to provide definitions of several words relating to traditional and cyber forms of bullying, aggression and violence. The results of the study indicated that the participants defined the abovementioned terms in relation to the behaviour involved, their perception of the level of control of the perpetrators and the perception of those involved. The results also suggested a negative perception of both the perpetrators and victims of bullying (Hopkins, et al., 2013). This research illuminated some of the perceptions that adolescents

have about bullying. While useful and informative, the sample used in the study, however, was not from a rural setting.

2.4 Bullies and Victims of Bullying

As bullying has become explored, characteristics of both bullies and victims of bullying have been explored. Learners who are bullies are believed to be psychologically stronger than their victims (Aluede, Adeleke, Omoike & Afen-Akpaida, 2008). These learners are frequently popular, confident, and less insecure than other learners (Aluede, et al., 2008; Furniss, 2000). Bullies also tend to be learners of average popularity with friends and rarely suffer from the lack of popularity from which their victims tend to suffer (Isernhagen & Harris, 2004).

There also seems to be slight gender differences in bullying. While both boys and girls can be bullies, it has been found that boys are more likely to be bullies and that boy bullies tend to be physically stronger than their victims (Farrington, 1993; Isernhagen & Harris, 2004; Nguyen, Bradshaw, Townsend & Bass, 2017).

Learners who are victims of bullying tend to be unable to defend themselves, are more anxious and more insecure than other students (Isernhagen & Harris, 2004). Victims of bullying also tend to have low self-esteem and a fear of negative peer evaluation (Ma, 2001). This characteristic is evident in both boys and girls. There are two types of victims of bullying: passive or submissive victims and provocative victims. Passive victims are learners who do not provoke their bullies, do not like violence and are unlikely to report incidences of bullying while provocative victims are more confident, stronger, assertive but are also equally anxious and likely to report bullying (Furniss, 2000; Isernhagen & Harris, 2004).

Dulmus, Sowers and Theroit (2006) also sought to contrast characteristics and experiences of victims and bully-victims in rural schools. Their participants were 192 elementary and middle

school students from a rural Appalachian county in the southeast region of the United States of America. Participants completed the Olweus Bully/Victim Questionnaire and results suggested a high rate of bullying, while approximately 31% of the participants met the criteria to be bully-victims (Dulmus, et al., 2006).

In another study, Farmer and colleagues (2012), sought to examine bully-involvement status and school adjustment in rural students with and without disabilities. They examined this on a sample of 1349 students and teachers from 35 schools across seven states in the United States of America. The participants completed the Interpersonal Competence-Teacher scale, Voekl's scale of perceived worthiness of the school to one's future along with the psychological Sense of School Membership Brief and the Social Adaptation Scale. Findings suggested that school adjustment difficulties were most pronounced in students who were identified as bully-victims. A bully-victim is a person who is both a victim and a perpetrator of bullying (Farmer, et al., 2012). Those who bully others, on the other hand, tended to have more characteristics that are positive. In addition, compared to their non-disabled peers, students who received special education services had higher rates of involvement as victims and bully-victims but not as bullies (Farmer, et al., 2012). While this study is useful in examining adjustment in school children, it is a step further than needed in the context of research on bullying in South African rural schools as there still needs to be further research on the prevalence and nature of bullying – areas that have not been examined extensively yet.

2.5 Gender and Bullying

There appears to be conflicting results with regards to gender and bullying. Some research suggests that boys are more likely to be classified as bullies and bully-victims (Protogerou & Flisher, 2009). This may be related to the idea that boys may be believed to be more

aggressive than girls. It may also be related to the types of bullying behaviour that boys and girls tend to use. In addition, boys are also reported to experience more direct bullying, while girls are known to experience indirect forms of bullying (Boyes, et al., 2014). Other studies strengthen this argument with boys being reported to be more likely experience bullying, in particular physical bullying, while girls are more likely to be involved in psychological forms of bullying (Card, Stucky, Sawalani & Little, 2008; Popovac, Leoschut, 2012; Powell & Jensen, 2010; Wang, Iannotti & Nansel, 2009). Other research, on the other hand, suggests that gender is not a factor in bullying (Bradshaw, Sawyer & O'Brennan, 2009). Therefore, it seems that the results regarding bullying and gender are mixed, without a clear-cut indicator of who is bullied more than whom.

2.6 Effects of Bullying

Numerous effects stem from bullying. These include depression, anxiety and loneliness (Garmy, et al., 2017; Isernhagen & Harris, 2004; Kulig, et al, 2008; Wang, Brittain, McDougall & Vaillancourt, 2015). Victims of bullying also appear to have increased absenteeism, dropout rates as well as avoidance of school or school-related activities (Hutzell & Payne, 2012; Isernhagen & Harris, 2004; Townsend, et al., 2008; Naidoo, Satorius, de Vries & Taylor, 2016). If there is no emotional support and bullying is severe and/or prolonged, victims of bullying are also more likely to have academic problems, lose friends and experience loneliness (Milsom & Gallo, 2006). Lack of emotional support could also repeat this cycle of loneliness and loss of friends. Bullying is also associated with physical and mental health difficulties (Hymel, Rocke-Henderson & Bannano, 2005). Victims of bullying tend to have a lower self-esteem than those who are not bullied, are less assertive, more withdrawn and anxious (Fekkes, et al., 2005).

The media has also shone an increasing light into the effects of bullying. In August 2016, the Herald newspaper reported the existence of a video that had surfaced at a school in Port Elizabeth (Butler, 2016). This video showed two boys who were fighting, with one boy holding the other in a choke-hold and wrestling him to the ground and then finally kicking him in the head (Butler, 2016). This report came after the same newspaper had reported that learners from other schools in June 2016) had also been seen to engage in similar instances, prompting an investigation by the Eastern Cape Department of Education. In an earlier incident (reported in November 2015), the Daily Dispatch reported the suicide of a learner at a high school in East London, following years of reported verbal bullying (Phandle, 2015).

Bullying also has effects for the perpetrators of the bullying. Bullies have been found to be at risk for more severe problems such as delinquency, alcohol, drug abuse and dropping out of school (Milsom & Gallo, 2006). Like victims of bullying, bullies are also at risk for depression and are more likely to treat their children and spouses with greater severity (Isernhagen & Harris, 2004; Milsom & Gallo, 2006). Newspaper articles have also stressed the practical importance of exploring both the victim and perpetrator aspects of bullying. In an article by the Mail and Guardian, reported in 2015, it is stated that both victims and perpetrators are affected by bullying (Dale-Jones, 2015). This is made harder by the advent of cyberbullying. The Northern Natal Courier newspaper (2016) also reported ambiguities regarding knowledge about the nature of bullying. Some misconceptions reported in the article include staying out of bullying when witnessed (by adults or bystanders).

Isernhagen and Harris (2004) compared bullying in rural middle and high schools. Three hundred and ninety-four middle school students and 419 high school students completed a 26-item questionnaire constructed by Harris and Petrie. Their findings suggested that children and more specifically girls in middle school, experience more bullying than those in high school (Isernhagen & Harris, 2004). Furthermore, the results suggested that middle school

students felt less safe than their high school counterparts did. They concluded that it seemed bullying was a bigger problem in rural middle schools than in rural high schools.

Leadbeater and her colleagues (2013) investigated the reasons for bullying in rural contexts. They sought to expose perceived differences in bullying and school safety related to rural contexts. They also aimed to identify evidence-based prevention programs in rural schools. They compared between 19612 and 29946 participants in urban settings and between 2717 and 3060 participants in rural settings in British Columbia, Canada. The participants rated their experiences of school safety and peer victimisation annually from 2004 until 2009. Another set of participants who were between in Grades 7 and 8 participated in the victimisation in adolescence aspect of the study. Results suggested that students in Grades 4 and 5 in rural elementary schools reported more peer victimisation than their urban counterparts do. Qualitative data from the study suggested that community norms about aggression, greater opportunities for bullying on long bus rides and a lack of or difficulties in participating in extra-curricular activities contributed to differences between urban and rural settings (Leadbeater, et al., 2013). While this study shed light on the perceptions of safety that children in rural schools have, the instruments that they used as they used single items to assess safety and peer victimisation limited it. Furthermore, the data did not allow for the analyses of subgroup differences such as gender, which this study aimed to do. Given the abovementioned articles, it is evident that bullying is a problem in rural schools. The newspaper articles mentioned in this section stress the issue of bullying in the South African context as well as rural schools in South Africa.

In the current study, the effects of bullying were not explored. However, the findings from previous research show that bullying has far reaching and long-term effects (Isernhagen & Harris, 2004; Leadbeater, et al., 2013). This further highlights the importance of a study like the present one, which sought to explore the prevalence of bullying in rural schools.

2.7 Consequences of Bullying

Bullying has consequences that may be seen or unseen by others. While one may not consider themselves a bully or even be aware that what they are doing is bullying, there are things that help reinforce bullying. One of these is the enjoyment and status that those who bully derive from it. Furninss (1993) stated in his research that the enjoyment of being a powerful member of the class or school along with the status that being feared may aid in increasing the likelihood of the perpetrators engaging in other aggressive behaviour. This seems to indicate that bullying at school may put perpetrators at risk of other aggressive and perhaps more serious acts, which may put their livelihoods at risk. It is important to note that bullying seems to have some relation to crime (Farrington, 1991; Garmy, et al., 2017). It seems that bullying has a relationship with crime, criminal violence and other types of aggressive and antisocial behaviour.

Perpetrators of bullying also tend to be aggressive in different settings. This makes bullying a cycle that may be never-ending and unless stopped, feeds into itself as there is very little incentive for those who bully others to stop and too little power for those who are bullied to be able to stop the perpetrators. Thus, unless there is adult surveillance and intervention, bullying does not stop and this makes it a systemic issue.

Farmer, Hamm, Leung, Lambert and Gravelle (2011) examined bullying peer group ecologies at the beginning of the middle grade years in schools. They had participants from 36 schools in ten states in the Pacific North western, South eastern, Appalachian and Deep South regions of the United States of America. The sample consisted of 1800 students along with 152 teachers. Participants completed the Teacher Assessment Instrument (TASS) (Farmer, et al., 2011). The results indicated that schools with a transition to middle school

had fewer bullies than schools without a transition to middle school. In addition, their findings suggest that there is a higher risk for involvement in bullying for schools that do not have a transition to middle school.

Penning, Bhagwanjee and Govender (2010) investigated the nature and extent of the relationship between bullying and trauma in male adolescents. They used a sample of 489 participants from a multi-racial school in Kwa-Zulu Natal province. The learners completed the Olweus Bully/Victim Questionnaire and the Trauma Symptom Checklist for Children (Penning, et al., 2010). Results confirmed that bullying is a problem in schools in Kwa-Zulu Natal province. Sixty percent of the learners reported having experienced some form of bullying while 49% reported having bullied others in some way, with 34% reported as being bully-victims (Penning, et al., 2010). Results further suggested that bullying could increase symptoms of trauma experienced by learners. This directly speaks to the long-term and short-term effects of bullying. This study is also a step further than research on bullying in rural schools as it somewhat presupposes the existence of bullying and seeks to examine the relationship between bullying and trauma symptoms.

2.8 Summary of previous research

The research reviewed above strongly indicates the presence of bullying. International research confirms the existence of bullying in rural schools. It has been ascertained that there are few differences in the nature of bullying in rural and urban schools. Literature indicates that there can be three distinct categories in bullying: the bully, the victim and the bully-victim. These are affected by some factors, such as adjustment to a new school and transition from middle school to high school (Farmer, et al., 2011 & Farmer, et al., 2012). Research in South Africa has also confirmed international development by showing the existence of

bullying in South African schools and has further emphasised a strong relationship between bullying and violence (de Wet, 2006; Harber & Mncube, 2011; Prinsloo, 2006).

All of the abovementioned points provide a brief description of what is known about bullying in rural schools. As mentioned previously, much of this research has been conducted in the United States of America, whose rural areas differ from those of South Africa. This means that there is a need for more exploration of bullying in South African rural schools. Furthermore, there is a limited amount of research on school bullying done in rural South Africa. Research conducted by Mlisa and colleagues (2008) has provided the beginning of an exploration of bullying in rural schools, and as such merely established the existence of bullying in rural schools. As only a part of a much larger study, it does not provide a more in-depth understanding into the prevalence and nature of bullying in South Africa. The current study sought to provide a fuller and more in-depth understanding of bullying in South African rural schools.

2.9 South African Legislation on Bullying

There does not seem to be any one piece of legislation that governs bullying in schools in South Africa. This means that bullying itself is not a crime. However, different pieces of legislation address different aspects of bullying. Physical bullying can be seen as assault. Assault is legally defined as any unlawful and intentional act or omission that results in another person's bodily integrity being directly or indirectly impaired or an act or omission (Snyman, 2008). This act or omission must invoke the belief in another person that impairment of their bodily integrity is about to take place (Snyman, 2008). This definition thus encompasses what can be understood as physical bullying. This means that if a child is above ten years of age, they can be charged with and arrested for assault, according to the

Child Justice Act of 2008. The act also stipulates other specifications concerning arresting and charging minors.

A second element of bullying is addressed by legislation in South Africa. Psychological bullying can be considered harassment and this is a crime in South Africa. According to the Protection from Harassment Act of 2011, harassment is direct or indirect engagement in conduct that one knows or ought to know causes harm or may invoke the belief that harm will be caused to another. Included in this is verbal, electronic or any other communication aimed at the complainant whether in conversation or sent to them. Harm means psychological, physiological and economic harm. As the act includes electronic communication, this may mean that this act may address cyber bullying.

While South African legislation does not address bullying, it seems there are elements of it addressed. In addition, individual schools tend to have their own bullying policy that governs bullying in that particular school. It is noted however, that the Bill of Rights in the Constitution of South Africa (1996) stipulates that people have the right to freedom and security. It goes on to stipulate that they have the right not to be tortured in anyway. Depending on what one views as torture and given the long-term effects of bullying, one can view bullying as a form of torture that is carried out by other minors. Furthermore, the Bill of Rights also states that every child has the right to be protected from maltreatment, abuse or degradation. Therefore, it is clear that while bullying is a complex matter when viewed from a legal perspective, it infringes on the rights of those who are bullied.

2.10 Social Cognitive Theory

Bandura's Social Cognitive Theory postulates that people's behaviour is a triadic, dynamic and reciprocal interaction of personal factors, behaviour and the environment (Rosenthal &

Bandura, 1978; Swearer, Wang, Berry & Myers, 2014). This theory was developed by Albert Bandura from Miller and Donald's Social Learning Theory (1941, as cited in Swearer, et al., 2014). The theory maintains the behaviourist view that response consequences mediate behaviour. However, Bandura proposed that there are cognitive processes that regulate behaviour. This is what Bandura referred to as the self-system. The self-system is the set of cognitive processes through which a person perceives, evaluates and regulates their own behaviour so that it is appropriate for their environment and effective in achieving their goals (Friedman & Schustack, 2012). Thus, a person's behaviour is not only determined by external stimuli but is also determined by expectations, anticipated reinforcement, thoughts, plans and goals – the internal processes of the self (Friedman & Schustack, 2012; Rosenthal & Bandura, 1978). Bandura thus asserts that learning can occur without an immediate change in behaviour. This means that it is a person's decision to change their behaviour (Friedman & Schustack, 2012). Bandura consequently places importance on what he calls "human agency" – that is, one's capacity to think about and control their actions.

In his theory, Bandura theorised mechanisms through which people can learn behaviour by watching other people perform that behaviour (Friedman & Schustack, 2012). This, Bandura referred to as observational learning, vicarious learning or modelling. According to Bandura, people do not mindlessly copy the behaviour of others but consciously decide whether to perform that behaviour (Friedman & Schustack, 2012). As such, there is a difference between the acquisition of behaviour and the later overt performance of that behaviour. Observational learning involves four active cognitive processes, which are attention, retention, motor reproduction and motivation. Attention processes are important as one need to attend to a model and the relevant aspects of behaviour in order to learn (Bandura, 1969; Swearer, et al., 2014). This is important in looking at how children can be involved in bullying. Retention processes involve the acquisition and encoding of behaviour in an individual so they retain it

for extended periods of time (Bandura, 1969; Friedman & Schustack, 2012). Motor reproduction processes are necessary for accessing encoded behaviours to guide overt performances (Bandura, 1969). Finally, motivational processes are important for understanding why they engage in behaviours (Bandura, 1969). Motivational processes can affect learning, retention and performance. Each of these four processes is also influenced by other factors such as the developmental level of the individual and characteristics of the model or the modelled behaviour. Social Cognitive Theory is useful in studying bullying behaviour because it may aid in understanding how society contributes to the bullying behaviour of learners. There has recently been an offshoot of Bandura's theory of Moral Disengagement with regards to bullying. Moral Disengagement occurs when one allows themselves to behave in ways that are in contradiction with their basic moral principles (Bauman & Yoon, 2014; Bandura, Barbaranelli, Caprara & Pastorelli, 1996). The implication of this development is that, according to Bandura it allows people to commit actions that they may otherwise not allow themselves to do without self-sanctions such as guilt (Bandura, et al., 1996; Gini, Pozzoli & Bussey; 2014). In South African schools, it is assumed that all learners have some amount of knowledge about accepted basic principles in society as they are all taught Life Orientation or Life Skills, whose learning outcomes include making informed decision about their lives, understanding their rights and responsibilities and using skills to respond effectively to challenges that they experience.

Social Cognitive Theory thus provides insight into some of the processes that lead to bullying incidents. In this view, bullying occurs as a result of mediating factors that can include parental support, the existence of anti-bullying policies in schools and the higher rank that comes with being in a position of perceived power. In addition, observational learning also has a role to play in understanding bullying. As mentioned before, South Africa is faced with the problem of violent schools. From a Social Learning perspective, it appears that learners

may be learning that physically aggressive behaviour produces desired consequences and thus engaging in it.

CHAPTER 3: METHODS

3.1 Context of the Study

The current study took place in the province of the Eastern Cape. The Eastern Cape is a province of South Africa that was formed in 1994 out of the former homelands of Ciskei and Transkei. The current research took in high schools in a rural area. Access to rural schools for researchers is not easy as most rural areas in South Africa are concentrated in the Eastern Cape, Kwa-Zulu Natal and Limpopo. This makes it more difficult for one to be able to conduct research if they are from institutions that are not in those provinces. This research can thus provide insights into the types of bullying behaviour, if any, in which learners in rural schools are involved.

Rural schools are located in the villages that made up the former homelands during Apartheid. These would have been schools that were under the administration of the Department of Education and Training (Mather & Paterson, 1995). Out of this population, two schools in the Eastern Cape were chosen in the King William's Town District. These schools were chosen because the English proficiency of the learners is better than that of the surrounding schools. High school level learners were also chosen for that reason, as well as their ability to reflect on their responses better than younger learners in primary school.

3.2 Research Design

This research is located in the positivist paradigm and as such it adopted a quantitative approach. A positivist approach enables other researchers to duplicate other research in order to find patterns and rules (Gavin, 2008). The research design that was used is a survey

research design. A cross-sectional survey research design was used for the study. Survey research describes the current state of a certain phenomenon (Stangor, 2011). Specifically, the research sought to investigate the existence of bullying behaviour in a rural school as well as differences in bullying behaviour between boys and girls.

3.3 Sample and Sampling

The population for this research was high school learners in a rural area. The sampling method was non-probability, convenience sampling. Non-probability sampling is a technique where those who make up the population do not all have an equal chance of being selected to participate in research (Haslam & McGarty, 2003; Stangor, 2011). Convenience sampling occurs when a researcher samples the available sample (Stangor, 2011). The learners of the particular high schools were chosen due to their proficiency in English, which enabled them to understand the questionnaire they completed. This sample was appropriate because the learners – who were between Grade 8 and Grade 12- were old enough to be able to reflect on the behaviour of them and those around them. The participants are made up of English second and third language speakers, and as such their proficiency in English was important as they were to complete a questionnaire in English. The two schools were thus chosen in part due to the learners' proficiency in English. The only inclusion criterion was that a prospective participant be a learner at a rural school.

Table 1 shows the participants listed according to the demographic characteristics of gender, grade and home language. In the current study, 209 high school learners participated in the research. The majority of the participants were females (n=131), while there were 77 males. The ages of the participants ranged from 13 to 23 years, with a mean age of 17 years. African learners comprised of 98,1% of the sample while Coloured learners comprised 1%.

The majority of participants were in Grade 12 while the least were in Grade 8. On the whole, most of the participants were in the Further Education and Training (FET) Phase and are considered seniors in high school.

Most of the participants spoke isiXhosa as their home language as illustrated by Table 1. This is expected because the majority of Eastern Cape residents speak isiXhosa. A decided minority, with regards to language was Setswana, with only one participant. This is also understandable because speakers of the Sotho-Tswana languages are mainly in the north of the Eastern Cape.

Table 1: Demographic Characteristics of the Participants

Demographic Characteristic	Frequency	Percentage
Gender		
Male	77	36,8
Female	131	62,7
Grade		
8	23	11,0
9	46	22,0
10	16	7,7
11	34	16,3
12	90	43,1
Home Language		
Afrikaans	2	1,0
English	3	1,4
Setswana	1	0,5
IsiXhosa	202	97,1

3.4 Instruments

The instrument that was used in the research is the Olweus Bully/Victim Questionnaire (Olweus, 1996). The Olweus Bully/Victim Questionnaire is a 38-item, Likert-type scale that

measures bullying related behaviours and experiences (Smith & Gross, 2006). Included in this questionnaire are questions about bullying involvement, attitudes about bullying and school climate (Lee & Cornell, 2009).

The benefit of the Olweus Bully/Victim Questionnaire is that it covers a varied amount of questions that are all related to bullying behaviour. The Olweus Bully/Victim Questionnaire is also a widely used instrument which will make the results of this study comparable to other studies (Livesey, 2007). Internal consistency reliability of the Olweus Bully/Victim Questionnaire has been found to range between 0.80 and 0.90 in a sample of 5000 students (Basharpoor, Malavi, Barahmand & Mousavi, 2013). Cronbach's Alpha for the victimisation scale was found to be 0.81 while the alpha for the bully scale was found to be 0.78 (Basharpoor, et al., 2013). As relationships on the individual items were tested for, there was no reliability information on the current study. The Revised Olweus Bully/Victim Questionnare has been used in a South African study (Greeff & Grobler, 2008). There was very little adaptation that needed to be adapted in order to use terms that South African learners use, such as register class instead of homeroom.

3.5 Procedures

Permission was sought and granted first from the research and ethics committee of the University of the Witwatersrand. Thereafter, a letter was sent to the district coordinator of the school and thereafter from the principal. The researcher addressed the learners in all classes introducing the research and herself. Thereafter, all the learners were given participation information sheets and consent letters for their parents to sign and these were to be returned on the next day. The learners were given questionnaires and assent letters upon returning the participation information sheets and consent forms the next day. Due to an extremely low

response rate from the learners, out of the six hundred questionnaires handed out to the learners, 121 were returned; permission to conduct research at a second school was sought. In the second school, a representative of the researcher addressed the learners and consent letters were given to the learners. Upon receipt of the letters, learners were given questionnaires to fill in.

3.6 Data Analysis

Following data gathering, the data was cleaned and thereafter, descriptive statistics were conducted to determine demographic information of the sample. In addition, descriptive statistics were used to identify the most common types of bullying within the participants. The questions that were investigated, as mentioned before, were what bullying behaviour is and whether it differs according to gender and age. The hypothesis test that was to be run is an independent samples t-test, which compared the bullying behaviour between boys and girls.

Analyses of appropriate parametric assumptions were run. This was to determine if the use of parametric hypothesis tests would result in accurate results for the hypotheses of the research questions posed. Parametric assumptions were not met and the Chi-Square Test of Independence was employed for each question in the questionnaire.

3.7 Ethical Considerations

Ethical clearance was applied from the research and ethics committee of the University of the Witwatersrand and granted to conduct research (protocol number: MEDP/15/004 IH). Thereafter, a letter was sent to the district co-ordinator of the schools to seek permission to

conduct research there (Appendix A). Following that, an access letters were sent to the principals of the two schools (Appendix B). Participation Information Sheets were given to the learners so they could give them to their parents (Appendix C). The learners also received assent letters asking for their participation (Appendix D).

The learners (with the exception of a few) were all minors and thus were given letters for their parents to sign for informed consent. In addition, they were given letters of assent that they could sign if they wished to participate in the study. It was explained to the learners that they did not have to participate and their responses would be kept confidential and that they could withdraw at anytime, and if they had already filled in the questionnaire and did not to participate anymore, they could simply not hand in the questionnaire. The learners were asked not to write their names and the questionnaires were coded. In addition, the information that the learners provided was anonymous as they were not required to provide any identifying information, except grade, age and race. Given that the learners were of similar ages, grade and races, none of this information can be used to identify any specific learner.

As the topic the learners were dealing with could elicit distressing feelings, the learners were told that they could visit the psycho-social unit of SS Gida Hospital, where they could receive help. All the learners who participated in this study are not home language speakers of English. Taking that into consideration, the researcher (or the person who helped her) availed themselves in all the classes to answer any questions that the learners had. This was after they had gone through the questions in the questionnaire with the learners.

CHAPTER 4: RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the results obtained from the analyses of the data. This includes an investigation of the prevalence of bullying in rural schools, establishing which type of bullying behaviour exist in rural schools, if any, as well as the nature of bullying in these schools. The preliminary analyses present descriptive analyses of all key variables in the study. Following the descriptive statistics, the main analyses are presented. The results will be presented according to the research questions. As each question in the questionnaire will be examined individually, the questions will be found in different places.

The present study was guided by the following research questions, namely,

1. What is the prevalence of bullying in rural schools?
2. What types of bullying behaviour exist in these schools?
3. What is the nature of bullying in these schools; What are the differences between gender and grades in bullying?

4.2 Prevalence of bullying in rural schools

The results reflected that of the 209 participants, only 61 participants (30%) reported experiencing some kind of bullying. Seventy percent (n=142) of the participants reported that they had not been bullied. As shown on Table 2, more males reported experiencing bullying than their female counterparts. An even lower number of participants (n=36) reported bullying other learners, while 82,3% (n=167) of the participants stated that they had engaged

in an act of bullying behaviour. Once again, more males reported bullying other learners than females.

Table 2: Cross Tabulation of Bullying Incidents

	Participants who have been bullied or experienced bullying Frequency (%)	Participants who have not been bullied or taken part in bullying Frequency (%)	Total Frequency (%)
How often have you been bullied at school in the past couple of months?	61 (30,0)	142 (70,0)	203 (100,0)
How often have you taken part in bullying another student(s) at school in the past couple of months?	36 (17,7)	167 (82,3)	203 (100,0)

The results discussed above are in keeping with previous research. Of the participants in the study, 30% reported that they had experienced bullying at school. The same trend was observed in previous findings (Dulmus, et al., 2004; Greeff & Grobler, 2008; Stockdale, et al., 2002). However, upon considering the results of those who reported experiencing specific types of bullying behaviour, this number rises. This, once again, confirms results observed in other studies (Dulmus, et al., 2004; Stockdale, et al., 2002). Also in keeping with previous studies is that the participants were less willing to admitting to perpetrating bullying. It is possible that these results speak to what learners understand as bullying. They have a more relaxed definition of the umbrella term of bullying, but are much more aware of the different behaviours that constitute bullying, when asked about them individually. A second possibility that is also supported by previous research is the participant's perception of being bullied and

labelling oneself a bully. It has been found that a bully and victim relationship is perceived negatively by other learners (Hopkins, et al., 2013). As such it may be that the participants do not want to be associated with either being a victim or a bully and will thus be less likely to report any involvement. Hopkins and her colleagues (2013) go on to explain that bullies are perceived negatively while victims are perceived as different, which also holds negative connotations. According to Bandura's Social Cognitive Theory, the negative outcomes that may come with being a bully or a victim of bullying may deter one from reporting it.

One of the studies that were reviewed, however, found different results. Greeff and Grobler (2008) found that more than half (56,4%) of their participants had experienced bullying. The reasons for this difference, as explained by Greeff and Grobler (2008) themselves may be that their participants were from single-sex schools, which may have increased the reported bullying.

Furthermore, that 36% of the participants in the Senior Phase reported being bullied reveals that younger learners experience more bullying in rural schools. Similarly, these findings confirm previous the results that were shown in previous studies in other rural contexts (Nansel, et al., 2001; Dulmus, et al., 2006). It is possible that there is a relationship between bullying and perceived power. There are a few factors that influence this. Learners in lower grades are often new to the high school environment, which may be a risk factor. Furthermore, as they are at the beginning of adolescence, their bodies are starting to develop and thus, these learners may be smaller than learners in the FET Phase. Therefore, the perceived power imbalances between learners in higher grades and those in lower grades speaks to the definition of bullying, which makes an imbalance of power an inherent part of bullying.

South Africa, as mentioned above, is a country that has high levels of violence in schools and society at large (Barnes, Brynard & de Wet, 2012; Barnes, Brynard & de Wet, 2014; Le Rouse & Mokhele, 2011; Mampane & Bouwer, 2011; Ward, et al., 2012; Ward & van der Merwe, 2012; Zulu, et al., 2006). As such, environments to which learners are exposed suggest that intimidation and violence may be a successful way to get one's desired results. Thus, when considered from a social cognitive perspective, cognitive processes are at work and suggest that learners see the benefits of bullying and use it to receive what they want. The results also indicate moral disengagement may be at work. As learners are less likely to admit to bullying other learners, they will not experience any negative self-sanctioning feelings such as guilt.

4.2.1 Classes and gender of those who have bullied others

The participants were also asked about the classes of those who had bullied them as well as their gender. As Table 3 illustrates, the results indicate that of those who have been bullied, 19,7% (n=40) reported being bullied by learners in the same grade as them, while 18,2% are bullied by learners in different grades (n=37). With regards to the gender of those who bully other learners, the table below shows that the majority of the participants who reported being bullied stated that they had been bullied by female learners. Seventeen percent (n=36) of the participants reported being bullied by female learners, while 15% (n=31) stated that they had been bullied by male learners. A smaller percentage of the participants (7,8%; n=16) reported that they had been bullied by both males and female. Furthermore, it was noted that only 9% (n=7) male participants reported being bullied by female learners, while 22,1% (n=29) of the female participants reported being bullied by female leaners. Twenty-six percent (n=20) of the male participants stated that they had been bullied by male learners and 8% (n=11) of the female participants indicated that they had been bullied by male learners. Only 3% (n=3) of the male participants reported that they had been bullied by both males and females and 10%

(n=13) of the female participants reported the same. Therefore, this indicates that male learners bully other male learners, while female learners also bully female learners, with a smaller percentage of cross-gender bullying.

As Table 3 illustrates, a total of 62% (n=126) of participants reported that they had not been bullied. A total of 19% (n=40) of the participants reported that they had been bullied by people in who are in the same class and the same grade as them and 18% (n=32) of the participants reported that they had been bullied by people in a different lower or higher grade than them. This indicates that, at these two schools, learners who are bullied seem to be bullied by learners who are in the same grade as them. Regarding the gender of those who bullied others, Table 3 shows that a total of 58% (n=123) of the participants indicated that they had not been bullied. Nine percent (n=7) of the male participants and twenty-two percent (n=29) of the female participants reported that they had been bullied by one or several girls, while twenty-six percent (n=20) of male participants and eight percent (n=11) of female participants indicated that they had been bullied by one or several boys. Three percent (n=3) of the male participants indicated that they had been bullied by both girls and boys and ten percent (n=13) of the female participants indicated that they had been bullied by both girls and boys.

Table 3: Classes and gender of those who bullied others

	In my grade and class Frequency (%)	In a different grade Frequency (%)	Have not been bullied Frequency (%)	Total Frequency (%)
In which classes is the learner or learners who bullied you?	40 (19,7)	37 (18,2)	126 (62)	203 (100)
	By boys Frequency (%)	**By girls Frequency (%)**	**By both girls and boys Frequency (%)**	**Total Frequency (%)**
Have you been bullied by girls or boys?	31 (15)	36 (17,5)	16 (7,8)	206 (100)

Some research indicates that learners are more likely to be bullied by other learners in the same class as them (Fekkes, et al., 2005; Greed & Grobler, 2008). The results presented above confirm this research. This is an indication of social hierarchies that exist not only between different grades, but also within grades. The results observed in the current study are also present in de Wet's (2005) research, demonstrating that male learners are experiencing more bullying.

4.3 Type of bullying behaviour present in rural schools

The questions below address the issue of the types of bullying behaviour. Each type of bullying behaviour will be presented according to those who reported experiencing it, as well as those who reported engaging in it.

Overall, the most prominent type of bullying is having false rumours spread or making others dislike them, with 44,9% (n=93) reporting that they had experienced it. Table 4 illustrates that this type of bullying is the highest in both male and female participants. A second type of bullying that is reported widely by the participants is being called mean names, being made fun of or teased in a hurtful way. More females (n=48) reported experiencing this type of bullying than their male (n=24) counterparts. This indicates that spreading of false rumours as well as calling others with mean names are the most prominent types of bullying among the participants, with more females reporting experiencing being made fun of, but more males stating that that they had experienced false rumours being spread about them.

Table 4: Types of bullying behaviour

Type of Bullying	Females Frequency (%)	Males Frequency (%)	Total Frequency (%)
Being called mean names, made fun of or teased in a hurtful way	48 (37,2)	24 (31,2)	72 (35,0)
Excluded from groups on purpose or ignored	38 (29,7)	23 (30,7)	61 (30,0)
Hit, kicked, pushed around or shoved in doors	22 (17,1)	15 (19,5)	37 (18,0)
Spread false rumours about me or tried to make others dislike me	56 (43,1)	37 (48,1)	93 (44,3)
Money or other things taken away from me or damaged	28 (21,5)	18 (23,4)	46 (22,2)
Forced or threatened to do things I didn't want to do	29 (22,3)	14 (18,4)	43 (20,9)
Comments related to race	33 (25,8)	22 (29,3)	55 (27,1)
Cyberbullied	28 (21,5)	17 (19,5)	45 (22,1)

Table 4 demonstrates those who reported engaging in bullying behaviour. The results presented show that participants are less likely to report engaging in bullying, with the exception of cyberbullying. More male participants reported bullying others than their female counterparts in all types of bullying behaviour. Unlike with the reports of those who experienced bullying, the highest type of bullying behaviour reported by the participants is cyberbullying, with 72% (n=83) of the participants reporting that they had engaged in cyberbullying using their cell phones. The second most prominent type of bullying behaviour is calling others with mean names or teasing them in hurtful ways, with 24% (n=51) of the participants reporting that they had engaged in it. Therefore, the results indicate that the most prominent form of bullying, as reported by those who bully others is cyberbullying, followed by psychological bullying (calling others with mean names, spreading rumours about others

and excluding others). Physical bullying (hitting or kicking others, stealing from others and forcing or threatening others to do things they do not wish to do) is the least reported form of bullying.

All three forms of bullying (physical, verbal and psychological bullying) were present, as per the results of the study. The three most common types of bullying were having false rumours spread about them, being called mean names and being excluded by others, with each of them having incidence of over 30%. Interestingly, these types of bullying behaviour are psychological forms of bullying. It was noted in the literature review that it was mainly females, who use this type of bullying while males engage in more physical forms of bullying. This was not observed in the current study. Both male and female participants reported experiencing types of psychological bullying. This suggests changing norms in the ways that boys and girls understand themselves.

The results observed in the current study somewhat confirm results from previous research (de Wet, 2005, Dulmus, et al., 2004; Stockdale, et al., 2004). As with the studies mentioned above, calling other learners with mean names or being made fun of has a relatively high amount. While de Wet (2005) observed that this type of bullying behaviour was experienced by males more so than females, the results of the current study say otherwise. In the current study, the comparatively more female participants reported being called mean names (37%), than the male participants (31%). This is in keeping with previous knowledge as discussed in the literature review (Anaya, 2015).

One of the highest reported types of bullying, namely exclusion of others is a prominent type of bullying in rural schools. This is the second of the psychological forms of bullying, further indicating the pronounced nature of psychological bullying. Unlike in other studies, there is no significant relationship between gender and exclusion (Isernhagen, et al., 2004). As with

spreading of false rumours, this suggests that psychological bullying is more complex in the 21st century than has been accounted for. It has been understood that male learners were more likely to engage in physical forms of bullying, while female learners would engage in psychological forms of bullying. It appears that this is not the case in rural schools. This proves to be an interesting development as rural areas tend to be considered more traditional and as such, follows that people in rural contexts would adopt more traditional and fixed gender roles. However, with increasing urbanisation and the constant movement between rural and urban contexts, one notes that rural areas are also influenced by urban areas as well as developments in technology.

According to the results of this study, having false rumours or lies spread was the most common type of bullying. Previous research contrasts with this (Dulmus, et al., 2004; Isernhagen, et al., 2004). Furthermore, the results of the current study indicate that the male participants reported experiencing false rumours or lies being told about them more so than the female participants. This is also contrary to previous knowledge about rumours as a type of bullying. As spreading of rumours or lies is a psychological form of bullying, it was expected that this type of bullying would be more prevalent in the female participants than the male participants. This suggests a shift in the relations between learners at school, which may indicate a broader change in what the learners understand to be masculine or feminine behaviour.

Previous findings have shown that theft of belongings is one of the more prominent types of bullying. In the present study, this was not the case. A physical form of bullying, theft of belongings has been one of the least reported types of bullying. This may be attributed to enforcement of school rules in rural areas. Furthermore, it may be that the learners did not feel that they needed to steal from each other.

There were 27% of the participants who reported experiencing bullying related to race. This type of bullying is a verbal form of bullying and was somewhat unexpected in this context. These results are in contrast with the findings of Stockdale and her colleagues (2002). Those in rural areas in South Africa tend to be rather homogenous. In the present study, the population consisted entirely of non-white, mostly Xhosa-speaking people, who have similar cultural norms, values and socio-economic circumstances. Given such demographic similarities, it would follow that they would not engage in comments that are related to race, when relating to each other. As the results show however, this is not the case. This may be related to some ideas that Black children have regarding their identities and their beliefs about black inferiority and white superiority. According to the Social Cognitive Theory, observational learning contributes to one's behaviour. As such, it is possible that the learners in these schools have various understandings of being black, which they translate into bullying each other (Friedman & Schustack, 2012). However, it is cautioned that this was one question that did not explore bullying and race, as such, the results are interpreted with caution.

An overwhelming number of participants (71%) reported having perpetrated bullying using their cell-phones. This confirms previous research on cyberbullying and the existence of cyberbullying in rural schools. It further strengthens the notion that rural areas in South Africa do not exist in a vacuum and are as influenced by the changing global society as urban areas. In addition, the influence that urbanisation has had on rural schools. The role of society in the formation of an individual is evident in the cyberbullying that is taking place in these schools. In cyberbullying, it can be argued that observational learning and its four cognitive processes (attention, retention, motor reproduction and motivation). However, this needs further exploration.

All three of the theoretical perspectives are applicable to all the types of bullying behaviour noted in the current study. From social cognitive perspective, these behaviours are related to the consequences of engaging in bullying. When one employs any of these behaviours to bully another and they succeed at it, they are in a relative position of power. When one goes through the four active cognitive processes of observational learning (attention, retention, motor reproduction and motivation), they produce a certain behaviour (any of the abovementioned types of bullying), which in turn has the desired consequences of ensuring that one is feared and has power over others. A social dominance understanding includes the need for dominance over others. As one engages in bullying behaviour and notes the consequences of it, they see then that it has the result of putting them at the top of the hierarchy at school, in terms of dominance. As one does this, they may be in contravention of some basic principles as members of society. However, through moral disengagement, resulting in a lack of self-sanctioning, they are able to carry them out.

4.4 The Nature of Bullying

In order to investigate the nature of bullying, Chi-Square analyses were run on each question in the questionnaire. The analyses examined the relationship between gender and bullying (as looked at by individual questions in the questionnaire) as well as the association between grade and bullying (also looked at by individual questions in the questionnaire).

4.4.1 The relationship between gender and bullying

A series of Chi-square tests were run on each question individually, in order to determine if there is a relationship between gender and bullying. The results indicated that for the most part, there is not association between gender and bullying, but a relationship was determined on one question, the link between gender and taking others' belongings.

As shown on Table 5, Chi-square tests were performed on each question, individually. The results shown below are those of the questions on types of bullying behaviour as reported by the victims of bullying, all of which showed no statistically significant relationship between gender and the specific type of bullying behaviour. The table below shows all the p-values of the questions, indicating no statistically significant relationship between gender and the individual types of bullying behaviour.

Table 5: Type of bullying behaviour experienced by victims

Type of bullying behaviour – Victims	P-value
Have you been bullied at school in the past couple of months?	0.876
I was called mean names, was made fun of, or teased in a hurtful way.	0.451
Other pupils left me out of things on purpose, excluded me from their group of friends, or completely ignored me.	0.644
I was hit, kicked, pushed, shoved around, or locked indoors.	0.709
Other learners told lies or spread false rumours about me and tried to make others dislike me.	0.563
I had money or other things taken away from me or damaged.	0.863
I was threatened or forced to do things I did not want to do.	0.595
I was bullied with mean names or comments about my race or colour.	0.625

A series of chi-square analyses were also run on bullying behaviour as reported by those who perpetrate bullying. As with the victims, on most of the questions, there was no statistically significant relationship between bullying and the specific types of bullying behaviour. There were only two questions where a relationship was found. These were on gender and using

threats or force on others as well as gender and taking belongings of others. Table 6 also details the relevant p-values, which indicate that there is no relationship between engaging in bullying behaviour and gender.

Table 6: Type of bullying behaviour reported by those who bully others

Type of bullying behaviour – Perpetrators	P-value
Have you taken part in bullying another?	0.349
student(s) at school in the past couple of months?	
I kept him or her out of things on purpose,	0.093
excluded him or her from my group of friends or	
completely ignored him or her.	
I hit, kicked, pushed and shoved him or	0.103
her around or locked him or her indoors.	
I spread false rumours about him or her and	0.101
tried to make others dislike him or her.	

These results are in contradiction with previous research regarding bullying behaviour and gender. According to previous research, males tend to engage in more physical forms of bullying, while females tend to use psychological forms of bullying (Anaya, 2015; Greeff & Grobler, 2008). As males bully each other and females also bully each other, it would be expected then that males would experience physical forms of bullying and females would experience psychological forms of bullying. However, the results indicate that there are no significant differences between types of bullying behaviour experienced by males and females, they are simply being bullied. Results observed from Hopkins, et al., (2013) are also in agreement with the observed findings of the current study.

4.4.1.1 Gender and stealing belongings of others

A Chi-square test for independence was run for statistical analysis. The test statistic $\chi^2_{(2,201)}$ is 0.156. As shown on Table 7, the continuity correction is 3.941 with *df* 1 and a level of

significance at 0,047. The Likelihood Ratio is 4,719 with *df* 1 and significance at 0.030. A Chi-square test was performed and the probability associated with the chi-square value of 0.42 is 0.030, which indicates a relationship between gender and stealing belongings of others. Therefore, as seen on Table 7, there is a significant but small association between gender and taking others' belongings, with males reporting more theft of belongings than females.

Table 7: The relationship between gender and taking belongings of others

	Value	*Df*	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	4.882[a]	1	.027		
Continuity Correction[b]	3.941	1	.047		
Likelihood Ratio	4.719	1	.030		
Fisher's Exact Test				.042	.025
Linear-by-Linear Association	4.857	1	.028		
N of Valid Cases	201				

a. 0 cells (.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 9.07.

b. Computed only for a 2x2 table

As noted before, previous research indicates that there is a relationship between gender and bullying and the same trend was observed in the current study, when it comes to stealing the belongings of others (Anaya, 2015; Greeff & Grobler, 2008). Males reported more theft of belongings, while a comparatively low (n=4) number of females reported it. A reason that has been posited for this has been a need for boys to establish social dominance, and this can be done by showing strength (Greeff & Grobler, 2008).

4.4.2 **The relationship between grade and bullying**

Along with the link between bullying and gender, a relationship between bullying and grade was also checked. The grades were divided into the Senior Phase (Grade 8 and 9) and the FET Phase (Grade 10, 11 and 12). There was a link between bullying and several variables, including types of bullying behaviour as reported by victims as well as perpetrators of bullying.

4.4.2.1 **Grade and types of bullying behaviour - victims**

Table 8 shows the results of the Chi-square tests (with a Fisher's Exact Test) that were performed in order to determine if there is a link between grade and physical bullying (including hitting, kicking, shoving and pushing). The test statistic $\chi^2_{(2,207)}$ is 0.232. The Fisher's Exact Test value is 0.002, with *df* 1 with a level of significance of 0.30. The continuity correction is 9.877 with *df* at 1 and significance at 0.002. The Likelihood ratio is 10.547, with *df* at 1 and a level of significance at 0.01. As seen on Table 10, the results of the Chi-square test indicate a relationship between grade and physical bullying, with a Phi coefficient of 0.232, thus demonstrating a small effect. This means that, while there is a statistically significant relationship between grade and physical bullying, it is a weak relationship, with participants in the Senior Phase more likely to report experiencing physical bullying.

Table 8: The relationship between grade and physical bullying

	Value	*Df*	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	11.123[a]	1	.001		
Continuity Correction[b]	9.877	1	.002		
Likelihood Ratio	10.547	1	.001		
Fisher's Exact Test				.002	.001
Linear-by-Linear Association	11.070	1	.001		
N of Valid Cases	207				

a. 0 cells (.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 12.33.

b. Computed only for a 2x2 table

The link between grade and victims experiencing the spreading of rumours or lies about them was test, using Chi-square analysis (with a Fisher's Exact Test). Table 9 details the test statistic, which is $\chi^2_{(2,208)}$ is 0.147. The p-value is 0.039, with *df* that is 1. The continuity correction is 3.878, with *df* 1 and a level of significance at 0.049. The Phi coefficient is 0.15, which is smaller than 0.30 and thus indicates a link between grade and spreading rumours and lies about others. Furthermore, these results demonstrate a small effect, with participants in the Senior Phase more likely to report having rumours or lies spread about them.

Table 9: Relationship between grade and having rumours or lies spread about them

	Value	*Df*	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	4.484[a]	1	.034		
Continuity Correction[b]	3.878	1	.049		
Likelihood Ratio	4.475	1	.034		
Fisher's Exact Test				.039	.025
Linear-by-Linear Association	4.462	1	.035		
N of Valid Cases	208				

a. 0 cells (.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 30.85.

b. Computed only for a 2x2 table.

As shown on Table 10, a Chi-square test (with a Fisher's Exact Test) was run to establish if there is a relationship between being teased with comments about race or skin colour and grade. The test statistic $\chi^2_{(2,204)}$ is 0.273 and the p-value is 0.000, with *df* 1 and a level of significance at 0.000. The continuity correction is 13.968, with *df* 1 and a level of significance at 0.000. The Likelihood Ratio is 14.703, with *df* 1 and a level of significance at 1. The Phi coefficient is 0.27, which is smaller than 0.30, indicating a small effect. Therefore, the results presented on Table 10 indicate that there is indeed a relationship between being teased with comments about race or skin colour and grade. Once again, the results show that participants in the Senior Phase are more likely to experience this.

Table 10: Relationship between grade and being teased with comments related to race

	Value	*Df*	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	15.247[a]	1	.000		
Continuity Correction[b]	13,968	1	.000		
Likelihood Ratio	14.703	1	.000		
Fisher's Exact Test				.000	.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	15.172	1	.000		
N of Valid Cases	204				

a. 0 cells (.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 18.33.

b. Computed only for a 2x2 table.

A Pearson's Chi-square test was run in order to determine if there is a link between the gender of those who bully others. A cross tabulation of the results, as shown on Table 11, demonstrates that a total of 26.1% of the senior phase participants reported being bullied by females. Twenty-one percent of the senior phase participants reported being bullied by males, while 7.2% of the senior phase participants reported being bullied by both males and females. In each category where one was bullied, the senior phase participants reported higher incidents, except where participants have been bullied by both males and females, which is higher for the participants in the FET phase.

Table 11: Cross tabulation of genders of those who reported bullying others

		Have been bullied by girls Frequency (%)	Have been bullied by boys Frequency (%)	Have been bullied by boys and girls Frequency (%)	Total Frequency (%)
Senior Phase	Count	18 (26.1)	15 (21.7)	5 (7.2)	69 (100.0)
FET Phase	Count	18 (13.0)	16 (11.6)	11 (8.0)	138 (100.0)
Total	Count	36 (17.4)	31 (15.0)	16 (7.7)	207 (100.0)

A Pearson's Chi-square (as seen on Table 14) test was conducted in order to determine any link between grade and the gender of those who bully others. The Pearson's chi-square value is 11.568 and the *df* 3 is 1, showing a significance at 0.009. The Likelihood ratio is 11.334, with *df* 3 and a level of significance at 0.010. The test statistic $\chi^2_{(2,204)}$ is 0.236. The p-value is 0.009, indicating a relationship between grade and the gender of those who bully others, with a Cramer's value of 0.24, showing a small effect.

Table 12: Relationship between gender and those who reported bullying others

	Value	*Df*	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	11.568[a]	3	.009
Likelihood Ratio	11.334	3	.010
Linear-by-Linear Association	4.577	1	.032
N of Valid Cases	207		

a. 0 cells (.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 5.33.

The results shown above indicate that the younger learners are more likely to be bullied. From a Social Dominance perspective, this may be a way for the more senior learners of the school to establish more powerful and dominant positions. However, as per the results that indicate that learners in the same grade bully each other rather than across grades. Due to this, it is more likely that learners in the Senior Phase are trying to establish dominance over each other. In addition, this may be influenced by the perceived awareness, or lack thereof, of teachers and parents. In such cases, learners would understand that they get status of being feared by their peers without the any sanctions from teachers or parents.

4.4.3 Grade and types of bullying behaviour - perpetrators

Pearson's Chi-square test was performed in order to check for a link between grade and calling other learners mean names or teasing them in hurtful ways. The test statistic $\chi^2_{(2,206)}$ is 0.171, with a p-value of 0.017. As shown on Table 13, the continuity correction is 5.235 with *df* 1 and a level of significance at 0.022. The Likelihood ratio is 5.848, with *df* 1 and significance at 0.16. Therefore, there is a relationship between grade and calling other learners mean names or teasing them in hurtful ways. The Phi coefficient is 0.17, which indicates a small effect and thus a weak relationship between the two variables.

Table 13: The link between grade and teasing others with mean names

	Value	*Df*	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	6.050[a]	1	.014		
Continuity Correction[b]	5.235	1	.022		
Likelihood Ratio	5.848	1	.016		
Fisher's Exact Test				.017	.012
Linear-by-Linear Association	6.021	1	.014		
N of Valid Cases	206				

a. 0 cells (.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 16.83.

b. Computed only for a 2x2 table.

Table 14 shows the results of the Chi-square test (with a Fisher's Exact Test) that was run in order to determine if there is a link between grade and hitting, kicking pushing and shoving others (physical bullying). The test statistic $\chi^2_{(2,203)}$ is 0.193, with a p-value of 0.008. The continuity correction, as seen on Table 14, is 6.328 with *df* 1 and a level of significance at 0.012. The Likelihood ratio is 7.101 with *df* 1 and significance at 0.008. The Phi coefficient is 0.19, which is smaller than 0.30, indicating a small effect. Thus, there is a relationship between grade and some physical types of bullying, with the participants in the senior phase reporting more incidents of taking part in these actions.

Table 14: Link between grade and physical bullying

	Value	*df*	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	7.593[a]	1	.006		
Continuity Correction[b]	6.328	1	.012		
Likelihood Ratio	7.101	1	.008		
Fisher's Exact Test				.008	.007
Linear-by-Linear Association	7.556	1	.006		
N of Valid Cases	203				

a. 0 cells (.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 7.26.

b. Computed only for a 2x2 table.

The Chi-square test (with a Fisher's Exact Test) that was performed on grade and spreading false rumours about others indicated a relationship between the two variables, as shown on Table 15. The test statistic $\chi^2_{(2,206)}$ is 0.161 with a p-value of 0.032. The continuity correction is 4.406 with *df* 1 with a level of significance at 0.036. The Likelihood ratio is 5.066 with *df* 1 and significance at 0.024. The Phi coefficient is 0.19, which is smaller than 0.19, thus indicating a small effect. Therefore, the relationship between grade and spreading false rumours about others is not strong, with participants in the senior phase, once again, more likely to report incidents of bullying in this manner.

Table 15: The relationship between grade and spreading rumours about others

	Value	*Df*	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	5.346[a]	1	.021		
Continuity Correction[b]	4.406	1	.036		
Likelihood Ratio	5.066	1	.024		
Fisher's Exact Test				.032	.020
Linear-by-Linear Association	5.320	1	.021		
N of Valid Cases	206				

a. 0 cells (.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 9.57.

b. Computed only for a 2x2 table.

A Chi-square test (with a Fisher's Exact test) was performed in order to determine if there is a relationship between grade and taking money or belongings from others. There results, as demonstrated on Table 16, indicate that there is a relationship between the two variables. The test statistic $\chi^2_{(2,202)}$ is 0.155, with a p-value of 0.038. The continuity correction is 3.891 with *df* 1 and a level of significance at 0.049. The Likelihood ratio is 4.602 with *df* 1 and significance at 0.032. The phi coefficient is 0.16, indicating a small effect. Therefore, while there is a relationship between grade and taking money or belongings from others, it is a weak relationship.

Table 16: Link between grade and taking belongings of others

	Value	*df*	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	4.848[a]	1	.028		
Continuity Correction[b]	3.891	1	.049		
Likelihood Ratio	4.602	1	.032		
Fisher's Exact Test				.038	.026
Linear-by-Linear Association	4.824	1	.028		
N of Valid Cases	202				

a. 0 cells (.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 8.20.

b. Computed only for a 2x2 table.

The results indicate that, for the most part, Senior Phase learners are the perpetrators of bullying, in addition to being the victims. These results, in part, confirm previous research. In their study, Isernhagen and Harris (2004) stated that in their sample, middle school students were experiencing more bullying than high school students, meaning that the younger students had higher bullying rates than the high school students. A similar trend was observed in the current study. Although all of the learners in this study are in high school, the younger learners (Senior Phase) are experiencing more bullying than the older learners (FET Phase). While bullying is taking part in the FET phase, the results indicate that there is no significant link between any type of bullying behaviour and the FET phase. This brings about questions regarding the possible reasons for this trend. As some of the learners in the Senior Phase are new to the schools and are coming from different environments, there is an opportunity for one to create ways in which they want to be seen by others. By bullying other learners, one

can ensure that they are in a dominant position in school and thus not at the bottom of the social hierarchy.

4.5 Implications of Findings

Although there a growing body of research on bullying in South Africa, to date, much of it has taken place in the urban context. This has yielded the current knowledge about the existence of bullying in South African schools, as well as its relationship with violence. Thus, it is unsurprising that the current study has found that there is indeed bullying in rural schools. The rates of those who reported experiencing some form of bullying behaviour warrants attention from stakeholders, as they indicate that learners are studying under conditions that may not be conducive to academic and social success. This is even more concerning when it is considered that bullying is taking place between learners in the same grades, suggesting that learners may not have spaces where they are safe from victimisation.

With the knowledge that South Africa has high rates of violence in school and wider society, it was expected that physical forms of bullying would be most prominent in schools. The present study, however, indicates that psychological bullying is the bigger problem. This type of bullying is more intimate than physical bullying, and may be less visible to teachers and parents, which may mean that learners will go through distressing events at school, with little help from interested parties. The three most common types were psychological forms of bullying, which show interested stakeholders that it is not only physical forms of bullying that need to be given attention but all forms of bullying, and increasingly non-physical forms of bullying. In addition to psychological bullying, cyberbullying has a high rate. Cyberbullying is also a more covert form of bullying, which can even be less visible to adults than psychological bullying. Thus, with the increase of the more covert forms of bullying,

schools, parents and the state need to catch up in order to ensure that measures are put in place to curb this already concerning phenomenon of bullying.

4.6 Strengths and Limitations of the Study

This research is good in that it adds to the limited knowledge of bullying in South African rural schools. In obtaining more information about bullying in rural schools, stakeholders include the Department of Basic Education, provincial departments of education, schools and parents, will be better informed about bullying and thus be better equipped to deal with it. In addition, the present study provided some insight on the nature of bullying in rural schools. It is noted that the results of the study should be looked at with caution. The sample was a small group of high school students from one school district in the Eastern Cape. As such, it may not be fully representative of the rural population in South Africa and thus one may need to generalise with caution. Furthermore, it should be noted that the questionnaire administered to the participants was self-report, and as such may have had halo effect influences.

4.7 Directions for Future Research

While this research has yielded information about bullying in rural school, there is still more that needs to be done. More studies should be done in other rural contexts in South Africa. Such a study may help validate the findings of this research, which – in some aspects – contradicted international research.

Considering the results of this study, it may be useful to research the different types of bullying in rural schools, as well as the prevalence of bullying in schools that are in provinces other than the Eastern Cape. As much of the results indicate that there is no relationship

between gender and bullying behaviour, it may be useful to investigate changes that are taking place that may have influenced bullying behaviour. Furthermore, it may be also be useful to investigate the role of cyberbullying in rural schools.

A future study could also investigate the role of gender identity and masculinities and femininities in bullying. Such research could shed some light as to why the results of the present study were contrary to international research with regards to the somewhat gendered nature of bullying behaviour.

4.8 Conclusion

Considering the limitations mentioned above, the following conclusions can be drawn. This study aimed to investigate bullying in rural schools. Furthermore, it aimed to ascertain if there are differences in bullying behaviour between boys and girls. Bullying does indeed exist in South African rural schools. The most prominent types of bullying behaviour are spreading lies and false rumour about others; calling others mean names and calling others mean names related to race. All three types of bullying behaviour are psychological forms, indicating a shift in the relations between high school learners. A significant relationship between gender and stealing the belongings of others was found, with males more likely to engage in the act of theft. No other significant associations were found between gender and bullying behaviour, which contrasts with findings from international research.

4.9 Key points

- Bullying is a problematic phenomenon in South Africa. The introduction chapter showed that bullying is concerning in all areas of the country and globally. As such it is important that bullying be investigated in a rural context.

- While there is plenty of research on bullying in South Africa, the knowledge of the dynamics of bullying in rural schools is very limited, with only one notable study that somewhat addressed bullying in rural schools.
- This research thus aimed to explore bullying in rural schools, to investigate its prevalence, the types of bullying behaviour that is prominent in these schools, as well as the nature of bullying in rural schools.
- Studies on bullying conducted in South Africa has also shown that bullying is concerning in South African schools. Furthermore, newspaper reports in various areas of the country have shown this.
- The literature review has also shown that South African legislation is slow in addressing bullying. Literature on bullying in rural schools in South Africa is very limited, reducing knowledge about bullying in schools in rural South Africa.
- The results indicate that there is bullying in rural schools and that learners may not all understand that certain types of behaviour constitute bullying. In addition, the findings show that, for the most part, males are bullying other males and females are bullying other females.
- Bullying occurs within grades, with perpetrators of bullying in the same classes and grades as their victims.
- The most prominent form of bullying is psychological bullying, with spreading of rumours about a victim being the most prominent type of bullying behaviour. Other forms of bullying, while present were not as prominent.
- The results indicate that there is no significant association between gender and bullying, with the exception of gender and taking belongings of others. However, the

findings indicated that there are some significant links between grades (separated into the senior phase and the FET phase) and bullying behaviour, with several types of bullying behaviour having significant relationships with grade.

- The findings of the current study confirm previous research in many ways. However, there are some departures. Gender is shown not to be associated with types of bullying behaviour in most of the questions. Some reasons for this include the changing gender norms of society.

- Bullying is more reported in the senior phase, with these learners more likely to be bullied as well as perpetrate bullying. This is because they are new learners, as compared to those in the FET phase and have the opportunity to re-establish themselves in dominant positions. In addition, they are modelling behaviour seen in society, which indicates that one rises to prominence through bullying.

- The implications of this are that schools are less safe for learners and bullying may affect their academic outcomes. In addition, the most prominent forms of bullying are less visible, making it more difficulty for teacher and parents to detect bullying.

- While the current research has provided information on bullying in rural schools, more is needed in order to further understand school bullying in rural South Africa. Topics for future research include cyberbullying in rural schools and the role that gender identity plays in bullying behaviour.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Access Letter (District coordinator)

Psychology

School of Human & Community Development

University of the Witwatersrand

Private Bag 3, Wits, 2050

Tel: 011 717 4503 Fax: 011 717 4559

Access Letter

Dear Sir

My name is Melinda Tonono and I am currently completing my Masters degree in Educational Psychology at the University of the Witwatersrand. As part of my studies I am required to complete a research project.

I am thus conducting research on bullying behaviour in a rural school. The study aims to identify bullying behaviour present. Furthermore, if there is bullying behaviour, the study aims to compare differences in bullying behaviour reported by boys and girls.

I am requesting permission for learners at St. Matthews High School to participate in this study. Should they participate, their participation will be voluntary and will entail completing a questionnaire. Their responses will remain confidential and no identifying information will be requested from them.

When the study is complete, feedback for the group will be provided if they require it.

Your permission will be greatly appreciated. If you have any questions or queries, you may contact me on +27 78 787 0084 or melindatonono@yahoo.com or my supervisor at +27 11 717 8331 or Joseph.Seabi@wits.ac.za.

Kind Regards

Melinda Tonono

Psychology

School of Human & Community Development

University of the Witwatersrand

Private Bag 3, Wits, 2050

Tel: 011 717 4503 Fax: 011 717 4559

I, _____, district coordinator of _____ (name of district) under which St. Matthews High School falls, consent for Melinda Tonono to conduct research at this school. I am aware that this research will not interrupt class time or extra-curricular activities, unless otherwise agreed to by the principal and the relevant teacher(s) involved. I understand that learners' participation in this study is completely voluntary and that all details will be kept confidential at all times.

Signed: _____

Date: _____

Appendix B: Access letter (School principal)

Psychology

School of Human & Community Development

University of the Witwatersrand

Private Bag 3, Wits, 2050

Tel: 011 717 4503 Fax: 011 717 4559

Access Letter

Dear Sir

My name is Melinda Tonono and I am currently completing my Master's degree in Educational Psychology at the University of the Witwatersrand. As part of my studies I am required to complete a research project.

I am thus conducting research on bullying behaviour in a rural school. The study aims to identify bullying behaviour present. Furthermore, if there is bullying behaviour, the study aims to compare differences in bullying behaviour reported by boys and girls.

I am requesting permission for learners at _____ to participate in this study. Should they participate, their participation will be voluntary and will entail completing a questionnaire. I would appreciate it if your school assisted me in the distribution and collection of the parental consent forms if you grant me permission to my conduct research at your school. Their responses will remain confidential and no identifying information will be requested from them.

When the study is complete, feedback for the group will be provided if they require it.

Your permission will be greatly appreciated. If you have any questions or queries, you may contact me on +27 78 787 0084 or melindatonono@yahoo.com or my supervisor, Prof Joseph Seabi at +27 11 717 8331 or Joseph.Seabi@wits.ac.za.

Kind Regards

Melinda Tonono

Psychology

School of Human & Community Development

University of the Witwatersrand

Private Bag 3, Wits, 2050

Tel: 011 717 4503 Fax: 011 717 4559

I, _____, principal of _____ (name of school), consent for Melinda Tonono to conduct research at this school. I am aware that this research will not interrupt class time or extra-curricular activities, unless otherwise agreed to by the principal and the relevant teacher(s) involved. I understand that learners' participation in this study is completely voluntary and that all details will be kept confidential at all times.

Signed: _____

Date: _____

Appendix C: Participation information sheet

Psychology

School of Human & Community Development

University of the Witwatersrand

Private Bag 3, Wits, 2050

Tel: 011 717 4503 Fax: 011 717 4559

Participant Information Sheet (English)

Dear Parents/Guardians

My name is Melinda Tonono and I am currently completing my Masters in Educational Psychology at the University of the Witwatersrand. As part of my studies, I am required to complete a research project. The reason for this letter is to ask for your permission for your child/ward to participate in my research project.

My study will investigate bullying behaviour in a rural school. The study aims to identify bullying behaviour present. Furthermore, if there is bullying behaviour, the study aims to compare differences in bullying behaviour reported by boys and girls.

I am inviting your child/ward to participate in my study. Your child/ward's participation is voluntary and their marks will not be affected in anyway by participation in this study. The school is aware of this study and has given permission for the study to be conducted.

Data will remain strictly confidential. No child will be identified in any written or spoken report and no identifying information will be requested from your child/ward, thus preserving your child's/ward's anonymity.

Your child's participation will be greatly appreciated and if choose for them to participate, please fill in the consent form on the next page, detach and send it with your child to school. If you have any questions or queries, you may contact me on +27 78 787 0084 or melindatonono@yahoo.com or my supervisor, Prof. Joseph Seabi at +27 11 717 8331 or Joseph.Seabi@wits.ac.za

Kind Regards

Melinda Tonono

Participation Information Sheet (IsiXhosa)

Psychology

School of Human & Community Development

University of the Witwatersrand

Private Bag 3, Wits, 2050

Tel: 011 717 4503 Fax: 011 717 4559

Participation Information Sheet (Xhosa)

Bazali

Igama lam ndinguMelinda Tonono. Ndenza izifundo zam zeMasters in Educational Psychology kwiDyunivesithi yaseWitwatersrand. Nje ngenxalenye yezifundo zam, ndinyanzelekile ukuba ndiqhube uphando. Lencwadi ndiyibhalela ukucela imvume yokuba umntwana wakho abeyinxalenye yophando lwam.

Oluphando luzakuphonononga ukuxhatshazwa kwabantwana ngoontanga-ndini ezikolweni zasezilalini. Injongo yoluphando kukukhangela ukuba ingaba lukhona na uxhaphozo ngoontanga-ndini ezikolweni? Ukuba lukhona, ingaba ukhona na umahluko phakathi kwendlela amakhwenkwe namantombazana axhatshazwa ngalo?

Ndimema umntwana wakho ukuba abe yinxalenye yoluphando lwam. Ukuba yinxalenye komntwana wakho akunyanzelekanga kwaye akuzokuba na galelo kwiziphumo zomntwana wakho zasesikolweni. Isikolo siyazi malunga noluphando kwaye sinqwalile ukuba uphando lungaqhubekeka.

Iinnckukacha zoluphando ziyakuba semfihlelweni. Akukho mntwana uyakuvezwa koluphando.

Intsebenziswano yomntwana wakho ndingayivuyela kakhulu. Ukuba uyayigunyazisa le ntsebenziswano ndicela ugcwalise iphepha lemvume eli landela eliphepha. Malunga nayo nayiphi na imibuzo qhakamshelana nam ku0787870084 or melindatonono@yahoo.com okanye umphathi wam onguNjinga-Lwazi Joseph Seabi ku0117178331

Ozithobileyo

Melinda Tonono

Appendix D: Consent form

Psychology

School of Human & Community Development

University of the Witwatersrand

Private Bag 3, Wits, 2050

Tel: 011 717 4503 Fax: 011 717 4559

Consent Form (English)

I, _____ consent to my child/ward participating in Melinda Tonono's study on bullying behaviour in a rural school. I understand that:

- Participation in this study is voluntary.
- I may withdraw my participation and responses from the study at anytime.
- All information provided will remain confidential.
- None of my identifiable information will be included in the research report.
- I am aware that the results of the study will be reported in the form of a research report for the partial completion of the degree, Masters in Educational Psychology.
- The research may also be presented at a local/international conference and published in a journal and/or book chapter.

Signed: _____

Date: _____

Consent Form (IsiXhosa)

Psychology

School of Human & Community Development

University of the Witwatersrand

Private Bag 3, Wits, 2050

Tel: 011 717 4503 Fax: 011 717 4559

Consent Form (Xhosa)

Mna _____ ndiyavuma ukuba umntwana wam angayinxalenye yophando lukaMelinda Tonono olumalunga nokuxhatshazwa kwabantwana ngoontanga-ndini ezikolweni zasezilalini. Ndiyayiqonda ukuba:

- Ukuba yinxalenye yoluphando ayinyanzelelkanga.
- Ndingarhoxa koluphando nangalo naliphi na ixesha.
- Akukho nanye yeenckukacha zomntwana wam ezizakubengezwa.
- Zonke iinckukakcha zakuhlala ziyimfihlo.
- Ndiyayazi ukuba iziphumo zoluphando zizakuchazwa nje ngenxalenye yezidingo zokugqiba iMasters degree in Educational Psychology.
- Oluphando lungachazwa kwiinkomfa zakwelilizwe nezangaphesheya kwaye zibhalwe kwimiqulu yezophando neencwadi.

Signed: _____

Mhla: _____

Appendix E: Assent letter

Psychology

School of Human & Community Development

University of the Witwatersrand

Private Bag 3, Wits, 2050

Tel: 011 717 4503 Fax: 011 717 4559

Assent letter

Dear Learner

My name is Melinda Tonono and I am currently completing my Master's degree in Educational Psychology at the University of the Witwatersrand. I am conducting research on bullying behaviour. Part of this research requests your responses on the attached questionnaire. Your response is valuable as it will contribute to more knowledge about bullying in rural schools. I would therefore like to invite you to participate in this research.

Your responses will remain confidential and anonymity is guaranteed. At no time will I know who you are, since the questionnaire requests no identifying information. Completion and return of the questionnaire will be considered to indicate permission for me to use your responses for my research project. There are no negative consequences of participating in this study and, should you choose not to participate, this will not be held against you in any way. As I am only interested in group trends, and have no way of linking any individual's identity to a particular questionnaire, I will not be able to give you individual feedback. You may request general feedback from me on the results of this study after 3 months. If you have any further questions or require feedback on the research, please feel free to contact me or my supervisor. My contact details are melindatonono@yahoo.com and +27 78 787 0084 and my supervisor's contact details are joseph.seabi@wits.ac.za and +27 11 717 8331.

Thank you for considering taking part in the research project. Please detach and keep this sheet.

Kind regards

Melinda Tonono