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A Qualitative Exploration of Teachers' Experiences of Bullying by Learners- A Job Demands Resources Perspective

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Declarations

I, Petunia Ntokozo Masoka declare that this research report is my own unaided work. It is submitted for the Bachelor of Arts Masters in Organisational Psychology degree at the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg. It has not been submitted before for any other degree or examination at this or any other university.

Signature: N.P Masoka

Date: 10 June 2024

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Abstract

Teacher-Targeted Bullying and Harassment by learners (TTBH) has been identified as an issue in South African schools. TTBH negatively affects the psychological and physiological well-being of teachers, their willingness to stay in the profession, and the overall quality of education in South African schools. This study utilised the theoretical model of the Job Demands Resources Model and a qualitative methodology to understand teachers' experiences and perceptions of this type of workplace bullying. It further utilised the Frustration- Aggression Hypothesis, Social Learning Theory, and Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Theory to understand possible causes of TTBH. The data was collected using semi-structured interviews and was analysed using Thematic Content Analysis. Twelve participants (9 females and 3 males) were interviewed from a number of schools within the Central Gauteng region. Eight participants identified as black (n=8), and four participants identified as coloured (n=4). All the participants in this study were from schools in Quintile four. The main themes that emerged were demands faced by teachers which include changes in curriculum, lack of resources as well as the impact of social and environmental factors that affect the process of teaching and learning. Furthermore, the effects of TTBH on teachers and schools, coping mechanisms, and how TTBH in South African schools can be mitigated were other themes that emerged from the interviews. Based on the findings of this study a number of interventions were suggested that include policies and procedures that protect teachers, counselling services for teachers and learners and greater parental involvement and support.

Keywords: Teacher-Targeted Bullying and Harassment (TTBH), Resources, Demands, Workplace bullying, Teachers, Coping, Interventions.

Table of Contents

Abstract **4**
Chapter 1: Introduction **8**
1.1. Rationale **8**
1.2. Aim **10**
1.3 Structure of the Research Report **10**
Chapter 2: Literature Review **12**
2.1 Defining Workplace Bullying and Prevalence. **12**
2.1.1 Prevalence ***12***
2.1.2 Defining Workplace Bullying ***13***
2.2 Consequences of Workplace Bullying **15**
2.3 Defining Teacher-Targeted Bullying and Harassment by Learners (TTBH). **17**
2.4 Consequences of Teacher-Targeted Bullying and Harassment **19**
2.4.1 Emotional and Psychological Effects ***19***
2.4.2 Physiological effects ***20***
2.4.3 Organisational effects ***20***
2.5 Coping with Bullying **22**
2.5.1. Internal resources: Personality and Bullying ***24***
2.5.2. External Resources and Bullying ***26***
2.6 Theoretical Framework: Job Demands-Resources Model (JD-R) **29**
2.7 The Job Demands-Resources Model and Workplace Bullying **30**
2.8 Antecedents of Teacher-Targeted Bullying: Contextual/Environmental Factors within South African Schools and the Broader Socio-Economic Environment **31**
Chapter 3: Methodology **37**
3.1 Research design **37**
3.2. Instruments and Research Questions **38**
3.2.1 Primary research question ***38***
3.2.2 Secondary research questions ***38***
3.3 Sample and Sampling Technique **39**
3.4 Procedure **41**
3.5 Data analyses **43**

3.5.1 Trustworthiness and Reflexivity *44*
3.6 Ethical considerations **45**
Chapter 4: Results and Discussion **47**
4.1 Theme One: Demands faced by teachers in South African schools **47**
4.1.1. Sub-theme: Extremely harsh work demands/ workload of teachers. *48*
4.1.2. Sub-theme: curriculum changes and their contribution to workload presented by the teaching role. *50*
4.1.3. Sub-theme: Lack of resources as a source of frustration. *53*
4.1.4. Sub-theme: Social and environmental factors as additional demands *55*
4.1.5 Theme Conclusion: Demands faced by teachers in South African schools. *60*
4.2 Theme Two: Demographics and teacher attributes that contribute to an increased exposure to being bullied by learners. **62**
4.2.1. Sub-theme: Experience, age, and other teacher's characteristics as reasons for heightened chances of exposure to TTBH. *63*
4.2.2 Sub-theme: Gender *64*
4.2.3. Theme Conclusion: Demographics and Teacher's attributes that contribute to an increased exposure to being bullied by learners. *65*
4.3. Theme Three: The effect of Teacher Targeted Bullying and Harassment by Learners on its victims. **66**
4.3.1. Sub-theme: Exposure to stress, anxiety, and depression *66*
4.3.2. Sub-theme: Compromised self-image and self-esteem. *67*
4.3.3. Theme Conclusion: The effect of Teacher Targeted Bullying and Harassment by Learners on its victims. *68*
4.4. Theme Four: The effect of Teacher Targeted Bullying and Harassment on schools. **68**
4.4.1. Sub-theme: Loss of motivation, and decreased productivity *69*
4.4.2. Sub-theme: Increased intention to leave the profession *70*
4.4.3. Sub-theme: Delays in syllabus or curriculum completion *73*
4.4.4. Sub-theme: Changes in the relationship between learners and teachers *75*
4.4.4. Theme Conclusion: The effect of Teacher Targeted Bullying and Harassment on schools. *77*
4.5. Theme Five: Coping mechanisms to deal with Teacher Targeted Bullying and Harassment by Learners (TTBH). **77**
4.5.1. Sub-theme: Problem-focused coping *78*
4.5.2. Sub-theme: Emotion-focused coping *79*
4.5.3. Theme Conclusion: Coping mechanisms to deal with Teacher Targeted Bullying and Harassment by Learners (TTBH). *81*

4.6. Theme Six: Mitigating TTBH in South African Schools 81
4.6.1. Sub-theme: Efforts by the Gauteng Department of Education 82
4.6.2 Sub-theme: Efforts made by School Management Teams (SMTs) 83
4.6.3. Sub-theme: Teacher's recommendations 85
4.6.4. Theme Conclusion: Mitigating TTBH in South African schools 86
Chapter 5: Contributions, Recommendations, Practical Implications, and Limitations 88
5.1. Contributions 88
5.2. Recommendations and Practical Implications 89
5.3. Future Research Recommendations 90
5.4. Limitations 90
5.5. Conclusion 91
References: 92
Appendices 112
Appendix A: Interview Schedule 112
Appendix B: Consent Form 116
Appendix C: PIS for Teachers 119
Appendix D: Access Letter to School/ PIS for the Principal 122
Appendix E: GDE Approval 126
Appendix F: Ethics approval 127

Chapter 1: Introduction

Chapter 1 commences with an introduction to the construct of Teacher-Targeted Bullying and Harassment by learners (TTBH). The chapter proceeds to discuss the rationale of the study and highlights the prevalence of TTBH internationally. Furthermore, the chapter highlights TTBH as a problem that needs to be solved specifically in the South African context. It finally outlines what the study aims to achieve in relation to its aim and provides a 'map' in terms of the structure of the research report and the chapters that are to follow.

Bullying is noted to be one of the biggest problems in schools globally. While the body of research literature has mainly examined bullying *between* learners within schools, there is research that indicates that teachers bully each other and that teachers get bullied by learners and/or parents, thus making teaching a high-risk profession (Adewusi, 2021; Bernstein & Batchelor, 2022). Schools have shown an increase in the cases of bullying of teachers by other teachers, principals, learners, and parents (De Wet & Jacobs, 2018). One particular problem that has been highlighted within South African schools is that teachers are being bullied by learners (De Wet, 2006). This type of bullying is usually referred to as learner-on-teacher bullying, educator-directed bullying, or teacher-targeted bullying and harassment (TTBH). In this study, the bullying of teachers by learners will be referred to as Teacher-Targeted Bullying and Harassment (TTBH).

Research has indicated that Teacher-Targeted bullying and Harassment by learners have an extremely negative impact on teachers' overall psychological and physiological well-being, their intention to stay in the profession, their job satisfaction, and their productivity (De Wet & Jacobs, 2018). Based on these deleterious effects on individual teachers and the profession as a whole, this study aims to gain an understanding of teachers' experiences and perceptions of TTBH, which can then be utilised to recommend policies and interventions to aid in creating safer working environments for teachers.

1.1. Rationale

Teacher-Targeted Bullying and Harassment by learners (TTBH) has been widely studied as a prevalent issue internationally. TTBH has been studied in many countries, such as Ireland

(Garrett, 2014; James et al., 2008), the US (Riley et al., 2011), and Taiwan (Chen & Astor, 2009). One of the early studies done on the bullying of teachers by learners was conducted by Pervin and Turner (1998) in an Inner London school. The results of the study showed that 91% of teachers have experienced bullying at some point in their careers (Pervin & Turner, 1998). Additionally, a local quantitative study was conducted by De Wet and Jacobs (2006) in the Free State and Eastern Cape. The aim was to investigate whether Educator-Targeted Bullying was a false notion addressed by popular media or if it is part of the daily lives of teachers. The results showed that 76.7% of the teachers who participated in the survey reported being bullied by learners at least once or twice a year (De Wet & Jacobs, 2006). Another local study by Hoffman (2015) was conducted to study the extent of teachers as targets of bullying by their learners in high schools. The results showed that 70% of teachers experience bullying from learners every day. The study further showed that 4% of the teachers who experienced this type of bullying decided to leave the profession (Hoffmann, 2015). A more recent study was conducted by Quao and Patterson (2020) with teachers from elementary, middle, and high schools in China and the United States. The findings of the study revealed that one-third of teachers both in China (n=154) and the United States (n=61) were victims of bullying by students. These teachers were exposed to physical, verbal, and relational bullying whereby verbal and relational bullying was reported the most (Quao & Patterson, 2020). Additionally, Burns et al. (2020) conducted an exploratory mixed-method study on over 500 teachers in Australian schools where teachers in both primary and secondary schools reported being bullied by the learners. Furthermore, another study was conducted by Koiv and Aai-Utsal (2021) in Estonia to gain insight into teacher's experiences of being bullied by their learners through interviewing victims of teacher-targeted bullying by learners. The results showed that teachers were exposed to verbal bullying, being ignored by learners, cyber-attacks, and other forms of threats whereby this type of bullying was seen as group-based (Koiv & Aai-Utsal, 2021).

As discussed above, TTBH has been studied and it is indicated to be a universal and prevalent problem. Some research has been done by De Wet and Jacobs (2006) and Hoffman (2015) to study Teacher-Targeted Bullying and Harassment by learners in South African schools (De Wet 2006, 2010, 2012; De Wet & Jacobs, 2018; Hoffman, 2015). However, the topic remains under-researched in South Africa, and the bullying of teachers is getting worse, as indicated by

widespread media reports, thus highlighting the importance of conducting more studies to examine this issue. For example, a video went viral in April 2022 where a learner at Hoerskool Jan de Klerk in Krugersdorp jumped on the back of an elderly teacher and held him in a choke grip during a classroom fight (Dayimani, 2022). Out of all the studies that have been conducted on Teacher-Targeted Bullying by learners, none of the studies, to the researcher's knowledge, have utilised the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) framework, looking at the broader context of the work environment and how it impacts upon creating a work environment in which bullying can flourish. This study utilised the JD-R model as the theoretical framework to explore how high demands and lack of resources within the workplace can foster an environment in which bullying can thrive. This model will be described in full in Chapter 2 – the Literature Review (See page 31).

1.2. Aim

Based on the above discussion, this study aimed to use the Job Demands-Resources Model to:

(1) Understand teachers' experiences and perceptions of being bullied by learners.

(2) To understand how this experience affected their well-being and their attitudes toward their job.

(3) To gain an understanding of how demands and resources contribute to increasing or reducing bullying within the work environment.

(4) What would be possible specific strategies to mitigate this bullying and create healthy working environments for teachers within South African schools, where such bullying could be circumvented or, at the very least, reduced.

1.3 Structure of the Research Report

This research report commenced with **Chapter One** which is the **Introduction** – which serves to introduce the constructs under study. The introduction further discusses the rationale and the aim of the study.

Chapter Two consists of the Literature Review. This Chapter explores the literature on workplace bullying (WPB) in general as this is the foundation upon which TTBH is based. This

exploration details WPB and its consequences in the workplace with a specific focus thereafter on Teacher- Targeted Bullying and Harassment by learners, and its consequences. The Chapter further discusses the Job Demands-Resources Model which is the theoretical framework of the study. Furthermore, the Chapter discusses the antecedents of TTBH in South African schools, thus providing a context within which TTBH is likely to flourish. In discussing antecedents, other theoretical frameworks such as the Frustration-Aggression Hypothesis, Social Learning Theory and Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory, are incorporated.

Chapter Three discusses the methods that are implemented to achieve the aim of the study. This includes the research design, the sample, the sampling techniques, the instruments that are utilised, the procedure followed, how data is analysed, and the ethical considerations that followed.

Chapter Four presents the results of the study, delineating the various themes revealed by the data, along with a discussion of these themes in relation to the literature on the topic.

Chapter Five presents the conclusion of the study in the form of the theoretical and practical implications of the research's findings, the limitations of the research, and recommendations for future research on the topic.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

This literature review begins by defining the concept of workplace bullying, its prevalence within the general literature and its consequences. It then discusses Teacher-Targeted Bullying and Harassment by learners (TTBH) which is the focus of this study, as it seeks to understand this phenomenon. Additionally, the consequences of TTBH are thoroughly discussed. Furthermore, this chapter discusses ways of coping with bullying followed by a detailed discussion of the Job-Demands Resources Model, which is the theoretical framework of the study. Moreover, the utility and the rationale of the Job-Demands Resources Model in relation to framing the construct of workplace bullying and more specifically TTBH are discussed. The Chapter also focuses on the antecedents of TTBH within the context of South African schools, examining how specific environmental conditions in South African schools prevail that increase the likelihood of such bullying occurring. Other theoretical frameworks such as the Frustration-Aggression Hypothesis, Social Learning Theory and Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory, are also incorporated in the discussion of the antecedents of TTBH.

2.1 Defining Workplace Bullying and Prevalence.

2.1.1 Prevalence

Research suggests that there is a vast number of people who experience workplace bullying (Branch et al., 2013). While figures vary with some studies reporting as low as 10% to 15%, some studies have shown higher percentages of people's experiences of this phenomenon (Branch et al., 2013). For example, a study was conducted by Cunniff and Mostert (2012) to study the prevalence of workplace bullying in South Africa and investigated whether people's experiences of bullying differ according to an individual's socio-demographic characteristics, diversity experiences, and sense of coherence. The results showed that 31.1% of people in the sample experienced workplace bullying. Additionally, a survey conducted by the Work Dignity Institute in 2000 showed that 77.8% of people in South Africa experience workplace bullying (WorkTrauma, 2010).

Workplace bullying is particularly prevalent in specific industries or professions such as teaching, nursing, and hospitality (Lewis & Gunn, 2007; Said & Tanova, 2021). As discussed in the rationale, the teaching profession is one of the professions where bullying is highly

evident. A study was conducted by Terry (1998) in the North Midlands of the UK to study the prevalence of learner-on-teacher bullying. More than 56% of the participants reported that they were bullied by learners (Terry, 1998). A more recent study that looked at the prevalence of workplace bullying was conducted by Al Muharraq et al. (2022) among nurses working at a tertiary medical city in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia. The results showed a high level of workplace bullying at a cumulative rate of 33.4% (Al Muharraq et al., 2022). From the literature above, it is evident that workplace bullying is a prevalent issue that requires research attention.

2.1.2 Defining Workplace Bullying

Workplace bullying has been defined in several ways in the literature. However, a general agreement on what constitutes workplace bullying has been established. Workplace bullying constitutes any behaviour that aims to oppress, humiliate, and threaten an individual whereby the victim cannot defend themselves (Djurkovic et al., 2008). Workplace bullying can be defined as intentional, persistent, and negative behaviour against an employee at work (Adewusi, 2021; De Wet & Jacobs, 2018; Magee et al., 2017; Rosander & Bloemberg, 2021). There are characteristics of bullying that distinguish it from mere actions of misbehaving or 'incivility'. Firstly, for an action to be considered bullying, it should be *intense.* This means that the actions should be harmful to the victim. Secondly, these actions should be repetitive. For example, it should at least be more than once to at least twice a week or more (De Wet & Jacob, 2018). Thirdly, these actions should last for a specific period of time (Branch et al., 2013; Vartia 2001). However, it is important to note that duration is not a fixed number with Branch et al. (2013) noting that even one single event can be *so severe and traumatic* as to constitute bullying. Thus, although Branch et al. (2013) acknowledge it could be 'once', the consensus is that bullying occurs chronically, over a period of time. Although it may be an acute incident, it likely is a series of acts that a victim is exposed to consistently over a period of time, but the duration cannot be tied to a specific time frame. Lastly, bullying has an element of power disparity which means an imbalance of power between different parties involved (Branch et al., 2013; De Wet & Jacobs, 2018; Uz & Bayraktar, 2019). Bullying can also take on different forms in terms of direction which is also aligned to power disparity. Power disparity in bullying generally refers to the target being bullied by either their superiors (top-

down bullying), someone on the same level as them (horizontal bullying) or being bullied by people below their level (bottom-up bullying) (Bernstein & Trimm, 2016).

Top-down bullying also known as vertical bullying is when an employee is bullied by those who are in a position of power such as supervisors and managers. Examples of this type of bullying include overloading employees with work, practicing abusive leadership, and promoting organisational injustice within the organisation (Farooq et al., 2020). Another type of bullying that is likely to occur in the workplace is horizontal bullying. Horizontal bullying occurs between colleagues or co-workers (Bernstein & Trimm, 2016; Granstra, 2015). These individuals may not have been given official power; however, they may have certain experience and knowledge that may lead them to think they have power and bully their colleagues. In cases like this, victims have the same level of power as the perpetrator and therefore rely on their supervisors to resolve this issue (Farooq et al., 2020). Furthermore, bottom-up bullying also known as upward bullying or subordinate-initiated bullying is when those in lower levels of power intentionally behave in a hostile manner towards their superiors (Busby et al., 2022). The bullying of teachers by learners also known as TTBH is an example of this type of workplace bullying and will be discussed thoroughly to show how this type of bullying occurs. The discussion above shows that the different levels or concentrations of power in the workplace may lead to the emergence of workplace bullying.

Furthermore, workplace bullying manifests in a number of forms of behaviour. Rayner and Hoel (1997), who were pioneering researchers in the area of WPB, note in their definition of WPB that WPB contains several characteristics. The first characteristic they identified is that workplace bullying may threaten the professional status of an individual (Rayner & Hoel, 1997). This can happen when one's opinion is undervalued, which may further lead to public professional humiliation (Rayner & Hoel, 1997). Secondly, they identified that workplace bullying may target a person's standing by insulting them or calling them names. Thirdly, denying employees access to resources and opportunities was classified as another characteristic of workplace bullying. Lastly, overworking of employees is another characteristic of workplace bullying that they identified (Rayner & Hoel, 1997).

As discussed above, workplace bullying does not occur in one specific way or form and can take on several permutations. An individual may be exposed to different forms of workplace

bullying within their working environment. Workplace bullying can either be verbal, physical, or emotional (Rosander & Bloemberg, 2021). Verbal bullying includes name-calling, gossiping, and swearing (De Wet, 2006; Sambo & Govender, 2023). Physical bullying involves beating or physical intimidation. Emotional bullying involves blackmail, manipulation, and humiliation. Other examples of bullying include damaging property, and cyberbullying (De Wet, 2006). Workplace bullying can also be categorised into two forms which are direct and indirect bullying. Direct bullying is a type of bullying that is physically identifiable. This is a type of physical bullying that may include insults, accusations, and threats (Cunniff & Mostert, 2012; De Wet, 2012; Magee et al., 2017). Indirect bullying is a type of bullying that cannot be easily identified. This type of bullying mainly focuses on causing emotional harm to the victim. This may include gossiping, excluding, and isolating the victim (Cunniff & Mostert, 2012). These types of bullying persist within an organisation and can be either promoted by supervisors, colleagues, or subordinates within a working environment.

Exposure to workplace bullying has a detrimental effect on the psychological and physical well-being of employees. Several studies have highlighted the negative effect of exposure to bullying on the health and well-being of employees (Bernstein & Trimm, 2016; Einarsen et al., 1996; Hogh et al., 2021). Additionally, workplace bullying also has a negative effect on the organisation in which it occurs (Bano & Malik, 2013). The following section will discuss the psychological, physiological, and organisational consequences of workplace bullying.

2.2 Consequences of Workplace Bullying

Workplace bullying harms the physical and psychological well-being of the victims and negatively affects the organisation in which it occurs. Workplace bullying can manifest in both serious psychological and physiological outcomes. For example, in a study that was conducted by Einarsen et al. (1996) to investigate the relationship between exposure to bullying and health complaints among Norwegian blue-collar and white-collar workers, the results showed that 13% of the workers had variations in psychological complaints, 6% variation in musculoskeletal problems and 8% variations in psychosomatic health complaints as a result of exposure to bullying. Research has noted that psychological effects include a decrease in self-esteem and an increased exposure to stress and depression (Conway et al., 2018; Cowie et al., 2002; Cunniff & Mostert, 2012). Bullied individuals may also suffer from anger, inability to

focus and memory loss, anxiety, and chronic fear, and may isolate themselves thus leading to loneliness (Appelbaum et al., 2012; Blasé et al., 2008). Post-traumatic stress disorder, suicidal thoughts, or actual suicide are some of the more extreme psychological consequences of bullying (Boudrias et al., 2021; Conway et al., 2018; Vartia, 2001).

Moreover, victims of workplace bullying may also suffer physiological consequences. The psychosomatic model of bullying states that bullying causes negative affect which may lead to victims suffering a wide range of physiological effects (Bane & Malik, 2013; Djurkovic et al., 2008). These include sleeping and eating disorders, that is, sleeping and eating too much or too little (Cunniff & Mostert, 2012). Major weight changes like weight loss or weight gain are the additional effects of workplace bullying (Blasé et al., 2008). They may also suffer from migraines, back pains, skin disorders, high blood pressure, chronic fatigue syndrome, and irritable bowel syndrome (Blasé et al., 2008; Bulut & Hihi, 2021; Djurkovic et al., 2008; Redman, 2020).

The physical and psychological effects discussed above further affect the organisation within which they occur. For example, as discussed above, bullying may lead to employees getting sick thus leading to an increase in sick leave, this will therefore have a negative impact on the ability of the organisation to meet its goals as productivity becomes disrupted when workers are absent (Nielsen et al., 2016; Vartia, 2001). Additionally, workplace bullying creates a hostile working environment where it becomes difficult for teamwork and effective communication to occur (Cunniff & Mostert, 2012). Furthermore, employees who suffer the consequences of bullying are less motivated to do their jobs and have decreased team interdependence (Appelbaum et al., 2013). This means that the ability of these individuals to do their job will possibly be decreased leading to a possible decrease in performance and productivity (Branch et al., 2013; Eriksen et al., 2016). Additionally, victims of workplace bullying are likely to report high levels of dissatisfaction (Bano & Malik, 2013). WPB may also lead to an increase in the intention of employees to leave their jobs and absenteeism (Eriksen et al., 2016; Hogh et al., 2021; Vartia, 2001). Furthermore, an increase in absenteeism which was mentioned above may be a result of sickness which is a result of exposure to bullying, or a way to avoid exposure to workplace bullying (Bernstein & Trimm, 2016). In a systematic review by Nielsen et al. (2016), 17 longitudinal studies where an association

between workplace bullying and the risk of sickness absence were conducted. Out of the 17, 16 studies showed that workplace bullying was potentially associated with sickness absence among targets of workplace bullying. Additionally, absenteeism may be a result of employees with low work engagement. For example, in a study that was conducted by Magee et al. (2017), different subtypes of workplace bullying were connected to absenteeism as a result of health impairments and lower work engagement. Essentially, workplace bullying leads to health issues and a decrease in work engagement which further leads to absenteeism. Lower levels of work engagement have a detrimental effect on organisational success and its ability to achieve a competitive advantage since a lack of work engagement leads to less productivity (Soares & Mosquera, 2019).

Workplace bullying also has a negative effect on those who witness it and may lead to some of the witnesses leaving the organisation thus contributing to an increase in turnover (Vartia, 2001; Holm et al., 2023). This is due to the likelihood that high rates of bullying within an organisation can poison/toxify the general organisational climate. Additionally, the increase in employees' turnover in such toxified environments will have a negative impact on the organisation as the organisation will have to replace employees by recruiting new employees thus causing additional costs that could have been avoided if these employees were still part of the organisation (Appelbaum et al., 2012; Hogh et al., 2021).

To conclude, Sections 2.1 and 2.2 examined the prevalence of workplace bullying, defined the construct, and explored the psychological, physiological, and organisational consequences of workplace bullying in general within the broader context of organisations. The following sections will specifically examine Teacher Targeted Bullying and Harassment by learners in particular, which is the specific type of workplace bullying that occurs within the context of schools.

2.3 Defining Teacher-Targeted Bullying and Harassment by Learners (TTBH).

Teachers in schools are in positions of power where they are expected to lead learners, teach, and maintain discipline (Kimakhi & Rusznyak, 2018). Yet, although teachers at school *are* in a position of power, situations *can* arise where teachers are bullied by learners. The situation where teachers are bullied by learners is referred to as contra-power harassment (Christensen et al., 2021). This is when an individual with less power harasses or bullies someone with

(supposed) superior power (Christensen et al., 2021; De Wet & Jacobs, 2018). Teacher-Targeted Bullying and Harassment by Learners (TTBH) is a form of contra-power harassment. In this instance, TTBH can be defined as an attack on teachers by learners. It can also be defined as any aggressive behaviour from a learner that aims to victimise a teacher (Sambo & Govender, 2023). In this situation, teachers who are responsible for the social and cognitive development of the learners can become disempowered (De Wet & Jacobs, 2006; Uz & Bayrakta, 2019). These actions are repetitive, and they aim to harm the teacher. They may lead to an imbalance of power between the teacher and the learner (Koiv & Aia-Utsal, 2021). Furthermore, the teacher may feel powerless and unable to defend themselves (De Wet, 2019; De Wet, 2020). Additionally, Kauppi and Porhola (2012) defined Teacher Targeted Bullying and Harassment as a communication process where learners continually expose teachers to interactions that make them feel insulted, intimidated, and emotionally upset.

Literature shows that teachers have been victims of many different types or forms of bullying (De Wet, 2010; De Wet & Jacobs, 2018). Teachers suffer from emotional attacks, persistent class disturbances, insults, and physical violence which are all examples of direct forms of workplace bullying (Adewusi, 2021). Teachers also experienced indirect forms of workplace bullying like learners who ignore their teachers' instructions and do not want to cooperate (Kauppi & Porhola, 2012). Cyberbullying is another type of bullying that teachers are faced with in schools. Cyberbullying is any aggressive digital behaviour that aims to hurt or harm the teacher (Cilliers & Chinyamurindi, 2020). Furthermore, damage to the personal property of teachers is another additional type of bullying that teachers are faced with (De Wet & Jacobs, 2018). A study conducted by Wilson et al. (2011) reported cases of property damage by learners to teachers during their teaching careers. Moreover, a local study conducted by De Wet (2010) showed that bullied teachers suffered from their classrooms and their cars being vandalised by learners. The study also showed that teachers were beaten, sworn at, made fun of, ignored by learners, mimicked, and/or laughed at (De Wet, 2010; Kauppi & Porhola, 2012).

In terms of prevalence, a study was conducted in Turkey by the Turkish Education Unit to examine learners' bullying towards teachers. The results showed that 23% of 1010 teachers were bullied or violated by their learners, 3.6% of the teachers reported sexual violence, 14.4% reported physical violence, and 65% reported verbal violence (Uz & Bayraktar, 2019).

Additionally, another study was conducted to investigate the proportion of teachers who were exposed to bullying by learners in South Africa. This study, conducted in the Free State, indicated that 18.1% of teachers were sexually harassed, 24% assaulted and 33.4% were verbally attacked by learners (Woustra et al., 2018). While sexual harassment falls out of the scope of the definition of bullying when teachers are bullied this type of behaviour can also become evident.

To conclude, the literature discussed above in terms of descriptions of bullying behaviours by learners indicates that the environment that teachers are exposed to is not conducive and could be toxic. Teachers in high bullying environments are exposed to conditions that are extremely threatening to their emotional and physical safety. The following section will discuss the emotional, psychological and physiological consequences of TTBH on teachers and how teachers cope with such bullying. Furthermore, it will discuss the impact of this type of bullying within the schooling environment and the overall education system.

2.4 Consequences of Teacher-Targeted Bullying and Harassment

2.4.1 Emotional and Psychological Effects

The bullying of teachers has detrimental effects on their emotional and physiological well-being (De Wet & Jacobs, 2018). Research shows that victims of TTBH are most likely to isolate themselves thus acting as an additional social stress that teachers deal with on top of their work-related stress (Adewusi, 2021; De Wet, 2012). They isolate themselves because they feel ashamed. Consequently, this negatively affects their relationships with their colleagues (De Wet, 2010). Bullied teachers may feel ashamed because the experience of bullying compromises their self-image (De Wet, 2010). Additionally, the relationships and the bond of bullied teachers with their partners and families may also be affected by this type of bullying. These teachers may be emotionally withdrawn or moody at home (De Wet, 2010). Additionally, victims of TTBH are also likely to be paranoid and fear that they may be bullied again and again. Some of them may begin to think that there might be something wrong with them that makes them victims of this type of bullying thus their sense of self-worth deteriorates (De Wet & Jacobs, 2018). Bullied teachers may even suffer from post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) which may have a long-term effect on them (Montgomery, 2019; Wilson et al., 2011). In this regard, teachers are most likely to replay the bullying experiences in their minds, thus

negatively affecting their well-being, this replay being a typical symptom of PTSD (De Wet, 2010). Furthermore, exposure to this type of bullying leads teachers to suffer increasing stress levels, alongside the usual daily stress demands of teaching, and this can reduce expectations of and engagement within the teaching profession (De Wet, 2010). Additionally, a study by Woudstra et al. (2018) which investigated teachers who were victims of learner-enacted bullying and the impact of this bullying showed that victims of this type of bullying are likely to suffer from anxiety and depression. Moreover, as a result of exposure to this type of bullying, some of the teachers may take out their frustrations and anger on other innocent learners (De Wet & Jacobs, 2018; Ozkilic & Kartal, 2012).

2.4.2 Physiological effects

TTBH also has physiological effects on teachers which may further lead to health-related issues. Teachers who are bullied may experience headaches, disturbed sleeping patterns, and other physiologically stress-related sicknesses such as high blood pressure and even strokes (De Wet & Jacobs, 2018). They may also suffer from disturbed sleeping patterns which may further lead to teachers being fatigued (De Wet, 2010). Additionally, bullied teachers may also experience respiratory problems like breathing difficulties (De Wet & Jacobs, 2018). For some teachers, disturbing symptoms have been noted such as their hair falling out and weight changes which include weight loss or gain (Blasé et al., 2008). As discussed above, the bullying of teachers leads to many physiological health problems. This means costs for medication. Psychological problems such as depression and anxiety may also require medication. This therefore negatively affects the finances of teachers as they are required to incur costs to medicate their impaired well-being (De Wet & Jacobs, 2018). Furthermore, victims of TTBH may also turn to indulge in harmful and addictive behaviour to distract themselves from the pain and shame that comes with being victimised such as using alcohol and drugs. These substance abuse behaviours may, in turn, have an impact on how they engage and do their job at work thus making it harder for them to cope in the long term (De Wet, 2010).

2.4.3 Organisational effects

The bullying of teachers does not only affect the well-being of teachers, but it also affects the quality of education. Teachers who have been bullied are likely to put less effort into their work, are less engaged, and may therefore be less productive (De Wet, 2010; De Wet & Jacobs, 2018;

Tolentino, 2016). Bullied teachers are also likely to experience lowered levels of self-esteem and be demotivated, thus leading to an increase in absenteeism (De Wet, 2010; Tolentino, 2016). Consequently, this affects the quality of education within schools thereby compromising the right of learners to quality education. TTBH further affects the relationship between parents and teachers. A study that was conducted by De Wet (2010) showed that the bullying of teachers by learners destroyed the relationship between the parents and teachers. While many teachers believe that it is the parent's responsibility to discipline or teach their children to respect elders, parents alternatively believe that the problem lies with the management techniques adopted by teachers in the classroom (De Wet, 2020). Thus, the two parties blame each other and this negative interaction between teachers and parents because of TTBH may affect the dynamics in the school environment (De Wet, 2020). Parents may also fail to acknowledge that learners bully their teachers which may be a source of other forms of bullying such as bullying of teachers by parents, however, this form of bullying falls outside of the scope of this study. Another consequence of this type of bullying may lead to some teachers opting for early retirement since they cannot cope with the conditions presented by their jobs thus leading to a high turnover. This may then lead to a loss of security and income and a decrease in the number of teachers within schools (Jacobs & De Wet, 2018). It also leads to schools losing senior staff who retire early taking their wealth of professional experience with them. A decrease in the number of teachers may exacerbate the issue of the shortage of teachers. This means that schools should be readily able to replace teachers who retire. But this is often not the case especially if those that leave the profession are experienced teachers. Replacing experienced teachers with less experienced teachers does not offer an adequate solution (Du Plessis & Mestry, 2019). Overall, the organisational effects of TTBH could lead to a compromised education system in terms of educational quality.

To conclude, from the literature above it is evident that the effects of TTBH discussed above can have long-term effects on the psychological and physiological well-being of bullied teachers and the overall integrity of the schooling system and the education of learners therein. Additionally, it is essential to acknowledge that the consequences of bullying in a given context are different for every individual and this can be attributed to the way they respond to the bullying. An individual's response to bullying depends on the type of bullying they have

experienced, how they appraise it, and the coping processes they implement to deal with it (Nielsen & Einersen, 2012). The following section will discuss *coping*, which when implemented properly, may be a useful tool in dealing with any form of workplace bullying including TTBH.

2.5 Coping with Bullying

Coping can be defined as the behavioural and cognitive efforts an individual makes to deal with the internal and external demands that surpass their resources (Karatuna, 2015; Lazarus & Folkman, 1984). Lazarus and Folkman (1984) proposed that individuals adopt different coping strategies when faced with demanding or stressful situations. These can either be problem-focused or emotion-focused coping strategies. Problem-focused coping is when an individual prioritises confronting and finding solutions to the problem (Van den Brande et al., 2018; Vranjes et al., 2022). This includes coming up with an action plan and seeking help from others. An emotion-focused coping strategy is when an individual focuses on reducing emotions in response to a problem. This includes avoiding the problem, trying to forget about the situation, or focusing on other positive events related to the problem (Karatuna, 2015; Vranjes et al., 2022). These coping strategies are categorised as being active or passive. Active coping involves efforts directly confronting the problem whereas passive coping refers to the indirect efforts to deal with a problem. Consequently, problem-focused coping is a type of active coping, and emotion-focused a type of passive coping (Karatuna, 2015; Van den Brande et al., 2018).

As discussed earlier, workplace bullying is a reality for many employees within different sectors internationally. Coping with bullying which is the application of cognitive and psychological efforts to tackle the stressful conditions presented by their job is an essential set of tools in the workplace (Bernstein & Trimm, 2016). People are different and therefore adopt different coping strategies to deal with workplace bullying. Olafsson and Johannsdotter (2004) conducted research to study bullying, victimisation, and coping strategies to deal with it among employees in Iceland. The results of their study showed four types of coping strategies namely: assertiveness, seeking help, avoidance, and doing nothing (Olafsson & Johannsdotter, 2004). Assertiveness is when an employee confronts a bully and stands up for themselves (Bernstein & Trimm, 2016; Van den Brande et al., 2018). However, assertiveness may worsen the situation

if used beyond a specific level. This is because too much assertiveness can be categorised as aggression (Bernstein & Trimm, 2016). Seeking help involves talking to others about bullying and getting assistance from others other than yourself (Van den Brande et al., 2018). An example of this is social support from colleagues or managers/supervisors within the work environment and support from family and friends outside the work environment. Social support can also involve seeking professional help from a counsellor. Avoidance is another type of coping mechanism that an individual may adopt. Avoidance is when an individual chooses to 'run away' from the problem instead of confronting it (Bernstein & Trimm, 2016; Van den Brande et al., 2018). Examples of this include taking sick leave, asking for a transfer, or eventually leaving your job (Olafsson & Johannsdotter, 2004). Avoidance coping includes cognitive distancing, externalisation, and internalisation (Potard et al., 2021). Cognitive distancing is when an individual avoids or minimises the negative feelings associated with a particular stressor. Externalisation is when an individual takes out the anger and frustration they experience on other people and lastly, internalisation is when an individual keeps the pain, they feel about a stressor to themselves (Potard et al., 2021).

Doing nothing is another coping strategy identified by Olafsson and Johannsdotter (2004). This is when an individual pretends to be unaware of the bullying. By pretending nothing is happening the victim hopes the bully will go away (Bernstein & Trimm, 2016). An individual does this with hopes that the bully will lose interest which will eventually stop the bullying (Bernstein & Trimm, 2016). Assertiveness and seeking help can be categorised as active coping since the victim is dealing with bullying whereas avoidance and doing nothing are examples of passive coping (Van den Brande et al., 2018).

Research shows that the intensity of the type of bullying that an individual is exposed to, and the coping skills they utilise will determine how successfully they manage the interaction (Johannsdottir & Ragnar, 2004). When faced with workplace bullying, employees may often initially turn to adopt problem-focused coping strategies (active) but when the bullying persists, they could adopt emotion-focused coping mechanisms (passive) which could lead to these employees eventually deciding to leave the organisation (Johannsdottir & Ragnar, 2004). This was evident in a study by Zapf and Gross (2001) which looked at victims of workplace bullying. The results showed that employees change strategies many times. Employees may

start by voicing out their concerns and challenges that they deal with, however, if these persist, they decide to leave the organisation (Zapf & Gross, 2001). Furthermore, employees may use different coping resources to cope with workplace bullying which can be internal or external. Internal resources are the resources that an individual possesses within him/her/themselves.

A large body of research has also shown that the personality characteristics of the victim may play a role in whether the person is (1) targeted in the first place (Rai & Agarwal, 2019) and (2) how well they cope with the bullying experience.

2.5.1. Internal resources: Personality and Bullying

Personality refers to an individual's way of thinking and behaving. This affects not only whether they are targeted or not but also affects how well they cope. Personality can be classified into five personality traits called the Big Five Factors. These personality traits are extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, neuroticism, and openness (Rai & Agarwal, 2019). Extraversion refers to the extent to which an individual prefers or invests in interpersonal relationships (Nielsen et al., 2017b). High levels of extraversion can be identified by talkativeness, sociability, and attention seeking whereas low levels lead to less talkative and less action-oriented individuals (Rai & Agarwal, 2019). Extraverted individuals spend most of their time interacting with others and they find those interactions meaningful. Positive emotions are a central aspect of extraversion which may lead to extraverted individuals not perceiving aggressive behaviour as bullying (Nielsen et al., 2017b). However, individuals with low levels of extraversion are likely to become targets of workplace bullying because their reserved nature is likely to be understood as a lack of self-esteem and they may be perceived as individuals with non-social competence (Sansudin et al., 2020). Furthermore, these individuals are likely to perceive negative actions in a more negative way and they are also likely to perceive social interactions as bullying (Rai & Agarwal, 2019).

Agreeableness refers to an individual's ability to understand others and solve problems in ways that do not offend those affected by them (Nielsen et al., 2017b; Sansudin et al., 2020). Individuals with high levels of agreeableness are selfless, cooperative, helpful, and sympathetic whereas those with low levels are rude, irritable, ruthless, and jealous (Rai & Agarwal, 2019). Individuals with low levels of agreeableness may behave in ways that anger others thus leading

to an environment where bullying occurs. Though being too agreeable can also lead to bullying as one can be seen as a 'pushover'.

Conscientiousness can be defined as the drive or motivation that an individual has to achieve their goals. It can also be defined as an impulse control that supports behaviour necessary for doing certain tasks (Nielsen et al., 2017b; Rai & Agarwal, 2019). Individuals with high levels of conscientiousness are disciplined, organised, and dependable. However, individuals with low levels of conscientiousness are disorganised and distractive. This leads to these employees not meeting the expected standards of their jobs. As a result, this will lead to the intervention of supervisors whereby their performance is constantly monitored. These supervisors may practice unfair and unlawful monitoring thus exposing these individuals to bullying which is known as top-down bullying (Nielsen et al., 2017b).

Neuroticism simply known as negative affectivity is the likelihood of an individual to experience negative thoughts and emotions (Jahanzeb et al., 2020; Sansudin et al., 2020). These negative emotions include anxiety, anger, and fear. Individuals with high levels of neuroticism have an increased exposure to emotional instability whereas those with low neuroticism can cope well with emotions (Jahanzeb et al., 2020). Neurotic individuals may display fear and anxiety which could increase their level of exposure to aggression (Sansudin et al., 2020). As a result, they are more likely to be bullied than those who are low on neuroticism. Essentially, neurotic individuals are likely to become victims of workplace bullying (Jahanzeb et al., 2020).

Openness refers to an individual's willingness to learn new things. Openness determines whether an individual prefers routine, or they are flexible. Individuals with high levels of openness are creative, imaginative, and flexible whereas those with low levels prefer routine and a traditional approach to things (Rai & Agarwal, 2019). Consequently, those with low levels of openness are not receptive to other people's perspectives or divergent behaviour, therefore, they are likely to disagree with their superiors and create a space in which workplace bullying may flourish (Rai & Agarwal, 2020).

To conclude, introverts, less agreeable or overly agreeable, and unconscientious employees are more prone to being targets or victims of workplace bullying. Additionally, neurotic individuals

are also likely to be affected by workplace bullying and workplace bullying may lead to low levels of openness among employees (Nielsen et al., 2017b; Sansudin et al., 2020).

Furthermore, self-efficacy is another internal resource that individuals use when faced with stressful conditions like workplace bullying. Self-efficacy refers to an individual's belief in their overall competence to perform in different situations (Van den Brande, 2019). Individuals with a high level of self-efficacy are confident to directly deal with work stressors like workplace bullying and are therefore unlikely to be targets of workplace bullying (Van den Brande, 2019). These individuals do not passively engage in workplace bullying; rather, they implement a problem-focused approach. Individuals with low self-efficacy may not feel competent enough to deal with workplace bullying and may turn to adopting an emotion-focused strategy in coping with workplace bullying (Van den Brande, 2019). Self-efficacy may help diminish the impact of workplace bullying.

Hardiness is another innate personality disposition that allows an individual to be resilient when faced with stressful events (Reknes et al., 2018). Hardiness helps an individual to deal with stressful events in a better way (Srivastava & Dey, 2020). Hardy people are actively engaged in activities of life, they believe that they are capable of changing events and circumstances and can bring development (Reknes et al., 2018). This approach reduces the impact of stressful events. Hardy individuals are characterised by having commitment, control, and the ability to deal with challenges. In a situation of workplace bullying, individuals with high levels of hardiness are likely to perceive the bullying experience as less threatening and will cope better whereas those with low levels of hardiness are likely to be threatened. The impact of hardiness in dealing with workplace bullying was studied by Reknes et al. (2018) in a gas company in Norway. The study focused on the role of hardiness in the relationship between bullying behaviour, anxiety, and depression. The results showed that hardy employees were resilient when dealing with workplace bullying compared to those who were not (Rekenes et al., 2018). Based on this discussion, it can be concluded that hardiness is an important coping resource that helps reduce the impact of workplace bullying (Srivastava & Dey, 2020).

2.5.2. External Resources and Bullying

External resources are resources that an individual receives from the organisation. This can be the social support from their colleagues or supervisors/managers or the organisation in which

they work (Van den Brande et al., 2018). Social support can be defined as an individual's confidence in that they are loved and that those they share social relationships with care about their well-being (Kossek et al., 2011). In a working environment, social support refers to the degree to which an employee feels that their welfare matters to their superiors through the supply of necessary social resources for doing their job (Kossek et al., 2011). Social support is a necessary resource that helps achieve organisational goals (Bakker et al., 2005). Perceived Organisational Support (POS) is one of the important forms of social support an organisation can offer its employees. POS is the individuals' belief in how valuable they are to the organisation and whether the organisation they work for cares about their well-being (Naseer et al., 2018; Naseer & Raja, 2019). POS plays a vital role in situations where an individual is faced with stressful situations such as workplace bullying. Individuals with high levels of POS do not regard bullying experiences as a representation of how the organisation treats its employees. However, those with low levels of POS may perceive bullying experiences as an indication of the organisation's failure to treat their employees accordingly (Naseer et al., 2018).

In cases of exposure to workplace bullying, individuals who feel valued and protected, through the provision of resources by the organisation are likely to rely on their organisation for organisational support to deal with workplace bullying. For example, the provision of training on how to deal with bullying and reprimanding the bullies make bullied individuals feel capable of dealing with their bullying experiences. On the contrary, individuals with low POS do not believe they can depend on the organisation to help them restore resources they have lost as a result of exposure to bullying. Thus, further leading to a low level of organisational citizenship behaviour and job performance (Naseer et al., 2018). What usually happens when an employee or individual has low levels of POS is Organisational Retaliatory Behaviour which refers to any behaviour that directly or indirectly harms the workplace by either disturbing others to a point where they lose their self-esteem or efficacy thus sabotaging the overall functioning of the organisation (Naseer et al., 2018). As mentioned, individuals may also receive social support from family, friends, and significant others outside of the organisation or they may seek professional help from a psychologist, counsellor, or religious advisor.

In addition to the internal and external resources for dealing with workplace bullying, the availability of coping resources or tools is essential in helping employees deal with workplace stressors, more specifically WPB or TTBH. These determine the type of strategy that an individual is likely to implement to deal with workplace bullying. Additionally, personal, social, and organisational coping resources correlate with the coping styles an individual adopts (Van den Brande, 2019). Van den Brande (2019) argues that individuals who have high resources to deal with the problem are likely to adopt a problem-focused coping strategy, as they believe that they can solve the problem. These individuals are those with high self-efficacy, high hardiness, and high POS. Whereas, individuals who do not have adequate resources to approach problems prefer using emotion-focused coping strategies (Van den Brande, 2019). Individuals who adopt the emotion-focused coping strategy are those with lower hardiness, lower self-efficacy, higher neuroticism, and lower POS.

Vranjes et al. (2022) argue that problem-focused strategies are the most effective coping strategy compared to emotion-focused coping. However, Zapf and Gross (2001) argue that problem-focused coping may not be effective in situations where an employee does not have control over the situation. Additionally, emotion-focused coping has been noted to be an ineffective coping strategy that may intensify an employee's exposure to workplace bullying thus negatively affecting the well-being of the employee (Van den Brande et al., 2018). While there is no clear-cut argument as to which strategy would be best to use, essentially, it seems that the ability to choose and apply the correct type of coping strategies that an employee adopts, that may either prevent them from further workplace bullying does seem to be somewhat dependent on the characteristics of the victim, and the context within which the bullying is occurring (Dehue et al., 2012; Van den Brande et al., 2018; Zapf & Gross, 2001).

To conclude, the previous section has defined coping and different coping strategies noting that some types of coping strategies are more effective than others, but this does depend somewhat upon the context and the personality of the individual concerned. It further discussed internal and external resources that individuals can use to deal with workplace bullying. The internal resources that were discussed include personality, mentioning a number of traits amongst them the big five personality traits self-efficacy, and hardiness. Perceived organisational support (POS) and social support as sources of external support outside of the organisation were also

discussed. Furthermore, this section discussed the importance of the availability of resources in determining the type of coping strategy an individual is likely to adopt. It was argued that those with adequate resources are likely to adopt a problem-focused strategy whereas those who do not have adequate resources adopt an emotion-focused strategy. The section concluded by stating that the problem-focused coping strategy is an effective strategy for dealing with workplace bullying. It is important to note that these personality resources and external resources are not exhaustive, though they are considered salient for this study. There is a vast catalogue of personality traits and external resources identified by the literature that do play a role in coping with bullying but the discussion of all of them fell beyond the scope of this study.

The following section will thoroughly discuss the Job Demands Resources (JD-R) model in detail, which is the theoretical framework of this study. In addition, this section will provide a rationale as to why this particular framework was appropriate to the issues and constructs under consideration within the present research. It must be noted that although the JD-R model is the overarching framework of the study, other frameworks such as the Frustration-Aggression Hypothesis, Social Learning Theory and Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory are also incorporated to explain antecedents of TTBH.

2.6 Theoretical Framework: Job Demands-Resources Model (JD-R)

The Job Demands Resources (JD-R) Model states that every working environment presents its employees with job demands and job resources (Schaufeli, 2017). Job demands can be defined as the characteristics of the job that require a physical or psychological effort within a working environment (Bakker et al., 2005; Schaufeli, 2017; Van Den Broeck et al., 2011). Job demands are characterised as the aspects of a job that evoke the process of energy depletion (Van Den Broeck et al., 2011). Job demands do not generally have a negative impact until an employee experiences 'too many' (for their capabilities) and is unable to meet them thus leading to job stress (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007). Examples of job demands include heavy workload, role ambiguity, emotionally draining interactions, and stressful working conditions (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007; Schaufeli, 2017; Tummers & Bakker, 2021). Job resources can be defined as the job characteristics that help individuals reduce or deal with the demands of their jobs, achieve their goals at work, and allow them to grow and develop (Bakker & Demerouti, 2017; Tummers & Bakker, 2021). Job resources can be physical, psychological, social, and

organisational. These resources include support from colleagues, learning and development programs, career opportunities, salary, autonomy, job security, and role clarity (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007; Schaufeli, 2017; Tummers & Bakker, 2021; Xanthopoulou et al., 2007).

The JD-R model argues that two psychological processes play a role in the development of motivation and stress within an organisation. When an individual is faced with many demands and limited resources, they are most likely to be burnt out which may lead to poor performance, poor health, absenteeism, exhaustion, and low organisational commitment (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007; Schaufeli, 2017). Bakker et al. (2005) conducted a study of with a sample of 1012 employees of a large institute for higher professional education in applied science in the Netherlands. The results of the study showed that high demands and low resources lead to burnout (Bakker et al., 2005). When an individual is presented with adequate resources to do their job, they are most likely to be committed, engaged, and perform well. Job resources are useful in preventing the negative impact of job demands.

Another study conducted by Bakker et al. (2007) among Finnish teachers who work in secondary, elementary, and vocational schools showed that job resources buffer and lessen the negative relationship between the misbehaviour of learners and work engagement. Additionally, they found that job resources positively impact the work engagement of teachers when there are high levels of student misbehaviour. A positive organisational climate, supportive supervisors, and appreciation were essential job resources that helped teachers cope with the demanding interaction with learners (Bakker et al., 2007).

The following section discusses the Job Demands-Resources model and how it relates to workplace bullying. More specifically, it will discuss how excessive job demands and low resources may create an environment in which workplace bullying can flourish.

2.7 The Job Demands-Resources Model and Workplace Bullying

The Job Demands-Resources Model has been widely used in research to explain different outcomes within a working environment. This includes employees' well-being, their attitude toward their jobs, how they interact with others, *and* their experiences of workplace bullying (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007; Van Den Broeck et al., 2011). The JD-R model can be utilised to explain how characteristics of a job may lead to the victims experiencing workplace bullying.

As stated in the definition of the Job Demands-Resources Model (JD-R), working environments present employees with resources and demands. An employee's experience of these factors may either expose or prevent them from experiencing workplace bullying. Literature shows that when employees within an organisation are presented with high demands and low resources, they are most likely to be exposed to bullying (Van Den Broeck et al., 2011). For example, a quantitative study was conducted by Van Den Broeck et al. (2011) among 17 Flemish organisations to associate job demands and job resources to the perpetrators' and targets' reports of workplace bullying. The results showed that employees with a high level of resources reported low levels of exposure to workplace bullying whereas exposure to high demands led to greater exposure to workplace bullying, especially when there were limited resources (Van Den Broeck et al., 2011). This may be due to the Frustration-Aggression hypothesis whereby people under stress or undue pressure begin to take out their frustrations on others (Van Den Broeck et al., 2011).

The Frustration-Aggression hypothesis by Dollard et al. (1939) states that aggressive behaviour can be attributed to exposure to frustrating conditions. While individuals exposed to frustration should usually direct aggressive behaviour to the source, when this is not possible, they may direct aggression to those who are not the source of the frustration (Breuer & Elson, 2017). This is known as displaced aggression which is what participants in the study discussed above by Van den Broeck et al. (2011) resorted to when faced with a lack of resources. Additionally, displaced aggression is the type of aggression that contributes to TTBH and will thoroughly be discussed in the next section when learners often displace their frustration with external environmental conditions onto teachers in the form of aggressive TTBH.

The following section will use the JD-R model to discuss the antecedents of workplace bullying within South African schools and look at how the resources and demands and frustration-aggression within a school environment may lead teachers to experience TTBH.

2.8 Antecedents of Teacher-Targeted Bullying: Contextual/Environmental Factors within South African Schools and the Broader Socio-Economic Environment

Teachers are key role players in the education system. Their responsibilities include supervision and maintaining order within schools, helping learners understand the content that they teach, helping them learn different types of skills, thinking critically, and becoming good problem

solvers; thus, allowing effective learning and teaching (Masitsa, 2011). However, the context of many schools in South Africa is not conducive enough to allow teachers to do their work efficiently.

The challenges faced by teachers within the education system of South Africa can be traced back to the mid-1990s (Govender, 2018). Since post-1994, the South African schooling system has gone through educational reform or different types of transformations where teachers were constantly expected to adapt to various professional changes (Santavirta et al., 2007). An example of this is changes in the curriculum. In 1998, Curriculum 2005 was introduced to deal with the inequalities in the education system during the apartheid era. It was implemented using Outcome Based Education (OBE) on a national level. The biggest issue with this approach is that teachers were excluded from the development process of the curriculum (Du Plessis & Letshwene, 2020). Later, Curriculum 2005 was changed to the National Curriculum Statement (NCS). Additionally, the lack of training, support materials, and resources within the NCS led to the implementation of Curriculum Assessment Policy Statements (CAPS) in 2012. As with the implementation of NCS, the lack of resources and lack of training still affects the effective implementation of this curriculum (Du Plessis & Letshwene, 2020). For example, in a study that was conducted in KwaZulu Natal (2018) to understand the perspective of teachers regarding the support they received in the curriculum implementation, the results showed that teachers feel that there is a lack of sustainable professional development programmes (Govender, 2018). Thus, although curriculum change in South Africa was implemented many years ago, teachers are still facing challenges because they are not included in the implementation process and do not receive adequate quality and quantity of professional training, nor do they receive adequate resources (Govender, 2018). Although the transformation was necessary to deal with the inequalities of apartheid, sufficient resources, and the inclusion of teachers in the process and support are essential in ensuring that teachers can do their jobs effectively and can cope with the demands presented by their jobs. However, this aspect has not been appropriately considered. Additionally, despite the involvement of teachers to some extent in curriculum implementation, teachers' voices in their jobs and their personal experiences are usually ignored which is very problematic as it leads to teachers' needs being compromised (Govender, 2018).

As mentioned in previous sections, research shows that teachers are one of the professional groups faced with high levels of stressful working conditions. Challenges faced by teachers include learners who do not want to do their work, possible unhealthy relations with colleagues, limited colleague support, often-times violent learners, and a low salary (Santavirta et al., 2007). Additionally, most schools, especially in rural areas, have teacher shortages, as a result, some teachers teach multiple different grades and subjects at the same time leading to a high workload (Du Plessis & Mestry, 2019). Furthermore, De Wet and Jacobs (2018) in their study noted that South African teachers are faced with extremely overcrowded classes, load shedding, lack of ablution facilities, poor infrastructure, and lack of textbooks.

Moving on to the safety of teachers, Section 12(1) of the constitution states that teachers, like other citizens, have the right to freedom and security which includes being free from all forms of violence (Masitsa, 2011). This is unfortunately not a reality for many teachers in South Africa as they are exposed to many different forms of violence. Many parts of South Africa have high rates of crime and gangsterism (De Wet & Jacobs, 2018). The violence in these communities often spills over into schools in the form of bullying (Bernstein & Batchelor, 2022). Teachers are faced with situations where they are bullied by learners which is also known as TTBH. The contributing factors to this type of bullying include poor parental involvement, poorly resourced homes or poverty, the use of drugs, and policies that focus more on protecting learners than protecting educators (Adewusi, 2021; Bernstein & Batchelor, 2022; Jackson & Rothmann, 2006). Additionally, teachers are faced with many demands and limited resources which leads to stress, frustration, and burnout (Bernstein & Batchelor, 2022). Teacher-Targeted Bullying and Harassment by learners are other major additional stressors and demands that teachers are faced with on top of the compromising conditions under which they work (Woustra et al., 2018).

Taking a closer look at the TTBH, the general context of South African communities is one of the main contributors to this type of bullying. This context with its high demands and lack of resources can be viewed through the lens of the JD-R model and the Frustration-Aggression Hypothesis as a context that could lead to the flourishing of TTBH. Many schools in South Africa especially those within poor communities are under-resourced and faced with high demands. Even in better-resourced schools, if demands are high but learners still come from

poorly resourced homes this could lead to increased bullying (Bernstein & Bachelor, 2022; De Wet & Jacobs, 2006). Many learners come from families where they have one source of income or where both parents are unemployed. These children are unable to access many desired resources due to a lack of affordability. This lack of resources may lead to learners being frustrated and resorting to bullying as a way to deal with their frustrations. While learners may target other learners, the teacher is also a target for these frustrated bullies to vent/enact upon. Additionally, some learners grow up in violent families where they are exposed to domestic violence which affects their behaviour (Singh & Steyn, 2013). The exposure to this bullying in their home lives has detrimental physical, psychological, behavioural, and emotional effects. These learners, in turn, may develop an aggressive attitude or behaviour which they enact on others outside of their home lives (Singh & Steyn, 2013). This aggression can also be understood using the Social Learning Theory by Albert Bandura who states that aggressive behaviour can be learned in a social context. Social Learning Theory by Bandura (1977) states that learning is not simply a matter of connecting a response to a stimulus. It occurs when a person observes and imitates someone else's behaviour (Bandura, 1997). Therefore, in this instance, learning of any behaviour by learners can be due to reinforcement, imitation, and identification. Essentially, learners might be aggressive because they have been exposed to aggressive individuals or settings (Singh & Steyn, 2013).

Furthermore, an environment where an individual lives affects how they develop and behave. Their behaviour is a result of their integrated ecological environment. The way an individual develops and behaves can also be attributed to the integrated ecological environment in which they live which can be explained using Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory. Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory (1979) describes the interconnectedness of the ecological environment to a hierarchical structure which should be studied as interdependent to have a clear understanding of all forces that surround and influence the development of an individual (Crawford, 2020; Neal & Neal, 2013). Bronfenbrenner's theory focuses on the impact of the interplay between the different systems. The hierarchy consists of the microsystem, mesosystem, exosystem, and macrosystem. The microsystem consists of the settings where an individual engages with others and plays a certain role. The microsystem consists of the pattern of activities and relations between an individual and people in their

immediate environment. It provides processes that control psychological development and the behavioural changes of an individual. An example of a microsystem is an individual's family. The mesosystem consists of microsystems. It is an interaction between the two most important settings of an individual. An example of this is family and school (Crawford, 2020; Neal & Neal, 2013). The exosystem consists of settings that influence important areas of an individual whereby the individual does not actively participate but is affected by what happens in these settings. It consists of multiple microsystems; however, the individual is not central to one of these microsystems. Lastly, the macrosystem comprises the culture and societal structures. The macrosystem consists of an interaction between the micro-, meso- and exosystems (Crawford, 2020). Using this theory to understand why learners adopt aggressive behaviour which leads to TTBH, the following facts should be considered: many learners grow up in violent households where they witness gender-based violence (GBV), whereby their family members or parents are violated in the hands of their loved ones (Miranda et al., 2021; Singh & Steyn, 2013). Additionally, learners in South Africa grow up in violent communities with high levels of crime and gangsterism (De Wet & Jacobs, 2018). The use of weapons like guns and knives is rife in the communities that they live in. Moreover, schools are also affected by these forms of violence since most of these schools are found *within* these communities. Consequently, the immediate environment of these learners (microsystem) and the combination of these systems (mesosystem), their communities (exosystem), and the societal structures and cultures (macrosystem) have different forms of violence within them that can influence the behaviour of these learners. These systems are inter-connected, and they may determine the type of behaviour that these learners adopt. The existence of violence in these different systems may thus lead to learners adopting aggressive and violent behaviours.

Furthermore, the aggressive behaviour of learners in the form of bullying towards their teachers is also an indication of the Frustration-Aggression hypothesis by Dollard et al. (1939) discussed earlier. Applying the Frustration-Aggression hypothesis to the focus of the study: it is evident as discussed, that learners are exposed to many issues that may lead to frustration. Consequently, the negative personal encounters of learners within their families and communities, compounded by the lack of resources for learners within schools, may lead to these learners being aggressive (Singh & Steyn, 2013). This aggression causes learners to

engage in crime and violence. Additionally, they take out their aggression on teachers by bullying them thus exposing teachers to TTBH. As discussed before, the aggressive behaviour of learners due to their issues and frustrations is a form of displaced aggression that leads teachers to experience TTBH (Breuer & Elson, 2017).

To conclude, based on the discussions above in which (1) WPB and TTBH have been defined, (2) the outcomes thereof on victims/teachers experiencing them have been explored, and (3) based on the conditions that teachers work in within South African schools; it can be argued that the stressful schooling environment characterised by excessive job demands and a lack of resources, creates an environment in which workplace bullying may flourish. As a result, this issue needs to be investigated and solved to ensure safe teaching environments. Therefore, utilising the Job-Demands Resources model to theoretically frame the research questions, and the Frustration-Aggression Hypothesis, Social Learning Theory, and Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory, to understand the learner-teacher bullying dynamic, the present research explored the phenomenon of this under-researched topic. The qualitative methodology that was followed to explore the current study's research questions is outlined in the following chapter, which is Chapter 3.

Chapter 3: Methodology

This chapter thoroughly discusses the research design of the study and why it is appropriate for this study. It further explains the research instruments and the research questions of the study. The chapter further describe the sample of the study, the procedure, and how the data is analysed. It will lastly discuss the ethical considerations adhered to throughout the study.

3.1 Research design

The research utilised a descriptive, qualitative research design. A descriptive research design focuses on accurately describing a phenomenon and its characteristics (Nassaji, 2015). In this study, the phenomenon was the teacher's experiences of Teacher-Targeted Bullying and Harassment (TTBH). A qualitative research design is a comprehensive type of research design that focuses on understanding the subjective lived experiences of individuals. This includes their opinions and attitudes (Nassaji, 2015). Furthermore, a qualitative research design allows the researcher to understand emotions, feelings, and complex social phenomena (Rahman, 2017).

A qualitative research design was suitable for this study because the participants (teachers) were allowed to share their experiences, thoughts, and emotions about TTBH. This allowed the researcher to get a rich and detailed understanding of the experiences and perceptions of bullied teachers (Greenstein et al., 2003). Additionally, it allowed the researcher to capture data the way it exists in real life thus allowing for the deep exploration of the topic under study. This research design is flexible and allows the researchers to gather contextualised data. Additionally, unlike quantitative research design where hypotheses are used, qualitative research design looks at non-statistical methods like people's experiences allowing the researcher to identify themes and patterns the way they occur in real life (Greenstein et al., 2003). Moreover, qualitative research design allows for a small sample size thus allowing the researcher to gather rich in-depth information about the experiences of TTBH (Fossey et al., 2007).

3.2. Instruments and Research Questions

This study consisted of two instruments. The first instrument was the semi-structured interview and the second was the researcher, the collector of the data. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with 12 teachers who were victims of Teacher-Targeted Bullying and Harassment by learners in the Gauteng area. The researcher utilised an interview schedule which allowed the researcher to gather rich data about the perceptions and experiences of TTBH. The interview schedule (appendix A) consisted of 26 questions that investigated the resources and demands presented by teachers' jobs, the teacher's understanding of bullying, the psychological, physical, social, and emotional impact of the bullying, how teachers cope with the bullying, and the teacher's overall understanding of the occurrence of this type of bullying. The questions in the interview were guided by the literature on TTBH, workplace bullying, and the Job Demands-Resources model. The JD-R model was used to frame the questions for the interview schedules. Within the interview, it was ensured that teachers understood the meaning of bullying, TTBH, and job-related demands and resources.

Guided by the Job Demands Resources (JD-R) model, the study sought to answer the following questions:

3.2.1 Primary research question

What are the teachers' personal experiences of Teacher-Targeted Bullying and Harassment by learners (TTBH)?

3.2.2 Secondary research questions

- How has learner-enacted bullying affected teachers' physical and psychological well-being?
- Do teachers believe job demands lead to more bullying by learners?
- Do teachers believe job resources could lead to less bullying by learners?
- Do teachers believe external environmental factors lead to learners bullying teachers?
- What are the coping strategies employed by teachers to cope with bullying by learners?
- What do teachers think schools *are* doing to mitigate learner bullying?
- What do teachers think schools *should* be doing to mitigate learner bullying?

The full interview schedule can be viewed in Appendix A

3.3 Sample and Sampling Technique

The sample of the study consisted of 12 teachers in the Gauteng area.

	Race	**Age**	**Gender**	**Experience (in years)**	**Qualification**	**School Quintile**
Participant 1	Coloured	24	Female	3	BA Psychology & Tourism, PGCE.	4
Participant 2	Coloured	54	Male	29	Masters in Education Law	4
Participant 3	Black	26	Female	1 and half	Undergraduate with majors in English and History and Honours in Education and Literature.	4
Participant 4	Coloured	57	Female	30+	Honours in Education Management	4
Participant 5	Black	44	Female	17	BEd degree	4
Participant 6	Coloured	30	Female	Less than a year	BEd degree	4
Participant 7	Black	33	Male	8	BEd degree	4
Participant 8	Black	31	Female	2	Postgraduate Certificate in senior and FET majoring in English	4

Participant 9	Black	24	Male	Less than a year	BEd degree	4
Participant 10	Black	49	Female	19	BEd degree	4
Participant 11	Coloured	36	Female	3	BEd degree	4
Participant 12	Black	23	Female	1	BEd degree	4

The table above shows the summarised description of the sample. The sample of the study consisted of male (n=3) and female (n=9) participants. The race of the participants was black (n=8) and coloureds (n=4). The ages of the participants were between 23 and 57. Most of the participants have a degree in teaching while some have other different and additional qualifications. Furthermore, seven participants have 0-3 years' experience, one participant between 4-10 years and some of the participants (n=4) have 10 years+ experience. Lastly, all the participants interviewed were from schools in quantile four.

Interviews were conducted until saturation was reached. This research utilised purposive, convenience, and snowball sampling. Purposive sampling is a type of non-probability technique that requires participants to have a specific characteristic to participate in a study (McBurney & White, 2007). The requirement of this study was for a teacher to be teaching in the Gauteng area and to have experienced bullying from learners. Schools in the Gauteng Area were convenient because they could be easily accessed by the researcher and teachers in these schools are victims of bullying in the hands of their learners. Furthermore, these teachers were also willing to participate in this study. As a result, only teachers who had been bullied by learners were allowed to participate in the study. Those who volunteered to participate were given a participant information sheet (PIS) (Refer to Appendix B). This sampling technique was suitable for the study because it only focused on giving detailed information about the experiences of teachers who have experienced TTBH. The study also used convenience sampling whereby teachers who were willing, available, and accessible to volunteer were allowed to participate given they met the requirements (Etikan et al., 2016). Lastly, snowball

sampling is another non-probability sampling method that was utilised in the study whereby the researcher asked the participants to recommend other teachers who meet the criteria and are willing to participate (Etikan et al., 2015).

3.4 Procedure

A detailed procedure was followed for this study to ensure that rigorous research processes were followed and that ethical considerations were adhered to. One of the requirements set by the University before any research can be conducted is to submit a proposal that explains what the researchers want to research, how they will do it, and the importance of conducting the research. To adhere to this requirement, the researcher submitted the proposal. As part of ethical considerations, the University's Ethics Committee required permission from the GDE to be obtained before the study could be approved. As a result, the researcher approached the GDE. The GDE required the researcher to obtain a written letter of consent from the principals of the schools that were going to be part of the study. The researcher contacted the schools to request permission to access teachers within those schools. The researcher provided principals with participant information sheets (PIS) that had all the details about the study (Refer to Appendix D). In response to the participant information sheet (PIS), principals were required to provide the researcher with a formal letter that gives the researcher access to teachers in their school. Once these letters were obtained, the researcher sent them to GDE. Once the GDE approved the study (See Appendix E), the GDE's letter was sent to the University's Ethics Committee. Once the University's Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC) approved the study (See Appendix F), data collection began. A PIS for teachers was distributed to teachers in all participating schools (See Appendix C). To access the teachers who qualify to participate in the study, the principal of each school was requested to email the Participant Information Sheet (PIS) to all teachers within each school. The researcher also went to the schools and distributed the PIS to teachers. This approach was used to ensure that everyone got an opportunity to participate since the researcher did not know which teachers had or had not been bullied by learners. It should be noted that the PIS requested only teachers who had been bullied by learners to volunteer to participate in the study. Those who have been bullied by learners and were willing to participate in the study were able to contact the researcher directly, this was done to ensure the confidentiality and anonymity of the teacher in the school they work in. The

PIS served many purposes in the study. Firstly, it was used to inform the participants about the nature of the study. Secondly, it purposefully sampled potential participants of the study since the study was only meant for teachers who had been bullied by learners to volunteer.

Once participants agreed to participate in the study, the researcher arranged the time and date that was suitable for the interviewee. The participants were given the option to have face-to-face or online interviews depending on what the participants preferred. One participant opted for an online interview and the other participants chose face-to-face interviews. On the day and time of the interview, the researcher introduced herself and once again explained what the study was about. The researcher did this clearly and calmly to create a comfortable space for the participants. The participants were then given consent forms that they were required to complete before the interview started (Refer to Appendix B). For the participant who had online interviews, the consent form was sent to the participants to complete before the interview. The consent form was used to show that the participant voluntarily agreed to be part of the study and for the interview to be recorded for data collection purposes. The researcher requested the participants to read the PIS once again and then complete the consent form. Once the consent form was signed, the researcher started the recording. Before the interview started, the participants were informed that they were allowed to not answer any questions that made them uncomfortable and that they could withdraw from the interview at any time without any negative consequences, if at any time they felt discomfort. This played a vital role in creating rapport with the participants.

Once this was achieved, the researchers started the recording. For the participant who opted for an online interview via WhatsApp, the call was recorded using another device. The researcher paid attention to every detail that the participant was sharing. At the end of the interview, the researcher thanked the participant and addressed any questions that the participant had. The researcher informed the participants that they would receive a copy of the final report upon request. For further information relating to anonymity and confidentiality please see the Teacher PIS and the section on Ethical Considerations 3.6. Once the interviews were done, the researcher started transcribing and analysing data.

3.5 Data analyses

Thematic Content Analysis (TCA) by Braun and Clarke (2006) was used to analyse the data collected. Thematic Content Analysis can be defined as identifying themes and patterns in a data set (Kawulich & Holland, 2012). This type of analysis allowed the researcher to identify the similarities and differences in the recorded interviews that were collected from the participants. This allowed the researcher to generate general themes thus enabling the researcher to get an in-depth understanding of Teacher Targeted Bullying and Harrassment by learners. The six steps of Braun and Clarke were followed in collecting data for this study.

- **The first step** was for the researcher to get familiar with the data. To achieve this, the researcher listened to the audio recordings of the participants. The researcher listened to the recording twice and started transcribing. To ensure that the transcription was accurate, the researcher compared the original audio recording with the transcription (Braun & Clarke, 2006). The researcher was interested in gaining an in-depth understanding of the data. As a result, the researcher engaged with the data multiple times, developed some ideas and insights in the process and wrote these insights down while going through the transcripts to a point where the researcher was familiar with the data.
- **The second step** was to generate initial codes of the data. Coding is a method that allows the researcher to make sense of the information that was transcribed. The researcher identified possible patterns and themes that resulted from the data. The researcher then identified statements and phrases that attempt to answer the research questions of the study.
- **The third step** was to search for themes. The researcher utilised codes to search for potential themes.
- **The fourth step** was to review themes. The researcher analysed the themes that were identified in step three. Some of the themes were combined to form one theme when required or to create sub-themes. This step helped the researcher to filter the themes and compile a list that sufficiently represented the collected data.
- **The fifth step** was to define and name the themes. This is where the researcher named and defined the themes within the study.

- **The final step** was to produce a report (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Here the researcher ensured that all the themes identified were not repeated. The final themes were combined and presented. The use of Thematic Content Analysis allowed the researcher to transcribe the data to extract common themes in the responses of the respondents (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

In addition, the following issues of **Trustworthiness** and **Reflexivity** were addressed:

3.5.1 Trustworthiness and Reflexivity

Trustworthiness can be defined as the degree of confidence in the data of a study, the way it is interpreted, and the methods used to ensure its quality (Connelly, 2016). Trustworthiness in qualitative study serves the purpose of showing that a study is rigorously undertaken and thereby worthy of attention. The researcher paid attention to credibility, dependability, transferability, and confirmability as the requirements for achieving trustworthiness (Connelly, 2016).

- *Credibility* is the confidence in the findings of a study. The researcher achieved credibility by using the appropriate design, data collection methods, and data analyses methods throughout the study (Connelly, 2016).
- *Dependability* is ensuring that the findings of a study remain stable over time and the conditions of the study (Connell, 2016).
- *Transferability* is being able to apply the findings of a study to different settings, situations, times, and populations (Connelly, 2016). The researcher provided all the details of the steps that were followed, including the sample, how data was collected, and how the data was analysed to give a clear picture of the present study and the extent to which the findings are transferable.
- *Confirmability* is when the findings of a study are consistent and can be repeated (Connelly, 2016). To achieve confirmability, the researcher checked the data throughout the data collection to see if it was analysed properly.
- *Reflexivity* is when a researcher analyses their thoughts and emotions to ensure that they do not affect the results of their study. The researcher utilised a reflexive diary to prevent bias. A reflexive diary is what the researcher used to write what they did, and

how they felt when analysing data to ensure that their subjective thoughts do not ‘creep in’ and affect the data in the study.

3.6 Ethical considerations

As mentioned, ethical clearance was obtained from the University’s Ethics Committee (HREC). Once clearance had been granted, the sample of the study was gathered. Once HREC and GDE permission was obtained the researcher approached participants by supplying them with PIS's and asking them to suggest the date and time suitable for their interview. Thus, the interview was done at their convenience. On the day of the interview, all the details were communicated to the participants. Firstly, the interviewer introduced herself to the participant, repeated all the ethical considerations that were written on the PIS, and gave them the PIS to read again. The interviewer clearly explained that the research is conducted as part of the requirements of completing a master’s degree in Organisational Psychology. Before the interview started, the interviewer stated that participation in the study was voluntary and that there would not be any advantages or disadvantages in choosing to participate in this study.

Given the face-to-face nature of the interviews, the interviewer explained that anonymity cannot be ensured as the interviewer 'sees' the interviewee. However, in terms of the writing up of the research report and how the data is stored and protected, both anonymity and confidentiality were ensured. Confidentiality was assured in two ways. Firstly, the interviewer kept the audio recordings and the transcripts of the study in storage on a password-protected computer which is only accessible to the interviewer and the supervisor of the study. Secondly, while questions were being asked about teacher's circumstances and quotes were used in the write-up of the report, no identifying information, such as the name of the school the teacher works at, or the real names of teachers was mentioned. Pseudonyms were used in place of the real names of educators in all written reports including the transcripts. In addition, all the interview data (audio recordings and transcripts) were safely stored away in a secure password-protected computer in the research supervisor's office, which only the supervisor and researcher have access to. Any hard copies of any interview data were stored away in a locked cupboard in the supervisor's office. Informed consent was obtained by the completion of signed consent

forms. The researcher explained the same information to the participant who participated in an online interview.

Once the interview started, the researcher paid attention to every single detail that the teachers experienced focusing on verbal and non-verbal cues. At the end of the interview, the researcher thanked the participants in the study and addressed any questions that each participant had. The researcher also has made arrangements with the Emthonjeni Centre to help participants deal with stress, anxiety, or any possible negative outcome that may result from partaking in the study. The researcher encouraged the participants to pay attention to their well-being by contacting the researcher who would help them find help in dealing with stress and anxiety that may result from partaking in the study. Lastly, the researcher provided an option for participants to get a copy of the results of the study which participants may receive upon request. As a sub-script note, no participants indicated distress, and none required any assistance for counselling post-interviews.

Chapter 4: Results and Discussion

This research aims to examine the teachers' experiences of being bullied by learners which is also known as Teacher-Targeted Bullying and Harassment (TTBH). The research questions posed in the interview, along with the literature on Teacher-Targeted Bullying by Learners and the Job Demands-Resources Model, along with other models that shaped our understanding of learner bullying antecedents, are utilised to identify common themes and sub-themes which are discussed in this chapter. To extract precise information, direct quotes of what the participants said are utilised. This chapter discusses all the themes that emerged as well as sub-themes to understand the lived experiences of teachers who are bullied by learners, and solutions that should be implemented to mitigate this type of bullying.

4.1 Theme One: Demands faced by teachers in South African schools

Teachers internationally are presented with multiple roles which include but are not limited to educating, marking of assessments, and disciplining learners, which at times can be demanding. Teachers in South Africa are faced with other roles or expectations that are outside the scope of their role as teachers which further contribute to the amount of workload that they are exposed to on a daily basis. These additional demands were comprehensively discussed in the literature review, particularly that of learners bullying their teachers (See pages 35-38). The media like Media24 and Daily News have consistently reported on different types of violent actions or activities committed by learners in schools thus compromising safety within the schooling environment (Botha et al., 2023). The researcher focused on comprehensively studying the bullying of teachers by learners also known as TTBH which is an additional demand that teachers are faced with which has a detrimental impact on the well-being of teachers as well as the overall education system of South Africa. The JD-R model lens was utilised to explore the workload or work demands faced by teachers as well as the lack of resources in schools and how this contributes to teachers' exposure to bullying. The experience of excessive demands faced by teachers in South African schools emerged as a main theme with multiple sub-themes that will be discussed below.

The main focus was to find out if teachers think job resources or job demands leads to more bullying by learners or not. To gather information on this, the researcher was interested in finding out how the participants feel about the workload or demands that comes with being a teacher, the job resources they have to cope with bullying and whether there were any socio-economic problems that lead learners to bully teachers. In this regard, the researcher investigated whether learners have adequate resources available to them both inside and outside of school, and if this influenced how they interact with teachers.

The findings of this study based on the interviews held with teachers revealed that teachers did indeed face excessive demands. This theme will thoroughly discuss the various demands that teachers are faced with as part of their role as a teacher and other additional demands that contribute to the work of teachers. The additional demands include behavioural issues presented by poverty or lack of resources as well as the social environment of learners. The perception of teachers was significant in extracting the details of all the demands presented by the teaching role to show that teaching is a profession that burdens teachers with extensive work demands.

4.1.1. Sub-theme: Extremely harsh work demands/ workload of teachers.

Work demands presented by the teaching profession can be very intense and very stressful (Ndebele et al., 2022). Teachers are under tremendous pressure that comes from learners, school management, and the Department of Education. They are expected to deal with administration, teaching, and other extracurricular activities (Crafford & Viljoen, 2013). Furthermore, teachers have other additional responsibilities outside what they do in the classroom. This includes supporting learners, attending workshops, serving as committee members, etc.

With regard to supporting learners along with their teaching duties, participant 6 stated, *"I think it's a lot. Apart from repeating lessons, you have to mark learners' books, lesson prep, and then you have admin. Admin work is a lot".* Participant 11 also added, *"It is a lot. We do everything. We're psychologists as well. So, children come to school crying, shouting and you have to be there for them"*. To support the idea that teaching is a demanding role, participant 1 stated, *"We don't realise that we are not just teaching a student, we're teaching a student with all these issues going on. Before I can even teach you, I need to first deal with what is the problem and*

understand how we can help you before I can even get to that level of teaching, I need to get you in that headspace, so it is a lot of work."

Furthermore, teachers attend several meetings and may also be part of a school committee. Being a committee member takes away some of the time that teachers could invest in teaching. Participant 5 has another role outside teaching. She stated, "*As the School Base Support Team (SBST) coordinator, I am expected to know everything about them. It deals with me having to be in contact with learners daily. My plate is very, very full because should there be any learner who is injured, I have to be there to write a report. We have to report everything, so it is too much. We are expected to do a whole lot of things and then at the same time keep a record or maybe just be on par with the annual teaching plan".* Participant 12 added, *"Outside the classroom, you still have to go for workshops, you still have accounting meetings if your learners are not participating well or reaching the target of the required pass mark, so it is quite a lot."* Although some of the demands mentioned by participants are what is expected from a teacher according to the Educators Act 76 of 1998, the participants highlighted that they feel that the demands are too high.

Time is an important resource in teaching. Teachers have work that they need to get done in a week, each term as well as work to be covered for the whole year. Due to the extensive workload that teachers are faced with, they may not have enough time to cover everything they are expected to cover. According to Du Plessis and Marais (2015), teachers are faced with excessive workloads that force them to work over the weekends and in the evenings. Participant 11 stated *"I did my exams, I marked, and the time was running. I didn't know it was already 5 o'clock."* Additionally, the national policy requires teachers to spend about 64-79 % of the 35-hour weekly schooling period, however, teachers on average spend about 43-46 % teaching. Teachers spend much more time preparing for classes than teaching (Mampane, 2012). Participant 12 stated that *"...going into the classroom takes much more preparation and even also leaving the classroom you still have a lot to do because you have to prepare before you go to class and even during the class, you are not only teaching. You have to be busy with class attendance, you have to sign the books and even after that you have to give homework and make sure that they have written the homework".* Participant 1 also commented, *"Workload is a lot. Not just the teaching but the admin of it all. Lesson planning, prepping and you know,*

marking up books, setting up papers and all those things. So it is, it does get a lot. The time given to complete all tasks is not enough".

Although the Educators Act 76 of 1998 states taking care of the emotional and physical welfare of learners, professional duties like attending meetings and workshops are essential to the process of teaching and learning, the participants of this study have indicated those as an addition to their extensive workload. The administrative work was identified as one of the main demands that contribute to the workload of teachers thus consuming time that could have been used to teach. Essentially, the findings of this study support the existing literature that teachers are faced with a high workload (Crafford & Viljoen, 2013; Du Plessis & Letshwene, 2020). Furthermore, teachers deal with curriculum-related problems which have an impact on teachers' day-to-day work thus contributing to their workload. This will be discussed in the following subtheme.

4.1.2. Sub-theme: curriculum changes and their contribution to workload presented by the teaching role.

South Africa like other countries has undergone curriculum reform since democracy was implemented in 1994 to deal with the historical inequalities within the country and to ensure that everyone has the same level of access and quality to education (Bantwini, 2010). Multiple curriculum reforms were implemented to achieve this. Curriculum reform included removing racial and outdated information to achieve one national syllabus that accommodates everyone in the country. The first curriculum reform introduced was the implementation of Curriculum 2005 which operated using principles of outcomes-based education (OBE) which was implemented in 1997 (Mouton et al., 2013). OBE changed the teaching approach from being teacher-centered to learner-centered (Maharajh et al., 2016). The introduction of OBE led to teachers being faced with an increase in demand. OBE made it obligatory for teachers to include assessments as part of every lesson, and the use learner portfolios to be moderated by the school, region, provincial or national level (Crafford & Viljoen, 2013). These challenges led to its revision in 2000 and to the launch of the Revised National Curriculum Statement (RNCS) in 2002 (Bantwini, 2010). One common take of the teachers of the RNCS was that it was work overload with additional paperwork. They believed that it was not as simplified as it claimed to be (Bantwini, 2010). As a result of issues faced under the NCS, CAPS was

implemented in 2012 (Du Plessis & Letshwene, 2020). According to Angie Motshega, the Minister of Education, CAPS was implemented to reduce administrative work and give teachers clarity on how to teach and assess learners (Maharajh et al., 2016). However, CAPS was characterised by having an extensive workload that teachers find hard to cover in class. In a focus group to investigate the challenges faced by teachers, the teachers asserted that the CAPS content is intense and there is no adequate time to cover all the content (Du Plessis & Letshwene, 2020).

Essentially, the development of the new curriculum led to a decrease in instructional time within schools. Teachers have additional administrative work that in the past was mainly done by school clerks (Mampane, 2012; West & Meier, 2020). This includes recording marks, filling learner portfolios, producing progress reports on a quarterly basis, and other professional duties like attending meetings and seminars, conferences as well as some responsibilities outlined in the Employment Educators Act, Chapter 3 3.1(b) (Mampane, 2012). Participant 3 also asserted that *"The workload is a lot, especially when it comes to admin, the admin side. Sometimes I find that I do more admin than teaching. So, there's no balance. I'm always behind on the ATP (Annual Teacher Performance)."* Participant 10 who has been teaching for 19 years stated, *"It's too much. But before, it was not too much. Now that there's too much, a lot of paperwork and some of the things that we're not trained to do like filing such things, those are not our specialties sometimes, most of us, but we do that."* Furthermore, teachers are not trained and well-prepared for these changes. In a study by Govender (2018) which looked at the perspectives of teachers on the implementation of curriculum reform, the results of the study showed that teachers felt that they did not get enough support, guidance, and professional developmental programmes to prepare for the curriculum changes thus leading to what was mentioned by participant 10 whereby teachers engage in duties that they were not trained for thus contributing to their workload. The constant changes in curriculum put teachers under the pressure of having to continuously learn a new system (Baloyi, 2022).

Participant 4 who has been a teacher since the 1980s stated, *"When I started, maybe because I was younger, it didn't feel as strange as now. But the main thing I think now is the administrative work is too much for the teacher. In this way, we cannot be that parent for the kid. So, it is only work and that is it. So, the demand for us is too heavy. I think it's too much."* Participant 2

added that, *"the workload of admin is a lot"*. Although the Department of Education stated the reduction in demand for the different types of curriculum reform, the findings of this study and literature show that curriculum reform has not decreased the amount of work or pressure that teachers are faced with, instead, it showed that these amendments contribute to an increase in the workload of teachers (Du Plessis & Letshwene, 2020; Maharajh et al., 2016). The participants of the study showed that curriculum reform led to an increase in the expected workload that teachers should cover. The intense administration that they are expected to meet leads to an increase in their workload thus taking away valuable time for teaching and learning. It can be deduced from this study that curriculum reform has increased the workload of teachers as it presents them with more administrative work as well as more expectations in terms of how they should teach as well as the approach to assess learners. Therefore, the extensive demands faced by teachers leave them exhausted and more vulnerable to being bullied by learners.

One particular theory that can be utilised to explain why teachers faced by high work demands like the participants of this study which was not mentioned in the literature review is the Job Demands-Control Model which is a variation of the Job-Demands-Resources Model. This model was introduced by Robert Karasek in 1979. Karasek also stated that job demands and job resources are important job characteristics that have an influence on an employee's well-being (Hausser et al., 2010). According to Karasek, job demands include workload, time pressure and job conflict. However, Karasek (1979) introduced the notion of Job Control. Job control refers to the opportunities that an employee gets to use specific skills and the authority to make decisions and autonomy (Baillien et al., 2011). Examples of job control includes timing and controlling methods implemented to get the job done (Hausser et al., 2010). Looking at what was discussed in the literature review about the demands of teachers and what the participants have highlighted in the study, it can be concluded that participants in this study are presented with very high job demands. Teachers have highlighted that they have a high workload. Their workload includes preparing for class, teaching, disciplining learners and attending meetings and workshops. In terms of job control, they have highlighted that the Department of Education implements curriculum reform without having them involved in the decision-making on what and how curriculum can be changed to best suit the needs of all learners while ensuring that teachers take part in creating a system that they will also effectively

function in. Teachers are told what they must do and are also given timeframes to get a specific amount of work *thus not presenting teachers with any autonomy, any participation in decision making and thus very little opportunity to control how they teach.* As a result, teachers are exposed to high job demands and low job control which leads them to be exhausted and vulnerable to being bullied by learners (Baillien et al., 2009; Baillien et al., 2011).

4.1.3. Sub-theme: Lack of resources as a source of frustration

Poverty has been identified as one factor that could lead to disruptive behaviour from learners within the schooling environment (Maarmann & Lamont-Mbawuli, 2017; Wadesango et al., 2011). Poverty is one of the socio-economic disadvantages that may lead to a child having emotional and behavioural issues thus more likely to bully teachers (Flouri et al., 2014). South Africa has many unemployed individuals. In the first quarter of 2023, 32,9% of people were reported unemployed, which is one of the highest in the world (Stats SA, 2023). Unemployment continues to remain an issue in South Africa due to the structural characteristics of the national economy and weak education levels (Chakona & Shackleton, 2019). Children grow up in households where parents are unemployed and where the social grant is the only source of income. Given the economic state of the country and inflation, social grants are usually not enough to sustain these families thus exposing them to the harsh reality of poverty (Chakona & Shackleton, 2019). Living in poverty involves not having access to basic needs. This includes food, clothing, and other necessary resources. Hunger is one issue posed by poverty whereby people do not have adequate food to sustain themselves. Participant 11 stated that *"...parents don't work, (children) don't have food to eat. They're angry. You know when your stomach is empty? You can't think, you can't focus. You can't do anything, you just wanna fight."* The hunger that learners are faced with frustrates them to the extent that they act aggressively toward their teachers. Poverty causes behavioural issues which therefore lead poor communities to be violent (Tugli et al., 2014). In a study conducted by Wadesango et al. (2011) in the Eastern Cape, it was revealed that children who grow up in poverty-stricken households with high levels of unemployment may also be exposed to the use of drugs and it is this combination, hunger and the use of drug abuse, which often creates an environment where they are exposed to violence or being bullied which, in turn, may lead to them becoming bullies too. Participant 5 asserted that, *"Yes, they are frustrated. Let's say economically, maybe at home. I*

(They) carry (their) our circumstances. South African citizens are unemployed You'll find that they do not have enough things in the house. They become frustrated when they look at the others having some of the things that they don't have. And then with them not knowing who to share with, they just explode." Learners bully their teachers to cope with the frustrations that result from the circumstances they are faced with due to poverty (Van den Broeck et al., 2011). As a result, the lack of resources by learners is one of the major contributing factors to the bullying of teachers by learners.

Furthermore, according to the JD-R, which is the framework of this study, resources from the teacher's side are an important aspect in schools. The availability and lack of resources affect the way in which teachers do their work. As discussed in the literature review on pages 31-32, job resources are aspects of the job that allows an employee to achieve their goals efficiently, reduce demands presented by their job and provide them with the ability to grow in their jobs. These resources include support from colleagues, learning opportunities and autonomy. Support from other teachers as well as opportunities to learn and grow as well as job security are important resources for teachers. Infrastructure is another important resource necessary for teachers to do their jobs. It allows teachers and learners to have tools and resources for the process of teaching and learning (Khumalo & Mji, 2014). Schools with infrastructural issues do not have libraries, computer facilities, little or broken furniture as well as little or no textbooks thus compromising the process of teaching and learning. The lack of these resources exacerbates the demands that the teachers deal with. Poor infrastructure or lack of resources within schools has a detrimental impact as they may lead to poor performance or failure. Furthermore, the lack of resources affects how teachers do their work. The lack of resources within schools has a detrimental effect on the process of teaching and learning.

The lack of resources at school and at home may exacerbate the learners' frustrations which may also contribute to TTBH. Participant 10 stated *"Learners do not have adequate resources at home, so they'll come with frustrations from home for whatever reasons. Then they will get to school, and the learner does not have a chair and have to move around to look for a chair. It's your period and you need to start to work but you must understand that the learner must move around to look for a chair and you have to wait for at least 15 minutes. So, do you think you'll finish your Annual Teaching Plan?"* Participant 11 added that, *"There aren't enough*

textbooks. (it is a) struggle in terms of proper infrastructure, the toilets we have are broken down and classrooms also don't have a proper working life. Yeah, so resources are a huge problem in general. I say this because the learners even end up fighting because of these resources. Learners may even end up fighting for chairs or desks. We experience that a lot especially during exam time".

The lack of resources in schools is an indication that teachers do not have all the essential job resources to do their jobs. As a result, as highlighted in the previous sub-theme, teachers are faced with extensive job demands as well as limited availability of resources. Furthermore, the findings of the study are in line with the existing literature in terms of the impact of poverty or lack of resources on how individuals behave (Flouri et al., 2014; Tugli et al., 2014; Wadesango et al., 2011). Conditions presented by a lack of resources thus lead to learners being frustrated and therefore possibly acting out, behaving in a way that is aggressive towards teachers.

4.1.4. Sub-theme: Social and environmental factors as additional demands

Interlinked to the discussion above, all the teachers interviewed in this study came from schools in Quintile four. These schools tend to be located in poor communities. As such these schools not only suffer from a lack of resources but the communities in which they are located are also subjected to a wide range of social and environmental problems. As mentioned, drug abuse, gangsterism and crime may be rife in such communities but there are many other social and environmental issues that are elaborated upon below. These issues have a detrimental impact on the teaching and learning within the school. Participant 8 stated that, *"Kids are failing, because all that is happening out there is having an effect in the sense of their school performance. You give them an essay; they'll tell you about everything that is happening there. So, it has got a big effect in terms of their school performance. They are not doing well"*. The conditions presented by where the schools are situated and the issue within the environment do not only affect the performance of learners. However, it also has an effect on the behaviour of learners in those schools and this can be attributed to the factors discussed above. One of the participants stated, *"…we are at the outskirts and then our clientele is from the squatter camp, 90% of them are from the squatter camp. And then we have those who are from Soweto, those who think that they know it all and then they misbehave however they want to because no one*

is going to reprimand them. This could also be the cause because the school is at the outskirts" (Participant 5).

This study utilised Bandura's Social Learning Theory as well as Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory to understand why learners engage in bullying behaviours which are an additional demand that teachers deal with which was discussed in the literature review on pages 36-37. According to Bandura, the bullying behaviour of learners at school is due to the different forms of bullying that they observe from their environment and those around them. The behaviour of learners in schools is a representation of what is happening at home (Adewusi, 2021). Participant 1 stated *"So if we have discipline at home, then we have discipline in your schoolwork when we have discipline in school. But now if there's no discipline at home, there's no one taking care of you, no one showing you what is right, what is wrong, and the only things that you are exposed to are gangs, is to fight, is to all these things, then obviously they do bring it into the school".* Participant 9 added that, *"... looking at the crime that is here, people who are committing this crime are the parents of these kids. So also, these kids are aware of that. So, you see, which is a family thing. Yeah, so I think that also contributes to that because they see it as the right thing to do because their parents also participate in such."* To support Bandura's theory, participant 9 further commented, *"You will be surprised if you come to a parents meeting. You see that looking at the parents, the way they respond, that is why you see these learners, they take this from these people."* This shows that when learners are exposed to any behaviour, they turn to imitate that behaviour. Essentially, Bandura's theory highlights the importance of observational learning, as a result, the behaviour of learners at school reflects what they are exposed to at home as well as their social environment and its effects which will be discussed below.

Another example of how social learning theory may play out is as follows. The community or social environment is a big factor that shapes the behaviour of children. For example, a child growing up in an unstable community characterised by crime, violence, gangsterism, and rape are likely to adopt aggressive behaviours (Pitso et al., 2014). These children or learners may experience psychological disorders and may also turn to think that violence is the only way to communicate or solve differences. Participants in this study highlighted that some learners bring weapons to school. These learners do not comply with laws and authority (Pitso et al.,

2014). Participant 8 stated *"...so, some of the things which happen there and that run of gangsterism, and drugs being sold around here, is a factor. That is what they talk about throughout the schools. They are gangster scientists so in their minds it's all about gangsterism, the environment, in which they are growing up. It has got a factor in how they behave."* Participant 10 supported this and stated that, *"there's too much usage of drugs, we understand and some of the parents they don't take care of (about) that. They don't care".*

Furthermore, a human being exists within different systems that influence how they develop. These systems may be understood using Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory. As discussed in the literature review on pages 36-37, Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory focuses on different systems that influence an individual's development. These include the microsystem, mesosystem, exosystem, and macrosystem. These systems are interconnected, and the interconnected nature of these systems influences an individual's behaviour and development. Family is a child's microsystem and an essential component of a child's support system. As a result, any disturbances in this support system may have negative implications on the child's functioning. These disturbances include domestic violence, divorce, abusive parents, wrong parenting styles, and the parents' socio-economic status (Gasa, 2012). According to a study conducted by Young et al. (2007), divorce was identified as a stressor in all individuals who are part of the family. As a result, learners who experience this turn to be frustrated which can be identified in their disruptive behaviour and anger (Gasa, 2012; Pitso et al., 2014; Young et al., 2007). Participant 4 stated that *"... the child might not have a good home life, right? but can be all right at school. But you can have a child that has a bad life. And he is just going, everywhere, he's cross, he's mad at everyone. And he takes off everything on others."*

Disrupted family life is another source of frustration and pain that children are faced with at home. Disrupted family life is one where there is a separation between parents or single parenthood (Gasa, 2012). In families where there has not been separation, disrupted family life can be characterised by parents violating each other, the extensive use of alcohol, and child abuse. An example of a disrupted family was described by Participant 4 who stated, *"If a boy sees his mom being bullied, our men bully our wives, they bully us. So, he feels like, you know, he won't have that respect. And that is also where it starts."* Another type of disrupted family

life was mentioned by Participant 3 who stated that, *"Most of them don't have fathers at home or predominantly live with their mothers. So yeah, they don't have guidance".* Furthermore, to support the existence of disrupted families that learners are faced with, Participant 2 stated that *"...they have different problems maybe there's no father figure at home, maybe there's no mother or it's just a mother or siblings looking after each other. Sometimes the parents drink or one of them does domestic violence and children experience that every day."* Children who are raised in families like these are likely to be frustrated thus leading to behavioural issues. Learners faced with these circumstances use the defence mechanism of displacement to deal with it whereby they do not take out their frustrations on those who cause them but take them out on others. In this case, they take them out on their teachers. The violence that children are exposed to in their homes disrupts their schooling experience (Lloyd, 2018). Children growing up in homes where they witness domestic violence are likely to change their behaviour, may be aggressive and have unpredictable behaviour which can contribute to them being victims or perpetrators of bullying behaviour (Lloyd, 2018). In this study, it was evident that teachers who have been bullied by learners believe that these learners are exposed to violence in their homes which leads them to behave the way they do. Since these learners do not have anyone to talk to or resources to use to deal with these frustrations, they may turn on and take out their frustrations on their teachers thus leading to TTBH. Participant 10 stated that *"...in government schools, we need people like counsellors full-time because learners have issues, and they don't have anybody to talk to."* Participant 5 stated, *"Most of these kids are raised by single parents or they are raised by both parents who have squabbles, and they experience that."* Participant 5 further stated *"Our breakups, the way we speak to our kids about our spouses, the way we behave around our spouses, the way we do things in the family, they count. They count on the behaviour that they are having. Some of these learners don't even have parents, they live with their grandparents or their aunt or uncle. So, they have issues that they bring into the classroom, and when they start because they don't know how you deal with all the things that are happening, then they start to act up or become less interested in their work. There are so many other things that are happening at home, it just demotivates them sometimes to not do their work or listen to us or behave."* Participant 6 added, *"Maybe they come from homes where they see their parents fight. I think that affects how they come to school and treat you. So, I think a lot of it has to do with how the learner has grown up. What kind of things do they go*

through at home? It is just a projection of what's happening at home." Participant 8 asserted, *"It's something that is happening at home. Maybe they are sort of an abuse that is happening at home. Being mistreated by the father, there's physical abuse happening there, domestic violence happening there, or some that are dealing with their issues, boyfriend stuff. It has an effect because some of it maybe the boyfriend was not doing that well and then they come here, they take out all that anger on you."* To respond to the possible factors that could be contributing to the behaviour of the learners, the participants in the study highlighted that the bullying behaviour of learners towards teachers is an imitation of what they are exposed to.

Parental guidance and control are an essential tool that can be utilised to help learners adopt the right behaviours. According to Tugli et al. (2014), learners reported that their families do not care about their moral behaviour or the type of friends that they make. This is an example of lack of parental guidance or involvement which was identified as one of the reasons learners adopt violent behaviours. Participant 3 stated, *"…sometimes I can even see that the parents are not supportive"*. One of the participants in the study mentioned a point about parental involved which was mentioned earlier and said, *"there's too much usage of drugs we understand and some of the parents they don't take care of(about) that. They don't care"* (Participant 10). In a study by Nzama and Ajani (2021) on high school learners who abuse substances, it was found factors that contribute to this behaviour are what learners are faced with at home, neglect, or lack of guidance from their parents, lack of support from teachers and learners who are raised by single parents. It can be deduced from this study that parents play a vital role in the behaviours that their children adopt. Furthermore, according to the ecological systems approach, learners are individuals who engage with their families, community, and the overall surrounding environment.

Crime and domestic violence form part of the upbringing of many South African children (Maarman & Lamont-Mbawuli, 2017). Community plays a vital role in the development of children as it forms their mesosystem. The components of a community within which a school is found contribute to the behaviour of learners within that school. An increase in crime and violence within communities contributes to school violence (Maring & Koblinsky, 2013; Mkhize & Sibisi, 2021). Community-based violence is a contributing factor to the safety of schools. Community-based violence refers to the exposure to drugs, weapons such as guns and

knives, and different acts of violence (Mkhize & Sibisi, 2021). Exposure to these disturbing living conditions leads some learners to use drugs or carry weapons to school (Mkhize & Sibisi, 2021). Learners possess and carry these weapons as a way to protect themselves which has become prominent in schools (Ncontsa & Shumba, 2013). To attest to this, Participant 3 stated, *"A couple of weeks back, I think in the last teaching week for term 3, there was a gun and a knife found in two of my classes. So, it's like a normal thing for us"*. De Wet (2007) in his study showed that it is normal for learners in townships to witness shootings, assaults, and stabbings. Participant 3 further stated, *"If you look at this community, I mean I sometimes fear for my life. We constantly hear gunshots."* Participant 8 added, *"There's a lot of violence happening outside. There are just random shootings. I think if not last week, the other week, during the break there was a shooting happening there by the street in broad daylight. Three gunshots bha bha bha, they ran."* Another participant commented on the societal factor of the environment within which the school is located. The participant stated that, *"... especially like in the area that we are. You know gangs, it's a big thing. So, I think being in a school like this, they notice there are probably other gang members as well. So, they see that, okay, this is happening, so if they can, why can't I?"* (Participant 6). The participants in the study discussed the impact of the different Ecological systems on the behaviour of learners. The microsystem, mesosystem, exosystem as well as the macrosystem of the learners were identified as factors that contribute to and influence behaviour. The combined effect of the different systems offers an in-depth understanding of why learners behave the way they do.

4.1.5 Theme Conclusion: Demands faced by teachers in South African schools.

According to the discussion on this theme, it was identified that teachers are faced with many demands that are part of their role as teachers as well as other additional demands outside their teaching scope. The role of lack of resources in schools and poorly resourced homes were also highlighted as factors that contributes to TTBH which is an example of an additional demand they are faced with. The Department of Education has invested in curriculum reform over the years to change the system that was dominated by apartheid principles. Although these efforts were successful in benefiting learners, it has not been successful in minimising the workload and the demands that teachers are faced with. The participants of this study like in other existing research highlighted that curriculum reform did not reduce their workload in any way instead,

the workload of teachers has increased by the approach introduced with the recent curriculum (Du Plessis & Letshwene, 2020; Maharajh et al., 2016). The findings also highlighted that learners from violent, poorly resourced families are likely to bully their teachers as a way of dealing with the frustrations they are faced with at home. The Social Learning Theory was utilised to highlight that learners imitate behaviours and actions they are exposed to. The participants of the study showed that they believe that the violent or disruptive behaviour of learners can be attributed to what learners are exposed to. The discussion further highlighted that the different systems of Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory do not exist in isolation; however, they are interconnected. The participants of this study indicated that these systems (micro-, meso-, exo-, and macro) have an impact on the learner's behaviour, specifically that of TTBH. Issues that learners have in their families were identified as one of the main factors that have a huge contribution to their disruptive or violent behaviours. The combination of the home, school, and community effect which is the mesosystem of the child were also identified as a factor that contributes to the behaviour of learners. In summary, violence, drug use, and gangsterism were identified as factors that contribute to the bullying of teachers by learners. The Social Learning Theory highlighted the impact of observational learning whereas the Ecological Systems Theory looked at the combined effect of systems that contribute to a child's development. Essentially, the participants showed that observational learning and the different systems within the environment of learners contribute to their bullying behaviour. These conditions lead to a stressful working environment where teachers' well-being is compromised. This indicates that to minimise the rate at which learners bully their teachers, issues faced by learners in their immediate environment as well as what they are exposed to at school and the general community should be addressed. According to Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory as discussed in the literature review on pages 36-37, learners are affected by many factors that stem from different Ecological systems. It can be deduced from this study that the types of family dynamics and other household factors, and the community within which these learners live may determine how these learners develop, and the type of behaviours that they adopt.

4.2 Theme Two: Demographics and teacher attributes that contribute to an increased exposure to being bullied by learners.

Local and international literature has shown that teachers are being bullied by learners (De Wet, 2010; De Wet, 2012; Woudstra, 2018). Teachers' characteristics were identified as one of the factors that contribute to the likelihood of a teacher being bullied by a learner. These characteristics include their personality, age, experience, and gender. For example, the data analysis of the study on teachers' social media comments on the antecedents of bullying showed that teachers believed that it is not just only the learners, their parents, and culture, that contribute to whether learners bully them or not but also the demographic characteristics of teachers such as age and years of experience which were responsible for the vulnerability of a teacher to being bullied (De Wet, 2020).

The researchers focused on identifying how the demographic and other teachers' attributes contributed to their likelihood of being victims of TTBH. The researcher was interested in finding out whether the demographic characteristics (age, race, and gender), experience and other attributes were the reasons teachers were targets of bullying. As a result, the theme that investigates demographic characteristics and other individual attributes of teachers emerged. Teachers who become victims of bullying by learners believe that this can be attributed to their characteristics such as their physical appearance, as well as their age, and gender (Kauppi & Porhola, 2012). This was evident in this study as more teachers reported the influence that their demographic attributes had on an increased chance of being bullied. According to Kauppi and Porhola (2012), teachers in secondary schools are most likely to be bullied by learners compared to those in primary schools. As a result, this study only focused on studying TTBH in high schools in the Gauteng area.

As mentioned in the methods chapter, demographically, the sample consisted of nine females (n=9), three males (n=3), eight black (n=8) and four coloured teachers (n=4). The participants of this study were predominantly females and black. Although race did not have an effect in the participants' exposure to being bullied by learners, gender influenced exposure to this type of bullying. Female teachers stated that learners tend to bully them more compared to their male counterparts. The sample comprised of seven teachers with working experience between 0-3 years. One teacher had 4-10 years' experience, lastly, four teachers had more than 10 years'

experience in the teaching profession. The sample also consisted of teachers between the ages of 23-57. The young new teachers stated that they felt they were likely to being bullied by learners compared to teachers who have been in the school. The results showed that gender and age influenced the level of exposure to bullying from learners. This study showed that their demographic characteristics affected their exposure to TTBH. These will be discussed in the following sub-themes below.

4.2.1. Sub-theme: Experience, age, and other teacher's characteristics as reasons for heightened chances of exposure to TTBH.

Novice teachers are teachers who have been in the profession for less than five years. These teachers are usually still not fully familiar with how things are done in the teaching profession. A study conducted by De Wet and Jacobs (2006) showed that 39.9% of inexperienced and 34% of new teachers have a higher chance of being bullied by learners. According to Koiv (2020), teachers who are inexperienced or new in a school are more likely to be bullied than those who are experienced and have been in the school for quite some time. As a result, tenure, and experience in the teaching profession determine the likelihood of a teacher to be bullied by a learner. Participant 12 stated, *"Your body can tell that you are young and still new in the profession so you can be at high risk of bullying."* According to Tschannen-Moran and Hoy (2007), experienced teachers have a higher level of self-efficacy beliefs compared to novice teachers in managing classes and in how they give instructions in class. Another study by Santos and Jin (2016) looked at educator-targeted bullying and argued that experience is useful in tackling this type of bullying. Individuals who are more experienced also report less negative psychological effects since they have found ways how to deal with the learners as well as the rewards presented by the teaching role. When teachers spend more time in the teaching profession, they adopt management methods, solving complicated issues and establishing successful coping mechanisms to deal with the challenges they face when interacting with learners (Santos & Jin, 2016). This therefore implies that teachers who have experience can manage bullying behaviours compared to those who do not.

As mentioned by participants in the study by Kauppi and Porhola (2012), the participants of the study indicated that their physical appearance and age may put them at higher risk of being bullied by learners. Participant 1 stated, *"Because of my height, most learners are taller than*

me". Participant 8 added, *"I look young even though I'm not young. Yeah, I'm smaller size and that's one of the reasons"*. Furthermore, a study by Emmerová and Kohútová (2017) which looked at learner aggression towards teachers showed a significant relationship between different forms of aggression and the teachers' age. The younger the teacher, there more likely he/she is bullied by learners. Participant 9 stated, *"They tend to judge a lot if you are too young. Why must you teach us as young as you are so it's easy for them to disrespect you".* Participant 12 added, *"As young teachers, we tend to be prone to bullying a lot because learners tend to think that we are of the same age."* In a study by Santos and Jin (2016), the results of the study showed that teachers with more experience are less likely to being exposed to educator targeted bullying compared to those with less experience. Another study by Emmerová and Kohútová (2017) also showed a linear significant relationship between the different forms of aggression and the period of the teacher's experience. The results showed that teachers with less experience are likely to be exposed to higher levels of aggression than experienced teachers. The findings of this study also revealed the same trend. Young teachers between the ages of 23-30 who are quite new in the profession with experience of less than a year reported to being more exposed to bullying compared to old, experienced teachers. When asked about exposure to bullying as a new teacher, one of the teachers commented that, *"... I have realized that this kind of relationship with the students is not the same as other teachers. They can also say that they are experiencing the same thing, but their case is different from mine. Trust me. Yeah, so I think being new in this school also contributes to treatment I'm getting from them. Maybe it's a welcome. So, I need to be stronger"* (Participant 7). It is therefore evident from previous research and in this study that the age and experience of a teacher determine their likelihood of being victims of TTBH.

4.2.2 Sub-theme: Gender

Gender is one of the characteristics that teachers who are bullied often believe contribute to their increased exposure to being bullied by learners. In a qualitative social media research, which focused on comments of teachers on antecedents of teacher-targeted bullying, the results showed that female teachers are seemingly more likely to be victims of bullying than their male counterparts (De Wet, 2020). Similarly, the results of a study conducted by Mooij (2011) showed that female teachers are more exposed to violence than their male counterparts. This is

similar to what was found by McMahon et al. (2014) in a study that looked at teacher-directed violence. The results showed that verbal violence was the type of violence that female teachers were more exposed to. Another survey conducted in Australia showed that 70% of the participants were victims of violence by learners. They further showed that 71% of female teachers were victims of harassment which is slightly higher than 68,4% of male teachers (Henebery, 2019). According to the participants in this study, gender contributes to the increased chances of exposure to TTBH. Participant 1 stated, *"...and being a woman in high school has an impact. It is a cultural thing where they don't see women as anything, so they don't feel like they have to obey you"*. Participant 10 added, *"Learners, you know, as I said before are not the same and they're from different backgrounds. Some don't know the mother figure even if they do, (if) they undermine their parents at home, they will undermine you too."* Participant 8 stated that *"...they are scared of male teachers. They don't do as they please with male teachers."* One of the male participants commented, *"I would say that if you are a male teacher, you can control your class and control the learners"* (Participant 2). This supports that male teachers are less likely to be bullied by learners. However, some studies reported different results in terms of whether male or female teachers were more exposed to being bullied or not (McMahon et al., 2014). Exposure to bullying for both genders can also be attributed to other factors or teacher characteristics which may contribute to either increased or decreased chances of exposure to TTBH which were discussed in the sub-theme above. As a result, it can be deduced that gender in conjunction with other factors such as race or age may either increase or decrease teachers' exposure to TTBH.

4.2.3. Theme Conclusion: Demographics and Teacher's attributes that contribute to an increased exposure to being bullied by learners.

The participants of this study identified age, gender and experience as factors that lead to an increased exposure to TTBH. Young teachers between the ages of 23 and 30 indicated that they feel that they stand a high chance of being bullied by learners compared to old and experienced teachers. They attributed this to the way they look which shows that they are young thus leading to learners taking advantage of them. The finding of this study showed that female teachers are likely to experience TTBH more than their male counterparts. Furthermore, the participants of this study showed that they believe that their gender contributes to their exposure to TTBH.

The participants with less experience and less tenure indicated that they are more likely to experience TTBH compared to teachers who have been teaching for a very long time.

4.3. Theme Three: The effect of Teacher Targeted Bullying and Harassment by Learners on its victims.

Literature shows that teachers can be victimised by learners (De Wet, 2010; Sambo & Govender, 2023; Woudstra, 2018) and that the bullying suffered by teachers in the hands of learners compromises their well-being (De Wet & Jacobs, 2018). Bullied teachers become anxious and stressed about what they have been exposed to. Furthermore, the continued exposure to TTBH affects how these teachers view themselves after they have been bullied. This therefore affects their self-image and the confidence they have in themselves and their job. Therefore, there is a negative relationship between emotional, psychological, and physiological well-being and exposure to workplace victimisation (Aquino & Thau, 2009). The main question that the researcher focused on was how learner-enacted bullying affected teachers' physical and psychological well-being. To gather this information, the researcher was interested in understanding how being bullied by learners affected the teachers, how it made them feel in relation to other teachers as well as the physical, psychological, as well as social effects of this bullying. The main theme discussing the effects of TTBH on teachers emerged with a number of sub-themes being delineated in terms of the types of poor well-being outcomes experienced.

4.3.1. Sub-theme: Exposure to stress, anxiety, and depression

It was evident when conducting the interviews that teachers are negatively affected by TTBH. The pain that teachers went through was evident in their voices and faces. Most of the participants repeated some of the things they said before thus showing the significance of the event as well as how they felt about continuing going to work. The bullying experiences of teachers exposed them to stressful conditions thus compromising their psychological health. As discussed in the literature review when discussing the consequences of workplace bullying and TTBH on pages 17-18, exposure to these may have psychological effects on its victims. These effects include depression and anxiety (Conway et al., 2018; Cowie et al., 2002; Cunniff & Mostert, 2012). A study conducted by Woudstra et al. (2018) that focused on exploring the effect of learner-on-teacher bullying on teachers' mental health showed that teachers who

reported being exposed to bullying reported being more anxious than those who did not thus implying that the bullying that teachers were exposed to led them to be anxious. With the different types of bullying experienced by the participants, they expressed anxiety as a consistent emotion they deal with. Participant 1 stated, *"At night you're just thinking, and you are dreading this. Oh, tomorrow I have to go to work and face this challenge, so it does give a person a bit of anxiety."* Participant 1 continued and stated *"And sometimes it can cause, you know, anxiety attacks and things like that. It feels horrible. You feel like you are nothing. Psychologically you're feeling depressed, and you are feeling sad emotionally."* As discussed in the literature review on page 22, exposure to TTBH leads to increased stress levels on top of the other demands that teachers are faced with thus affecting how they do their job (De Wet, 2010). Participant 9 added, *"...you become stressed whenever you have to come to work."* This is consistent with what was found by Jacobs and Det Wet (2015) as one of the effects of exposure to bullying. It can be deduced that exposure to bullying has psychological effects which have a detrimental effect on the mental well-being of teachers which is consistent with literature on the effect of exposure to bullying experiences (De Wet & Jacobs, 2018; Montgomery, 2019; Woudstra et al., 2018). Exposure to this type of bullying leads to depression and anxiety which was evident in this study and the study by Woudstra et al. (2018). As a result, the anxious and depressed victims of bullying therefore stand a higher chance of continuously becoming victims of further bullying. This compromised psychological state may lead to a low self-esteem. Consequently, the individuals are likely to display inferiority type behaviours like isolating themselves and being very nervous thus causing them to appear as weak and vulnerable which may further lead to a situation where they are taken advantage of (Sansudin et al., 2020).

4.3.2. Sub-theme: Compromised self-image and self-esteem.

Self-esteem may be defined as an individual's judgement of their self-worth (Sansudin et al., 2020). As a result, high levels of self-image and self-esteem are essential resources for teachers. Teachers with increased self-esteem can efficiently present themselves and the content confidently (Mbuva, 2017). However, teachers who have been bullied are likely to have a distorted self-image thus leading to them being worn out (Mbuva, 2017). The bullying of teachers by learners may lead to these teachers' losing self-confidence and doubting themselves

(Fahie & Devine, 2014; Tolentino, 2016). Participant 1 stated, *"...after the bullying it feels like, why am I here? So, you do rethink and feel like, am I enough for the learners or what am I doing wrong, or you contemplate everything".* Participant 3 stated *"I feel like the kids see me as someone who is not worth respecting…so I feel so inferior, and they make you feel so small. You feel like you are incompetent in class like you are not good enough."* Compromised self-image and self-esteem are likely to affect the process of teaching and learning. These teachers may struggle to present themselves properly or confidently deliver the expected content, further affecting productivity and the quality of their teaching. A study by De Wet (2010) which studied the experiences of educator-directed bullying identified low self-esteem as an aftermath of exposure to bullying thus putting them at a high risk of being victims of future bullying attacks. Furthermore, bullied teachers tend to have a low self-esteem which may lead them to being demotivated which may lead to high absenteeism (De Wet, 2010; Tolentino, 2016).

4.3.3. Theme Conclusion: The effect of Teacher Targeted Bullying and Harassment by Learners on its victims.

It can be deduced that victims of TTBH were negatively affected by exposure to this type of bullying. The participants stated that exposure to TTBH has affected their self-esteem and self-image. They found themselves questioning their worth and whether they were good enough for the job or not. As identified in other studies, the participants of this study stated that their exposure to bullying by learners has left them feeling anxious and depressed thus compromising their well-being (Jacobs & De Wet, 2015; Woudstra et al., 2018).

4.4. Theme Four: The effect of Teacher Targeted Bullying and Harassment on schools.

Teacher Targeted Bullying and Harassment by Learners is a reality for many teachers within South African schools. This type of bullying does not only affect its victims, but it also affects the schools where teachers are victimised. The researcher was concerned with whether this bullying has an impact on the schools where teachers are victims of TTBH. The researcher was interested in researching how being bullied by learners made teachers feel about staying in the profession, the general effect of this type of bullying on the school and on the ability of teachers to do their job. From this information, the themes that look at the effects of TTBH on schools and the impact on teaching that teachers can deliver, emerged.

Teachers who are bullied in schools are likely to lose the dedication and focus they have. These teachers are demotivated and are likely to report high levels of absenteeism which can either be attributed to the effects of the bullying they are exposed to or as a way to stay away from their toxic working environment (De Wet, 2010; Tolentino, 2016). Changes in the motivation and presence of the teacher have a negative impact on the quality of teaching these teachers can achieve (De Wet & Jacobs, 2018).

Furthermore, victims of TTBH are likely to be angry and resentful thus leading to changes in how they engage with learners as a way to protect themselves from further bullying. This may therefore have a negative impact on the learning activities that require engagement and discussion thus affecting the quality of teaching and learning. Teachers are also sometimes faced with intense bullying experiences that require to be reported and dealt with thus taking a valuable amount of time that could be used for teaching and learning (De Wet, 2010; Ncotsa, 2013).

These various impacts are discussed in greater detail in the sub-themes below:

4.4.1. Sub-theme: Loss of motivation, and decreased productivity

Job motivation and job productivity are essential characteristics that allow employees to stay engaged in their jobs. Job productivity is the ability of an employee to transform input resources into outputs (Anjum et al., 2018). An employee's level of productivity depends on multiple factors like the policies within an organisation, support from supervisors, the working environment and the employee's ability. Work environments characterised by workplace bullying create a hostile environment thus leading to a decrease in employees' level of productivity (Anjum et al., 2018). Applying this to teachers, participants in this study indicated that being bullied by learners had an effect on their motivation and level of productivity. Participant 5 stated, *"As I mentioned it affects how you work with these learners. More especially if maybe you went to class and then you experienced it through one or maybe with a number of learners. If they are five or maybe if they are six, it's too much. Unlike when it's one. With one you will know, okay fine, I'll just have to deal with this one this way. So, if there are about five, or six in a classroom, it's a problem. Delivery of curriculum will be affected, which is the reason why we are here. It's going to be negatively affected. And then from there, the behavior towards the learners themselves as an educator or as educators, you develop that*

little resentment, even though it doesn't last long, but it gets developed and then from there you ignore, or you try to just supress it, but should anything happen it piles up".

Ncotsa and Shumba (2013) in their study looked at school violence in South African high schools and reported demotivation for teachers to do their work as one of the effects of school violence that they are exposed to. Participant 8 asserted that *"The motivation decreases. That oomph that you start with beginning of the year slowly goes down."* Participant 1 added, *"Yeah, because if you do feel sad and you feel unmotivated, you know, to come to school every day and it's just one learner, it's this class, it just demotivates you."* Participant 2 further added *"You're eager to do the work. And you're eager to introduce new things to them, especially in your introduction when you start with a lesson. And then just in a second or few minutes, you've lost it again because of that children's behaviour."* Participant 3 added that, *"It affects my performance at work especially when I have to write reports and diagnostics. I have the same problem I was having at the beginning of the year, so it doesn't look like there's been some sort of positive teacher development. It's like I am sitting at the same place."* Participant 4 explained the impact of the bullying episode she had and stated, *"It didn't affect my other classes but with that class. I can't even tell you if all those learners did well that year." I couldn't do my work properly in that class."* The participants of this study indicated that their ability to do their job was indeed affected by their experiences of TTBH. Furthermore, loss of motivation from teachers who were bullied was identified as a common impact of being bullied which may further lead to teachers not finishing the curriculum that they are expected to cover (Woudstra, 2018). The inability to complete the syllabus thus negatively affects the process of teaching and learning. It was evident in the study that exposure to TTBH had a negative impact on the motivation of the teachers to do their job and their productivity thus violating the learner's right to quality education.

4.4.2. Sub-theme: Increased intention to leave the profession

Teacher turnover refers to a situation where a teacher moves from one school to another, changes the subjects they teach, and transfers to another role within the teaching profession or completely leaves the teaching profession (Rasanen et al., 2020). In this study, teacher turnover refers to a situation where a teacher decides to leave the profession. Teacher turnover or resignation in South Africa is drastically increasing thus negatively affecting the delivery of

curriculum. More than 50,000 teachers have left the profession posing a risk of teacher shortages in the South African schooling system (Mpundu et al., 2023). Multiple reasons lead teachers to leave the teaching profession. Literature shows that teachers leave the teaching profession because of the following: workload, curriculum issues, burnout, low salary, lack of support, class discipline, and lack of resources (Mpundu et al., 2023; Palm, 2022). South African teachers are faced with several challenges that have a negative impact on their ability to do their job successfully. These challenges include overcrowded classes that make it hard to maintain control and order, lack of resources as well as unruly behaviour from the learners. This contributes to teachers' attrition and their willingness to stay in the profession (Bothe et al., 2023). The bullying of teachers by learners is another possible reason why teachers leave the teaching profession. TTBH has a detrimental effect on teachers' ability to effectively do their work. It leads to negative emotions, disempowerment, and low levels of motivation (Woudstra et al., 2018). According to Long et al. (2017), many teachers have lost their commitment, and their identity as teachers by profession has decreased which may further lead to teachers deciding to leave the profession.

TTBH affects the working conditions of teachers thus creating a harsh working environment where individuals do not feel safe and protected. This may further lead to teachers getting worried and being less committed to their work. When this persists, teachers are left with no choice but to leave the profession for the safety of their lives. For example, participant 3 highlighted the environment and the behaviour of learners as factors that lead them to want to leave the teaching profession. The violence in and around the school was one of the concerns the participants of the study had. Participant 3 stated *"When I started teaching last year, I really had a good experience. I was at a school in a nice area. You see kids in class want to learn. Yeah, I came here, and I experienced something totally different. In my mind I told myself that I could not see myself doing this for a long time, even five years seemed like an eternity. I want to leave as soon as possible. So, as soon as I can get my things in order, I will move along to something else".* Participant 8 stated added, *"It makes you think twice like, really is this something I really want to do for the rest of my life? Do I want to be sworn at every day? So, it sort of makes you rethink your decision. Is this where I'm supposed to be?"* Participant 10 expressed that, *"at times you feel like resigning. And then again you think of yourself, but when*

I resign, how am I going to survive? What are my kids gonna eat? How much do you have and what are you gonna do? It does affect my job, sometimes I ask myself if I chose the right career. After teaching for all these years and at this age if you decide to quit, where are you gonna go?" When asked about the demands of teachers, participant 5 commented, *"If I could, I would resign because the Department of Education is expecting a lot from us as educators".* Participant 12 also stated, *"I'm even considering changing careers at this point. Because I feel like the children, I thought I'd be teaching are long out of school, this is a new generation of learners, and they make it very, very difficult to work with them."* Participant 1 further stated *"Even before I came into the profession, it wasn't a long-term thing for me. It was always like I'm going to get the experience and I'm going to step into something else. And as I'm in the profession, I don't know how these other teachers are teachers their whole lives. I'm ready to go. It's a very draining job."* Participant 11 stated *"...you come to school with a positive energy, and you want to leave with the same energy but there are times where I said to myself, I can't do this. I don't want to go back".* Exposure to different forms of TTBH that these participants were exposed to led to each of them expressing the desire to leave the profession.

The turnover of teachers has a negative impact on teaching and learning. An increase in teacher turnover leads to teacher shortages whereby schools usually respond by hiring inexperienced teachers to close the gap (Carver-Thomas & Darling-Hammond, 2019). The hiring of inexperienced teachers will therefore negatively affect the performance of the learners and the school thus compromising the education quality. In instances where teachers who leave cannot be replaced, learners are distributed among available teachers thus leading to further overcrowded classrooms with an even larger teacher-learner ratio above the expected ratio (Carver-Thomas & Darling-Hammond, 2019; Mpundu et al., 2023). Teacher turnover has a detrimental impact on the school community and the quality of content delivery. When teachers leave, this leads to changes in staff thus leading to a need for new teachers thus leading to a need for recruitment resources and ways to help the new members adopt the school culture (Rasanene et al., 2020). Participant 11 asserted *"We tend to lose a lot of teachers because of this. When this happens, we have to close the gap because it takes a bit of time before these teachers can be replaced."*

Furthermore, many participants who expressed the desire to leave the profession are novice teachers (teachers with less than 5 years' experience). Participants 1,3,6, 8, 9, 11 and 12 were all the novice teachers who were part of the study. Literature shows that novice teachers have turnover intentions more than teachers who have been in the profession for longer (Rasanen et al., 2020). The contributing factors to this include the excessive workload that the teaching role presents or struggles to effectively engage with learners or other teachers. These teachers usually struggle with the beliefs of what their work is and the reality that they face daily (Rasanen et al., 2020). In this study, the teacher's exposure to TTBH contributed to their turnover intentions. As it can be seen from many of the above quotes it is often only the inability to find another source of income to feed their families, that keeps some teachers in the profession.

Utilising the Job-Demands Resources Model, it can be deduced from what the participants mentioned that teaching is a demanding job with the bullying faced by teachers as an additional, and extremely inimical demand that they face in schools which further complicates the teaching role. There are no policies put in place to protect teachers from being bullied by learners which therefore leads to these learners taking advantage of teachers thus leading to the persistence of this type of bullying within South African schools.

4.4.3. Sub-theme: Delays in syllabus or curriculum completion

As mentioned, above, the disruption of lessons by learners and indiscipline in the classroom are forms of TTBH that teachers are faced with which affect their job. Discipline is an important factor or component in the ability of teachers to teach in a classroom setting. Ill-discipline in a classroom is the failure of a learner to self-discipline which may further lead to distracting learning activities (Mansor et al., 2017). Moreover, South African schools are characterised by overcrowded classrooms thus making it difficult to maintain discipline thereby fostering an environment in which learners can misbehave (Ndebele, 2023). Many schools in South Africa specifically public schools exceed the recommended teacher-learner ratio of 1:30 meaning that they are overcrowded (Venketsamy, 2023). Overcrowded classes affect the ability of teachers to maintain discipline. These teachers spend more time disciplining these learners instead of teaching (Venketsamy, 2023; West & Meier, 2020). It can therefore be argued that overcrowded classes present teachers with more workload as there are more learners to work with.

Discipline issues like time-wasting and disorder have a detrimental effect on the ability of teachers to do their job especially in relation to curriculum or syllabus completion (Ncontsa & Shumba, 2013). Participant 11 asserted, *" You'd find that when you get into the class you spend about 10 to 15 minutes disciplining them, getting them to sit down on the chairs getting them to be settled and you spend another 10 minutes telling them to take out their books turn to page five and you spend another 10 minutes trying to make them listen asking for answers asking for their cooperation so it's a lot." Essentially, the time that you could have used for learning activities is wasted in disciplining learners thus leading to delays in syllabus completion.* Participant 3 added *" You will stand there for like 15 minutes trying to calm them down, trying to get them to listen. Not a lot of teaching and learning happens. That disrupts us and at the end of the day everyone expects a certain percentage that we have to produce."* Participant 7 when commenting about the effect of their bullying experiences stated, *"The only thing that has been affected so far is my job. Yes. Now in terms of syllabus, there is a syllabus to cover but unfortunately, I could not cover it and even the least I covered I realized that many students did not learn or understand as much as the rest they want to learn so at some point it affected even those who want to learn so my teaching I can say it was affected in terms of completing the syllabus".*

Disturbing classes is one of the common ways through which teachers are being bullied and this affects the ability of teachers to do their work thus delaying the process of teaching and learning. Participant 3 stated, *"As I've said I'm always behind that is because you will stand there for like 15 minutes trying to calm them down, trying to get them to listen". You are not supposed to kick them out because that is violating their right to education So I try to not kick them out, they will be in class making noise and I'll just have to teach while they're doing what they are doing. Sometimes what I do is I'll ask them to sit at the back so that the ones in front are the ones who want to listen. So, they delay the process, they delay it a lot".* Participant 1 stated that, *"Basically if you are not going to listen to my authority, I'm suddenly not going to teach you. Yeah. Do you understand me? Why am I wasting my time trying to teach you? So, why am I trying to teach you if you don't want to learn? We basically don't teach or adopt silent treatment, which obviously affects my job because I'm not doing my job. This will therefore affect the completion of the syllabus".*

Hoffmann (2015) noted that 70% of teachers are bullied when interacting with learners in the classroom in the process of teaching and learning. Learners turn out to be disrespectful, rebellious, and ill-disciplined thus affecting the teacher's ability to teach. As discussed in the previous theme on lack of resources (See pages 52-53), the teachers deal with learners with disruptive behaviour which make it difficult to maintain order or discipline thus leading to a loss of teaching time. Teachers are unable to complete what they have planned for their lessons as they use most of the time to ensure that there is order, and that the environment is suitable for effective teaching and learning (Ndebele, 2023).

4.4.4. Sub-theme: Changes in the relationship between learners and teachers

Ill-discipline in class, teachers' frustration and resentment, hostile interactions with learners and teachers' exposure to the bullying of teachers by learners can all lead to changes in the way teachers interact with learners. As noted in the quote above, Participant 1 stated that, *"Basically if you are not going to listen to my authority, I'm suddenly not going to teach you. Yeah. Do you understand me? Why am I wasting my time trying to teach you? So, why am I trying to teach you if you don't want to learn? We basically don't teach or adopt silent. treatment…".* Teachers are also more careful with their moves and are most likely to adopt different behaviours and approaches as a way to safeguard themselves and prevent further exposure to being bullied. In a study by De Wet (2010), teachers who are victims of TTBH tend to expect less from learners and are likely to ignore misconduct. This is similar to what was found in Santos and Jin's (2018) studies which showed that decreasing learner expectations was an effective way of dealing with educator-targeted bullying. Additionally, teachers' experiences of bullying may change their perspective and approach to life as well as their attitude (Tolentino, 2016). Participant 12 stated, *"I think my mindset in terms of children has changed. Children of these days are no longer children I thought were children. They are adults, so we treat them as adults (in as far) as (is) possible. I literally just don't feel for these learners. Those experiences have literally led to me not treating a learner as a child and I have no empathy because if you turn to have empathy towards them, they take advantage."* Participant 4 when asked about the impact of being bullied by learners stated that, *"…it made me a very aggressive teacher".* Participant 1 added that, *"It affects your personality and perspective. When they come you have that perspective that I no*

longer care about them. They may do whatever they like. You no longer care about what they do and even when it comes to schoolwork, whether they do the work or not, you tend to ignore".

Moreover, being bullied by a learner in class does not only affect the teacher and the perpetrator(s) but may affect every learner in the classroom where the bullying occurred. Participant 5 stated *"It affects the way you treat them as a class and then at the same time the way you do your work. You might get to class and then just because you are angry, write notes or maybe write homework. Then the following morning you will want your work back again. Then with you not having to have explained, there is a possibility that they will not give you the right answers".* This affects the quality of education for all learners. This is similar to what was found in a study conducted by Ozkilic and Kartal (2012) that focused on the influence of being bullied by learners, the results of the study showed that teachers who have been bullied by learners have less expectations of their learners and the profession. In the same way, in a study conducted by Pervin and Turner (1998) 15% of the teachers who have been bullied reported to have low expectations of their learners as well as their teaching career. The results further showed that the experiences of bullying led to an increase in stress levels and changes in how things are done in the classroom. It creates a toxic culture in the classroom thus creating an environment in which bullying flourishes (Ozkilic & Kartal, 2012). Another study that supports changes in the behaviour of teachers and the way things are done in the classroom was done by Koiv (2020). Koiv (2020) focused on assessing the nature, attitudes, and the effect of Teacher Targeted Bullying by students whereby 80% of the teachers who participated in the study stated that once they were bullied, the atmosphere in the classroom as well as their approach to teaching changed. These teachers were exposed to different types of bullying which include verbal abuse, ignoring teachers, physical abuse, damaging property, and cyberbullying, the latter which was an uncommon form of bullying those teachers experienced (Koiv, 2020). As a result, these experiences changed the way in which they approach and do their work. When this happens, the quality of education is affected, and it decreases thus negatively affecting the education system of the country. Furthermore, teachers who are victims of TTBH are usually angry and may take out their frustrations on innocent learners thus affecting the process of teaching and learning. It can be deduced from the discussion above that teachers who have been bullied by learners adopt a new approach in terms of how they see

learners, how they see the teaching profession and how they engage with all learners, even those who have not been the perpetrators. As discussed in the literature review, bullied teachers are likely to be frustrated by the bullying that they experience and take out their anger on innocent learners thus affecting the overall learning environment (De Wet & Jacobs, 2018; Ozkilic & Kartal, 2012).

4.4.4. Theme Conclusion: The effect of Teacher Targeted Bullying and Harassment on schools.

The findings of this study show that TTBH does not only affect its victims but may have a detrimental effect on the overall schooling system. Firstly, the motivation of teachers and productivity decreased after they have been bullied. Secondly, victims of TTBH were considering leaving schools where they are bullied or leave the teaching profession altogether. Thirdly, learners' indiscipline which is a form of TTBH negatively affected the completion of the syllabus which delayed the process of teaching and learning. Lastly, TTBH affects the culture teachers adopt and how they engage with learners. It creates a space where teachers do not feel safe or fulfilled which may further lead to teachers deciding to leave the profession. TTBH lead teachers to change their teaching methods and how they engage with learners as a way to prevent themselves from further exposure to bullying.

4.5. Theme Five: Coping mechanisms to deal with Teacher Targeted Bullying and Harassment by Learners (TTBH).

The discussion on the experiences of teachers of learner bullying highlighted that teachers were indeed victims of TTBH. As a result, the researcher was interested in exploring the coping strategies that the teachers employ to cope with bullying from learners. The researcher looked at the personal resources teachers use to cope, resources from the school, as well whether teachers have support systems outside the school that help them cope with the bullying. As a result, coping with TTBH emerged as the main theme. The transactional theory of coping states that the personal characteristics of an individual determine their cognitive appraisal. In this context, the teachers' beliefs and experiences of bullying determine their understanding of bullying and further determine how they respond to it (Kahn et al., 2012; Yoon et al., 2014). According to Aquino and Thau (2009), when exposed to bullying, an individual will either adopt a problem-focused or emotion-focused coping strategy. The coping strategy an individual

implements may either lead to an increased or decreased exposure to bullying experiences. The approach that teachers adopt to cope with bullying also depends on their characteristics. The coping mechanism that teachers adopted will be discussed below.

4.5.1. Sub-theme: Problem-focused coping

Problem-focused coping is a coping method that focuses on finding a solution to a problem. Problem-focused coping is a type of active coping that includes analysing what the problem is and coming up with the necessary solution to solve the problem (Dehue et al., 2012). Examples of problem-focused coping strategies include addressing bullying, revenge, and seeking support (Fahie & Devine, 2014). Being bullied at work is a form of social stress that victims of bullying deal with (Dehue et al., 2012). As a result, victims of bullying should find ways to cope with this phenomenon. Self-efficacy is an important personal characteristic that determines how an individual approaches a situation. Individuals with high levels of self-efficacy are likely to actively engage with bullies which is an example of problem-focused coping (Yoon et al., 2014).

Social support within the workplace has been identified as one way that could inhibit or mitigate the effects of bullying (Pyhalto et al., 2015). Social support consists of emotional support, intervention, feedback, and informational support (Nielsen et al., 2020). Individuals who have support at work feel less defenceless when faced with experiences of bullying in the workplace (Kauppi & Pauola, 2012). Social support from colleagues plays a vital role in minimising the negative effects of the bullying experience (Galand et al., 2007). According to Kauppi and Pauola (2012), two forms of social support may help victims of bullying to cope with the bullying. The first support is emotional support. Emotional support enhances their perceptions of themselves as acceptable. The second support is getting advice that could help them stop the bullying (Kauppi & Pauola, 2012). Teachers in this study depended on their colleagues to help them deal with the bullying they were experiencing. Participant 1 stated, *"So the way I cope with it is definitely with my colleagues"*. Participant 5 added that, *"... we deal with it as a group, as a collective, we support each other"*. Participant 11 further stated, *"I told a few teachers. I told them on the group chat and the support was there, especially the teachers that are close by. They will always give me advice, so the support was there"*.

Another form of problem-focused coping involves seeking help. Reporting incidents of bullying by teachers is one way of raising awareness about the occurrence of this phenomenon in schools. Furthermore, praying is a spiritual approach that individuals may use to cope when dealing with or exposed to violence (Maring & Koblingsky, 2013). Participant 8 stated, *"Okay, well, I'll say I pray about it mostly. Yeah, and (also) just reporting all those occurrences"*. Additionally, counselling is an example of problem-focused coping where an individual receives help using different methods to cope with bullying (Verasammy & Cooper, 2021). Participant 11 stated, *"We do have a counsellor, our church counsellor, I did counselling. I'm still doing it as well. So, whenever something's bothering me at school, especially the children, I go"*. Support from school management, that is supervisors and bosses is also a crucial external coping mechanism identified by the participants which will be discussed later. School management implements several methods to solve the bullying of teachers by learners which will thoroughly be discussed in the next theme. It is clear from the discussion above that participant in this study mainly relied on social support as a way to cope with their experiences of bullying. This is consistent with what is found in the literature (Bounds & Jenkins, 2016; De Wet, 2014; Kauppi & Pörhölä, 2012; Kõiv, 2020; Özkilic & Kartal, 2012; Pervin & Turner, 1998; Woudstra et al., 2018).

4.5.2. Sub-theme: Emotion-focused coping

As discussed in the literature review, an emotion-focused coping strategy is a coping method that focuses on lessening emotions in response to a problem (Karatuna, 2015; Vranjes et al., 2022). Emotion-focused coping is a type of passive coping approach whereby an individual finds an indirect way to deal with a problem. This coping strategy involves ignoring the problem, finding ways to distract oneself from the problem, and looking at other positive things related to the problem (Vranjes et al., 2022). Examples of other emotion-focused coping include drinking alcohol, substance abuse, and humour (Fahie & Devine, 2014). The adoption of passive coping may continue to expose an individual to continuous persistent bullying thus having negative implications on the well-being and health of the victim (Dehue et al., 2012). Individuals usually adopt emotion-focused coping when they feel that the problem, they are faced with is uncontrollable (Van den Brande et al., 2020). Emotion-focused coping is also

adopted when an individual is continuously faced with a situation that they have tried to solve before but were not successful.

As a result, how the teacher responds and copes with bullying is affected by the way the issues are addressed. However, the bullying they were exposed to persisted thus leading to the teacher adopting a different coping mechanism. Participant number 3 stated *"I've learned to sort of ignore things. Yeah. So now I don't have any strategy for addressing them. I just ignore them. Yeah. I'm just ignoring them and hoping it'll pass, but it doesn't".* Another participant who was physically bullied by a learner stated, *"I tend to brush off everything" (Participant number 1)*. The reason for this approach could be that regardless of reporting this phenomenon it continues and parents and the school are unable to stop it. As discussed in the literature review on page 24, research shows that individuals faced with bullying experiences turn to adopt a problem-focused coping strategy which involves directly finding ways to deal with the bullying. However, when this approach fails, and the bullying persists these individuals adopt an emotion-focused coping strategy (Johannsdottir & Ragnar, 2004). Similarly, participants who adopted the emotion-focused coping strategy in this study highlighted that regardless of the efforts they made to deal with the bullying, they continue to be victims of TTBH which led to them adopting the emotion-focused coping strategy.

The participants who adopted the emotion-focused or passive coping strategies highlighted that the bullying experiences they were faced with led to parents of the offenders being called in at school to address the issue. However, the involvement of parents in dealing with bullying was not helpful as a tool to mitigate this type of bullying. Participant 12 stated that *"...the child's parents were called, and the mother is experiencing the same thing as well at home. The mother said, "I'm also afraid of this child, so I don't know what to do".* Participant 3 added *"...but when we have parents' meetings, we can see that parents are not supportive. If there are a lot of complaints against the child, instead of trying to find a solution, what they will do is say, no I'm gonna take this child out of the school because I'm tired.* Participant 3 further added that *"...there are no consequences for what they do. Even when you report them, nothing happens".* The prohibition of corporal punishment could contribute to the persistence of TTBH since not much is done to discipline learners who bully teachers. These learners know that there is not much that teachers can do except report them and suspend them. The results of a study by

Bernstein and Trimm (2016) showed that adopting active coping mechanisms such as seeking help and assertiveness moderates the relationship between bullying and psychological well-being. Adopting passive coping mechanisms such as avoidance and doing nothing also moderated the relationship between psychological well-being and bullying in a contradictory manner in the sense that it increased the negative effects of bullying on psychological well-being (Berstein & Trimm, 2016). Consequently, it is evident that adopting active coping is the most successful and effective way of coping with bullying whereas passive coping may exacerbate exposure to bullying.

Furthermore, exposure to bullying may lead to an individual becoming aggressive as a way to prevent further exposure to bullying. However, as noted by Bernstein and Trimm (2016), who distinguish between assertiveness and aggression, this may further exacerbate bullying. Participant 9 stated *"When I came here, I was a different person. When you can compare these two people, they're totally different because back then I was calm, gentle, and understanding but now, I'm more aggressive and stricter."* It is evident that exposure to bullying has the potential to change its victims to become aggressive as a way to prevent further exposure to bullying.

4.5.3. Theme Conclusion: Coping mechanisms to deal with Teacher Targeted Bullying and Harassment by Learners (TTBH).

Teachers who are victims of TTBH have implemented both emotion-focused coping as well as problem-focused coping. Reliance on social support from colleagues was identified as one of the main resources that teachers use to deal with bullying. Few of the participants of the study adopted an emotion-focused coping strategy which was attributed to the persistence of this type of bullying that the participants believe that schools fail to mitigate.

4.6. Theme Six: Mitigating TTBH in South African Schools

South African schools like in other countries present teachers with harsh conditions of bullying from learners (Burns et al., 2020; Koiv & Aai-Utsal, 2021; Quao & Patterson, 2020). This theme will discuss efforts that have been made by the Department of Education and those implemented by management within schools to solve this type of bullying. It will further discuss what teachers have proposed as possible solutions to mitigate this type of bullying in South African schools.

4.6.1. Sub-theme: Efforts by the Gauteng Department of Education

Literature shows that the issue of the bullying of teachers also known as TTBH is of high concern (De Wet, 2006; De Wet, 2010; De Wet & Jacobs, 2018). According to the Department of Basic Education, efforts have been made to solve this phenomenon to ensure a safe environment for both learners and teachers. Among efforts made by the Department of Education, the national bullying prevention programme was implemented in April 2018 which was meant to be distributed to all public schools under the STOP, WALK, TALK slogan (DoBE, 2018). The DoBE partnered with Mindset to create anti-bullying television content for primary and high school learners to regulate school violence (DoBE, 2018). Furthermore, the DoBE also implemented the Multi-Sectoral School Safety Initiative which was launched in 2021. The initiative was also implemented to regulate school violence. Multiple departments took part in this initiative. This includes the Department of Health, Home Affairs, Sports, Arts and Culture, Justice and Constitutional Development, Communications and Digital Technologies, and the South African Police Services (DoBE, 2021). The initiative did not only look at bullying but had multiple objectives. This includes dealing with corporal punishment, teenage pregnancy, sexual harassment, substance abuse, and school-related Gender-Based Violence. The initiative had two aims. It aimed at changing the behaviour of parents, principals, Grade 10-12 learners, and School Governing Bodies as well as equip them with the necessary skills needed to effectively deal with and mitigate bullying in schools. This initiative was meant to start a journey in School Safety Roadshows which were anticipated to spread to different provinces in the country (DoBE, 2021). However, when teachers in the study were asked about this initiative, they did not seem to know about it. Participant 9 stated, *"I'm not aware. Educators are being bullied and nothing is done. No policy sides with educators in the court of law. The learners are always right regardless".* Based on the findings of this study, the Multi-Sectoral School Safety Initiative did not add value to the mitigation of learner-enacted bullying which is a form of school violence. Moreover, the Gauteng Department of Education and the Department of Social Development have implemented the National School Safety Framework (NSSF) (Department of Social Development, 2023). The NSSF serves to ensure that all stakeholders can identify and manage the risk of violence in schools. According to the NSSF, schools should be prepared to prevent any issues that could be related to safety in schools. Schools can do this by having a code of conduct and policies and constantly revising them to

ensure safety. Schools should also be conscious of what is happening within the school and should be ready to act and be able to offer support to both the victim and the perpetrator by getting them all the help that they need (Leoschut & Makota, 2016).

Furthermore, an article about addressing school bullying on the DoBE page highlighted that the government provides teachers with training on how to deal with bullying as well as spread preventative measures and ways they can support learners (DoBE, 2016). Yet, as mentioned, teachers in this study are unaware of this and have not been provided with the training. Additionally, teachers are expected to use school rules and anti-bullying policies to prevent bullying in schools. To the researcher's knowledge, no literature shows solutions or methods tailor-made to tackle the bullying of teachers by learners. To support this, a participant in a study by Makhasane and Majong (2023) on the challenges faced by SMTs in dealing with the bullying of teachers by learners stated that there is no specific policy designed to mitigate TTBH. The Department of Education mainly focuses on mitigating bullying in a general sense, especially the bullying of learners. Thus, the focus seems to be on protecting learners more than protecting teachers.

4.6.2 Sub-theme: Efforts made by School Management Teams (SMTs)

School Management Teams play a vital role in dealing with different types of bullying within the schooling environment. As expected by the Department of Education, SMTs should respond to bullying that happens on school grounds daily (DoBE, 2021). SMTs utilise safety policies, classroom rules and the learner's code of conduct to deal with this type of bullying (Makhasane & Majong, 2023). The participants of this study mentioned the use of suspension as a method that schools use to safeguard the bullying of teachers by learners. However, the participants in the study also highlighted that this method is not effective because learners take the suspension as a holiday and come back with unchanged behaviour which is why the same learners repeat the same behaviour. The school management teams also make efforts to include parents in dealing with bullying which is an essential tool that can be utilised to mitigate this type of bullying (Makhasane & Majong, 2023). Parental involvement in disciplining their children is one way that could minimise bullying. However, parents are usually not involved in disciplining their children. They put the responsibility on teachers (Sitoyi, 2020). Some of the parents of learners who bully teachers are also victims of being bullied by their children

meaning they cannot suggest any solutions since they also need help. The participants in this study stated that some of the parents do not cooperate with the school management and teachers in solving issues of learner-enacted bullying. Some parents are more focused on defending their children who perpetrate this type of bullying making it hard for the schools to find effective solutions. Participant 5 stated *"...They always defend their kids. And then there is this other parent who said that you have something against your child. What do you mean? We came here to teach. I don't even know that child because I teach 40, 45 kids in one class and then I reprimand this one tomorrow, today this, this one, and then the other day. So, if you have to tell me that I don't like your child, it's another thing".* Participant 5 continued to mention other efforts made by the school to deal with bullying. She stated, *"As a school, that's what we do on an assembly basis. We call them and then we try to talk to them. We show them the right way. But immediately after that, immediately before you even leave the stage at the assembly, somebody would have said something to you while you were trying to reprimand"*. Another participant added, *"We have some disciplinary hearings, which also doesn't work most of the time because you'll find that a learner will forever disrespect educators or bully them but will never be cleared out of the system. But then that's how the system is"* (Participant 9). One of the teachers, (Participant 3) stated *"...the only thing that we really have is you give them a letter so that they can bring their parents to school. Honestly, I feel like I do not have support from the school as well as the parents because we do call the parents in and when they come, instead of trying to find the solution with us, they will ask me what they must do. And the Department doesn't allow us to expel kids for those minor things. So, on the school side, there is some form of support but it's not consistent. The best they can do is if they've called a parent two times is to give them detention or some form of punishment where they stay back and help in the classes. But it doesn't help because you find that you have repeat offenders in each class. So, it doesn't necessarily solve the problem. I feel like if the school was consistent in supporting us, then there would be some sort of change"* (Participant 3). The participants highlighted that although the school management teams address TTBH, it persists within the school grounds thus implying that these methods used are not effective in stopping TTBH. It can be deduced from the discussion above that lack of parental involvement and inadequate policies to deal with TTBH leads to the failure of the attempts made by SMTs to mitigate TTBH.

4.6.3. Sub-theme: Teacher's recommendations

The participants were concerned about the persistence of this bullying and suggested a few methods they believe should be implemented in schools to stop TTBH. The discussions in the first theme have highlighted possible factors that teachers believe contribute to the behaviour of learners. These factors were thoroughly discussed on pages 56-63. These include family dynamics, lack of resources, as well as social and environmental factors. The participants in the study highlighted that learners are faced with challenges that contribute to their behaviour which further leads to Teacher Targeted Bullying and Harassment. As a result, the participants suggested that the Department of Education should allocate psychologists in different schools to ensure that the frustrations that learners have are dealt with without compromising the well-being of teachers. Participant 10 stated that *"... somebody should sit them down, maybe find out what is the cause of that. Maybe there's something behind their behaviour. Why they are so disruptive? What causes them to be disruptive? In schools, especially in government schools, we do need people like counsellors to be stationed at school full-time because I'm only a teacher but at times I become a counsellor".* Participant 12 also added that, *"Having a school-based psychologist may help a lot. For one instance, there was a learner whom we found out was acting in a certain way in class because they were a victim of rape at home and may not easily open up about such but because we had a psychologist present at school, the psychologist managed to speak to the learner and we're better able to understand the situation behind the learners behaviour and you also can teach a learner in a way that will not trigger things which may make them retaliate."* Participant 1 stated that, *"I suppose we need a better disciplinary committee so that if a learner misbehaves there is a procedure and all those things. And also, if we can deal with their mental health. So, it's no use punishing this learner, but you're not getting to the root of the problem either. So, it goes hand in hand, you know, interdisciplinary procedures, but you also need, you know...Maybe psychologically help to deal with those learners that just acted out of character because of other issues".* Participant 4 stated, *"I think if the schools are set to a workshop to ensure counselling especially make sure there's a counsellor available for teachers and not only for kids that's a main thing".*

Participant 9 stated, *"So my opinion is that the government has to revise some of the laws especially the rights that we give to these learners, or these kids, because they have more rights*

than us, you understand, which means they are having that dominance against us, because you cannot touch them, you cannot shout at them, like as a form of discipline, so that they see that what they are doing is wrong". Participant 8 supported this and commented that, *"Going back to the department because it's not something which can be done by the communities in which we are located. It has to start from the top and the implementation of the laws. The department must set laws in place to ensure that teachers are safe because we have few resources to protect us. We are restricted in terms of discipline so the department can revise the laws regarding discipline because currently our hands are tied. We can't do nothing. The only thing that can be done is suspension. So, they will come back after, well, they take suspension as a holiday. They have more rights than us. They know they have rights. They know they sort of have power. They know. They are taking advantage of that. I mean if you are not going to get punished or whatever, you'll just do what you want. Because you know there are no repercussions".* Participant 5 also added, *"So, it's a problem because even the Department of Education. They do not have the right way to discipline these kids".* Participant 3 stated, *"A stronger support system for disciplining the kids. So that they don't repeat the bullying behaviour that they do in class. If we had a very strong discipline process in place, I feel like things would be fine".* Teachers in this study highlighted that the DoBE does not protect teachers from being victims of bullying. The DoBE/GDE is effective in investing in how to stop bullying amongst learners while ignoring cases where teachers are being bullied by some of the learners. They also highlighted that the bullying behaviour of learners could stem from the everyday challenges that they face. As a result, psychologists will be useful in helping learners deal with their issues and behave in an acceptable manner.

4.6.4. Theme Conclusion: Mitigating TTBH in South African schools

Teacher Targeted Bullying and Harassment by learners (TTBH) continues to be an issue in South African schools thus compromising the well-being of teachers as well as the process of teaching and learning in schools. This phenomenon continues in different schools regardless of the efforts made by the DoBE/GDE and school management. The participants of the study highlighted that the Department of Basic Education is not making enough efforts to prevent the bullying of teachers. It thus seems likely that despite all the interventions proposed by the DoBE as seen on its page. Programs like the Multi-Sectoral School Safety Initiative, the

National School Safety Framework and the STOP, WALK, TALK bullying prevention program were implemented as means to mitigate violence or bullying in schools. Furthermore, many of the DoBE/ GDE policies seem more concerned about learners being bullied with less emphasis on teachers being protected from learner bullying. For example, the implementation of anti-bully laws within the code of conduct of learners and school safety rules focuses more on how to make schools a safe environment for learners.

Moreover, the occurrence of TTBH within South African schools exposes social issues in South African communities. As mentioned above, learners are faced with multiple issues and are therefore in need of psychological intervention in the form of psychologists and counsellors. The interventions in terms of improving school disciplinary policies were also suggested since efforts made by school management teams are not effective. The participants believe that the department has the power and ability to mitigate this type of bullying and ensure that teachers are protected, yet the implementation of teacher protection seems to not be something that is being appropriately applied in practice.

Chapter 5: Contributions, Recommendations, Practical Implications, and Limitations

This chapter thoroughly discusses the contribution of the study and the implications of the themes identified in the previous chapter. It further discusses the limitations of the study and recommendations for future research.

5.1. Contributions

This study focused on exploring the personal experiences of teachers who have been bullied by learners also known as TTBH. It contributes to research on workplace bullying that looks at a specific type of bullying within schools. The study utilised the Job-Demands Resources Model to explore and understand the demands teachers are faced with as well as the impact of the lack of school resources on the teacher's ability to do their job. The JDR model in the study was also used to explain the impact that the lack of resources from the learners' private lives may have on TTBH. Furthermore, the study thoroughly discussed other possible factors that would have led learners to bully them. It utilised the Social Learning Theory as well as Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory to explain why learners bully teachers. Social conditions like crime, the use of drugs, and family dynamics were identified as reasons learners adopt disruptive behaviour toward their teachers. The findings of the study highlighted that teachers are faced with high demands. These include administrative work, changes in curriculum and dealing with disruptive behaviour from learners. TTBH is an additional demand that teachers are faced with which stems from many socio-economic factors. The findings also showed that there are schools with a lack of resources which further affect the process of teaching and learning. Although many teachers highlighted that they were supported by their colleagues, some teachers did not have the social support they needed to cope with the bullying that they were exposed to. Furthermore, the study used the JDR model in conjunction with the Frustration Aggression theory to explain the phenomena where teachers stand a chance of being bullied due to frustrations experienced by learners from poorly resourced homes. This study contributes to research about the causes of teacher-directed bullying. The findings of this study showed that the bullying experiences that teachers encounter have a negative effect on the productivity of teachers thus compromising the quality of teaching and learning. Increased intention to leave the teaching profession was identified as one of the consequences of the type

of bullying that the teachers in the study were exposed to. Social support from colleagues was highlighted as a tool or job resource that teachers utilised to deal with the challenges, they face on a daily basis especially the one of TTBH. Social support was utilised passively and actively. Those who used social support actively used it to come up with ways to deal with the bullying whereas some of the participants used social support as a way to share their experiences without necessarily finding solutions to the problem they were faced with.

5.2. Recommendations and Practical Implications

This study has highlighted that TTBH compromises the quality of education within South African schools. The government needs to come up with effective ways to mitigate the bullying of teachers by learners to rescue and preserve the quality of the South African education system. The participants of the study recommended strategies that should be implemented to mitigate teacher bullying in South African schools. The participants stated that they do not feel protected, and their needs are not catered for. As a result, the DoBE/GDE should consider introducing policies that will protect teachers as well as suggest effective ways that teachers can utilise to prevent TTBH and effective disciplinary measures to deal with this type of bullying. Furthermore, teachers stated that learners are faced with many challenging circumstances that lead them to behave the way they do. Teachers suggested psychological intervention through the provision of psychologists on a full-time basis. This will create a safe space in which learners can speak about their problems and get the necessary help that they need. Psychologists will help learners deal with the challenges they encounter and prevent these learners from projecting their frustrations onto their teachers. Moreover, the Department of Basic Education should offer the necessary resources and support to SMTs. More support for these teams can add value in ensuring that the policies put in place by the Department of Basic Education protect SMTs and offer the necessary resources to mitigate TTBH. Furthermore, the participants also mentioned that they do not have support outside the schooling environment, especially parents. Parental involvement and the involvement of the general community may be useful in mitigating TTBH to ensure that teachers are safe thus leading to highly performing teachers and quality education.

5.3. Future Research Recommendations

Future research should use a quantitative method to fully explore teachers' experiences of being bullied by learners. The use of a quantitative method will allow the researcher to investigate a much bigger sample with different characteristics. This could include well-resourced and poorly resourced schools. It could further compare the teacher's frequency of being bullied and the type of bullying they are exposed to in different schools. Future research could also use a longitudinal study which will allow the researchers to trace the effectiveness of the strategies which were suggested by the participants of the present study. Furthermore, the research could also consider investigating additional reasons why learners bully their teachers which could further reveal additional causes of this behaviour that were not discussed in the present study.

5.4. Limitations

The data was collected using a qualitative method which allowed the researcher to have a precise understanding of the lived experiences of teachers who have been bullied. The sample of the study consisted of 12 participants (9 females and 3 males). Eight participants identified as black (n=8), and four participants identified as coloured (n=4). All the participants who were interviewed teach in quantile 4 schools. As a result, the findings are only applicable to this sample. Schools from other quintiles in particular lower quintile schools may have different experiences of learner behaviour and therefore the findings are likely to only be applicable to quintile 4 schools. Furthermore, the sample size of the study was small, therefore, the results of this study cannot be generalised to all South African schools. The study was self-reported, as a result, participants are likely to have responded in a way that they think is desirable to the researcher. The researcher observed the facial expressions of the participants during the interview. The interpretation of these expressions may be biased to what the researcher is hoping to observe to meet their research requirements. Additionally, although the face-to-face nature of the interviews was essential to allow the researcher to read and understand the participants' emotions, it could have also affected the credibility or accuracy of the information from the participants since participants are most likely to respond in a way that they think the researcher expects them to. The values and beliefs of the researcher could have affected how the researcher interprets the data. Although the researcher was very self-aware and used a self-

reflexive journal to ensure that the data did not get contaminated, it is possible that some bias on the researcher's behalf could have unconsciously crept in.

5.5. Conclusion

Teacher-Targeted Bullying and Harassment by Learners is as an ongoing issue in South African schools. This study discussed the negative effect of TTBH on the quality of education and the well-being of teachers. The JD-R model was utilised to discuss factors that contribute to TTBH with some discussion of other models namely Frustration-Aggression Hypothesis, Social Learning Theory, Job Demands Control and Support Model, and Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory where relevant for usage to supplement the main theoretical framework. The findings of the study highlight that teachers are faced with extensive work demands and inadequate resources which create an environment within which TTBH can flourish. Furthermore, learners from poorly resourced homes take out their frustrations on teachers thus exposing them to TTBH. The study supports existing literature on the negative effect of TTBH on the motivation, productivity, and well-being of teachers thus highlighting the importance of finding ways to mitigate this type of bullying. Teachers in this study were used as sources of information in understanding why learners engage in TTBH. As a result, future research can consider involving perpetrators of this bullying to get detailed information on the underlying factors behind this kind of bullying. This can be useful to identify additional factors that could be promoting this kind of behaviour. This study further advocates the importance of mitigating the bullying behaviour from learners by dealing with all the possible factors that could be promoting or leading to this kind of behaviour from learners. It suggests that the Department of Education should revise its disciplinary procedures for dealing with TTBH and it recommends the intervention of psychologists and counsellors within schools to mitigate bullying behaviours from learners.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Interview Schedule

Establishing Rapport and making the Interviewee comfortable:

On the day of the interview, the researcher will introduce herself and once again explain what the study is about. The researcher will do this clearly and calmly to create a comfortable space for the participants. The participants will be given consent forms that they will be expected to fill in before the interview starts. The researcher will instruct the participants to read the PIS once again and then fill in the consent form. Before the interview starts, the interviewer will state that participation in the study is voluntary and that there will not be any advantages or disadvantages in choosing to participate in this study. The researcher will explain that confidentiality in the study will be assured. Confidentiality will be assured in two ways. Firstly, the interviewer will keep the audio recordings and the transcripts of the study in storage on a password-protected computer and will only be accessed by the interviewer and the supervisor of the study. Secondly, the researcher will explain that pseudonyms will be used in place of the real names of educators in all written reports including the transcripts. No identifying information, such as the name of the school the teacher works at, or the real names of teachers will be mentioned. In addition, all the interview data (audio recordings and transcripts) will be safely stored away in a secure password-protected computer in the research supervisor's office, that only the supervisor and researcher will have access to. Any hard copies of any interview data will be stored away in a locked cupboard in the supervisor's office. The researcher will explain that given the face-to-face nature of the interviews, anonymity will not be ensured as the interviewer will 'see' the interviewee. However, in terms of writing up of the research report and the way in which the data is stored and protected both anonymity and confidentiality will be ensured through the use of pseudonyms. The researcher will explain that the participants are free to not answer any question that they are not comfortable to an answer. Once the consent form is signed, the researcher will start the recording.

If the interview is online the researcher will offer the same assurances to the interviewee in terms of protecting their anonymity and confidentiality. Further, the researcher will tell the interviewee that if they don't want to answer any questions and if they want to end the interview

at any time, they are free to do so without any penalty. Once this initial introduction has been offered along with assurances and signing of forms the interview with the questions below will commence. The interview schedule is divided up into sections where various questions will be asked and probed.

Aim: Interviewees understanding of their job, the resources and demands presented by their job.

1. What is expected from you as a teacher?
2. How do you feel about the workload and demands that comes with being a teacher?

Aim: Interviewees understanding of what workplace bullying is.

3. What is your understanding of being bullied at work?
4. Have you been bullied by a learner? If yes, what was your experience of being bullied (how/ what did he / she / they do). (In this section there will be significant probing and elaboration)****

Aim: The impact of bullying on the participants and how this affected their job.****

5. How did you feel after being bullied by a learner?
6. How did it affect you?
7. What was the physical, psychological, and social effect of this bullying?
8. What was the effect on your ability to do your job?
9. How did being bullied make you feel about yourself in relation to other teachers? Did they know you were bullied? How did that make you feel? Were they supportive or not?
10. Did being bullied have an impact on your life outside of school (home/family life).
11. How did being bullied by learners make you feel about wanting to stay in your job?

Aim: Coping with the bullying experience and resources available*****

12. How did you personally cope with being bullied by learners?

13. What resources were available to you to cope with the bullying (probe personal and school resources)
14. Did the school assist you to cope with the bullying? (probe formal help structures colleague supervisor support)
15. If yes, what did the school do about it?
16. Did you have any support structures outside of the school? Probe into the responses. (Friends family therapy, pastor etc)

Aim: Perceived reasons why participants think the bullies targeted them

17.Why do you think you were bullied? (I didn't ask the participants this question)

18. Do you think your demographic characteristics (age, race and gender) are the reason you were a target of bullying?

19. Do you think it was something about the learners that made them bully you? **(Try to fish out socio economic problems)**

20.Do you think it is something about the school environment or society in general that leads to teachers being bullied by learners in schools?

Aim: Participants understanding why bullying happens in their school and what can be done about it.

21. Why does bullying by learners of teachers occur in your school?

22. Do you think learners have adequate resources in their lives and resources to learn? If no, do you think this contributes to how they interact with their teachers?

23. What do you think is the effect of the bullying of teachers by learners for your school?

24. Are you aware of the Multi-Sectoral School Safety Initiative implemented by the GDE in 2021? If yes, what changes have you seen in terms of bullying specifically the bullying of teachers by learners?

25. What do you think the school and the Department of Education are doing to alleviate or mitigate the bullying of teachers by learners?

26. What do you think should be done to STOP the bullying of teachers by learners in general across schools within SA?

Appendix B: Consent Form

SCHOOL OF HUMAN & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

UNIVERSITY OF THE WITWATERSRAND

Private Bag 3, WITS, 2050

Tel: (011) 717 4500 Fax: (011) 717 4559

Title of project: Qualitative Exploration of Teachers' Experiences of Bullying by Learners- A Job Demands Perspective

Name of Researcher: Petunia Masoka

I,……..….agree to participate in this study.

I hereby confirm that:

(Please **TICK** the relevant response below)

I have been briefed on the research that Petunia Masoka and Professor Colleen Bernstein are conducting on workplace bullying amongst teachers in Gauteng

□ YES □ NO

I understand what participation in this study entails

□YES □ NO

I understand that I am volunteering to participate in the study and that there is no penalty for withdrawing or refusing to participate

□YES □ NO

I understand that the interview will be audio recorded

□YES □ NO

I understand that I can refrain from answering any question I am not comfortable with and there is no penalty for refusing to address these questions

□ YES □ NO

I understand that at any point in time during the interview I can choose to end the interview if I wish to do so and that there will be no penalty for doing so

□ YES □ NO

I understand that any information that I share will be held in the strictest confidence by the researcher and the supervisor.

I understand that no identifying information for example my name or the school that I work for will be recorded on the interview transcription

□ YES □ NO

I understand that the findings of this research may be used in academic publications and conference proceedings but that my identity will be completely sanitized and nowhere will my name of any other identifying information be revealed

□ YES □ NO

I understand that if I agree to participate that I need to sign this form as proof of my acceptance

□ YES □ NO

I understand the conditions and accept to participate in this study voluntarily

□ YES □ NO

Optional clauses:

□ I hereby consent to being audio recorded

□ I hereby request a copy of the research report

Participant:

Signed by _____ on_____ at _____

Signature _____

Researcher:

Signed by _____ on_____ at _____

Signature _____

Appendix C: PIS for Teachers

SCHOOL OF HUMAN & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

UNIVERSITY OF THE WITWATERSRAND

Private Bag 3, WITS, 2050

Tel: (011) 717 4500 Fax: (011) 717 4559

Dear Sir / Madam

Invitation for your participation in a research project!

My name is Petunia Masoka, and I am presently completing my Master's degree in Industrial/Organisational Psychology at the University of the Witwatersrand under the supervision of Dr Colleen Bernstein. As part of the requirements for my degree, my area of research is designed to explore teacher's perceptions and experiences of Teacher Targeted Bullying and Harassment by learners (TTBH). It will use the Job Demands Resources model to investigate how demands and resources within schools may foster TTBH. Thus, if you are a teacher in Gauteng that has experienced workplace bullying from learners, I would like to invite you to please participate in my study.

Participation in this study would involve an interview that should take approximately one hour to complete. Please note that participating in the interview process is completely voluntary and you will not be advantaged or disadvantaged in any way for choosing or not choosing to partake in the interview. Due to the face-to-face nature of the interview, anonymity cannot be guaranteed. However, in terms of writing up of the research report and the way in which the data is stored and protected both anonymity and confidentiality can be ensured. While questions will be asked about your personal circumstances and quotes will be used in the write up of the report, no identifying information, such as your name or the name of your school will be mentioned. Pseudonyms will be used in place of your name and the name of the school in

all written reports including the transcripts. In this regard, all identifying information will be completely sanitised and removed once your recordings are transcribed. Additionally, all electronic interview data (audio recordings and transcripts) will be safely stored away in a secure password-protected computer that only the supervisor and researcher will have access to. Any hard copies of any interview data will also be safely stored away in a locked cupboard in the supervisor's office. Further to all of the above, if participants do not wish to meet face to face and would like to do an interview 'online', this too can be arranged through mediums such as Teams or Zoom. Again, recordings of such interviews will be kept in password protected computers that only the researcher and supervisor have access to.

The interview will take place at a time and venue most suitable for you. If it suits you better interviews can be conducted online via Teams or Zoom. Your informed consent to participate in this study will be obtained by the completion of signed consent forms. You will however, be able to withdraw from the interview at any point and will not be forced to answer any questions that you do not wish to answer. Should you wish to have a copy of the findings before the submission of the report to the University, it will be made available upon request. It is important to note that these findings will be reported under general themes and therefore will not enable the identification of your individual response.

It must be emphasised that your wellbeing is of utmost importance. Therefore, while no harm is expected to be experienced by any teacher that volunteers to complete the interview, should you feel that you need counselling after participating in the study, counselling will be arranged free of charge. This counselling will be provided through the Emthonjeni Centre at the University of the Witwatersrand. Please contact the supervisor or researcher should you need any contact details and/or further information regarding the research. The contact number of Paballo Lepota at the Emthonjeni Centre is 011 7174513 if you feel the need for counselling. The researchers contact details are listed below

Please note that responses obtained from the interview will not be used for any purposes, other than academic research. Volunteering to participate in this study would be greatly appreciated as it will contribute to a larger body of knowledge on demands, resources, workplace bullying, burnout and work engagement within the schooling context. Additionally, the findings of this

research study could assist in the long term by encouraging government institutions to improve environmental conditions within schools and thereby protect teachers like yourself, from workplace bullying and its negative outcomes.

The research study is an independent study, which will be conducted under the supervision of an Industrial Psychologist at Wits University.

If you wish to be interviewed, please contact the researchers at the contact details below and an interview time will be set up at a time and place convenient to you.

Kind Regards
Petunia Masoka

Masters Student: Petunia Masoka
Email: 1924306@students.wits.ac.za
Cell Phone: 0725816777

Supervisor: Colleen Bernstein
Colleen.Bernstein@wits.ac.za
Office Phone 011 7174538

Paballo Lepota 011 7174513
HREC number: H18/06/07

Appendix D: Access Letter to School/ PIS for the Principal

SCHOOL OF HUMAN & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

UNIVERSITY OF THE WITWATERSRAND

Private Bag 3, WITS, 2050

Tel: (011) 717 4500 Fax: (011) 717 4559

Dear Sir / Madam

My name is Petunia Masoka, and I am presently completing my Master's degree in industrial/Organisational Psychology at the University of the Witwatersrand. As part of the requirements for my degree, my area of research is designed to explore teachers perceptions and experiences of Teacher Targeted Bullying and Harassment by learners (TTBH). It will use the Job Demands Resources model to investigate how demands and resources within schools may foster TTBH. To carry out this research project, I would like to invite the teachers at your school to participate in this study, which will involve an interview with educators who volunteer to be part of the study. The interview should take approximately one hour to complete. The interviews can be conducted face to face or online via Teams or Zoom depending on what suits the teachers. The interview will take place at a time and venue suitable for the teacher. Hard copies of a Participant Information Sheet, which details the study, will be printed, and provided to all teachers in the school.

<u>Please note the following regarding the individual interview</u>

Participating in the interview process is completely voluntary and teachers will not be advantaged or disadvantaged in any way for choosing or not choosing to partake in the

interview. Due to the face-to-face nature of the interview the interviewer will explain that anonymity will not be ensured as the interviewer will 'see' the interviewee. However, in terms of writing up of the research report and the way in which the data is stored and protected both anonymity and confidentiality can be ensured.

While questions will be asked about teacher's personal circumstances and quotes will be used in the write up of the report, no identifying information, such as the name of the school the teacher works at or the real names of teachers will be mentioned. Pseudonyms will be used in place of the real names of educators in all written reports including the transcripts. In addition, all the interview data (audio recordings and transcripts) will be safely stored away in a secure password-protected computer in the research supervisor's office, that only the supervisor and researcher will have access to. Any hard copies of any interview data will be stored away in a locked cupboard in the supervisor's office. Further to all of the above, if participants do not wish to meet face to face and would like to do an interview 'online', this too can be arranged through mediums such as Teams or Zoom. Again, recordings of such interviews will be kept in password protected computers that only the researcher and supervisor have access to. Informed consent will also be obtained by the completion of signed consent forms. Teachers will be able to withdraw from the interview at any point and will not be forced to answer any questions that they do not wish to answer. Findings for the interview will be reported under general themes therefore not enabling the identification of any single teacher's response. The school will receive a copy of the findings of the report obtained upon request. Should any teacher wish to receive feedback this will also be made available upon request.

It must be emphasised that the wellbeing of all teachers who volunteer to partake in the study is of utmost importance. Therefore, while no harm is expected to be experienced by any teacher that volunteers to partake in the interview, should any teacher feel that they may need counselling after participating in the study, counselling will be arranged free of charge. This counselling will be provided through the Emthonjeni Centre at the University of the Witwatersrand. Please contact the supervisor or researcher should you need any contact details and/or further information regarding the research. The contact number of Paballo Lepota at the Emthonjeni Centre is 011 7174513, if you feel the need for more information

regarding the counselling that will be provided. The researchers contact details are listed below.

Further, it must be emphasised that responses from the interviews will not be used for any purposes, other than academic research, journals, and conference proceedings. Allowing teachers at your school to be invited to participate in this study would be greatly appreciated. This research will contribute to a larger body of knowledge on the bullying of teachers by learners within schools.

Additionally, the findings of this research study could assist in the long term by encouraging government institutions to improve environmental conditions within schools and thereby protect educators from environments in which workplace bullying by learners and its negative outcomes are induced. The research study is an independent study, which will be conducted under the supervision of an Industrial Psychologist at Wits University

Please note that data collection will only commence once two conditions are met. Firstly, data collection will only commence once the University of the Witwatersrand Ethics Committee provides ethics clearance for the study and secondly once the Gauteng Department of Education allows us to access your school. Note that the GDE will only allow us access if you as the principal are willing to agree to the project. Your response to this letter is therefore to be used as an indication to the GDE of your willingness to allow us access to the teaches at your respective school. It is also important to note that while the GDE grants the permission to conduct the study, information on findings from any single school will not be provided to the GDE. A number of schools will be involved in the project so only general overall findings will be presented in the final report.

Please do formally respond to this letter (on a school letterhead) indicating your willingness or not, to grant the researcher access into your school. Please contact the me or my supervisor should you have any questions.

Kind Regards

Masters Student: Petunia Masoka
Email: 1924306@students.wits.ac.za

Supervisor: Colleen Bernstein
Colleen.Bernstein@wits.ac.za

Cell Phone: 0725816777 Office Phone 011 7174538

Paballo Lepota 011 7174513

HREC number: H18/06/07

Appendix E: GDE Approval

GAUTENG PROVINCE
Department: Education
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

8/4/4/1/2

GDE RESEARCH APPROVAL LETTER

Date:	**25 July 2023**
Validity of Research Approval:	**08 February 2023– 30 September 2023** **2023/270**
Name of Researcher:	**Masoka PN**
Address of Researcher:	**ZP80 Brazzaville**
	Atteridgeville
Telephone Number:	**0725816777**
Email address:	**1924306@students.wits.ac.za**
Research Topic:	**A Qualitative Exploration of Teacher's Experiences of Bullying by Learners- A Job Demands Resources Perspective.**
Name of University:	**Wits**
Type of qualification	**Masters**
Number and type of schools:	**4 Primary Schools, 1 Secondary, 2 LSEN**
District/s/HO	**Johannesburg South, Johannesburg Central**

Re: Approval in Respect of Request to Conduct Research

This letter serves to indicate that approval is hereby granted to the above-mentioned researcher to proceed with research in respect of the study indicated above. The onus rests with the researcher to negotiate appropriate and relevant time schedules with the school/s and/or offices involved to conduct the research. A separate copy of this letter must be presented to both the School (both Principal and SGB) and the District/Head Office Senior Manager confirming that permission has been granted for the research to be conducted.

25/07/2023

The following conditions apply to GDE research. The researcher may proceed with the above study subject to the conditions listed below being met. Approval may be withdrawn should any of the conditions listed below be flouted:

Making education a societal priority

Office of the Director: Education Research and Knowledge Management
7th Floor, 17 Simmonds Street, Johannesburg, 2001
Tel: (011) 355 0488
Email: Faith.Tshabalala@gauteng.gov.za
Website: www.education.gpg.gov.za

Appendix F: Ethics approval

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/23/06**
PROJECT TITLE:	Qualitative Exploration of Teachers' Experiences of bullying by Learners- A Job Demands Resources Perspective.
INVESTIGATOR	Masoka Petunia (1924306)
SCHOOL/DEPARTMENT OF INVESTIGATOR	SHCD/Psychology
DATE CONSIDERED	14 June 2023
DECISION OF THE COMMITTEE	Conditionally Approved **Conditional Clearance: Data collection cannot commence until the permission letter is submitted to the school/dept HREC Non-Medical Committee**
RISK LEVEL	Low Risk
EXPIRY DATE	31 December 2025
ISSUE DATE OF CERTIFICATE 05 July 2023	**CHAIRPERSON** _____ (Dr Aline Ferreira Correia)

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

_____ 06 / 07 / 2023

Signature **Date**

PLEASE QUOTE THE PROTOCOL NUMBER ON ALL ENQUIRIES