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Master of Arts in Organisational Psychology

University of the Witwatersrand

Distinguishing Between Workplace Bullying Behaviours, Workplace Incivility Behaviours and Reasonable Management Action: An Exploratory Study

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A research report submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Masters of Arts by Coursework and Research Report in the field of Organisational Psychology in the Faculty of Humanities, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg on 30 April 2021.

Plagiarism Declaration

I, Julia Samantha Ziman, declare that this research project is my own, unaided work. It has not been submitted before for any other degree or for examination at this or any other university.

Signed: Julia Ziman

Date: 30 April 2021

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Abstract

Many studies have investigated the negative effects of Workplace Bullying (WPB) and Workplace Incivility (WPI) for both individual and organisational outcomes. WPB and WPI have been shown to lead to a wide range of deleterious outcomes for both the individual and the organisation. In spite of this, organisations struggle to define WPB and WPI and differentiate these concepts from Reasonable Management Action (RMA). This creates a problem for both subordinates and managers. Subordinates often struggle to attain relief from acts of WPB and WPI and managers are often accused of bullying or being uncivil to their staff when they are trying to reasonably manage them. The absence of clear and objective criteria distinguishing these behaviours enhances the difficulties that Human Resource Practitioners (HRPs) and managers have in adequately dealing with claims of WPB and WPI. This research set out to address this gap in the literature and distinguish these three sets of behaviours; WPB, WPI and RMA. The main aim of this study was to explore the perceptions held by managers and HRPs as to how they differentiate WPB, WPI and RMA. An exhaustive literature review was conducted which enabled the researcher created a check-list of WPB, WPI and RMA behaviours based on existing scales, literature, government websites and consultation with subject matter experts. This led to a checklist of 115 behaviours. The survey also asked participants open-ended questions as to how they define and deal with WPB, WPI and RMA in order to gather more depth and insight into their perceptions of these behaviours. A final sample of 145 participants completed the survey. The checklist was quantitatively analysed and presented using percentages in order to itemise what behaviours the majority of participants consider WPB, WPI and RMA. The open-ended responses were qualitatively analysed using Conventional Content Analysis (CCA) and from this it emerged that five broad themes influence how participants perceive WPB, WPI and RMA; 1) Context may be paramount in order to ascertain whether the behaviour is workplace bullying, workplace incivility or reasonable management action 2) Poor management or leadership skills that may be "unreasonable management actions" 3) Lack of a workplace bullying policy and clear grievance procedures 4) Defining behaviour in terms of the outcomes it causes 5) Bullying and incivility from the bottom up: The impossibility of effectively managing.

Keywords: managers, subordinates, workplace bullying, workplace incivility, reasonable management action

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CHAPTER 1: RESEARCH AIMS AND INTRODUCTION

Research Aims

The broad aim of this study was to explore the perceptions held by managers and Human Resource Practitioners (HRPs) with regards to what behaviours constitute Workplace Bullying (WPB) and Workplace Incivility (WPI) behaviours and what behaviours constitute reasonable management action (RMA). The purpose of exploring these perceptions was to gain a broad and general understanding of how the three sets of behaviours can be distinguished from one another and ultimately aimed to set the stage for the development of WPB policies in South African organisations.

To date, there are very few organisations that have a clear-cut WPB policy. While policies on discrimination and sexual harassment are far more evident within organisations, very few have tackled the issue of WPB and set out policies and procedures to deal with such behaviours. A major problem that organisations grapple with is how to distinguish WPB from RMAs and how to distinguish WPB from WPI. Inability to create such a policy and set out rules and regulations regarding such negative behaviours as WPB and WPI often leads to targets or victims being unable to protect themselves from perpetrators while, alternatively, it could also lead to managers being unable to protect themselves from accusations of bullying and incivility when they are trying to hold their subordinates accountable for doing their jobs. Consequently, based on this problem, the present study sought to create a checklist, of the various behaviours and through use of a survey methodology whereby managers and HRPs where canvassed to try to ascertain their perceptions of WPB, WPI and RMA. This was done with a view to determine what behaviours they would regard and define as WPB, WPI or RMA, and with a view towards the researcher establishing some guidelines with regard to distinguishing these sets of behaviours. In terms of future implications, once these guidelines are established this could assist HR practitioners in creating a WPB policy to enable the organisation’s management of such behaviours.

Context of the Research Study

The researcher approached an organisation within Gauteng that had indicated that it was receiving a large number of complaints regarding WPB and WPI. The organisation is a large bureaucratic organisation in Gauteng. It is hierarchical in its reporting structure and there are a large number of layers in the hierarchy from the lowest level through to various multiple layers of junior, middle, senior, and executive management. It is a highly competitive organisation that operates within a sector that is at the cutting edge of knowledge development and dissemination.

Based on the problems experienced by this organisation, the overall dearth of organisations in South Africa with established WPB policies and the very limited literature regarding WPB policies within organisations and the efficacy thereof; the researcher set out to explore the perceptions of managers and HRPs at this organisation with regards to what behaviours constitute WPB, WPI and RMA. The aim in this regard was to establish guidelines on policy based on their perceptions of these behaviours

The crucial need for such policies and procedures is well established in the literature, which indicates the extremely deleterious implications of WPB and WPI for individual and organisational wellbeing. These implications along with their various antecedent conditions will be further elaborated upon in the Introduction and Rationale as part of Chapter 1 and in the Literature Review to follow (Chapter 2).

Introduction

Research has revealed that WPB and WPI has severe implications for individuals and organisations (Anjum et al., 2019; Bowling & Beehr, 2006; Hoel & Cooper, 2001).

WPB is a multi-causal phenomenon, which is, in essence, wilful and deliberate behaviour, that has as its objective, a desire to hurt (Samnani & Singh, 2012). It involves an abuse of power and dominance over a person who ends up in an inferior position (Einarsen et al., 2003). To label negative social acts as bullying, the behaviours have to occur repeatedly and regularly (e.g. weekly) and over a period of time (Einarsen et al., 2011). Although, it has been argued that in some cases a single, very severe, once-off act can be regarded as WPB

(Einarsen et al., 2003). Compared to WPI, it is likely WPB would have a more severe negative impact on individual and organisational outcomes, given its harsher, systematic negative acts.

The victims of WPB can suffer a number of consequences that may be physical and psychological. Physical consequences include for example stomach disorders, sleep disorders, musculoskeletal pains and headaches (Kivimäki et al., 2003; Nielsen et al., 2020), while psychological consequences are depression and anxiety (Kivimäki et al., 2003; Nielsen & Einarsen 2012). Psychological consequences can also manifest in behavioural strains (e.g., aggressive behaviour, crying) (Bowling & Beehr, 2006; Mikkelsen et al., 2020). WPB has even been linked to severe forms of physical illness such as the development of cardiac ill health (Nielsen et al., 2012) and severe psychological problems such as post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and suicide over the long term (Bond et al., 2010; Mattheisen & Einarsen, 2004). In terms of organisational consequences victims of bullying have been shown to engage in high levels of voluntary absenteeism, their morale and productivity is lowered and overall, such individuals may disengage from their work, engaging in presenteeism at best (Bernstein & Trimm, 2016; Berthelsen et al., 2011; Dehue et al., 2012; Gardner & Johnson, 2011; Yildrim, 2009).

WPI is a milder and subtler form of WPB (Cortina et al., 2001). Although both are classified as deviant work behaviours, WPI is described as being of lower intensity and frequency when compared to WPB (Andersson & Pearson, 1999). Additionally, for behaviour to be characterised as incivility, the intention to harm, as perceived through the eyes of the instigator, the target, and the observer, is perceived to be ambiguous. The instigator may intend to harm the target, or may be ignorant as to the consequences of his/her actions. Furthermore, unlike WPB, power imbalance is not a prerequisite (Hershcovis, 2010). However, as with WPB, research has also linked WPI to mental health problems, psychological distress, and increased somatic symptoms (Leiter et al., 2011). In addition, in terms of organisational outcomes, negative relationships have also been found between supervisor incivility and work engagement, organisational commitment and job satisfaction (Cortina et al., 2001; Smidt et al., 2016).

WPB and WPI have been shown to be “two connected, yet separate, constructs” (Smidt et al., 2016, p. 9) in that WPI can signal the beginning of a negative organisational cycle (Andersson & Pearson, 1999). Research has revealed that WPB and WPI have an extremely

high incidence in organisations with percentages of individuals reporting such experiences ranging from 28% to 78% (Namie, 2000). While incidence figures do vary it is noted that approximately 10% of individuals are bullied or emotionally abused in the workplace at any given point in time (Keashly & Neuman, 2005; Lutgen-Sandvik et al., 2005) and 53% of individuals have been bullied at some point in their working lives (Rayner, 1997).Context or sector is also implicated, for example, in the healthcare environment, 80% of staff experience WPB at some point in their working lives (Hutchinson et al., 2006).

In spite of this, there is a "paucity of specific organisational policies and guidelines for dealing with bullying, and ambiguous definitions and criteria for behaviour to be considered bullying" (Fox & Cowan, 2014, p. 116). The same paucity of policy is evident for WPI. In order for HRPs and line managers to concretely address and deal with bullying and incivility behaviours in the workplace, they need to have clear guidelines of what constitutes bullying and incivility, and what does not. In this regard HRPs and line managers need to be able to distinguish between and segregate what is WPB and WPI behaviours and what is *RMA*. This segregation is crucial as often employees may complain of being bullied when in fact they are being held accountable for the work they are supposed to be doing and similarly managers may disregard employees' complaints of bullying as they feel employees are simply not doing their jobs properly and are complaining unnecessarily (Jenkins et al., 2012). Based on the above discussion, the aim of this research was to question and gain information in order to facilitate a more specific and clear understanding about what behaviours constitute WPB and WPI and what behaviours constitute RMAs.

Rationale

As discussed above, WPB and WPI have been shown to lead to extremely negative individual and organisational outcomes (Barlett & Barlett, 2011). Faas (2015) found that WPB is a 1.5 trillion-dollar drain on the North American economy. While research into WPB and WPI has primarily focused on its antecedents and consequences (Barlett & Barlett, 2011; Einarsen, 1999; Lutgen-Sandvik & McDermott, 2008; Salin, 2003; Skogstad et al., 2007; Zapf, 1999) and has focused in great depth on defining WPB, with no literature focusing on distinguishing bullying, and incivility, from RMA. Consequently, the difficulties that HRPs have in dealing with WPB in organisations tend to be compounded by this lack of distinction. Amidst these difficulties line managers may feel they are being unnecessarily accused of bullying while targets of WPB often feel that their complaints are not taken seriously, with

some targets even reporting that going to HRPs exacerbates their bullying problems (Salin, 2020; Workplace Bullying Institute, 2020).

To the researcher's knowledge there has been virtually no research seeking to explore this gap, that is, how to distinguish WPB and WPI behaviours from RMA.

As an unexplored area of research, this research aimed to address this gap in the literature by separating the often-intertwined behaviours of WPB, WPI and RMA. This distinction is crucial for two reasons: Firstly, employee complaints of WPB and WPI will be more likely to be dealt with and taken seriously if all constituents (employees, managers and HRP's) are aware of what behaviours constitute WPB and WPI and what behaviours constitute RMAs. Objective criteria will help HRPs identify and deal with WPB and WPI. Thus, clear distinctions could possibly enhance the facilitation of management of WPB and WPI issues within the workplace. Secondly, if all constituents are aware of the distinctions between such behaviours, it may prevent employees from making unsubstantiated allegations that they are being bullied at work, when in fact managers are trying to hold them accountable and are engaging in RMAs.

To conclude: Based on the above introduction and rationale, in the following chapter, the literature on the aforementioned concepts will be elaborated upon, followed by a formulation of the research questions of the present study.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

This literature review aims to provide the reader with the most recent and relevant information defining WPB, WPI and RMA. This literature review argues for the importance of a WPB policy in organisations that takes account of both management and employee interests. In setting the stage for this policy, it is firstly important to separate the often-intertwined concepts of WPB, WPI and RMA. This literature review will begin by defining WPB and WPI, exploring their antecedents and consequences and looking at how they are dealt with in organisations. An exploration of RMA as outlined in the literature will then be described, with specific emphasis explaining the role of managers, and investigating how to separate what employees may perceive as WPB and what managers may perceive as RMA. This will be followed by a discussion of how the COVID-19 pandemic, which has forced many organisations to work from home (WFH), has added additional dimensions that require distinguishing between WPB, WPI and RMA.

Defining Workplace Bullying

Despite all the definitional literature, it has been argued that WPB is a phenomenon that is difficult to define, measure, pin down, and consequently, address (Anjum et al., 2019; Fevre et al., 2010; Ritzman, 2016). According to the European Agency for Safety and Health at Work (2019), there is no single definition of WPB that has been agreed upon internationally. Various definitions have been defined by legislators and researchers. For example, researchers such as Leymann (1990) in one of the earliest studies of WPB described WPB as psychological terror that involves verbally aggressive behaviour, directed in a systematic way towards an individual. WPB is a particular form of aggression where direct or indirect acts escalate to a point where an employee is stigmatised and becomes the target of systematic negative social acts (Leymann, 1990). Anjum et al. (2019) notes that WPB behaviours include verbal and non-verbal behaviours such as personal attacks, constant criticism, isolation, and work interference (Anjum et al., 2019). With regard to legislation, Australian legislation states that WPB occurs when an individual or group of individuals repeatedly behaves unreasonably towards a worker or group of workers at work and the behaviour creates a risk to health and safety (Fair Work Act, 2009). Thus varied definitions are proposed. However, one definition that has tended to be widely accepted within the field of research is that offered by Einarsen et al. (2003, 2011). According to Einarsen et al. (2011), bullying at work means, “harassing, offending, socially

excluding someone or negatively affecting someone's work tasks. In order for the label bullying to be applied to a particular activity, interaction or process it has to occur repeatedly and regularly (e.g. weekly) and over a period of time (e.g. about six months). Bullying is an escalating process in the course of which the person confronted ends up in an inferior position and becomes the target of systematic negative social acts. A conflict cannot be called bullying if the incident is an isolated event or if two parties of approximately equal 'strength' are in conflict" (p. 15).

Further, it is also widely agreed that three features distinguish WPB from other negative organisational acts; such as harassment, WPI, and other forms of emotional abuse. These three features are; persistence, power disparity, and potential to harm the target (Einarsen & Skogstad, 1996; Einarsen et al., 2003; Leymann, 1990).

In terms of the persistence requirement, (as mentioned) WPB is said to occur if a target is exposed to negative acts at least once a week for a period of six months. The routine, regular, and on-going nature of these attacks is what makes bullying so psychologically damaging (Ritzman, 2016). It wears an individual down and depletes their coping mechanisms (Bernstein & Trimm, 2016). Namie (2003) asserts that targets of WPB are often forced to endure their pain for as long as two years on average.

In terms of power disparity it is noted that a power differential exists between the bully and the target in which the bully either has organisational power in terms of the organisations hierarchical system or the bully has other forms of power in terms of access to and control of resources (Einarsen et al., 2003; Salin, 2003). Yamada (2000) defines WPB as being driven by a perpetrators' need to exercise control and dominance over another individual. This need for control often undermines business goals and productivity in the process (Salin, 2003; Yamada, 2000). A study by Einarsen et al. (2003) revealed that 80% of WPB cases involve a superior bullying a subordinate. The power differentials between employees has the effect that the powerless employee is systematically subject to degrading and disrespectful treatment in which they feel a continuous loss of control over the situation and an inability to defend themselves (Einarsen et al., 2005). Though power can also manifest in the form of group bullying where a single individual is targeted by a group of colleagues (Taylor & Kluemper, 2012) or in some instances targeted by a group of subordinates (Branch, 2006; McKay, 2012) (though the latter scenario is the least likely).

The last requirement is the potential to harm the target or cause adverse effects. As mentioned, WPB can take the form of verbal and/or non-verbal behaviour and the behaviour can manifest through the perpetrators direct actions (namely insulting/offensive remarks) or through an omission (namely withholding information, ignoring or excluding the target). The behaviours can be overt such as being humiliated or degraded, or they can be covert, such as excessive monitoring of work. The negative and aggressive acts characteristic of WPB can be directed towards the person or their work. The crucial factor here is the degree of harm or adverse effect experienced by the target. The adverse effects that the target experiences can range from lowered self-esteem and disengagement from work to the target being completely unable to do their work due to psychological impairment (Hoel et al., 2020). Some research such as Carbo and Hughes (2010) have gone so far as to describe WPB as a human rights violation. The aggressive and persistent nature of WPB has meant that targets of WPB generally experience the bullying behaviour as wilful and deliberate (Anjum et al., 2019).

Theorists have debated whether intent should be considered a defining feature of WPB (Aquino & Thau, 2009; Einarsen, 1999; Field, 1996). Hoel et al. (1999) concluded that it is difficult to definitively prove intent. This is supported by more recent studies that show that in certain situations it can even be difficult to prove that the bullying behaviours occurred. Carbo and Hughes (2010) conducted a qualitative study in which they asked participants to define WPB. This study found that participants focused on the actions of the perpetrator and the outcomes of those actions, whether they were intended or not. Thus one could argue that the intent of the perpetrator does not alter the harm suffered by the target (de Castro, 2020; Weisel 2016). This, along with the difficulty of proving intent has meant that most definitions of WPB do not include intent as a requirement. According to Einarsen et al. (2003), the perception made by the target that the repeated acts are hostile, humiliating and intimidating is a core component of WPB. The behaviour can therefore be classified as WPB if the target perceives intent (Catley et al., 2017).

With regard to process: According to Nielsen and Knardahl (2015) WPB comprises a two-step process. The first step includes being exposed to systematic negative acts over time, whereas the second step comprises a subjective interpretation of being victimised by bullying behaviours. Targets are more likely to perceive that they are being bullied if the perpetrator lacks social competence, is thoughtless, or fails to reflect on their own behaviours (Einarsen et

al., 1994; Namie & Namie, 2018; Salin et al., 2019). Perpetrators of WPB may therefore not deliberately intend to harm their targets, however, adverse effects will result based on the targets perception of the perpetrators behaviours (Catley et al., 2017). This, along with the fact that there is no clear definition or criteria of WPB has made operationalizing WPB particularly difficult for researchers and organisations.

As mentioned in Chapter 1, this study aimed to define and provide a list of what managers and HRPs consider to be WPB behaviours, WPI behaviours, and RMAs. As such, this is a first attempt to address a major gap in the WPB literature. It will contribute to the body of knowledge on WPB as it gives an indication as to what a sample of the working population of managers and HRPs consider to be acceptable behaviours and what behaviours they consider to be harmful. The following section will discuss the antecedents of WPB and thereafter the consequences of WPB will be elaborated on. The literature on WPB has also scrutinized antecedents of WPB. In the section below the literature on antecedents of WPB is outlined.

Antecedents of Workplace Bullying

There are many factors that encourage or foster the occurrence of WPB in organizations (Notelaers et al., 2019). Conditions that exist before or logically precede another condition or event are known as antecedents (Samsudin et al., 2020). This section will explore individual and organizational antecedents of WPB and will thus outline the precursors that set the stage for the occurrence of WPB in organizations. It will also examine the different models of WPB in order to show the complex interconnections between both individual characteristics and organizational factors in the development of WPB. According to Cowie et al. (2002) many factors could lead an individual to experience WPB within their work environment. These pertain to both organizational factors that foster WPB and individual characteristics, such as the personality of the perpetrator and the victim and their relationship.

Researchers have widely agreed on three sets of explanatory models to account for antecedents of WPB, namely individual antecedents such as personality characteristics of the perpetrator and of the target, inherent characteristics of human interactions within organizations, and organizational factors relating to the work environment and working conditions (Giorgi et al., 2003; Leymann, 1993; Matthiesen & Einarse, 2010; Samsudin et al., 2019). Leymann (1990; 1993) shows that these factors are major precursors of WPB, and adds

that they often occur in combination with a lack of adequate measures to manage interpersonal conflicts in the workplace. This section will explore individual and organizational antecedents of WPB.

Individual Antecedents

A significant body of research has examined the personality traits of perpetrators and targets of WPB. In this regard for example, some researchers have shown strong links between the dark triad (Machiavellianism, psychopathy and narcissism) and the perpetration of WPB. In a study of 346 Australian workers, Boddy (2011) found that approximately 26% of WPB is accounted for by *"corporate psychopaths",* who make up 1% of the employee population. Barbiak and Hare (2006) identified that approximately 29% of corporate psychopaths are also workplace bullies. Other researchers have shown that workplace bullies have symptoms of personality disorders (Randall, 1997; 2001) and described them as sadistic and sociopathic (Field, 1996). However, according to the American Psychiatric Association (2019) only a small proportion of bullies, approximately 4% may have genuinely disordered personalities or dark triad traits.

Weuve et al. (2014) shows that personality traits common to workplace bullies are that they are aggressive, hostile, egocentric and selfish. Those that are highly narcissistic may also engage in bullying behaviors if they perceive a threat to their self-esteem when faced with conflict (Germain, 2017; Tokarev, 2017). Associations have also been found between emotional intelligence and WPB; with those individuals scoring lower on measures of emotional intelligence being more likely to engage in WPB behaviors (Hoel & Salin, 2010). Individuals who lack emotional control may respond to stress or agitation with anger and vent or possibly project this anger onto other employees (Samsudin et al., 2020). In addition to this, workplace bullies are sometimes unaware of the effect that their emotions have on themselves and the effect that their behavior has on other individuals (Pallavi, 2019). This may lead them to continuously engage in bullying behaviors (Pallavi, 2019). They may also lack empathy and therefore not care what effect their behavior has. This egocentric behavior, according to Namie (2003) can only be stopped if bullies are punished for their behavior. Namie (2003) shows a common characteristic of bullies is that they are controlling, competitive and power hungry. WPB may also be the result of employees attempting to enhance their position and gain power

(Zapf & Einarsen, 2003), which could manifest in competitive, dominant and assertive behaviors.

A study by Coyne and Parker (2007) showed that compared to non-bullies, workplace bullies are more independent, competitive, assertive, outspoken and confrontational. According to Dåderman and Impola (2019) workplace bullies are more extraverted and less agreeable compared to non-bullies. However, it may be difficult to identify workplace bullies based on them being independent, assertive, competitive, and not avoiding conflict as these traits are also personality traits that are also associated with leadership (O' Moore & Lynch, 2007). In this regard, there are times where leaders may have to be dominant and assertive (Schmidt & Hunter, 1998). While these traits have been shown to be precursors of perpetrating WPB, it is extremely difficult to identify workplace bullies based on personality traits only and it is for this reasoning that examining behavior of individuals in the context of organizations and the culture and climate of such organizations is a more comprehensive means of deciding if WPB is likely to occur.

Target Characteristics. Target characteristics are also of importance when it comes to antecedents of bullying. As demonstrated above, certain personality traits of workplace bullies can act as a precursor for the occurrence of WPB. This section will examine the impact that the personality traits of targets' of bullying have on the occurrence of WPB. The role of the target's personality in WPB cases has been a contested area of research with different hypotheses being presented (Hodgins et al., 2020). The target of WPB cases may play a role in WPB because targets possess certain personality traits that predispose them to being victims of WPB (Glasø et al., 2007; Lind et al., 2009). These traits may frustrate other employees and elicit aggressive and bullying behaviors. Targets may also be more sensitive and thus more likely to perceive an individual's behavior as WPB compared to non-targets. Lastly, researchers have proposed that exposure to WPB may alter the targets personality traits and thus a reverse relationship can be seen where exposure to WPB may make certain personality traits more or less dominant (Glasø et al., 2007; Hodgins et al., 2020; Lind et al., 2009). The literature is not clear on which of these hypotheses best accounts for the role of the target in WPB. However, this section will explore the various hypotheses providing supporting arguments for these.

Studies have generally found that targets of WPB score lower on measures of social competencies, self-esteem, assertiveness, independence, mental stability, and extroversion (Matthiesen & Einarsen, 2007; Nielsen & Knardahl, 2015; Podsiadly & Gamian-Wilk, 2017). Targets of WPB have been found to be less social and talkative, and shyer.

Zapf (1999) identified two subgroups of bullied targets and found that only one of the subgroups could be distinguished from the control group and this subgroup tended to score significantly higher in anxiety and depression and have lower social skills. It could be that there are different types of WPB victims with different pre-existing personality traits. This is further explored below.

Neuroticism has been shown to be positively related to and predictive of WPB (Glasø et al., 2007) and there may be many reasons for this. Neuroticism refers to adjustment versus emotional instability and provides an indication of whether an individual tends to be relaxed and stable, or anxious and easily upset (Pervin, 1993). High scores on this trait may predispose individuals to experience emotional reactions such as anxiety, anger, jealousy, guilt and depression. Individuals low on this trait tend to be emotionally stable and less reactive to challenging situations (Pervin, 1993). Employees with high levels of neuroticism may both be at greater risk of experiencing WPB and more likely to perceive behavior as WPB when compared to individuals scoring lower on this personality dimension (Glasø et al., 2007). Employees with high neuroticism are likely to exhibit high levels of anxiety and be easily upset. This may frustrate other employees who may respond negatively or with aggression (Nielsen & Knardahl, 2015; Podsiadly & Gamian-Wilk, 2017). Neuroticism is therefore a risk factor for being exposed to WPB.

It is also important to note that neurotic individuals may be more likely to perceive their environments and other employees' behaviors in more pejorative terms when compared with less neurotic employees (Glasø et al., 2007; Pervin, 1993). They may be more likely than emotionally stable individuals to interpret and therefore "experience" certain behaviors as WPB. According to a two-year longitudinal study of 3066 employees conducted by Nilesen and Knardahl (2015) neuroticism at baseline was positively associated with an increased risk of feeling victimized by WPB two years later. A six-month longitudinal study by Podsiadly and Gamian-Wilk (2017) also found that increased neuroticism predicts exposure to WPB. These findings are important as they point to the subjective nature of WPB claims and this can

be detrimental for organizations. It is possible that highly neurotic employees may be more likely to perceive a managers harsh but necessary actions as WPB compared to less neurotic employees.

Building on this idea, the literature on the introversion-extroversion personality dimension and being a target of WPB has also been mixed. Extroverted people tend to get their energy from being around other people. Jung (1971) originally described that extroverts direct their psychic energy towards things in the external world. Extroversion can manifest in outgoing, talkative, and energetic behavior. Introverted people on the other hand are more likely to get their energy from being alone and according to Jung (1971) direct their psychic energy inwardly. Introversion manifests in more reserved and solitary behavior. Researchers have found associations between being more introverted and being a target of WPB (Coyne et al., 2000; Glasø et al., 2007; Liu et al., 2018). A possible reason for this is that the quiet and more reserved nature of introverts may frustrate co-workers and managers and make introverts more difficult to collaborate with. However, as shown in the previous section, being more extroverted may act as an antecedent for perpetrating WPB. Extroverted employees may initiate behaviors that can be perceived as WPB, possibly by being too assertive. It has been proposed that the key difference between extroversion and introversion and being a target of WPB could be in how the two personality types perceive different behaviors (Nielsen & Knardahl, 2015; Podsiadly & Gamian-Wilk, 2017). Extroverts have a predisposition to interpret neutral or negative events in a more positive manner compared to introverts (Farrell, 2017) and thus may judge behaviors differently compared to more introverted employees. The judgment on whether a behavior constitutes WPB, WPI or RMA may be influenced by the personality of the victim, with more extroverted employees possibly interpreting behaviors in a more positive way compared to more introverted employees.

Other researchers have noted that personality factors such as being (overly) achievement orientated, (overly) conscientious, rigid and intolerant of diversity (Einarsen et al., 1994; Matthiesen & Einarsen, 2007; Nielsen & Knardahl, 2015; Podsiadly & Gamian-Wilk, 2017) can predispose an employee to being bullied. In this regard those that strive to achieve or are too conscientious as compared to their work group, may annoy their work group to the point that those within the group, target and bully them. In this regard the target could be seen to be breaking group norms and showing up their colleagues and their colleagues may sanction the target through bullying them.

In addition, target coping mechanisms may also influence subsequent WPB (Benstein & Trimm, 2016). Employees faced with work-related stress may distance themselves from their work and invest less effort. This may lead other employees to feel angry and frustrated and may increase the likelihood of other employees perpetrating bullying behaviors against the individual who they perceive of as 'doing less' (Neuman & Baron, 2003). Thus, in this instance, those who do less (as compared to the overly achievement oriented or overly conscientious individual) could also be bullied by their colleagues.

Target negative affectivity has also been found to be a systematic predictor of victimization (Namie & Namie, 2018; Podsiadly & Gamian-Wilk, 2017; Samsudin et al., 2020). Some studies have found that targets exposed to WPB also acted as perpetrators of WPB, while others have found targets of WPB to be characterized by low levels of aggression. This may be because being a target of WPB is connected with temperamental emotional vulnerability (Gamian-Wilk & Bjorkelo, 2019) and this may manifest differently in different individuals. A study by Smith et al. (2003) of 5288 adults found an association between childhood bullying and WPB. According to this study, former victims of school bullying were more exposed to WPB.

Lastly, it is possible that a general victim profile does not exist and a reverse relationship mechanism can be seen where individual dispositions are outcomes and not causes of being exposed to WPB (Leymann, 1996; Nielsen & Knardahl, 2015). Nielsen and Knardahl (2015) provide some support for this showing that although personality is highly stable over time, victimization from WPB seems to have a negative impact on personality traits. Being on the receiving end of continuous destructive and demoralizing behaviors may cause victims to become more reserved and withdraw from social interactions in order to cope (Einarsen, 1999). It is likely that they would also become less agreeable and more skeptical and mistrustful (Nielsen & Knardahl, 2015; Podsiadly & Gamian-Wilk, 2017).

Thus, it is possible that the vicious cycle of WPB perpetuates itself, as being exposed to WPB is associated with lowered self-esteem, depression, anxiety and a range of detrimental psychological consequences (Kivimäki et al., 2003; Nielsen & Einarsen 2012). In such a way personality changes may be an outcome of bullying exposure and further perpetuates the cycle of bullying as these changes may again predispose WPB targets, making them more vulnerable

to further attack (Glasø et al., 2009; Nielsen & Knardahl, 2015; Podsiadly & Gamian-Wilk, 2017).

To conclude, it is clear that WPB needs to be identified and stopped before it escalates. This section has explored individual risk factors for the occurrence of WPB. Organizational context has also been identified, as a significant antecedent of WPB and this will be explored in the next section.

Organizational Antecedents

As mentioned above, inherent characteristics of human interactions within organizations, and organizational factors relating to the work environment and working conditions can create antecedent conditions in which bullying is likely to occur. According to Matthiesen and Einarsen (2007) a common characteristic among targets, provocative victims and perpetrators of WPB is that they all reported elevated levels of role stress and role ambiguity. This shows the role that organizational factors have on the occurrence of WPB. This section will elaborate on the role that the organization plays in WPB.

The way in which an organization perceives and reacts to individual behavior in the workplace may also be a powerful predictor of WPB (Hoel et al., 2020). It is possible that certain bullying traits may be either rewarded or punished in certain organizational environments. Workplace culture plays a role in the development of WPB. A highly competitive, achievement-orientated work environment sets the stage for the development of WPB in organizations (Bowling & Beehr, 2006). While work stress and pressure are precursors of WPB (Salin & Hoel, 2011), WPB has been shown to occur in work cultures that accept or even encourage bullying and uncivil behavior (Brodsku, 1976; Einarsen, 1999). This may be the case where the sole organization focus is on profitability or effectiveness at the expense of the wellbeing of employees. Hoel and Cooper (2000) in a UK-wide survey of WPB show that employees working in service sector businesses such as retail, hotel and catering and health services reported high levels of bullying by their clients. This may occur because the needs and rights of customers are seen as more important than those of employees. Research shows that highly competitive and politicized work environments allow bullying to thrive (Bowling & Beehr, 2006). Additionally, workplace stress and pressure may lead managers to bully their subordinates in order to meet their performance objectives. One source of workplace stress,

time pressure is correlated with WPB (Salin & Hoel, 2011) in that it does not give managers and employees the opportunity to resolve conflicts. This may have the effect of turning relatively small disagreements into bigger workplace conflicts.

Another important antecedent of WPB which would tend to have an effect across the entire organization is that of organizational wide change. The immense disruption, uncertainty and extreme stress that can emerge as the result of organizational change has led researchers to identify organizational changes as significant risk factors for the occurrence of WPB. According to an older study by Rayner (1997), changing jobs or getting a new manager are risk factors for WPB. The significant changes that we are currently experiencing in relation to the COVID-19 pandemic along with planned organizational change interventions that may also be occurring may create significant stress and pressure along with the usual stress and pressure that many employers and employees are under and could serve to further exacerbate the problem of WPB in organizations.

Einarsen et al. (1994) shows that employees may perceive the mere presence of work stress as bullying, particularly when attributed to hostile intentions. The psychoanalytic lens offered by Brodsky (1976) and Thylefors (1987) shows that workers need to relieve the stress and frustration they feel by means of projection, a defense mechanism in which unwanted thoughts, feelings and motives are attributed onto another person. This view postulates that in highly stressful working environments, individuals may search for scapegoats to relieve their stress and frustration. In an interesting account of the role of the organization in accounts of WPB, Liefooghe and Davey (2001) show that it is in fact the organization that bullies employees and managers are the scapegoats. These accounts of the origins of WPB show the complex nature of this phenomenon. The view of managers as scapegoats of organizational stress and pressure highlights how important it is to distinguish between WPB, WPI and RMA. Blaming managers when they are struggling to do their jobs under severe time constraints and pressure may lead to detrimental consequences for individuals and organizations.

The previous section has defined WPB and antecedents thereof. In the following section various models of bullying will be examined which frame and support the notion of various organizational antecedents which could both foster (alternatively inhibit) WPB.

Models of Work Stress and Workplace Bullying: Providing a Lens on Workplace Bullying Antecedents. There are a number of models that have been utilized to explain antecedents of WPB, namely, Einersen's environmental model, the Job-Demands-Control Model, the Job-Demands Resources Model, the Frustration-Aggression Hypothesis.

The work environment hypothesis attributes WPB to organizational and work characteristics that create a stressful work environment (Einarsen et al., 2009; Notelaers et al., 2010). According to this hypothesis, work environment factors such as social climate, role conflict, job insecurity, workload, social support and leadership behavior can predict both being a target of and perpetrating WPB (Agrevold & Mikkelsen, 2004; Neyens et al., 2007; Notelaers et al., 2010). This hypothesis will be analyzed through the lens of the JD-C model, JD-R model, and the frustration-aggression hypothesis (Dollard et al., 1939).

The lens of the job demands-control model, which shows that strain is the likely outcome of a combination of high demands and low decision latitude or control (Karasek, 1979) offers a useful lens to examine how WPB occurs in organizations. When employees are faced with a high degree of pressure and have little control over their work, bullying is likely to occur. According to the JDC model, there are two fundamental aspects of all work environments that can be used to predict how people experience work; job demands and job control (Karasek, 1979). Job demands are the psychological demands associated with the job and include aspects such as expectations around pace and amount of work. Job control refers to the authority to make decisions at work and skill discretion (Karasek, 1979). According to the JDC model, high job demands and low job control leads to strain outcomes. Job control moderates the relationship between job demands on job strain (Karasek, 1979). Low job control and low job demands decrease learning and motivation and may result in learned helplessness. High job demands and high job control increase learning and motivation (Karasek, 1979).

The JD-C model has received empirical support in the WPB literature. The hypotheses presented in the JD-C model have been shown to predict the likelihood of being a target of WPB (Baillien et al., 2011; Goodboy et al., 2017; Notelaers et al., 2012; Tuckey et al., 2009) and even of witnessing WPB (Tuckey et al., 2009). According to a three-year longitudinal study by Notelaers et al. (2012), employees who have 'very high' job demands are two times more likely to be a target of severe WPB and employees who have 'very low' job control are four

times more likely to be a target of severe WPB. This study found that the likelihood of being a target of severe bullying increases with 'high'/'very high' job demands and 'very low' job control but decreases when job control is 'high'. According to Goodboy et al. (2017) organizations with high psychological demands create the conditions under which WPB is likely to occur, however, this can be mitigated if organizations also give their employees control over their work. This model therefore offers a useful lens as to how workplaces can attenuate WPB in organizations as well. Even if organizations cannot reduce job demands, giving employees control over their jobs may make WPB less likely to occur. This is supported by research studies that have confirmed that unpredictable, unclear or contradictory job roles or work environments are risk factors for the occurrence of WPB (Baard, 2002; Ryan & Deci, 2002; Salin & Hoel, 2010). The lack of control that employees feel under these conditions may also explain why role conflict and role ambiguity are strong predictors of WPB (Einarsen et al., 1994; Hauge et al., 2007; Vartia, 1996).

An expansion of the JD-C model, the JD-R model has also been considered in WPB research. According to the JD-R model, a broad set of job characteristics (job demands and job resources) can influence employee wellbeing (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007). As in the JD-C model, job demands require sustained physical or mental effort to cope with and when they are too onerous, strain or burnout can occur. Job resources (e.g. social support and task autonomy) can buffer (lessen) the negative impact of job demands, motivate employees to achieve work goals, decrease burnout, enhance engagement (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004), and stimulate learning, development and personal growth (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007; Bakker, 2011). Job demands and job resources have also been found to interact in such a way that employees who have high job demands may to a lesser extent suffer from psychological and physiological effects if they can access various job resources.

The JD-R model is an occupational stress model that has been used to examine the impact of job demands and resources across a wide range of jobs and occupational sectors (Simbula et al., 2012) and to a wide range of outcomes (Xanthopoulou et al., 2007). Researchers have also applied the JD-R model to better understand the occurrence of WPB. The presence of job demands and the absence of job resources has been shown to predict being a target of WPB (Baillien et al., 2011; van den Broeck et al., 2011). This may occur because being exposed to high job demands and low job resources deplete employees' resources, resulting in emotional and physical exhaustion (Xanthopoulou et al., 2007). This may have the

effect that the employee complains more, withdraws from their work, and violates workplace norms and expectations. This behavior may frustrate other employees, resulting in WPB behaviors. Coupled with this, high job demands and low job resources has been shown to increase employees' feelings of vulnerability and helplessness and this makes them less likely to defend themselves against WPB acts (Xanthopoulou et al., 2007).

From the perpetrators perspective, high job demands coupled with low job resources may evoke feelings of stress and frustration (Xanthopoulou et al., 2007). These feelings may lead them to bully others to cope with their negative feelings, attempt to regain control or as an outlet for their frustration. This view is supported by one of the most seminal theories in aggression research, the Frustration-Aggression hypothesis (Dollard et al., 1939). At its most basic level, this hypothesis states that frustration causes aggression. When the source of the frustration cannot be challenged, the aggression gets displaced onto an innocent target (Dollard et al., 1939). This is often the case in organizations where either as a result of power differentials or ingrained organizational structures and processes, employees cannot direct their aggression at the cause of their frustration (Denzler & Förster, 2012). This often means that their aggression manifests in WPB and WPI behaviors directed at innocent targets, possibly setting off a damaging WPB and WPI spiral that continually perpetuates itself.

Although a number of models have been outlined to explain the antecedents of WPB and how certain organizational environments can foster the occurrence of WPB, this research is not framed by any particular model. This is because the intention of the present study was to distinguish between the behaviors of WPB, WPI and RMA so as to concretely define these phenomena. The outlining of these models is of importance as it indicates environmental organizational factors that can cause such behaviors to flourish. These models may thus become useful in the establishment of policy, as they will help organizations identify risk and protective factors for the occurrence of WPB and WPI.

In the following section the outcomes of bullying for both individuals and organizations is elaborated upon, clearly demonstrating that such behaviors need to be addressed in organizations to improve and sustain individual and organizational wellbeing,

Outcomes of Workplace Bullying

There are a number of deleterious outcomes that can occur as a result of WPB. These are outcomes for the individual being targeted and overall outcomes for the organisation.

According to Yamada (2000) WPB is a severe form of interpersonal hostility that harms all aspects of the target's health, as well as their economic status. Sheehan et al. (2001) shows that WPB costs Australian employers between 6 and 13 billion Australian dollars every year. This section will outline the possible detrimental consequences of WPB for both individuals and organisations.

Individual Outcomes of Workplace Bullying

WPB has been associated with a wide range of negative psychological, physiological, and physical health outcomes (Kivimäki et al., 2003; Magee et al., 2015; Nielsen & Einarsen, 2012; Raja et al., 2017; Verkuil et al., 2011; Zapf et al., 1996). In an integrative literature review on WPB, Barlett and Barlett (2011) show that stress, depression, and humiliation were the overwhelming feelings experienced by victims of WPB. WPB has been shown to cause a wide range of stress-related health outcomes (Finne et al., 2011; Niedl, 1996), such as anxiety (Zapf & Einarsen, 2003), low self-esteem, panic attacks, clinical depression (Niedl, 1996), insomnia (Hansen et al., 2016), and psychological trauma (Martinez, 2020; Teodora & Michelle, 2018). In Mikkelsen and Einarsen's (2002) study of 118 bullied victims, they found that 76% portrayed symptoms of PTSD (namely anger, re-experiencing the moment of WPB in a repeated manner, recurrent nightmares, distressing and intrusive thoughts and recurrent flashbacks). An older study by Leymann and Gustavson (1996) showed that most victims of WPB were troubled with intrusive thoughts and avoidance reactions. Suicide has even reported amongst victims of WPB (Balducci et al., 2009; Leach et al., 2017). Cognitive effects such as problems with memory and difficulty concentrating, fatigue, decreased motivation, as well as irritability and aggression have been reported as outcomes of being bullied at work (Boudrias et al., 2020; Niedl, 1996; Yung & Kan, 2018). Anger and loss of confidence have also been reported as consequences of WPB (Finne et al., 2011; Niedl, 1996; Zapf & Einarsen, 2003), as well as physical effects such as sweating, shaking, and feeling sick and psychosomatic symptoms such as gastric upset, loss of appetite and nausea (Boudrias et al., 2020; Vie et al., 2011). The prolonged stress that results from WPB has been shown to lead to cardiovascular and stress-related illnesses (Finne et al., 2011; Niedl, 1996; Nielsen et al., 2012). Targets of

WPB have been shown to be more likely to engage in smoking and substance abuse (Elkins, 2019). Even witnessing WPB has a negative impact on work-related attitudes (Hoel et al., 2004; Rayner et al., 2002; Unison, 1997). Compared to those who have not observed bullying taking place, witnessing bullying is positively associated with stress and turnover and negatively associated with job satisfaction (Hoel & Cooper, 2000).

The literature on WPB describes it as a more debilitating problem for workers than all other kinds of stress combined (Zapf et al., 2011). Being bullied at work may begin a downward spiral of negative emotions and events in a victim's life (Nauman et al., 2019). In a study by Keashly and Jagatic (2000) 16.7% of participants reported a severe disruption of their lives from workplace aggression. Tracy et al. (2006) in an article entitled "Nightmares, Demons, and Slaves: Exploring the Painful Metaphors of Workplace Bullying" show how pervasive feelings of isolation and powerlessness plague victims of WPB. This article also shows how difficult it is for outsiders to fully understand the abusive nature of WPB. Targets of WPB have difficulty confiding in others, and this exacerbates their negative emotions (Tracy et al., 2016). The pervasive melancholia that plagues victims of WPB may be a reason that WPB negatively impacts social interaction outside and inside the workplace (Barlett & Barlett, 2011; Yildrim, 2009). The psychological and physical health of victims of WPB as well as their work performance is negatively affected (Barlett & Barlett, 2011). An older study by Rayner (1997) shows that 27% of victims of WPB resigned. This is supported by Namie (2003), who shows that it is predominantly the targets and not the perpetrators of WPB who leave the organisation.

Organizational Outcomes of Workplace Bullying

From an organisational perspective, if WPB remains unresolved, victims often have no choice but to resign from the organisation. Job turnover is a consequence of WPB and is a significant cost for organisations, as they have to spend time and money recruiting, selecting, and training new applicants (Berthelsen et al., 2011). In South Africa job turnover is however less evident as the scarcity of alternative employment compels many individuals to stay. The economic consequences of the corona virus pandemic may mean that this holds true for people and organisations around the world. It is therefore imperative that WPB is more clearly understood and dealt with in organisations.

Despite wanting to and thinking of quitting work on a regular basis, individuals may have no choice but to stay in their jobs, draw a salary and do as little as possible. In essence they often become disaffected, disgruntled rent seekers looking to do as little as possible for an organisation they distrust and resent. These employees have been shown to engage in very high levels of voluntary absenteeism (Dehue et al., 2012), their morale is lowered, productivity is lowered and overall, such individuals disengage from their work, engaging in presenteeism at best and doing the bare minimum to avoid any disciplinary action. As their numbers increase they can spread their disaffection amongst other employees.

Victims of WPB are also more prone to experiencing burnout, given the significant psychological stress that bullying places on them. WPB victims work less hours and therefore suffer an income loss (Gardner & Johnson, 2011). According to Quine (1999, 2001) managers experience difficulty managing and evaluating victims of WPB as they are extremely sensitive to criticism (Yildrim, 2009) and are often disengaged from their work. Given these possible negative effects on the organisation and the way in which such disaffection can spread, the importance of identifying and stopping WPB in its early stages cannot be overemphasised. WPB creates a stressful and toxic work environment that impacts not only the target, but also the functioning of the work team as a whole (Longo & Sherman, 2007).

In this regard, witnessing WPB also has a negative effect on bystanders. A large body of research has found negative health effects among those who have witnessed WPB but have not been personally targeted (Lutgen-Sandvik et al., 2007; Sprigg et al., 2019). Vartia (2016) showed that victims and observers of WPB report a poor social and managerial climate, more stress, and job dissatisfaction when compared with employees from workplaces in which bullying does not occur. Some research has shown that bystanders can be affected almost to the same extent as targets (Hodgins et al., 2020; Mayhew et al., 2004; Niedhammer et al., 2006). According to Skogstad et al. (2011) this may be the case due to the fact that both victims and observers of WPB report negative shared perceptions of the work environment and a poor interpersonal work environment. This shows the detrimental effect that WPB has in further poisoning and damaging the organization in terms of morale, productivity, and general wellbeing.

The above section has defined WPB its antecedents and outcomes – however, as mentioned there are “lower grade” forms of negative behaviour that can have deleterious

outcomes on individuals and organisations. As discussed, this may occur in the form of WPI. A recent study by Hodgins et al. (2020) shows the importance of recognising WPI when it occurs as early intervention can stop situations from escalating (Hoel & Cooper, 2000). As shown above, it can be difficult to break this cycle and truly provide assistance to targets of WPB and therefore the checklist in this study seeks to assist organisations to identify and mitigate against negative acts at an early stage. The following section will consequently elaborate in detail on defining WPI, its antecedents, and its outcomes.

Defining the Concept of Workplace Incivility

The most commonly cited definition of WPI is that by Andersson and Pearson (1999, p. 457) who define WPI as "low-intensity deviant behaviours with ambiguous intent to harm the target, in violation of workplace norms for mutual respect." In their seminal article "Tit for Tat? The spiralling effect of incivility in the workplace," Andersson and Pearson (1999) show how uncivil acts can escalate into more severe workplace violations. They show that when a person perceives a negative act directed towards them, they may reciprocate the uncivil act either as a result of the negative affect that is evoked from receiving the uncivil act or out of a desire for revenge. The cycle continues until a tipping point is reached in which a relatively minor act evokes extreme, disproportionate anger and aggression. Incivility, if not dealt with, can represent the beginning of an upward spiral of negative organisational events (Andersson & Pearson, 1999; Cortina et al., 2001; Hershcovis, 2010; Smidt et al., 2016). This is further supported by Namie (2003) in his article, entitled "Workplace bullying: Escalated incivility" in which it is shown that bullying can be viewed on a continuum from 1 – 10, that starts with incivilities (generally range from 1 to 3 on the scale), then gradually progress to WPB, which covers mild to severe interference (scores range from 4 to 9) and ends with workplace violence.

According to Leiter et al. (2011), daily rude and inconsiderate behaviours were stronger predictors for damaged morale, impaired social and work functioning and psychosomatic symptoms when compared with a single severe workplace violation. WPI can be hard to identify and deal with in organisations, as a distinguishing feature of incivility is that intent to harm is ambiguous (Andersson & Pearson, 1999). The instigator can easily deny intent or blame the target's misinterpretation of the event or hypersensitivity. Consequently, the developed checklist in this study and the findings derived from it may help organisations identify cases of WPI as it lists specific behaviours that may constitute WPI as distinguishable from WPB. This makes the intention of the instigator less important, as even if they claim not

to have intended to behave uncivilly, it should be known that certain behaviours are not tolerated in organisations. Thus, the checklist may thus help organisations identify and deter WPI behaviours from occurring and, importantly, from escalating to more severe organisational acts, such as WPB.

Antecedents of Workplace Incivility

There are many factors that can explain how WPI originates. The following section will outline the various individual and organisational antecedents of WPI.

Individual Antecedents

An individual's attitudes and perceptions about themselves and their organisation are related to instigating incivility (Schilpzand et al., 2016). Blau and Andersson (2005) show that individuals' perceptions of distributive injustice and lower job satisfaction may predict the instigation of incivility. When employees perceive that they invest more in their jobs than they get in return, they may be more likely to perpetrate WPI (Meier & Semmer, 2013). A dominating conflict style is also a risk factor for acting uncivilly in the workplace (Trudel & Reio, 2011). A dominating conflict style can manifest in employees being highly concerned with their own goals while exhibiting little concern for the goals of others. This conflict style has been shown to be predictive of both instigating and being a target of WPI (Hershcovis & Cameron, 2011). This is an important finding when viewed in light of Anderrson and Pearson's (1999) incivility spiral as it suggests that when conflict begins, responding with a dominating conflict style may be likely to instigate incivility, setting off a potential spiral. Responding with a different conflict style, such as being more accommodating or collaborative, may terminate the incivility spiral (Hershcovis & Cameron, 2011).

Being excluded may also predict acting uncivilly in the workplace (Scott et al., 2013). This may be because social exclusion evokes feelings of hopelessness and helplessness as the target feels out of control over their situation (Williams & Zadro, 2005). This often leads targets to retaliate, and respond with aggression and hostility, further exacerbating the incivility spiral.

In line with Andersson and Pearson's (1999) 'incivility spiral', being a target of WPI may positively predict instigating WPI (Trudel & Reio, 2011; Van Jaarsveld et al., 2010). As mentioned, being a target of WPI may inspire retaliation, which creates a cycle of incivility

between individuals. Further, depression, state anger, and high levels of strain are precursors associated with instigating incivility (Blau, 2007; Meier & Semmer, 2013).

WPI can be instigated by employees at any level of the organisation (Taylor & Kluemper, 2012). In spite of this, instigating WPI is more prevalent among individuals with social or organisational resources. This is shown by Cortina et al. (2001) study of 1180 public sector employees, in which it was shown that a more powerful position in the organisation and being male is positively correlated with instigating WPI. Gender minority status in groups is a precursor to experiencing WPI. Instigators behave in subtly discriminatory and rude ways, being generally disrespectful and condescending. This is because these covert behaviours cannot be classified as illegal sex discrimination. Cortina (2008) supports this notion and shows that enacting incivility may be a subtle way of discriminating against certain race or gender minority groups.

Organisational Antecedents

As mentioned previously, WPI can represent the beginning of a negative organisational cycle that can escalate into WPB. Therefore the organizational antecedents identified above for WPB are also relevant when considering WPI. As with WPB, organizational stress and pressure is a major precursor of WPI (Pearson et al., 2005). Moreover, according to Leiter (2013) organizational change may set off a negative spiral in an organization. This is because organisational change may be associated with other antecedents of WPI, such as; stress, role ambiguity, job insecurity, low social support from co-workers and supervisors, and high job demands and low job control and, thereby, a possible higher incidence of workplace aggression (Torkelson et al., 2016). Poor leadership may also set the stage for the beginning of peer-conflict and incivility. This is seen when leaders fail to intervene in group conflicts or when leaders inappropriately leave decisions to group members (Hoel et al., 2010). Poor leadership leading to WPI can be interlinked with the frustration-aggression hypothesis in that poor leadership or the absence of leadership creates tension and frustration (Dollard et al., 1939; Lewin et al., 1939). In addition, when the leader themself is the problem, power differentials often prevent this tension from being directed at the leader and as a result intragroup tensions and conflict can escalate causing group members to be uncivil to one another (Hoel et al., 2010). Alternatively, positive leadership behaviour can reduce the potential for frustration and therefore also aggression among group members in that leaders appropriately manage conflicts

between members and do not become the source of conflict themselves (Dollard et al., 1939; Lewin et al., 1939).

Outcomes of Workplace Incivility

Outcomes of WPI are predicated on Lazarus and Folkman's (1984) model of stress in that "ordinary daily hassles considerably outstrip major life stressors in predicting damaged morale, impaired social and work functioning and psychosomatic symptoms" (p. 74). The low-level interpersonal mistreatment characteristic of WPI if it is on an on-going basis, may be more damaging to an individual when compared to other one-off albeit more major stressors. The on-going and stressful conflict characteristic of WPI creates constant anger, tension, and anxiety in WPI victims (Porath & Pearson, 2012). The constant, persistent, and unpredictable nature of these attacks could be more harmful to individuals than an isolated WPB incident. This is because individuals may be able to recuperate after a WPB incident. The nature of WPI incidents is that the pain is always present as it is an on-going attack (Porath & Pearson, 2012). This section will outline the individual and the organizational consequences of experiencing WPI.

Individual Outcomes of Workplace Incivility

Many of the self-same outcomes of WPB are also evidenced with WPI. These include mental health risks such as depression and anxiety, as well as physiological and physical health complaints. However studies that have focused specifically on WPI note that WPI is significantly correlated with damaged morale, impaired social and work functioning, and psychosomatic symptoms (Cortina et al., 2001; Porath & Pearson, 2012; Schilpzand et al., 2016). As experiences of WPI becomes more frequent, so too do feelings of psychological distress (Baker & Cortina, 2007). Emotional outcomes of experiencing WPI include; heightened emotionality, stress, anxiety, and depression (Meier & Semmer, 2013; Porath & Pearson, 2012). The negative impacts of WPI extend to employees' personal lives and manifests in lower marital satisfaction and increased levels of work-family conflict (Cortina et al., 2001; Schilpzand et al., 2016). Targets of WPI may either retaliate and continue the incivility spiral or may withdraw if they feel there is no hope of repairing the situation (Porath & Erez, 2007). According to Baumeister and Dewall (2005), certain WPI behaviours such as being ignored, excluded, rejected or ostracised has been correlated with a significant drop in cognitive functioning. The effect of these behaviours damages the targets self-regulation,

which may also impede proper social and emotional functioning (Baumeister & Dewall, 2005). In line with the incivility spiral, it has been observed that social exclusion promotes socially disvalued behaviours, which can in turn lead to further social rejection (Baumeister & Dewall, 2005; Ireland & Arhcer, 2002; Ma, 2001; Palmer & Thakordas, 2005).

Organizational Outcomes of Workplace Incivility

WPI has been shown to cost organizations 14000 dollars per employee annually. Targets of WPI are more frequently absent and frequently think about quitting (Schilpzand et al., 2016). WPI is positively associated with cognitive distraction from work and project delays (Porath & Erez, 2007). According to a study by Pearson (1999), 53% of participants reported losing work time ruminating over the incivility. In Cortina et al. (2001) study of 1180 public sector employees, they found that employees who frequently experienced WPI were less satisfied with all aspects of their employment – their jobs, supervisors, co-workers, pay and benefits. In line with Andersson and Pearson's (1999) notion of the spiralling effect of WPI, Porath and Pearson (2013) show that targets of WPI take their frustrations out on customers. The spiralling effect of incivility is shown in the set of counterproductive work behaviours that targets of WPI engage in, either seeking revenge, engaging in deviant work behaviours, avoiding the instigator and/or disengaging from work. The initial acts of incivility and responses to it creates a negative and unpleasant work environment characterised by constant tension and conflict.

To conclude: This section has portrayed both the seriousness and the spiralling effect that WPI has. It is therefore imperative that WPI is clearly identified and stopped before it negatively spirals out of control, harming individual and organizational interests, and possibly escalating into WPB.

Management of Workplace Bullying and Workplace Incivility

By and large WPB and WPI complaints are reported to managers or HRPs. However, a consistent theme emerging from the literature is the confusion and disagreement among organizational members as to who is responsible for dealing with WPB and WPI and whether the behaviour is in fact WPB, instances of incivility or "something else" (Daniels, 2006; Mannix-McNamara et al., 2017). According to Hodgins et al. (2020) WPB can be seen as the "hot potato, tossed from one unit or individual to another, with no-one ultimately wanting to take responsibility for addressing it" (p. 7). Targets who are bullied by their peers may be more likely to go to their line manager and if they are bullied by their line manager they may be more likely to seek assistance from the HR department (D'Cruz et al., 2016; Nielsen & Einarsen, 2018). The lack of clarity over whose responsibility it is to deal with the issues is seen in that HRPs often instruct WPB and WPI targets to go to their line managers and line managers may instruct the target to go to the HR department (Rocket et al., 2017).

An organisation's structure and promotion policies may also influence how WPB and WPI is dealt with in organisations. According to Blackwood et al. (2017) managers are often promoted to managerial positions without the requisite people and conflict management skills. This is supported by Hodgins et al. (2020) participants who note that managers avoid dealing with WPB and WPI cases because they lack the requisite skills to manage such complex issues.

In addition to this, managers often put the onus on WPB and WPI targets to take ownership and responsibility over the WPB or WPI issue (Hodgins et al., 2020). This is seen in Hodgins et al. (2020) study where only one of the management participants stated that they had a responsibility for managing WPB and WPI in the organisation. A member of management described that if a complaint arose over a bullying issue she would advise the person reporting the issue that "[I] can't un-know what [they] tell me" (Hodgins et al. p. 7). This reflects the difficulty that WPB and WPI targets have both in who to report their claims to as well as how to get proper relief for WPB and WPI claims.

The difficulty of managing WPB and WPI is supported in the literature which has consistently cited three themes that make dealing with WPB and WPI problematic within organisations. These themes or problems relate to: 1) Lack of a clear policy and clear guidelines and criteria for behaviour to be considered WPB and WPI (Cowan, 2011; Fox & Cowan, 2014).

2) The conflicting roles that HRPs play in organisations (Catley et al., 2017; Cowan, 2012; Harrington et al., 2015). In this regard it must be noted that 3)HRPs may experience a number of difficulties in making a claim against a powerful figure in the organisation when the latter is accused of bullying by a lower-level employee or group of employees (Georgakopoulos et al., 2011; Harrington et al., 2012; Liefooghe & Davey, 2001; Walsh et al., 2019).

The first problem in the management of WPB and WPI in organisations is that there is no clear policy or clear guidelines and criteria as to what behaviour constitutes WPB, WPI and RMA. An organizational policy on WPB should have two core roles; a statement of intent and a guiding document that clearly lays out acceptable and unacceptable workplace behaviours and actions to be taken against such behaviours (Salin et al., 2018). A WPB policy will ensure that there are objective criteria and that all organizational members know which behaviours constitute WPB and WPI and will also serve to distinguish these behaviours from RMAs which are enacted by managers from time to time. A policy also provides a statement of the employer's intent to mitigate WPB and WPI (Rayner & Lewis, 2011). This is supported by a body of research that has established that workplaces that have WPB policies in place report lower levels of WPB and WPI (Einarsen et al., 2017; Galanaki & Papalexandris, 2013; Salin et al., 2018). However, a caveat in this regard is that workplaces can have perfect policies that are not implemented or made known to organisational members (Harrington et al., 2012). In order for a WPB policy to be effective it is important that it is communicated widely, that is, known by all and engrained in an organisations processes, procedures and culture. It should be included in training, socialisation, and induction processes. Thus, all organisational members need to be acutely aware of and buy-into the policy. The most effective organisational responses to WPB are those that focus on communication and support their employees (Bentley et al., 2012). The establishment and communication of an effective policy is thus one crucial area in the management of WPB and WPI. Relationship building and repairing are also important in managing WPB and WPI and the role that HRPs have in this will be discussed below.

As mentioned, the second problem in managing WPB and uncivil acts relates to difficulties that HRP's may experience when called upon to manage such incidents. HRPs play an important role in the management of WPB and WPI in organisations, however, the conflicting roles that HRPs are expected to navigate in organisations has been shown to impact how they deal with WPB and WPI claims (Fox & Cowan, 2015; Jackson et al., 2014; Ulrich,

1998). HRPs changing and multiple roles in organisations is best-explained using Ulrich's (1997) multiple roles model. This model focuses on the outcomes of HR work and classifies four types of roles that HRPs are expected to fulfil based on both a strategic or operational focus and a people or process orientation namely that of; strategic partner, administrative expert, employee champion and change agent (Ulrich, 1997). As a strategic partner, HRPs are expected to align HR practices and initiatives with the global business strategy of the organisation. In their administrative expert role, HRPs focus on designing and delivering effective HR practices and focus on larger organisational processes and outcomes. In their role as change agent, HRPs help organisations build the capacity to adapt to change. Lastly, HRPs assume the role of employee champion by focusing on employees needs and issues. In this role HRPs are expected to protect and promote the interests of all employees (Ulrich, 1997).

HRP's role of both a strategic partner and an employee champion is paradoxical in WPB cases (Fox & Cowan, 2015). As a strategic partner HRPs are expected to promote the organisations interest and as an employee champion HRPs are expected to protect employee interests (Fox & Cowan, 2015; Ulrich. 1997). In WPB cases, a conflict may emerge where HRPs are expected to intervene and discipline a powerful and highly respected member of the organisation for bullying an employee. It may not be in the organisations best interest strategically to aggravate or even dismiss a powerful organisational figure. If HRPs do intervene to protect the bullied employee, they may violate their strategic partner role. If they do not intervene and stop the bullying, they will violate their employee champion role (Salin, 2008).

In WPB and WPI cases, HRPs often prioritise their strategic partner role and this is often as a result of organisational power differentials (Harrington et al., 2015). Even if HRPs do intervene in WPB and WPI cases they may be reluctant to find powerful organisational figures guilty of WPB or WPI. In order to preserve their job security and relationships with managers, HRPs often avoid properly investigating or dealing with WPB and WPI cases (Harrington et al., 2015; Salin, 2008). The effect of this is often that WPB and WPI becomes accepted and normalised in organisations. It may be that the way an organisation's structure is designed makes it difficult for targets of WPB and WPI to adequately be heard and attain relief.

Thus, a definitive guiding list that delineates WPB, WPI and RMAs may help alleviate the difficulties that HRPs face in finding against managers as this will make the process less

personal and subjective. It will also give targets more power to substantiate their WPB or WPI claims.

Given the lack of clear policy on the distinctions between WPB, WPI and RMA, these conflicting roles, and the difficulties for HRP's in disciplining more powerful individuals in the organisation who have been identified as bullies; it is the researcher's belief that outlining clear guidelines of what behaviours constitute WPB and incivility will go a long way in attenuating the impact of these factors on effective WPB management and resolution. The importance of such policy is highlighted by a survey conducted by the Workplace Bullying and Trauma Institute (2003) which reports on the lack of support provided to targets of WPB. This study showed that targets who reported bullying behaviour to the bully's manager were only helped in 18% of cases. In 42% of cases, reporting the bullying behaviour to the bully's boss exacerbated the problem, and in 40% of the cases the boss ignored the request for help and did nothing. Similar statistics were reported for HRPs; 17% proactively attempted to stop the bullying behaviours, 32% made the problem worse, and 51% did nothing. Consequently, a WPB policy is essential as without clear guidelines of prohibited behaviour in the workplace, managers and HRPs may undermine the seriousness of bullying and incivility, labelling these acts as mere "personality clashes" (Namie, 2003).

According to Anjum et al. (2019), WPB and WPI is predominantly reported at lower levels. As mentioned above, power differentials can plague an organisation's management of WPB and WPI. Victims often by virtue of their lower level of seniority, experience a sense of hopelessness when they realise that the problem is not likely to be resolved and therefore, they do not report it to the higher chain of command. This is especially the case in organisations with many hierarchical levels. Those at lower levels of the organisation may perceive that they have to accept more rude or unfair treatment and their position may mean that others in the organisation either don't take them seriously or feel that they must endure harsher treatment due to their lower rank.

Another problem is the quantum of people laying a complaint against the bully. Rayner (1999) shows the difficulty of identifying an individual as a bully as many managers may have only one subordinate who describe their behaviour as destructive and aggressive while they have many more subordinates who describe their behaviour as constructive and productive; or if there is more than one subordinate complaining they may still be out-numbered by the many

who do not complain or support their manager. This may be the due to personality factors. It could also be because the manager specifically target's a single or a few individuals. In such instances where only one person is complaining and they do not receive support from their colleagues, the behaviour of bullying may be shrugged off as being the targets problem only and not the manager. This has detrimental consequences for the target who may suffer a range of negative consequences such as lowered self-esteem, anxiety and depression (Kivimäki et al., 2003; Magee et al., 2015; Nielsen & Einarsen, 2012; Raja et al., 2017; Verkuil et al., 2011; Zapf et al., 1996). Targets who are solely victimised have been shown to excessively ruminate and blame themselves for the WPB incidents (Ferris, 2010; Jennifer et al., 2003). Emotions such as guilt, confusion, and helplessness have specifically been found in individuals who are singled out targets of WPB (Ferris, 2010; Jennifer et al., 2003). This is once again, a reason that it is particularly useful to itemise what behaviours constitute WPB, WPI and RMA. The exclusive focus on behaviours and not on individuals may make cases of WPB and WPI easier to identify and deal with. Additionally, itemising certain unacceptable as well as acceptable behaviours ensures that even those lower down on the organisation hierarchy are still treated in a fair and humane way.

However, as mentioned it is often difficult to segregate behaviours that are bullying and uncivil from RMA. Many subordinates may often accuse their managers of bullying when all the manager is trying to do is ensure they complete their job tasks to the required standard and on time. While the present literature review has engaged in detail with defining WPB and WPI, it remains crucially important to define and RMA and attempt to segregate such actions from WPB and WPI behaviours. The following section unpacks RMA in greater detail by defining the concept and exploring the complexities of managing 'reasonably' as opposed to managing by bullying and incivility.

Defining Reasonable Management Action: The Complexities of Desegregating Reasonable Management Action From Bullying and Uncivil Behaviours

An area of contestation within this field of literature is how to define what is RMA and what would constitute unreasonable management behaviours in the form of bullying and incivility.

Defining RMA

Definition of RMA. RMA refers to a set of behaviours that managers may engage in when communicating with staff on work related issues (Wilson, 2012). It is crucial that clear guidelines are provided as to what is RMA. RMA refers to actions that are aligned to labour legislation and give permission for managers to take the necessary steps to ensure the business runs effectively (O' Grady, 2006). It acknowledges that from time to time difficult issues need to be addressed and it provides managers with the vehicle to do this without fear of a claim being made against them (Jenkins et al., 2012; Wilson, 2012). RMA refers to normal operational instructions which are part of the employees and the managers daily work. Questions of RMA often centre around a management act, such as disciplinary action, a workplace investigation, a sanctioning or even a poor performance review (Bowers v. Workcover Queensland, 1999). Some examples of RMAs include: (Odendaal & Roodt, 2018; O' Grady, 2006; Wilson, 2012)

a) Introducing a performance management system (assuming all employees are required to participate)
b) Allocating work to an employee and controlling how it is carried out
c) Lawfully modifying an employee's duties, including transferring or redeploying the employee
d) Informing an employee about their unsatisfactory work performance or inappropriate work behaviour
e) Providing fair and constructive feedback on an employee's performance
f) Expecting employees to achieve reasonable workplace goals and maintain workplace standards

It may also involve:

g) Formal meetings to address underperformance

h) Providing training to address underperformance
i) Counselling in relation to performance
j) Investigations into alleged misconduct
k) Instituting disciplinary action
l) Denying benefits in certain circumstances (for example, vacation leave during peak work periods)

In determining reasonableness, it is important to consider the specific circumstances of each case (Bowers v. Workcover Queensland, 1999). This will be a question determined by an objective assessment, meaning that the subjective views of the employee or the manager will not be determinative (Wilson, 2012). The action must be lawful and aligned to policies and procedures of both the organisation and labour legislation (Fair Work Act, 2009; Wilson, 2012). In addition, the behaviour must be *carried out in a reasonable manner*, that is, managers, when engaging in RMAs communicate both verbally and non-verbally in a manner that does not exhibit behaviours (outlined in the definition of WPB and WPI) that could be construed as bullying or uncivil behaviour (Bowers v. Workcover Queensland, 1999; Wilson, 2012).

Determining Reasonable Management Action

In determining whether management action is reasonable, an objective test is undertaken that considers the circumstances that created the need for the management action to be taken, the circumstances while it was being taken, and the consequences that flowed from the management action (O' Grady, 2006). The objective test involves asking whether a hypothetical, reasonable person in the position of the manager would have acted in the same way as the manager acted (Wilson, 2012). However, the term objective is itself difficult to define. This is because even management action carried out in a reasonable manner may lead to an employee feeling victimised, aggrieved, or humiliated (O' Grady, 2006). This is seen in Liefooghe and Davey (2001) study of 113 TELCO employees where they found that employees find the practice of "overtime being withdrawn as a result of not meeting targets" as a bullying practice. It is thus important to explore perceptions of managers as to what they consider reasonable.

Managers Being Reasonable Versus Managers Being Bullies

Managers who are accused of WPB and WPI may not be aware of the impact that their behaviour has on their subordinates (Glasø et al., 2009; Jenkins et al., 2012). From their perspective, they may consider themselves to be fulfilling their managerial roles or may consider themselves to be "firm leaders" or "witty" and "outspoken" (Glasø et al., 2009). As discussed, there has been debate in the literature as to whether the potential to harm the target or cause adverse effects should be a requirement of WPB or should be seen as an unfortunate but at times unavoidable aspect of a manager's job (Agervold, 2007; Lewis et al., 2008; Liefooghe, 2002; Salin, 2003). It is noted that the subjective nature of this requirement places too much emphasis on the subjective reaction of individual targets in proving or disproving WPB claims. In calling for a clearer and more objective criteria to establish behaviour as WPB and WPI, Agrevold (2007) makes the point that proving WPB and WPI should be the same as proving workplace violence or harassment in that it should be solely dependent on objectively assessing if the act occurred and not dependent on how the victim evaluates or reacts to the attack. This particular point is of major importance if one is to distinguish bullying and incivility from RMAs.

In addition to this, even RMA carried out in a reasonable manner can result in adverse effects for employees (Wilson, 2012). For example, Fevre et al. (2010) argues that some bullying behaviours seen on many measures of WPB, such as, "being given tasks with unreasonable deadlines" or "excessive monitoring of your work" should not be seen as bullying but rather as RMAs that managers may have to undertake. There are certain situations in which managers may have to monitor work closely, or change the work tasks of their employees, or give them more or less work at certain times (Ólafsson & Jóhannsdóttir, 2004). Another example would be the unpopular management practices of managing poor performance which may be perceived as bullying or incivility even if there is no intent to bully or be uncivil. Consequently, some researchers have argued that behaviours that negatively harm the target and/or his or her work, whether carried out deliberately or unconsciously can be classified as WPB or WPI behaviours (Catley et al., 2017; de Castro, 2020; Einarsen et al., 2003; Weisel 2016).

Provided that these actions are carried out in a reasonable way, they may constitute RMAs and not bullying or incivility behaviours. Thus, cases of WPB and WPI should involve

an objective assessment of the behaviour of the alleged perpetrator and not *only* a subjective assessment of the target's feelings in reaction to that behaviour. This particular illustration does indicate that there are instances where it becomes difficult to determine if behaviour is actually bullying, incivility or RMA, as the behaviour can be context bound. Nonetheless, an organisational policy that delineates what behaviours constitute WPB, WPI or RMA will go a long way in helping employees, employers and HRPs identify how to classify certain incidents.

What Managers Should Do: Management Roles and Management Styles

There is scant literature on RMA. However, what exists notes that managers have the legitimate authority and a duty to control and direct the way work is carried out, to ensure that employees are carrying out their duties and that they are meeting their performance objectives and the organisation's overall objectives, and to respond to poor performance and to take disciplinary action when and if it occurs (Wilson, 2012). Management action is generally considered as consisting of four functions; planning, organising, leading and controlling (Odendaal & Roodt, 2018). Management action is not necessarily disciplinary by its nature, and can be taken either with or instead of a disciplinary penalty (Wilson, 2012).

In addition to these duties, managers are also responsible for communicating with their subordinates, motivating them, and managing conflict (Odendaal & Roodt, 2018). Managers often need to solve complex problems and make quick decisions. An essential managerial skill is an understanding of people (Odendaal & Roodt, 2018). This will influence every aspect of a manager's job; how they communicate their decisions, discipline their employees and control the way work is carried out. This is highlighted by Goleman (2004), who shows the importance of emotional intelligence in leading and managing people. Emotional intelligence is defined as the ability to manage ourselves and our relationships effectively and consists of self-awareness, self-management, social awareness and social skills (Goleman, 2004). The importance of emotional intelligence for managing people is shown by McClelland (1960). In a study of leaders McClelland (1960) found that 87% of emotionally intelligent leaders were placed in the top third of annual salary bonuses and their divisions outperformed yearly revenue targets by 15 – 20%. Managers who lacked emotional intelligence were rarely highly rated in their annual performance reviews and their divisions underperformed by almost 20% on average. This is not surprising given that researchers have shown that the competencies of effective leadership are the ability to monitor emotions in oneself and others and the ability to manage

emotions (George, 2000; Goleman, 2004; Ivcevic et al., 2020). A study by Gardner and Stough (2002) showed that each outcome of leadership (extra effort, effectiveness and satisfaction) correlated significantly with the five components of emotional intelligence (emotional recognition and expression, understanding of emotions, emotional management, emotional control) measured in their study.

Emotionally intelligent leaders have also been found to score higher on levels of psychological wellbeing, organizational commitment, and work performance (Abraham, 2000; Watkin, 2000). The ability to be aware of and able to control emotions allows emotionally intelligent leaders to make better decisions and build better interpersonal relationships with employees (Vyatkin et al., 2019). George (2000) shows that emotionally intelligent leaders can use their positive emotions to envision and execute improvements in organisational functioning. Emotionally intelligent leaders are also able to understand the emotions of their subordinates and this allows them to relate well to, motivate and influence their subordinates (Goleman, 2004). Emotional intelligence enhances leaders' problem solving capacity and allows them to address issues and opportunities facing them and their organisation (Ivcevic et al., 2020). Lastly, the ability to successfully manage emotions allows the leader to deal with stressful, disappointing and frustrating aspects of their jobs (Goleman, 2004).

Early studies of management action have shown that effective managers can balance both the concerns for the task with concerns for people (Blake & Mouton, 1964). Jameson (2001) describes the importance of language in management action – in getting people to believe in the manager's vision, want to do something, and do it in a particular way. Some researchers have argued that the way in which a manager carries out their duties and how a manager holds subordinates accountable can be as important as what a manager does (Goleman, 2004; Ivcevic et al., 2020). All of the manager's skills and style of management described above would be of crucial importance in not only managing WPB and WPI but also in behaving in a manner that does not cast the manager in the role of a perpetrator. Such skills and styles can also enable managers to influence subsequent WPB and WPI among work groups.

This was established in a series of pioneering studies on group dynamics from the 1930s. Lewin et al. (1939) showed that the leadership style of the group leader predicted

patterns of aggressive behaviour in groups. Below follows a greater elaboration of leadership styles in relation to WPB and WPI

The Relationship Between Leadership/Management Styles and Workplace Bullying and Workplace Incivility

An important part of a manager's job is leading and managing employees. Different leadership styles have been shown to predict self-perceived exposure to WPB and WPI as well as observed WPB and WPI (Goleman, 2004; Ivcevic et al., 2020). While five common leadership styles have been identified in the literature (Goleman, 2004); some of them are more or less likely to create antecedent conditions within which bullying can flourish or will be hindered. The five styles are as follows: autocratic, toxic, transactional, transformational, and laissez-faire styles of leadership. This section will discuss how these five leadership styles as well as different forms of punishment relate to perceptions of WPB and WPI. The aim of this section is to show how certain styles of management are associated with WPB and WPI amongst victims and observers and the mismatch that can occur between experiencing and observing different management styles and WPB and WPI.

An autocratic or coercive style of leadership is a leadership style that demands immediate compliance to the leader at all costs (Goleman, 2004). This leadership style is least effective in most situations. It does not allow for employee input or flexibility and is often associated with a "reign of terror" or relentless focus on personal or organisations goals without concern for human costs. This tyrannical style of leadership is often considered a source of bullying in itself (Goleman, 2004) and leads to employees feeling disrespected, withdrawn and resentful. By its very nature, this style of leadership undermines a leaders and managers core function – to motivate their subordinates. Research has supported strong positive associations between perpetrating WPB and an autocratic style of leadership (Goleman 2004; Hoel et al., 2010).

A particular interesting finding is Hoel et al. (2010) nationwide study of 5288 participants in the UK. This study found that an autocratic leadership style is the strongest predictor of observed WPB and non-contingent punishment is the strongest predictor of self-perceived exposure to WPB. Non-contingent punishment occurs when a manager punishes or rewards employees in an arbitrary and random manner. This creates feelings of uncertainty and

confusion in employees as they struggle to understand and cope with their managers' unpredictable actions. A particularly concerning finding in this study is that no association was found between WPB and non-contingent punishment amongst observers of WPB. This points to the difficulties that bystanders or observers may have in fully understanding the felt impact that certain behaviours have on victims of WPB and WPI (Tracy et al., 2006). It is possible that some observers may not experience the pain of the victim, yet others are more affected by the victims suffering when observing WPB and WPI. It was discussed above that bystanders also suffer negative consequences when observing WPB and WPI and it is therefore possible that individual differences exist in the extent to which observing WPB and WPI affects those observing it. It may be difficult for some individuals in charge of dealing with WPB and WPI to comprehend the psychological impact that a bully's behaviour has on a target. Their subjective feelings in relation to either the perpetrator or the behaviour may lead them to disregard the allegation. The list in this study is thus a first step in removing subjective judgements of WPB and WPI as it aims to itemise acceptable and unacceptable behaviours based on managers and HRPs perceptions of these behaviours in the workplace. This makes the perception of those observing or dealing with the bullying and incivility less relevant as it should be known that certain behaviours are unacceptable in organisations.

This point is also important in relation to toxic leadership. Blumen (2005) describes that toxic leaders engage in deliberate and destructive behaviours that leads to employees being mistreated over a period of time. Toxic leadership consists of five main clusters of behaviour; abusive supervision, narcissistic leadership, authoritarian leadership, unpredictability and self-promotion (Schmidt, 2008). Toxic leaders lack emotional intelligence, are unpredictable, insensitive towards others, and make use of negative managerial techniques to influence others (Milosevic et al., 2020). A defining feature of toxic leaders is that they lack concern for others and are willing to "harm others or enhance themselves at other's expense" (Milosevic et al., 2020, p. 29). The main aim of toxic leaders is to promote themselves, and their agendas and this is usually done without care or consideration of the impact of their behaviour on their followers or the organisation (Winn & Dykes, 2019). Toxic leaders engage in many of the same behaviours as workplace bullies. In an attempt to maintain their power, control, and influence, toxic leaders engage in behaviours such as humiliating, intimidating, undermining and belittling others, setting unrealistic work demands and blaming others for their own mistakes (Milosevic et al., 2020).

It can be difficult to identify and get rid of toxic leaders in organisations as their relentless drive for results and goal attainment often means that they are viewed as committed, competent and hardworking employees (Anjum et al., 2018). An organizational culture that encourages goal attainment at all costs may value, reward and promote toxic leaders (Dagless, 2018). This may mean that these leaders expand their influence in the organization. In spite of toxic leaders being highly productive, they have been shown to be psychologically damaging to their subordinates and their behaviours may lead to employees becoming disengaged or even leaving the organization (Amutenya, 2019; Marthur, 2020; Muaaz & Khurram, 2020). Many of the behaviours that toxic leaders engage in are similar to WPB and WPI behaviours and therefore the list in this study may help HRPs identify these toxic behaviours. It is clear that a toxic leadership style is strongly correlated with WPB. The next section will discuss the effect that transactional, transformational, and laissez-faire leadership styles have on WPB.

Bentley et al. (2012) shows how the quality and type of leadership within an organisation impacts the occurrence and management of WPB and WPI in organisations. In a study of 817 crew members, Nielsen (2013) found that leadership styles explain between 10 and 22% of the variance in exposure to WPB. Leaders play important roles in WPB and WPI claims as not only are they responsible for ensuring that these kinds of behaviours do not occur, they also provide a blueprint as to which behaviours are acceptable and unacceptable in organisations (Woodrow & Guest, 2017). The environment that a leader creates and kinds of relationships the leader forms can play an important role in the occurrence and prevention of WPB and WPI in organisations (Woodrow & Guest, 2017). Research suggests that the presence of supervisors who are supportive and concerned with the work environment and their employees and are actively involved play an important role in reducing WPB and WPI (Crimp, 2017; Einarsen et al. 2018; Woodrow & Guest, 2017)

Distinctions have also been made between transformational and transactional leaders and the role they play in inhibiting or fostering bullying behaviours. In this regard, negative relationships have been established between transactional and transformational leadership and work-related bullying, person-related bullying, and physically intimidating bullying (Dussault & Frenette, 2015; Nielsen, 2013). Burns (1997) originally distinguished between transactional and transformational leadership and it has been argued (Bass, 1997) that effective leaders use both transactional and transformational leadership styles, depending on the context (Bass, 1985; Gardner & Stough, 2002). The main difference is that the transformational leader

promotes dramatic change in individuals, groups, and organisations whereas the transactional leader addresses the current needs of subordinates (Burns, 1997).

Transformational leadership involves bringing people together around a common purpose through reinforcing behaviours (McClesky, 2014). Transformational leaders are actively involved in driving change and fostering a work culture of development and growth (Schlechter, 2009). They encourage their followers to be intrinsically motivated to work towards organisational goals. This type of leadership involves the leaders moving their followers beyond immediate self-interest through the four components of idealised influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individual consideration (Díaz-Sáenz, 2011). Higher levels of transformational leadership have been shown to be associated with a decreased risk of exposure to WPB and WPI (Dussault & Frenette, 2015; Nielsen, 2013; Woodrow & Guest, 2017). This is supported by Mills et al. (2018) study, which found that 22% of the variance in reports of decreased WPB can be explained by a transformational leadership style. Cemaloglu (2011) in a study of 500 teachers demonstrated that as transformational leadership behaviours increase, WPB decreases. According to Medisauskaite and Kern (2015) this may be because transformational leadership gives followers more autonomy, independence, and power. A study by Tuckey et al. (2017) found that transformational leadership attenuates the negative impact of leaders' task demands and followers' autonomy on WPB. This is supported by Fleming (2017) who found that transformational leadership negatively predicts WPB.

According to Barling et al. (2000) emotional intelligence predisposes leaders to use transformational behaviours. Strong relationships between transformational leadership and total emotional intelligence have also been established in subsequent studies (Brown et al., 2005; Gardner & Stough, 2002). The reason for this may be because transformational leaders are able to understand and manage their emotions and foster trust and respect in followers, who view these leaders as role models (Bass & Avolio, 1993; Mills et al., 2018). They are also able to understand their followers' emotions and needs and respond to these accordingly (Gardner & Stough, 2002; Mills et al., 2018).

It is also important to look at the relationship between transactional leadership and WPB. Transactional leadership is characterised by a leader-member exchange relationship, where the leader fulfils the needs of the followers in exchange for their performance meeting

basic requirements (McClesky, 2014). This type of leadership style has been shown to reduce workplace anxiety as it allows leaders to meet their objectives and gives employees clear direction and allows them to focus on their tasks (McClesky, 2014). Transactional leadership is made up of two components: contingent reward and management-by-exception (Bass et al., 2003). Contingent rewards entail the leader recognising and positively reinforcing when expectations and goals are achieved. The more corrective form, management-by-exception involves the leader specifying sub-optimal performance and using negative feedback or possibly punishment if subordinates fail to meet expectations (Booysen, 2009).

Inconsistent findings have been observed for the relationship between WPB and WPI and transactional leadership. Gholamzadeh and Khazaneh (2012) study of 235 employees from a transportation company found a positive association between transactional leadership and WPB. In a study consisting of frontline manufacturing workers, Fleming (2017) found that transactional leadership positively predicts WPB. Cemaloglu (2011) on the other hand found no relationship between transactional leadership and WPB in a study of teachers. In contrast to this, Dussault and Frenette (2015) study of 288 adults employed across several organisations found negative correlations between transactional leadership and WPB. This is supported by Ertureten et al. (2013) who argued that transactional leadership, where leaders are engaged with their work group and focus on performance and stability, is related to a decrease in WPB.

A laissez-faire leadership style lies at the opposite end of the spectrum from an autocratic style of leadership and can also be seen as a form of WPB and WPI (Buch et al., 2014). A laissez-faire leadership style may become destructive where leaders ignore and neglect their subordinates' needs and their management responsibilities. Subordinates' expectations are consistently let down by the leader's lack of active concern in their work and career growth. These leaders are absent when needed, avoid accepting responsibility and fail to follow up on subordinates' requests for assistance (Gardner & Stough, 2002). According to Skogstad et al. (2007) laissez-faire leadership is "not a type of zero-leadership, but a type of destructive leadership behaviour that shows systematic relationships with workplace stressors, bullying at work, and psychological distress" (p. 80). In this study, Skogstad et al. (2007) concluded that a laissez-faire leadership style is directly related to bullying. According to Nielsen (2013) high levels of laissez-faire leadership is associated with a three times higher risk of being exposed to WPB behaviours. This absence of feedback and involvement may be experienced by subordinates as systematic neglect. Being ignored stimulates brain activity in

the dorsal anterior cingulate and the anterior insula, two of the regions in the brain that show increased activity in response to physical pain (Weiten, 2016). Gardner and Stough (2000) found that laissez-faire leaders are more likely to score lower on measures of emotional intelligence. It is however often extremely difficult for employees to report actions of laissez-faire leaders as WPB or WPI as it may be difficult for observers to pinpoint the behaviour of laissez-faire leaders and they may not regard omissions as WPB or WPI**.**

To conclude: This section has explored the links between management or leadership styles and WPB and WPI. It was shown that an autocratic and laissez-faire leadership style may increase the likelihood of employees experiencing WPB and WPI. Non-contingent punishment was shown to be associated with WPB and WPI among victims but not observers of WPB and WPI. Transformational styles of leadership are associated with a decreased risk of exposure to WPB and WPI. The findings are inconsistent with regard to the relationship between transactional leadership and WPB and WPI. It can be seen that WPB and WPI is associated with leadership that is either too weak or too firm. An important point in this regard is that depending on the leadership style, the leader may be more or less likely to create an environment in which WPB and WPI is either fostered or inhibited and is therefore either more or less likely to lead by engaging in RMAs. The next section will explore the consequences of accusing managers of WPB and WPI when they are trying to reasonably manage their subordinates.

When Managers are Afraid of Being Perceived of as Bullies – Failure to Exercise Reasonable Management Action

Failure to Manage: Fears of Being Accused of Workplace Bullying and Workplace Incivility. Establishment of RMA also becomes important as a lack of guidelines may lead to managers being reluctant to exercise their legitimate authority in managing employees. Research has reported cases where managers are scared to reasonably manage or discipline their staff as they do not want to be accused of WPB (Wilson, 2012). In Jenkins et al. (2012) study titled "Bullying Allegations from the Accused Bully's Perspective", the researchers show that a common theme amongst alleged perpetrators of WPB is that they are trying to manage poor performance and difficult employees. This study shows that those accused of bullying believe that their behaviour is not only appropriate in the circumstances, but essential to ensure that work gets done. Some of Jenkins et al. (2012) participants report being unaware of any problems with their employee prior to being accused of WPB. Hoel et al. (2010) also shows that leaders and managers may unknowingly bully their subordinates. An example of this is that subordinates may consider that they are being bullied when they are not involved in decision-making processes. It is sometimes not possible for managers to involve subordinates in all team or organisational decisions and therefore the way that bullying, incivility and management action is defined is critical.

Management action can involve making difficult decisions and putting the needs of the business or organisation over that of employees. As a result of their managerial position, managers may have to retrench staff and at times take extreme measures to ensure that work gets done. Agervold (2007) shows that actions that frequently occur in organisations and may be necessary to ensure organisational effectiveness, such as an employee "being moved or transferred against [his/her] will" and even actions such as excessive monitoring of work or repeated reminders of errors or mistakes are not only frequent management activities but are also activities that managers may have to undertake in training new employees or in ensuring a good quality of work is produced from employees who are slow or prone to making mistakes. Liefooghe (2002) support this notion and further shows the problems that employees have in separating WPB from RMAs. According to Liefooghe (2002), employees use the term bullying to describe management actions such as work monitoring and performance appraisal systems. This may lead to over-reporting bullying incidents (Liefooghe, 2002) and may make it exceptionally difficult for managers to do their jobs. Many WPB scales perpetuate this problem

by either providing a definition of WPB and asking employees if they feel they are being bullied or present employees with a list of "negative acts" and ask them to evaluate if they have experienced these acts. While employees may have experienced certain acts, such as work monitoring or transfers, without adequately defining whether these acts are WPB, WPI or RMA, it is difficult to provide proper relief to either managers or employees.

The Relationship Between the Way an Organisation is Structured and Perceptions of what is Workplace Bullying, Workplace Incivility and Reasonable Management Action

When assessing WPB claims, the structure of modern organisations must always be borne in mind. The way in which modern organisations are structured inherently entrenches a wide power disparity between employers and employees. Hidden behind an organisations ideology is often a political agenda where those in power entrench and perpetuate their powerful positions, as they are the ones who make important decisions and are responsible for running the organisation. It is important to note that the raison d'être of organisations in business is profitability. Line managers' report to higher level managers in organisations and there may be consequences for them if their team is not performing optimally.

While this stress and pressure may encourage managers to engage in acts of bullying or incivility (Yamada, 2000), it is possible that managers, in carrying out their managerial duties are perhaps "placed as the scapegoat in interpersonal bullying research, shouldering responsibility for organisational practices that are predominantly out of their control" (Liefooghe & Davey, 2010, p. 377). Drawing on critical management theory (Alvession & Deetz, 1996) and theories of power and discourse (Mumby & Stohl, 1992), Liefooghe and Davey (2001) make the point that the dominating and controlling nature of organisational practices may in itself constitute bullying. An early study by Sjoteviey (1992) supports this point, showing how bullying is not necessarily the result of an abuse of power, but stems from the legitimate power that an organisation entrusts in managers. Therefore, the structure of organisations may be seen as a form of abuse and dominance over vulnerable and powerless employees. They may act out these frustrations by blaming managers for bullying them or being uncivil. Coupled with this reality, the way in which organisations are structured does require managers to engage in certain acts that employees may perceive as bullying or incivility even if these acts are a necessary but harsh component of a manager's job in an organisation. The challenge for organisations lies in finding the difficult balance between ensuring that

complaints of WPB and WPI are taken seriously on the one hand, and ensuring that managers can do their jobs on the other.

COVID 19 and the Challenges of Working from Home

In light of the exceptionally difficult circumstances that organisations now face brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic and people working from home, the boundary between WPB, WPI and RMAs may become even more blurred. While it is impossible to predict the future and how workplaces will be organised going forward with COVID-19, for both managers and subordinates, the challenges are immense. The lockdown measures that have been imposed to curb the spread of the virus has brought with it severe economic challenges. This creates increased pressure for managers to try and ensure their business survives the pandemic and that they get the most out of their staff working from home.

It is also possible that WPB and WPI could become rifer or take on different forms during this period as workplace stress has been shown to be a significant predictor of WPB and WPI (Leymann, 1990; Salin & Hoel, 2020). Managers may micromanage their staff by requiring they document their daily activities, or ensuring that they are logged on and working during specific hours. In many ways, this may be the only way for managers to monitor and manage their subordinates to ensure that work is performed. Some employees may attempt to take advantage of their new work environments and not do as much work as they normally would because they cannot be "seen". However, some employees may face real challenges when working from home. It will be difficult for organisations to balance employee concerns with organisational concerns, as from the organisation's point of view, they are still paying their employees and need them to do as much work as they normally would.

Yet, it cannot be ignored that employees may also face major challenges when working from home. Some may be working mothers who now have the added burden of home schooling their children, some may not have adequate internet access or the equipment needed to do their jobs. These employees have to adjust their work hours and may not be as available as they normally would. This could create conflict between managers and subordinates.

It is possible that many forms of cyber bullying may also become more prevalent. Research suggests that typing rude or intimidating responses may be easier than saying them as the person typing the messages cannot visibly see the reaction of the target's response

(Barlett & Barlett, 2011; Kowalski et al., 2018; Oksanen et al., 2020; Privitera & Campbell, 2009). Even if bullying and incivility may be more likely to occur during this time, employees may be more likely to accept the bullying and uncivil behaviours. Hoel and Salin (2003) show that job insecurity makes it more likely for WPB to occur because targets are less likely to challenge managerial behaviour for fear of losing their jobs. The job losses brought about by COVID-19 may force bullied employees to endure the harsh and unfair treatment for fear of unemployment. This might be especially true in South Africa, where before the corona virus pandemic, the official unemployment rate was 29% (Statistics South Africa, 2019). As mentioned previously, while subordinates may not be able to leave their jobs as they cannot find alternative employment, they may disengage from their work, engaging in presenteeism at best and doing the bare minimum to avoid any disciplinary action. In addition, the power imbalance inherent in manager – subordinate relationships may become even more apparent during this period as workers remain fearful and ever-mindful of possible retrenchments.

Conclusion

In conclusion, this literature review has defined and distinguished between WPB, WPI and RMA. It has shown the antecedents and consequences of WPB and WPI. It has also explored the possibility that working from home exacerbates the challenges of delineating WPB, WPI and RMA. Ultimately, it is argued that the survey put forward in this study will create clearer definitions of what constitutes WPB, WPI, and RMA from the perspective of managers and HRPs. With these distinctions in place, it may be easier to establish WPB policies in organisations.

Some Important Caveats

While the survey put forward in this study may serve as an extremely useful tool for organisations, a holistic assessment of the behaviour must always be considered. A broad assessment of the facts of the case and the circumstances of the individuals involved in the case also need to be considered when determining whether behaviour constitutes WPB, WPI or RMA. It must also be borne in mind that where individuals are involved, human emotion will always come into play and mitigating circumstances may also need to be considered. Notwithstanding this, the survey put forward in this study serves as an important ***first step*** for managers, subordinates, and HRPs to decide where a behaviour falls on the WPB/WPI – RMA spectrum. It should provide a sense of relief to managers and subordinates. For subordinates,

having a list of behaviours that are considered bullying makes it more likely that their complaints will be validated and addressed appropriately and consistently. Subordinates may also be less likely to accuse their managers of bullying them or being uncivil when they are reasonably managing them if there is a policy that delineates precisely what each behaviour entails. Thus, the survey put forward in this study serves as an important first step in gathering HRPs and line managers' perceptions of what behaviours constituted WPB, WPI and RMA.

Research Question

Based on the above review of the literature and contested issues contained therein, the research question for this study is as follows:

"What are managers and human resource practitioners' perceptions of what behaviours constitute workplace bullying, what behaviours constitute workplace incivility**,** and what behaviours constitute reasonable management actions?"

CHAPTER 3: METHODS

Introduction

This chapter outlines the methods of this study. The research design and paradigm are firstly outlined, showing how these support the aims of the study. The sample is then explained, specifically outlining the sampling strategy and the final sample composition of the study. This is followed by a discussion on the instrument used in the study, how it was developed, the purpose for its development and how it was tested. The procedure of the study and data analysis is then explained. Lastly, the chapter ends by reflecting upon the ethical considerations that were taken into account when conducting the study.

Research Design

This study utilised a non-experimental, cross-sectional, descriptive, and survey-based approach. The study was a non-experimental research design as it does not meet the criteria for causality nor was there any manipulation of variables (Salkind, 2006). This is of no concern for the current study, as it did not intend to predict or make causal claims, but rather, to explore, and describe participants' perceptions. This study design is useful for exploratory and descriptive purposes (Neuman, 1994). The study was cross sectional, as data was only collected at one point in time (Salkind, 2006). The study was a descriptive study using a survey methodology that included both quantitative and qualitative data.

Research Paradigm

An exploratory research paradigm was followed in this study. The research was exploratory, as it does not provide definitive answers (Terre Blanche et al., 2006) but explored and provided greater insights into perceptions of managers and HRP's regarding the phenomena of WPB, WPI and RMA. It thus attempted to gain a better understanding of this new and unexplored topic. The aim of this study was to provide a better understanding of the differences between WPB, WPI and RMA. Exploratory research is classified as preliminary research that is used to clarify the nature of the problem (Stebbins, 2001). Exploratory research was therefore appropriate, as this study did not aim to provide a conclusive result but to investigate and clarify the nature of this problem. It is the researcher's hope that this exploratory study provided a better understanding of the distinction between WPB, WPI and RMA and that this will allow more research to investigate this further and ultimately lead to a WPB policy in

organisations. As this area of research has not been sufficiently studied or investigated in the past, exploratory research was an appropriate paradigm to use.

Sample and Sampling

The sample of this study was made up of human resource practitioners and line managers that are working in a large organisation in South Africa.

The sample was a non-probability, purposive sample, which consisted of human resource practitioners and line managers that are working in a large organisation in South Africa. A large organisation was approached and after access was granted to approach the participants an email invitation was sent to 650 participants explaining the study and asking them to participate. From this, 160 participants completed the survey. After cleaning the data and accounting for missing data, the final sample size consisted of 145 managers and HRPs. (As mentioned, it is important to note that the scope of the present study was confined to canvassing managers' and human resource practitioners' opinions, but ultimately, it will be required that employees' perspective are also canvassed by future researchers).

The sample of 145 participants was expected as a response rate of 20-25% is generally obtained in surveys (Fosnacht et al., 2017). The sample varied in terms of their ages, with the majority of the sample being between the ages of 51 to 60 (38.7%), followed by employees aged 31 to 40 (28%), aged 41 to 50 (20.4%), aged 60 and above (10.7%), and aged 21 to 30 (2.2%). The sample consisted of 65.6% female participants, 33.3% male participants, and 1.1% non-binary participants. In terms of the racial composition of the sample, the majority of the participants were White (41.9%), followed by Black (26.9%), Indian (15.1%) and Coloured (10.8%) participants. Foreign nationals made up 2.2% of the sample, 2.2% of the sample commented that they were "not interested in being classified", and 1.1% of the sample was made up of Asian participants. The majority of the participants indicated that English was their first language (65.25%), followed by isiZulu (8.51%), Afrikaans (5.67%), isiXhosa (3.55%), isiNdebele (3.55), Sesotho (2.84%), Sepedi (2.13%) Setswana (3.55%), siSwati (1.42%), Tshivenda (2.84%), Xitsonga (0.71%).

A large percentage of the sample have either an honours degree (29.0%) or a master's degree (25.8%),16.1% of the sample have a PhD, 14% have an undergraduate degree, 6.5%

have a Diploma, and 8.6% of the participants have a Matric. Middle management made up just over half of the sample (50.5%), followed by upper management (20.4%), junior management (14%), other (staff member, senior staff, supervisor, support staff, professional and administrative staff, officer, grade 8 position) (10.7%), and executives (4.3%). The tenure of the participants varied, with most participants having been in the organisation for 6 to 10 years (26.9%), followed by a tenure of 1 to 5 years (21.5%), 11 to 15 years (16.1%), 16 to 20 years (15.1%), 21 to 25 years (10.8%), 26 years or more (5.4%), and less than a year (4.3%).

Table 3.1

Demographic Information for the Sample

Variable	Category	Frequency	%
Age	21-30 years old	3	2.2
	31-40 years old	41	28
	41-50 years old	30	20.4
	51-60 years old	56	38.7
	60+ years old	16	10.7
Gender	Female	95	65.6
	Male	48	33.3
	Non-binary	2	1.1
Ethnicity	Black	39	26.9
	White	61	41.9
	Coloured	16	10.8
	Indian	22	15.1
	Asian	2	1.1
	Other	6	4.2
Home Language	English	95	65.25
	Afrikaans	8	5.67
	isiZulu	12	8.51
	isiXhosa	5	3.55
	isiNdebele	5	3.55
	Sesotho	4	2.84
	Sepedi	3	2.13
	Sestswana	5	3.55
	siSwati	2	1.42
	Tshivenda	4	2.84
	Xitsonga	1	0.71
Level of Education	Matric	13	8.6
	Diploma	9	6.5
	Undergraduate degree	20	14
	Honours degree	42	29.0
	Masters degree	37	25.8
	Doctoral degree	23	16.1
Job Level	Junior management	20	14
	Middle management	73	50.5
	Upper management	30	20.4
	Executive	6	4.3
	Other	16	10.7
Job Tenure	Less than 1 year	6	4.3
	1-5 years	31	21.5
	6-10 years	39	26.9
	11-15 years	23	16.1
	16-20 years	22	15.1
	21-25 years	16	10.8

26+ years	8	5.4

Instruments

After carefully analysing the literature on WPB, WPI and RMA, it was established that organisations struggle to differentiate between these concepts and this creates problems for employees and managers This distinction is crucial for two reasons: Firstly, employee complaints of WPB ad WPI will be more likely to be dealt with and taken seriously if all constituents (employees, managers and HRP's) are aware of what behaviours constitute WPB and WPI and what behaviours constitute RMAs. Objective criteria will help HRPs identify and deal with WPB and WPI. Thus, clear distinctions could possibly enhance the facilitation of management of WPB and incivility issues within the workplace. Secondly, if all constituents are aware of the distinctions between such behaviours, it may prevent employees from making unsubstantiated allegations that they are being bullied at work, when in fact managers are trying to hold them accountable and are engaging in RMAs. It was also established that there was no existing questionnaire that would address the aims of this study and as a result the researcher developed an instrument in order to distinguish between the behaviours of WPB, WPI and RMA.

Development and Design of the Instrument

In order to design the checklist, a wide-ranging literature review was conducted on WPB, WPI, and RMAs. Literature that explained how targets and perpetrators explain bullying behaviours, incivility behaviours, and RMAs were collated into an extensive list of possible behaviours of these constructs. Additionally, existing measures of WPB and WPI were analysed and their relevant items were utilised within the instrument. The researcher also conducted a wide-ranging Google, Google Scholar and Scopus search for any literature on RMA, searching terms like "what is reasonable management action?", "when is behaviour not workplace bullying?" "reasonable management action law/reasonable management action organisational policies". In order to generate RMA items, international policy was analysed, as well as case law and the Labour Relations Act in South Africa. From this, a checklist of all possible behaviours was compiled. All survey items were changed to direct behaviours. For example, "someone withholding information which affects your performance" was changed to "a manager withholding information which affects his/her subordinate's performance". All

behaviours that described how a person felt and not an actual behaviour were either modified or removed. Thereafter, all leading terms were taken out so as to try and stick to specific behaviours. This resulted in a list of 250 items. From this, all items that were repeated were removed. After this, items were clustered together in themes in order to further summarise items by combining those with similar themes. The final checklist was reduced to 115 items and the reduction of items was achieved by constantly referring back to the available theory within the literature and consultation with subject matter experts. Subject matter experts consisted of the HR director of the organisation where the study was conducted as well as other members of the HR department and academics sourced by the researcher's supervisor. The researcher sent the survey to the subject matter experts and asked them for their feedback as to whether the survey adequately represents the constructs under study and if any items need to be added, changed, or removed.

Given the current COVID-19 pandemic and the fact that workplaces are now working from home, a short list of items were compiled of WPB, WPI and RMAs within the context of work from home situations. This was compiled by looking at the literature relating to working from home. As working from home has surged due to the COVID-19 pandemic, current articles about working from home during the pandemic also helped inform this list.

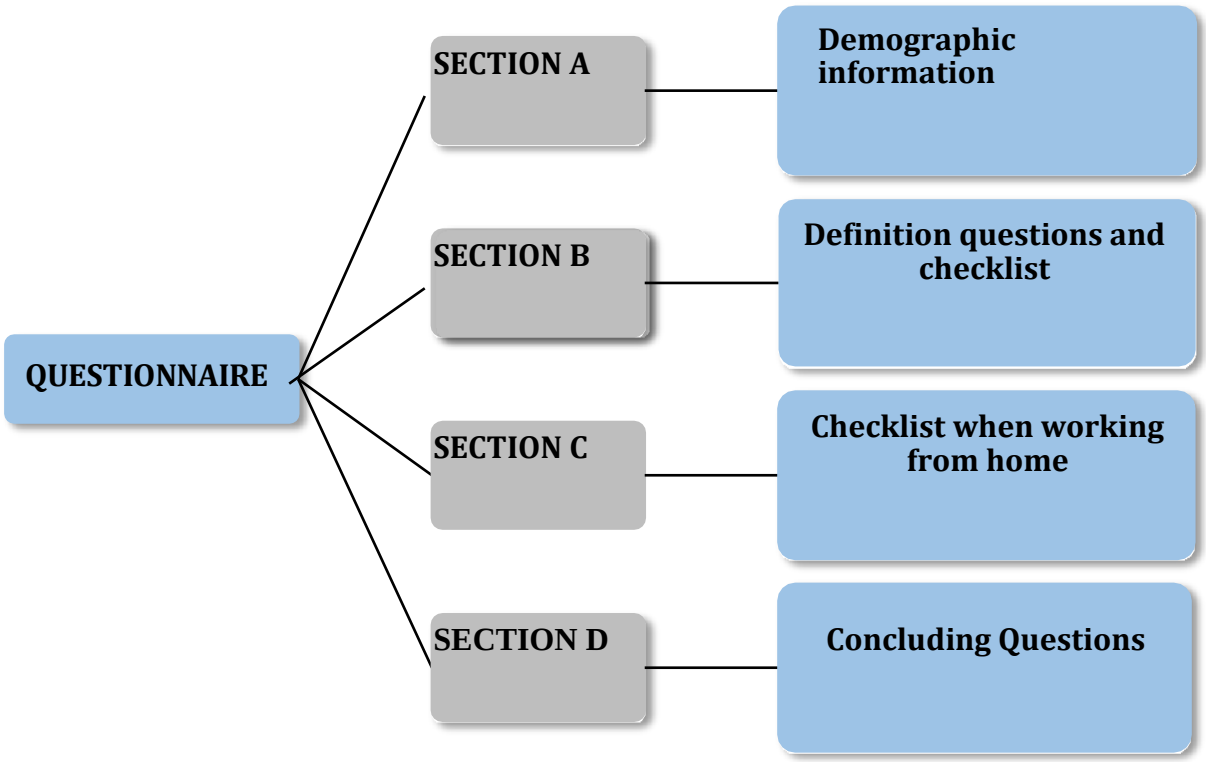
Open-ended questions were then added in order to ascertain how organisations conceptualise and deal with WPB, WPI and RMA and to explore respondents' perceptions around the nature of each item

Scaling of the Questions

The instrument was pilot tested in order to ensure that all the items were clear and easy to understand and answer. This was essential in order to identify any potential problems before carrying out the study (Leedy & Ormrod, 2015). The instrument was designed in order to address the aims of the study. The questionnaire asked participants about their demographics, how they define the constructs under study as well as a checklist asking them to rank the extent to which they consider a certain behaviour to be either WPB, WPI, RMA or none of the above, a shorter checklist of behaviours to consider when employees are working from home (WFH), and concluding questions. The questionnaire was divided into four sections and included both closed and open-ended questions in order to fully explore the depth and nuances of the topic.

Figure 1

Layout of the Questionnaire



- **Demographic information:** The demographic information sheet asked participants to note their age, gender, race, language, level of education, job grade and tenure. The purpose of collecting the demographic information was to better understand the participants in terms of their age, race, gender, level of education, job grade, and tenure and determine the extent to which this sample is representative of the larger South African working population and to determine the generalizability of the findings.
- **Definition questions and checklist:** This section introduced the survey and provided participants with a brief explanation of the aim of the survey and the rationale behind the study. A brief description of WPB, WPI and RMA was provided for participants to ensure that they could all clearly conceptualise the three different forms of behaviour. The survey then asked participants how they define WPB, WPI and RMA. These results were qualitatively analysed using Conventional Content Analysis (CCA). Thereafter, a checklist of 115 behaviours was provided and participants were asked to rank the extent to which they considered the behaviours listed to be examples of WPB, WPI, RMA or none of the above. These results were quantitatively analysed and presented using frequencies and percentages. If the participants answered none of the above, they were

asked to explain why they ranked the behaviour as none of the above and these responses were qualitatively analysed using CCA. The participants did not need to comment if they answered that the behaviour is an example of WPB, WPI or RMA.

- **Checklist when working from home:** This checklist was finalised in April/May 2020, when most organisations had just started working from home. The researcher therefore decided to create an additional short checklist in order to delineate WPB, WPI and RMA behaviours when working from home. Even though most of the items on the previous checklist can be adapted and still apply when working from home, there are additional dimensions that are especially pertinent when working from home. A checklist of 13 behaviours was created and respondents were asked to rank the extent to which they consider the behaviours to represent WPB, WPI or RMA when working from home. The changes that the pandemic may bring in terms of working means that it is essential to delineate WPB, WPI and RMA behaviours when working from home.
- **Concluding Questions:** This section made some provision for respondents to answer in an open-ended way as to how their organisation differentiates between cases of WPB, WPI and RMA, their understanding of the differences between these constructs, their belief on the most important barriers to ending WPB in organisations, and lastly if they have any additional thoughts or comments to add. As discussed below, these results were qualitatively analysed using CCA.

Pretesting the Questionnaire

A pilot study of the questionnaire was conducted with a number of managers and HRPs to validate the face and construct validity of the final instrument compiled and to determine whether any items needed to be added or excluded. The validity of a test is the extent to which the test accurately measures what it is supposed to measure (Anastasi & Urbina, 2007). Face validity pertains to whether the test "looks valid" and appears to measure what it is intended to measure. It is important to establish face validity in order to ensure that the participants in the study cooperate and feel the measure used is appropriate (Anastasi, 1982).

The Pilot Study aimed to assess the face validity of the survey developed. Respondents were asked to fill in the survey and thereafter, in order to assess face validity, were asked an additional set of six open-ended questions. The questions asked respondents whether (1) there were any items in the scale that they did not understand, (2) there were any items that they felt

were ambiguous or unclear, (3) there were any items that were included that they felt should be excluded, (4) there were any items that they felt were sensitive and/or offensive in nature, and if (5) there were any items that they thought should be included that were not included. Responses followed a "yes/no" format and subjects were instructed to elaborate on their answers if they answered 'yes' to any of the questions. In addition, a further question (6) asked respondents to comment on the clarity of the instructions of the scale (see Appendix I). This approach to Face Validity has been advocated by both Murphy and Davidshofer (2001) and Moerdyk (2009). The results from the pilot study were solely used to assess the respondents' thoughts on the items within the survey and whether items needed to be removed, modified, or added. These results were not used for any additional analysis. A vignette was included in the original questionnaire in order to gauge a deeper understanding of how managers and HRPs examine whether an incident is either WPB, WPI or RMA and what evidence they use to decide this (Appendix J). However, the results of the pilot study indicated that the questionnaire may be too long with the vignette and so a decision was taken to remove the vignette for this study.

Procedure

Before commencing with the collection of the data, ethical clearance was obtained by the Human Research Ethics Committee (non-medical) at the University of the Witwatersrand (MAORG/20/06). Permission to conduct the study was granted and a specifically targeted access letter was sent to the HR director (Appendix C). The e-mail addresses of the sample were requested and provided by the HR director who granted permission for this study. The email list was securely and confidentially stored in a password-protected computer, accessible only to the researcher and the researcher's supervisor. An email and invitation letter was sent to all HRPs and line managers in the organisation inviting them to participate and explaining what the study is about (See Email invitation and Participant Information Sheet Appendix A and B).

The email attached the participant information sheet, and elaborated on how the participants' confidentiality and anonymity would be ensured. It outlined that there will be no way for the researcher to identify who has responded or to link participant's responses to their email addresses. The researcher only had access to the IP addresses, which were deleted once the data was downloaded (See below – Ethical Considerations). It also set out in more detail

what the study was about and explained that no risks or benefits would be derived from participating in the study. The email also contained the electronic survey link to the questionnaire. If participants clicked on the link, the first thing they were provided with was a consent form. The consent form outlined that participation was voluntary and outlined what participants should have been aware of should they chose to participate in the study. If they clicked "yes" it meant that they voluntarily agreed to participate and this took them straight to the survey. More details on this is discussed in the Ethics section of this report (See below-Ethical Considerations). Respondents who consented to participate in the study were directed to a secure encrypted website. A website called Survey Monkey was used and, as mentioned, included items directed towards obtaining both quantitative and qualitative data. Each participant was only able to complete the questionnaire once. The link to the questionnaire was closed after a month, all IP addresses were deleted, and responses were kept in a password-protected file until they were ready for data analysis.

Data Analysis

The data was firstly entered into an excel spreadsheet, cleaned and checked for errors. The closed-ended questions were analysed using SPSS version 26. Content analysis was used to analyse the open-ended responses in the survey. Content analysis was used to analyse the definitional questions at the beginning of the survey and the longer questions at the end of the survey which asked participants how WPB is dealt with in their organisations, how they differentiate between WPB and RMA and what they see as the most important barriers to ending WPB in organisations. Lastly, the check list asked participants to give an explanation for their answer if they rated a certain behaviour as none of the above (i.e. not WPB, WPI or RMA) and content analysis was also used to analyse their answers to these questions.

Descriptive Statistics

Frequencies and descriptive statistics were calculated for all the demographic data, such as age, gender, race, language, level of education, job level, and tenure. Frequencies and descriptive statistics were also used to represent the quantitative data. Descriptive statistics and frequencies are appropriate for answering the research question as they summarise and describe the sample responses (Field, 2018) and this allows an analysis of the participants' perceptions of what behaviours constitute WPB, WPI and RMA. Data was exported into Excel, cleaned and coded, and then imported into SPSS 26. Frequencies and percentages were calculated for

the survey items to determine the percentage of participants who rated a specific behaviour as WPB, WPI, RMA or none of the above. In order to answer the research question, four clusters were created (WPB, WPI, RMA, none of the above) and three clusters for the WFH items (WPB, WPI, RMA). A behaviour was classified as either WPB, WPI, RMA or none of the above if 50% or more of the sample rated the behaviour as either WPB, WPI, RMA or none of the above. This is represented by the tables below, which portray how the majority of the participants ranked the behaviours. Tables 2.1 to 2.6 represent the behaviours that at least 50% or more of the participants perceive as WPB, WPI or RMA for the original items and the WFH items.

Table 3.2

WPB Behaviours (Based on More Than 50% of the Sample Ranking the Behaviour as WPB)

Behaviour	Frequency	%
1. A manager intimidating (finger pointing, invasion of personal space, shoving, blocking/barring the way) his/her subordinate	140	96.39
2. A manager threatening (verbally, physically, indirectly) his/her subordinate	140	96.25
3. A manager singling out or humiliating a subordinate in connection with his/her work	135	92.86
4. A manager retaliating or seeking revenge on his/her subordinate	129	88.75
5. A manager pressurising a subordinate not to claim something which the subordinate is entitled to (e.g. sick leave, holiday entitlement, travel expenses)	123	84.71
6. Scapegoating (a manager inflicting blame on his/her subordinate unfairly)	122	84.15
7. A manager publicly criticising or undermining his/her subordinate	120	82.75
8. A manager setting up his/her subordinates to fail	119	82.14
9. A manager using disciplinary procedures that are out of proportion to the subordinate's performance	118	81.48
10. A manager hinting or signalling to a subordinate that he/she should quit his/her job	116	79.75
11. A manager making micro-aggressive remarks to his/her subordinates	109	75.00
12. A manager denying his/her subordinate a benefit in relation to his/her employment	107	73.75
13. A manager inviting his/her subordinates to "informal" meetings which turn out to be administration of discipline	101	69.51
14. An employer offering an employee pay or a benefit in exchange for the employee not going to the CCMA or taking the issue further	97	66.67
15. A manager constantly finding fault with his/her subordinate	95	65.48
16. A manager shouting or responding in an angry way when provoked by a subordinate	90	61.73
17. A manager repeatedly reminding a subordinate of his/her errors or mistakes	88	60.49
18. A manager giving his/her subordinates regular ultimatums	86	59.26
19. A manager responding in a condescending way to his/her subordinate	81	56.10
20. A manager denying subordinates resources to help them do their job	81	56.10
21. A manager blocking his/her subordinate from promotion through poor performance evaluations	81	55.56
22. A manager pranking or making jokes about his/her subordinate and assuring the subordinate that the manager "wasn't being serious, it was just a joke"	78	53.66
23. A manager taking inconsistent disciplinary action across a team	76	52.44

Table 3.3

WPI Behaviours (Based on More Than 50% of the Sample Ranking the Behaviour as WPI)

Behaviour	Frequency	%
1. A manager neglecting to say please or thank you	125	86.42
2. A manager talking loudly on the phone about personal matters	116	80.00
3. A manager answering the phone with a "ja" when his/her subordinate calls	109	75.31
4. A manager rolling his/her eyes at his/her subordinate's idea	102	70.37
5. A manager inviting his/her subordinates to a formal meeting without telling his/her subordinates what the meeting is about	97	66.67
6. A manager behaving in an abrupt manner towards his/her subordinates	94	64.63
7. A manager interrupting his/her subordinate while he/she is speaking on the telephone	93	64.29
8. A manager giving little explanation for his/her decisions	93	64.29
9. Failure from the manager to show empathy or compassion towards his/her subordinates (failure to acknowledge contextual factors that prevent a subordinate from carrying out his/her duties)	90	62.20
10. A manager not reprimanding team members who are rude to or criticise one another	88	60.49
11. A manager making unwanted attempts to draw a subordinate into a discussion of personal matters	86	59.26
12. A manager not rewarding or recognising good performance	86	59.04
13. A manager raising his/her voice when speaking to his/her subordinate	85	58.33
14. A manager taking items from his/her subordinate without returning them	83	57.14
15. A manager opening his/her subordinate's desk drawers without permission	81	55.95
16. A manager withholding information which affects the performance of his/her subordinate	81	55.81
17. Failure of the manager to consult his/her subordinate in reference to a decision he/she should have been involved in	79	54.32
18. A manager ignoring subordinates' complaints that he/she sees as frivolous	78	53.57
19. A manager commenting on his/her subordinate's appearance and lifestyle	77	53.09
20. A manager comparing team members with one another	76	52.44
21. A manager responding in a sarcastic way to his/her subordinates	76	52.38
22. A manager sharing personal information about his/her subordinate	73	50.00

Table 3.4

RMA Behaviours (Based on More Than 50% of the Sample Ranking the Behaviour as RMA)

Behaviour	Frequency	%
1. A manager identifying skill gaps and developing targeted developmental plans	145	100.00
2. A manager dealing with performance issues as soon as they come up	145	100.00
3. A manager acknowledging that his/her subordinate's performance has improved and discussing how to maintain the improvements	145	100.00
4. A manager setting up times to meet his/her subordinates to review their performance	145	100.00
5. A manager giving his/her subordinate time frames to improve performance and setting a date for review	143	98.78
6. A manager implementing performance improvement plans	143	98.77
7. A manager asking his/her subordinate what he/she thinks the solution to his/her performance problem is	143	98.77
8. A manager reprimanding his/her subordinate in a calm manner, using a neutral tone of voice	143	98.77
9. A manager explaining to his/her subordinate the impact of his/her performance on the organisation	143	98.77
10. A manager creating an environment of mutual respect	143	98.75
11. A manager checking in with his/her subordinate when giving feedback and asking if he/she agrees/disagrees with what the manager is saying or if he/she has anything to add	141	97.47
12. Performance appraisals	141	97.44
13, A manager explaining to his/her subordinate how he/she can improve performance	140	96.43
14. A manager providing constructive criticism to his/her subordinate	140	96.43
15. A manager offering appropriate support (e.g. training) to his/her subordinates	140	96.30
16. A manager setting goals for his/her subordinates and monitoring that those goals have been achieved	138	95.06
17. A manager giving specific examples of his/her subordinate's poor performance	138	95.06
18. A manager counselling an employee before giving him/her a verbal or written warning	138	95.06
19. A manager documenting and recording performance issues	138	95.00
20. A manager holding meetings addressing underperformance	136	93.98
21. A manager explaining to his/her subordinate how he/she has underperformed	133	91.95
22. A manager taking mitigating factors into account when examining his/her subordinate's conduct	132	91.36
23. Managers checking up on subordinates' wellbeing ("are you happy" appraisals)	131	90.12
24. A manager establishing possible causes of his/her subordinate's performance issues	131	90.00
25. An employer allowing an employee to call witnesses to his/her disciplinary hearing	130	89.29
26. A manager having regular counselling sessions with his/her subordinates about their behaviour	128	88.10
27. Investigation by the manager of any alleged misconduct	127	87.80
28. A manager explicitly requesting a team member to participate in a team meeting	125	86.42
29. A manager holding his/her subordinate to a high performance standard	124	85.23
30. A manager giving his/her subordinate a benefit in relation to his/her employment	112	77.50
31. Directors and line managers meeting once a month to discuss the issues they are having with their staff members	109	75.31
32. A manager taking disciplinary action against his/her subordinate	107	73.81
33. A manager making the details of contributions in a project highly visible to others within the organisation	99	67.90
34. A manager being stern with his/her subordinates	98	67.47
35. Demotion for incompetence	97	66.67
36. A manager giving his/her subordinate negative feedback pertaining to his/her work performance	90	61.73
37. A manager taking cultural norms and rituals into account when disciplining his/her subordinates	83	57.50
38. A manager reprimanding a team member based on complaints about him/her from other team members	76	52.38
39. A manager implementing penalties or punishments for poor performance	76	52.38
40. A manager asking his/her subordinate to take a medical examination to make sure he/she is fit for work	74	51.23

Table 3.5

WPB Behaviours When Working From Home (Based on More Than 50% of the Sample Ranking the Behaviour as WPB)

Behaviour	Frequency	%
1. A manager belittling his/her subordinate's contribution to online meetings	119	81.71
2. A manager making a vulnerable employee or an employee who is scared to return to work, return to work	113	78.05

Table 3.6

WPI Behaviours When Working From Home (Based on More Than 50% of the Sample Ranking the Behaviour as WPI)

Behaviour	Frequency	%
1. A manager excluding his/her subordinate (e.g. from online meetings, failing to copy him/her into team emails)	87	60.24
2. A manager ignoring his/her subordinate's contribution to online meetings	92	63.41
3. A manager ignoring/not responding to his/her subordinates attempt to contact him/her electronically or via phone call	94	64.63
4. A manager taking away certain support structures that his/her subordinates would have had previously; such as coaching, therapy sessions, or other employee assistant programs	86	59.26

Table 3.7

RMA Behaviours When Working From Home (Based on More Than 50% of the Sample Ranking the Behaviour as RMA)

Behaviour	Frequency	%
1. Developing Remote Working Guides for Managers and Staff and communicating these via online training	145	100.00
2. An employer directing his/her employees to partake in training on the new technology	138	95.12
3. A manager being open and flexible about alternative working patterns	142	97.56
4. An employer paying an employee less in these times because of the losses the business is making	90	61.73
5. A manager regularly checking in with his/her subordinates to ensure that the new arrangements are working for them	142	97.56
6. A manager providing contact details and signpost to a range of resources	143	98.78
7. A manager requiring his/her subordinates to document what they do during the day and how many hours they spend on each task	73	50.00

Tables 3.1 to 3.6 represent the behaviours that the majority of the participants (that is 50% or more) ranked as WPB, WPI or RMA respectively for both the original items (Tables 3.1 to 3.3) and the WFH items (Tables 3.4 to 3.6).

In order to get a clearer indication of how the sample ranked each behaviour, the behaviour was then broken down into the exact percentages of participants that ranked the behaviour as WPB, WPI, RMA or none of the above and this is presented in Tables in the Results and Discussion Chapter as well as in pie charts in the appendix (Appendix K).

The Results and Discussion section of this study also shows how the researcher in consultation with her supervisor and subject matter experts ranked each behaviour and how the

participants ranked these behaviours. Participants who felt that a behaviour was none of the above (that is the behaviour did not represent WPB, WPI or RMA) were asked to comment. These comments were qualitatively analysed. The Results and Discussion section of this study presents this analysis linking it back to relevant literature where appropriate.

Qualitative Data

Conventional content analysis (CCA) was used to analyse the responses from the survey. CCA seeks to describe and quantify specific phenomena (Downe-Wambolt, 1992). It reduces the volume of text collected by identifying and grouping categories together in order to understand, describe, and quantify specific phenomena (Bengtsson, 2016; Downe-Wambolt, 1992). Krippendorff (2004) defines CCA as a method applicable both in a quantitative and qualitative approach as "a research technique for making replicable and valid inferences from texts (or other meaningful matter) to the contexts of their use" (p. 18). In this study, CCA was used to gain greater insight and understanding of how participants perceive WPB, WPI and RMA. The survey in this study asked participants open-ended questions pertaining to how they deal with and define WPB, WPI, and RMA. The survey also presented a check-list of behaviours and participants were asked to rank the behaviours as either WPB, WPI, RMA or none of the above. If participants ranked the behaviour as none of the above they were asked to comment and explain why they did not feel the behaviour represented WPB, WPI or RMA. CCA was used to analyse these responses as well as the open-ended responses in the survey. This type of qualitative design is particularly useful for this study as it is typically used when existing theory or research literature on a phenomenon is limited (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005). RMA is an unexplored area of research and research to date has not attempted to distinguish WPB, WPI and RMA.

The researcher did not utilise preconceived categories but allowed the categories and category names to emerge from the data. This is referred to as inductive category development (Mayring, 2000) and allowed the researcher to fully immerse herself in the data to allow new insights to emerge (Kondracki & Wellman, 2002). This was particularly useful for this research study. As this is a new area of research, there was no way of knowing how participants would answer the open-ended questions. This approach to CCA allowed the researcher to analyse the responses and describe what categories and themes emerged. The researcher needed to continually be aware of her own biases and expectations and how this affected her analysis of

the data. The researcher kept a self-reflexive journal throughout the study in order to understand and minimise her own bias and influence when interpreting the results. The researcher also continually consulted her supervisor about the research process and research findings.

The researcher began by reading all the data repeatedly in order to immerse herself in the responses and obtain a sense of how the participants responded to the survey. This is in line with Hsieh and Shannon's (2005) recommendations, which emphasise the importance of first becoming immersed in the data and reading it like a novel. Bengtsson (2016) refers to this as de-contextualisation and shows the importance of the researcher obtaining a sense of the whole and understanding the responses broadly before they can be broken down into smaller meaning units. Thereafter, the researcher began the "open coding process" (Berg, 2001). The researcher began by identifying and highlighting the words in the text that capture key thoughts or concepts. The researcher grouped these into small meaning units. A meaning unit is the smallest unit of analysis in CCA containing some of the information that addresses the researcher's aim (Graneheim & Lundman, 2004). Each meaning unit was labelled with a code. As the codes were obtained inductively, the researcher performed the coding process repeatedly. This helped ensure the reliability of the results obtained. The researcher then condensed the extended meaning units (Graneheim & Lundman, 2004) and identified categories and themes based on the relationship between different codes and how these can be linked. CCA allows the researcher to choose categories as the highest level of abstraction or to go further and create themes (Erlingsson & Brysiewicz, 2017). The researcher decided to create themes because of the depth and volume of the data collected. Each stage of the analysis was performed several times in order to ensure the quality and trustworthiness of the results obtained (Bengtsson, 2016; Erlingsson & Brysiewicz, 2017) Once the researcher had obtained five themes that addressed the aims of the study, the researcher consulted the literature to determine the extent to which these results were supported or could be made sense of by existing literature (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005; Morse & Richards, 2002). These themes are fully elaborated upon in the Results and Discussion Chapter.

The researcher followed a careful and methodical method as prescribed (Bengtsson, 2016; Hsieh & Shannon, 2005) and outlined above in analysing the data. The researcher continually went back to the responses in order to ensure that the analysis represented the participants' answers. This was an iterative process that helped ensure the rigor of the study. According to Bengtsson (2016) categorisation is complete when, based on the aim of the study,

a reasonable explanation has been reached. As stated on page three, the broad aim of this study was to explore the perceptions held by managers and human resource practitioners with regards to what behaviours constitute WPB and WPI and what behaviours constitute RMA. The purpose of exploring these perceptions was to gain a broad and general understanding of how the three sets of behaviours can be distinguished from one another. The themes from the CCA help explain that context is an important factor that influences managers and HRPs perceptions of how to distinguish WPB, WPI and RMA. It was also clear that in deciding whether behaviour is WPB, WPI or RMA, managers and HRPs take account of the fact that the behaviour may not be severe enough to be termed WPB or WPI but may represent poor management or leadership skills. Another way that managers and HRPs define and perceive these behaviours is in terms of the outcomes they cause in individuals. The absence of a WPB policy and clear grievance procedures was also seen as a major barrier to ending WPB in organisations and as a factor that enhances the difficulties that managers and HRPs have in distinguishing between these behaviours. It was also evident that managers and HRPs take account of bottom-up WPB and WPI when examining whether behaviour is WPB, WPI or RMA. Therefore, the themes reached from the CCA addressed the aims of this study.

Ethical Considerations

Ethical clearance for the study was obtained from the Human Research Ethics Committee (non-medical) at the University of the Witwatersrand. Once ethical clearance was obtained, an email invitation was sent to human resource practitioners and line managers working in a large organisation. A participant information sheet was also provided to all participants informing them of the purpose of the study, what participation will involve and that participation is voluntary and that no one will be advantaged or disadvantaged for choosing to participate or not choosing to participate. In addition, participants, on accessing the online survey, were provided with a consent sheet to tick yes if they agree to participate which then allowed them to proceed to the on line survey. Selecting “yes” on the consent form acted as informed consent for their responses to be used in this research. They were informed that they have the right to withdraw at any time before such a time that they submit the survey on line. Contact details of the researcher and the researcher’s supervisor were included in the email invitation and the participant information sheet along with the contact details of the University’s Ethics office.

The participants were fully assured of their confidentiality and anonymity. This was because; the participants were not identifiable by name and no identifying information was requested in the survey. Although the online survey does indicate the IP addresses of participants, once the data is downloaded all IP addresses were deleted to ensure anonymity. The data was stored securely in a password-protected computer accessible only to the researcher and the researcher's supervisor. Participants were informed that the data would only be used for research purposes and for possible future use in conference proceedings and/or publication/s. However, research findings are presented as general trends only so that no single person's responses can be identified and the name of the organisation is not mentioned in the research or any future conference proceedings and/or publications.

This study was a minimal to no risk study, as the survey did not ask participants if they have been victims of WPB, it merely served to ascertain their perceptions of WPB, WPI and RMA. Additionally, participants in this study were not regarded as vulnerable or at risk.

CHAPTER 4: RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This chapter presents the results and discussion of the study. Although it is standard in a quantitative study to first describe the results of the study and then have a discussion, given the nature of how these results were arrived at it was decided to approach the writing up of the results chapter to incorporate the discussion at the same time. This is because the results were analysed both quantitatively and qualitatively. The quantitative section of the study also had a qualitative element as participants were asked to comment if they did not rank behaviour as WPB, WPI or RMA (that is they felt it was none of the above). While the participants' response on the items (that is whether they ranked the behaviour as WPB, WPI, RMA or none of the above) were quantitatively analysed using percentages, their comments were analysed qualitatively using Conventional Content Analysis (CCA). As discussed above, this allowed for deeper insight into participants' perceptions of the items. Additionally, there were open-ended questions at the beginning and end of the survey that asked participants how they define the constructs under study, how they deal with these issues in their organisations, and what they see as the most important barriers to ending WPB in organisations. These answers were also analysed qualitatively using CCA. The researcher constructed themes based on the participants' comments on the list and their open-ended answers. Five themes were developed based on participants' perceptions of WPB, WPI and RMA and how they deal with these issues.

This chapter is therefore presented in the following way:

1) The results of the quantitative analysis are presented and explained. This is presented slightly differently compared to what would normally be expected in a typical quantitative results study. This is because the researcher decided to divide the behaviours into WPB, WPI and RMA based on at least 50% of the sample ranking the behaviour as either WPB, WPI or RMA. This is discussed with reference to relevant literature for both the original and the WFH items. Behaviours that did not receive a 50% majority are presented and discussed. Behaviours that received comments that helped the researcher make sense of the way in which participants perceive or respond to certain behaviours are also discussed with reference to relevant literature.
2) The purely qualitative analysis is then presented. In this section, CCA was used to analyse the data and the themes that emerged from the responses are presented. In

integrating the results and discussion section, relevant literature was drawn on in order to make sense of, link and explain the themes that emerged.

Section One: Quantitative Data Analysis

This section presents the Tables for each category as defined by the researcher. Based on the literature search and consultation with subject matter experts, the researcher originally ranked all 115 behaviours as WPB, WPI or RMA. Table 4.1 consists of the 28 behaviours originally classified by the researcher as WPB behaviours. Of these behaviours, 23 of them were categorised by the respondents as WPB behaviours (based on 50% or more of the respondents ranking the behaviour as WPB). The percentage columns in the Table refer to the percentage of the respondents that ranked the behaviour as WPB, WPI, RMA or none of the above. An explanation of the behaviours that respondents perceive as WPB linked to the literature and their comments is provided. Table 4.2 presents the 33 behaviours that the researcher ranked as WPI behaviours. Of these 33 behaviours, the respondents perceived 22 of them as WPI behaviours (based on 50% or more of the respondents ranking the behaviour as WPI). The percentage columns in the Table refer to the percentage of the respondents that ranked the behaviour as WPB, WPI, RMA or none of the above. An explanation of how respondents perceive these behaviours is presented with reference to their comments and relevant literature. Finally, Table 4.3 shows the 54 behaviours originally classified by the researcher as RMA. Of these 54 behaviours, the respondents perceived 40 of the behaviours as RMAs (based on 50% or more of the respondents ranking the behaviour as RMA). The percentage columns in the Table refer to the percentage of respondents that ranked the behaviour as WPB, WPI, RMA or none of the above. A brief explanation of their answers with reference to the literature and their comments is provided. Table 4.4 consists of the 30 items across all categories that the respondents ranked below 50% in terms of type (that is the behaviours where there was not consensus by at least 50% of the respondents as to whether the behaviour represents WPB, WPI, RMA or none of the above). The way in which the researcher originally categorised these items is noted in brackets after each item. A discussion of the responses and why they may have differed from those originally proposed by the researcher is elaborated upon. Finally, the responses categorised by the researcher as WPB, WPI and RMA in the working from home (WFH) situation and the way in which the participants responded to them are presented and discussed (Tables 4.5 to 4.8 and the narrative accompanying each table).

For ease of reading the tables, items divided into designated tables are numbered. Although these item numbers do not necessarily align to those in the actual survey; as items were not numbered in the survey according to the researchers designated type; the numbering of the items in the tables below facilitates an easier reading and understanding of the narrative, as it applies to each table

Table 4.1

WPB Behaviours

Behaviour	% WPB	% WPI	% RMA	% none of the above
1. A manager intimidating (finger pointing, invasion of personal space, shoving, blocking/barring the way) his/her subordinate	96.39	3.61	0.00	0.00
2. A manager threatening (verbally, physically, indirectly) his/her subordinate	96.25	1.25	0.00	2.50
3. A manager singling out or humiliating a subordinate in connection with his/her work	92.86	3.57	0.00	3.57
4. A manager retaliating or seeking revenge on his/her subordinate	88.75	6.25	0.00	5.00
5. A manager pressurising a subordinate not to claim something which the subordinate is entitled to (e.g. sick leave, holiday entitlement, travel expenses)	84.71	11.76	2.35	1.18
6. Scapegoating (a manager inflicting blame on his/her subordinate unfairly)	84.15	13.41	0.00	2.44
7. A manager publicly criticising or undermining his/her subordinate	82.75	12.35	1.23	3.70
8. A manager setting up his/her subordinates to fail	82.14	11.90	0.00	5.95
9. A manager using disciplinary procedures that are out of proportion to the subordinate's performance	81.48	8.64	0.00	9.88
10. A manager hinting or signalling to a subordinate that he/she should quit his/her job	79.75	11.39	1.27	7.59
11. A manager making micro-aggressive remarks to his/her subordinates	75.00	22.50	0.00	2.50
12. A manager denying his/her subordinate a benefit in relation to his/her employment	73.75	13.75	2.50	10.00
13. A manager inviting his/her subordinates to "informal" meetings which turn out to be administration of discipline	69.51	20.73	1.22	8.54
14. An employer offering an employee pay or a benefit in exchange for the employee not going to the CCMA or taking the issue further	66.67	17.28	1.23	14.81
15. A manager constantly finding fault with his/her subordinate	65.48	21.43	2.38	10.71
16. A manager shouting or responding in an angry way when provoked by a subordinate	61.73	29.63	1.23	7.41
17. A manager repeatedly reminding a subordinate of his/her errors or mistakes	60.49	22.22	11.11	6.17
18. A manager giving his/her subordinates regular ultimatums	59.26	18.52	9.88	12.35
19. A manager responding in a condescending way to his/her subordinate	56.10	40.24	1.22	2.44
20. A manager denying subordinates resources to help them do their job	56.10	29.27	0.00	14.63
21. A manager blocking his/her subordinate from promotion through poor performance evaluations	55.56	11.11	24.69	8.64
22. A manager pranking or making jokes about his/her subordinate and assuring the subordinate that the manager "wasn't being serious, it was just a joke"	53.66	34.15	1.22	10.98
23. A manager taking inconsistent disciplinary action across a team	52.44	31.71	1.22	14.63
24, A manager reprimanding his/her subordinate for a performance issue and then incorporating other areas in which his/her subordinate was incompetent or has underperformed in the past	49.38	25.93	16.05	8.64
25. A manager pressuring his/her subordinate not to leave at the end of the day due to the high workload the manager has given his/her subordinate	49.38	29.63	13.58	7.41
26. A manager misrepresenting a project so that employees will agree to take part	48.78	41.46	1.22	8.54
27. A manager excluding his/her subordinate from essential conversations	48.78	45.12	0.00	6.10
28. A manager reading communications addressed to his/her subordinate, such as e-mails or faxes	30.86	45.68	3.70	19.75

Table 4.1 contains a list of twenty-eight behaviours. These behaviours were originally categorised by the researcher as being WPB behaviours. This table shows that twenty-three of these behaviours were perceived as WPB by the majority of the sample. From the Table it can be seen that the majority of the participants agree that intimidating and threatening behaviours constitute WPB behaviours. This is evident as 96.39% of the participants agree that intimidating behaviours constitute WPB and 96.25% of the participants agree that threatening behaviours constitute WPB. It is evident that 92.86% of the participants agree that singling out or humiliating a subordinate in connection with his/her work constitutes WPB. None of the participants find these behaviour RMAs. It can be seen that 88.75% of the participants find that retaliating or seeking revenge constitutes WPB and 81.48% of the participants agree that managers are bullying their employees when they use disciplinary procedures that are out of proportion to their employees' performance.

From this Table it is evident that the majority of the participants felt that these twenty-three behaviours in the list constitute WPB behaviours. It can be seen that behaviours such as a manager pranking or making jokes and justifying that the manager "wasn't being serious, it was just a joke", taking inconsistent disciplinary action across a team, denying subordinates resources to help them do their job, responding in a condescending way and blocking a subordinate from promotion through poor performance evaluations received just over a 50% majority. In this regard there were cross-rankings with a large number of respondents perceiving these behaviours as WPI and even on occasion RMA (The terms cross-ranking was used when a large number of respondents scored a behaviour as more than one type).

Participants who did not rank behaviour as WPB mostly ranked it as either WPI, or none of the above. On occasion some of the participants ranked these behaviours as RMAs. With regard to the behaviours seen as WPI, this shows that participants view these behaviours as counterproductive work behaviours but may need more contexts around the behaviour and the relationships in order to ascertain whether the behaviours constitute WPB or WPI. This is seen in the item "a manager responding in a condescending way to his/her subordinate" where 56.10% of the participants ranked this as WPB, 40.34% ranked it as WPI (showing that 96.44% of the participants view this as a counterproductive work behaviour), 1.22% ranked it as a RMA and 2.44 ranked it as none of the above. The participants that ranked this behaviour as none of the above noted that it depends on whether the manager frequently responds to his/her subordinates in a condescending manner or whether it is a once off incident. This is in line with

the literature, which defines WPB behaviours as behaviours that occur frequently (e.g. once a week) and for an extended period of time (about six months) (Einarsen et al., 2003, 2011). The participants also noted that this could be bad management and the manager may have accidently made a condescending remark when in a particularly stressful situation. It is possible that these factors influenced whether participants ranked this behaviour as WPB or WPI.

The importance of the context and surrounding circumstances is also seen in the item "a manager blocking his/her subordinate from promotion through poor performance evaluations" where the majority of the participants (55.56%) ranked the behaviour as WPB, followed by RMA (24.69%), followed by WPI (11.11%), and lastly none of the above (8.64). Those who commented that the behaviour is none of the above noted that it depends on the objective performance of the subordinate and whether the poor performance evaluations are justified or not. It was noted that it may be reasonable if the subordinate is under-performing but that the manager should still engage in a dialogue with the subordinate about his/her poor performance. The participants clearly stated that this behaviour would be a WPB behaviour, and even added that it would be in contravention of workplace laws and policies if the poor performance evaluations are unjustified. The participants noted that a manager has the power to block a subordinate from promotion and if the manager abuses this power and unfairly blocks a subordinate from promotion then this is outright bullying. The WPB literature places importance on the imbalance of power as a key component of WPB. Therefore the respondents' comments help to explain why 55.56% of participants would classify this behaviour as WPB and 24.69% would classify it as a RMA. It is therefore often important to carefully examine behaviour and all the surrounding evidence before judging whether it is WPB, WPI or RMA.

Table 4.2

WPI behaviours

Behaviour	% WPB	% WPI	% RMA	% none of the above
1. A manager neglecting to say please or thank you	6.17	86.42	0.00	7.41
2. A manager talking loudly on the phone about personal matters	5.00	80.00	0.00	15.00
3. A manager answering the phone with a "ja" when his/her subordinate calls	3.70	75.31	4.94	16.05
4. A manager rolling his/her eyes at his/her subordinate's idea	24.69	70.37	2.47	2.47
5. A manager inviting his/her subordinates to a formal meeting without telling his/her subordinates what the meeting is about	14.81	66.67	11.11	7.41
6. A manager behaving in an abrupt manner towards his/her subordinates	28.05	64.63	1.22	6.10
7. A manager interrupting his/her subordinate while he/she is speaking on the telephone	23.81	64.29	1.19	10.71
8. A manager giving little explanation for his/her decisions	20.24	64.29	5.95	9.52
9. Failure from the manager to show empathy or compassion towards his/her subordinates (failure to acknowledge contextual factors that prevent a subordinate from carrying out his/her duties)	25.61	62.20	0.00	12.20
10. A manager not reprimanding team members who are rude to or criticise one another	13.58	60.49	7.41	18.52
11. A manager making unwanted attempts to draw a subordinate into a discussion of personal matters	33.33	59.26	0.00	7.41
12. A manager not rewarding or recognising good performance	16.87	59.04	4.82	19.28
13. A manager raising his/her voice when speaking to his/her subordinate	35.71	58.33	0.00	5.95
14. A manager taking items from his/her subordinate without returning them	29.76	57.14	0.00	13.10
15. A manager opening his/her subordinate's desk drawers without permission	27.38	55.95	1.19	15.48
16. A manager withholding information which affects the performance of his/her subordinate	30.23	55.81	2.33	11.63
17. Failure of the manager to consult his/her subordinate in reference to a decision he/she should have been involved in	27.16	54.32	4.94	13.58
18. A manager ignoring subordinates' complaints that he/she sees as frivolous	34.52	53.57	0.00	11.90
19. A manager commenting on his/her subordinate's appearance and lifestyle	30.86	53.09	4.94	11.11
20. A manager comparing team members with one another	25.61	52.44	7.32	14.63
21. A manager responding in a sarcastic way to his/her subordinates	39.29	52.38	1.19	7.14
22. A manager sharing personal information about his/her subordinate	34.52	50.00	0.00	15.48
23. Failure of the manager to provide the subordinate a suitable job description (one that is clear and not vague or exceedingly long)	30.49	48.78	1.22	19.51
24. A manager calling or messaging his/her subordinate outside of work hours	8.64	48.15	11.11	32.10
25. Failure from the manager to support his/her subordinate (e.g. a manager ignoring his/her subordinate's requests for help or being slow in seeing to matters on which his/her subordinate is reliant on him/her for)	41.98	48.15	1.23	8.64
26. A manager providing conflicting instructions to his/her subordinate	22.62	47.62	2.38	27.38
27. A manager only giving directions in written form	4.76	46.43	29.76	19.05
28. Administrative delays (this could include delays in processing pay or leave applications)	20.25	44.30	10.13	25.32
29. A manager dominating team meetings and not allowing others to give input	48.78	42.68	1.22	7.32
30. A manager excessively monitoring the work of his/her subordinates	39.29	36.90	13.10	10.71
31. A manager making allegations against his/her subordinates	37.04	35.80	7.41	19.75
32. A manager changing his/her work expectations or deadlines of his/her subordinates	21.95	34.15	26.83	17.07
33. An employer putting a clause in an employee contract that the employer is entitled to monitor employee emails	32.10	27.16	24.69	16.05

Table 4.2 displays thirty-three behaviours. These behaviours were originally categorised by the researcher as being WPI behaviours. This table indicates that twenty-two of these behaviours were perceived of as WPI by the majority of the sample. Again, within this table there is evidence of cross-rankings. The table shows that participants who did not feel the behaviour represents a WPI behaviour were more likely to rank the behaviour as WPB. This is

also seen in the small percentage of participants who ranked these behaviours as RMAs. The behaviours where the majority of the sample ranked the behaviour as WPI represent typically rude and discourteous behaviours, such as talking loudly on the phone about personal matters, not saying please or thank you, rolling eyes and answering the phone with a "ja". It can also be seen from the table that participants ranked omissions from a manager (that is a manager not performing an action when there is an expectation to do so) as WPI behaviours. This can be seen in behaviours such as giving little explanation for decisions, not recognising good performance, withholding information, ignoring complaints the manager sees as frivolous, inviting a subordinate to meetings without telling the subordinate what the meetings are about, failing to show empathy or compassion, failing to consult a subordinate when there is an expectation to do so as well as not reprimanding team members who are rude to or criticise one another.

From the Table it can be seen that the majority of the participants agree that typically rude or discourteous behaviours represent WPI behaviours, however there appears to be less consensus on behaviours that appear to be more rude than for example not saying please or thank you but possibly not as harsh as threatening and intimidating behaviours characteristic of WPB. This is seen in behaviours that received under a 55% majority, and include behaviours such as a manager commenting on his/her subordinate's appearance and lifestyle, a manager comparing team members with one another, a manager responding in a sarcastic way, and a manager sharing personal information about his/her subordinate. The majority of participants who did not rank these behaviours as WPI ranked it as a WPB behaviour (with percentages ranging from 25.61% to 39.29%) with a small percentage ranking the behaviours as RMA and the remaining ranking it as none of the above.

A common theme that emerged from the open-ended responses of those that ranked these behaviours as none of the above was that these behaviours could simply be attributed to a manager's personality and do not represent bullying or uncivil behaviour. It could just be how the manager is and the manager may engage in actions such as comparing team members with one another in order to encourage and motivate the team. As discussed in the Literature Review Chapter, HRPs often undermine targets complaints of WPB and WPI and blame it on a "personality clash" between the parties. This makes it difficult for participants to attain relief from what they may view as a manager bullying them or being uncivil. It is evident that the majority of the participants view these behaviours such ignoring complaints (88.09%),

comments about appearance or lifestyle (83.95%), being compared with other team members (78.05%), sarcasm (91.67%), and sharing personal information (84.52%) as counterproductive work behaviours (that is either WPB or WPI). From the Table it can be seen that “a manager sharing personal information about his/her subordinates” was ranked as WPI by 50.00% of participants, as WPB by 34.52% of participants and as none of the above by 15.48% of participants. None of the participants ranked this behaviour as RMA and those that ranked it as none of the above noted that it goes beyond WPB, is unethical, illegal and goes against basic HR policies. According to the participants, this behaviour prompts a culture of WPI and leads to an environment of gossip and distrust.

Table 4.3

RMA behaviours

Behaviour	% WPB	% WPI	% RMA	% none of the above
1. A manager identifying skill gaps and developing targeted developmental plans	0.00	0.00	100.00	0.00
2. A manager dealing with performance issues as soon as they come up	0.00	0.00	100.00	0.00
3. A manager acknowledging that his/her subordinate's performance has improved and discussing how to maintain the improvements	0.00	0.00	100.00	0.00
4. A manager setting up times to meet his/her subordinates to review their performance	0.00	0.00	100.00	0.00
5. A manager giving his/her subordinate time frames to improve performance and setting a date for review	1.22	0.00	98.78	0.00
6. A manager implementing performance improvement plans	0.00	0.00	98.77	1.23
7. A manager asking his/her subordinate what he/she thinks the solution to his/her performance problem is	0.00	1.23	98.77	0.00
8. A manager reprimanding his/her subordinate in a calm manner, using a neutral tone of voice	0.00	0.00	98.77	1.23
9. A manager explaining to his/her subordinate the impact of his/her performance on the organisation	0.00	1.23	98.77	0.00
10. A manager creating an environment of mutual respect	0.00	0.00	98.75	1.25
11. A manager checking in with his/her subordinate when giving feedback and asking if he/she agrees/disagrees with what the manager is saying or if he/she has anything to add	0.00	2.53	97.47	0.00
12. Performance appraisals	1.28	0.00	97.44	1.28
13, A manager explaining to his/her subordinate how he/she can improve performance	0.00	0.00	96.43	3.57
14. A manager providing constructive criticism to his/her subordinate	1.19	0.00	96.43	2.38
15. A manager offering appropriate support (e.g. training) to his/her subordinates	0.00	2.47	96.30	1.23
16. A manager setting goals for his/her subordinates and monitoring that those goals have been achieved	0.00	3.70	95.06	1.23
17. A manager giving specific examples of his/her subordinate's poor performance	2.47	2.47	95.06	0.00
18. A manager counselling an employee before giving him/her a verbal or written warning	0.00	2.47	95.06	2.47
19. A manager documenting and recording performance issues	0.00	3.75	95.00	1.25
20. A manager holding meetings addressing underperformance	1.20	2.41	93.98	2.41
21. A manager explaining to his/her subordinate how he/she has underperformed	2.30	2.30	91.95	3.45
22. A manager taking mitigating factors into account when examining his/her subordinate's conduct	4.94	3.70	91.36	0.00
23. Managers checking up on subordinates' wellbeing ("are you happy" appraisals)	1.23	3.70	90.12	4.94

24. A manager establishing possible causes of his/her subordinate's performance issues	5.00	3.75	90.00	1.25
25. An employer allowing an employee to call witnesses to his/her disciplinary hearing	2.38	2.38	89.29	5.95
26. A manager having regular counselling sessions with his/her subordinates about their behaviour	1.19	3.57	88.10	7.14
27. Investigation by the manager of any alleged misconduct	3.66	6.10	87.80	2.44
28. A manager explicitly requesting a team member to participate in a team meeting	2.47	9.88	86.42	1.23
29. A manager holding his/her subordinate to a high performance standard	3.41	1.14	85.23	10.23
30. A manager giving his/her subordinate a benefit in relation to his/her employment	2.50	3.75	77.50	16.25
31. Directors and line managers meeting once a month to discuss the issues they are having with their staff members	2.47	17.28	75.31	4.94
32. A manager taking disciplinary action against his/her subordinate	1.19	3.57	73.81	21.43
33. A manager making the details of contributions in a project highly visible to others within the organisation	4.94	18.52	67.90	8.64
34. A manager being stern with his/her subordinates	4.82	21.69	67.47	6.02
35. Demotion for incompetence	5.95	5.95	66.67	21.43
36. A manager giving his/her subordinate negative feedback pertaining to his/her work performance	11.11	18.52	61.73	8.64
37. A manager taking cultural norms and rituals into account when disciplining his/her subordinates	18.75	13.75	57.50	10.00
38. A manager reprimanding a team member based on complaints about him/her from other team members	13.10	21.43	52.38	13.10
39. A manager implementing penalties or punishments for poor performance	25.00	14.29	52.38	8.33
40. A manager asking his/her subordinate to take a medical examination to make sure he/she is fit for work	17.50	10.00	51.23	21.25
41. A manager directing and controlling the way work is carried out	18.52	20.99	46.91	13.58
42. A manager insisting that his/her subordinate carry out the work exactly how he/she says, after the subordinate misunderstands the manager's explanations of alternative methods of doing the task	18.52	28.40	39.51	13.58
43. A manager pressurising his/her subordinate to attend supplementary meetings and training sessions	18.75	33.75	38.75	8.75
44. A manager conducting a formal disciplinary enquiry before giving a verbal or written warning	32.50	20.00	36.25	11.25
45. An employer suddenly removing a benefit from an employee's contract due to organisational change or downsizing	27.16	23.46	32.10	17.28
46. An employer refusing an employee permission to return to work due to a medical condition	36.59	14.63	30.49	18.29
47. A manager asking a subordinate to carry out tasks outside his/her job description	27.38	17.86	22.62	32.14
48. Making an employee redundant	31.25	10.00	22.50	36.25

49. A line manager calling the director to discipline his/her subordinate	30.12	32.53	19.28	18.07
50 A manager calling a trade union leader or another representative to discipline his/her subordinate	36.25	30.00	18.75	15.00
51. A manager accusing his/her subordinate of not trying hard enough	23.46	48.15	17.28	11.11
52. A manager explaining that he/she is under pressure to get work done and telling his/her subordinates that if they complete their daily tasks they can go home, if not they must stay and finish and if they do not want to work they must leave	48.81	26.19	16.67	8.33
53. A manager reclassifying, redeploying, or downgrading an employee's job, even if it means that he/she will be doing a lower level of work or work below his/her level of competence	48.78	17.07	13.41	20.73
54. A manager rejecting his/her subordinate's application for leave, training or promotion	47.50	17.50	11.25	23.75

Table 4.3 shows that the participants ranked the majority of the behaviours as defined by the researcher as RMA, within the survey, as RMAs. This is seen in that 40 behaviours were ranked as RMAs by the participants and 54 behaviours were ranked as RMAs by the researcher. The table shows that behaviours such as holding a subordinate to a high performance standard, giving time frames to improve performance, offering appropriate support, and taking mitigating factors into account when examining a subordinate's conduct are seen as RMAs by participants.

The table shows that a high percentage of participants ranked these behaviours as RMAs, showing a high level of agreement amongst participants. The table shows that only 57.50% of the participants viewed the item "a manager taking cultural norms and rituals into account when disciplining his/her subordinate" as a RMA. This item was ranked as a WPB behaviour by 18.75% of the participants, a WPI behaviour by 13.75% of the participants and as none of the above by 10.00% of the participants. Participants who ranked this behaviour as none of the above noted how difficult it is to answer this question as it largely depends on what is done and how it is done. There are a number of different cultures in South African organisations and according to one participant cultural intricacies should be included in a "*team charter*" so that there is "*transparency, agreement, and no space to make things up*" (Participant 8). These intricacies are evident in the fact that it may be considered insensitive to make eye contact in certain cultures but may be considered rude not to make eye contact in other cultures. The manner in which cultural norms and rituals are taken into account is paramount as it could be reasonable if done out of genuine care and in the spirit of diversity

and inclusion. However, the participants emphasised that it could at times be done in a condescending manner. As mentioned above, condescending behaviours were seen as WPB by 56.10% of participants and as WPI by 40.34% of participants.

It is also evident from the Table that the items "a manager reprimanding a team member based on complaints about him/her from other team members" and "a manager implementing penalties or punishments for poor performance" were ranked as a RMA by only 52.38% of the respondents. The participants that commented that these behaviours are none of the above made reference to the words "reprimand" and "punishment" respectively and made the point that a manager's duty should not be to punish and reprimand. A manager should engage in open dialogue and have a meaningful conversation with their subordinates if their performance is poor or should have a conversation with the whole team if they receive complaints about certain team members. The punitive and coercive connotations of these words is encapsulated by Participant 4's comment that the word punishment "*made me think of the "master and slave" paradigm which so often exists and is sadly disguised by a body guard of untruths*". This shows how important it is for subordinates that managers treat them "*as adults with dignity and respect and not as school children that need to be punished when we don't perform*" (Participant 10).

Table 4.4

Behaviours That Did Not Have a 50% Majority

Behaviour	% WPB	% WPI	% RMA	% none of the above
1. Making an employee redundant (RMA)	31.25	10.00	22.50	36.25
2. A manager only giving directions in written form (WPI)	4.76	46.43	29.76	19.05
3, A manager providing conflicting instructions to his/her subordinate (WPI)	22.62	47.62	2.38	27.38
4, A manager asking a subordinate to carry out tasks outside his/her job description (RMA)	27.38	17.86	22.62	32.14
5. A manager explaining that he/she is under pressure to get work done and telling his/her subordinates that if they complete their daily tasks they can go home, if not they must stay and finish and if they do not want to work they must leave (RMA)	48.81	26.19	16.67	8.33
6. A manager excessively monitoring the work of his/her subordinates (WPI)	39.29	36.90	13.10	10.71
7. Failure of the manager to provide the subordinate a suitable job description (one that is clear and not vague or exceedingly long) (WPI)	30.49	48.78	1.22	19.51
8. A line manager calling the director to discipline his/her subordinate (RMA)	30.12	32.53	19.28	18.07
9. A manager making allegations against his/her subordinates (WPI)	37.04	35.80	7.41	19.75
10. A manager dominating team meetings and not allowing others to give input (WPI)	48.78	42.68	1.22	7.32
11, A manager changing his/her work expectations or deadlines of his/her subordinates (WPI)	21.95	34.15	26.83	17.07
12, A manager reprimanding his/her subordinate for a performance issue and then incorporating other areas in which his/her subordinate was incompetent or has underperformed in the past (WPB)	49.38	25.93	16.05	8.64
13. A manager misrepresenting a project so that employees will agree to take part (WPB)	48.78	41.46	1.22	8.54
14. An employer refusing an employee permission to return to work due to a medical condition (RMA)	36.59	14.63	30.49	18.29
15. A manager excluding his/her subordinate from essential conversations (WPB)	48.78	45.12	0.00	6.10
16. A manager reclassifying, redeploying, or downgrading an employee's job, even if it means that he/she will be doing a lower level of work or work below his/her level of competence (RMA)	48.78	17.07	13.41	20.73
17. A manager rejecting his/her subordinate's application for leave, training or promotion (RMA)	47.50	17.50	11.25	23.75
18. Failure from the manager to support his/her subordinate (e.g. a manager ignoring his/her subordinate's requests for help or being slow in seeing to matters on which his/her subordinate is reliant on him/her for) (WPI)	41.98	48.15	1.23	8.64
19. A manager pressurising his/her subordinate to attend supplementary meetings and training sessions (RMA)	18.75	33.75	38.75	8.75
20. A manager calling or messaging his/her subordinate outside of work hours (WPI)	8.64	48.15	11.11	32.10
21. A manager directing and controlling the way work is carried out (RMA)	18.52	20.99	46.91	13.58
22. A manager accusing his/her subordinate of not trying hard enough (RMA)	23.46	48.15	17.28	11.11
23. Administrative delays (this could include delays in processing pay or leave applications) (WPI)	20.25	44.30	10.13	25.32
24. An employer suddenly removing a benefit from an employee's contract due to organisational change or downsizing (RMA)	27.16	23.46	32.10	17.28
25. A manager pressuring his/her subordinate not to leave at the end of the day due to the high workload the manager has given his/her subordinate (WPB)	49.38	29.63	13.58	7.41
26. A manager calling a trade union leader or another representative to discipline his/her subordinate (RMA)	36.25	30.00	18.75	15.00
27. A manager reading communications addressed to his/her subordinate, such as e-mails or faxes (WPB)	30.86	45.68	3.70	19.75
28. An employer putting a clause in an employee contract that the employer is entitled to monitor employee emails (WPI)	32.10	27.16	24.69	16.05
29. A manager conducting a formal disciplinary enquiry before giving a verbal or written warning (RMA)	32.50	20.00	36.25	11.25
30. A manager insisting that his/her subordinate carry out the work exactly how he/she says, after the subordinate misunderstands the manager's explanations of alternative methods of doing the task (RMA)	18.52	28.40	39.51	13.58

Table 4.4 shows the behaviours where there was not an agreement by 50% of the participants on whether the behaviour represents WPB, WPI, RMA or none of the above. Note that the classification by the researcher of these items is bracketed after each item, while the respondents' perceptions of each item are represented within the percentage columns.

Based on the literature, the researcher presumed that participants would rank certain behaviours as WPB, WPI or RMA and has therefore labelled them in brackets based on this presumption. There are instances where a significant deviation can be seen between how the participants ranked an item and how the researcher in consultation with her supervisor and subject matter experts classified the item. There are two mechanisms that helped the researcher make sense of this deviation: the participants comments on the items they ranked as none of the above allowed the researcher access into how participants thought about and acted on these issues and behaviours, and related to this, the way participants respond to or cognitively appraise an item is influenced by their personal contexts, experiences and environment.

Cognitive appraisal is defined by Lazarus and Folkman (1984) as an individual's personal interpretation of a situation that ultimately influences the extent to which they perceive the situation. According to Miller and Willis (2016) in their article on Cognitive Models of Answering Processes, respondents cognitively interpret, assign meaning and respond to survey questions based on cognitive schemas or conceptual frameworks that have been constructed through an individual's interaction with their environment. Cognitive schemas are formed and created based on an individual's cultural context and social interactions and these allow respondents to make meaning of survey questions. This may explain the deviation of answers in this section as it is possible that what one respondent perceives as WPB. WPI or RMA may not be appraised in the same way by another respondent based on a range of factors, including their individual differences in experience or culture. This could explain why 31.25% of participants ranked the item "making an employee redundant" as WPB, 10% ranked it as WPI, 22.50% ranked it as RMA and 36.25% ranked it as none of the above. It is clear that while 22.50% of respondents view this as a necessary but harsh component of fulfilling a managerial duty (RMA), 32.50% of participants view this behaviour as counterproductive work behaviour. This could be informed by participants' prior experience and history as well as the way they interpret or perceive their world. Miller and Willis (2016) show how a person's worldview will influence their responses to survey questions. This is true in this case as a respondent who views the world as just or fair or tries to promote these ideals may put the needs of employees

before the organisation and take steps to avoid making an employee redundant, whereas a respondent who views the world in a more tough or competitive manner may see actions like making an employee redundant as a necessary way to ensure businesses are profitable. This may also be influenced by whether a respondent is a capitalist, a communist, or a socialist, however this is beyond the scope of the present study.

From the Table it can be seen that the following behaviours were ranked as WPB behaviours by just under 50% of participants; a manager explaining that he/she is under pressure to get work done and telling his/her subordinates that if they complete their tasks they can go home, if not they must stay and finish and if they do not want to work they must leave, misrepresenting a project so that employees will agree to take part, a manager reclassifying, redeploying, or downgrading an employee's job, even if it means that he/she will be doing a lower level of work or work below his/her level of competence, and a manager pressuring his/her subordinate not to leave at the end of the day due to the high workload the manager has given his/her subordinate. These items were ranked as WPB behaviours by 48 – 49% of participants. The Table shows that 48.78% of participants ranked that failure of the manager to provide the subordinate a suitable job description (one that is clear and not vague or exceedingly long) as a WPI behaviour, 48.15% of participants ranked a manager contacting a subordinate outside of work hours and a manager accusing a subordinate of not trying hard enough, as WPI behaviours.

The following section outlines the WPB, WPI and RMA behaviours that the researcher developed for WFH conditions. Participants' responses in terms of percentages are reported in the table, followed by a discussion of the percentage response.

Table 4.5

WPB Behaviours When Working From Home

Behaviour	% WPB	% WPI	% RMA
1. A manager belittling his/her subordinate's contribution to online meetings	81.71	18.29	0.00
2. A manager making a vulnerable employee or an employee who is scared to return to work, return to work	78.05	20.73	1.22

Table 4.5 shows the behaviours that the majority of the participants ranked as WPB behaviours when working from home. From the Table it can be seen that the majority of the participants agree that belittling a subordinate's contribution to an online meeting and making a vulnerable employee who is scared to return to work, return to work, constitute WPB behaviours.

Table 4.6

WPI Behaviours When Working From Home

Behaviour	% WPB	% WPI	% RMA
1. A manager excluding his/her subordinate (e.g. from online meetings, failing to copy him/her into team emails)	38.55	60.24	1.20
2. A manager ignoring his/her subordinate's contribution to online meetings	36.59	63.41	0.00
3. A manager ignoring/not responding to his/her subordinates attempt to contact him/her electronically or via phone call	35.37	64.63	0.00
4. A manager taking away certain support structures that his/her subordinates would have had previously; such as coaching, therapy sessions, or other employee assistant programs	27.16	59.26	13.58

Table 4.6 shows the behaviours that the majority of the participants ranked as WPI behaviours when working from home. From the Table it can be seen that removing a support structure that would have been in place before the pandemic as well as ignoring and exclusionary behaviours are seen as WPI behaviours by participants when working from home.

Table 4.7

RMA Behaviours When Working From Home

Behaviour	% WPB	% WPI	% RMA
1. Developing Remote Working Guides for Managers and Staff and communicating these via online training	0.00	0.00	100.00
2. An employer directing his/her employees to partake in training on the new technology	3.66	1.22	95.12
3. A manager being open and flexible about alternative working patterns	0.00	2.44	97.56
4. An employer paying an employee less in these times because of the losses the business is making	11.11	27.16	61.73
5. A manager regularly checking in with his/her subordinates to ensure that the new arrangements are working for them	1.22	1.22	97.56
6. A manager providing contact details and signpost to a range of resources	0.00	1.22	98.78
7. A manager requiring his/her subordinates to document what they do during the day and how many hours they spend on each task	13.41	36.59	50.00
8. A manager assuming women will have greater difficulties than men working from home and therefore checking up on a female more than a male to make sure work is being done	39.76	44.58	15.66

Table 4.7 shows participants perceptions of RMAs when working from home. The Table shows that a high percentage of participants ranked behaviours such as directing participants to partake in training on new technology, being flexible about alternative working patterns, regularly checking in, providing contact details of a range of resources as well as developing remote working guides as RMAs. The Table shows that 61.73% of the participants felt that it was reasonable to pay an employee less in these times as a result of businesses losses, 27.16% perceive this as WPI and 11.11% perceive this behaviour as WPB. The Table also shows that 50% of participants ranked that a manager requiring his/her subordinate to document what they do during the day and how many hours they spend on each task as RMA, 36.59% viewed this behaviour as WPI and 13.41% ranked this behaviour as WPB.

Table 4.8

Behaviours That Did Not Have a 50% Majority When Working From Home

Behaviour	% WPB	% WPI	% RMA
1. A manager assuming women will have greater difficulties than men working from home and therefore checking up on a female more than a male to make sure work is being done (RMA)	39.76	44.58	15.66

Table 4.8 shows that less than half of the participants perceive that a manager checking up on a female employee more frequently than a male employee to make sure working is being done due to the managers assumption that women will have greater difficulties working from home than men, as WPI. The table shows that 39.76% of participants perceived this behaviour as WPB and 15.66% perceived the behaviour as a RMA. For the WFH items, there was not an option to select none of the above or comment. Using the reasoning of the item "a manager taking cultural norms and rituals into account when disciplining his/her subordinate" it is possible that parallels can be drawn between these two items. The variation in responses on these items may indicate that it largely depends on how and why the manager checks up on the female. Context may be important here as it may be appropriate and welcomed if a women checks up on another women but it may be inappropriate if a man does this. It also depends on how this is done and if participants perceive the actions as being done out of care and concern or out of a desire to put pressure on the female to ensure that the work is being done despite her possible other commitments. The participants also noted in their open-ended responses that they see this behaviour as dominating and controlling and as discriminatory and condescending. Thus, the sense was that managers, more particularly male managers, by checking up on female staff are being undermining and condescending believing that women are not capable of managing home-work boundaries and will therefore not do their jobs properly. Participant 46 noted that if a corporate culture of "*communication, compassion, and empathy for others, yet understanding where various issues needs to be addressed*" was facilitated, then there would be an understanding by all parties whether these actions were performed out of care and concern or in a condescending and controlling manner. Instances where targets feel singled out or discriminated against may be mitigated by "*transparent management structures and honest and open relationships between managers and subordinates*" (Participant 52). A manager may therefore have good intention in checking up on a female but this may or may not be welcomed by their subordinates. It is possible that this

reasoning could explain the variation in responses between participants that ranked this behaviour as WPB, WPI and RMA.

Section Two: Qualitative Data Analysis

Participants were given the opportunity to answer open-ended questions at the beginning and end of the survey. They were also asked to comment if they felt that the behaviour listed in the survey did not represent WPB, WPI or RMA (that is it was 4 – none of the above). These comments were rigorously and carefully analysed using CCA.

Themes were developed and are listed below. The open-ended responses helped to provide further depth and nuance in order to address the main aim of the study; to distinguish between WPB, WPI and RMA. This section will discuss the themes that emerged from the data analysis. Specifically, this section provides greater depth as to how the participants define WPB, WPI and RMA and what barriers exist that prevent the effective management of WPB and WPI. The four themes that emerged are;

1) Context may be paramount in order to ascertain whether the behaviour is workplace bullying, workplace incivility or reasonable management action.
2) Poor management or leadership skills that may be "unreasonable management actions"
3) Lack of a workplace bullying policy and clear grievance procedures
4) Defining behaviour in terms of the outcomes it causes
5) Bullying and incivility from the bottom up: The impossibility of effectively managing

Theme One: Context may be paramount in order to ascertain whether the behaviour is workplace bullying, workplace incivility or reasonable management action

Context can be defined as the circumstances that form the setting for an event, statement, or idea and in terms of which it can be fully understood (May et al., 2016). Context emerged as a significant theme in how participants judge whether behaviour is WPB, WPI or RMA and how they interpreted management and employee actions. The participants emphasised that context "*can often be the difference between one and the other*" (Participant 37). The participants in the study defined and interpreted context in a broad way, so as to include the context around the behaviour, the motive, or agenda behind the behaviour and the

relationships between the parties. This category shows the importance of not only examining the specific behaviour, but the context around the behaviour. This is evident where participants felt that certain behaviour were “none of the above” (that is. not WPB, WPI or RMA) and commented that the context, situation, relationships, and circumstances need to be examined and scrutinised in order to determine what the behaviour is.

In this regard, participants’ noted the importance of examining manager’s motives or agenda behind their actions and behaviours. This was a key theme that emerged when participants were asked what they see as the differences between WPB and RMA. In deciding whether a behaviour represents WPB, WPI or RMA, participants distinguished between whether a manager was motivated by the best interests of their subordinate and the organisation (RMA) or whether the manager was governed by self-interest or “*making life unpleasant for a person*” (Participant 1) (WPB or WPI). The participants acknowledged the duty that managers have to motivate their employees and ensure that work is getting done. They may at times have to monitor work closely and discipline employees. The participants felt that this could be reasonable at times, provided it is done in a reasonable and ethical manner. However, when a manger has ulterior motives or his/her intention is to single an employee out, cause harm, or negatively affect the working environment, then this would be a situation of WPB or WPI. The item “a manager providing conflicting instructions to his/her subordinate” is an example of where intent was seen as important. Participants who commented that this behaviour does not represent WPB, WPI or RMA noted that the situation must be examined and contextual factors need to be taken into account. Intent must be considered, as if the situation itself is confusing for the manager then this may happen naturally and it could be unavoidable. However, if done intentionally to interfere with the employee’s ability to do their job, then it would be WPB or WPI. The manager could also have received conflicting or unclear instructions, or could be unsure and this could be an instance of negligence or bad management, which will be discussed under category two.

There is debate in the literature as to whether intent should be considered a defining feature of WPB (Aquino & Thau, 2009; Einarsen, 1999; Field, 1996). This is partly due to the difficulty of proving intent (Hoel et al., 1999). However, some researchers have argued that the perception of the target as to whether the behaviours were acted out intentionally or not is an important consideration when deciding if a behaviour is WPB, WPI or RMA (Catley et al., 2017; de Castro, 2020; Einarsen et al., 2003; Weisel 2016) . This is supported by the results of

this study where participants emphasised the importance of the intention of the perpetrator in deciding whether behaviour is WPB, WPI or RMA. According to the participants, behaviour may be WPB if they perceive that the perpetrator acted deliberately, with the aim of harming another employee. According to the participants, this is one of the most hurtful and confusing aspects of WPB; knowing that another person in your work environment purposefully wants to harm and degrade either you or one of your team members. Some of the participants referred to their experiences of WPB and noted that as much as they hated their bullies, they desperately wanted their approval and wanted to gain deeper insight and understanding into the reasons they behaved the way they did. The participants also noted the importance of intent in WPI cases as in these cases intent is perceived as ambiguous. They expressed frustration at being on the receiving end of rude or discourteous behaviours and not knowing whether or not the perpetrator intended to cause harm. The ambiguity of intent makes it extremely difficult to attain relief from the organisation and it is for this reason that victims of WPI often try and seek revenge (Andersson & Pearson, 1999; Cortina et al., 2001; Porath & Erez, 2007). The desire for revenge negatively impacts task performance as victims often fixate on the rude act and how to get back on the perpetrator instead of focusing on their jobs (Porath & Erez, 2007). This is how the vicious cycle of WPI starts and spirals out of control, creating a hostile work environment and possibly leading to WPB (Andersson & Pearson, 1999; Namie, 2003). It is therefore important to examine intent in WPB and WPI cases.

It is also important to consider the subordinate's actions and how a subordinate's actions may affect a manager's actions. This is evident in the item "a manager constantly finding fault with his/her subordinate." Circumstances and the performance of the subordinate also need to be considered. This would be an instance of WPB if the manager constantly singles out the subordinate or if the subordinate is not at fault. However, if the subordinate is constantly performing poorly and ignoring his/her manager then this may be a reasonable response from the manager. This is echoed in participants' response on "a manager taking disciplinary actions against his/her subordinate" where participants commented that it should not be a first resort but is required at times and needs to be fair, justified, and related to the job. Similarly, a manager may need to repeatedly remind a subordinate of his/her errors or mistakes or reprimand his/her subordinate for past and current performance issues if the manager has previously been ignored and the subordinate shows no intention or desire to change their behaviour and improve. It must also be borne in mind, as reiterated by participants' responses that managers can slip up and make mistakes and their actions can be largely informed and

guided by those of their subordinates. Managers may shout or respond in angry way when provoked and participants felt that in these instances it is "*difficult to put fault on the reaction*" (Participant 6).

The relationship between a manager and a subordinate may also dictate whether the behaviour is WPB, WPI or RMA. For example, a manager answering with phone with a "ja" when his/her subordinate calls may need further examination into the pre-existing relationship between the manager and their subordinate in order to decide whether the behaviour is WPB, WPI or RMA. Similarly, "a manager pranking or making jokes about his/her subordinate and assuring the subordinate that the manager "wasn't being serious, it was just a joke" also depends on the working relationship between the manager and the team and how well the manager knows the subordinate. This can also be seen in "a manager asking a subordinate to carry out tasks outside his/her job description". In order to make a judgement on where this behaviour falls, the relationship between the manager and the subordinate is an important factor as this will help determine whether there is an element of coercion in the request or if the subordinate can decline the request without consequences. It also depends on what prior information the manager has about the subordinate and his/her capacity, and ability to carry out additional tasks. It would also depend on what the tasks are and if they would help develop the subordinate or if they are required to help the team and meet a deadline. In determining whether behaviour is WPB, WPI or RMA the circumstances and context surrounding the action are thus as important as the action itself and therefore need to be established (Beale & Hoel, 2011; Cooper-Thomas et al., 2014)

Many participants focused on notions of fairness and equality when deciding whether behaviour is WPB or WPI or whether it is a RMA. This is seen in items such as "a manager only giving directions in written form" as well as items where a manager takes disciplinary actions against a subordinate and "a manager pranking or making jokes about his/her subordinate and ensuring the subordinate that the manager "wasn't being serious, it was just a joke"". Participants felt that if a manager's actions are consistent and they treat all team members in the same manner, then depending on the nature and delivery of the behaviour it could be a RMA, however, if the manager singles a subordinate out or treats different subordinates differently, then this could be WPB or WPI. This is in line with the literature on WPB, which classifies isolating, excluding or singling out an employee as WPB (Einarsen et al., 2003, 2011). At times, however, participants noted that depending on the subordinate and

relationship, a manager may be justified in treating different employees differently. For example, participants felt that "a manager directing and controlling the way work is carried out" may be WPB, WPI or RMA depending on the circumstances. It may be an essential managerial task if the employee is new or working on a particularly important task that needs checking, however, it may be regarded as WPB or WPI if it denies employees their autonomy and agency and is motivated by a managerial desire to have absolute control and dominance over the work.

Situational and contingency theories of leadership may be important in these instances. These leadership theories emphasise the importance of the situation or context. The premise of these leadership theories is that different leadership styles may be successful and even required, in different situations. The best leadership style in one situation may not be successful under different circumstances (Landis et al., 2014). The main difference between these leadership theories is that situational leadership theories state that the overall effectiveness of a group depends on the leader adapting to the situation, whereas contingency theories emphasise the importance of the match between the leadership style and the situation (Landis et al., 2014).

Situational leadership theories emphasise the importance of the manager using his/her discretion to decide what action is fair and reasonable in the specific situation. This would involve a manager assessing the employee and their experience, the relationship between the manager and the employee and all other relevant aspects of the situation (Hershey & Blanchard, 1969). According to Hershey and Blanchard's (1969) situational leadership model, successful managers base their leadership styles on the situation and the maturity level of their followers. Hersey and Blanchard (1969) emphasised that maturity should only be assessed in relation to the specific task to be performed.

The maturity level of the follower is defined as the extent to which a subordinate is able and willing to take responsibility for their actions and successfully execute a task. According to this model, there are four styles of leadership (delegating, participating, selling and telling) that can be effective based on whether the maturity level of the follower is high, moderate, or low (Hershey & Blanchard, 1969). High maturity (Level M4) employees work well on their own, are experienced, capable and confident. A manager can therefore utilise the delegating leadership style. This style involves delegation and general supervision but allows followers to take responsibility and execute task decisions. Moderate maturity followers are divided into

two groups; employees that are capable but lack the confidence to assume responsibility, and employees who have the confidence but lack the desire or will to execute the task (Levels M3 and M2). A participating and supportive leadership style would be most useful for employees who are capable but lack confidence as this style emphasises shared decision making through communication and facilitating behaviour from the leader (Hershey & Blanchard, 1969). A selling style would be most beneficial for a leader to use with followers who have the ability but are unwilling to do the job as the leader attempts to sell their ideas to their team by using persuasion and socio-emotional support to try and get the team to adopt the decisions that have to be made (Hershey & Blanchard, 1969). Lastly, a telling style is best for low maturity followers (level M1) that lack the skill to do the task and are also unwilling to learn. With these followers a leader may be compelled to use a telling style, where the leader gives explicit instructions and supervises work closely (Hershey & Blanchard, 1969). Thus, in instances where a subordinate is both unwilling and unable – it is acceptable for a manager to closely supervise their work and tell them what to do.

This model therefore helps to explain participants' responses on the survey, particularly the item "a manager directing and controlling the way work is carried out" as a new employee who lacks the experience or knowledge to do the task would benefit most from a telling style of leadership. Utilising a participating style on a new employee may be a form of WPB or WPI as the employee may feel that he/she needs the guidance and direction. In the same way, utilising a telling leadership style on an experienced and knowledgeable employee may be seen as condescending, controlling, and micro-managing behaviour. It is therefore important to understand the employee, the manager, and their relationship as well as the whole situation and context before either accusing a manager of WPB or WPI and before dismissing employee complaints.

This import of situational leadership styles has been supported by empirical studies more recently where organisations have found that good leaders before the pandemic did not necessarily lead well during the pandemic. This is because a different leadership style is required when the environment is more stable compared to a more volatile and rapidly changing environment. Schwantes (2020) shows that during a crisis, leaders need to provide flexibility, account for emotions, stay engaged and listen the opinions of their subordinates. It is also important for the leader to acknowledge fear and focus on the emotions and wellbeing of their subordinates in order to successfully lead in times of crisis (Koehn, 2020; Lapin, 2020).

According to Lapin (2020) in times of crisis it is especially important for leaders to be able to expose their deeper, authentic selves. It is important for leaders to be able to acknowledge and express how they are feeling not just what they are thinking as these are the only mechanisms that leaders have to inspire the trust of others during times of crisis and uncertainty. This will help leaders to create psychological safety, which is paramount to ensure that all organizational members can draw on their resources to help the organisation during volatile times (Stoller, 2020). Leaders also need to acknowledge the difficulty of the situation, show empathy, and show genuine care and concern for the unique challenges that the whole team faces (Orangefiery, 2020).

During times of crisis there may be times when leaders need to act quickly and being able to successfully manage and lead during a crisis may also require a leadership style that is more directive (Meyer et al., 2020). It is essential that leaders communicate constantly with their subordinates (Dirani et al., 2020) and be transparent about what they know and what they do not know (Orangefiery, 2020).

The complexity of distinguishing between different behaviours is evident in the "fine line" between RMAs and WPB or WPI. One participant described how "*many actions taken by managers are necessitated by circumstances and do not necessarily reflect bullying or incivility*" (Participant 3). Many RMAs may become WPB and WPI behaviours "*depending on circumstances and delivery and attitude*" (Participant 7). This is supported by early studies by Maier (1963) who viewed leadership style as a continuum from no sharing of power (unilateral decision-makings) by the leader, to complete power sharing (group decision making). According to Maier (1963), leaders need to vary their styles according to the type of problem presented. This is also reflected in this study where a recurring theme was expressed that context can often be the difference between whether behaviour is WPB or WPI or whether it is a RMA. This is seen in the item "a manager changing his/her work expectations or deadlines of his/her subordinates". This is a manager's prerogative and whether or not it is reasonable depends on the situation and the circumstances. A manager may not always have the time or resources to consult their team before changing deadlines or expectations as external circumstances may have changed and there may be a new urgency that requires the manager to change deadlines or expectations. There may however be times when a manager needs to consult with his/her team on their other personal and work commitments before changing

deadlines. Thus, the management decision and form of power sharing ultimately depends on the context, the situation, and the urgency of the task.

Vroom and Yetton (1973) developed Maier's model (1963), maintaining the key premise that the method used in leadership decision-making should be a function of the situation. Vroom and Yetton (1973) developed a decision tree in order to guide leadership decision-making under different scenarios. The Vroom-Yetton Decision Tree (1973) asks leaders to consider seven questions based on whether; the quality of the decision is important, team commitment to the decision is important, the leader has enough information to make the decision on their own, the problem is well structured, the team would support the decision if the leader made it, the team shares organisational goals, and, lastly, whether conflict amongst the team over the decision is likely. Based on the answers to these questions, the decision tree directs leaders to either take an autocratic (A1), autocratic (A2), consultative (C1), consultative (C2) or collaborative (G2) decision. These decision-making styles range from the amount of input the leader gets from the team in how the final decision is made. Research studies have found that employees of leaders who adapted the Vroom and Yetton (1973) model were more productive and more satisfied with their supervision compared with leaders who did not adapt this model (Margerison & Glube, 1979).

In relation to Maiers theory (1963) and Vroom and Yetton's model (1973) it is thus apparent that different scenarios require managers to take different decisions depending on circumstances; showing the importance of taking the *perspective of the manager into account* and what their duties are in any given situation. An example of this is the item "making an employee redundant" where some participants felt that the manager should explore all possible options and consult the team widely and, specifically in these times, should only make an employee redundant if all available options have been explored. Some respondents expressed that the employee should be trained and up skilled and this is only reasonable if the department or division is closing down. Other participants however noted that this is part of a manager's job and they at times have to make difficult decisions in order to meet their targets and deadlines. They see this as reasonable and necessary and do not see the necessity to consult the team as this could at times over complicate matters, cause conflict and interfere with productivity. The literature on management action specifies that making difficult decisions and balancing the needs of the organisation with the needs of employees is a core component of a manager's job (Odendaal & Roodt, 2018; Wilson, 2012). In line with Vroom and Yetton's

(1973) decision tree, it is incumbent upon managers to assess the problem and situation before deciding how much team input they need to get and to what extent they can make the decision on their own. Vroom and Yetton (1973) note that if a decision has to be made urgently that would have major implications for the organisation if it is delayed and if there is insufficient time for elaborate and time consuming consultation, it is the manager's prerogative to make such a decision quickly and unilaterally, As discussed in the Literature Review (Chapter 2) managers can be scared to reasonably manage their staff out of fear of being accused of WPB (Glasø et al., 2009; Jenkins et al., 2012) and it is therefore important that managers are given the legitimacy and power from the organisation to reasonably manage their staff. In instances such as the aforementioned example or similar situation, where there is an urgent difficult decision that must be made without explanation or consultation with employees, managers should *not* be bound by the constraint of fearing to make a necessary and unilateral urgent decision to sustain the business. Further, in such instances, this behaviour on the part of the manager, given the circumstances, should not be conceived of as WPB or WPI but rather as, clearly, RMA.

Thus it becomes apparent that contingency theories of leadership, also referred to as situational theories are of great importance when distinguishing between WPB, WPI and RMA, as the context must always be considered. With the premise of contingency theories of leadership being that a leader's effectiveness is contingent on *how they manage* in a particular situation: this may help explain the difficulties that some participants encountered in managing employees. They described how their team would often undermine their authority and bully them, while simultaneously laying WPB complaints. According to the participants, they were often accused of bullying or acting uncivilly towards their team when they were simply trying to manage them and get the business objectives of the organisation achieved. They referred to this as bottom-up bullying "(where by giving reasonable instructions) "*they will label it bullying and make it almost impossible for you to get your job done*" (Participant 11). Participants thus expressed their frustration and desperation at times when they were under pressure to get their work done and needed full commitment from their team but instead were facing WPB accusations. Contingency theories of leadership provide a useful lens to examine these accusations, as it may be that a managers' leadership style in certain situations angers employees who want more participative decision making, which in times of urgency is likely not possible. In such situations it is likely that the manager clearly does not intend to bully their

team but that their leadership style is perceived of as bullying or being uncivil as subordinates are not allowed to have their say.

In order to protect management and organisational interests and allow managers to carry out their duties, it may be useful to examine Australian legislation on this topic. According to Australian legislation, when assessing if management action is reasonable, an objective test is undertaken. This test involves asking whether a hypothetical, reasonable person in the position of the manager would have acted in the same way as the manager acted (Wilson, 2012). This is useful because even if a manager's leadership style is not considered by the employees to be appropriate, employing this test ensures that as long as the manager was acting reasonably and was not bullying their team members, they cannot be liable for a WPB or WPI claim. From this it is clear that a list of WPB, WPI and RMA behaviours as well as guiding principles to assist organisations to deal with ambiguous or context dependent situations may be necessary when a WPB policy is developed. The insights from these answers provided by participants suggests the need for such guidelines and serves as an important first step in the development of this policy.

This Theme of "Context" shows the importance of taking a holistic view of WPB, WPI and RMA and examining the whole situation and context behind the action before judging whether the behaviour represents WPB, WPI or RMA. This study aimed to distinguish between the behaviours of WPB, WPI and RMA in order to protect both employee and management interest. As mentioned in the Literature Review Chapter, there may be instances where managers are scared to reasonably manage their employees because of being accused of WPB or WPI and this Theme thus fully supports the fears expressed and the importance of taking the whole situation into account before making accusations.

Theme Two: Poor management or leadership skills that may be "unreasonable management actions"

There are instances where a manager behaves in an unreasonable manner; however, the behaviour is not harsh enough to warrant labelling it a WPB or WPI behaviour. The behaviour also however cannot be termed a "reasonable management action". The behaviour is a management action but it is an "unreasonable management action" and could be the result of a poor management or leadership style. It could also be a manager's personality or indicative of not enough managerial experience or training.

The participants defined a RMA as any reasonable action aimed at improving work performance, in the interest of creating and sustaining a harmonious working environment for the team at large. It should be a fair and balanced action and take the interest of the job demands and the entire working team into account. Importantly, a RMA, according to Participant 26 "*may not always be the personally preferred option, but it should seek a solution based on fairness*". The participants emphasised the importance of the manner in which the manager carries out the action. This is an important factor in deciding on the reasonableness of the action. RMA involves carrying out duties in a constructive, "learning" manner and in a manner that is collegial. It involves encouraging and understanding employees and creating an environment of acceptance and belonging. It involves working with individuals and utilising individual skill to get the best out of employees.

In contrast to this, unreasonable management action would occur when management behaves poorly or lacks adequate management skills to deal with situations. These instances do not necessarily constitute WPB or WPI. Examples of these include; a manager withholding information which affects the performance of his/her subordinate and a manager raising his/her voice when speaking to his/her subordinate. Participants also described this category as a manager who "lacks people skills" and can be seen in items such as a manager sharing personal information about his/her subordinate or a manager only giving directions in written form**.** This is supported by the literature, which shows that an understanding of people is an essential managerial skill that influences every aspect of a manager's job (Gardner & Stough 2002; George, 2000; Goleman, 2004; Ivcevic et al., 2020; Odendaal & Roodt, 2018). Management action involves balancing the needs of the task with the needs of the people doing the task (Blake & Mouton, 1964; Odendaal & Roodt, 2018; Wilson, 2012).

Participant 68 noted "*Bullying can be when this reasonable action is delivered with a bad attitude or with malice*". A large part of a managers' job involves constructive communication, engagement, and building relationships. As discussed in the Literature Review, Goleman (2004) outlines the importance of emotional intelligence in leading and managing people. Emotionally intelligent leaders and managers are able to get the best out of their team. This is a core goal of management and is achieved because emotionally intelligent leaders are not only able to regulate and understand their own emotions but are better able to listen to and understand the emotions of their team members (Goleman, 2004). The ability of

emotionally intelligent managers to build strong interpersonal relationships with their team and make them feel secure allows them to motivate their employees and build team cohesion (Goleman, 2004). A manager who struggles with these aspects of management may have poor management skills but may not necessarily be engaging in WPB or WPI behaviours. According to the participants, a manager not rewarding or recognising good performance is more of a case of bad management or poor leadership and could even indicate envy of a colleague or poor emotional intelligence but does not amount to WPB or WPI.

According to the participants, organisations should carefully consider the type of people they promote into management positions and implement a rigorous and objective screening process for positions that require dealing with and managing people. This is because *" untrained and ignorant managers bully in subtle ways that are not always noticeable to other parties"* (Participant 65). The participants articulated the idea that managers often become managers because other people in leadership positions see them as competent at doing their jobs. However, this does not always translate into having the necessary soft skills and abilities to deal with and manage a team of people. This idea encapsulates the 'Peter Principle'. The Peter Principle asserts that employees in an organisation continually rise and get promoted until they reach their maximum level of incompetence (Peter & Hull, 1969). Employees are promoted based on their success in their previous jobs, however, just because an individual performs well in a job does not mean that they would be suitable in a different job. The competencies and skill set required for their previous job may have aligned with their competencies and skill set at that time but may not be the case for a more senior position. This is expressed by the participants who note that managers may be good at doing their jobs and were therefore promoted to a managerial role, but they lack the essential people skills needed for a management role. Participants expressed that a major barrier to ending WPB in organisation is that "*managers were put into leadership positions based on them being good at their previous jobs… and just because they are good at… does not translate into them being able to manage and lead a team, to deal with complex people issues, to be able to manage conflict and listen and speak out...*" (Participant 25).

In addition to this, the participants noted that leadership/management training could also mitigate instances of poor management. This may help equip managers with better people and leadership skills. The importance of this is seen in the investment that many organisations make in coaching and leadership workshops. According to Participant 64**,** the only way to

mitigate WPB and WPI in organisations is for there to be "*manager and employee training on what bullying is; measures that can be taken against bullies whether they are managers or employees*". Participant 70 emphasized that in order to reduce WPB and WPI in organizations, it is important to "*TRAIN - TRAIN - TRAIN DO NOT put untrained managers in jobs they are not trained for*". Training may help managers understand the impact of their behaviours on their team and help equip them with managerial and leadership skills. Participant 13 cited that a key way to understand if the behaviour is reasonable is to ask "*would I like to be treated in this manner?*" This participant noted that it may also be helpful for managers to share their vision with their team. The literature on management and leadership shows that the way a manager behaves often serves as an example for how team members behave (Abraham, 2000; Ivcevic et al., 2020; Jameson, 2001). This idea is reiterated by the participants in this study who note that WPB and WPI "*starts at the top. Senior management are bullies and employ fellow bullies. This filters down through the levels of management. People need to be made aware of what constitutes workplace bullying and that some of their actions are not acceptable*" (Participant 52). It is therefore important for managers to set a good example and create an environment of care and respect and one that is conducive to learning and productivity

This Theme on poor management skills and 'unreasonable management actions' thus indicates the importance of a manager's soft skills in how they manage and discipline their employees. The results of this study indicate that some participants may perceive a management action that is unreasonable as WPB or WPI while others may view it as a poor management style.

Theme Three: Lack of a workplace bullying policy and clear grievance procedures

The participants were asked what they believe are the most important barriers to ending WPB in organisations. A consistent theme that emerged from their responses was that their organisation did not have a clear policy either defining and delineating WPB, WPI and RMA or clear procedures as to how to deal with workplace bullies.

This is encapsulated by Participant 19 who expressed that WPB and WPI occurs because of "*Lack of Workplace Bulling Policy and clear grievance procedures. An HR not conducting annual workshops for staff/Departments to create awareness and share policy. Managers not having reasonable management practices as part of their performance*

management objectives." The result of this was that participants felt that WPB and WPI is dealt with in an arbitrary manner and victims often struggle to attain relief from their workplace bullies. This was evident in participants' responses to how they decide if something is reasonable or sounds like WPB or WPI. The lack of policy meant that these decisions were handled in a subjective way and according to Participant 61 "*I think I base my answers on what I have received/how I have been treated in the past and basically if I felt it was 'wrong' then it's bullying, but if it's just rude then maybe it's incivility. Reasonable also really depends on the eye of the beholder. So if it's not in the manual, the grey area can be hard to navigate*". In organisations in which WPB and WPI is prevalent, there is a "*lack of proper disciplinary procedures or implementation of them, failure to acknowledge a problem, lack of appropriate policies, not wanting to 'rock the boat*'" (Participant 16). The importance of a WPB policy was emphasised by the participants in this study who noted that "*companies should have policies in place and procedure for bad behavior. Their documentation must describe what is bullying and what is not and through this enforcement and putting it to practice, this will reduce workplace bullying. Human Resource also plays a very important part in this that should someone complain about it, they should take fair measures to look into this. With the company policy and the support of Human Resources, I feel that at least we can start moving in the right direction to minimize workplace bullying*" (Participant 44). A WPB policy should be fair and transparent and implemented in a consistent manner. It needs to ensure that all parties are aware of what constitutes WPB, WPI and RMA. Participants believed that in mitigating against WPB and WPI, this policy would help ensure that a workplace culture of fairness and respect is cultivated.

The results of this study indicate that participants struggle to decide if behaviour is reasonable or could be incivility or bullying. This is complicated by the fact that evidence of WPB and WPI can be hard to attain. This is especially true in the cases of subtle forms of WPB or WPI where it is difficult to prove what tone of voice was used or if using sarcasm and humour even constitutes WPB or WPI. One participant reported that after struggling with distinguishing between WPB, WPI and RMA and witnessing the detrimental effects of WPB and WPI, the team drafted a Service Charter to guide their conduct. According to this participant, this Service Charter motivated the team to create a more caring, productive, and harmonious environment and reduced WPB and WPI incidents.

The responses indicate that the lack of policy prevents some employees from reporting WPB and WPI incidents. When they do report these incidents, they often struggle to attain relief as these actions are often justified or "*nicely encapsulated in authoritarian management*" (Participant 4). This has the effect that bullying and incivility acts can be "disguised" under reasonable management actions as many reasonable management actions are "*imposed in heavy handed or dictatorial ways without consultation*" (Participant 26). According to the participants, powerful organisational members create their own standards of WPB, WPI and RMA based on how it suits them. This is often supported by HR and has the effect that victims often have no choice but to "*suffer in silence*" (Participant 6) and accept the arbitrary manner in which these decisions are made. This often means that WPB and WPI can become the accepted norm in which teams and organisations operate.

This shows the importance of the leader in WPB and WPI cases. Leaders may engage in WPB and WPI and thereby create a culture in which WPB and WPI is accepted. They may even reward WPB and WPI or fail to intervene when it occurs (Mathisen et al., 2011). Research has shown the importance of constructive leadership in reducing WPB and WPI (Cooper-Thomas et al., 2013; Woodrow & Guest, 2017). Constructive leadership reduces these incidents as the leader acts as a role model for appropriate behaviour and sets clear guidelines as to what behaviours are acceptable and unacceptable with regard to WPB and WPI. Constructive leaders also intervene when WPB and WPI occur and ensure consistent punishment for these incidents (Cooper-Thomas et al., 2017). Participant 2 noted that as a manager he/she "*takes extra time to listen and assist and this has led to a very efficient and collegiality in the work environment. Managers have to be fair and transparent, that builds trust, then there is no reason to bully!*" The participants in this study noted that subordinates may not struggle to attain relief from WPB and WPI if they had a constructive leader setting out what behaviours are acceptable and what behaviours are not, appropriately and consistently punishing WPB and WPI when it occurs, and modelling the correct behaviours. Participant 47 noted that the only way to prevent WPB from occurring in organisations is for there to be "*transparency, and an open and honest working environment. Subordinates should feel comfortable enough talking to their managers about instances where they felt bullied, and have the reassurance that managers will take remedial action. If managers do not recognise that their leadership is destructive rather than constructive, then the bullying will continue".*

Again, these responses by participants indicate the need to have guidelines in place to facilitate positive working conditions and to clearly delineate what behaviours are and are not acceptable in relation to what is and what is not WPB and WPI. By creating such guidelines and a more positive working environment instances of WPB and WPI can be mitigated or more easily managed when they do occur. In this regard the literature on Psychological Safety Climate (PSC) and WPB and WPI can also be used to guide what polices should be put into place with regard to how leaders and mangers should behave and can assist in establishing guidelines on WPB policy.

PSC is the perception of management's commitment to protecting workers psychological health and safety (Dollard & Bakker, 2010) that creates an organisational climate free from psychological harm at work. PSC is reflected in the policies, practices, and procedures that leaders and managers implement that reflects their commitment to prioritise and safeguard the psychological health of their employees as opposed to organisational outputs (Dollard & Bakker, 2010). PSC has been found to negatively correlate with WPB and WPI at both an individual and organisational level (Tuckey et al., 2009; Law et al., 2011). The participants in this study expressed that WPB and WPI was rife at their organisation because "*subordinates generally feel unempowered to challenge managers for being bullies due to formal protections seeming to lack actual effect and the fear of recrimination. Therefore, there needs to be a way to show that all people within an organization are subject to discipline if they bully and to end cultures of workplace bullying*" (Participant 11). The participants alluded to the fact that low levels of PSC in their environments translates into high levels of WPB and WPI and a situation where they feel "*completely helpless because there is nothing we can do and no one who will listen or care, we must just produce good work*" (Participant 72).

A seminal study by Bond et al. (2010) on the relationship between PSC and WPB found that organisations with high levels of PSC were more likely to have lower rates of WPB. This is explained using Salin's (2003) WPB model. According to Salin (2003) WPB occurs when there is an interaction between enabling, precipitating, and motivating structures and processes within the work environment. When management and leadership create a strong PSC, they are likely to commit to ensure that WPB and WPI does not occur in organisations. They would also be likely to quickly and effectively deal with WPB and WPI in organisations and intervene to stop WPB from occurring and to stop the negative organisational spiral characteristic of WPI. This may explain the moderating effect that PSC has been shown to have in the positive

relationship between WPB and psychological distress (Dollard et al., 2012; Law et al., 2011) and emotional exhaustion (Law et al., 2011). Additionally, in organisations with high levels of PSC, employees are likely to feel comfortable reporting WPB and WPI claims as they are aware of the emphasis that their organisations places on their psychological safety and therefore feel that their claims would be taken seriously and dealt with accordingly. This is supported by the participants in this study who note that WPB and WPI could be prevented by having "*safe reporting structures and dealing effectively with the bullies*" (Participant 10). In relation to motivating factors, employees in organisations with high levels PSC may be less likely to engage in WPB and WPI as it is unlikely that competition or reward systems would exist for these behaviours and these behaviours would likely be punished. Lastly, when precipitating factors such as organisational changes are present, WPB may be less likely to occur in organisations with high PSC as employees are kept informed of these processes and given an opportunity to voice their concerns and contribute to the decision making process. This may mean that the risk factors associated with organisational change (job insecurity, competition, frustration) are likely to be reduced and therefore few triggers will exist for the development of WPB and WPI (Bond et al., 2010).

It is likely that a WPB policy would assist in creating a high PSC in organisations as it provides a statement of the employers intent to protect and nurture the psychological safety of its employees by outlining that certain actions are not acceptable in organisations and will be stopped and punished.

This is because according to Lohr et al. (2007) PSC is a safety signal and a resource that employees can rely on when they face danger (such as WPB and WPI). This safety signal ensures that employees will be supported to cope with the WPB and WPI and means that they do not need to draw as heavily on their internal resources (Lohr et al., 2007). This can explain why PSC attenuates the positive relationships between WPB and psychological health problems (Law et al., 2011) and between WPB and PTSD (Bond et al., 2010). It also mitigates the negative impact that WPB has on work-engagement (Law et al., 2011). Law et al. (2011) found that reports of WPB and WPI can be predicted from organizational levels of PSC. It is therefore important to establish and develop a WPB policy as this is evidence of management and leaders commitment to the PSC of their employees and organisation.

Similarly, Climate for Conflict Management (CCM) as a part of an organisation and incorporated into a WPB policy will assist in reducing the occurrence of WPB and WPI and in improving WPB and WPI outcomes when such counterproductive behaviour does occur. CCM refers to the employees' assessment of the organisation's conflict management procedures, and of how fair and predictable the interaction patterns between managers and employees are perceived to be in this regard (Rivlin, 2001). A strong CCM occurs when employees perceive that interpersonal conflicts and general procedures of rewards and punishment in their organisation are fair and managed well (Rivlin, 2001). A strong CCM is present when employees believe proper procedures and policies are in place to deal with interpersonal problems (Einarsen et al., 2018; Rivlin, 2001). A strong CCM provides guidelines on how to handle interpersonal conflicts, where to go if these arise and confidence that their organisation will intervene if the situation becomes too difficult for them to deal with alone (Zahlquist et al. 2019). A strong CCM has been found to be directly related to lower reports of WPB and WPI (Einarsen et al., 2018; Zahlquist et al. 2019). Thus, when employees perceive that CCM is highly effective, minimum WPB and WPI issues will arise (Naseem & Ahmed, 2020). According to Einarsen et al. (2018) this may be because a strong CCM may give employees safe channels through which they can express frustration. They thus do not need to release their anger on the victim. Employees may also be more motivated to engage in problem solving and reconciliation as oppose to rude behaviour or low-intensity conflicts if they feel assured that their organisation will help them if these attempts do not work. This is particularly important because the literature on WPB and WPI shows that if conflicts are not managed, they not only lead to the perception of being bullied, but they also set the stage for the enactment of WPB and WPI (Baillien et al., 2009).

Researchers have also found that CCM reduces the negative impact of WPB and WPI behaviours (Einarsen et al., 2018; Zahlquist et al. 2019). In this regard, a strong CCM has been shown to buffer the positive relationships between job demands and exposure to WPB and WPI and between employee presenteeism and WPB and WPI. A strong CCM has also been found to buffer the negative relationships observed between WPB and WPI and work engagement (Einarsen et al., 2018). A high CCM gives employees control and social resources (Einarsen et al., 2018). A high CCM reduces the helpless and out of control feeling characteristic of WPB and WPI as it gives employees the assurance that correct and fair procedures are in place to deal with interpersonal conflicts. A strong CCM may entrench an organisations PSC as employees are confident that their psychological safety is protected and their organisations

handles interpersonal conflicts in a predictable and fair way. This reduces the both the perception of experiencing WPB and WPI as well as the negative outcomes of these behaviours (Einarsen et al., 2018; Zahlquist et al. 2019).

The benefits of CCM in reducing WPB and WPI and in attenuating the negative consequences of WPB and WPI point to the importance of a clear, fair and universally applied WPB policy. A WPB policy can be seen as a statement of the organisation's commitment to fostering a strong CCM as it ensures that interpersonal conflicts are managed well and fairly. It provides employees the assurance that their claims will be seriously assessed and dealt with. When PSC is incorporated into a WPB policy that outlines what behaviours constitute WPB, WPI and RMA it serves as a statement of the employer's intent to protect its employees against harmful and counterproductive work behaviours, and it creates an environment in which employees feel safe to report such incidents. As an expression of CCM, a WPB policy will ensure that employee complaints of WPB and WPI are dealt with and taken seriously. It will also ensure that managers can reasonably manage their employees and are not subject to bottom-up WPB and WPI or WPB and WPI allegations.

This Theme on the need for policy thus shows the importance of creating clear guidelines and criteria as to what behaviour constitutes WPB, WPI and RMA. This will help ensure that employee grievances are dealt with in a fair and consistent manner and will create a more pleasant and less stressful work environment for both managers and their subordinates. The survey that respondents answered in this study outlines objective behaviours and asks participants to decide whether the behaviour described constitutes WPB, WPI or RMA. In doing this, the perspective or feeling of the victim in relation to the behaviour, as well as human and organisational interactions that may influence labelling behaviour as WPB, WPI or RMA are controlled for. In advocating for the establishment of a WPB policy in organisations, clearly delineating where a behaviour falls on the WPB – RMA spectrum is a helpful start. As mentioned in the Literature Review Chapter, there are instances where what may be reasonable can be perceived as bullying (Fevre et al., 2010). Exploring managers and HRPs perspectives of WPB, WPI and RMA is particularly important as research to date has largely focused on defining and operationalizing bullying from the target's perspective (Barlett & Barlett, 2011) who predominantly complain of being bullied by their managers. It is therefore essential that an understanding and appreciation is gained for how managers define and identify cases of WPB, WPI and RMA.

Theme Four: Defining behaviour in terms of the outcomes it causes

The results of the study indicate that many participants decide whether behaviour represents WPB, WPI or RMA based on how the recipient responds to the actions and what it means for them. A behaviour can be classified as WPB if the acts could "*mentally hurt or isolate a person*" (Participant 25); while WPI would be less harmful and could even be almost innocuous to the point where Participant 20 noted that WPI would be a behaviour that is not necessarily psychologically damaging but is "*an annoyance like a squeak on a chalkboard*". RMA would be any management behaviour that is reasonable and undertaken in the course and scope of business activities in a reasonable manner. According to Participant 4, "*reasonable management action is to see that everyone is treated fairly and therefore if someone is not doing their share that should be addressed. Bullying is when one is throwing their weight around either because they have the position or authority*". The reasonable implementation of these management actions is what some participants describe as differentiating RMA from WPB or WPI. Participant 28 summarises these differences as "*RMA being a fair balanced approached, taking in the best interest of the organization and the team at large. RMA may not be welcomed or liked, but is reasonable and ethical in its conception and application. WPB and WPI are directed to a self serving outcome, at the expense of others and the organization"*. RMAs may cause employees to be distressed, however, RMAs should lead to improved work performance and functioning, whereas victims of WPB or WPI struggle to do their jobs properly. The participants emphasised the point that "*managers are allowed to push and nudge their staff in an effort to support and improve their job as long as they are doing this ethically and are being reasonable about it*" (Participant 43) and this is different from WPB and WPI which occurs when "*someone is purposefully managed badly by management with the intention of causing harm and making the work and the working environment a difficult place to be*" (Participant 82).

Workplace Bullying and Outcomes. The participants defined WPB in terms of the feelings of the victims or the outcomes it causes in the victims. They noted that WPB is intentional abuse that aims to "*hurt the person's feelings within*" (Participant 5). Specifically, WPB makes targets feel unworthy and miserable. The participants expressed the idea that it is not just that WPB demotivates employees and causes them to want to leave, the continual psychological abuse actually renders them unable to carry out their work properly. WPB induces a range of negative emotions such as fear, agitation, anxiety, stress, humiliation and eventually causes a constant "*ill-feeling" that is inescapable, "even if [you] are not at work*" (Participant 1). Participants further noted that two mechanisms that must be enacted to achieve these deleterious outcomes 1) power differential and 2) frequent negative behaviour.

WPB involves the abuse of power and dominance over a person who ends up in an inferior position. A person in an organisation may have power either because of their position in the organisation, or as a result of age or gender or certain personality factors. The literature defines WPB as an abuse of power or dominance over a person who ends up in an inferior position (Einarsen et al., 2003; Salin, 2003). It is this abuse of power that makes it difficult for victims of WPB to defend themselves (Einarsen et al., 2003; Salin, 2003). Participants described the completely powerless position that victims of WPB may find themselves in. This emerges because someone in a position of power uses abusive tactics to continually diminish or infringe on the power of their victim. WPB has an extremely negative impact on the target's psychological and work functioning, and this continual negative impact further renders victims unable to defend themselves against the powerful workplace bully. In addition to this, victims are often powerless because they need the job. Even though their lives might be "*living hell*" (Participant 2) they are often unable to defend themselves because the organisation will often defend the bully because of the bully's position of power. As discussed in the Literature Review Chapter, HRPs often avoid dealing with WPB and WPI when the accused bully is a powerful organisational figure and the complaint is being put forward by a lower level employee or group of employees (Georgakopoulos et al., 2011; Harrington et al., 2012; Liefooghe & Davey, 2001; Walsh et al., 2019). Power is therefore a predominant feature of WPB. The participants in this study also noted that workplace power can also be used in more subtle ways to coerce employees to carry out actions that they cannot argue against because of their inferior position.

Thus, based on the participants' responses, this aligns with the literature which supports the assertions made by the respondents as it discusses the two ways in which an abuse of power can be used to bully an employee. The majority of WPB cases involve a superior bullying a subordinate (Einarsen et al., 2003).

The results of this study also indicate that the on-going nature of WPB is partly what makes WPB psychologically damaging. In some instances, participants distinguished between WPI or bad management and WPB based on whether or not there is a continuous trend of bad behaviour towards a subordinate. This is supported by the literature which shows that the frequent and on-going nature of WPB attacks is what wears an individual down and depletes their coping mechanisms (Bernstein & Trimm, 2016). According to the literature, it is the persistence of WPB that distinguishes it from WPI and other counterproductive workplace acts (Ritzman, 2016). For example, a manager raising his/her voice when speaking to his/her subordinate may be WPB if it occurs frequently but may just be natural human behaviour if it is not a regular occurrence. This is also the case when a manager behaves in an abrupt manner or makes micro-aggressive remarks towards his/her subordinate. This would be WPB if it is part of a consistent negative pattern towards the subordinate as this would negatively impact the subordinates psychological wellbeing and work performance in the long term. However, if this is not a regular occurrence and a 'once off'/ due to circumstances at the time when the manager may be stressed, this could be a bad management behaviour or WPI behaviour. It is thus *the persistent pattern* of mistreatment that undermines the target, depletes their resources and coping mechanisms, and leads to emotional distress, that would be defined as bullying leading to the aforementioned outcomes (Namie, 2003).

Workplace Incivility and Outcomes. As mentioned on page 36 above, WPI effects can range from moderate to mild to at times fairly innocuous. The results of this study indicate that participants perceive WPI as a frustration that may temporarily interfere with work functioning or wellbeing and may interfere with an employee's ability to speak out or be authentic at work. Primarily, participants viewed WPI behaviours as rude behaviours that show a general lack of respect towards the target. According to the participants, WPI occurs when employees' views and interests are not considered. It was generally defined as inconsiderate and selfish behaviour. Victims of WPI do not suffer the same negative outcomes as those of WPB, according to the participants, because there is not the same sense of helplessness and hopelessness characteristic of WPB. The participants viewed WPI acts as both less severe and

less frequent than WPB acts. According to the participants, WPI primarily impacts on the relationships amongst team members and leads to a work environment characterised by hostility and a general lack of communication amongst team members. The way that participants define WPI is consistent with the literature, however, the literature would suggest that participants are unaware of the full effects that WPI is having on employees and their functioning as the literature has indicated that WPI can be severe. As mentioned in the Literature Review (Chapter 2), many of the self-same outcomes of WPB are also evident with WPI. Victims of WPI suffer a number of consequences which may be physical and psychological. Physical consequences include sleep disorders, stomach disorders, and headaches. Psychological consequences can manifest in depression and anxiety disorders. WPI has been found to be significantly correlated with damaged morale, impaired social and work functioning, and psychosomatic symptoms. The negative impacts of WPI extend to employees' personal lives and manifests in lower marital satisfaction and increased levels of work-family conflict (Cortina et al., 2001; Schilpzand et al., 2016). Targets of WPI may either retaliate and continue the incivility spiral or may withdraw if they feel there is no hope of repairing the situation.

In addition, the participants in this study noted that because there is not always a power differential between the target and the victims, it is sometimes easier to attain relief from acts of incivility. According to Porath and Pearson (2012), however, it is this lack of power differential that can contribute to the harmful and on-going nature of WPI. This is because it allows victims to retaliate against an uncivil act, mostly with another act of incivility. This creates a negative organisational spiral of WPI that not only interferes with employees personal and work functioning, but may also, in the long term, lead to an escalation into WPB. As previously mentioned in the Literature Review section, Andersson and Pearson (1999) in a seminal article on WPI entitled "Tit for Tat?" note the spiralling effect of incivility in the workplace, suggesting how an act of incivility can spiral into severe workplace violations. Targets of WPI want revenge from their perpetrators and this cycle continues, creating a hostile and unpleasant workplace environment that can escalate into a toxic WPB situation.

Reasonable Management Action and Outcomes With regard to RMA, according to the participants, RMA should lead to improved work or personal functioning. Employees may not always see the need for the management action and may not always desire the action, however, the action should benefit the work team and organisational functioning as a whole.

The person being managed should understand the reason for the action and how the action benefits the team or organisation even if it does not benefit the employee personally.

The responses indicate that a major barrier to ending WPB in organisations is that organisations do not differentiate between WPB, WPI and RMA. They do not focus on the emotional outcomes that behaviour causes in individual employees, but rather, focus on the outcomes and profitability of the organisation. According to the participants, results are rewarded and recognised, regardless of how they were achieved. This is facilitated through a culture that emphasises "*so long as a desired result is given, whether it came about reasonably or through bullying is beside the point*" (Participant 58). This type of attitude is common in toxic cultures with toxic leaders and explains why workplace bullies and toxic leaders are not singled out. They are not singled out because they have been found to be successful (at least for the short-term) in attaining organisational goals (Burke, 2016; Veldsman, 2016). Organisations that promote profitability at all costs are less concerned about the psychological impact that these leaders have on their employees and may retain and even promote workplace bullies or toxic leaders because they may be seen as competent and able to get results from their team, and therefore organisations reason that the end justifies the means. The ruthless nature of toxic leaders and workplace bullies means that they will get things done and ensure compliance from their team. Reed (2004) shows that the poison of toxic leaders is often slow acting and organisations therefore do not realise their full impact until it is too late. This is because employees may initially respond with fear and will push themselves to deliver their work, however, in the long term the increase in productivity and short -term success is not sustainable. The psychological impacts and trauma eventually become so damaging to employees and teams and they are no longer able to perform at a high standard. It has been argued that the main problem with workplace bullies is that their organisations allow them to thrive. While this argument may seem counterintuitive to the one proposed by the researcher earlier where it is argued that reasonable management action is needed and should be implemented to sustain the team and the organisation as a whole, it is still important to remain mindful of the negative impact of reasonable management actions upon a single individual (Liefooghe & Davey, 2001; O' Grady, 2006; Wilson, 2012). It thus becomes a fine line in relation to the benefit cost ratio and a manager needs to always be mindful that even RMA's can have negative impacts, but in implementing the difficult decision managers often need to assess if the benefits outweigh the costs (Blake & Mouton, 1964). These are not easily answered questions, which indicate the need for managers to manage reasonably and ethically.

To conclude: The outcomes that WPB, WPI and RMA cause in individuals and teams, as expressed by the study participants shows the importance of fundamentally shifting this culture and distinguishing between WPB, WPI and RMA. This will be an important first step in protecting management and employee interests.

Theme Five: Bullying from the bottom up: The impossibility of effectively managing

Power can also come from a group of employees acting together. According to one of the participants in the study, WPB occurs when "*employees form cliques and defend each other not doing their work and then blame the manager for lack of support*" (Participant 13).

In this regard, respondents also defined WPB as occurring when they felt that their subordinates were making it difficult for them to carry out their managerial duties. The participants noted that their subordinates can also bully them and in turn they then come under pressure from their superiors when they cannot manage their team - "*when we can't manage and we get in trouble*" (Participant 6). The participants in this study described the difficult jobs that managers have as they face pressure from the organisation to get the most out of their team but whenever they execute their duties and try to manage their team and motivate them to do their best, they are met with resistance or complaints that they are bullying their subordinates or being uncivil. The participants noted that their actions were fair and reasonable and were surprised when faced with WPB and WPI allegations. This is in line with Jenkins et al. (2012) study discussed in the Literature Review, which showed that subordinates can perceive management action, which is essential to ensure work gets done, as WPB or WPI. One participant, when defining WPB raised this issue and noted that reasonably managing employees can be like being at war – "*Every day feels like I'm fighting a war with my team – I try to be nice, to manage them in the most respectful way possible but all they do is complain about me bullying them, no matter what I do. This constant push away and these accusations are how I define WPB*" (Participant 16).

Participants likened the resistance managers often face and the WPB and WPI accusations as their weapons because it paralyses managers and makes carrying out their jobs an impossible task. According to Participant 16, a major barrier to ending WPB in organisations is that "*employees use workplace bullying accusations as their weapons because they know*

that it cripples us, there is nothing we can do and we will always get in trouble from both sides – from employees and from our managers. Our employees don't let us do our jobs and yet our managers shout at us for such and for bullying or being uncivil to our staff." This shows the difficulties that managers experience when trying to reasonably manage.

The participants expressed their frustration at constantly facing resistance when carrying out less favourable aspects of their jobs such as giving feedback or monitoring performance. In this regard the Literature Review Chapter discussed how managers may at times have to carry out unfavourable actions in order to ensure that work gets done and their team is effective (Agervold 2007; Hoel et al., 2010; Liefooghe, 2002). This theme complements theme three in that the problems that managers experience could possibly be mitigated by a WPB policy that outlines what behaviours constitute WPB and WPI and which ones constitute RMA.

CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION, LIMITATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusion

This exploratory study focused on understanding line managers and HRP's perceptions of WPB, WPI and RMA with the aim to create a checklist of these behaviours to help organisations distinguish between these behaviours. Research to date has not attempted to understand managers' perceptions of WPB, WPI and RMA and this understanding is therefore an important contribution to the WPB literature. This study also represents a first step in creating a check-list of what behaviours constitute WPB, WPI and RMA. The list in the study consisted of 115 items, and of these 23 were ranked as WPB by the participants, 22 as WPI, and 40 as RMA. There were 30 items where there was not an agreement by 50% of the participants as to whether the behaviour constitutes WPB, WPI or RMA and these would most likely need to be decided on a case by case basis, taking all relevant factors into account. There were 14 items that asked participants to consider WPB, WPI and RMA when working from home in light of the COVID-19 pandemic, and of these items, 2 were ranked as WPB behaviours, 4 as WPI behaviours, 7 as RMAs, and 1 item where there was not an agreement by 50% of the participants as to whether the behaviour is WPB, WPI or RMA.

It is the researcher's belief that that the establishment of this checklist is an important first step in delineating these behaviours and protecting employees from WPB and WPI and managers from WPB and WPI accusations. The qualitative answers were informative in this study as they gave insight into how managers and HRPs think about and deal with these issues. The results of this study highlight the complexity of distinguishing between these behaviours. As mentioned previously, this study was exploratory and was not a typical quantitative study with definitive answers and conclusions. It was evident from the qualitative analysis that deciding whether a behaviour represents WPB, WPI or RMA is contingent upon many factors, including the culture, context, relationship between the parties, frequency of the behaviour, and power differential factors.

The key findings of this study were that while consensus was established to a high degree on many of the checklist behavioural items, no definitive rules can be made when determining exactly how to define each and every behaviour. As such, a holistic interpretation

of the behaviours are essential. More than this, it is evident that what one person may perceive of as WPB another may perceive of as a RMA and behaviour is thus not only context bound but is also affected by the role players involved. Nevertheless, this study contributes to the extremely limited body of knowledge on the differences between WPB, WPI and RMA and how organisations deal with these constructs. It is the hope of the researcher that the list in this study will serve as an important guiding document for future research. In addition to this, this research has shown that this topic needs to be approached sensitively taking account of the complexity of distinguishing these behaviours and of people in organisations and their emotions. It is thus the hope of the researcher that when a WPB policy is established it takes account of the importance of all the factors discussed in this study and is used as a guiding principle. A WPB policy should not be created and applied in the same way that sexual harassment policies are applied in organisations as cases of WPB and WPI are often less clear cut and more layered and complex.

Yet in spite of the complexity of distinguishing between these behaviours, it is essential that it is done so that organisations have some guidelines as to how to deal with these issues. The literature shows that if this is not done, cases of WPB, WPI and RMA are often arbitrarily decided or left to the discretion of the manager or the HR department. Australian legislation has attempted to deal with this issue by asking if the behaviour of the manager was reasonable in the context in which it was taken. This however can also lead to biases and subjectivities if it is not accompanied by a checklist or guiding principles as to what behaviours are WPB, WPI and RMA. This study has therefore made an important contribution in setting the stage for more fair and objective criteria to be established for WPB, WPI and RMA.

Limitations of the Present Study

While this study yielded important findings that have contributed to the body of research on WPB, WPI and RMA, it had some limitations. This study used self-report questionnaires which can lead respondents to respond in social desirable ways. The social desirability bias may have led participants to answer the questions in socially acceptable ways and thus they may have given socially desirable answers when ranking the behaviours or when answering how they define and deal with WPB, WPI and RMA. This was partially controlled by the researcher as the participants completed the questionnaire during lockdown in South Africa and participants were therefore working from home. The researcher also assured the

participants both in the email invitation and the consent sheet that their responses were anonymous and confidential, would only be seen by the researcher and the researcher's supervisor and that there was no way of linking individual responses.

A common limitation of qualitative studies is that the researcher's interpretation of the findings can be influenced by what the researcher expects the results to be based on knowledge of prior research (Dodgson, 2019). This was to some extent mitigated by the researcher by keeping a self-reflexive journal in order to constantly be aware of the researcher's anticipations, thoughts, and biases and by having regular critical discussions with her supervisor about the research findings and the research process.

The demographic information obtained shows that the sample was not representative of the broader South African population. In terms of gender, the sample is not representative of the gender split in the population as this sample consists of females (65.6%), males (33.3%), and non-binary participants (1.1%). Women are over-represented in this sample as they only make up 51% of the South African population (Statistics South Africa, 2020). In terms of race, the sample also does not appear to be representative of the broader South African population. The Black group is under represented in this sample (26.9%) and the White group is over represented (41.9%) as the Black group makes up 79.4% of the South African working population (Stats SA, 2020) and the White group makes up 9.2% of the broader South African working population. The coloured group appear to be over represented in this sample of working adults, as they only make up 8.8% of the total South African working population (Stats SA, 2020). The Indian group is also overrepresented as Indians and Asians only make up 2.6% of the South African working population (Stats SA, 2020). The majority of the sample spoke English as a first language (66.7%) which also does not reflect the broader population where only 13.5% of speak English as a first language. isiZulu is spoken as a first language by 22.7% of South Africans but is only spoken as a first language by 7.5% of this sample.

This study also only targeted managers and HRPs and it is possible that other employees in the organisations would have different perceptions of WPB, WPI and RMA based on their experience and position in the organisation. Therefore, a limitation of this study is that the sample only canvassed management and thus does not represent the opinions of the millions of South African employees who are not in managerial positions.

Another limitation of the study is the length of the survey. It required at least half an hour to forty five minutes of the participants' time as well as a great deal of thought and concentration. This raises issues of response bias, particularly random responding. However because participants were warned of this in the email invitation and the consent sheet, it seems that this may have mitigated the problem of response bias. The fact that many respondents also engaged in lengthy open ended answer further indicates that they were not responding by rote. In addition, because the issues of WPB and WPI are of current concern in the organisation under study, the topic may have been seen as a particularly pertinent issue which may have largely lessened such response bias.

While there were a number of participants who logged on, filled out their biographical information and did not complete the survey, suggesting a lack of engagement, of those that completed there was little evidence of random responding.

As discussed in Tables 3.1 to 3.3 there were a number of cross ranked items. That is, some items in the list that although ranked as a certain behaviour by over 50% of the participants were are also ranked highly as another behaviour a significant percentage of the participants. When using a technique of factor analysis this would be termed cross loading, a term used where an item loads high on two factors and it is difficult to determine which category the item should be assigned to. Even though this study analysed percentages of responses, in the same spirit of cross loading in factor analyses, the responses on certain items can be difficult to disentangle and definitively label. This is a limitation of the present study as it makes it difficult to categorise certain behaviours, however, this study was exploratory in nature and aimed to gain a broader understanding of participants perceptions of WPB, WPI and RMA.

Recommendations and Directions for Future Research

To the researcher's knowledge, this study is the first of its kind. It has therefore contributed to the dearth of research on distinguishing between WPB, WPI and RMA. Given the time and scope of the study it could not address all gaps but has exposed a number significant ones.

This research study exposed the importance of other factors in distinguishing WPB, WPI and RMA. It is therefore recommended that future research engage more deeply with managers and probe them on their responses to the items. It would be necessary to ascertain why managers chose the response they did and what circumstances would influence their decisions. This would help in the development of policy as it could lead to a list of items that represent WPB, WPI, RMA under certain contexts or when certain conditions are present. In this regard qualitative studies could be done where one-on one interview are held with line managers or focus groups could be used to generate discussions on items. These could be conducted face-to-face or virtually, depending on the pandemic situation.

It is also recommended that a wide and demographically diverse group of managers are interviewed. As mentioned in the limitations, the sample did not represent the wider population in relation to demographics. It is thus possible that other groupings could have a range of diverse opinions when it comes to gauging the behaviours in the checklist based on language, and culture as well as context.

In addition, it would also be imperative to canvass employees' perspectives of WPB, WPI and RMA as they could have very different views from managers. Future research could therefore replicate this study but on employees in different organisational levels. An examination of the various differing viewpoints was not done in this study given that 1) this study was exploratory and to the researcher's knowledge the first of its kind and 2) given the limited scope and time frame of this study.

It is also recommended that more attention and research is conducted into distinguishing between WPB, WPI and RMA when WFH. WFH may become more common for certain professions even after the COVID-19 pandemic. At the time this research was conducted and the survey was administered, WFH was a new phenomenon and research was limited. It would be interesting to examine WPB, WPI and RMA when WFH and if it differs from when employees are in their office buildings. Given the scope of this study and the novelty of WFH when it was conducted, this research could only briefly address this issue.

Finally, the findings of this study are limited to the organisation in which this study was conducted and therefore an attempt should be made to determine whether these findings are apparent in different types of organisations across a wide range of sectors. As mentioned at the

beginning of this study, the organisation that this study was conducted on is a bureaucratic organisation of large size and is hierarchical in its reporting structure and the number of layers of those from the lowest level through to various multiple layers of junior, middle, senior and executive management. In addition, this organisation operates within a sector that is at the cutting edge of knowledge development and dissemination and the environment is one which is highly competitive. Thus, given that other organisations are of different types in terms of their structure, their culture, and the types and layers of employees that they employ, a wider range of organisations in different sectors need to be examined.

Practical Recommendations

This study has demonstrated the crucial need for a WPB policy in organisations. This is firstly evident by the fact that many respondents raised issues around the wide variety of contingencies which could affect judging a behaviour definitively. This also indicates to some extent that managers felt unsure about making judgement calls, which indicates that a policy needs to be developed that clearly delineates behaviours and contexts and that is fairly and equally applied. The policy should ensure that all organisational members are aware of what behaviours constitute WPB, WPI and RMA. A clear understanding of these behaviours should allow employees to feel comfortable reporting cases of WPB and WPI. It should also ensure that employees are aware of what behaviours constitute RMAs and therefore prevent employees from making frivolous and/or vexatious accusations of WPB or WPI against managers when the behaviour was a RMA. It is also important that a policy that is developed is fairly and equally applied to all employees and all managers.

As a final concluding note, the results of this study have further shown the crucial importance of the leader in WPB and WPI cases and the importance of leaders and managers ‘of quality’. Organisations should strive to select and train constructive leaders that model appropriate behaviours, address employee grievances and punish cases of WPB and WPI. It is also important for leaders to create an environment of care, safety, and concern and ensure that employees feel comfortable to inform them about cases of WPB and WPI. It is important for leaders to create a positive safety climate and climate for conflict management and ensure that a zero tolerance attitude towards WPB and WPI is enforced.

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Appendices

Appendix A - Email invitation

Good day

My name is Julia Ziman and I am conducting research for the purpose of obtaining a Masters degree in Organisational Psychology at the University of the Witwatersrand. The aim of my research is to explore perceptions of workplace bullying, workplace incivility and reasonable management actions. I would like to invite you to participate in this study.

Participation involves completing an online questionnaire. You will be asked to fill in a brief demographic questionnaire. You will also be asked about your perceptions of workplace bullying, workplace incivility, and reasonable management actions.

Participation in this study is completely voluntary. The survey should take approximately 20-30 minutes to complete. You will be not advantaged or disadvantaged for choosing to participate or not. The participant information sheet and a link to the online questionnaire have been included in this email should you choose to participate.

Thank you for considering this invitation. Your participation would be greatly appreciated.

Kind regards,

Julia Ziman

julesziman@gmail.com

+27 (79) 599 7879

Dr Colleen Bernstein (Supervisor)

colleen.bernstein@wits.ac.za

+27 (11) 717 4538

https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/Y92DMB3

Appendix B – Participant 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

Dear Participant

My name is Julia Ziman and I am conducting research for the purpose of obtaining a Masters degree in Organisational Psychology at the University of the Witwatersrand. I am required to complete a research report as part of my Masters degree. The aim of my research is to explore managers' perceptions of workplace bullying, workplace incivility and reasonable management actions. I would like to invite you to participate in this study.

Participation in this study includes the completion of an online questionnaire, which you can access by clicking the link at the bottom of this page. Completion of the questionnaire will take approximately 20-30 minutes.

Please ensure that your completed questionnaire is submitted online within 2-3 weeks. Participation is completely voluntary, and there are no risks or benefits associated with your participation. You will have the right to withdraw from the study at any point up until you have submitted the online questionnaire.

Responses will remain strictly confidential and anonymous at all times, as no identifying information such as your name, staff number or ID number will be collected in the questionnaire. Responses to the questionnaire will only been seen by myself and my supervisor. IP addresses will not be recorded. Since the questionnaire is anonymous, there is no possibility of linking an individual to their questionnaire, therefore no individual feedback can be given and the results will only focus on group trends. This further ensures that your individual set of responses cannot be

identified.

We will be able to provide you with a summary of the findings after the study is completed if requested. Completion and return of the consent form and questionnaire will be taken as informed consent of your participation and for the use of your responses to be used for statistical analysis and research purposes only. Data will be kept in a password-protected computer during the research process, and only the researcher and the supervisor will have access to this data. Once the research report has been completed, the data will be stored in a password-protected computer for future secondary analyses, and only the researcher and her supervisor will have access to the data. The research report will be placed in the University's online repository (WIReDSpace) and findings may be used for future research publications or conference proceedings. However, as mentioned, findings are only reported as general trends and therefore your responses will remain completely anonymous. In addition, the name of your organisation will not be mentioned.

If you have any further questions or would like feedback on the results of this study, please feel free to contact me or my supervisor. Contact details are provided below. Thank you for considering to take part in this research. Your participation would be greatly appreciated.

Kind regards,

Julia Ziman	Dr Colleen Bernstein (Supervisor)
julesziman@gmail.com	colleen.bernstein@wits.ac.za
+27 (79) 599 78 79	+27 (11) 717 4538

https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/Y92DMB3

If you have any concerns or complaints regarding the ethical procedures of this study, you are welcome to contact the University Human Research Ethics Committee (Non-Medical), telephone +27(0) 11 717 1408, email Shaun.Schoeman@wits.ac.za.

Appendix C – Organisation Access Letter

Psychology
School of Human & Community Development
University of the Witwatersrand
Private Bag 3, Wits, 2050
Tel: 011 717 4503 Fax: 011 717 4559

Good day

My name is Julia Ziman and I am conducting research for the purpose of obtaining a Masters degree in Organisational Psychology at the University of the Witwatersrand. I am required to complete a research report as part of my Masters degree. The aim of my research is to explore managers' perceptions of workplace bullying, workplace incivility, and reasonable management actions. I am requesting permission to access human resource practitioners and line managers at [insert name of organisation] in order to carry out my research.

Participation in this will involve employees completing an online questionnaire, which will take approximately 20-30 minutes to complete, which must be submitted within 2- 3 weeks. Participation in this study is completely voluntary, and employees will not be advantaged if they choose to participate, nor will they be disadvantaged if they choose not to participate. No foreseeable risks or benefits are associated with participation.

No identifying information such as employee names, staff numbers or ID numbers will be collected, thus ensuring that participants remain anonymous. The data collected from your employees will therefore not be linked to an individual employee in any way, and only group results will be reported. Furthermore, participants will not be asked to provide the name of the organisation, the name of the organisation will not be reported, and only myself and my supervisor will know the name of your organisation. Thus, the anonymity and confidentiality of both your employees and

the organisation will be preserved.

If employees choose to participate in this research, they will be requested to complete an online questionnaire, either at work in their free time or at home. Employees will be able to complete the online questionnaire through distribution of the electronic link to your employees' email addresses, and no IP addresses will be recorded. Completion and submission of the consent form and questionnaire will act as informed consent to participate in this research. The overall research findings of this study will be summarised and sent to participants and your organisation upon request. The research report will be placed in the University's online repository (WIReDSpace) and findings may be used for future research publications or conference proceedings. However, as mentioned, findings are only reported as general trends and therefore employees' responses will remain completely anonymous.

There has been no research in South Africa on this specific topic, and thus this research may provide valuable contributions. It would be greatly appreciated if permission was granted to access the employees in your organisation to conduct this research. If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me or my supervisor.

Kind regards,

Julia Ziman

julesziman@gmail.com

+27 (79) 599 78 79

Dr Colleen Bernstein (Supervisor)

colleen.bernstein@wits.ac.za

+27 (11) 717 4538

If you have any concerns or complaints regarding the ethical procedures of this study, you are welcome to contact the University Human Research Ethics Committee (Non-Medical), telephone +27(0) 11 717 1408, email Shaun.Schoeman@wits.ac.za

Appendix D – Consent Form for Online Questionnaire

CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS STUDY

Please read through the following and tick the Yes/No consent at the end.

I voluntarily agree to participate in this research study and have read and fully understand all the points outlined below.

- I understand that my participation is voluntary and that even if I agree to participate now, I can withdraw at any time before submitting the final questionnaire.
- I have had the purpose and nature of the study explained to me in writing and I do have the opportunity to ask questions about the study.
- I understand that participation involves the completion of questions pertaining to some personal information as well as my experiences and perspective pertaining to various events in the workplace.
- I understand that I will not benefit directly from participating in this research.
- I understand that all the information I provide for this study will be treated confidentially.
- I understand that in any report on the results of this research my identity will remain anonymous. This will be done by not recording any personal information that could be utilised to identify any one individual or organisation.
- I am aware that the findings of this study will be processed into a research report, journal publications and/or conference proceedings, but that my participation will be kept confidential as all findings are reported as general trends and therefore my single responses cannot be identified in any way.
- I am aware that findings from this research will be published in the Wits online research repository and may be used for publication and conference proceedings. All findings stored and utilised in this manner will remain completely anonymous.

I understand that I am free to contact any of the people involved in the research to seek further clarification and information.

Yes	☐
No	☐

Appendix E – Organisational Demographic Questionnaire

1. How old are you (completed years)
2. Please indicate your gender
   - ☐ Female
   - ☐ Male
   - ☐ Non-binary
   - ☐ Other, please specify_____
3. Please indicate your race
   - ☐ Black
   - ☐ White
   - ☐ Coloured
   - ☐ Indian
   - ☐ Asian
   - ☐ Other, please specify_____
4. Please indicate your home language
   - ☐ English
   - ☐ Afrikaans
   - ☐ isiZulu
   - ☐ isiXhosa
   - ☐ isiNdebele
   - ☐ Sesotho
   - ☐ Sepedi
   - ☐ Setswana
   - ☐ siSwati
   - ☐ Tshivenda
   - ☐ Xitsonga
   - ☐ Other, please specify_____
5. Please indicate your level of education
   - ☐ Less than grade 10
   - ☐ Grade 10
   - ☐ Matric
   - ☐ Diploma
   - ☐ Undergraduate degree
   - ☐ Honours degree
   - ☐ Masters degree
   - ☐ PhD
6. Please indicate job level
   - ☐ Junior management

- ☐ Middle management
- ☐ Upper management
- ☐ Executive
- ☐ Other, please specify_____

7. Please indicate your tenure (how long you have been in the organization)

_____

Appendix F – Research Instrument

The following survey aims to determine how to distinguish between workplace bullying (WPB), workplace incivility (WPI) and reasonable management action (RMA). Definitions of WPB, WPI and RMA are provided below. Often individuals may feel they are being bullied when their manager (or even their team members) request certain work from them or expects them to work in a certain way. This survey is therefore designed to determine your perceptions of what is workplace bullying, what is workplace incivility, and what is reasonable management action and how you distinguish between these forms of behaviour. Please answer all of the questions in this survey.

WPB involves direct and indirect acts that occur when an individual or group of individuals repeatedly behaves unreasonably and in a potentially harmful manner towards a worker or group of workers. Workplace bullying often involves a power imbalance (a senior staff member bullying a more junior staff member or a group of individuals acting together to bully one person). WPI is a milder and subtler form of WPB and is of lower intensity and frequency when compared to WPB. WPI involves behaviours in violation of workplace norms for mutual respect. Power imbalance is not a prerequisite of WPI. In addition, intention to harm, as perceived through the eyes of the instigator, the target, or the observer, is not always clear. RMA would be any action that a manager enacts to ensure that subordinates are doing their jobs as required by their job descriptions.

A. How do you define workplace bullying? _____
B. How do you define reasonable management action? _____
C. Please indicate whether you consider the following behaviours to be examples of either workplace bullying, workplace incivility, reasonable management action, or none of the above (1 – workplace bullying, 2 – workplace incivility, 3 – reasonable management action, 4 – none of the above). Please note that after each question a comment box has been provided. If you feel that the behaviour described does not represent workplace bullying, workplace incivility, or reasonable management, (i.e. is 4 – none of the above), please explain why. If you feel that the behaviour is either workplace bullying, workplace incivility or reasonable management, there is no need to comment.
    1. A manager holding his/her subordinate to a high performance standard
    2. A manager withholding information which affects the performance of his/her subordinate
    3. A manager explaining to his/her subordinate how he/she has underperformed
    4. A manager pressurising a subordinate not to claim something which the subordinate is entitled to (e.g. sick leave, holiday entitlement, travel expenses)
    5. A manager explaining to his/her subordinate how he/she can improve performance
    6. Making an employee redundant
    7. A manager raising his/her voice when speaking to his/her subordinate
    8. A manager sharing personal information about his/her subordinate
    9. A manager providing constructive criticism to his/her subordinate
    10. A manager constantly finding fault with his/her subordinate

11. A manager reprimanding a team member based on complaints about him/her from other team members
12. Demotion for incompetence
13. A manager only giving directions in written form
14. A manager providing conflicting instructions to his/her subordinate
15. A manager taking disciplinary action against his/her subordinate
16. A manager opening his/her subordinate's desk drawers without permission
17. A manager taking items from his/her subordinate without returning them
18. A manager interrupting his/her subordinate while he/she is speaking on the telephone
19. A manager asking a subordinate to carry out tasks outside his/her job description
20. A manager responding in a sarcastic way to his/her subordinates
21. A manager explaining that he/she is under pressure to get work done and telling his/her subordinates that if they complete their daily tasks they can go home, if not they must stay and finish and if they do not want to work they must leave
22. A manager excessively monitoring the work of his/her subordinates
23. A manager giving little explanation for his/her decisions
24. A manager intimidating (finger pointing, invasion of personal space, shoving, blocking/barring the way) his/her subordinate
25. An employer allowing an employee to call witnesses to his/her disciplinary hearing
26. A manager giving his/her subordinate time frames to improve performance and setting a date for review
27. A manager having regular counselling sessions with his/her subordinates about their behaviour
28. A manager implementing penalties or punishments for poor performance
29. A manager singling out or humiliating a subordinate in connection with his/her work
30. A manager not rewarding or recognising good performance
31. A manager setting up his/her subordinates to fail
32. A manager ignoring subordinates' complaints that he/she sees as frivolous
33. A manager pranking or making jokes about his/her subordinate and assuring the subordinate that the manager "wasn't being serious, it was just a joke"
34. A manager taking inconsistent disciplinary action across a team
35. Failure of the manager to provide the subordinate a suitable job description (one that is clear and not vague or exceedingly long)
36. A manager inviting his/her subordinates to "informal" meetings which turn out to be administration of discipline
37. A manager identifying skill gaps and developing targeted developmental plans
38. A manager being stern with his/her subordinates
39. A line manager calling the director to discipline his/her subordinate
40. A manager holding meetings addressing underperformance

41. A manager inviting his/her subordinates to a formal meeting without telling his/her subordinates what the meeting is about
42. A manager making allegations against his/her subordinates
43. A manager dominating team meetings and not allowing others to give input
44. A manager repeatedly reminding a subordinate of his/her errors or mistakes
45. Scapegoating (a manager inflicting blame on his/her subordinate unfairly)
46. Investigation by the manager of any alleged misconduct
47. A manager denying subordinates resources to help them do their job
48. A manager setting up times to meet his/her subordinates to review their performance
49. A manager behaving in an abrupt manner towards his/her subordinates
50. A manager changing his/her work expectations or deadlines of his/her subordinates
51. A manager comparing team members with one another
52. Failure from the manager to show empathy or compassion towards his/her subordinates (failure to acknowledge contextual factors that prevent a subordinate from carrying out his/her duties)
53. A manager using disciplinary procedures that are out of proportion to the subordinate's performance
54. A manager reprimanding his/her subordinate for a performance issue and then incorporating other areas in which his/her subordinate was incompetent or has underperformed in the past
55. A manager misrepresenting a project so that employees will agree to take part
56. An employer refusing an employee permission to return to work due to a medical condition
57. A manager excluding his/her subordinate from essential conversations
58. A manager reclassifying, redeploying, or downgrading an employee's job, even if it means that he/she will be doing a lower level of work or work below his/her level of competence
59. A manager hinting or signaling to a subordinate that he/she should quit his/her job
60. A manager responding in a condescending way to his/her subordinate
61. A manager rejecting his/her subordinate's application for leave, training or promotion
62. Failure from the manager to support his/her subordinate (e.g. a manager ignoring his/her subordinate's requests for help or being slow in seeing to matters on which his/her subordinate is reliant on him/her for)
63. A manager making micro-aggressive remarks to his/her subordinates
64. A manager taking cultural norms and rituals into account when disciplining his/her subordinates
65. A manager explicitly requesting a team member to participate in a team meeting
66. A manager answering the phone with a "ja" when his/her subordinate calls
67. Managers checking up on subordinates' wellbeing ("are you happy" appraisals)
68. A manager making unwanted attempts to draw a subordinate into a discussion of personal matters
69. A manager pressurising his/her subordinate to attend supplementary meetings and training sessions

70. Performance appraisals
71. A manager retaliating or seeking revenge on his/her subordinate
72. A manager calling or messaging his/her subordinate outside of work hours
73. A manager denying his/her subordinate a benefit in relation to his/her employment
74. A manager implementing performance improvement plans
75. A manager giving his/her subordinates regular ultimatums
76. A manager directing and controlling the way work is carried out
77. A manager giving his/her subordinate negative feedback pertaining to his/her work performance
78. A manager accusing his/her subordinate of not trying hard enough
79. A manager commenting on his/her subordinate's appearance and lifestyle
80. Administrative delays (this could include delays in processing pay or leave applications)
81. A manager asking his/her subordinate to take a medical examination to make sure he/she is fit for work
82. An employer suddenly removing a benefit from an employee's contract due to organisational change or downsizing
83. A manager establishing possible causes of his/her subordinate's performance issues
84. A manager pressuring his/her subordinate not to leave at the end of the day due to the high workload the manager has given his/her subordinate
85. A manager documenting and recording performance issues
86. A manager checking in with his/her subordinate when giving feedback and asking if he/she agrees/disagrees with what the manager is saying or if he/she has anything to add
87. A manager rolling his/her eyes at his/her subordinate's idea
88. A manager setting goals for his/her subordinates and monitoring that those goals have been achieved
89. A manager dealing with performance issues as soon as they come up
90. A manager giving specific examples of his/her subordinate's poor performance
91. A manager threatening (verbally, physically, indirectly) his/her subordinate
92. A manager explaining to his/her subordinate the impact of his/her performance on the organisation
93. A manager publicly criticising or undermining his/her subordinate
94. A manager offering appropriate support (e.g. training) to his/her subordinates
95. A manager asking his/her subordinate what he/she thinks the solution to his/her performance problem is
96. A manager calling a trade union leader or another representative to discipline his/her subordinate
97. A manager creating an environment of mutual respect
98. A manager acknowledging that his/her subordinate's performance has improved and discussing how to maintain the improvements
99. A manager reading communications addressed to his/her subordinate, such as e-mails or faxes
100. A manager neglecting to say please or thank you

101. A manager blocking his/her subordinate from promotion through poor performance evaluations
102. A manager talking loudly on the phone about personal matters
103. A manager taking mitigating factors into account when examining his/her subordinate's conduct
104. An employer putting a clause in an employee contract that the employer is entittled to monitor employee emails
105. A manager counselling an employee before giving him/her a verbal or written warning
106. A manager reprimanding his/her subordinate in a calm manner, using a neutral tone of voice
107. Failure of the manager to consult his/her subordinate in reference to a decision he/she should have been involved in
108. A manager conducting a formal disciplinary enquiry before giving a verbal or written warning
109. Directors and line managers meeting once a month to discuss the issues they are having with their staff members
110. A manager making the details of contributions in a project highly visible to others within the organisation
111. An employer offering an employee pay or a benefit in exchange for the employee not going to the CCMA or taking the issue further
112. A manager shouting or responding in an angry way when provoked by a subordinate
113. A manager not reprimanding team members who are rude to or criticise one another
114. A manager giving his/her subordinate a benefit in relation to his/her employment
115. A manager insisting that his/her subordinate carry out the work exactly how he/she says, after the subordinate misunderstands the manager's explanations of alternative methods of doing the task

D. In light of the current COVID-19 pandemic which has forced most organisations to work from home, please rank the extent to which you consider the following behaviours to be examples of either workplace bullying, workplace incivility or reasonable management action in these times (1 – workplace bullying, 2 – workplace incivility, 3 – reasonable management action).

1. A manager assuming women will have greater difficulties than men working from home and therefore checking up on a female more than a male to make sure work is being done
2. A manager excluding his/her subordinate (e.g. from online meetings, failing to copy him/her into team emails)
3. A manager ignoring his/her subordinate's contribution to online meetings
4. A manager belittling his/her subordinate's contribution to online meetings
5. A manager ignoring/not responding to his/her subordinates attempt to contact him/her electronically or via phone call

6. An employer directing his/her employees to partake in training on the new technology
7. A manager being open and flexible about alternative working patterns
8. An employer paying an employee less in these times because of the losses the business is making
9. A manager regularly checking in with his/her subordinates to ensure that the new arrangements are working for them
10. A manager providing contact details and signpost to a range of resources
11. A manager requiring his/her subordinates to document what they do during the day and how many hours they spend on each task
12. Developing Remote Working Guides for Managers and Staff and communicating these via online training
13. A manager taking away certain support structures that his/her subordinates would have had previously; such as coaching, therapy sessions, or other employee assistant programs
14. A manager making a vulnerable employee or an employee who is scared to return to work, return to work

CONCLUDING QUESTIONS

E. Based on all the above questions you have been asked do you have any additional comments or thoughts that you would like to add? _____

F. Based on all the above questions you have answered what do you understand to be the difference between reasonable management action and workplace bullying? _____

G. In your everyday work, how do you decide if something is reasonable or sounds like incivility or bullying? Are there any features or factors in the situation that you use to decide this? / How does your organisation differentiate between management actions and workplace bullying? _____

H. What do you believe are the most important barriers to ending workplace bullying in organisations? _____

THANK YOU PAGE

Appendix G – Ethical Clearance Certificate

UNIVERSITY OF THE WITWATERSRAND, JOHANNESBURG

SCHOOL OF HUMAN AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT ETHICS COMMITTEE
CONSTITUTED UNDER THE UNIVERSITY HUMAN RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE (NON-MEDICAL)

CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE:	**PROTOCOL NUMBER: MAORG/20/06**
PROJECT TITLE:	Distinguishing between Workplace Bullying Behaviours, Workplace Incivility Behaviours and Reasonable Management Action: An Exploratory Study
INVESTIGATOR	Ziman Julia (1525637)
SCHOOL/DEPARTMENT OF INVESTIGATOR	SHCD/Psychology
DATE CONSIDERED	05 June 2020
DECISION OF THE COMMITTEE	Approved unconditionally
RISK LEVEL	Low Risk
EXPIRY DATE	31 December 2022

ISSUE DATE OF CERTIFICATE 21 June 2020 **CHAIRPERSON** _____
(Dr Colleen Bernstein)

cc: Dr Colleen Bernstein (Supervisor)

DECLARATION OF INVESTIGATOR

To be completed in duplicate and **ONE COPY** returned to the Chairperson of the School/Department ethics committee.

I fully understand the conditions under which I am are authorized to carry out the abovementioned research and I guarantee to ensure compliance with these conditions. Should any departure to be contemplated from the research procedure as approved I/we undertake to resubmit the protocol to the Committee.

_____ 23 / 06 / 2020

Signature **Date**

PLEASE QUOTE THE PROTOCOL NUMBER ON ALL ENQUIRIES

Appendix H – Permission Letter from the Faculty Registrar

UNIVERSITY OF THE WITWATERSRAND, JOHANNESBURG

OFFICE OF THE DEPUTY REGISTRAR

29 July 2020

Julia Ziman
Student number (1525637)
Master of Arts in Organisational Psychology School of
Human and Community Development

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

"Distinguishing between Workplace Bullying Behaviours, Workplace Incivility Behaviours and Reasonable Management Action: An Exploratory Study"

This letter serves to confirm that the above project has received permission to be conducted on University premises, and/or involving staff and/or students of the University as research participants. In undertaking this research, you agree to abide by all University regulations for conducting research on campus and to respect participants' rights to withdraw from participation at any time.

If you are conducting research on certain student cohorts, year groups or courses within specific Schools and within the teaching term, permission must be sought from Heads of School or individual academics.

Ethical clearance has been obtained. (Protocol number: **MAORG/20/06**)

Research duration: (1 Year)

Nicoleen Potgieter
University Deputy Registrar

Appendix I – Pilot Study

Now that you have answered the questions above please answer the following questions which pertain to your overall feelings about all the questions that you have just answered. You may answer Yes or No by ticking one of the boxes. However, if you do answer yes, please explain your answer in the lines provided below each question.

(1) Were any items in the scale that you did not understand?

☐ YES ☐ NO

If yes please explain

(2) Were there were any items that you felt were ambiguous or unclear?

☐ YES ☐ NO

If yes please explain

(3) Were there were any items that were included that should have been excluded?

☐ YES ☐ NO

If yes please explain

(4) Were there were any items that you felt were sensitive and/or offensive in nature?

☐ YES ☐ NO

If yes please explain

(5) Were there were any items that you thought should be included in the scale that were not included?

☐ YES ☐ NO

If yes please explain

6) Were the instructions on how to answer the questions clear?

☐ YES ☐ NO

If yes please explain

THANK YOU FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION.

Appendix J – Vignette included in original survey but subsequently removed based on the results of the pilot study

Vignette

John, the manager of a small consulting company has recently employed a new intern, Hannah to work for him. To his dismay, Hannah is not competent to complete any of the tasks she was contracted to complete. This leads to John micro-manage all of Hannah's work. Hannah senses that her colleagues pick up on this, and she overhears them gossiping about her "not even being able to complete a simple presentation." She gets excluded from all non-work social activities and John often asks her if she really wants this job or feels she is cut out for this. She assures him that this is her dream company and begs him to let her compile the next report on her own. He reluctantly agrees. Hannah however messes up large portions of the report. John, who is very angry and frustrated, resists the urge to shout at Hannah, but belittles her and no longer gives her any tasks and responsibilities. She is forced to do admin work and after 6-months feels frustrated and confronts John, explaining that she has only just finished studying and that she really wants to meaningfully contribute to his company. John, who is under a lot of financial pressure, ignores her request.

Is this an example of:

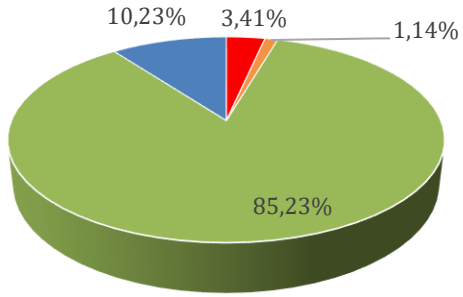
a) Workplace bullying?
b) Workplace incivility?
c) Reasonable management action?

Why?

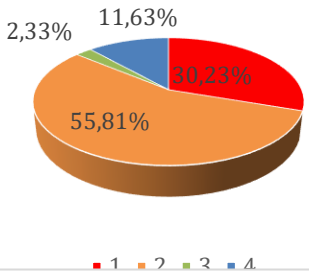
Appendix K - Pie Charts of Results of the Check-List

KEY:
1) Workplace Bullying
2) Workplace Incivility
3) Reasonable Management Action
4) None of the above

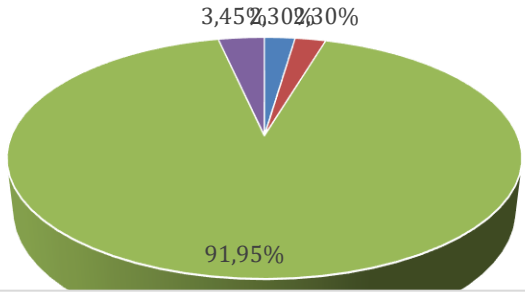
1. A manager holding his/her subordinate to a high performance standard



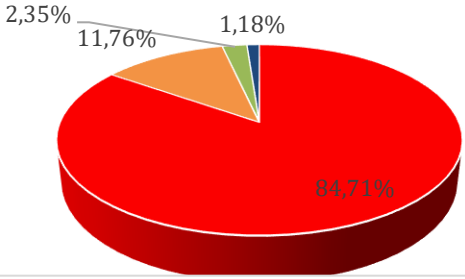
2. A manager withholding information which affects the performance of his/her subordinate



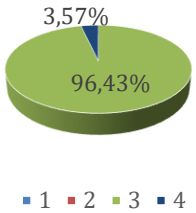
3. A manager explaining to his/her subordinate how he/she has underperformed



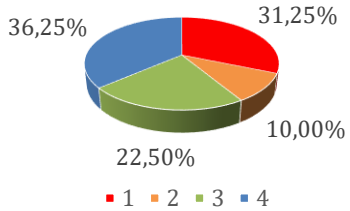
4. A manager pressurising a subordinate not to claim something which the subordinate is entitled to (e.g. sick leave, holiday entitlement, travel expenses)



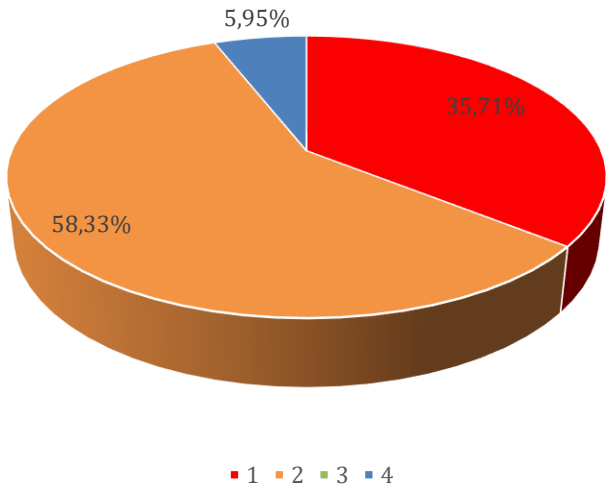
5. A manager explaining to his/her subordinate how he/she can improve performance



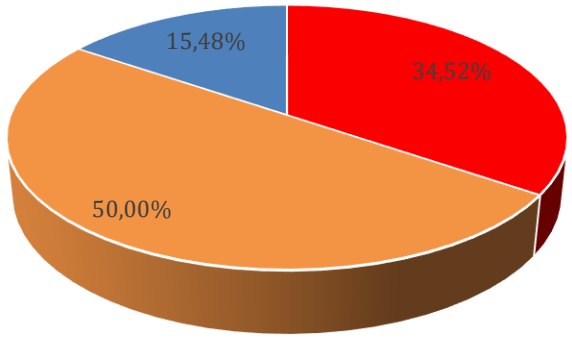
6. Making an employee redundant



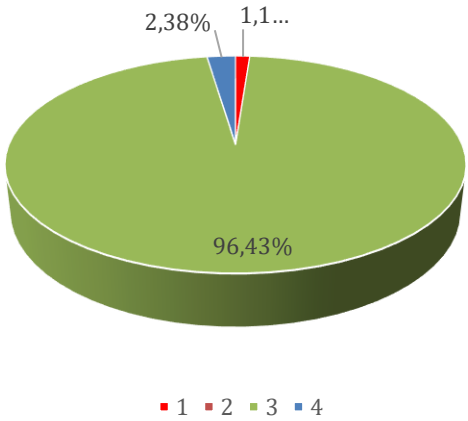
7. A manager raising his/her voice when speaking to his/her subordinate



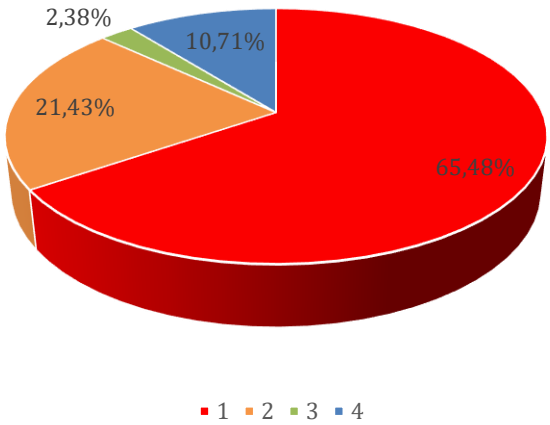
8. A manager sharing personal information about his/her subordinate



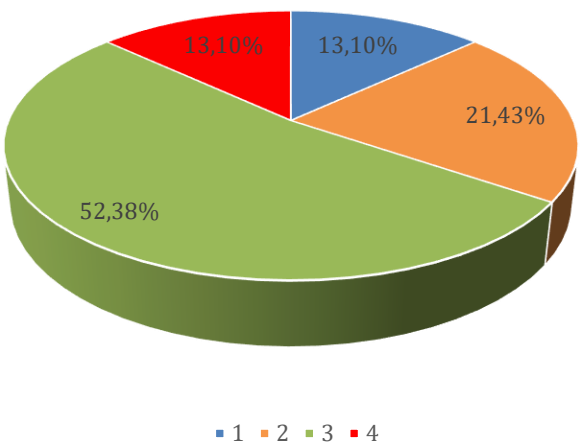
9. A manager providing constructive criticism to his/her subordinate



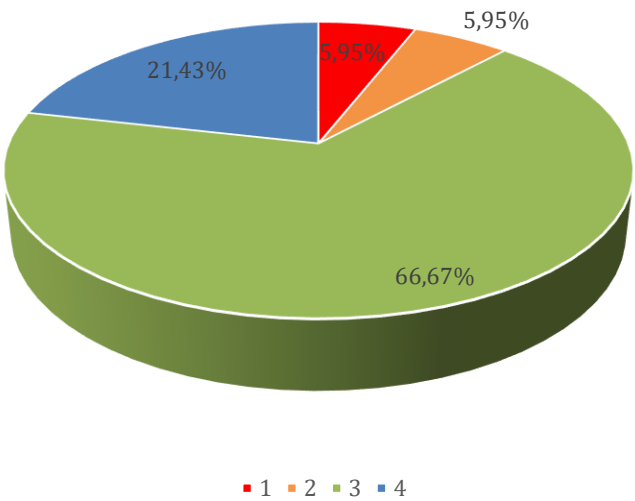
10. A manager constantly finding fault with his/her subordinate



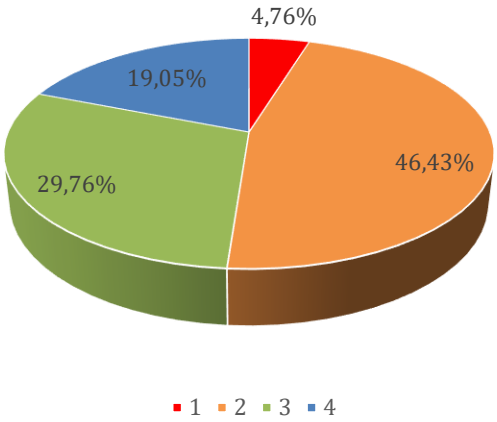
11. A manager reprimanding a team member based on complaints about him/her from other team members



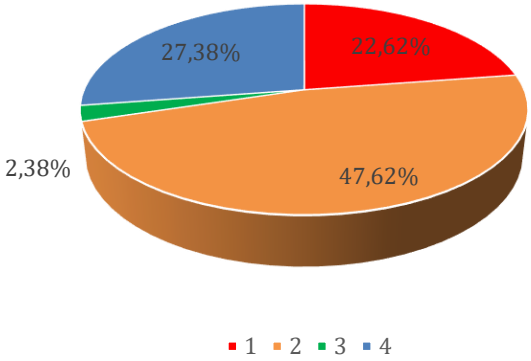
12. Demotion for incompetence



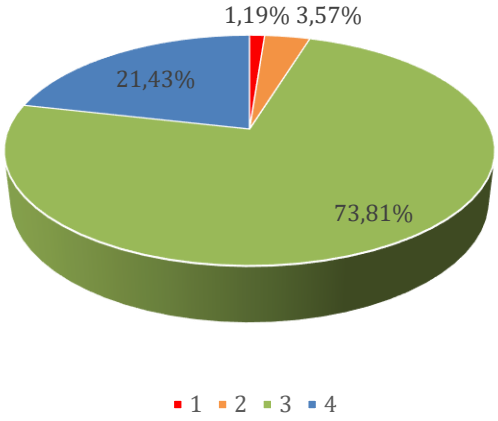
13. A manager only giving directions in written form



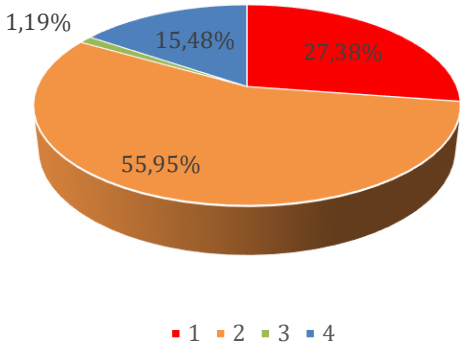
14. A manager providing conflicting instructions to his/her subordinate



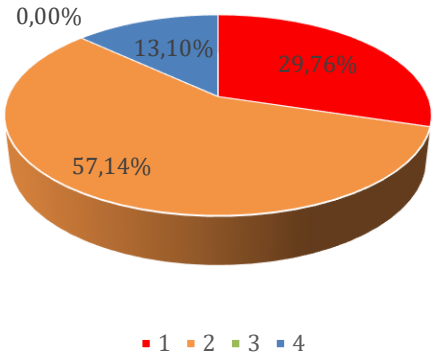
15. A manager taking disciplinary action against his/her subordinate



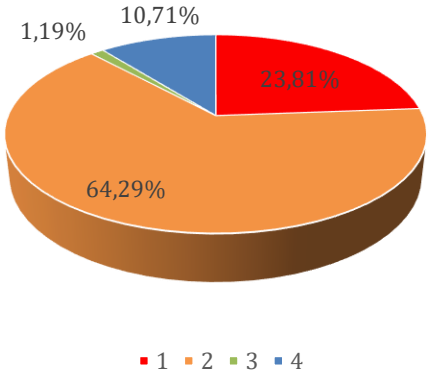
16. A manager opening his/her subordinate's desk drawers without permission



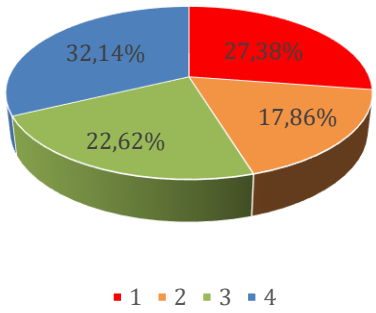
17. A manager taking items from his/her subordinate without returning them



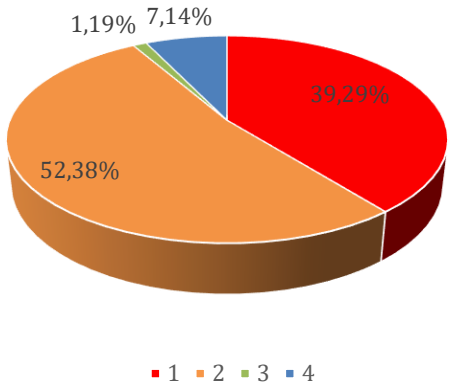
18. A manager interrupting his/her subordinate while he/she is speaking on the telephone



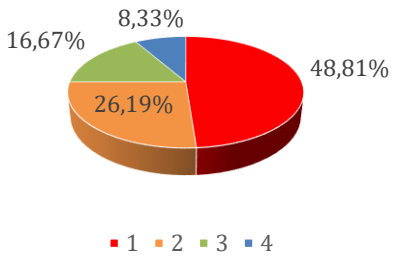
19. A manager asking a subordinate to carry out tasks outside his/her job description



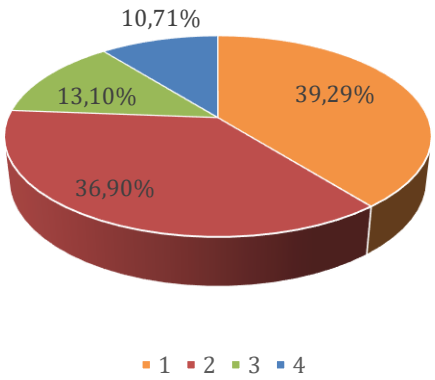
20. A manager responding in a sarcastic way to his/her subordinates



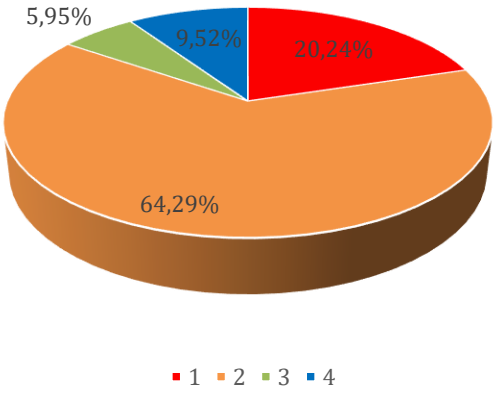
21. A manager explaining that he/she is under pressure to get work done and telling his/her subordinates that if they complete their daily tasks they can go home, if not they must stay and finish and if they do not want to…



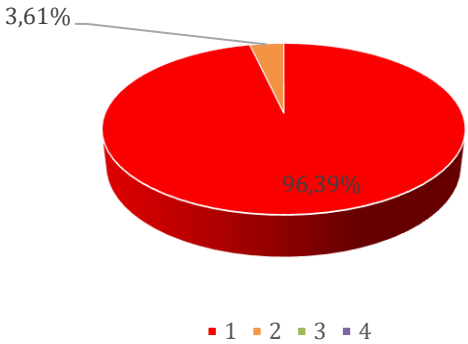
22. A manager excessively monitoring the work of his/her subordinates



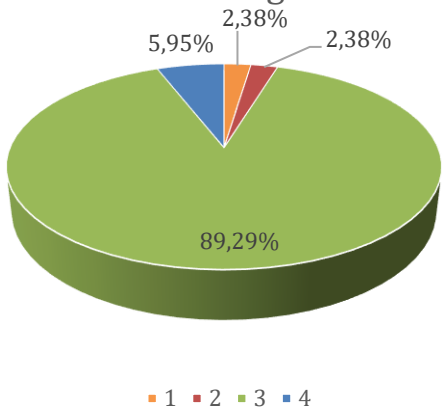
23. A manager giving little explanation for his/her decisions



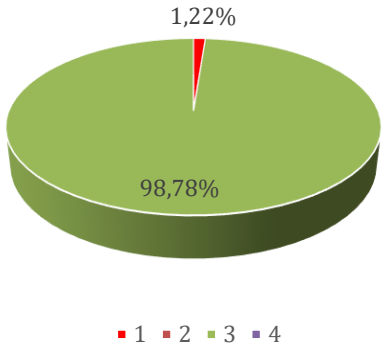
24. A manager intimidating (finger pointing, invasion of personal space, shoving, blocking/barring the way) his/her subordinate



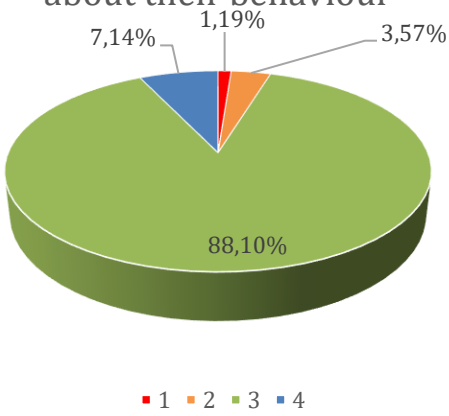
25. An employer allowing an employee to call witnesses to his/her disciplinary hearing



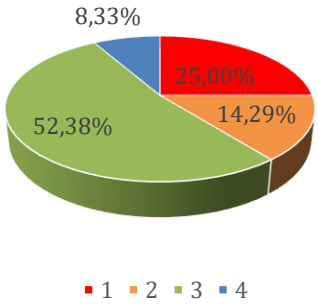
26. A manager giving his/her subordinate time frames to improve performance and setting a date for review



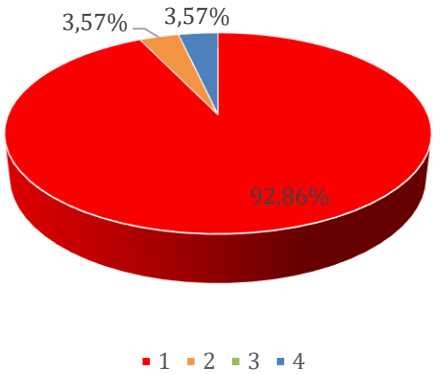
27. A manager having regular counselling sessions with his/her subordinates about their behaviour



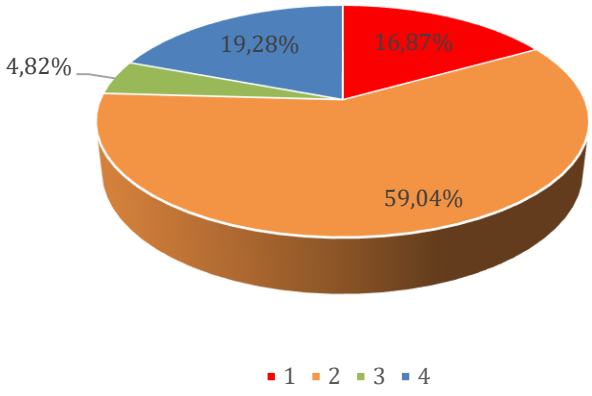
28. A manager implementing penalties or punishments for poor performance



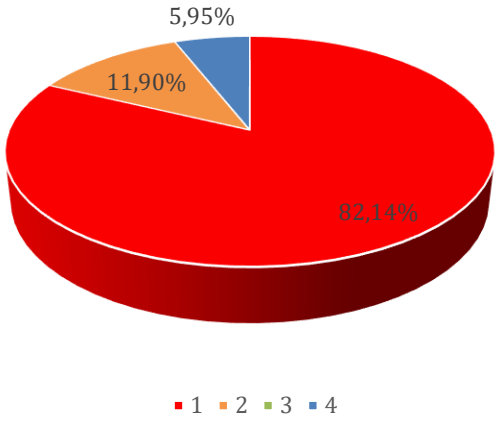
29. A manager singling out or humiliating a subordinate in connection with his/her work



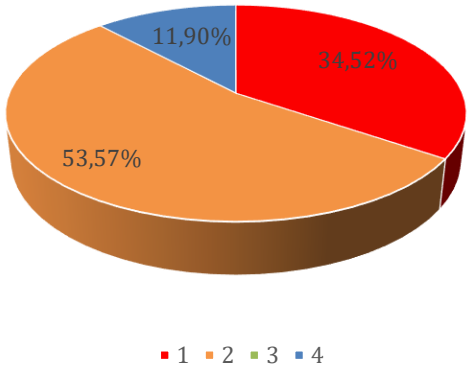
30. A manager not rewarding or recognising good performance



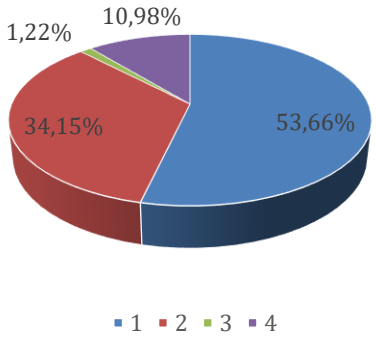
31. A manager setting up his/her subordinates to fail



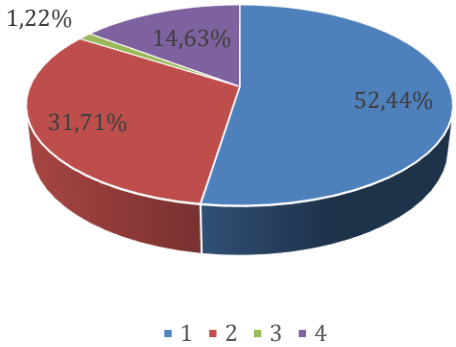
32. A manager ignoring subordinates' complaints that he/she sees as frivolous



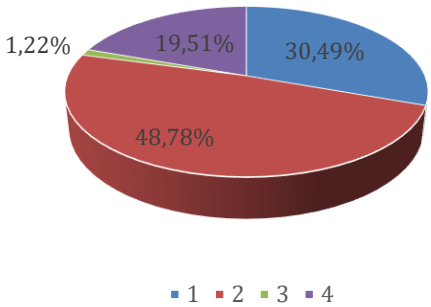
33. A manager pranking or making jokes about his/her subordinate and assuring the subordinate that the manager "wasn't being serious, it was just a joke"



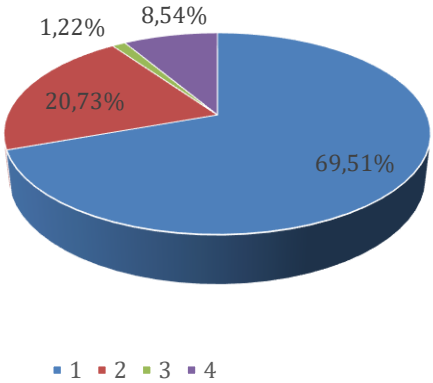
34. A manager taking inconsistent disciplinary action across a team



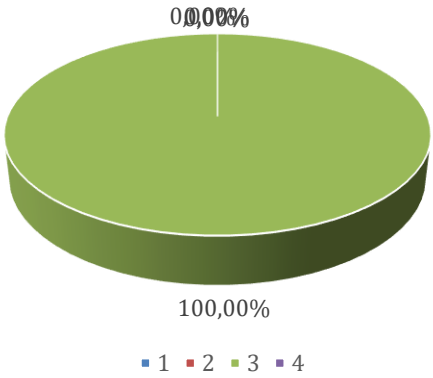
35. Failure of the manager to provide the subordinate a suitable job description (one that is clear and not vague or exceedingly long)



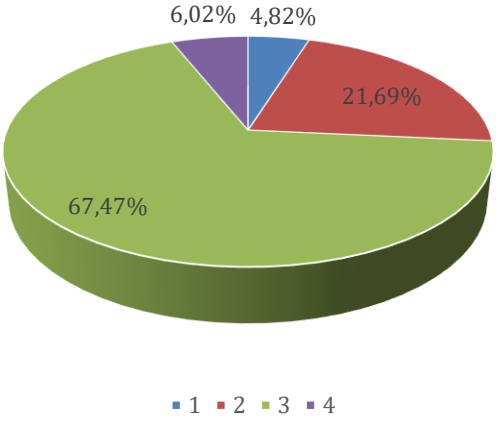
36. A manager inviting his/her subordinates to "informal" meetings which turn out to be administration of discipline



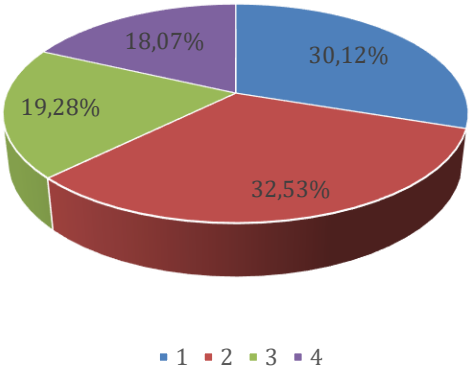
37. A manager identifying skill gaps and developing targeted developmental plans



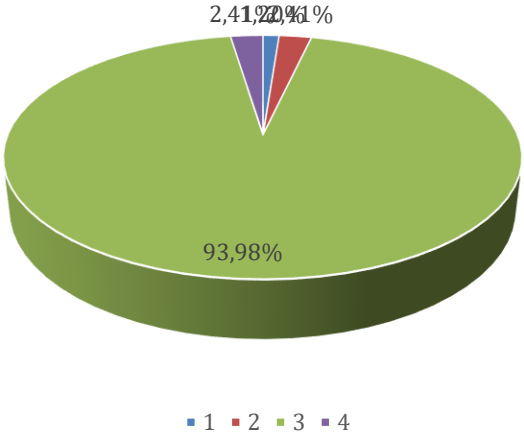
38. A manager being stern with his/her subordinates



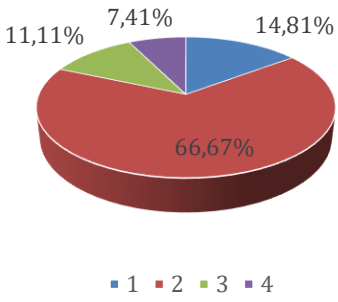
39. A line manager calling the director to discipline his/her subordinate



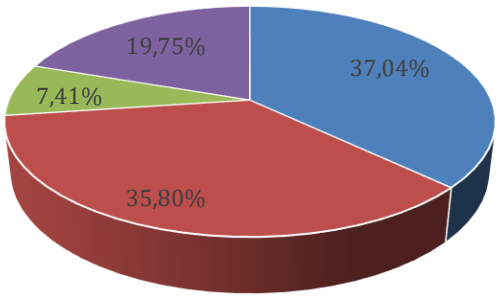
40. A manager holding meetings addressing underperformance



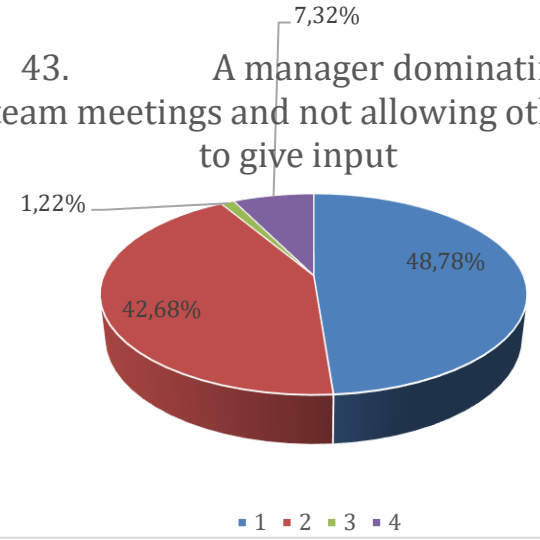
41. A manager inviting his/her subordinates to a formal meeting without telling his/her subordinates what the meeting is about



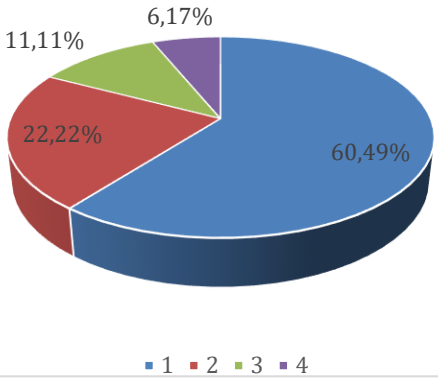
42. A manager making allegations against his/her subordinates



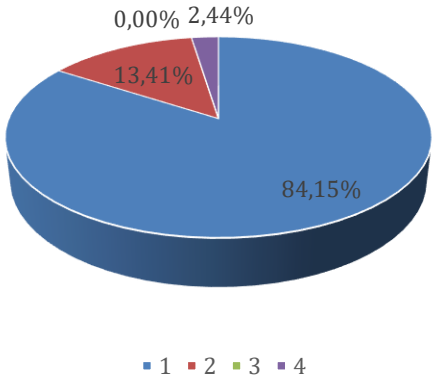
43. A manager dominating team meetings and not allowing others to give input



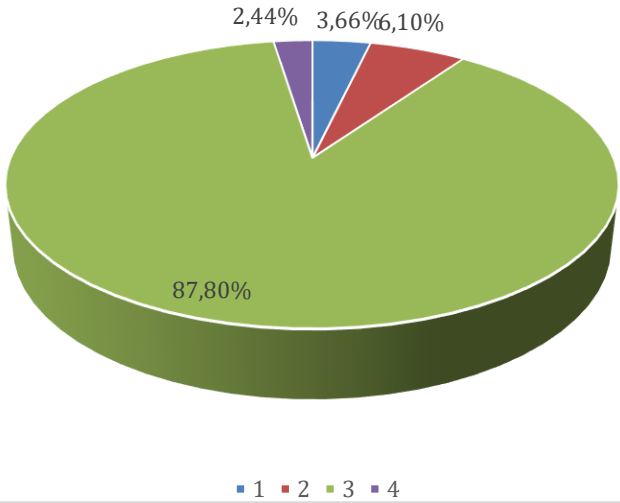
44. A manager repeatedly reminding a subordinate of his/her errors or mistakes



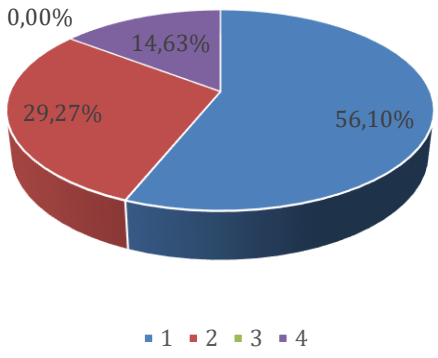
45. Scapegoating (a manager inflicting blame on his/her subordinate unfairly)



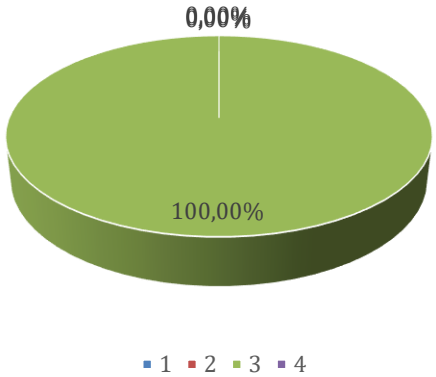
46. Investigation by the manager of any alleged misconduct



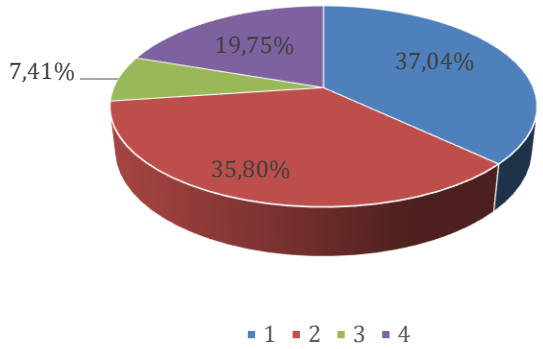
47. A manager denying subordinates resources to help them do their job



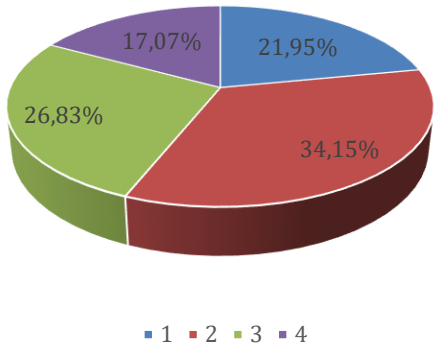
48. A manager setting up times to meet his/her subordinates to review their performance



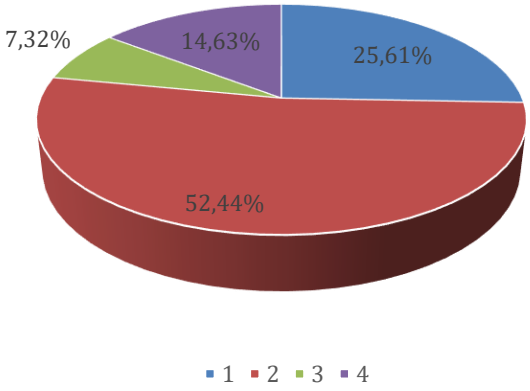
49. A manager behaving in an abrupt manner towards his/her subordinates



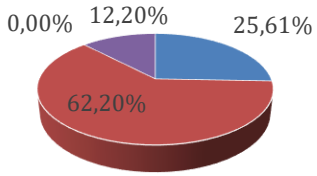
50. A manager changing his/her work expectations or deadlines of his/her subordinates



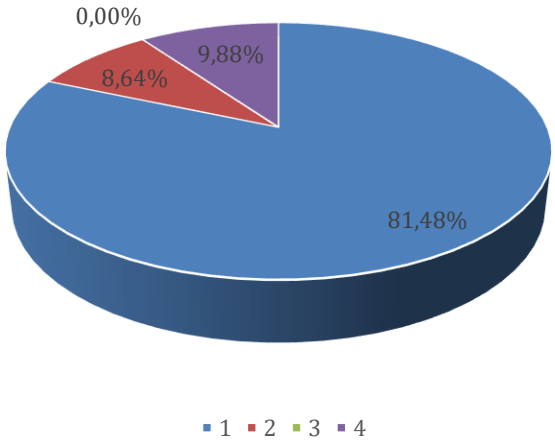
51. A manager comparing team members with one another



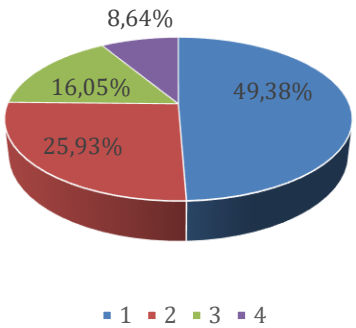
52. Failure from the manager to show empathy or compassion towards his/her subordinates (failure to acknowledge contextual factors that prevent a subordinate from…



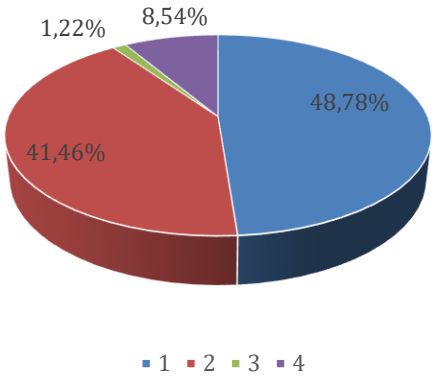
53. A manager using disciplinary procedures that are out of proportion to the subordinate's performance



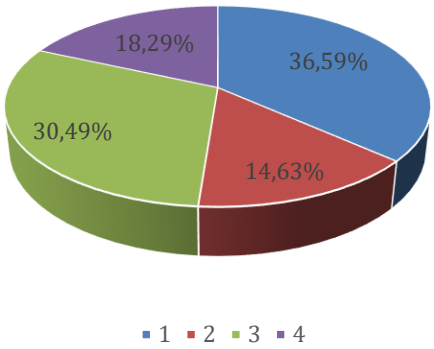
54. A manager reprimanding his/her subordinate for a performance issue and then incorporating other areas in which his/her subordinate was incompetent or has underperformed in the past



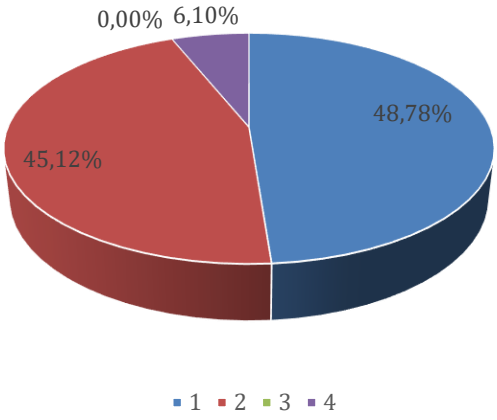
55. A manager misrepresenting a project so that employees will agree to take part



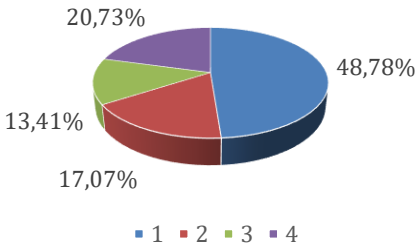
56. An employer refusing an employee permission to return to work due to a medical condition



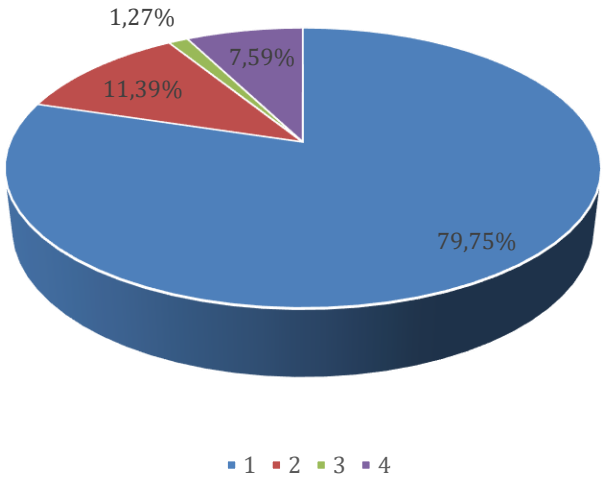
57. A manager excluding his/her subordinate from essential conversations



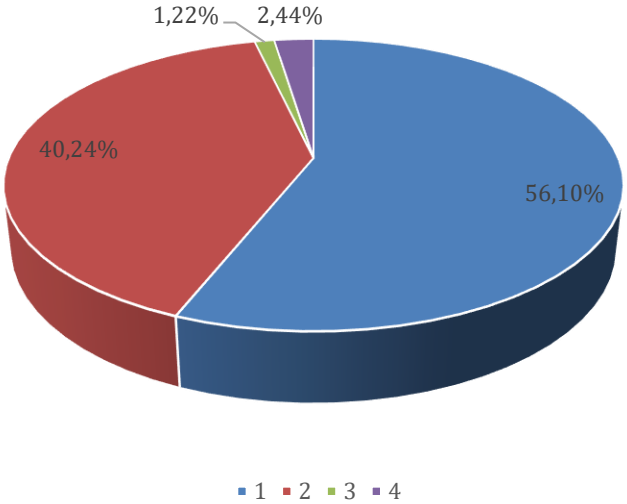
58. A manager reclassifying, redeploying, or downgrading an employee's job, even if it means that he/she will be doing a lower level of work or work below his/her level of competence



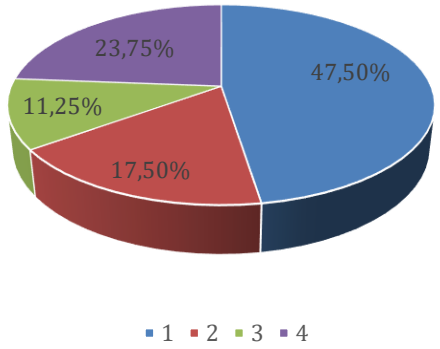
59. A manager hinting or signaling to a subordinate that he/she should quit his/her job



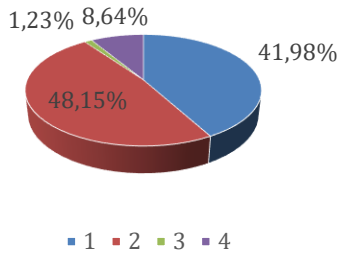
60. A manager responding in a condescending way to his/her subordinate



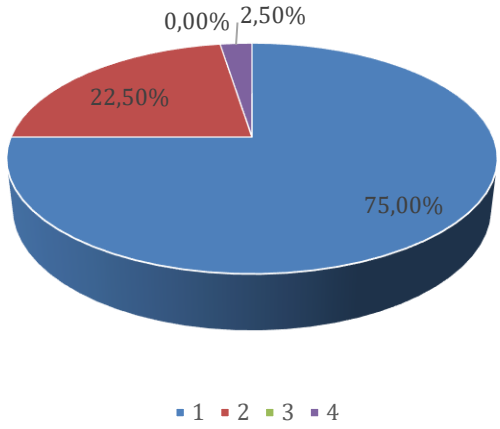
61. A manager rejecting his/her subordinate's application for leave, training or promotion



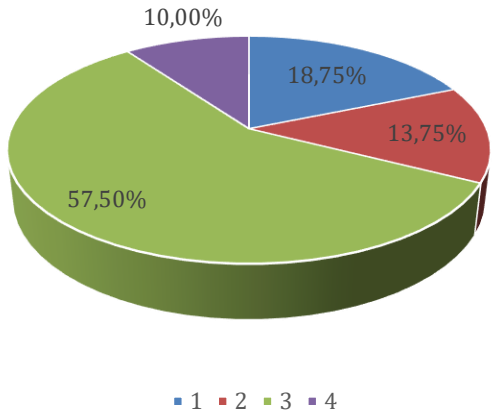
62. Failure from the manager to support his/her subordinate (e.g. a manager ignoring his/her subordinate's requests for help or being slow in seeing to matters on which his/her subordinate is reliant on him/her for)



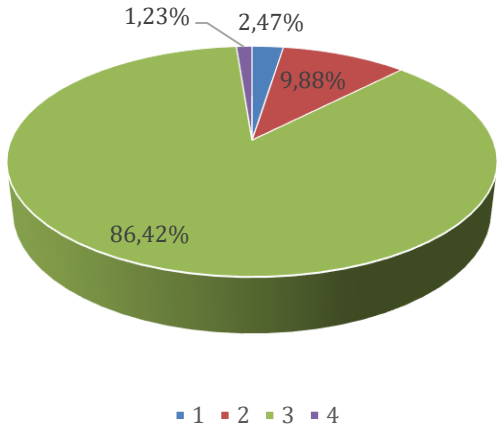
63. A manager making micro-aggressive remarks to his/her subordinates



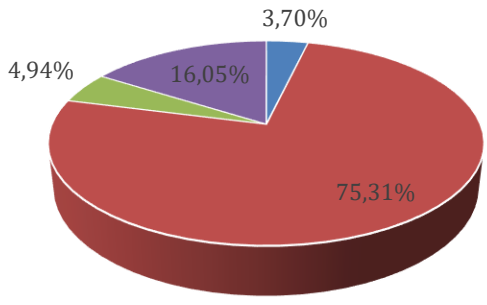
64. A manager taking cultural norms and rituals into account when disciplining his/her subordinates



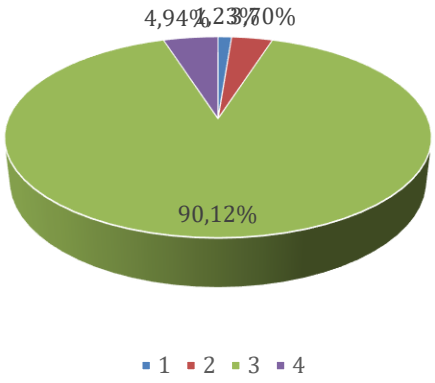
65. A manager explicitly requesting a team member to participate in a team meeting



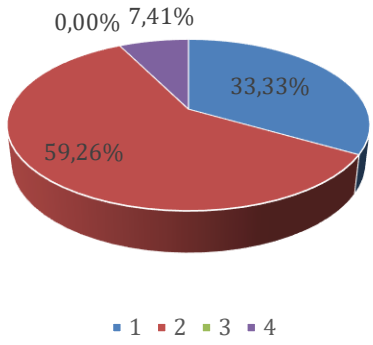
66. A manager answering the phone with a "ja" when his/her subordinate calls



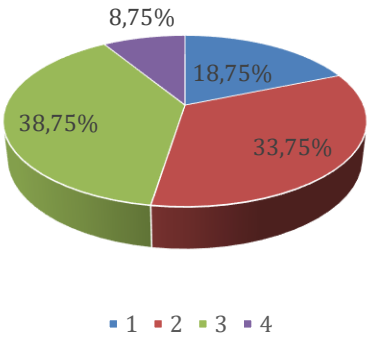
67. Managers checking up on subordinates' wellbeing ("are you happy" appraisals)



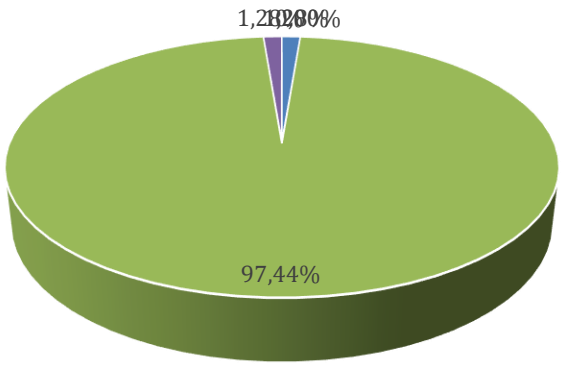
68. A manager making unwanted attempts to draw a subordinate into a discussion of personal matters



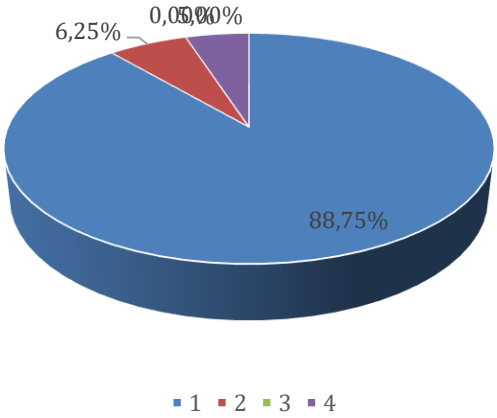
69. A manager pressurising his/her subordinate to attend supplementary meetings and training sessions



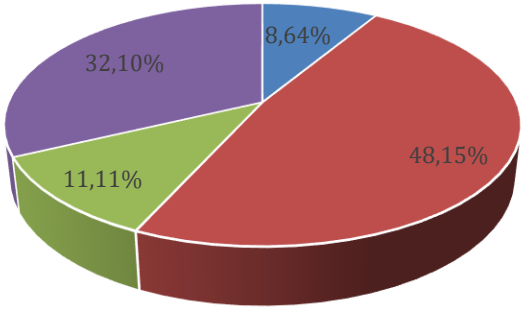
70. Performance appraisals



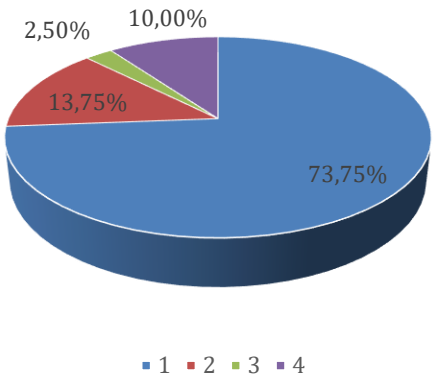
71. A manager retaliating or seeking revenge on his/her subordinate



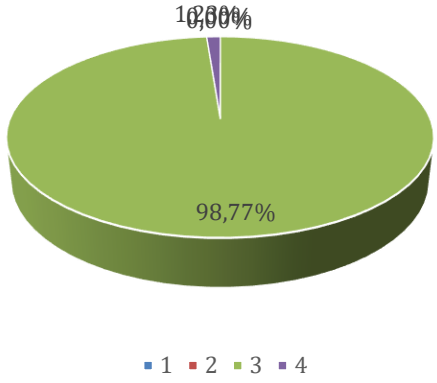
72. A manager calling or messaging his/her subordinate outside of work hours



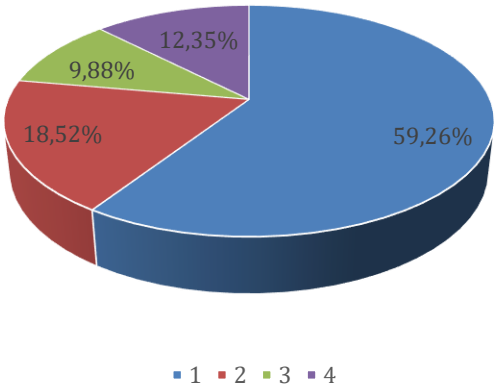
73. A manager denying his/her subordinate a benefit in relation to his/her employment



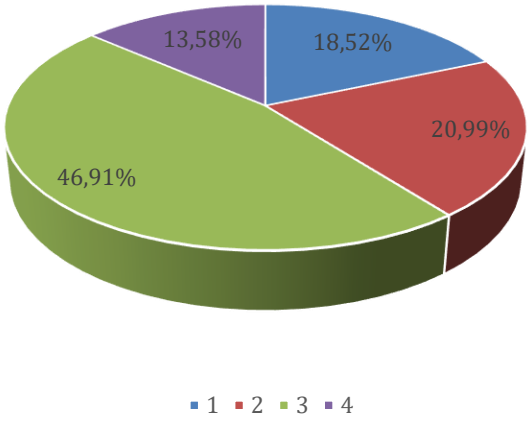
74. A manager implementing performance improvement plans



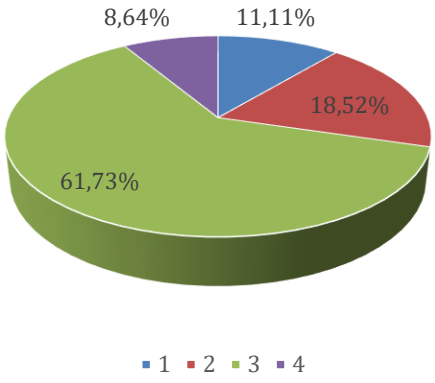
75. A manager giving his/her subordinates regular ultimatums



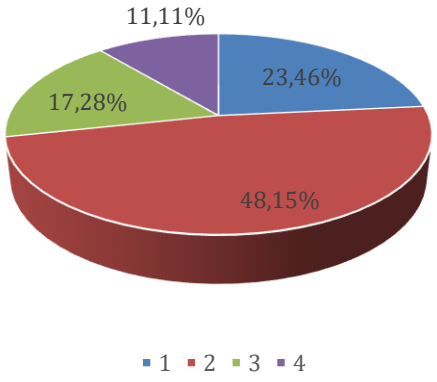
76. A manager directing and controlling the way work is carried out



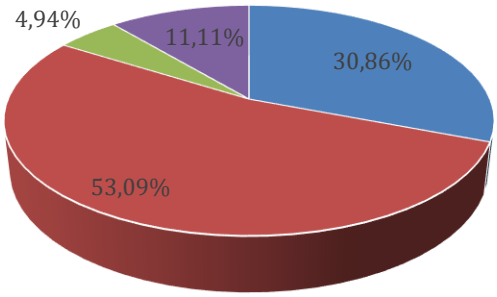
77. A manager giving his/her subordinate negative feedback pertaining to his/her work performance



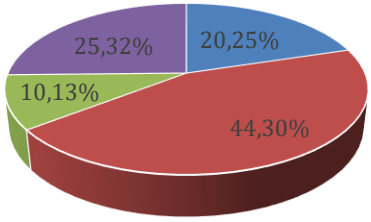
78. A manager accusing his/her subordinate of not trying hard enough



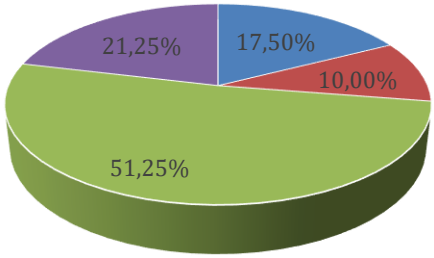
79. A manager commenting on his/her subordinate's appearance and lifestyle



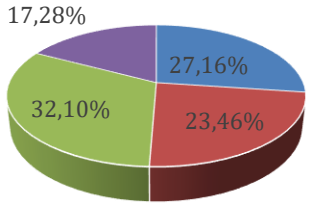
80. Administrative delays (this could include delays in processing pay or leave applications)



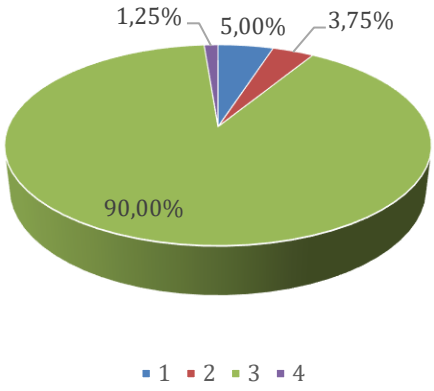
81. A manager asking his/her subordinate to take a medical examination to make sure he/she is fit for work



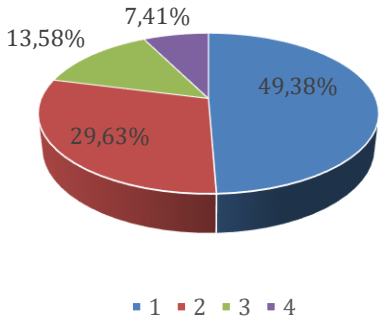
82. An employer suddenly removing a benefit from an employee's contract due to organisational change or downsizing



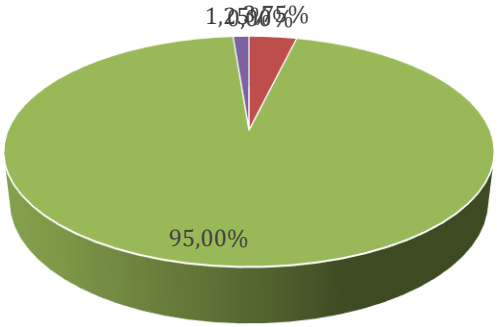
83. A manager establishing possible causes of his/her subordinate's performance issues



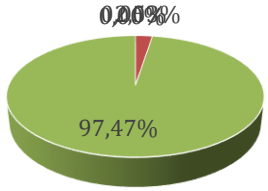
84. A manager pressuring his/her subordinate not to leave at the end of the day due to the high workload the manager has given his/her subordinate



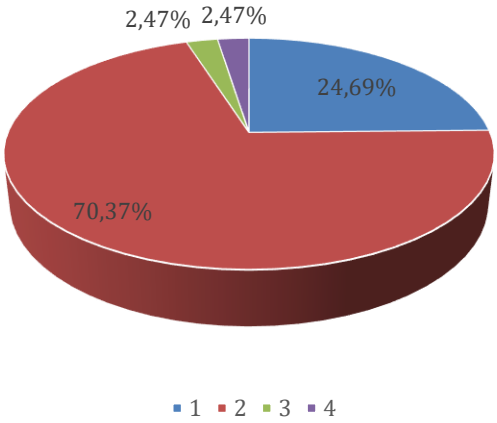
85. A manager documenting and recording performance issues



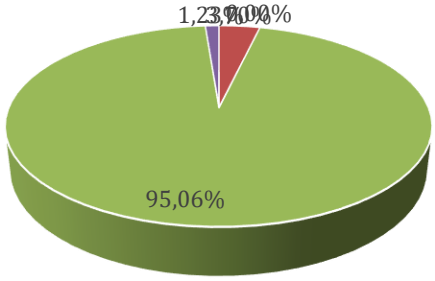
86. A manager checking in with his/her subordinate when giving feedback and asking if he/she agrees/disagrees with what the manager is saying or if he/she has anything to add



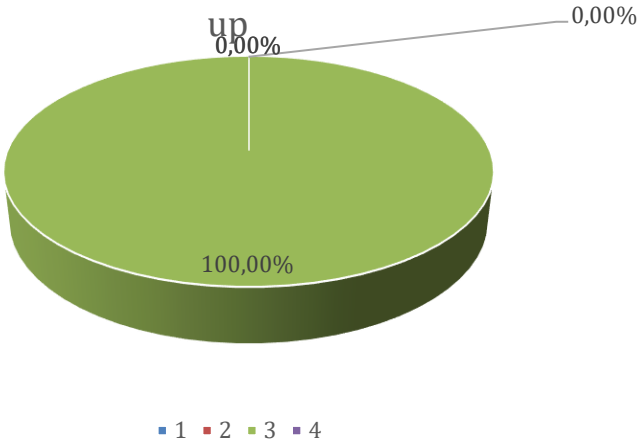
87. A manager rolling his/her eyes at his/her subordinate's idea



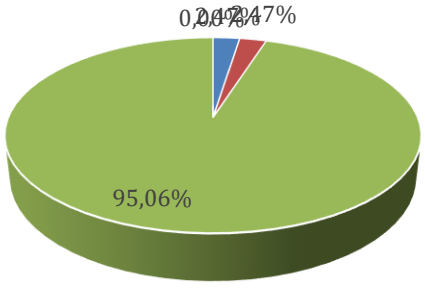
88. A manager setting goals for his/her subordinates and monitoring that those goals have been achieved



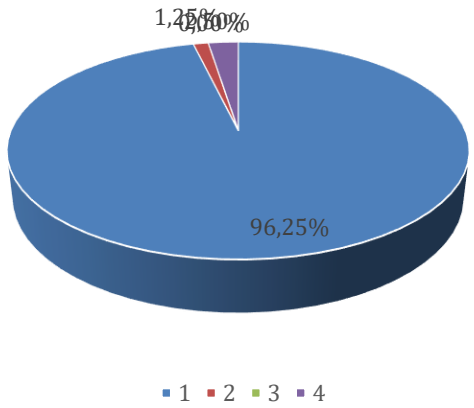
89. A manager dealing with performance issues as soon as they come up



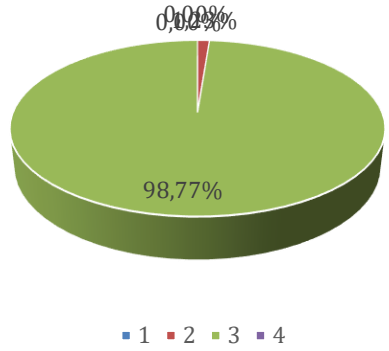
90. A manager giving specific examples of his/her subordinate's poor performance



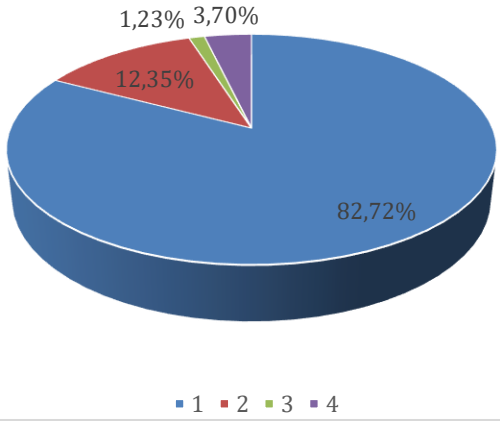
91. A manager threatening (verbally, physically, indirectly) his/her subordinate



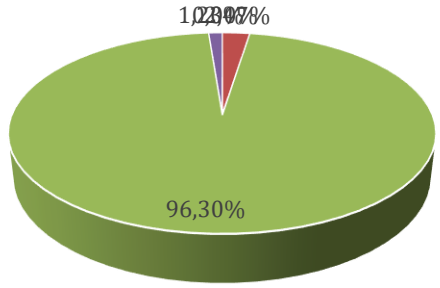
92. A manager explaining to his/her subordinate the impact of his/her performance on the organisation



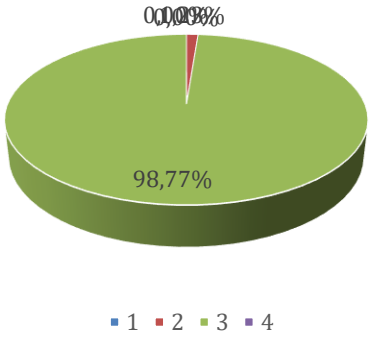
93. A manager publicly criticising or undermining his/her subordinate



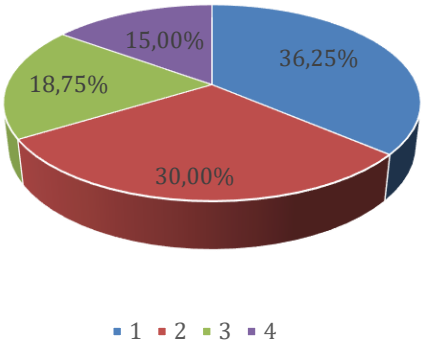
94. A manager offering appropriate support (e.g. training) to his/her subordinates



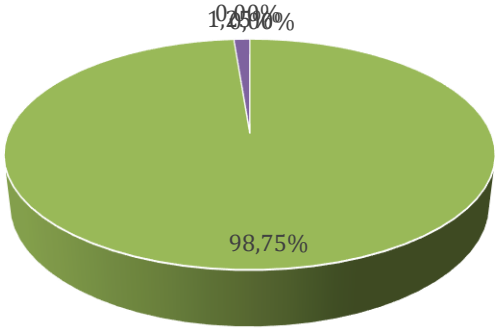
95. A manager asking his/her subordinate what he/she thinks the solution to his/her performance problem is



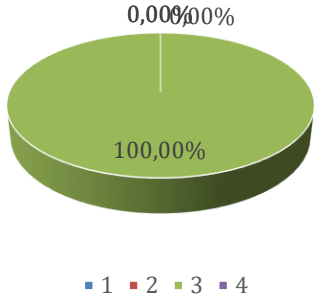
96. A manager calling a trade union leader or another representative to discipline his/her subordinate



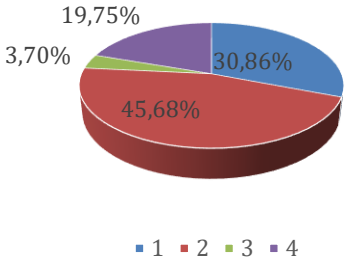
97. A manager creating an environment of mutual respect



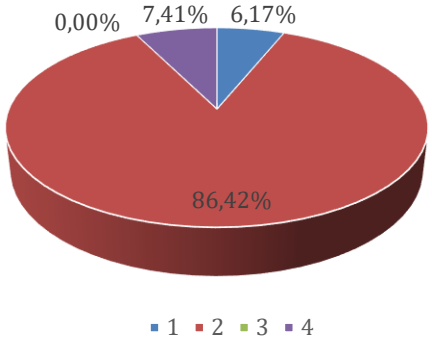
98. A manager acknowledging that his/her subordinate's performance has improved and discussing how to maintain the improvements



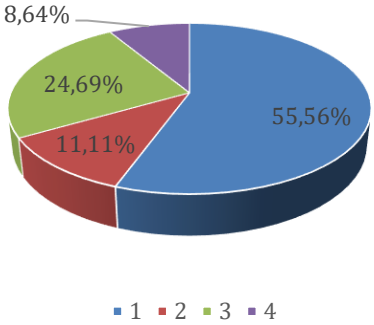
99. A manager reading communications addressed to his/her subordinate, such as e-mails or faxes



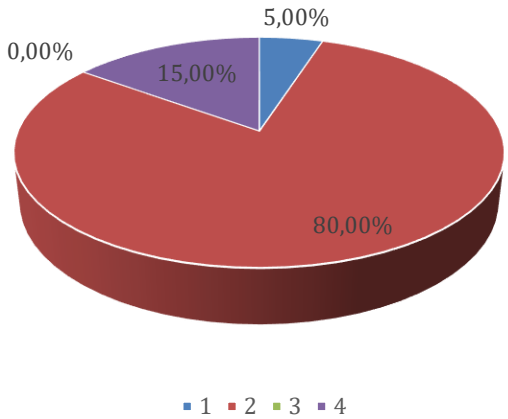
100. A manager neglecting to say please or thank you



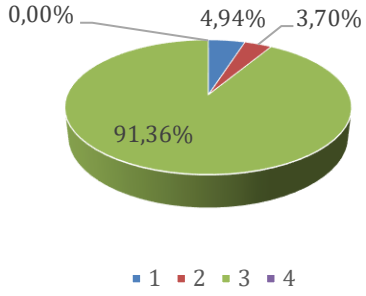
101. A manager blocking his/her subordinate from promotion through poor performance evaluations



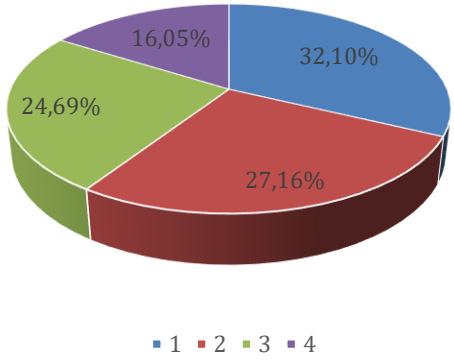
102. A manager talking loudly on the phone about personal matters



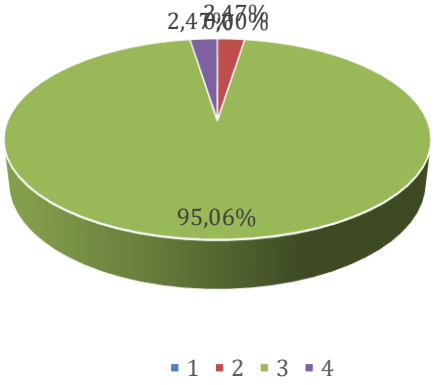
103. A manager taking mitigating factors into account when examining his/her subordinate's conduct



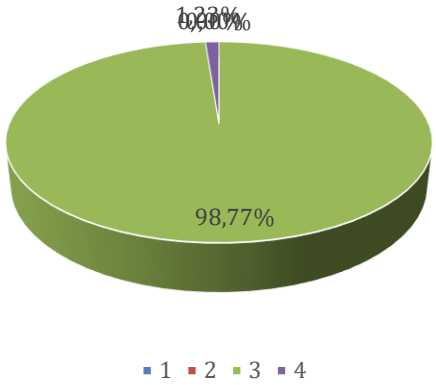
104. An employer putting a clause in an employee contract that the employer is entittled to monitor employee emails



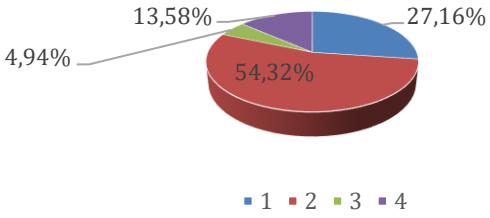
105. A manager counselling an employee before giving him/her a verbal or written warning



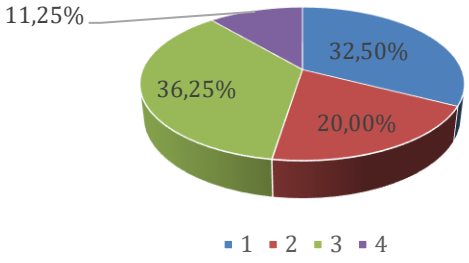
106. A manager reprimanding his/her subordinate in a calm manner, using a neutral tone of voice



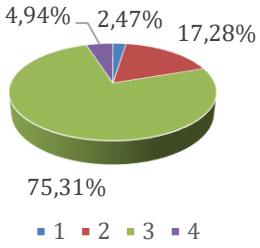
107. Failure of the manager to consult his/her subordinate in reference to a decision he/she should have been involved in



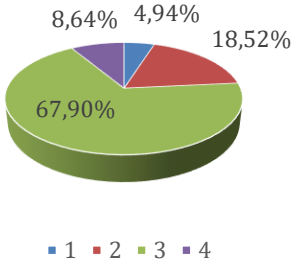
108. A manager conducting a formal disciplinary enquiry before giving a verbal or written warning



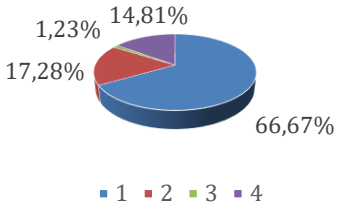
109. Directors and line managers meeting once a month to discuss the issues they are having with their staff members



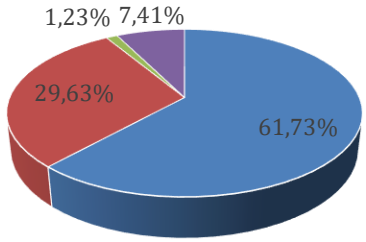
110. A manager making the details of contributions in a project highly visible to others within the organisation



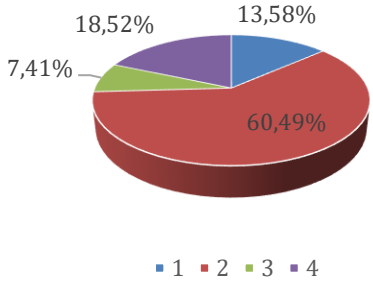
111. An employer offering an employee pay or a benefit in exchange for the employee not going to the CCMA or taking the...



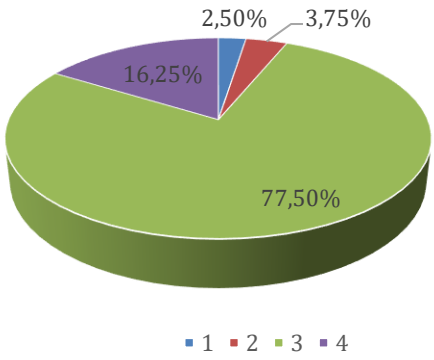
112. A manager shouting or responding in an angry way when provoked by a subordinate



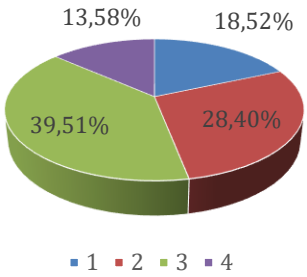
113. A manager not reprimanding team members who are rude to or criticise one another



114. A manager giving his/her subordinate a benefit in relation to his/her employment



115. A manager insisting that his/her subordinate carry out the work exactly how he/she says, after the subordinate misunderstands the manager's explanations of alternative methods of doing the task



Appendix L – Turnitin Report

1525637:Julia_Ziman_full_thesis.docx

ORIGINALITY REPORT

8%	5%	4%	3%
SIMILARITY INDEX	INTERNET SOURCES	PUBLICATIONS	STUDENT PAPERS

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