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THE IMPACT OF WORKPLACE BULLYING ON INDIVIDUAL AND ORGANISATIONAL WELL-BEING IN A SOUTH AFRICAN CONTEXT AND THE ROLE OF COPING AS A MODERATOR IN THE BULLYING – WELL-BEING RELATIONSHIP

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Dissertation submitted to the

School of Human and Community Development,

University of the Witwatersrand, for the degree of Master of Arts

February 2010

DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this dissertation is my own unaided work. I have not submitted it for the degree of Master of Arts to any other university.

_____

L. Upton

“You can kill a person once, but,
when you humiliate him/her,
you kill him/her many times over”
~ The Talmud

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I'd like to give my heart-felt thanks to my supervisor Colleen Bernstein
for allowing me to spread my wings during this study, and
for her constructive advice and guidance.

I lovingly thank my family
for their endless encouragement and support
throughout my years of study.

I thank my fiancé for his selfless patience
and understanding during the many hours spent
working on the present study.

I would like to gratefully thank the organisation
that participated in the present study and
for those that made the research possible.

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CHAPTER ONE
INTRODUCTION

A general concern in the workplace is not only how management manages, but also what goes on when colleagues choose to turn their heads. Previous research has looked at such undisclosed behaviour as sexual harassment, emotional and physical abuse, and workplace aggression, the psychological impact of these behaviours on the individual, as well as the organisational cost implications (Cox, 1978; Hoel, Sparks and Cooper, 2002; Turney, 2003; Einarsen, Hoel, Zapf and Cooper, 2003; Matthiesen and Einarsen, 2004; Hoel and Faragher, 2004; Penney and Spector, 2005; Steinman, n.d.a). Workplace bullying is a particular form of aggression where direct or indirect acts lead an employee to being systematically subjected to acts involving degrading and disrespectful treatment due to serious personal differences between employees (Einarsen, Hoel and Nielsen, 2005).

There are many possible factors that could lead an individual to experience bullying within their work environment. These pertain to organisational factors that foster bullying, perpetrator's personality characteristics and individual personality characteristics of the victim. Much of the recent research has focused on the distinguishing features that define a 'bully', as well as trying to determine the characteristic traits of the victim. This has lead to unnecessary stereotypes (Bowie, Fisher and Cooper, 2005), thus not every individual may perceive their negative experiences as bullying but rather prefer to label the actions differently in order to cope.

Certain aspects of a person have been considered in order to assist researchers in determining the characteristics that define the bully, such as an individual's age, gender (Olafsson and Johannsdottir, 2004) and his/her mental status (Goldman, 2006). Research indicates that a child belonging to an aggressive family is a central indicator that the child is likely to exhibit aggressive behaviour (Radke-Yarrow and Kochanska, 1990). As will be discussed, aggression is a fundamental trait in a bully (Einarsen, 1999), thus

aggressive children are likely to be a bully in the schoolyard playing field as well as to carry this behaviour with them through life to become the workplace bully themselves (Smith, Singer, Hoel and Cooper, 2003; as cited in Branch, Ramsay and Barker, 2008).

Bullying at work is claimed to be an extreme form of social stress. It is referred to as a more crippling and devastating problem for employees than all other work-related stressors put together (Matthiesen *et al*., 2004). Coping may be seen as a moderator of the impact of the negative behaviour, thus it is necessary to consider the coping strategies victims are likely to employ when faced with a bullying situation. However, coping styles are person-specific, according to their social norms and may vary the impact on the individual during the bullying process (Cox, 1978).

As discussed, bullying is a severe form of stress that can be moderated by coping. Before going on to discuss the literature on bullying, this study will first examine and explore the literature on stress and coping, and the definitions thereof.

TOWARDS A DEFINITION OF STRESS

Stress can be viewed as a change in an individual's natural equilibrium state (Cox, 1978; Payne, Jones and Harris, 2002). This can lead to personal strain. According to the Concise Oxford Dictionary (as cited in Cox, 1978, pp. 4-5), *strain* can be defined as "the effort needed to meet change", and *distress* is defined as "severe pressure of pain, or sorrow and anguish, or breathlessness". Thus, stress can have negative effects on a person's body which may in turn, spill over into their work environment (Fujishiro and Heaney, 2009).

The physiological response to stress as explained by Selye (1956; as cited in Cox, 1978, p. 5) sees the response to stress as "a representation of a defence reaction to protect the individual"; therefore the response does not depend on the nature of the stressor or the source of the stress. Selye (1956; as cited in Cox, 1978) believed that the defence reaction progress can be illustrated by

three distinct stages: (i) alarm reaction, (ii) resistance and (iii) exhaustion. The three stages can be demonstrated as follows, where the first stage is characterised by an individual's typical response to a stressor. The individual's body changes to illustrate an increase in resistance and shock, followed by countershock. Stage two is characterised by a person's adaptation to the stressor. The bodily changes that occurred in stage one tend to disappear and resistance rises above normal. The final stage refers to an individual's long-term exposure to a stressor and as a consequence the individual has adapted to this stressor. However, in stage three the stressor begins to dissipate. That is, the individual has run out of the necessary energy to adapt to the stressor. This may cause the reactions of stage one to reappear. Selye (1956; as cited in Cox, 1978) described this process as the *General Adaption Syndrome*.

According to Cox (1978) and Kiecolt-Glaser, McGuire, Robles and Glaser (2002), individuals experience stress differently thus not every situation may be considered stressful. What one person perceives to be a tolerable situation, another person may not; that is, the situation may be *perceived* of as stressful, differentially. Researchers describe stress as a dependent variable where stress is a reflection of a person's response to the distressing environment and/or behaviour, i.e. the person is or has been under pressure from the disturbing environment (Cox, 1978; Einarsen, 1999). Stress can also be considered as an independent variable where the stressor is considered as a stimulator of the disturbing environment and/or behaviour (Cox, 1978). For the purpose of this study, stress was considered as an independent variable and strain as the outcome variable, i.e. a *lack of fit* between the person and his environment. The word 'environment' refers to an individual's internal (psychological) and external (physiological) environment where stress may impact on both of these (Cox, 1978).

Stimulus-based definitions of stress consider external stressors that give rise to a stress reaction, or strain within the individual, psychologically (Cox, 1978). This term considers what stimuli causes the stress, however, the stimulus-based definition also needs to define what conditions can be considered as

stressful. Weitz (1970; as cited in Cox, 1978) attempted to classify different types of situations that may be considered as stressful. He described eight stress-provoking situations: speed information processing, toxic environmental stimuli, perceived threat, disrupted physiological functioning (as a result of disease, drugs, and sleep loss, etc), isolation, blocking, group pressure and frustration, while Lazarus (1993) considers a perceived threat as a central characteristic of a stressful situation. As will be discussed, most of these can be considered as characteristics of bullying behaviour and/or acts.

In this regard, stress can also be defined as "a threat to the quality of life, and to the physical and psychological well-being of an individual" (Cox, 1978, p. 25). Furthermore, according to Cox (1978), stress is a perceptual experience arising from a comparison between the demand on the person and their ability to cope. Stress may be said to arise when there is a discrepancy between the person's perceived demand and their perceptual capability to meet that demand. If coping is ineffective, stress is then prolonged and as a result possible damaging responses may occur (Cox, 1978).

TOWARDS A DEFINITION OF COPING

Coping is defined as "ongoing cognitive and behavioural efforts to manage specific external and/or internal demands that are considered as taxing or exceeding the resources of the person" (Lazarus, 1993, p. 237). Therefore coping can best be considered by Lazarus (1976; as cited in Cox, 1978) as a form of problem solving in which the risks can be detrimental to a person's physiological and psychological state as the person may display uncertainty regarding which best coping response (or problem solving technique) to utilize. As a result, the response chosen may not be as helpful to the person as what they had anticipated.

Lazarus (1993) explains that coping research has moved from the traditional thinking where coping was viewed as a trait or style, to one where coping is considered as a process that changes over time, and in accordance with the situational context in which it occurs. The changes over time allow an individual to adapt so as to cope with the changing situation and/or threat. A

person perceives whether their coping ability is successful or unsuccessful. There is no correct coping process; however some are more effective than others (Lazarus, 1993; Hunter and Boyle, 2004).

According to Lazarus (1993), a person may experience a fair amount of denial during the coping process. This may be considered as part of a person's coping trait or style in their coping preferences, i.e. avoidance style; although denial may be useful under certain circumstances. According to Cox (1978) denial has favourable consequences when an individual is attempting to adapt to an unfavourable situation, for example, rate of healing. A person is thus able to cope with threat or danger simply by *denying* that is exists (Cox, 1978). However, an individual should be cautioned against the denial when it causes a delay in seeking help, specifically if the unfavourable situation is medically related.

The process of coping includes two functions: problem-focused coping and emotion-focused coping. *Problem-focused* coping is described as a change in the distressed person-environment relationship by acting on the environment or the person, i.e. dealing with the problem that is causing the distress (Folkman, Lazarus, Gruen, and DeLongis, 1986). On the other hand, *emotion-focused* coping is to change either a) the way the stressful relationship with the environment is dealt with (as in awareness or avoidance), or b) the relational meaning of what is happening, which simplifies the stress even though the actual conditions of the relationship have not changed (Folkman and Lazarus, 1990; as cited in Lazarus, 1993). Thus, emotion-focused coping is considered as a more soothing form of coping, for instance, changing the relational meaning of what is happening can be described as *emotional boundary* whereby the individual chooses to restrain their emotions in order to regulate stress and emotion.

Research on coping has gathered strength in recent years (Edwards and Holden, 2003; Shimazu and Kosugi, 2003; Gellis and Kim, 2004). Coping may seem to lessen the effects of an unfavourable situation experienced by a person; however the situation may still need to be addressed. Thus, coping

may be viewed as a person's attempts to master those situations (Cox, 1978). Lazarus (1966, 1976; as cited in Cox, 1978) suggests that coping can involve two processes: direct action and palliation. *Direct action* refers to the change process in problem-focused coping whereby the behaviour is aimed at changing the person's relationship with his environment. Direct action can take three forms: preparation against harm, aggression and avoidance (or escaping the situation). Preparation against harm is considered true avoidance behaviour whereby the person anticipates danger and takes the necessary action to correct it. Aggression takes the form of active coping, that is, the individual will attempt to confront their source of stress. Aggression may not always be an appropriate and thus effective form of coping (Cox, 1978). Avoidance (also known as escape) is the third form of direct active coping. Aggression and avoidance are considered the 'fight or flight' response to stress (Selye, 1956; as cited in Cox, 1978). Avoidance, although part of direct active coping, can be considered as inactive behaviour. Inactivity may lead to depression and feelings of helplessness (Cox, 1978). This may be due to certain situations which produce stress and which do not allow for a person to take action against the stressor. Avoidance does not express the possibility that stress may be relieved (Cox, 1978). As a result, the person may lose any desire to cope, and loses the actual ability to do so (Lazarus, 1976; as cited in Cox, 1978).

According to Cox (1978), palliation is considered a moderator of stress. This is done by reducing the psycho-physiological effects of stress through symptom-directed modes and intrapsychic modes. These include, respectively, body-centred techniques through the use of tranquillizers, sedatives, meditation and exercise such as yoga; and cognitive defence mechanisms, such as denial, repression, projection and displacement. Displacement refers to the avoidance of the stimuli that causes the stress, for example, frustration which may often take the form of aggression (Cox, 1978). There may be no universally successful or unsuccessful coping processes, though some might more often be better or worse than others (Lazarus, 1993).

TOWARDS A DEFINITION OF BULLYING

Bullying can be defined as "a social interaction in which the sender uses verbal and/or non-verbal communication that is characterised by negative and aggressive elements directed towards the receiver's person or his or her work situation. The experience of being bullied correspondingly involves the receiver experiencing this verbal and/or non-verbal communication as negative and aggressive and as constituting a threat to his/her self-esteem, personality or professional competence" (Agervold and Mikkelsen, 2004, p. 2).

Workplace bullying is conceptualised to take place relatively often, and over time. Scales that assess perceived bullying measure the frequency and intensity of bullying, that is, taking place over varying periods of time, for example, once a week, to over a six month period (Einarsen *et al.*, 2003). The victim is said to be unable to defend himself as a result of the bullying and/or due to the severity of the bullying (Agervold *et al.*, 2004). Bullying is seen as a form of violence, although more so in emotional terms. Some examples of bullying include belittling someone's opinion, giving other's the silent treatment, undermining actions by a co-worker, insults, yelling, swearing, name-calling, threats, shouting, rude gestures and aggressive posturing (Steinman, n.d.a). It is necessary to note the difference between physical violence, psychological violence and sexual harassment which may be used interchangeably, however a distinction must be drawn. The following definitions are provided in support of this:

Physical violence can be described as *"*the use of physical force against another person or group that results in physical, sexual or psychological harm" (Adapted from the World Health Organisation's definition of violence; as cited in Steinman, n.d.b).

Psychological violence is considered to be the "intentional use of power, including threat… [perceived of by the person or group as a possible source of] harm to family life, livelihood, physical, mental, spiritual, moral or social development*"* (Adapted from the World Health Organisation's definition of violence; as cited in Steinman, n.d.b).

Sexual harassment can be considered as “any unwanted, unreciprocated and unwelcome behaviour of a sexual nature that is offensive to the person involved, and causes that person to be threatened, humiliated, degraded or embarrassed” (ILO/ICN/WHO/PSI Joint Programme on Workplace Violence, 2001; as cited in Steinman, n.d.b).

Many factors contribute to workplace bullying in individual, social and organisational contexts, however Einarsen (1999) explains two types of incidents: dispute-related and predatory bullying. *Dispute-related* bullying typically develops from grievances of work-related conflict where negative behaviour of some nature is said to have been done to, and felt by the bully thus aggravating the person (bully) to respond in a negative manner.

According to Einarsen (1998b; as cited in Einarsen, 1999), there are three kinds of dispute-related bullying: aggressive behaviours used as tactics in an interpersonal conflict, malingering as a tactic, and resentment to perceived negativity or unfair treatment by one’s opponent. The total vilification of the victim is seen as the ultimate goal to be gained by the parties (Glasl, 1994; as cited in Einarsen, 1999). *Predatory bullying* on the other hand is seen as a case of ‘wrong time, wrong place’ where the victim has done nothing to solicit the bullying behaviour although the bully takes advantage of the opportunity to exploit the vulnerability of the victim to demonstrate power over him/her (Einarsen, 1999). Thus, dispute-related bullying can be summarised as negative acts towards a person in which the person responds to these acts by bullying their opponent. Conversely, predatory bullying is bullying behaviour exhibited by a bully towards their victim for no apparent reason.

Predatory bullying is probably caused by a combination of the social climate of the organisation where hostility and aggressiveness prevails as well as an organisational culture tolerant to bullying and harassment (Fitzgerald, Hulin, and Drasgow, 1995; as cited in Einarsen, 1999), although the organisation can interrupt the negative action at any stage.

COPING AS A MODERATOR OF EXPERIENCED BULLYING

Coping strategies may be used as a moderator for the victim when dealing with the bullying act(s) that they are exposed to. The severity of the bullying and the psychological state of the victim may determine the type of coping strategy used by the victim (Lazarus, 1976; as cited in Cox, 1978; Endler and Parker, 1990b; as cited in Edwards and Holden, 2003; Olafsson *et al.*, 2004). Most bullying research has been centred on school children and schoolyard bullying, specifically looking at the differences in age and gender with reference to coping strategies (Demko, 1996; Aggleton, Rivers, Mulvihill, Chase, Downie, Sinkler, Tyrer and Warwick, 2000; Olafsson *et al.*, 2004; Nesdale and Scarlett, 2004; Carlisle and Rofes, 2007; Dussich and Maekoya, 2007; Lin, 2008). These schoolyard coping strategies have been linked to the workplace (Olafsson *et al.*, 2004). Olafsson *et al.* (2004) suggested that there are four main *dimensions* of coping: the passive versus active dimension and the detached versus emotional dimension.

Studies of school bullying found that boys tend to use more active and self-destructive coping strategies than girls. For instance, boys would resort to external coping means such as taking up smoking, thinking about suicide, and "taking it out on others" (Kristensen and Smith, 2003; Olafsson *et al.*, 2004, p. 320). Girls on the other hand tend to use stress recognition techniques such as screaming, seeking advice from others, or internalised techniques such as crying. It was found that boys would respond highly to aggressive emotional responses such as "get my revenge" where girls would respond more emotionally passive, such as "feeling helpless" (Olafsson, 2003; as cited in Olafsson *et al.*, 2004, p. 321). There may be a number of reasons for the differences between genders in the choice of coping strategy utilized when bullied. Research indicates that different genders are exposed to different forms of bullying (Cowie, 2000; Ireland and Archer, 2002; Seals and Young, 2003; Olafsson *et al.*, 2004; Simpson and Cohen, 2004; Hunter, Boyle and Warden, 2004; Young and Sweeting, 2004; Griffin-Smith and Gross, 2006; Meglich, 2008). Boys tend to experience more physical, direct forms of bullying whereas girls experience more indirect forms. Direct forms of bullying

may be attributed to “fighting back”, whereas indirect forms may be talking behind one’s back (Olafsson *et al.*, 2004, p. 321).

Thus, different types of bullying behaviour result in different types of coping strategies employed (Olafsson *et al.*, 2004). With reference to differences in coping strategies for age, Smith, Shu and Madsen (2001; as cited in Olafsson *et al.*, 2004, p. 321) found that older children use strategies such as “ignoring the bully”, while Kristensen and Smith (2003) found that younger children used distancing, seeking social support and internalising the negative actions as a means of coping. Therefore, younger children seem to use *escape* as a means of dealing with a bully whereas older children tend to ignore the negative affect due to their greater size and strength, and possibly as a tactic to try and get the bully to lose interest in them (Kristensen and Smith, 2003; Olafsson *et al.*, 2004).

Olafsson *et al.* (2004) identified a number of factors which were associated with the choice of coping strategies used when faced with bullying among school children. Interestingly, children who were subjected to bullying at school were more likely to become a victim of workplace bullying. Similarly, a child bully was likely to become the workplace bully (Matthiesen and Einarsen, 2007). Research indicates that workplace victims with bullying experience from childhood or previous workplaces were likely to use confrontational coping responses unlike those who were new to the experience. However, these victims also frequently admitted that they acted as bullies during their childhood (Matthiesen *et al.*, 2007, p. 743).

Research indicates that there is inconsistency in coping responses between what people say they would do if they were bullied when compared to what they actually do when the negative action occurs (Olafsson *et al.*, 2004). The inconsistency was found in the claims of the non-victims (i.e. witnesses) that stated that they would go straight to management to report the incident(s). Another discrepancy was the use of support, that is, the non-victim claimed that as a victim they would report the incident(s), however, research indicated that victims were more likely to use escape strategies such

as leaving their job, compared to what non-victims claimed that they would do if bullied (Olafsson *et al*., 2004). The following is stated in support of this, whereby only 7% of non-victims believed that they would quit their job if bullied. However, other studies suggest that this figure ranges as high as from about 14% to 36% for the victims (Cox, 1987). It is important to note, however, that quitting one's job is also a function of the economic environment, that is, in poor economic times individuals are less likely to quite their jobs, and vice versa in good economic times (Cokayne, 2007; Naidoo, 2009; Donnelly, 2009).

Olafsson *et al.* (2004) constructed a scale consisting of 16 coping items to determine four factors of coping when faced with bullying. The four factor solution accounted for 51% of the variance which made the results easier to interpret. The four factors that were considered as coping strategies were *seeking help*, *avoidance*, *assertiveness*, and *doing nothing*. Examples for each coping factor would include, respectively, the victim reporting the bullying act(s) to HR or seeking social support from colleagues; taking sick leave, or asking for a transfer, or possibly even leaving the organisation for good; attempting to take action by bullying the bully himself; hoping it stops, or for the victim to try and not let the bullying affect him.

There are many ways in which a victim can endeavour to cope with the bullying situation; however research indicates that a strong social support group is essential in attempting to cope with bullying, without the traditional means of seeking psychological help. It was also essential that the victim be aware of the individual effects on him or her due to the bullying behaviour, and that he make an active effort to take care of himself. It is also possible for the victim to try and confront the bully or to communicate with the bully's boss (if there is one). In addition, the victim may seek legal advice in order to address the problem (Steinman, n.d.a).

Other forms of coping strategies may originate from the organisations' themselves (Lingard, Brown, Bradley, Bailey and Townsend, 2007). It is imperative that an organisation acknowledges the importance of their

employees as valuable human resources. Employers and organisations have a significant role to play in preventing bullying in the workplace, and there is much that they can offer in terms of helping the victim.

Organisations have the responsibility to put policies and procedures in place to communicate to their employees that there is a zero tolerance approach towards bullying behaviour and that if experienced, the victim has options when seeking help (United States Department of Labor, 2005; Bandow and Hunter, 2008). The European Agency for Health and Safety at Work (2002) states that organisations can encourage a positive culture by ensuring that top management portrays ethical commitment in order to foster a bully-free environment. In addition, the organisation should also state what actions are considered acceptable and those that are not. The organisation must also declare the consequences of breaking organisational values and standards. From inception, it is important for the organisation to state the role of managers, supervisors, colleagues and trade union representatives in order to avoid role conflict and role ambiguity. Organisations should also provide access to counselling and support information for its employees, and at all times confidentiality of victims and/or bullies must be maintained (Kauppinen and Tuomola, 2008).

Training in management skills, people management, communication and personal development with the aim of building confidence and self-esteem in employees, without the need to directly alter their work environment should also be considered. Further, organisations should move from closed, rule-driven systems to more open systems where communication and the management style are more fluid and flexible (Jennifer, 2000). Thus, with training experience and understanding the need to handle their colleagues better, employees can begin to communicate and empower fellow employees to assist in the prevention of negative behaviour in the workplace. Personal development will also give the would-be victim opportunity to confront the potential bully which will hopefully prevent the negative actions from occurring.

BULLYING AS A "STRESSOR"

According to Einarsen's conceptual framework Model (see Figure 1, pg. 22) of the nature and cause of workplace bullying (Einarsen 2003; as cited in Einarsen, 2005), three elements can describe the causes of workplace bullying: individual, social and organisational. Hoel and Stalin (2003; as cited in Lewis, 2004) suggested that there are four antecedents to organisational causes of workplace bullying, namely, the changing nature of work, how work is organised, the organisational culture, and leadership. The changing nature of work can be attributed to globalisation, mergers and the current economic recession, amongst others (McCarthy, 2003). 'How work is organised' and the 'leadership style' of the organisation can produce role conflict and poor work control (Einarsen, Raknes and Matthiesen, 1994; as cited in Jennifer, 2000). Thus, it is up to the culture of the organisation to set a precedent for unambiguous work flow, higher production, and zero tolerance for workplace bullying. Other researchers have found that the "work environment and organisational climate (Einarsen *et al.*, 1994; Vartia, 1996); job content and social work environment (Zapf, Knorz and Kulla, 1996); work organisation and poor conflict management (Einarsen and Skogstad, 1996; Leymann, 1996); inappropriate managerial behaviour (Crawford, 1997; Sheehan, 1998); and, tyrannical management (Ashforth, 1994)" can also account for workplace bullying (as cited in Jennifer, 2000, p. 213).

Individual causes of workplace bullying can be attributed to hypersensitivity and neuroticism of the victim. In addition, self-reported bullies often describe themselves as highly aggressive in nature and having lowered self-esteem (Einarsen, 1999). Researchers (Leymann and Gustafsson, 1996; Matthiesen, Aasen, Holst, Wie, and Einarsen, 2003; as cited in Lewis, 2004) attribute the social causes of bullying to a lack of social support in the workplace. Zapf (1999; as cited in Jennifer, 2000) further characterised the causes of workplace bullying to the perpetrator and the victim, which comprised the individual causes, the social system of the work group and the organisation. Thylefors (1987; as cited in Jennifer, 2000) as well as Einarsen, Raknes, and Matthiesen (1994) suggest that socially, bullying may be seen as a scapegoat process whereby perpetrators are said to use intimidation as a form of

relieving stress and tension, and possibly as a behavioural strategy for resolving interpersonal conflict with regard to task objectives and work demands.

Einarsen *et al*. (1994) suggest that workplace bullying can be explained by two theories: the revised frustration-aggression hypothesis and the social interactionist approach to aggression. The former suggests that aggression is due to the highly stressful work environment that the individual(s) encounter. The latter depicts that an unconstructive work environment and work conditions may cause norm-violating behaviour from distressed individuals which is then perceived as annoying, thus provoking bullying behaviour in others (Felson and Tedeschi, 1993; as cited in Jennifer, 2000).

Research suggests that there is a distinction between what is termed "subjective bullying" and "objective bullying". As previously discussed, Cox (1987) illustrated what he referred to as 'perceived stress', whereby an individual could cope more effectively with stress by altering his perceptual process. Thus, the individual should distinguish between the actual consequences and the perceived consequences of the stressor in order to cope. That is, s*ubjective* bullying suggests a definite awareness of bullying by the victim, i.e., the actual bullying behaviour. *Objective* bullying suggests that there is external support found for the bullying behaviour (Brodsky, 1976; as cited in Jennifer, 2000), i.e., the perceived bullying behaviour taking place. Bullying is a complex phenomenon where the severity of the incident(s) may be misunderstood. Thus, given the limited research opportunities, researchers have only been able to consider the *perceived* (or objective) act of bullying (Einarsen, 1999). Therefore it seems that bullying cannot be measured in subjective terms, but rather safely in objective terms.

Considering the four antecedents to organisational causes of workplace bullying previously discussed, it was necessary to look at the organisational characteristics that foster workplace bullying. Research indicated that workplace bullying may be fostered in the type of organisation that tolerates negative behaviour towards individuals (Fitzgerald, Hulin, and Drasgow, 1995;

as cited in Einarsen, 1999). According to Vartia-Vanaanen (2002), these organisations are usually characterised by highly driven, competitive and professional environments where there is a need to be aggressive and to *get ahead* in order to achieve and receive recognition. Other types include those organisations that are large and have a flat structure where role ambiguity may exist, as well as work overload. There are also those that are highly bureaucratic and/or hierarchical in structure; and are mostly male-dominated (Vartia-Vanaanen, 2002).

Bullying organisations tend to foster individuals that have a need for positional power. Workplace bullying tends to occur in power relationships were the power distance is deliberately capitalised on between a superior and their subordinate(s) (Turney, 2003). Research distinguished between vertical power and horizontal power bullying. *Vertical power* imbalances resulted in the majority of workplace bullying due to internal workplace conflict (Turney, 2003; Jennifer, 2000). Bullying generally occurred from superior to subordinate (Hannabuss, 1998; Namie, 2000; Heames and Harvey, 2006). *Horizontal* workplace bullying may be due to interpersonal conflict and tends to transpire between those individuals on the same job level, within the same occupation (Turney, 2003).

Another concern that may cause bullying to be considered as a stressor is the type of industries that constitute bullying organisations, i.e. where the most common occurrences of workplace bullying have been reported to have taken place. Though, it is important to note that bullying appears to vary considerably between organisational sectors (Einarsen and Skogstad, 1996; as cited in Hoel *et al.*, 2004). Public-sector employees appear to be more at risk than those working in the private sector (Zapf *et al.*, 2003; as cited in Hoel *et al.*, 2004). For example, nearly 78% of South Africans claim to have experienced some form of victimisation in their careers, and over 20% can account for bullying experienced in the health sector alone (Steinman, n.d.a).

Research indicated that nurses, teachers, taxi and/or bus drivers, petrol attendants, cashiers and waitresses appear to experience more workplace bullying than other industries (European Agency for Health and Safety at Work; as cited in Kauppinen *et al.*, 2008). Although, it was necessary to consider the type of work that is involved in these industries as well as the type of client-base that employees in these industries may encounter. Employees in these industries experienced more face-to-face interaction than most other industries, hence exposing them to more direct contact, stress, and thus increasing their risk of being bullied (Kauppinen *et al.*, 2008).

Some of the more serious aspects that described workplace bullying as a stressor were the negative psychological and physiological implications on the individual and subsequently on their well-being. People who suffered from emotional violence or harassment at work tended to report higher levels of work-related illnesses than those who did not—nearly four times the level of symptoms of psychological disturbances (Kauppinen *et al.*, 2008).

As a result of the above discussion, there was a need to publicise the mistreatment occurring within industry. Although still a relatively unexplored field of study, employees tend to be somewhat uncertain of what actions to take when they have experienced this type of individual vilification. Empirical research indicated that workplace bullying was accompanied by negative consequences for victims' and for witnesses' health and wellbeing (Agervold *et al.*, 2004). Below follows a more detailed discussion of the deleterious impact of bullying on the individual and on the organisation.

THE IMPACT OF BULLYING

Workplace bullying not only impacts on an individual's life but also has serious consequences for the organisation. Some of the negative effects that victims have reported are excessive stress, stress-related illnesses, insomnia and apathy as well as severe prolonged psychological trauma in the form of posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD) (Steinman, n.d.a; Matthiesen *et al.*, 2004; Turney, 2003). Victims have reported feeling anxious, fearful and helpless which could lead to depression (Matthiesen *et al.*, 2004) and lowered

self-esteem. This in turn affects their mental health and their ability to perform optimally at their job. For employers, this can be highly disadvantageous to the organisation. Workplace bullying can affect the organisation negatively by reducing employee productivity due to feelings of inadequacy and continued criticism, increased absenteeism and high staff turnover. This loss of production time and possible legal costs due to unfair or constructive dismissals can be seen as severe social costs to the organisation as a whole (Turney, 2003).

With over ten years experience in measuring and researching the extent to which bullying has had an effect on individuals and organisations, Stale Einarsen and his followers have come to the undisputed conclusion that bullying is damaging to a person's health and well-being (Hoel *et al*., 2004). Hoel *et al.* (2002) conducted a study involving a number of countries within Europe, and estimated that stress and workplace bullying cost between 1% and 3.5% of a country's GDP annually – a cost that developing countries cannot afford.

Exposure to bullying in the organisation may change an individual's perception of their work environment to one of danger, threat and insecurity which may result in loss of productivity (Janoff-Bulman, 1992; as cited in Matthiesen *et al*., 2004; Turney, 2003). Victims of bullying report to receive less social support from the Human Resources (HR) department in their organisation and are often pushed from person to person, which result in feelings of shame and possible relocation due to HR in some instances even supporting the bully instead of the victim (Hubert, 2003, Adams, 1992 and Rayner, 1992; as cited in Lewis, 2004). This is evidenced by a study conducted in the United States that stated in 62% of cases HR did nothing to help the victim despite requests and in 32% of cases HR supported the bully and reacted negatively to the victim (Namie, 2000).

Bullying evidently has the most adverse effects on the victim. Organisations are aware that their most important resource is the employee. If the employee is unhappy, the work environment and therefore the output of the organisation

will also be poor (Jennifer, 2000). Thus, it is important for employers to consider the well-being of their employees, as organisations that tolerate a bullying environment will have to deal with the consequences. For example, 45% of U.S employees reported health effects of severe anxiety, loss of concentration and sleeplessness, and 33% reported these effects as lasting for more than one year (Namie, 2000). Some of the more serious consequences of ongoing bullying can result in posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD) where the victim is said to feel irritable, depressed, paranoid, as well as experience feelings of helplessness, lowered self-esteem and mood swings (Matthiesen *et al.*, 2004).

The list of consequences are thus enormous and the negative effects of bullying serves as further proof that organisations and individuals suffer from bullying in the long-term. The end result for many victims is job loss where studies show that 82% of bullied individuals in the U.S lost their jobs (44% involuntary departure, 38% voluntary) (Namie, 2000). This may be due to stress, ongoing negative effects of the experience; or due to the fact that the victims see no other way of resolving the issue due to the organisation, specifically HR, siding with the bully and/or ignoring the problem. This may be attributed to the fact that 81% of bullies are in superior positions to the victim (Namie, 2000).

Most research on bullying and bullying behaviour has considered the impact on the organisation as well as on the individual. Since the late 1980's a new approach to research was conducted by considering the effects of bullying on the witnesses of the negative acts. Recent evidence suggested that being a witness to bullying may have adverse effects on the individual's psychological and physiological well-being and that these effects may be as severe as that of the victim (Hoel *et al.*, 2004). UK studies indicate that 78% of individuals have witnessed some form of bullying in the workplace, with the percentage of actual bullying reported in the workplace being noticeably lower than that, that of 53% (Steinman, n.d.a).

It seems that people become too afraid to report the incident(s) to management as they believe, or know, that management either knows about what is going on or that management will not take the necessary action to deal with it. Witnesses may be drawn into the conflict to such an extent that a fear of conflict establishes itself, making it difficult for bystanders to report the incident(s) which may in fact have helped the bullied victim (Rayner, 1999; as cited in Lewis, 2004). Inappropriate advice given to the victim on bullying can often result in escalation of the conflict (Hubert, 2003; as cited in Lewis, 2004). Similarly, exposing one's experiences of bullying within an organisation with a bullying culture may lead to feelings of social exclusion, inadequacy, or deviance (Archer, 1999; Lewis, 2002; as cited in Lewis, 2004). However, as the effect of bullying on witnesses was beyond the scope of this study, only the impact of bullying on victims themselves was studied, along with the organisational impact.

CHAPTER TWO
THE TRANSACTIONAL MODEL OF PERCEIVED BULLYING

Like stress, bullying can be considered against a backdrop of The Transactional Model whereby bullying is part of a dynamic transaction between the person and his environment (Cox, 1978). Einarsen developed a conceptual framework Model (see Figure 1, p. 22) of the nature and causes of bullying to help identify the variables that were necessary to consider in research on workplace bullying (Einarsen, 2003; as cited in Einarsen, 2005).

According to Einarsen (2005) four factors were important in the Model. First, the Model distinguished between the nature and causes of bullying behaviours. That is, the behaviour exhibited by the alleged bully from the nature and causes of the perceptions of these behaviours by the victim (see subjective (perceived) versus objective (actual) bullying previously discussed). Second, it distinguished between the perceived exposures to bullying behaviours from the reactions to these kinds of behaviours. Third, it focused on the organisational impact on both the behaviour of the alleged bullies and

the perceptions and reactions of the victims. Fourth, the victim's personality was likely to affect how the bully's behaviours were perceived and even more so how they were reacted to. Lastly, the conceptual Model identified that the victim's reactions to the bullying behaviour may have altered the victim's personal characteristics (such as personal styles of coping or even personality), as well as the very organisation itself and how it reacted to the particular victim. This Model was however modified due to the present study measuring coping styles and not the individual predisposition of the victim (see Figure 2, p. 23). Below follows a discussion of the variables contained within this modified Model.

THE INDEPENDENT VARIABLE

WORKPLACE BULLYING

Figure 2 (p. 23) demonstrates a modified version of Einarsen's (2003; as cited in Einarsen, 2005) Conceptual Framework Model of Workplace Bullying. This Model formed the scope of the present study. That is, the perceptions of the victims of the bullying behaviour exhibited by the bully were seen as a transactional process between the victim and the bully (see Selye 1956; as cited in Cox, 1978). Thus, these perceptions were considered the stimulus in the stress-strain relationship. To be precise, bullying was the independent stressor variable in the bullying-strain relationship.

THE MODERATOR VARIABLE

COPING

As discussed, coping can be seen as the moderator of the bullying-strain relationship. Coping strategies may intervene to assist in allowing the individual to return to their equilibrium state before the consequences of bullying affect the organisational and individual outcomes. As described by Selye (1956; as cited in Cox, 1978), the response to the stressor is seen as a defence mechanism, i.e. the coping strategy employed by the victim.

THE DEPENDENT VARIABLES

PSYCHOLOGICAL AND PHYSIOLOGICAL WELL-BEING

The overall considerations in the bullying process are the effects on the individual. Although organisations suffer from the effects of workplace bullying experienced by their employees, it is the victims that endure the most significant amount of damage. The effects on the victim are serious and prolonged (Steinman, n.d.a; Matthiesen *et al.*, 2004; Turney, 2003). Thus, it was a concern for the present study to take into account the psychological and physiological effects on the victim's well-being during the bullying act/s as a consequence for the individual outcomes.

SELF – ESTEEM

In this regard, the study deemed to examine the effects on the individual's psychological and physiological well-being, as well as self-esteem, job satisfaction and intention to leave the organisation. Pelham and Swann (1989) identified three factors that uniquely contributed to a person's global self-esteem: (i) a person's tendencies to experience positive and negative affective states, (ii) a person's specific self-views (i.e., their notion of their strengths and weaknesses), and (iii) the way people frame their self views. Bullying can take many forms, however the most prominent characteristic is the degradation of the individual and their self-worth. Thus, self-esteem was considered as an important contributor to the effects on the individual outcomes.

JOB SATISFACTION

With regard to job satisfaction, an employee's satisfaction at their work place depends on the environment which they are exposed to (Jennifer, 2000). If the employee is dissatisfied with their environment as a result of exposure to bullying, the consequences for the organisation and the employee may be damaging. For example, an employee may experience low self-esteem and this may result in high staff turnover (Einarsen, 1999; Turney, 2003). Thus, job satisfaction was considered as a consequence for organisational outcomes.

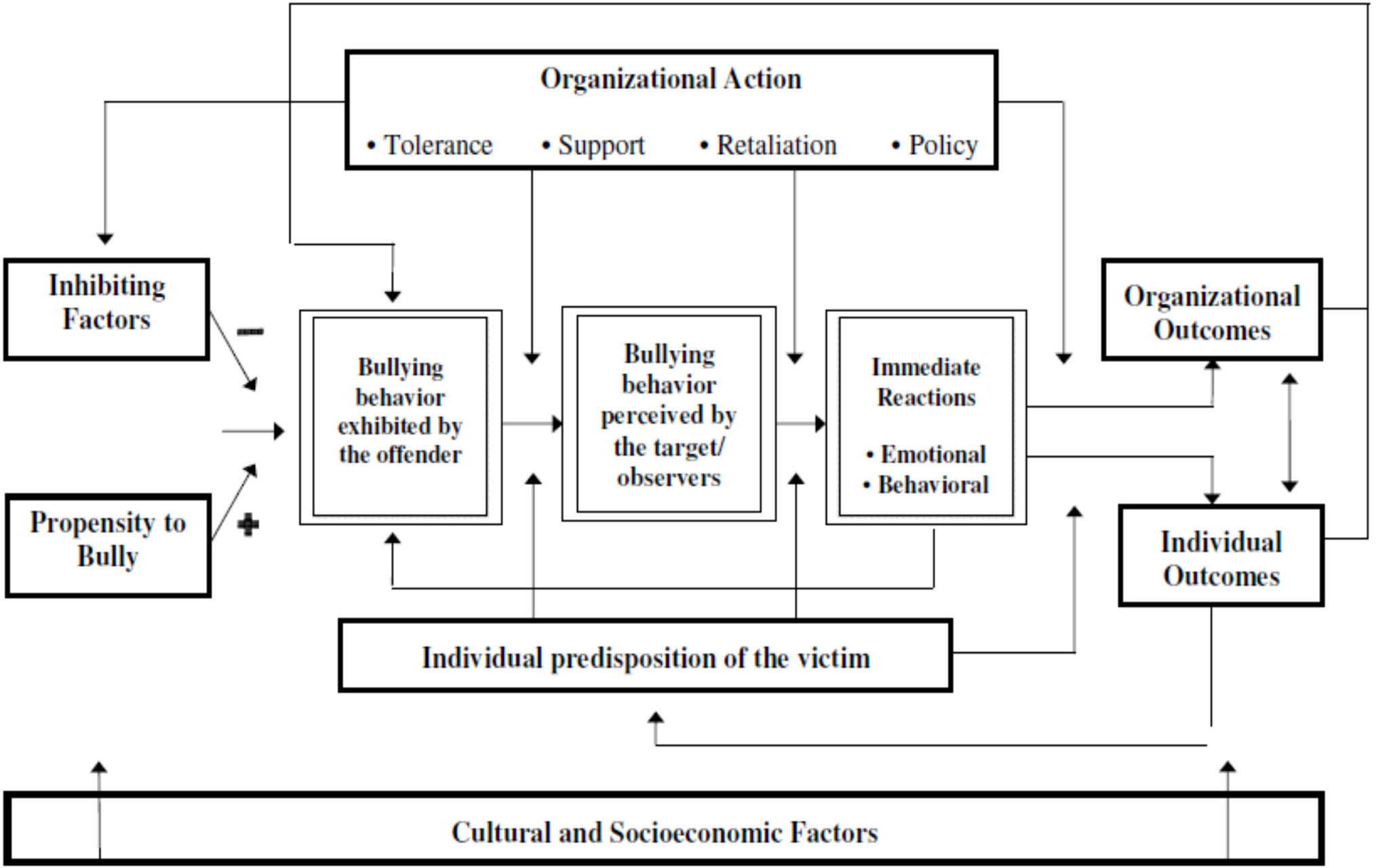

FIGURE 1: A conceptual framework for the study and management of bullying at work (from Einarsen *et al.*, 2003; as cited in Einarsen, 2005)

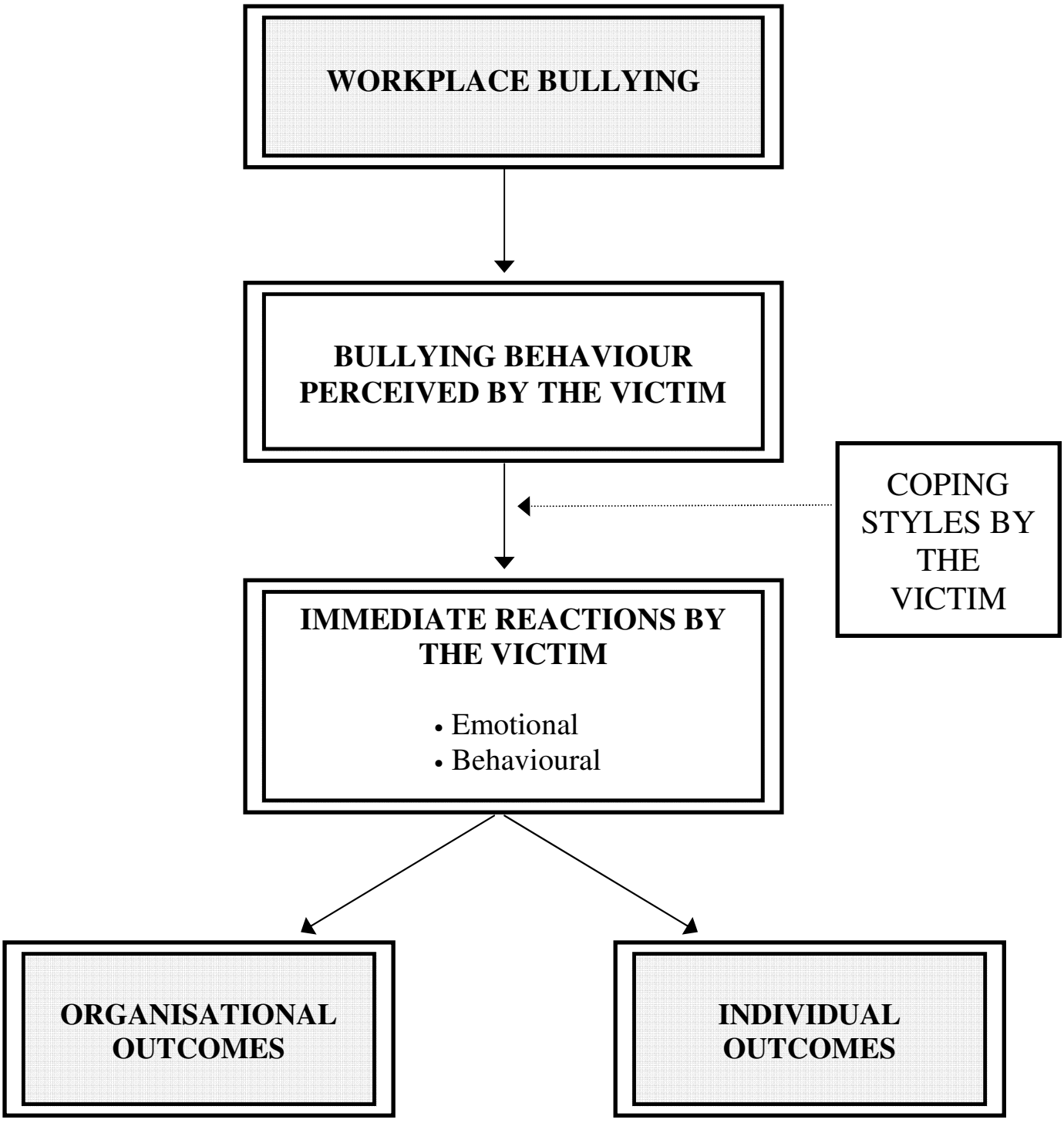

FIGURE 2: Modified version of Einarsen's (2003 *et al.*; as cited in Einarsen 2005) 'A Conceptual Framework for the Study and Management of Bullying at Work'

INTENTION TO LEAVE

As a result of the negative behaviours demonstrated towards the victims, the only option may be to escape, i.e. for the individual to leave the organisation. This in turn may cost the organisation greatly by having to contend with ongoing labour disputes as well as the additional recruiting that will be needed to replace the employees that have left, and the orientation of new and possibly less experienced employees (Turney, 2003). Thus, the research considered the possibility of an individual's intention to leave the organisation as an important organisational outcome to evaluate due to negative behaviour experienced at work.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND HYPOTHESES

Based on the previous discussion, the research questions were as follows:

1. To what extent does perceived bullying impact upon individual and organisational health and well-being, i.e. psychological and physiological well-being, self-esteem, job satisfaction and intention to leave?
2. To what extent does coping moderate this relationship; that is, reduce the impact of bullying on the dependent variables?
3. Four coping styles are proposed by Olafsson *et al.* (2004), and the research examined which ones were more or less effective.

The above hypotheses are illustrated below (See Figure 3, 4, and 5).

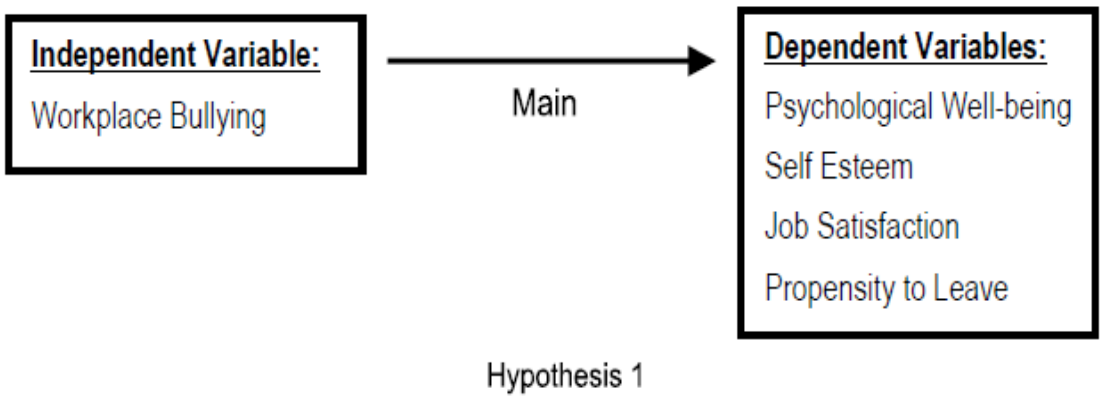

FIGURE 3 Hypothesis 1

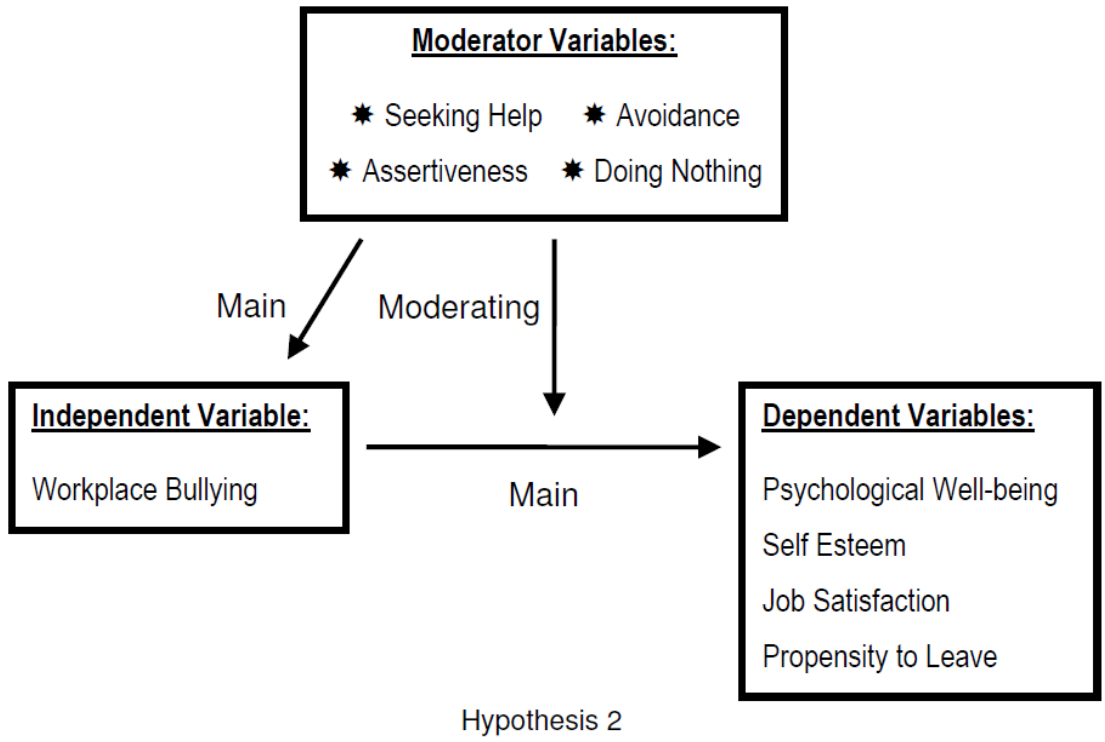

FIGURE 4 Hypothesis 2

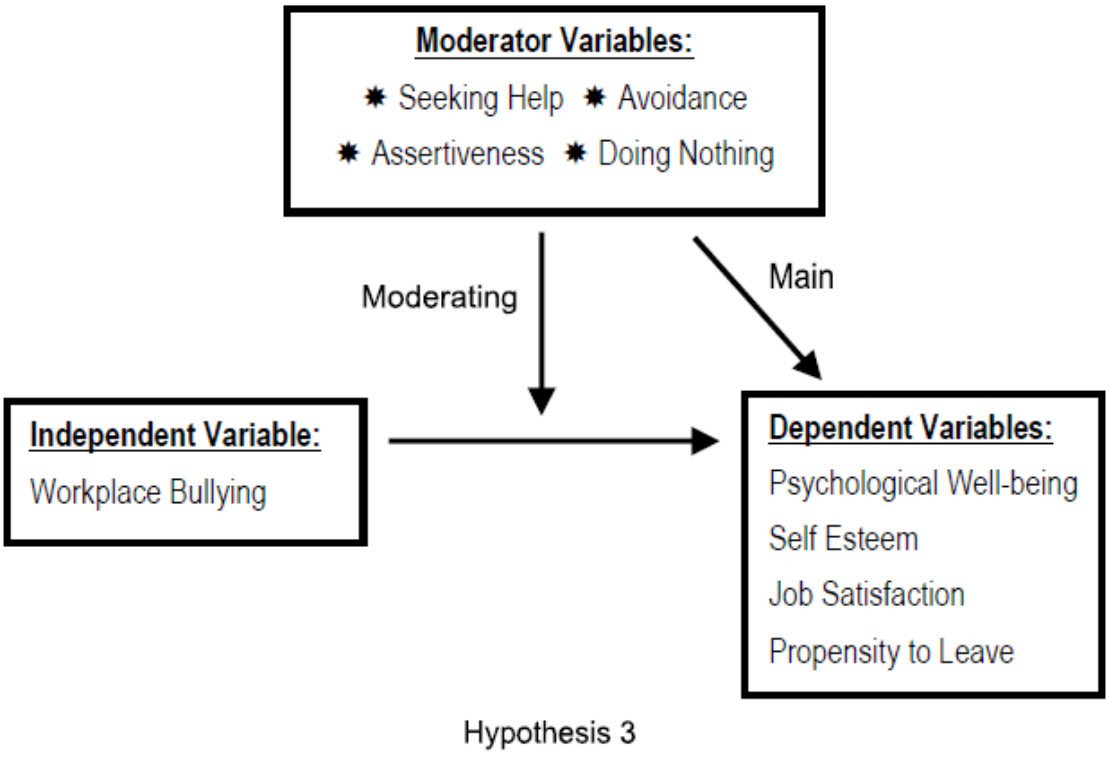

FIGURE 5 Hypothesis 3

CHAPTER THREE
THEORETICAL AND METHODOLOGICAL CONSIDERATIONS AND PROCEDURES USED IN THE PRESENT STUDY

NON-EXPERIMENTAL RESEARCH DESIGN

The research design employed in the present study was that of non-experimental design, and the sampling procedure utilized was that of convenience sampling. The researcher was granted access into a construction company. This industry was deemed an appropriate target population for the present research due to the nature of the construction industry where it is expected that bullying and/or negative acts will occur.

Non-experimental design is utilized by the behavioural sciences to ensure consistency between pre-existing participant variables (Gravetter and Forzano, 2006). That is, different conditions are created by ensuring that there are limited threats to internal validity and through the use of non-manipulated variables (i.e. male versus female) or a time variable (i.e. before or after treatment) (Gravetter *et al.*, 2006). As such, the research applied a cross-sectional field design. Cross-sectional design requires subjects to provide information on different aspects of their working environment that may be related to changes in behaviour at a single point in time (Gravetter *et al.*, 2006). This may also be viewed as retrospective as subjects were asked to recall the occurrence of certain events that may have occurred previously and were not necessarily current. As the aim of the present study was not to determine causality, a longitudinal study was not considered necessary.

THE MODEL

The model assessed was that of the modified Transactional Model proposed by Einarsen *et al*. (2003), titled 'A Conceptual Framework for the Study and Management of Bullying at Work'. The Model focused on bullying aspects that relate to the dynamic transaction between the person and his environment. Cox (1978) referred to this dynamic transaction as being related to stress. Consequently, the negative outcomes of workplace bullying can be

attributed to the stressor of 'being bullied' or 'experiencing bullying' (Kauppinen *et al.*, 2008).

In the Transactional Bullying Model the focus is on workplace bullying as a stressor, and the psychological, physiological and/or behavioural consequences of such which may affect the individual and/or the organisation. The Model further suggested that coping as a strategy may buffer the relationship between the stressor and the negative consequences, as well as have a main effect upon these variables.
In adopting this Model in the present study, the variables included were designated the roles of "independent variables", "moderator variables" and "dependent variables" (See figure 2, p. 23). The independent variable or stressor was that of (perceived) workplace bullying, the moderator variable was that of coping, of which there were four different strategies that were assessed, namely, seeking help, avoidance, assertiveness and doing nothing. The dependent variables were those of psychological well-being, self-esteem, job satisfaction and the intention for one to leave the organisation.

The methodology and procedure for the research followed a two phase process. Phase one consisted of a two step process consisting of two pilot studies that assessed the validity and reliability of the coping scale proposed by Olafsson *et al.* (2004). This was due to the low reliability score for the assertiveness strategy subscale when used with an Icelandic sample. Cronbach's alpha for the initial subscales were: seeking help, .71; avoidance, .64; assertiveness, .47 and doing nothing, .60. According to Kim and Mueller (1986; as cited in Bernstein, 1992) an alpha of above .60 is an acceptable level of reliability for the social sciences. Consequently, .60 was adopted as the minimum accepted alpha level in the present study.

Olafsson *et al.* (2004) advocated that the coping scale on which the literature of coping in the present study was based upon had been translated from Icelandic into English for the purposes of the research article. As such, the scale had yet to be used with first-language English participants; therefore it was further necessary to confirm the reliability and validity of the scale on a

South African English speaking sample. The original coping scale was modified to suit the South African context thereby making it more understandable and less ambiguous. This formed the crux of the first pilot study completed within a large construction company. Olafsson *et al.* (2004) also suggested that more items be added to assist in improving the overall reliability of the scale. The scale was adjusted and scale items were added with the help of subject matter experts. This formed the end product of the second pilot study carried out amongst a small sample of part-time tertiary learners, all of whom hold corporate positions within South Africa.
Methods used to establish the validity of the coping scale were thus both qualitative through open ended response questions proposed at the end of the coping scale during both pilot studies; and quantitative through descriptive statistical validation testing, i.e. Cronbach's alpha. The second phase of the research procedure continued with one hundred randomly selected participants from a large South African construction company who were asked to complete questionnaires containing all of the variable scales.

Below follows a detailed discussion of Phase 1 of the research, that is, the two pilot studies. This is followed by a discussion of Phase 2 of the research which pertains to the testing of the relationships within the proposed Model.

CHAPTER FOUR
PHASE 1 – ASSESSING THE VALIDITY AND RELIABILITY OF THE PROPOSED COPING SCALE

STEP 1 – PILOT STUDY ONE

The pilot study consisted of two phases. Within the first phase, the original scale was presented to a small group of subject matter experts within the field of Industrial Psychology (See Appendix A). The purpose of presenting the original scale to a group of experts was to establish the content and face validity of the original scale.

On the basis of the subsequent recommendations of the experts, certain items were reworded to form a clear and unambiguous understanding for the future respondents. No items were deleted. Within the second phase of the pilot study the 16-item modified coping scale (See Appendix B) was administered anonymously via closed envelopes to respondents within three subdivisions of the large South African construction company in order to further establish validity and to ensure internal reliability.

SAMPLE

The sample consisted of 54 subjects who are employed within a large South African construction company. 30 of the respondents were female (55.6%), and 24 were male (44.4%). The age of the participants ranged from 24 years to 67 years (M = 41 years). 29 of the respondents were White (53.7%), 12 were African (22.2%), seven were Asian (13%), five were Coloured (9.3%), and one respondent did not indicate their racial grouping (1.9%). The home language spoken by 27 of the respondents was English (52.9%), 10 spoke Afrikaans (19.6%), four indicated their home language to be Zulu (7.8%), and two spoke Northern Sotho (3.7%), while another two spoke Tswana (3.7%). The remaining six respondents (12%) indicated that they spoke another African home language. The highest level of education indicated for 21 of the respondents was a post-Matric diploma, or certificate (38.9%), whilst 14 had obtained a Matric (25.9%), seven had obtained a degree (13%) and another seven had a postgraduate qualification (13%). In terms of marital status, 32 of the respondents were married (59.3%), 10 were single (18.5%), 10 were divorced (18.5%) and two respondents were widowed (3.7%). The number of years employed in the company ranged from newly employed to 34 years (M = 7 years).

PROCEDURE

Participants completed the questionnaire within their own time during a two week period. The researcher distributed the questionnaire, biographical sheet and preamble in unmarked envelopes to the Human Resources (HR) Director at the construction company. The HR Director at the company then further distributed the unmarked envelopes, which included an internal introductory

memorandum with the company letterhead, to the three randomly selected subdivisions of the construction company. The confidentiality of the participants' responses was guaranteed in the preamble inserted by the researcher. There was no time limit given for the completion of the questionnaire. On completion of the questionnaire, respondents were instructed in the preamble and the internal memorandum by the HR Director to seal their responses in the unmarked envelope provided with the questionnaire and to ensure that their completed questionnaire was returned to the HR Director of the company after a specific two week period.

MEASURING INSTRUMENT

The Scale was presented as a questionnaire. It was entitled "Coping with Bullying Scale". A preamble on the front page explained to the participants the purpose of the research and guaranteed the confidentiality of the responses (See Appendix C). Respondents were then required to record their biographical information on a separate page (See Appendix D). Instructions pertaining to the completion of the scale were given at the top of the questionnaire page and explained what was required of participants (See Appendix B). The 16 items presented thereafter in the questionnaire described the preferred coping strategy of respondents if subjected to bullying in the workplace. Of the 16 items, six items pertained to the Seeking Help strategy (Items number 1, 5, 6, 7, 11, 16); four items pertained to the Avoidance strategy (Items number 2, 10, 12, 15); three items pertained to the Assertiveness strategy (Items number 4, 9, 13) and three items pertained to the Doing Nothing strategy (Items number 3, 8, 14) (See Appendix E).

In the original coping scale proposed by Olafsson *et al.* (2004), the format for the four coping strategies could be scored along five points with responses pertaining to (1) have done it; (2) I would do it; (3) I would probably do it; (4) I would probably not do it and (5) I would never do it. This was however modified to exclude the first scoring option, "have done it". This was due to the context in which the scale was presented to the respondents and used for the research. That is, attempting to understand the respondents' retrospective thoughts and coping strategies on the subject of workplace

bullying. The researcher attempted to determine the coping strategies that respondents *would* use or *would have* already used, or have considered using, if subjected to bullying in the workplace. Thus, the intentional use of past tense was eliminated in the scale responses which related to response one, "have done it". In addition, as will be discussed, the study employed a cross-sectional research design which requires respondents to consider *retrospectively* what they have, or would do in the context of the question being asked of them.

On completion of the modified scale an additional set of five open ended questions were presented to respondents. These questions asked subjects whether (1) there were any items in the scale that they did not understand, (2) there were any items that they felt were ambiguous, (3) there were any aspects that were included that they felt should have been excluded, (4) there were any items that they felt were sensitive and/or offensive in nature, and (5) there were any aspects that they thought should have been included in the scale that were not included. Responses followed a "Yes/No" format and subjects were instructed to elaborate on their answer if they answered 'Yes' to any of the questions (See Appendix F).

The purpose of including the open ended response questions was to enhance the understanding of the respondents regarding the scale's items. These questions were also included in order to ensure that the scale had an acceptable degree of face validity, content validity and reliability. Thus, within the present study, face validity and content validity were established in terms of the subject matter experts and of the participants in the pilot study.

RESULTS

Items from the initial coping scale were to be removed on the basis of the answers given to the five open ended pilot questions. While there were some suggestions made regarding bullying in general which related to possible future research on the topic, none of the subjects found any of the scale items to be ambiguous, sensitive and/or offensive in nature, or incomprehensible, thus no items were removed from the scale based on the open ended

responses from the participants. Reliability for the four subscales where then measured by clustering the item numbers pertaining to each of the subscales. Cronbach's alpha for the four subscales were: seeking help, .76; avoidance, .60; assertiveness, .46 and doing nothing, .38.

Consequently, given the low reliability for two of the four subscales, the coping scale was further modified and a second pilot study was deemed necessary to assess the reliability and validity of the adjusted subscale items. Kim *et al.* (1986; as cited in Bernstein, 1992) suggested that reliabilities of 0.8 and above are regarded as good to excellent, while those which fall below 0.6 are regarded as unacceptable.

STEP 2 – PILOT STUDY TWO

The second pilot study consisted of two phases. Within the first phase, the coping scale established in the first pilot study was once again presented to a small group of subject matter experts within the field of Industrial Psychology. The purpose of presenting the second draft of the coping scale to a group of experts was to determine further item inclusion and to eliminate item repetition and/or ambiguity, and/or to exclude items that were possibly not assessing the construct adequately and therefore detracting from the overall reliability. On the basis of the expert recommendations certain items were reworded in order to form a clear and unambiguous understanding for future test takers. In addition, items that represented two concepts instead of one were split to include two separate items on the scale. Furthermore, items were added to each of the subscales as per the recommendation of Olafsson *et al.* (2004). The final draft of the coping scale was presented to the same group of experts to establish content and face validity of the coping scale. No further items were deleted, reworded and/or added. Within the second phase of the second pilot study, the 24-item coping scale (See Appendix G) was administered anonymously via electronic mail (email) to respondents amongst a small sample of part-time tertiary learners, all of whom hold corporate positions within South African organisations.

SAMPLE

The sample consisted of 15 participants, who are employed throughout different sectors of industry in South Africa and who are currently part-time learners at the University of the Witwatersrand. Nine of the participants were female (46.7%), and 6 were male (33.3%). The age of the participants ranged from 21 to 43 years (*M* = 30 years). Six of the participants were White (33.3%), 5 were African (26.7%), 3 were of Asian origin (13.3%) and one participant indicated Coloured as their racial grouping (6.7%). Most (nine) of the participants indicated that English was their home language (46.7%). Two of the participants spoke Sotho (13.3%) and another two spoke Zulu (13.3%) as their home language. One participant indicated Tswana as their home language (6.7%) whilst one participant did not indicate their spoken home language. Eight of the participants indicated that Matric was their highest level of education obtained (40%). Five participants indicated that they hold a post-Matric diploma, or certificate (26.7%), and two indicated that they have a degree (13.33%). In terms of marital status, nine of the participants were single (46.7%), five were married (33.3%) and one participant was divorced (6.7%). The number of years employed in their respective organisations ranged from newly employed to a maximum of 10 years (*M*= 4 years), however only 11 of the 15 participants (73.3%) indicated this on the biographical questionnaire.

PROCEDURE

The modified coping scale was presented as a questionnaire in Microsoft Word format and sent to respondents via electronic mail by way of an Industrial Psychologist employed at the University of the Witwatersrand. The email was entitled "Assessment Survey". The questionnaire was entitled "Coping with Bullying Scale". A preamble attached in the email explained to the participants the purpose of the research and guaranteed the confidentiality of their responses. Respondents were then required to record their biographical information on a separate page attached to the same email. Instructions pertaining to the completion of the scale were given at the top of the questionnaire page and explained what was required of participants. Participants completed the questionnaire within their own time during a one

week specified period. The confidentiality of the participants' responses was guaranteed in the preamble.

No time limit was given for the completion of the questionnaire, however on completion respondents were instructed to send the completed questionnaire back via electronic mail to the Industrial Psychologist that they originally received the email from, after a specified one week period. The researcher then received the final questionnaires in Adobe PDF and/or Microsoft Word format from the Industrial Psychologist. Thus, no identifying information was given to the researcher, only completed questionnaires were returned.

MEASURING INSTRUMENT

The adjusted coping scale was presented as a questionnaire. It was entitled "Coping with Bullying Scale". A preamble on a separate page explained to the participants the purpose of the research and guaranteed the confidentiality of the responses (See Appendix C). Respondents were then required to record their biographical information on an attached page (See Appendix D). Instructions pertaining to the completion of the scale were given at the top of the questionnaire page and explained what was required of participants. The 24 items presented thereafter described the preferred coping strategy of respondents if subjected to bullying in the workplace. Of the 24 items, six items pertained to the Seeking Help strategy (Items number 1, 5, 9, 14, 18, 22); six items pertained to the Avoidance strategy (Items number 2, 6, 10, 15, 19, 23); seven items pertained to the Assertiveness strategy (Items number 3, 7, 11, 13, 16, 20, 24) and five items pertained to the Do Nothing strategy (Items number 4, 8, 12, 17, 21) (See Appendix H).

The scoring format as established in the first pilot study remained the same for the second pilot study. That is, items were scored along a four point Likert scale: (1) I would do it; (2) I would probably do it; (3) I would probably not do it and (4) I would never do it (See Appendix B and G).

On completion of the Coping with Bullying Scale an additional set of five open ended questions was presented to the respondents, as in the first pilot study.

The open ended questions asked subjects whether (1) there were any items in the scale that they did not understand, (2) there were any items that they felt were ambiguous, (3) there were any aspects that were included in the scale that they felt should have been excluded, (4) there were any items that they felt were of a sensitive and/or offensive nature, and whether (5) there were any aspects that they thought should have been included in the scale that were not included. Responses followed a "Yes/No" format and subjects were instructed to elaborate on their answer if answered 'Yes' to any of the questions (See Appendix F).

As mentioned previously, the purpose of including the open ended response questions was to enhance the understanding of participant's responses by the researcher regarding the coping scale's adjusted items. These questions were also included to ensure that the adjusted coping scale had an acceptable degree of face validity and content validity. Thus, within the present study, face validity and content validity were again established in terms of the subject matter experts and of the participants in the pilot study.

RESULTS

Items from the Coping with Bullying Scale were to be removed on the basis of the answers given to the five open ended piloted questions. Some suggestions from the open ended response section were considered regarding bullying in general which relate to possible future research on the topic, as well as to the variables included in the final analysis of the present research study. None of the respondents found the scale items to be ambiguous, sensitive and/or offensive in nature, or incomprehensible, thus no items were removed from the scale based on the open ended responses from the respondents.

After analysing the reliability scores from the four subscales it was observed that all four subscales had acceptable reliability. However, after analysing items from the assertiveness strategy subscale (that was problematic from scale initiation) with experts in the field of Industrial Psychology and Statistics, it was determined that by removing item 24, "think of ways of getting back at

the bully", the assertiveness subscale reliability would improve from r = .66 to r = .70. Thus, the overall reliability for the four subscales was: seeking help, .74; avoidance, .80; assertiveness, .70 and doing nothing, .82. The four subscale reliabilities, according to Kim *et al.* (1986; as cited in Bernstein, 1992) were thus considered good, or excellent. An alpha of .60 was adopted as the minimum acceptable alpha level in the present study. The overall reliability of the Coping with Bullying Scale subscales was considered acceptable by the researcher to continue with the second phase of the research study.

CHAPTER FIVE
PHASE 2: ASSESSING COPING AS A MODERATOR IN THE WORKPLACE BULLYING – WELL-BEING RELATIONSHIP – UTILIZING THE TRANSACTIONAL MODEL

SAMPLE

The present study intended to obtain a total sample of 200 voluntary participants, however only 100 responses were obtained from subjects at a large construction company. Ages of the participants ranged between 22 and 62 years (*M* = 40 years). Forty (40.82%) of the participants were White, 37 (37.76%) were African, 14 (14.29%) were of Asian decent and 7 (7.14%) were Coloured. Two respondents did not indicate their racial grouping. The home language spoken by 41 (41.41%) of the participants was an African language, whilst 36 (36.36%) of the participants spoke English, 21 (21.21%) spoke Afrikaans and one (1.01%) participant indicated that they spoke another home language other than those described above. One respondent did not indicate their home language. The highest level of education indicated by 37 (37%) of the participants was Matric, 29 (29%) of the respondents have a diploma and/or certificate, 14 (14%) have a postgraduate degree, 11 (11%) have a degree, 6 (6%) of the participants indicated that they have another form of educational qualification other than that described above and 3 (3%) of the respondents indicated a level of education of standard 8 or below. Sixty-four

(64.65%) of the participants indicated that they were married, 24 (24.24%) were single, 7 (7.07%) were divorced and 4 (4.04%) were widowed. One participant did not indicate their martial status. The number of years employed in the current organisation ranged from 3 months to 40 years (M = 8 years).

Job title was assessed in order to ascertain the level of the participants' role in the employing organisation. Research indicated that workplace bullying usually occurs from higher levels in the organisation and reverberate down the hierarchical levels towards subordinates (Hannabuss, 1998; Namie, 2000; Heames *et al*., 2006). Table 1 (p. 39) represents the demographic details of the sample.

The need to ascertain the demographics of the sample in the study was due to the fact that these variables, namely, sex, age, race, educational standard, job level, and martial status have been shown to be factors that can aggravate or improve the affect of stress on health and well-being. In addition, these factors may also affect the coping abilities of person's that experience stress emanating from a negative source (Williams, Gonzalez, Williams, Mohammed, Moomal, Stein, 2008; Din-Dzietham, Nembhard, Collins, Davis, 2004). Thus, in light of this research, **Pearson Correlation Coefficients** (see Chapter 6, Results and Discussion) were carried out in order to determine whether these variables were contributing to any variance in the variables under study. If in fact these variables were found to contribute to the variance, these variables would then be controlled for as covariates in the statistical analyses of workplace bullying's main and moderating effects.

PROCEDURE

Questionnaires of the relevant scales were once again presented to members of the construction company. The relevant scales assessing the independent, moderator, and dependent variables were contained in the questionnaire pack. A preamble on the first page of the questionnaire pack introduced the study as well as the purpose of the study to the participants (See Appendix I). Participants completed the questionnaires within their own time during a two week specified period, on a voluntary basis. As with the first pilot study, the

researcher distributed the questionnaires, biographical questionnaire and preamble in unmarked envelopes to the Human Resources (HR) Director at a large South African construction company. The HR Director at the company then further distributed the unmarked envelopes, which included an internal introductory memorandum with the company letterhead, to the five randomly selected subdivisions of the construction company.

The confidentiality of the participants' responses was guaranteed in the preamble inserted by the researcher. There was no time limit given for the completion of the questionnaire. On completion of the questionnaire, respondents were instructed in the preamble and the internal memorandum to seal their responses in the unmarked envelope provided to them, and to ensure that their completed questionnaires were returned to the HR Director of the company after a specific two week period.

Minor changes were made to the demographic questionnaire pertaining to the respondents' racial grouping. This was done at the request of the HR Director of the construction company who is in the process of attempting to implement a positive change in the organisational culture. As a result, the racial grouping response option of "Black" was changed to that of "African" in the demographic questionnaire given to participants of the present study. In addition, the question pertaining to "Job Grading" was further removed from the demographic questionnaire in the final analysis. This was at the discretion of the researcher due to a large number of concealed responses for this item found in the pilot studies. Also, the name of the organisation where the respondents currently are employed was omitted due to only one organisation partaking in the present study. Thus, only eight questions were included in the final demographic questionnaire given to participants (See Appendix J).

Before the final analysis of the research data could take place, participants who omitted more than two items per questionnaire were excluded from the final analysis of the data. This was determined as the cut-off by the researcher who attempted to maximise actual responses. A total of 98 responses were analysed for each questionnaire.

Demographic details are presented in the following table.

TABLE 1 ***Demographic Details of the Sample***

	N	*M*	*SD*	Range
Sex				
Male	53			
Female	47			
Age	92	40.51	10.49	22-62
Racial Grouping				
African	37			
Coloured	7			
White	40			
Asian	14			
Other	0			
Language				
English	36			
Afrikaans	21			
African Language	41			
Other	1			
Education				
Standard 8 or below	3			
Matric	37			
Diploma/Certificate	29			
Degree	11			
Postgraduate Degree	14			
Other	6			
Marital Status				
Single	24			
Married	64			
Divorced	7			
Widowed	4			
Number of years employed in the organisation	95	8.12	8.52	0.03*

* 0.03 = 3 months

MEASURING INSTRUMENTS

Six scales were included in the questionnaire (See Appendix K). A separate discussion of each scale follows:

THE INDEPENDENT VARIABLE

WORKPLACE BULLYING

Bullying was assessed using the Negative Acts Questionnaire Revised (NAQ-R), developed by Stale Einarsen in 1994. The NAQ-R was developed for workplace bullying as a standardised measurement to fill a gap in the research field. It should be noted that the NAQ-R is not a diagnostic instrument, but rather it was designed to measure perceived exposure to bullying and victimisation at work by determining an individual's self-reported behaviour and/ or experiences (Bergen Bullying Research Group, n.d.). Originally designed in Norway, the NAQ-R has been modified to suite specific global research on the subject of workplace bullying. In its original version the questionnaire consisted of 21 items derived from literature studies and interviews with victims of bullying at work. In a revised version it consists of 22 items describing different kinds of behaviour which may be perceived as bullying if they occur on a regular basis. The response categories are recorded on a 5-point Likert format ranging from (1) "never", (2) "now and then", (3) "monthly", (4) "weekly" and (5) "daily" (Matthiesen *et al*., 2007, p. 7). All items are written in behavioural terms with no reference to the term bullying. This has the advantage of letting participants respond to each item without having to label themselves as being bullied or not. After responding to these items, a 23rd item is introduced that pertains to a definition of bullying at work. The respondent must indicate whether or not they consider themselves as victims of bullying at work according to the definition given (Einarsen and Hoel, 2001). The definition in the questionnaire is shown as follows:

"A situation where one or several individuals persistently over a period of time perceive themselves to be on the receiving end of negative actions from one or several persons, in a situation where the target of bullying has difficulty in defending him or herself against these actions. A once–off incident is not bullying" (Einarsen *et al*., 2001).

Thus, respondents who score low on the NAQ-R indicate that they experience low amounts of bullying within their workplace. Conversely, a high score on the NAQ-R indicates a high amount of bullying. According to Einarsen *et al.* (2001), the reliability and construct validity of the NAQ-R is quite significant. Studies have shown that internal reliability of the scale is high, ranging from .87 to .93 as measured by Cronbach's alpha. Additionally, studies also show that the scale correlates with measures of job satisfaction in the range of r = -.24 to r = -.44. The scale also correlates with measures of psychological health and well being in the range of r = -.31 to r = -.52, and with measures of psychosomatic complaints (r = .32) (Einarsen *et al.*, 2001). In the present study, internal reliability of .89 was obtained.

THE MODERATOR VARIABLE

COPING

Coping was measured using an adjusted version of the scale developed by Olafsson *et al.* (2004) that determines the type of coping strategy used in bullying situations, as discussed above. The adjusted coping scale was named 'Coping with Bullying'. The final measure consisted of a single question: 'How would you react if you were subjected to bullying in your workplace?' Participants were given 23 coping strategies to rate (e.g. 'tell my boss', 'do nothing') on a 4-point Likert scale (1= I would do it; 2 = I would probably do it; 3 = I would probably not do it; 4 = I would never do it), from this the four types of coping strategies can be derived: *seeking help*, *avoidance*, *assertiveness*, and *doing nothing*. Therefore, respondents who score low on the Scale indicate that they would endorse that coping strategy (or have already endorsed that coping strategy in the past) when bullying is experienced. Conversely, a high score on the Scale indicates that respondents would not endorse that coping strategy when bullying is experienced. Cronbach's alpha for the original items relating to each coping strategy are, respectively, .71, .64, .47 and .60. The reliability of the coping strategies in the adjusted Coping with Bullying Scale were derived as follows: .74, .80, .70 and .82 correspondingly for Phase 1. However, for the final scale

analysis in the present study Cronbach's alpha for each subscale produced reliabilities of .70, .71, .64 and .65, correspondingly for Phase 2.

It should be noted that the internal reliability for the Assertiveness subscale was shown to be .55, however after removing the problematic item, that of item 16, "Make sure that nothing I do in my work gives the bully an opportunity to bully me", the subscale presented an overall reliability of .64 as mentioned above which was considered acceptable according to the .60 cut-off score proposed by Kim *et al.* (1986; as cited in Bernstein, 1992).

THE DEPENDENT VARIABLES

PSYCHOLOGICAL AND PHYSIOLOGICAL WELL-BEING

Psychological well-being was assessed using the General Health Questionnaire (Goldberg, 1972). The General Health Questionnaire (GHQ) is a self administered screening test which enables the assessment of minor psychiatric disorders in individuals. The focus of the questionnaire is on the psychological attributes of ill-health where the respondents evaluate their present psychological state by comparing it to their usual psychological state. As a result, the questionnaire focuses on symptoms as opposed to traits.

The original form of the GHQ consists of sixty items; however Goldberg (1972) has provided shortened versions of the scale by identifying the "best" thirty, twenty, and twelve items in the past. The shortened versions are administered when the respondent's time is at a premium. The present study used the twelve-item format due to time constraints of the respondents. Each item enquires whether the respondent has recently experienced a particular symptom, or item of behaviour. Responses are recorded on a 4-point Likert scale that ranges from (1) less that usual to (4) much more than usual. Such a response range eliminates the error of central tendency as well as avoids the error of overall agreement that arises when bimodal response scales are used (Goldberg, 1972).

Two scoring procedures have been suggested for use with the GHQ (Goldberg, 1972; Newman, Bland, Orn, 1988). The first scoring procedure, known as the General Health Questionnaire-method, suggested that a score of zero would be assigned if the respondent endorsed the first or second category. Subsequently, if the respondent endorsed the third or fourth category, a score of one would be assigned. With the second procedure, a Likert-method was to be used, with respondents giving scores from one to four for the respective categories (as discussed above). For both scoring procedures comparable reliability and validity characteristics were obtained.

The study assumed the second procedure as this method provides a more acceptable distribution of scores in parametric analysis (Banks, Clegg, Jackson, Kemp, Stafford and Wall, 1980). This method is also used to overcome the potential problems associated with a shortened range (Bluen, 1986; as cited in Bernstein, 1992). Therefore, if respondents score low on the GHQ, this indicates good overall well-being. However, if respondents score high on the GHQ their overall well-being is then considered to be poor.

In terms of the psychometric properties of the GHQ, a number of researchers (Goldberg, 1972; Graetz, 1993; Hung Lok, Shing-Kai Yip, Tak-Sing Lee, Sahota, Kwok-Hung Chung, in press) report that the scale demonstrates satisfactory test-retest reliability over a period of six months, and acceptable split-half reliability. Banks *et al.* (1980) also investigated the efficacy of the GHQ within an organisational setting and found that the GHQ exhibited satisfactory psychometric properties, similar to those demonstrated in a clinical setting. This is further evidenced when administered to three samples, namely, a sample of employees, a sample of school leavers and a sample of unemployed men, where internal reliability of between .82 and .90 was recorded. Accordingly, the GHQ confirmed a sensitivity to sex differences and employment status although it was found to be unrelated to marital status, age, and job level (Banks *et al*., 1980).

When used on a South African sample at separate time intervals, the GHQ reported acceptable internal consistency (.91 – Cronbach's alpha time one, .93 – Cronbach's alpha time two) (Bluen, 1986; as cited in Bernstein, 1992). In the present study, internal reliability of .87 was obtained.

SELF-ESTEEM

Self-esteem was measured using Quinn and Shepard's (1974) four item Self-Esteem at Work Scale. Items refer to self-esteem within a job-related context and are "bipolar adjectival descriptors" separated on a 7-point Likert scale (Bernstein, 1992, p. 114). Respondents are asked to rate the extent to which they feel they are 'not successful/successful', 'not important/important', 'not doing their best/doing their best', and 'sad/happy'. A high score on the Scale represents a high sense of self-esteem, whilst a low score represents a low sense of self-esteem.

In Quinn *et al.*'s (1974) initial study using 1496 respondents, internal reliability of .70 was reported. Correspondingly, in Bernstein's (1992) study using a South African sample, the scale had a reported reliability of .70. In the present study, internal reliability of .76 was obtained.

JOB SATISFACTION

Job satisfaction was measured using the Overall Job Satisfaction Scale (Warr, Cook and Wall, 1979). The scale includes a total of 16 items designed to measure satisfaction with both intrinsic and extrinsic job features. The first 15 items describe specific job features such as the physical work conditions, fellow workers, rate of pay, hours of work and job security. The final item requires respondents to indicate how they feel about their job as a whole. Reponses are recorded on a 7-point Likert format which ranges from (1) "extremely dissatisfied" to (7) "extremely satisfied". Therefore, a low score on the Scale indicates that respondents do not feel very satisfied with their job and/or work environment. Conversely, a high score on the Scale indicates that respondents are satisfied with their job and/or work environment.

Warr *et al.* (1979) notes that the development of the scale was based on a broad literature review, a pilot study, and two investigations with a sample of 200 and 390 male blue collar workers, respectively, in a United Kingdom manufacturing industry. Warr *et al*. (1979) reports acceptable internal reliability of .78, and test-retest reliability of .63 over a six month period. In addition, adequate construct validity has been found with the Overall Job Satisfaction scale correlating significantly ($p < .001$) with measures of intrinsic job motivation ($r = .35$), work involvement ($r = .30$), life satisfaction ($r = .42$), happiness ($r = .49$) and self-rated anxiety ($r = -.24$). Consequently, when tested on a South African sample, Bluen (1986; as cited in Bernstein, 1992) reported acceptable internal reliability of .95, and a significant test-retest reliability coefficient ($r = .63$, $p < .001$). In the present study, internal reliability of .93 was obtained.

INTENTION TO LEAVE

Intention to leave one's job was assessed using the Propensity to Leave Scale (Lyons, 1971). The scale consists of three items designed to measure withdrawal intent. The three items refer to (1) how long subjects would like to continue working in their present place of employment, (2) whether they would continue to work in their present place of employment if they were given the freedom to choose, and (3) whether they would return to their present place of employment if, for some reason, such as ill-health, pregnancy, etc, they had to leave for a period of time.

Bernstein (1992) explains that although the scale is entitled 'Propensity to Leave', the three items actually assess the intention of the respondent to *stay* with their organisation. For the first item a 6-point Likert response format was used in order to maximise response range. The response format for this item ranged from (1) "one year" through to (6) "more than 10 years". A three-point Likert format was used in the present study for the last two items. Thus, for these two items the response format ranged from (1) "no", through (2) "not sure", to (3) "yes" (Bluen, 1986; Morris and Van der Reiss, 1980; as cited in Bernstein, 1992). Further, a low score on the Scale indicates a low intention

to stay with the organisation. On the other hand, a high score on the Scale indicates that the respondent intends to stay with the organisation.

A change from the original format of the scale was the substitution of the word "hospital" with the word "organisation". The scale was originally designed to assess the intention of nurses to leave their employing hospital. However, Rousseau (1978; as cited in Bernstein, 1992) used the scale in an organisational context and substituted the word "hospital" with "organisation". Thereafter, when the scale was used in an organisational context, the words were substituted in the same manner.

Lyons (1971) reported sufficient psychometric properties for the scale, a Spearman Brown internal reliability coefficient of .81. Subsequently, Bluen (1986; as cited in Bernstein, 1992) reported a coefficient alpha of .77 on a South African sample. Although Lyons' (1971) reported reliabilities were obtained with samples of nursing employees, satisfactory psychometric properties have also been obtained with samples of organisational employees (e.g. Bluen, 1986; as cited in Bernstein, 1992; Bernstein, 1992). In the present study, internal reliability of .60 was obtained.

STATISTICAL ANALYSIS

Moderated Multiple Regression (MMR) was used to analyse the data in the present study. A discussion of this statistical procedure follows:

MODERATED MULTIPLE REGRESSION

The statistical technique of Moderated Multiple Regression (MMR) was selected for the analysis of the data in the present study. This technique was developed by Saunders (1956; as cited in Bernstein, 1992) from standardised multiple regression. Standardised multiple regression allows for the assessment of the relationship between a dependent (criterion) and an independent (predictor) variable (Irwin and McClelland, 2001). The dependent variable is regarded as the function of a set of independent variables (Cohen, 1978; as cited in Bernstein, 1992). However, MMR differs

from standard multiple regression by way of including an interaction term in the equation.

According to Irwin *et al*. (2001), the MMR model allows for the simple relationship between the dependent variable and the independent variable to depend on the level of another independent variable (moderator). The moderated relationship, often referred to as the interaction term, is modelled by including a product term as an additional independent variable. The product term refers to the values of the independent variable multiplied by the values of the moderator variable used to represent the moderating effect (Stone and Hollenbeck, 1984). Baron and Kenny (1986) purport that moderation indicates that the causal relationship between two variables changes as a function of the moderator variable. Thus, MMR measures the differential effect of the relationship between the independent variable on the dependent variable, as a function of the moderator, thus rendering the moderator as the third variable in the MMR equation (Baron and Kenny, 1986; Stone *et al*., 1984).

MMR was chosen as a method of analysis for the present study based on two distinguishing qualities. Firstly, MMR is able to include an interaction term, as opposed to the Anova method. The interaction term allows for the inclusion of information about the main and moderating effects of a moderator in the relationship between the independent and dependent variables. Secondly, MMR does not rely on subgrouping (Zedeck, 1971; as cited in Bernstein, 1992).

Although subgrouping is also able to detect moderator effects, there are a few problems inherent in this method (Stone *et al*., 1984; Zedeck, Cranny, Vale and Smith, 1971; Cohen, 1978; as cited in Bernstein, 1992). Firstly, subgrouping analysis relies on the separation of the data sample into subgroups of the moderator variable (e.g. high and low moderator variables), and then determines the relationship between the independent and dependent variables by comparing the results obtained for each of the subgroups. Secondly, subgrouping of the sample is determined through

random subgroup separation. This increases the probability of obtaining erroneous results (Stone *et al.*, 1984).

Furthermore, information is degraded given that quantitative variables are converted into categorical variables. Moreover, statistical power is reduced as data is only compared from the selected subgroups. Thus, information is wasted from the subgroups whose data is not analysed using the subgrouping analysis method (Stone *et al.*, 1984). Stone *et al.* (1984) explain that subgrouping analysis often produces differing and overstated findings concerning moderator variables.

Subsequently, Zedeck (1971; as cited in Bernstein, 1992) suggests that MMR is able to overcome these problems in that MMR asserts three distinct advantages over the subgrouping technique. Firstly, MMR yields greater information regarding the main and interaction effects of the moderator variable. Secondly, as mentioned, MMR comprises prediction equations for the total sample and does not rely on subgrouping; lastly, MMR allows for the analysis of non-linear variables.

Stone *et al.* (1984) demonstrate that MMR is truly a resilient technique given that MMR is able to detect moderator effects even when the data analysis confirms strong main effects for both independent and moderator variables. Even so, MMR identifies moderator effects when the dependent variables have large error components, the reliabilities for independent and moderator variables are low, and/or the independent and moderator variables are partially multicollinear (Stone *et al.*, 1984).

Consequently, on the basis of the above described strengths inherent in the MMR technique, and as the aim of the present study was to assess the moderating and main effects of four coping strategies in the relationship between workplace bullying and the impact of bullying on individual and organisational well-being, the utilization of MMR was considered to be appropriate.

According to Cleary and Kessler (1982) and Lewis-Beck (1980; as cited in Bernstein, 1992), the aim of MMR is to test for significance, the percentage of explained variance in each of the dependent variables due to the independent variable, the hypothesised moderator variable and the interaction term. MMR, through its inclusion of the interaction term, offers a more comprehensive explanation of the dependent variable. Indeed, using this technique enables the assessment of a specific independent variable with greater certainty, since the possible distorting effect of relevant moderator variables (otherwise known as extraneous variables if not accounted for) are taken into account (Cleary *et al*., 1982; Lewis-Beck, 1980; as cited in Bernstein, 1992).

There are two central concepts that represent the interaction effect, namely, the main effect and the moderator effect. A main effect is said to occur when the effect of the independent variable is constant, despite the presence or absence of any other variables or moderating influences (Finney, Mitchell, Cronkite and Moos, 1984). A moderator effect, by contrast, refers to a variable that affects a second variable if the effect of the second variable depends upon the level of the first variable. Thus, the third variable (Z) is said to moderate the relationship between two other variables (X and Y) if the degree of relationship between X and Y is affected by the level of Z (Miles and Shevlin, 2001).

MMR is able to assess both effects through the use of a hierarchical analytical strategy. That is, to determine the existence of an interaction effect, through the use of the product term, all of the variance associated with the main effects of the variable used to form the interaction must be partialled out, and only then will it be possible to assess whether or not there is a true interaction (Stone *et al*., 1984). Thus, the effects of the independent variable (X) and the moderator variable (Z) are first assessed, then automatically partialled out as they are entered before the interaction term (the product of X multiplied by Z) in the moderated regression equation (Suchet, 1984; as cited in Bernstein, 1992).

The significance of the interaction term is then assessed using the standard F-test of significance and comparing the derived values with the critical F-values and degrees of freedom. An overall F-test explains how well a single regression line fits the data. A significant interaction term will indicate "two or more lines that fit the data better than a single regression line" (Bedeian and Mossholder, 1994, p. 162). That is, the regression of Y on X is dependent on the moderator variable (Z) (Bernstein, 1992). A .05 level of significance is applied in determining the existence of a moderator (Zedeck *et al.*, 1971; as cited in Bernstein, 1992).

When applying MMR to the present study, separate regression equations were computed using the statistical computational analysis system, Enterprise Guide 4 (SAS), for each dependent variable, namely, psychological well-being, self-esteem, job satisfaction and the propensity for one to leave one's job. More specifically, for each dependent variable analysis, the first step was to enter the independent variable followed by the moderator, namely, each of the hypothesised coping strategies, that is, the interaction term. For these separate analyses, the .05 level of significance was selected to determine the presence of significant effects. This cut-off point was deemed acceptable according to Zedeck *et al.* (1971; as cited in Bernstein, 1992), and given that MMR is considered as a robust technique (Stone *et al.*, 1984).

However, before the computational analysis of MMR could take place, two assumptions had to be satisfied. A discussion on the two assumptions follows.

LINEARITY

As stated previously, MMR allows for the analysis of non-linear variables (Zedeck *et al.*, 1971; as cited in Bernstein, 1992). Consequently, a linear relationship between the independent and dependent variables are necessary for the use of MMR. As a result, linear regression tests are applied which assesses whether a linear relationship exists between each independent and dependent variable. This is done by categorising between-group sum of squares into the portion expressed by linearity, and that portion due to

deviation from linearity (Bluen, 1986; as cited in Bernstein, 1992). The *F*-test values and the degrees of freedom are then used to determine the significance of linear and non-linear values (Bernstein, 1992).

If a significant *F*-value is found this indicates that there is a deviation from linearity. When this occurs, polynomial regression which is a special case of moderated regression is applied to modify the variable and thus comply with linearity (Irwin *et al.*, 2001). Polynomial regression refers to products (i.e. successive powers) of the independent variable that are included in the regression model that allows the relationship between the independent and dependent variables to be moderated by the level of the same independent variable (Irwin *et al.*, 2001). That is, analysis is done hierarchically by means of adding a higher order polynomial to the equation at each successive step. The original non-linear variable in the regression equation is replaced by the highest order term found to add significantly to the previously explained variance of the dependent variable (Pedhazur, 1982; as cited in Bernstein, 1992).

MEASUREMENT ERROR

In order to ensure an accurate reflection of the data, specifically referring to the measurement of the data and the estimates yielded, it is necessary to confirm that no measurement error exists. While it may be impossible to completely eliminate all measurement error, there is still a need to assess the extent to which measurement error does exit. This can be determined by calculating the internal reliability of all of the instruments used in the present study. That is, by utilizing Cronbach's alpha formula where coefficients above the .60 level of reliability will be considered suitable (Kim *et al.*, 1986; as cited in Bernstein, 1992).

ETHICS

The participants in the present study were employees from a large construction company in South Africa. The participants were white-collar employees as was determined through the targeting of the chosen organisation. This was important for the present study as most of the past

research on bullying has involved the service industry (e.g. nurses) and school children. The sampling strategy that was implemented was convenience volunteer sampling. This allowed all willing and accessible individuals to participate in the study, thus employees in the organisation all had an equal chance of being recruited into the sample. The sampling method was non-probability sampling.

The demographic information sheet and questionnaires were distributed to all participating employees in the organisation through the HR directors' of the participating subdivisions of the construction company. The preamble information sheet explained the purpose of the research and how it was to be executed. The information sheet also explained who the researcher was and that the research was being conducted in order to obtain an Organisational/Industrial Psychology Masters degree. It clarified that participation was voluntary, confidential and anonymous. It explained to the participants that participation would involve completion of the brief biographical blank (to summarise the sample) and a questionnaire that assesses the research variables, namely, perceived bullying behaviour, coping strategies, psychological and physiological well-being, self-esteem, job satisfaction and intention to leave the organisation. Once completed, participants were required to submit their anonymous questionnaires into a sealed envelope provided to them at the onset of the participation. Participants were requested to hand their sealed envelopes to their respective HR director.

The preamble further assured employees that if they decided to participate in the study, the handing in of the questionnaires was considered to be their informed consent after which employees were not allowed to withdraw from the study. Participants were also informed that they were not to be disadvantaged in any way if they did not decide to partake in the research study.

It should also be noted that there was no risk involved to the participants who participated in the research and only summary results were presented to the participating organisation at the end of the research, thus further ensuring anonymity and confidentiality. The raw research data was to be kept by the researcher after completion. The data was to be kept for a minimum of six years and an electronic copy of the summarised data was also to be kept safely by the researcher's supervisor.

The following section pertains to the findings of the moderated multiple regression analysis where analyses of the results are presented, as well as a discussion on the findings.

CHAPTER SIX
RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

RELATIONSHIP OF BIOGRAPHICAL VARIABLES

According to Pedhazur (1982; as cited in Bernstein, 1992), biographical variables such as age, gender, race, language, educational level, marital status, the organisation for which one works and the position one holds within the organisation may be significantly related to the dependent variables, thus it is necessary to assess their relationship and include these variables in the analysis of the data if necessary.

The assessment of the relationships between the biographical variables and the dependent variables was done through correlation analysis. Correlation analysis was selected to assess these relationships due to the functionality of a correlational strategy, that is, to identify and describe relationships between variables (Gravetter *et al*., 2006). No significant relationships were reported between sex, age, language, education, and number of years employed in the organisation (See Table 2, p. 54). However, results did indicate that a person's racial grouping was significantly related to self-esteem. In addition, racial grouping was inversely related to job satisfaction and one's propensity

to leave the organisation. Further, marital status was also significantly related to one's propensity to leave the organisation.

On the basis of these findings, the demographic variables pertaining to race and marital status were included as covariates in the relevant regression equations. This was done in order to control for spuriousness that could arise due to the contribution by the covariate to the variance in the dependent variables (Bluen, 1986; Neale and Liebert, 1980; as cited in Bernstein, 1992). The two assumptions pertaining to the prerequisite analysis of moderated multiple regression, namely linearity and measurement error, are discussed below. In addition, a third assumption, multicollinearity is discussed.

TABLE 2 ***Pearson Correlation Coefficients of the Independent Variable, Dependent Variables, and Demographic Variables***

	1	2	3	4	5
Independent Variable					
1. Workplace Bullying	-	0.35	0.40	-0.47	-0.29
Dependent Variables					
2. Psychological Well-being	0.35	--	0.41	-0.43	-0.24
3. Self Esteem	0.40	0.41	--	-0.40	-0.46
4. Job Satisfaction	-0.47	-0.43	-0.40	--	0.39
5. Intention to Leave	-0.29	-0.24	-0.46	0.39	--
Demographic Variables					
6. Sex	-0.08	-0.07	-0.11	-0.04	-0.05
7. Age	-0.03	0.04	-0.07	-0.01	0.13
8. Racial Grouping	0.07	-0.05	0.22*	-0.25*	-0.31*
9. Home Language	0.02	-0.005	-0.17	0.11	0.15
10. Level of Education	-0.0008	0.11	0.17	0.09	-0.11
11. Marital Status	-0.17	0.06	-0.03	0.05	0.20*
12. Number of years employed in the organisation	-0.03	0.04	-0.03	-0.13	-0.09

LINEARITY

According to assumption one, a test for linearity was conducted for workplace bullying and the four types of coping strategies with every dependent variable. Results revealed that the relationships were all linear as examination of the relevant *F*-value in each instance suggested that all relationships between the dependent and independent variables did not deviate significantly from linearity (See Table 6, p. 59). In addition, correlation analysis of the independent variable on the dependent variables was selected as a linearity measure (Miles *et al.*, 2001). Results revealed that the relationships between the independent and dependent variables were all linear (See Table 2, p. 54). Therefore, the assumption of linearity was deemed to be satisfied.

MEASUREMENT ERROR

Assumption two required the assessment for the presence of measurement error, thus internal consistency reliability tests were conducted. Standardised alpha's used for all the scales in the present study are reported in Table 3 (p. 56). Examination of this table shows that the internal consistency coefficients were satisfactory (*Mean* alpha = .73; range = .61 - .93). Therefore, taking into account the calculated Cronbach's alpha's obtained in the present study and the previously reported reliabilities of the instruments used (see discussion on Measurement Instruments), the assumption of no error was considered to be fulfilled.

MULTICOLLINEARITY

According to assumption three, multicollinearity was assessed by computing the relationship between the independent and moderator variables using Pearson correlation coefficients (see Table 4, p. 56). Multicollinearity refers to the size or extent to which the independent variables are correlated. According to Miles *et al.* (2001), when correlations between variables are too high (i.e. $r > .80$) the variables are then considered to be multicollinear. The calculation of Pearson correlation coefficients allows for the assessment of the relationship between the independent variables. If no correlations greater than .80 are found to exist (See Table 3, p. 56), it can then be assumed that multicollinearity does not exist (Pedhazur, 1982; as cited in Bernstein, 1992).

Results indicated that all of the above requirements were met and therefore the assumption of multicollinearity remained unchallenged.

TABLE 3 ***Internal Consistency of Measuring Instruments***

Measuring Instruments	*N* of Items	Item Range		*SD*	Alpha
		Min	Max		
Coping With Bullying:					
Seeking Help Subscale	6	1	4	1.0336217	0.70
Avoidance Subscale	6	1	4	0.9629083	0.73
Assertiveness Subscale	5	1	4	0.973406	0.67
Do Nothing Subscale	5	1	4	1.084696	0.66
Negative Acts Questionnaire	23	1	5	0.7633222	0.72
Psychological Well-being	12	1	4	0.7511217	0.87
Self Esteem	4	1	7	1.3593275	0.72
Job Satisfaction	16	1	7	1.485218	0.93
*Propensity to Leave**	3	1	3/6	0.68463333	0.61

* Propensity to Leave Scale, items 2 and 3 are scored on a three point scale, items 1 is scored on a six-point scale. A high score on this scale indicates the potential for one to *stay* with the organisation.

TABLE 4 ***Pearson Correlation Coefficients of the Independent Variable and Moderator Variables***

	1	2	3	4	5
Independent Variable					
1. Workplace Bullying	--	0.21*	-0.15	0.05	-0.009
Moderator Variables					
2. Seeking Help	0.21	--	0.17	0.06	0.02
3. Avoidance	-0.15	0.17	--	-0.15	0.52
4. Assertiveness	0.05	0.06	-0.15	--	-0.11
5. Doing Nothing	-0.009	0.02	0.52	-0.11	--

$p < .05$

Given the above discussion, all of the assumptions underlying moderated multiple regression were shown to be satisfied and thus the computing of MMR could then be conducted. The results of these analyses are presented in the following section.

RESULTS OF WORKPLACE BULLYING

In Table 5 (below) the respondents' experiences of negative acts in the workplace are compared to their experience of being bullied. Of the respondents, 81% claim to have never been bullied, and 72% claim to have never experienced a negative act in the workplace. Interestingly, 10% of respondents claim to have experienced bullying on rare occasions, whereas 21% of respondents claim to have experienced negative acts 'now and then'. This may indicate a discrepancy in the understanding of workplace bullying and negative acts towards a person. Six percent of respondents experience bullying on a monthly basis, and only three percent experience negative acts on a monthly basis. Whilst no respondents indicated that they were bullied on a weekly basis, two percent of the respondents claim to experience negative acts on a weekly basis. Three percent of respondents are believed to be bullied on a daily basis, and only two percent experience negative acts on a daily basis.

TABLE 5 ***Reported Experience of Negative Acts in the Workplace Compared To Reported Experience of Being Bullied in the Workplace***

EXPERIENCE OF NEGATIVE ACTS		**SELF REPORTED BULLIED**	
Answer Categories		Answer Categories	
Never	72%	No	81%
Now and then	21%	Rarely	10%
Monthly	3 %	Now and then	6%
Weekly	2%	Several times per week	0%
Daily	2%	Daily	3%

RESULTS OF THE MODERATED MULTIPLE REGRESSION ANALYSIS

Results pertaining to the moderated multiple regression (MMR) analysis are discussed below. A summary of the MMR model for the independent variable, moderator variables and dependent variables are presented in Table 6 (p. 59). Following Table 6 (p. 59) the results for each variable, namely, the independent variable of workplace bullying, the moderator variables of seeking help, avoidance, assertiveness, doing nothing; and the dependent variables of psychological and physiological well-being, self esteem, job satisfaction and propensity to leave are disclosed separately.

Following the disclosure of the moderated multiple regression results, each significant effect, as well as the non-significant results are discussed. Thereafter, limitations and theoretical implications for future research of the study will be discussed.

TABLE 6 ***Summary of the Moderated Multiple Regression Model for the Independent Variable and Moderator Variables on the Dependent Variables***

	R^2	*F* (df1; df2)	*p*-Value
Psychological Well-being			
Seeking Help	0.25	2.16 (13; 84)	0.0183*
Avoidance	0.28	2.50 (13; 84)	0.0061*
Assertiveness	0.28	2.58 (13; 84)	0.0048*
Doing Nothing	0.26	2.29 (13; 84)	0.0120*
Self Esteem			
Seeking Help	0.31	2.85 (13; 84)	0.0020*
Avoidance	0.37	3.79 (13; 84)	<.0001*
Assertiveness	0.31	2.85 (13; 84)	0.0019*
Doing Nothing	0.30	2.85 (13; 84)	0.0020*
Job Satisfaction			
Seeking Help	0.33	3.19 (13; 84)	0.0006*
Avoidance	0.35	3.48 (13; 84)	0.0002*
Assertiveness	0.33	3.25 (13; 84)	0.0005*
Doing Nothing	0.33	3.21 (13; 84)	0.0006*
Propensity to Leave			
Seeking Help	0.23	1.90 (13; 84)	0.0416*
Avoidance	0.22	1.86 (13; 84)	0.0466*
Assertiveness	0.22	1.88 (13; 84)	0.0447*
Doing Nothing	0.23	1.94 (13; 84)	0.0367*

$p < .05$

A detailed discussion of the results as indicated above is discussed below.

PSYCHOLOGICAL WELL-BEING

Psychological well-being was regressed onto the independent variable of workplace bullying and the moderator variable of seeking help. An interaction term of bullying x seeking help followed thereafter. Three significant findings emerged. Workplace bullying had a significant main effect on psychological well-being (F (13; 84) = 2.16, $p < .05$) explaining 0.13% of the variance. In addition, the moderator variable of seeking help demonstrated a significant main effect on psychological well-being, explaining 0.25% of the variance. Third, the interaction effect of bullying x seeking help had a significant interaction effect on psychological well-being (F (13; 84) = 2.16, $p < .05$) explaining 0.02% of the variance. Results of the moderated multiple regression for workplace bullying and seeking help on psychological well-being are presented in Table 7.

TABLE 7 ***Moderated Multiple Regression Model for Workplace Bullying and Seeking Help on Psychological Well-being***

Variable	Beta	Standardized Estimate	*t*-Value	*p*-Value
Workplace Bullying	0.013	0.29	2.83	0.0059*
Seeking Help	0.025	0.22	2.09	0.0395*
Bullying x Help	0.002	0.19	2.01	0.0472*

*$p < .05$

Psychological well-being was regressed onto workplace bullying and the coping strategy of avoidance. An interaction term of bullying x avoidance then followed. Two significant findings emerged. Workplace bullying had a significant main effect on psychological well-being (F (13; 84) = 2.50, $p < .05$) explaining 0.15% of the variance. In addition, the interaction effect of bullying x avoidance had a significant, yet inverse effect on psychological well-being (F (13; 84) = 2.50, $p < .05$) explaining 0.04% of the variance. Results of the moderated multiple regression for workplace bullying and avoidance on psychological well-being are presented in Table 8.

TABLE 8 ***Moderated Multiple Regression Model for Workplace Bullying and Avoidance on Psychological Well-being***

Variable	Beta	Standardized Estimate	*t*-Value	*p*-Value
Workplace Bullying	0.015	0.35	3.44	0.0009*
Avoidance	-0.009	-0.07	-0.65	0.5199
Bullying x Avoid	-0.004	-0.23	-2.75	0.0074*

*$p < .05$

Psychological well-being was once again regressed onto workplace bullying, followed by the moderator variable of assertiveness. An interaction term of bullying x assertiveness followed thereafter. Two significant findings were observed. Workplace bullying had a significant main effect on psychological well-being (F (13; 84) = 2.58, $p < .05$) explaining 0.12% of the variance. In addition, the interaction effect of bullying x assertiveness had a significant effect on psychological well-being (F (13; 84) = 2.58, $p < .05$) explaining 0.03% of the variance. Results of the moderated multiple regression for workplace bullying and assertiveness on psychological well-being are presented in Table 9.

TABLE 9 ***Moderated Multiple Regression Model for Workplace Bullying and Assertiveness on Psychological Well-being***

Variable	Beta	Standardized Estimate	*t*-Value	*p*-Value
Workplace Bullying	0.012	0.28	2.79	0.0065*
Assertiveness	0.006	0.04	0.44	0.6602
Bullying x Assert	0.003	0.29	2.88	0.0050*

*$p < .05$

Psychological well-being was finally regressed onto workplace bullying followed by the coping strategy of doing nothing. An interaction term of bullying x doing nothing followed thereafter. Two significant findings were observed. Workplace bullying had a significant main effect on psychological well-being (F (13; 84) = 2.29, $p < .05$) explaining 0.16% of the variance. In

addition, the interaction effect of bullying x doing nothing had a significant, yet inverse effect on psychological well-being (F (13; 84) = 2.29, $p < .05$) explaining 0.04% of the variance. Results of the moderated multiple regression for workplace bullying and doing nothing on psychological well-being are presented in Table 10.

TABLE 10 ***Moderated Multiple Regression Model for Workplace Bullying and Doing Nothing on Psychological Well-being***

Variable	Beta	Standardized Estimate	*t*-Value	*p*-Value
Workplace Bullying	0.016	0.36	3.47	0.0008*
Doing Nothing	-0.00006	-0.0005	-0.00	0.9968
Bullying x Nothing	-0.004	-0.23	-2.33	0.0224*

*$p < .05$

SELF ESTEEM

Self Esteem was regressed onto the covariate race, followed by the independent variable of workplace bullying and the moderator variable of seeking help. An interaction term of bullying x seeking help followed thereafter. Only one significant finding emerged. Workplace bullying had a significant main effect on self esteem (F (13; 84) = 2.85, $p < .05$) explaining 0.33% of the variance. Results of the moderated multiple regression for workplace bullying and seeking help on self esteem are presented in Table 11.

TABLE 11 ***Moderated Multiple Regression Model for Workplace Bullying and Seeking Help on Self Esteem***

Variable	Beta	Standardized Estimate	*t*-Value	*p*-Value
Covariate				
Race	0.47	0.21	1.69	0.0951
Workplace Bullying	0.033	0.33	3.39	0.0011*
Seeking Help	0.035	0.14	1.35	0.1816
Bullying x Help	-0.0002	-0.008	-0.09	0.9279

*$p < .05$

Self Esteem was regressed onto the same covariate as outlined above, followed by workplace bullying and the coping strategy of avoidance. An interaction term of bullying x avoidance then followed. Two significant findings emerged. Workplace bullying had a significant main effect on self esteem (F (13; 84) = 3.79, $p < .05$) explaining 0.37% of the variance. In addition, the interaction effect of bullying x avoidance had a significant, inverse effect on self esteem (F (13; 84) = 3.79, $p < .05$) explaining 0.09% of the variance. Results of the moderated multiple regression for workplace bullying and avoidance on self esteem are presented in Table 12.

TABLE 12 ***Moderated Multiple Regression Model for Workplace Bullying and Avoidance on Self Esteem***

Variable	Beta	Standardized Estimate	*t*-Value	*p*-Value
Covariate				
Race	0.25	0.11	0.93	0.3533
Workplace Bullying	0.037	0.37	3.94	0.0002*
Avoidance	-0.023	-0.08	-0.76	0.4514
Bullying x Avoid	-0.009	-0.28	-2.92	0.0045*

*$p < .05$

Self Esteem was again regressed onto the same covariate as above, followed by workplace bullying and the coping strategy of assertiveness. An interaction term of bullying x assertiveness followed thereafter. Only one significant finding was observed. Workplace bullying had a significant main effect on self esteem (F (13; 84) = 2.85, $p < .05$) explaining 0.34% of the variance. Results of the moderated multiple regression for workplace bullying and assertiveness on self esteem are presented in Table 13.

TABLE 13 ***Moderated Multiple Regression Model for Workplace Bullying and Assertiveness on Self Esteem***

Variable	Beta	Standardized Estimate	*t*-Value	*p*-Value
Covariate				
Race	0.47	0.21	1.70	0.0934
Workplace Bullying	0.034	0.34	3.41	0.0010*
Assertiveness	0.027	0.08	0.85	0.3976
Bullying x Assert	-0.0006	-0.03	-0.28	0.7786

*$p < .05$

Self Esteem was finally regressed onto the same covariate as outlined in the above analyses, followed by workplace bullying and the coping strategy of doing nothing. An interaction term of bullying x doing nothing then followed. Only one significant finding emerged. Workplace bullying had a significant main effect on self esteem (F (13; 84) = 2.85, $p < .05$) explaining 0.34% of the variance. Results of the moderated multiple regression for workplace bullying and avoidance on self esteem are presented in Table 14.

TABLE 14 ***Moderated Multiple Regression Model for Workplace Bullying and Doing Nothing on Self Esteem***

Variable	Beta	Standardized Estimate	*t*-Value	*p*-Value
Covariate				
Race	0.47	0.21	1.66	0.1015
Workplace Bullying	0.034	0.34	3.35	0.0012*
Doing Nothing	-0.005	-0.01	-0.14	0.8923
Bullying x Nothing	-0.0005	-0.01	-0.14	0.8909

*$p < .05$

JOB SATISFACTION

Job Satisfaction was regressed onto the covariate race, followed by workplace bullying and the moderator variable, seeking help. An interaction term of bullying x seeking help followed thereafter. One significant finding was observed. Workplace bullying had a significant, inverse effect on job satisfaction (F (13; 84) = 3.19, $p < .05$) explaining 0.49% of the variance. Results of the moderated multiple regression for workplace bullying and seeking help on job satisfaction are presented in Table 15.

TABLE 15 ***Moderated Multiple Regression Model for Workplace Bullying and Seeking Help on Job Satisfaction***

Variable	Beta	Standardized Estimate	*t*-Value	*p*-Value
Covariate				
Race	-0.43	-0.20	-1.64	0.1053
Workplace Bullying	-0.049	-0.52	-5.39	<0.0001*
Seeking Help	0.037	-.15	1.51	0.1337
Bullying x Help	-0.0004	-0.02	-0.19	0.8510

*$p < .05$

Job Satisfaction was again regressed onto the same covariate as outlined above, followed by workplace bullying and the coping strategy of avoidance. An interaction term of bullying x avoidance then followed. Two significant findings emerged. Workplace bullying had a significant main, inverse effect on job satisfaction (F (13; 84) = 3.48, $p < .05$) explaining 0.52% of the variance. In addition, the moderator variable of avoidance demonstrated a significant inverse effect on job satisfaction (F (13; 84) = 3.48, $p < .05$) explaining 0.60% of the variance. Results of the moderated multiple regression for workplace bullying and avoidance on job satisfaction are presented in Table 16.

TABLE 16 ***Moderated Multiple Regression Model for Workplace Bullying and Avoidance on Job Satisfaction***

Variable	Beta	Standardized Estimate	*t*-Value	*p*-Value
Covariate				
Race	-0.32	-0.15	-1.21	0.2305
Workplace Bullying	-0.052	-0.54	-5.68	<0.0001*
Avoidance	-0.060	-0.22	-1.99	0.0497*
Bullying x Avoid	0.005	0.15	1.60	0.1138

*$p < .05$

Job Satisfaction was regressed onto the same covariate as above, followed by workplace bullying and the coping strategy of assertiveness. An interaction term of bullying x assertiveness then followed. One significant finding was observed. Workplace bullying had a significant, inverse effect on job satisfaction (F (13; 84) = 3.25, $p < .05$) explaining 0.49% of the variance. Results of the moderated multiple regression for workplace bullying and assertiveness on job satisfaction are presented in Table 17.

TABLE 17 ***Moderated Multiple Regression Model for Workplace Bullying and Assertiveness on Job Satisfaction***

Variable	Beta	Standardized Estimate	*t*-Value	*p*-Value
Covariate				
Race	-0.43	-0.20	-1.65	0.1025
Workplace Bullying	-0.049	-0.51	-5.34	<0.0001*
Assertiveness	-0.037	-0.12	-1.27	0.2090
Bullying x Assert	-0.002	-0.08	-0.78	0.4395

*$p < .05$

Finally, job satisfaction was regressed onto the same covariate as outlined in the above analyses, followed by the independent variable, workplace bullying and the moderator variable, doing nothing. An interaction term of bullying x doing nothing followed thereafter. One significant finding emerged. Workplace bullying had a significant, inverse effect on job satisfaction (F (13; 84) = 3.21, $p < .05$) explaining 0.51% of the variance. Results of the moderated multiple regression for workplace bullying and doing nothing on job satisfaction are presented in Table 18.

TABLE 18 ***Moderated Multiple Regression Model for Workplace Bullying and Doing Nothing on Job Satisfaction***

Variable	Beta	Standardized Estimate	*t*-Value	*p*-Value
Covariate				
Race	-0.42	-0.19	-1.59	0.1146
Workplace Bullying	-0.051	-0.53	-5.41	<0.0001*
Doing Nothing	0.017	0.06	0.54	0.5885
Bullying x Nothing	0.001	0.04	0.46	0.6475

*$p < .05$

PROPENSITY TO LEAVE

Propensity to leave was regressed onto the covariates race and marital status, followed by workplace bullying and the coping strategy of seeking help. An interaction term of bullying x seeking help followed thereafter. Two significant findings were observed. Workplace bullying had a significant, inverse effect on propensity to leave (F (13; 84) = 1.90, $p < .05$) explaining 0.18% of the variance. In addition, race had a significant, inverse effect on propensity to leave, explaining 47% of the variance. Results of the moderated multiple regression for workplace bullying and seeking help on propensity to leave are presented in Table 19.

TABLE 19 ***Moderated Multiple Regression Model for Workplace Bullying and Seeking Help on Intention to Leave***

Variable	Beta	Standardized Estimate	*t*-Value	*p*-Value
Covariates				
Race	-0.47	-0.28	-2.17	0.0332*
Marital Status	0.24	0.14	1.33	0.1877
Workplace Bullying	-0.018	-0.24	-2.36	0.0205*
Seeking Help	-0.005	-0.02	-0.24	0.8132
Bullying x Help	-0.001	-0.07	-0.74	0.4644

*$p < .05$

A further statistical analysis for the dependent variable of propensity to leave was undertaken. The dependent variable was regressed onto the same covariates as outlined above, followed by the independent variable of workplace bullying and the moderator variable of avoidance. An interaction term of bullying x avoidance then followed. Two significant findings emerged. Workplace bullying had a significant main, inverse effect on propensity to leave (F (13; 84) = 1.86, $p < .05$) explaining 0.19% of the variance. In addition, race had a significant, inverse effect on propensity to leave, explaining 47% of the variance. Results of the moderated multiple regression for workplace bullying and avoidance on propensity to leave are presented in Table 20.

TABLE 20 ***Moderated Multiple Regression Model for Workplace Bullying and Avoidance on Intention to Leave***

Variable	Beta	Standardized Estimate	*t*-Value	*p*-Value
Covariates				
Race	-0.47	-0.28	-2.07	0.0419*
Marital Status	0.25	0.15	1.34	0.1830
Workplace Bullying	-0.019	-0.26	-2.47	0.0156*
Avoidance	-0.018	-0.08	-0.70	0.4832
Bullying x Avoid	-0.001	0.04	0.41	0.6819

*$p < .05$

Propensity to leave was regressed onto the covariates race and marital status, followed by workplace bullying and the coping strategy of assertiveness. An interaction term of bullying x assertiveness followed thereafter. Two significant findings were observed. Workplace bullying had a significant, inverse effect on propensity to leave (F (13; 84) = 1.88, $p < .05$) explaining 0.19% of the variance. In addition, race had a significant, inverse effect on propensity to leave, explaining 49% of the variance. Results of the moderated multiple regression for workplace bullying and assertiveness on propensity to leave are presented in Table 21.

TABLE 21 ***Moderated Multiple Regression Model for Workplace Bullying and Assertiveness on Intention to Leave***

Variable	Beta	Standardized Estimate	*t*-Value	*p*-Value
Covariates				
Race	-0.49	-0.29	-2.27	0.0256*
Marital Status	0.23	0.14	1.26	0.2125
Workplace Bullying	-0.019	-0.26	-2.48	0.0151*
Assertiveness	0.017	0.07	0.69	0.4917
Bullying x Assert	0.001	0.06	0.56	0.5802

*$p < .05$

Finally, propensity to leave was regressed onto the same covariates as outlined in the above analyses, followed by workplace bullying and the coping strategy of doing nothing. An interaction term of bullying x doing nothing then followed. Two significant findings emerged. Workplace bullying had a significant main effect on propensity to leave (F (13; 84) = 1.94, $p < .05$) explaining 0.2% of the variance. In addition, race had a significant, inverse effect on propensity to leave, explaining 46% of the variance. Results of the moderated multiple regression for workplace bullying and doing nothing on propensity to leave are presented in Table 22.

TABLE 22 Moderated Multiple Regression Model for Workplace Bullying and Doing Nothing on Intention to Leave

Variable	Beta	Standardized Estimate	*t*-Value	*p*-Value
Covariates				
Race	-0.46	-0.28	-2.12	0.0372*
Marital Status	0.26	0.15	1.43	0.1554
Workplace Bullying	-0.020	-0.27	-2.60	0.0111*
Doing Nothing	0.033	0.15	1.25	0.2165
Bullying x Nothing	0.003	0.09	0.98	0.3309

*$p < .05$

SUMMARY OF RESULTS

The previous section presented the results of phase two of the study. Statistical analyses were conducted once the assumptions underlying the statistical technique of moderated multiple regression were fulfilled.

The analyses revealed that:

1) Workplace bullying demonstrated a main relationship on all of the dependent variables. However, there was an inverse relationship between *job satisfaction* and *propensity to leave* on workplace bullying;

2) an interaction effect for all four coping strategies on the dependent variable of *psychological well-being* was reported. However, interaction effects for the coping strategies of *avoidance* and *doing nothing* had an inverse relationship on psychological well-being;

3) an interaction effect for the coping strategy *avoidance* on self esteem was reported;

4) direct effects were reported between the coping strategy of *seeking help* and *psychological well-being*, as well as between the coping strategy of *avoidance* and *job satisfaction*, albeit the latter was inverse in nature;

5) In terms of propensity to leave, the covariate race had a significant, yet inverse effect on this dependent variable.

No moderating effects for job satisfaction and propensity to leave were reported. Both the statistically significant results as well as all non-significant findings will be discussed in the following section. Thereafter, limitations and theoretical implications for future research of the study will be discussed.

DISCUSSION

The aim of the second phase of the study was to investigate (1) whether the independent variable directly impacted upon the dependent variables, (2) whether the type of coping strategy employed by the victim reduced the bullying relationship on individual and organisational outcomes, and (3) to determine which style of coping was more or less effective. It was proposed that four different styles of coping would have different effects on the bullying – well-being relationship. Two effects of coping were assessed, the *main* effect of coping on individual/ organisational outcomes, i.e. the dependent variables, and the *moderating* effects of coping in the relationship between bullying and the dependent variables. Further, the direct effect of bullying

upon individual/organisational well-being was assessed. Three hypotheses were proposed within which these two effects were assessed.

The *first hypothesis* proposed that perceived bullying would have a direct effect on psychological and physiological well-being, self-esteem, job satisfaction and the intention for one to leave the organisation.

The *second hypothesis* proposed that certain types of coping strategies could moderate the impact of perceived bullying on the dependent variables.

The *third hypothesis* proposed that different coping strategies may be more or less effective on the bullying – well-being relationship.

With regard to the testing of *hypothesis one,* direct relationships were found for the independent variable on all of the dependent variables, thus supporting hypothesis one. Job satisfaction and intention to leave demonstrated an inverse relationship with workplace bullying.

With regard to the relationships found in *hypothesis two*, all four of the proposed coping strategies demonstrated a moderating effect on the dependent variable of psychological well-being; only the coping strategy of *avoidance* demonstrated a moderating, yet inverse relationship on the dependent variable of self esteem; and no moderating effects were found for the four coping strategies on job satisfaction and intention to leave. Thus, hypothesis two was only partially supported. Lastly, the covariate of *race* demonstrated an inverse relationship on intention to leave.

Hypothesis three demonstrated two direct relationships for the moderator variables on the dependent variables. That is, the coping strategy of seeking help demonstrated a significant relationship on psychological and physiological well-being. However, this coping strategy was found to be less effective and inversely related which was unexpected. In other words, it did not improve psychological and physiological well-being in a bullying situation. In fact, it exacerbated perceptions of bullying. In addition, the coping strategy

of avoidance demonstrated a significant, yet inverse relationship on job satisfaction. This was found to occur in the expected direction. That is, low scores for the avoidance coping strategy on the Coping with Bullying Scale (i.e. response 1 = "I would do it") relate to a high tendency to endorse that coping strategy. Conversely, a high score on the Job Satisfaction Scale indicates high job satisfaction. Therefore, the avoidance coping strategy was considered effective in improving job satisfaction in a bullying situation. Thus, hypothesis three was partially supported as only the coping strategies of avoidance and doing nothing were found to be effective in dealing with bullying as a stressor.

The above mentioned findings will be discussed in the following section.

STATISTICAL DISCUSSION ON WORKPLACE BULLYING

In Table 5 (p. 57) the respondents' experiences of negative acts in the workplace was compared to their experience of being bullied. Results indicated that a low amount of negative acts, as well as workplace bullying was experienced by the respondents.

Given the above information, it seems that the respondents who claimed to have experienced negative acts and those who claimed to be bullied were similar (See Table 5, p. 57). However, a slight discrepancy in the understanding of negative acts and workplace bullying was evident by the corresponding 'now and then' and 'rarely' results (21% and 10%, respectively), as well as the corresponding 'monthly' and 'now and then' results (3% and 6%, respectively). Although the actual definition of workplace bullying was given at the end of the NAQ-R (Einarsen *et al*., 2001) that pertained to item 23 (see discussion on Measuring Instruments), the discrepancy highlighted above may be due to the definition of bullying provided by Einarsen *et al.* (2001) which defined bullying as a continuous occurrence of negative actions (as opposed to a once-off event) whereas items 1 to 22 referred to intermittent negative acts. Thus, the perceived victim was then required to distinguish between *continuous* and *intermittent* negative acts towards him or her as required by the NAQ-R (Einarsen *et al*., 2001)

In addition, the understanding of bullying may have varied across racial groupings in the present study. According to Altman (2009), research in the UK (Quine, 2002, Lewis and Gunn, 2007; as cited in Altman, 2009) has indicated that persons belonging to the African racial group report being bullied at work more so than other racial groupings (i.e. Whites, Hispanic/Latino and Asian). Altman (2009) noted that Africans were likely to perceive being bullied more so if the context of bullying was based on race. Furthermore, Africans were likely to experience more bullying in general (whether race related or not) (Altman, 2009). Although this research was done in the UK, it may be possible that in South Africa there is a slight distinction between the terms *discrimination* and *workplace bullying* in the African culture (Altman, 2009), which may further explain the discrepancy in understanding the term bullying as opposed to intermittent negative acts, and therefore lowered perceptions of bullying within the total sample.

Furthermore, Whites were less likely to experience negative acts such as bullying when compared to other racial groupings in similar studies (i.e. African (American), Hispanic/Latino and Asian) (Fox and Stallworth, 2005; Altman, 2009). As discussed above this may be due to Africans contextualising the negative actions towards them as 'being bullied', whereas Whites are more likely to differentiate negative actions as being either "modernized" discrimination based on race, general discrimination, or bullying (Altman, 2009, p. 40).

Subsequently, the African racial grouping in the present study accounted for 37% of the respondents, whilst 41% were Whites (see Table 1, p. 39). This difference, although quite similar may possibly explain the scarce occurrence of bullying in the organisation investigated in the present study. Moreover, as discussed above, the higher occurrence of negative acts experienced in some cases was reported as 21% occurring 'now and then', whilst the equivalent rating of being bullied 'rarely' was only reported as 10% in the study (see Table 5, p. 57). In addition, the slightly higher rate of reported 'now and then' bullying when compared to the equivalent rating of negative acts occurring 'monthly' was 6% and 3%, respectively (see Table 5, p. 57), further

suggesting a possible racial discrepancy in the understanding of discrimination versus bullying in the African versus White groups.

STATISTICALLY SIGNIFICANT MAIN EFFECTS

THE MAIN EFFECT OF WORKPLACE BULLYING

The present study showed that bullying indicated a direct effect on all of the dependent variables, namely, psychological and physiological well-being, self esteem, job satisfaction and intention to leave. These findings thus confirmed hypothesis one. However, the relationships between job satisfaction and intention to leave were inverse. This finding further confirmed that a low occurrence of negative acts and bullying was found amongst respondents, where a high amount of job satisfaction was reported. In addition, as discussed previously (see Measuring Instruments), the Propensity to Leave Scale (Lyons, 1971) assessed the propensity for one to *stay* within the organisation. Accordingly, as perceptions of bullying in general were low, respondents reported a high propensity to stay with the organisation.

PSYCHOLOGICAL AND PHYSIOLOGICAL WELL-BEING

As can be seen from the **Correlation Coefficient Table** (Table 2, p. 54), bullying correlated significantly with psychological well-being where 35% of the relationship was explained. This finding was found to occur in the expected direction. That is, a decrease in bullying leads to an increase in the psychological and physical well-being (Kauppinen *et al.*, 2008). This was confirmed in the findings that indicated there was a low occurrence of bullying within the organisation, thus accounting for a high occurrence of well-being among participants in the study. For instance, a low score was found on the NAQ-R indicating a low amount of bullying. A low score was also found on the GHQ, however this accounts for a high sense of well-being. Thus, it seems that respondents report feeling generally satisfied with their overall health and well-being.

SELF ESTEEM

Bullying correlated significantly with self esteem explaining 40% of the relationship (see Table 2, p. 54). This finding was found to occur in the expected direction. That is, the presence of bullying impacts negatively on a person's self esteem (Matthiesen *et al.*, 2004). Conversely, a low amount of bullying tends to indicate a good sense of self esteem. As discussed, results indicated a small occurrence of bullying within the organisation, equally a high occurrence of self esteem among participants in the study was found. Thus, as suggested by the results, respondents reported feeling happy with their self esteem at work. The fact that people may already have had high self esteem to start with could also account for the reduced perceptions of bullying. This is due to the fact that a person high in self esteem is less likely to immediately perceive a situation as stressful or threatening (Hobfoll, 1985).

JOB SATISFACTION

As can be seen from Table 2 (p. 54), bullying correlated significantly with job satisfaction where 47% of the relationship was explained. This finding was found to be inverse in nature. As discussed in the literature, bullying is associated with negative outcomes for the individual and the organisation (Turney, 2003; Matthiesen *et al.*, 2004; Lewis, 2004), that is, as bullying increases job satisfaction decreases, and vice versa. In the present study the findings occurred in the expected direction, that is, a low score of bullying was reported indicating a low occurrence of bullying, and a high score for job satisfaction was reported indicating high job satisfaction. Therefore, respondents reported feeling satisfied about certain aspects of their job.

INTENTION TO LEAVE

As can be seen from the **Correlation Coefficient Table** (Table 2, p. 54), bullying correlated significantly with intention to leave where 29% of the relationship was explained. This finding was inverse in nature. It will be remembered that the Propensity to Leave Scale (Lyons, 1971) assessed an individual's intention to *stay* with the organisation. As such, a low amount of bullying was reported thus it was expected that intention to stay would be high. The results supported this assumption. Again, the inverse relationship

mentioned confirmed the low occurrence of bullying within the organisation. In addition, the covariate of *race* was also found to contribute to an inverse relationship on intention to leave. Results indicated that those who were scored as 'non-African' (i.e. Whites, Coloureds and Asians) were more likely to continue their tenure with the organisation. This is consistent with previous research that notes that Whites are less likely to experience bullying than Africans (Altman, 2009) and as a result may tend to stay with an organisation for longer periods of time if the work environment contributes positively to their overall well-being, self-esteem and satisfaction with their job, as the results suggest.

The sample in the study constituted majority White (41%) than African (37%) respondents thus possibly explaining the intention for respondents to stay with the organisation. Moreover, as mentioned (see Table 1, p. 39) a large portion of the sample was predominantly White, thus possibly accounting for the increased tendency towards 'non-Africans' to stay with the organisation. Furthermore, majority of the sample was reported to be Male, and married (see Table 1, p. 39). This may in turn explain the tendency for the sample to stay with the organisation as majority of the respondents may in fact be considered as breadwinners to their families and thus cannot afford to leave the organisation, especially during the current economic downturn (Cokayne, 2007; Naidoo, 2009; Donnelly, 2009). Additionally, the mean age of the sample was 40 years of age ($M = 40.51$). Research indicates that company turnover lessens with age, and diminishes with higher qualifications (De Bartolo and Stranges, 2008). As such, the highest qualification indicated by the sample was a Matric ($N = 37$). However, of the 40 responses pertaining to educational level reported for Whites, nine (22.5%) participants indicated that their highest level of qualification was a degree, whilst of the 37 African responses only two (0.05%) respondents indicated that their highest level of qualification was a degree.

Interestingly, more Whites (37%) reported having a Matric than the African respondents (27%), although the African respondents reported more certificate/diploma related qualifications (38%) when compared to that of

Whites (17.5%). Furthermore, the highest qualification for both Coloured and Asian respondents reported was a Matric, 57% and 50% respectively. As such, given that these groupings reported a lower overall qualification, and that these respondents were grouped as 'non-African' together with the White respondents, this may possibly explain the tendency for individuals to stay with the organisations as job opportunities may not be as readily available as those available to higher qualified individuals. Although, as mentioned, turnover diminishes with higher qualifications (De Bartolo *et al.*, 2008), it can be assumed that individuals with lesser qualifications compared to those with higher qualifications are more likely to stay within the organisation. The reasons for their tenure may however differ. For example, higher qualified individuals may be given more promotable opportunities whereas less qualified individuals will stay with the organisation due to a good sense of job security. As such, given that majority of the sample was Male, research indicates that males attach greater importance to job security (Larsen, 2008). Furthermore, those with lower qualifications could have less lateral and upward mobility as compared to those with higher qualifications, and they are therefore more likely to stay within the organisation (De Bartolo *et al.*, 2008). Therefore, the demographics of the sample may further explain the intention for individuals to stay with the organisation.

The findings relating to the direct relationship between bullying, psychological and physiological well-being and self esteem were consistent with previous research (Steinman, n.d.a; Jennifer, 2000; Namie, 2000; Turney, 2003; Matthiesen *et al.*, 2004; Hoel *et al.*, 2004; Lewis, 2004;). The findings relating to the inverse relationships between bullying and job satisfaction, and intention to leave were expected. As discussed, these findings may be due to the low amount of perceived bullying in the organisation examined (see Table 5, p. 57), however, intrinsic individual factors may have also played a role in the positive well-being, self-esteem and job satisfaction reported by individuals and thus may explain the low occurrence of bullying and intention for one to stay with the organisation (Hobfoll, 1985; Mobley, 1977).

THE MODERATING EFFECT OF THE FOUR COPING STRATEGIES ON THE DEPENDENT VARIABLES

SEEKING HELP AS A COPING STRATEGY

Results indicated that the moderating variable of *seeking help* demonstrated a positive moderating relationship between the variables bullying and psychological and physiological well-being. That is, the interaction effect accounted for 0.02% of the variance. Seeking help did not demonstrate any other moderating relationships on the remaining dependent variables investigated. In addition, results indicated that seeking help may be employed as a coping strategy if exposed to bullying in order for the victim to attempt to improve their psychological and physiological well-being. However, theoretically the relational direction of these results indicated that as seeking help increases, so will bullying. Thus these results did not occur in the expected direction.

In fact, the results indicated that an increase in seeking help behaviour could lead to a possible increase in bullying. This may be due to the victim publicising their distress by seeking help. This behaviour may draw the attention of the bully who may see further opportunity to take advantage of the situation. Although, the coping strategy of seeking help may be employed above other coping strategies as consequences of seeking help may be seemingly less to the victim than that of, for example, the assertiveness coping strategy. However, these assumptions were beyond the scope of this study and may also be attributable to individual factors of the person and/ or victim. Therefore, the coping strategy of seeking help was not considered as an effective means of coping with bullying when taking into account negative individual outcomes.

AVOIDANCE AS A COPING STRATEGY

Results indicated that *avoidance* demonstrated a moderating relationship between bullying and psychological and physiological well-being by accounting for 0.04% of the variance. However, this relationship demonstrated an inverse moderating relationship. In addition, avoidance

demonstrated a moderating relationship between the variables bullying and self esteem. Again, an inverse moderating relationship was demonstrated explaining 0.09% of the variance. The inverse relationships mentioned suggested that the use of avoidance as a coping strategy may lead to an increase in one's psychological and physiological well-being, as well as their self esteem. Furthermore, a direct inverse relationship was found on job satisfaction. This further indicates that avoidance is a useful coping strategy if a victim is focused on improving their overall job satisfaction by attempting to avoid the negative consequences of bullying. That is, the relational direction of bullying on the dependent variables when utilizing avoidance as a coping strategy was inverse however the findings did occur in the expected direction. For instance, a low score of bullying was reported which indicated a low amount of bullying being experienced by respondents. Conversely, a low score on the Coping with Bullying Scale indicates a high endorsement for that coping strategy (i.e. avoidance). A low score on the GHQ and the Self Esteem Scale indicates a high sense of well-being and self-esteem. Also, inversely, a high score on the Job Satisfaction Scale indicates a high feeling of satisfaction with one's job. Thus, avoidance was deemed as an effective coping strategy when the possibility of negative consequences of bullying on individual and organisational outcomes is considered.

ASSERTIVENESS AS A COPING STRATEGY

Results indicated that *assertiveness* demonstrated a positive moderating relationship between the variables bullying and psychological and physiological well-being. That is, the interaction effect accounted for 0.03% of the variance. There were no other moderating relationships demonstrated by the *assertiveness* coping strategy on the other dependent variables investigated. The relational direction of the results suggest that an increase in the use of the assertiveness coping strategy could possibly lead to an increase in bullying behaviour experienced by the victim. However, the positive relationship reported demonstrates that assertiveness may be used as a coping strategy. Although, theoretically the use of assertiveness as a coping strategy was deemed less effective in dealing with the pressures and consequences of bullying, especially where one's psychological and

physiological well-being was concerned. Thus although these results are not inverse, they do not occur in the expected direction.

DOING NOTHING AS A COPING STRATEGY

Results indicated that *doing nothing* as a coping strategy demonstrated a moderating relationship between the variables bullying and psychological and physiological well-being. That is, the relationship accounted for 0.04% of the variance; however an inverse moderating relationship was indicated. There were no other moderating relationships demonstrated by the *doing nothing* coping strategy on the other dependent variables assessed. The inverse relationship between the coping strategy, doing nothing and bullying suggested that as one utilizes this coping strategy, the effects on psychological and physiological well-being as a consequence of bullying may be lessened. Thus, doing nothing as a means of coping with the consequences of bullying was identified as an effective strategy in handling the possible negative individual outcomes that bullying is associated with. As such, although the results were inverse the findings did occur in the expected direction.

From the above, it was evident that not all of the four coping strategies that one could utilize if bullied moderated the effects of bullying on the individual and organisational outcomes. What was interesting to note was that the coping strategies of *avoidance* and *doing nothing* displayed more efficacious outcomes. However, it seemed that in order for one to cope with bullying one would first choose to engage the bullying situation (assertiveness). Subsequently, if the 'assertiveness' coping strategy was ineffective, subjects would seek out the help of family, friends and/or work colleagues. Seeking help would be consistent with research on the need for human affiliation which is more intense for some when encountering anxiety-inducing situations (Schaehter, 1959; as cited in Dunnette, Campbell and Hakel, 1967).

To sum up:

The above discussion established that the coping strategies of *assertiveness* and *seeking help* were less effective of the four coping strategies proposed. Thus, avoiding the situation and doing nothing may in fact be more effective coping strategies (Forsythe and Compas, 1987; Collins, Baum and Singer 1983; Wilson, 1981; as cited in Shimazu and Kosugi, 2003) when dealing with bullying in the construction industry.

According to Folkman *et al.* (1986) the coping strategies of avoidance and doing nothing can be characterised as *emotion-focused coping*. That is, efforts to regulate emotional distress (Lazarus and Folkman, 1984). However, according to Folkman and Lazarus (1985; as cited in Edwards *et al.*, 2003), emotion-focused coping is only utilized when the person perceives the situation to be anxiety-provoking and cannot be changed easily. As previously discussed, coping styles may intercede a stressful situation and its associated negative outcomes (Olafsson *et al.*, 2004). Although, an individual's coping response to a given event can be a determinant for the impact the event will have on the person (Endler *et al.*, 1990b; as cited in Edwards *et al.*, 2003). According to Suls and Fletcher (1985), an avoidant coping strategy will cause more negative outcomes than necessary in the short term. Conversely, in the long term, an avoidant coping strategy will be more effective and thus decrease the negative outcomes associated with stressful situations. Consequently, if bullying is conceptualised to occur often and/or over varying periods of time (usually prolonged), the effectiveness of avoidant and doing nothing coping strategies would be likely (Einarsen *et al.*, 2003).

Furthermore, according to Dunnette *et al.* (1967), a person will behave in a manner that either prolongs a satisfied state or allows them to avoid dissatisfying states (or work environments) by reducing the emotions elicited by the dissatisfying and stressful states. In order for individuals to feel less vulnerable in dissatisfying states, their perception of themselves as being a victim of these states may stimulate them to invest time and money into protective practices, such as avoiding particular places, events or people

(Dao, Kerbs, Rollin, Potts, Gutierrez, Choi, Creason, Wolf and Prevatt, 2006). Thus, by avoiding or appearing less appealing to the bully, the situation (or dissatisfying state) may diffuse itself and become more manageable once again without the need for confrontation by the persons involved.

The contribution of the organisational culture of the organisation may also account for a low occurrence of bullying and the use of coping strategies, such as avoidance and doing nothing. The perception of how effectively the organisation deals with its operating and competitive problems, as well as how well the climate rewards its employees, and the degree of democratisation achieved in the organisation relates positively to job satisfaction and thus may lead to a decrease in bullying behaviour perceived by the victim (Pritchard and Karasick, 1973; Jennifer, 2000). Furthermore, Xenikou (2005) suggests that if the organisational culture is positive, the type of individual who is employed and subsequently relates well to the person-environment fit is likely to be one whose attributional style reflects a need for achievement and fulfilment of creative potential, and engages their environment in a positive manner. On the other hand, a negative attributional style reflects a conflicting environment where people tend to sabotage the work of others (Xenikou, 2005), which may be considered as bullying behaviour. Pritchard *et al.* (1973) and Lingard *et al.* (2007) suggest strong evidence in their findings that job satisfaction relates positively to a positive organisational culture where an individual's perception of the support received, friendliness within their organisational climate and autonomy regarding job empowerment is observed. Therefore, if the climate of the organisation possesses these characteristics, it is likely that job satisfaction will also be present (Pritchard *et al.*, 1973). In addition, if the culture of the organisation is positive, job security is then sensed by its employees and as a result individuals will want to stay with the organisation (Larsen, 2008).

From the above results, it is possible that the work environment of the construction organisation investigated replicates the positive attributes discussed here, indicating a positive attributional style where bullying is not tolerated, hence the effective coping styles of *avoidance* and *doing nothing*

were endorsed in order to minimize the attention of the bully, if bullying occurred and thus make the situation less appealing for the bully.

Interestingly, the organisational culture and climate of the construction industry is traditionally male-dominated, demonstrating a culture of competitive, confrontational practices and high levels of conflict (Loosemore and Waters, 2004). According to Lingard *et al.* (2007), it is important to note that the construction industry is characterised by long work hours, following the traditional work patterns of gender assumptions (i.e. "men's work", p. 807) and the ever-availability of employees. Traditionally, the long work hours have given men the opportunity to devote time to work whereas women would prefer to devote this time to their family. However, with changes in the dynamics of organisations more and more women are entering the construction industry which has resulted in a 'softer', no-blame culture, as well as added collective responsibility and risk-sharing (Loosemore *et al.*, 2004; Dabke, Salem, Genaidy and Daraiseh, 2008), and thus perhaps in the future help seeking may become a more efficacious or acceptable strategy. This division has transformed the construction industry during the 21st century (Lingard *et al.*, 2007). That is, the construction industry is attempting to work towards a sustainable environment that is conducive to all and thus relates to a positive culture of an empowered workforce. A positive workforce demonstrates job satisfaction, low turnover and productivity (Pritchard *et al.*, 1973; Lingard *et al.*, 2007).

Transformed organisations that are characterised by employees that are empowered with delegated decision-making power; where the flow of information is improved, and employees are able to strongly identify with the organisation's objectives have been called "high-performance" work systems (Lingard *et al.*, 2007, p. 808). According to Lingard *et al.* (2007), when employees are treated with respect these work systems are then assumed to develop. In turn, this will enhance employee commitment to the organisation, increase trust in management and give employees a sense of empowerment which leads to improved individual and organisational performance and positive attributional styles amongst individuals (Wheatley 1997; as cited in

Lingard *et al*., 2007; Xenikou, 2005). Empowerment in turn leads to an improved organisational climate, and job satisfaction (Carless, 2004). The type of organisational climate and culture are determined by the attraction, selection and retention of people who remain with the organisation (Ostroff and Rothausen, 1997).

However, although the construction industry has transformed to a certain extent, the predominantly male culture still exists. This does not bode well for those choosing assertive and help seeking coping behaviours as these individuals, by seeking help, may be viewed as a 'soft target' for the bully who may perceive such help seeking as vulnerability on the part of the help seeker. In addition, for those choosing assertiveness, given the confrontational practices, this strategy could escalate conflict which would explain why people, that is, those within this sector and/or sample found assertiveness to be less efficacious.

As discussed, avoidance and doing nothing were indicated as coping strategies of choice when attempting to lessen the effects of bullying on individual and organisational outcomes. This may be due to the psychological consequences that subjects seem to have understood based on the stressor, bullying. As such, subjects tend to avoid a stressful situation when wanting to improve, for instance their self esteem, as stress (bullying) causes low self esteem (Beehr and Newman, 1978; Matthiesen *et al*., 2007). In addition, Sonnentag and Fritz (2007; as cited in Moreno-Jimenez, Rodriguez-Munoz, Pastor, Sanz-Vergel and Garrosa, 2008) further stipulate that psychological detachment (i.e. *avoidance* and *doing nothing* in this case) is a core component for recovery of work stress (i.e. bullying) that improves individual health and well-being, as indicated by the inverse relationships demonstrated in the results of the present study (see Results, pp. 53-71).

STATISTICALLY NON-SIGNIFICANT MODERATOR EFFECTS

No moderating effects were found for the dependent variables of job satisfaction and intention to leave. As such, the Transactional Model of bullying proposed (see Figure 2, p. 23) was not fully supported. From the above discussion it is possible that the positive attributional style that is assumed to model the organisational culture of the construction company investigated in the study, may have resulted in an empowered workforce that is willing to stay with the organisation ($M = 3.06$) and that is satisfied with their work environment ($M = 4.9$). The literature supports this view, for example, a person's perception that one's job fulfils their personal values (e.g. empowerment and autonomy) leads to job satisfaction (Locke, 1976; as cited in Edwards and Cooper, 1990). Consequently, a person's desire for personal growth and self-actualisation results in satisfaction (Oldham and Hackman, 1987; as cited in Edwards *et al.*, 1990). As such, a high level of job satisfaction will result in positive well-being as the outcome (Edwards *et al.*, 1990).

With the above in mind, high job satisfaction leads to lower levels of employee turnover (Ilgen and Hollenbeck, 1977), hence the possible provenance for the inverse relationship found for workplace bullying on job satisfaction and propensity to leave. Also, it can be assumed that, regardless of the positive attributional style of the construction company examined, the current global economic recession may play a part in one's reluctance to leave the organisation (Cokayne, 2007; Naidoo, 2009; Donnelly, 2009). Subsequently, an employee's attitude and the global economic climate are likely to affect their intention to leave the organisation (Porter, Crampon and Smith, 1976).

As can be assumed from the above discussion and results, the employees examined in the present research displayed positive attitudes in terms of their satisfaction with their work and thus could be expected to continue their tenure with the employing organisation. In addition, employee turnover can influence organisational performance. Conversely, according to DataMonitor (2009), the construction organisation investigated presented yearly results

that reflected a marked increase in productivity. This further suggests that high job satisfaction and low intention to leave the organisation was prominent amongst the employees examined. Sheridan and Slocum (1975) found that an individual's performance is affected by their job satisfaction. That is, one high in job satisfaction will tend to yield positive job performance results. Subsequently, if an individual experiences high job satisfaction, their intention to stay with the organisation will be greater due to their perception of intrinsic rewards offered by the organisational climate (Pritchard *et al.*, 1973).

Most importantly, the results indicated a low occurrence of bullying in the construction company examined. This may be due to the work environment in which the subjects operate which encourages a low tolerance for bullying in the environment, as suggested by Fitzgerald, Hulin, and Drasgow (1995; as cited in Einarsen, 1999). Hague (1985) further suggested that due to the nature of the construction industry that requires constant change and adaptation to new environments and risks when moving from one project to the next, individuals in the construction industry tend to be more tolerant of individual differences amongst their colleagues. Hague (1985) also notes that employees in the construction industry depict a unified group that may assist them in adapting to the changing environments. The unity suggested by Hague (1985), as well as a tolerance for individuality found in the construction industry may assist in explaining the low perceptions of bullying reported in the current study as employees may be more likely to accept and appreciate individual differences. However, it should be noted that employees are not completely excluded from bullying in this environment, although it appears that bullying appears to be an infrequent event amongst the subjects that participated in the research study.

In addition, personality variables of the sample may have led to low perceptions of bullying. According to Einarsen (1999), personality determinants play a strong role in perceptions of bullying (see Figure 1, p. 22). In terms of this, an individual who fits well with their environment is likely to exhibit positive personality attributes (Xenikou, 2005). Further, as suggested by Hobfoll (1985), individuals with a high sense of self-worth are likely to

perceive stressful events as less threatening and are thus able to cope better with a stressor when it does appear. Moreover, those who are higher on personality variables such as hardiness and internal locus of control, as well as those who may have a strong sense of coherence and/or resilience, and a positive attributional style; they may perceive of bullying to a lesser extent. Conversely, those who are high in individual factors such as hypersensitivity, neuroticism and anxiety would have increased perceptions of bullying (Rotter, 1966; Antonovsky, 1979; Kobasa, 1982; Einarsen, 1999; Turney, 2003)

According to Kobasa (1982), an individual who demonstrates a hardy personality is able to buffer the effects of stress. Therefore individuals may use this personality style as a positive source of resistance to the effects of stressors on one's health (Kobasa, Maddi and Puccetti, 1982). Kobasa (1979) proposed three characteristics of the hardy personality construct: challenge, commitment and control. *Challenge* refers to an individual's perceptual outlook on life that views stress to be interesting and meaningful rather than as a threat (Kobasa *et al.*, 1982; Soderstrom, Dolbier, Leiferman, and Steinhardt, 2000). *Commitment* refers to an individual's self-awareness and their own sense of purpose in life. Commitment indicates an individual's full involvement in all aspects of their life through engaging these events rather than evading them due to fear (Soderstrom *et al.*, 2000). Lastly, *control* refers to an individual's belief that they are able to influence (within reasonable limits) through what they say, do and imagine (Kobasa *et al.*, 1982). Hardy individuals demonstrate an internal locus of control and are able to confront problems with confidence and implement effective solutions (Soderstrom et al., 2000).

An individual with an internal locus of control is able to engage their environment in a positive manner (Guagnano, 1995). Hague (1985) mentioned that individuals in the construction industry demonstrated a unified, yet individualised manner of working. Individuals with high internal locus of control believe that they are responsible for the way in which they handle (stressful) events in their lives, as well as how they control the way in which they cope with these events (Headey, 2008). As a result, a person with high

internal locus of control tends to have relatively good coping skills (Lazarus and Folkman, 1984).

Furthermore, an individual who is able to control their reactions in a positive manner and the way in which they perceive stressful events is likely to exhibit positive individual attributes (i.e. well-being and self-esteem) and a good sense of coherence (Antonovsky, 1979; Smith, Breslin and Beaton, 2003). Thus, the degree to which employees can determine their manner of dealing with stressors and subsequently how they cope with these stressors will affect the way in which an individual's personality is shaped and how they interact with and/or perceive their work environment (Kohn, Naoi, Schoenbach, Schooler and Slomczynski, 1990). Feldt, Kinnunen and Mauno (2000) have found support that relates to a positive sense of coherence in the workplace and a good sense of well-being and job satisfaction. Feldt *et al.* (2000) state that employees who perceive a positive climate within their organisation are likely to report high levels of job satisfaction as well as a high sense of coherence.

It is possible given the culture of the construction organisation under investigation and the type of employees it attracts, that the organisation may be personified as a positive unified cluster of differing personalities that endorses employees who demonstrate positive attributional styles, hardiness, internal locus of control and a good sense of coherence. These personality characteristics may then explain the low tolerance for bullying as found within the sample drawn from this organisation. Thus, given the strong positive individual attributes suggested in the literature and the low perception of bullying reported among participants, it is thus likely that the organisation may not have exhibited individuals who have a tendency toward neuroticism and hypersensitive behaviour when exposed to stressors such as bullying (Einarsen, 1999). Such individuals may have been less likely to exhibit anxious behaviour in a bullying situation and may in fact have been able to handle the situation with confidence and devise effective solutions (Soderstrom *et al.*, 2000).

For example, individuals may choose to avoid the situation as a coping strategy in order to avoid confronting the bully directly, and thus disrupting the productivity of employees as well as the positive organisational climate. On the other hand, although employees within the construction industry are characterised to be confrontational in nature, Matthiesen *et al.* (2007) suggests that individuals who have past experience of being victims of bullying may choose to confront the bully. That is, the individual may have realised that during the process, avoiding the situation and pretending that it is not happening may be a more effective means of getting the bully to lose interest in them and subsequently the intention to bully. The results support this view as the coping strategies of seeking help and assertiveness were found to be less efficacious. Conversely, the coping strategies of avoidance and doing nothing were found to be effective in coping with bullying.

ORGANISATIONAL CONSIDERATIONS FOR WORKPLACE BULLYING

In order for organisations to help their employees deal with the negative consequences of bullying, research suggests that employers should first attempt to understand and acknowledge that bullying is occurring within the work environment (Pietersen, 2005). When bullying has been acknowledged, organisations are encouraged to solve the problem by introducing employee assistance programmes (EAPs), or implementing work policies that encourage employees to voice their grievances and assist in reprimanding the bully (Pritchard *et al.*, 1973; Beehr *et al.*, 1978; Ostroff *et al.*, 1997; Richards and Daley, 2003; Dao *et al.*, 2006; Lingard *et al.*, 2007). Furthermore, Dunn, (2000; as cited in Pietersen, 2005) and McCune (1994; as cited in Pietersen, 2005) further suggest the proper screening of individuals during the selection phase of recruitment in order to identify individuals who have an aggressive tendency, and also to train managers in the necessary interpersonal skills necessary to help deal with workplace bullying (Jennifer, 2000). Pearson, Andersson and Porath (2000) suggest interpersonal training in the effective use of one's emotions (*emotional boundary* as implied by Lazarus, 1993) as well as skills such as negotiation and dealing with difficult people. Pietersen (2005) also suggests that during the induction process, new employees

should be sensitised to the personal values and behaviour that is expected of them as well as the company culture that the organisation endeavours to uphold in order to limit bullying behaviour in the workplace.

In addition, suggestions have been made regarding the introduction of human resources, conflict management, and dispute resolution systems and strategies as well as legislation specific to the prohibition of bullying (Fox *et al*., 2005; Djurkovic, McCormack and Casimir, 2006). Moreover, Beehr *et al.* (1978) suggests the introduction of legislature specific to ensuring positive quality of life during work hours as well as necessary support from organisational parties (for example, colleagues, superiors, etc). Although the South African Labour Relations Act 66 of 1995 (South African Department of Labour, n.d.) does provide legislation against sexual harassment; as distinguished previously, sexual harassment and workplace bullying are two separate negative actions with their own relative consequences. Thus, South Africans should engage in encouraging the South African Government to invest time in realising and implementing solutions that organisations can adhere to in order to protect their employees against these negative acts.

Stacey (1993; as cited in Pietersen, 2005) proposed a decision-making and problem solving Model that may assist managers in facilitating the implementation of solutions in the workplace regarding bullying behaviour (See Figure 6, p. 92). Further, as a transformed organisation, decision-making power rests with those employees who are empowered with such responsibility. Therefore, the decision-making power of encouraging and implementing better practices in order to deal with workplace bullying within an organisation rests with its managers, and as such it is proposed that the steps mentioned in Stacey's (1993; as cited in Pietersen, 2005) Model will possibly lead to less occurrences of workplace bullying.

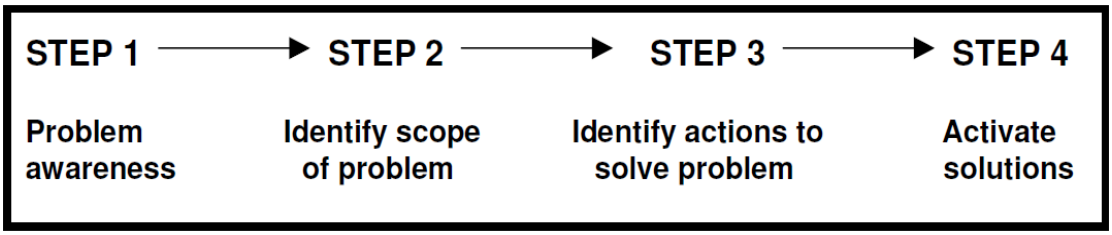

FIGURE 6 Steps for Managing Workplace Bullying

According to the Model, workplace bullying can be managed in four steps: step 1, problem awareness; step 2, identifying the scope of the problem; step 3, identifying actions to solve the problem; and step 4, implementing the solutions. These four steps will be briefly explained below.

Step one purports that management recognises and acknowledges that workplace bullying is present in the organisation. Step two involves management determining how prevalent the problem (bullying) is in the organisation. Pietersen (2005) recommends that this be done by establishing how aware employees are of workplace bullying, how strongly they feel about this negative behaviour and the impact that employees perceive this behaviour to have on the performance of the organisation. Pietersen (2005, p. 3) suggests a diagnostic framework that determines the above as well as the frequency of "different forms of workplace aggression" that occurs within the organisation (see Pietersen, 2005).

Step three involves the selection of appropriate policies and procedures, as discussed above that will assist management in reducing the occurrence and recurrence of bullying incidents in the organisation. Lastly, step four entails the actual implementation and regular monitoring of the policies and procedures suggested in step three which should minimize workplace bullying. The above Model suggests that workplace bullying is manageable if management and employees are educated about the occurrence and consequences of workplace bullying. In addition, governments as well as the organisations themselves should assist in the knowledge management of employees and managers by encouraging policies, procedures and legislature

to be implemented within organisations as well as through training programmes offered to employees.

CHAPTER SEVEN
CONCLUSIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND LIMITATIONS

There are a number of important limitations with regards to the present study, some of which have implications for future research. These limitations pertain to 1) the non-experimental design, 2) the Transactional Model utilized in the present study, and 3) the sample size.

LIMITATIONS OF CROSS-SECTIONAL RESEARCH DESIGNS

In the present study, a cross-sectional research design was adopted in order to assess the relationship between the four different types of coping strategies, and the stressor (bullying) as well the negative outcomes on the organisation and on the individual.

As discussed (see Methodology, p. 26), a non-experimental cross-sectional design allows for a researcher to establish consistency within a participant variable by examining respondents answers that may allow the researcher to observe changes in behaviour that may be related to one or more of the variables (Gravetter *et al.*, 2006). As such, it may then be simple to assume that non-experimental cross-sectional design allows for the establishment of a cause-and-effect relationship between two (or more) variables (Gravetter *et al.*, 2006), however it is difficult to establish the underlying cause of the relationship in cross-sectional designs. Thus, a cause-and-effect relationship was not explored in the present research. However, the changes in behaviour, over time, due to perceived bullying (and thus personal choice of coping style) would be an interesting area for future research. A discussion relating to the conditions for establishing cause-and-effect relationships over time follows.

Miles *et al.* (2001) explain that in order to establish causation, three criteria need to be satisfied: association, direction of influence and isolation. With reference to *association*, it may be simple to assume that correlation (or regression coefficients) does not explain causation. However, if two variables are causally related, a change in one must then produce a change in the other. Therefore, a statistical association (e.g. regression coefficient or a correlation) is necessary to establish a claim of causality (Miles *et al.*, 2001). *Direction* of causality is explored after the association between variables has been established. According to Miles *et al.* (2001) and Gravetter *et al.* (2006, p. 173) there are three possible causes for association: 1) that variable A is a cause of variable B, 2) that B may be the cause of A, and 3) that a "third variable", variable C, is a cause of both A and B. Thus, it is difficult to establish the underlying cause of the relationship. In theory, one would expect A to cause B, that is, the cause precedes the effect. However, the actual time interval between the cause and effect may vary widely depending on the variable in question.

Thus, the notion of temporal priority is central to non-experimental cross-sectional design because the manipulation of the independent variable always precedes the measurement of the dependent variable. However, temporal precedence cannot be observed in cross-sectional research where data is collected at one point in time (Miles *et al.*, 2001). As such, a longitudinal research design would be recommended for the future research into the topic of workplace bullying and its effects on individual and organisational outcomes.

Furthermore, in order to establish causality it is necessary to *isolate* the dependent variable (B) from all other influences (e.g. personality and time lags) other than the assumed cause (A). This is to be certain that the independent variable (A) is a cause of the dependent variable (B). A regression slope indicates the effect of the independent variable on the dependent variable while holding the effect of all the other independent variables constant (Miles *et al.*, 2001). Multiple regression models can be

used to isolate the influence of the independent variable, such as those used in the present study

CAUSALITY AND LONGITUDINAL RESEARCH DESIGN

According to Bernstein (1992), researchers have suggested that utilizing a longitudinal research design strategy represents an effective means of overcoming the issue of causality. The fact that all variables are examined at only one point in time in cross-sectional designs is problematic for determining cause-and-effect relationships (with reference to temporal priority). As such, necessary time facets that are not considered in the relationship are a threat to internal validity (Miles *et al.*, 2001; Gravetter *et al.*, 2006). Thus, the results of the cross-sectional design may reveal an association that is not representative of the true nature of the relationship over time (Contrada and Krantz, 1987).

Although a longitudinal research design is not without its disadvantages, the advantages, when compared to that of cross-sectional design, are difficult to ignore. For instance, Gravetter *et al.* (2006) state that a longitudinal research design allows the researcher to observe the subject in their natural environment over time whilst experiencing the stressor and the effects of the stressor. This allows the observer to examine changes in behaviour of the subject at more than one stressful occasion. In addition, the observations are not affected by the necessary time facets that are possibly required in establishing cause-and-effect relationships (Gravetter *et al.*, 2006).

Moreover, when examining the interaction (moderating) effects of the moderator variables, the effects of these variables on the independent and dependent variables may only appear at certain times during the observation and not necessarily at the time of the cross-sectional observation (Miles *et al.*, 2001). Thus, longitudinal design will allow for the greater observation of these moderating effects.

THE SELECTION OF TIME FACETS

According to Beehr *et al.* (1978), field studies employing the use of time facets (in attempting to include temporal priority) and longitudinal research design will benefit from the understanding of stressors and their effects in two ways. First, in attempting to explain the importance of workplace bullying to managers in the workplace, the use of time facets to further explain the causal relationships between variables is useful. Second, the time or duration of the stress may be a crucial factor in determining the consequences of stressful events. For instance, a certain amount of stress occurring occasionally in a person's job may not be as harmful to the employee. Prolonged stress, however, at the wrong time could be detrimental to the individual and/or the organisation (Beehr *et al.*, 1978; Matthiesen *et al.*, 2004). Thus, it is important to select the correct (prioritised) time course or facet to improve one's knowledge of causation and provide more accurate data in longitudinal studies (Leventhal and Tomarken, 1987; as cited in Bernstein, 1992).

As stated by Beehr *et al.* (1978), elements of the negative consequences produced by stress require time to exhibit their effects. Immediate, short-term, and long-term consequences of stress have been determined (Steinman, n.d.a; Matthiesen *et al.*, 2004; Turney, 2003). As discussed, prolonged stress results in a greater number of negative consequences. By and large, workplace bullying is characterised to occur over varying (usually long-term) periods, that is, prolonged periods of stress upon the individual (Einarsen *et al.*, 2003). As such, any causal links that exist between the stress and its consequences depends upon the passage of time (Beehr *et al.*, 1978).

Beehr *et al.* (1978) proposed a General Model (Figure 7, p. 98) which indicates the general points of the job stress – employee health domain. That is, the Model is specific to job stress and not stress in general. As workplace bullying is a job stressor, the General Model can be applied. The following facets (or consequences) are considered and explained in the Model. The *environmental facet* relates to any aspect of the work environment that is perceived as stressful by the employee, and responded to accordingly.

According to Beehr *et al.* (1978) the aspects of the work environment referred to here are the psychological aspects, for instance, job satisfaction and intention for one to leave the organisation; and the physiological aspects such as workplace bullying.

The *personal facet* includes any characteristic of the individual (i.e. personality variables) that influences their perception of stressful events, interpretation of the events as stressful, and/or reaction to the stress (Beehr *et al*., 1978). Researchers such as Kahn, Wolfe, Quinn, Snoek and Rosenthal (1964; as cited in Beehr *et al*., 1978) as well as House (1974; as cited in Beehr *et al*., 1978) suppose that personal characteristics moderate the relationship between job stress and employee health. This belief was also suggested by Moreno-Jimenez *et al.* (2008) who stated that individual characteristics of the person will determine how a person perceives the negative actions directed towards them and therefore the type of coping strategy employed by the person.

As previously mentioned (see pp. 87-90), researchers state that if an individual possesses personality characteristics such as hardiness, an internal locus of control, a good sense of coherence and a positive attributional style, it is likely that the negative consequences that may be perceived in their work environment would be less stressful and thus the individuals would be able to cope with these stressors (Kobasa, 1979; Antonovsky, 1979; Hague, 1985; Hobfoll, 1985; Xenikou, 2005; Headey, 2008). It is likely that these personal characteristics may exist within the sample of the study which would have contributed to low perceptions of stress in the workplace and thus low perceptions of bullying behaviour. In turn, the personality characteristics described above may have contributed to positive job satisfaction and the intention for individuals to stay with the organisation if low perceptions of stress such as bullying behaviour were prominent amongst the sample. Negative personality outcomes such as neuroticism, hypersensitivity and anxiety would therefore be less likely to occur (Einarsen, 1999).

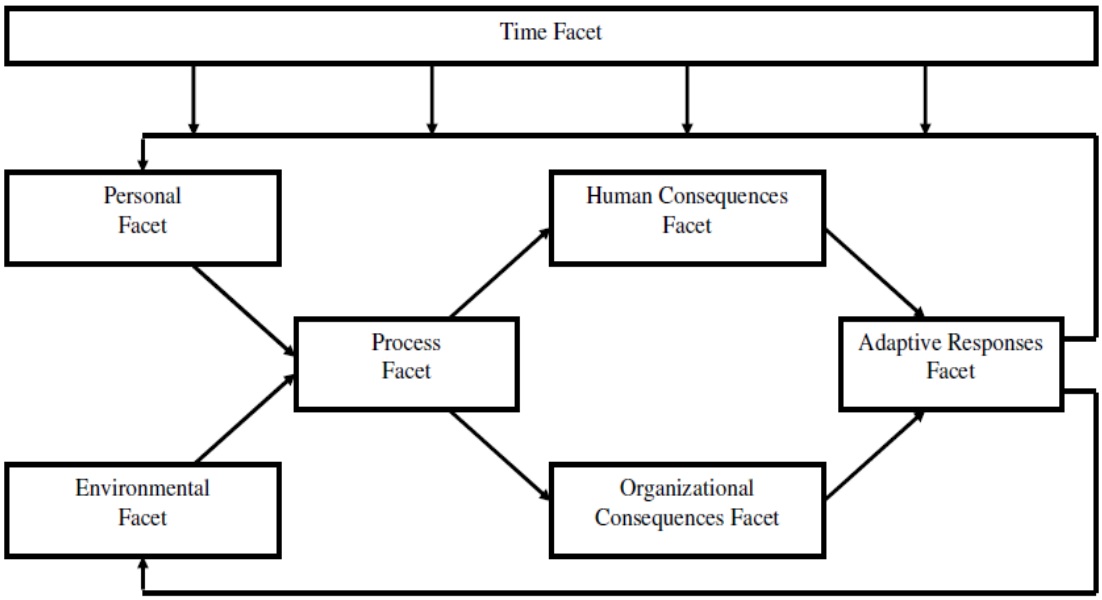

FIGURE 7 A General Model (Beehr and Newman, 1978)

Beehr *et al.* (1978) states that the *process facet* refers to the physical and psychological events within the individual which transform the stimuli (inputs) and produce (perceived) individual and organisational consequences and responses (outputs). The outputs are reliant on the individual's perception of the situation, their appraisal of the situation, their decision-making regarding an appropriate response (i.e. internal locus of control), and their perception of the outcomes of their responses. As such, this leads to either the *human consequences facet* or the organisational consequences facet, the former of which consists of health-related conditions that are mainly (and relatively) significant to the individual and less significant to the organisation.

The human consequences of stress can be divided into three categories: physiological, psychological and behavioural (Beehr *et al.*, 1978). The physical consequences relate to, for example, cardiovascular effects which is considered a negative outcome due to stress. Psychological consequences relate to the psychological well-being and self-esteem of the individual (e.g. neuroticism, hypersensitivity, anxiety, posttraumatic stress disorder), of which has been previously discussed (see Impact of Bullying) (Einarsen, 1999; Turney, 2003). Finally, behavioural consequences are difficult to determine

as these require direct interaction between the individual and a psychologist in therapy sessions. Although, the most studied behavioural consequence is smoking (Beehr *et al*., 1978).

The *organisational consequences facet* suggests that the separation of individual and organisational facets is valued independently and in terms of their relevance (Beehr *et al*., 1978). Consequences of stress of which the organisation presumably has more direct interest than the individual employee are linked to the organisation's effectiveness, for example, job performance, job satisfaction, and employee turnover. The *adaptive responses facet* focuses on the individual's means for handling job stress (Beehr *et al*., 1978). For instance, preventative and curative stress management programs implemented within the organisation are encouraged, as well as conflict resolution programs to help deal with workplace bullying (Beehr *et al*., 1978).

The adaptive responses facet is directly related to the personal and environmental facets. This is due to, as discussed above, the individual's predisposition to handle stress and the work environment's ability to allow for a low stress (bullying) tolerance. Lastly, the *time facet* in the Model allows for a focus on longitudinal, field research. As such, field studies that employ measurements at several points in time would greatly benefit the understanding of job stress and employee health. Longitudinal studies are thus suggested (as mentioned above) for the purpose of explaining causal relationships and their direction in order to gain the support of managers in term of job stress awareness (e.g. workplace bullying). Also, time or duration of stress may be a crucial factor in determining the consequences of stressful events (Beehr *et al*., 1978). Thus, Figure 8 (p. 100) allows researchers to explain the full effects of job stressors on the individual and the organisation by allowing for time facets to be included in the research which will benefit both the researchers and the organisation's for which they dedicate their research to.

Cohen and Wills (1985) proposed an analytic model which attempts to assist in selecting the correct time facets, and to reduce results that are attributable

to pre-existing symptoms causing or reducing stress or causing changes in behaviour. The Model allows researchers to obtain two-wave data where Time 2 symptomology is the criterion and Time 1 stressors are the predictors. Symptomology at Time 1, measured at a time prior to Time 1 stressors is included as a control variable (see Figure 8).

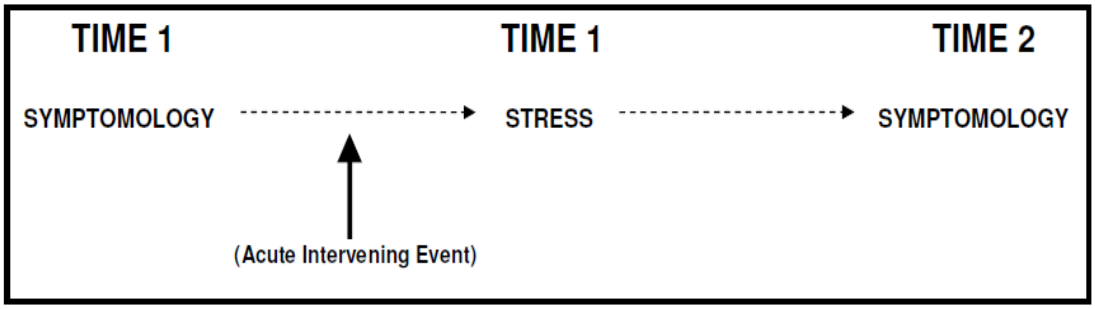

FIGURE 8 Temporal Lags in Longitudinal Study

However, Cohen and Wills (1985) state that a problem arises with regard to the point at which Time 1-Prior Symptomology is assessed. Kessler (1987) notes that if one is premature or late with regard to the time lag selected for measures of prior symptomology and the actual longitudinal analysis, then bias can be introduced into the prediction equation. This may have occurred during the current study. That is, the researcher may have assessed the perception of workplace bullying along with the individual and organisational outcomes *after* the bullying had occurred. This may have given victims the time to select a coping strategy that was suited to them and to their situation (Time 3). As a result, individuals may have come to realise that seeking help and assertiveness were less effective coping strategies to endorse than that of avoidance and doing nothing. The latter coping strategies thus allowed the individual to cope well with the situation, and in turn the situation was resolved. Therefore, if bullying is again perceived by the individual, the individual would then be able to select the most effective coping strategy to begin with.

As such, an individual's past experience could be considered as an extraneous variable. Also, a long time lag may have given individuals the opportunity for too much rest and recoup after the stressful event, and thus when assessed the individuals did not consider their previous situation to be as stressful, thus accounting for low perceptions of bullying (see Figure 9).

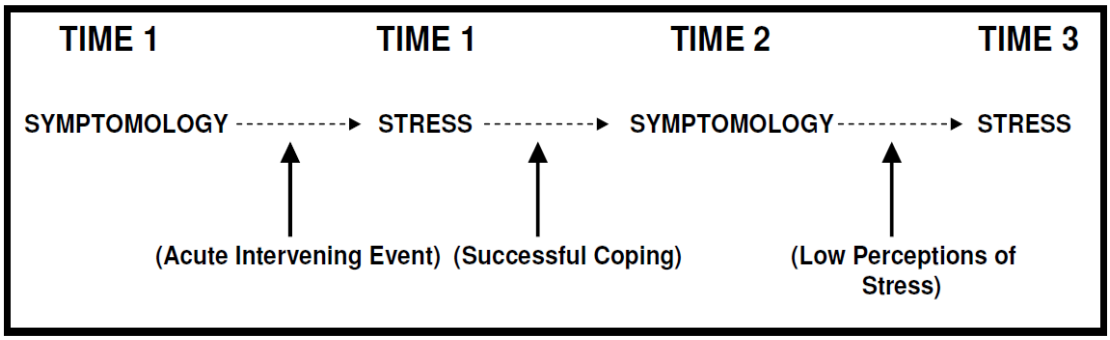

FIGURE 9 Temporal Lags in Longitudinal Study Relating to Workplace Bullying

Gravetter *et al.* (2006) suggest that by controlling the time from one observation to the next, a researcher has some control over time-related threats to internal validity. For example, by shortening the time between observations, this can reduce the risk of time-related threats, although this technique can often increase the likelihood that order effects will influence results. Thus, allowing a reasonable amount of time between observations will allow participants to rest and recoup before the next observation, although longer rest periods between observations may allow for bias to be reflected in the results (Gravetter *et al.*, 2006). The selection of time facets then is dependent on the researcher and the variables under investigation.

LIMITATIONS OF THE SAMPLE SIZE

It is necessary to consider the size of the sample used in the research. The present study had a response rate of 40% (100 responses) whereby only 98 of those responses were useable in the data analysis. In terms of regression, a larger sample size will reduce the standard error, thereby increasing the possibility of finding a significant association (Miles *et al.*, 2001). A small sample size could possibly result in spurious data that may illustrate no

association in the population when in fact there is an association. However, it is also necessary to consider previous research on the subject, an appropriate effect size and conventions to determine a suitable sample size (Miles *et al*., 2001). For example, Cohen (1988; as cited in Miles *et al*., 2001) define a small effect size as $R^2 = 0.02$, a medium effect size as $R^2 = 0.13$ and a large effect size as $R^2 = 0.26$.

LIMITATIONS OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE TECHNIQUE

As with cross-sectional research designs, trying to capture moderating relationships that change over time by means of a questionnaire technique that represents one point in time may produce less accurate results (Lieberman, 1986; as cited in Bernstein, 1992). Moreover, the type of information sought from the questionnaires cannot be reliably obtained by means of a questionnaire technique only (Hubbard, 1939). For example, attempting to understand the nature of the bullying and the specific type of bullying, how long it is/has been occurring, and the specific consequences are difficult to obtain through questionnaire techniques alone. This poses a problem for researchers who are attempting to understand the significance of certain effects of the variable under examination, as this will lead to spurious data and possibly fewer significant results that may be obtained through a larger sample size and additional data collection techniques (Miles *et al*., 2001).

Making use of a self-administered questionnaire technique may result in the observer overlooking the *actual* times when the moderating is taking place. This may also be true when utilizing the longitudinal design strategy as discussed above (see Selection of Time Facets, p. 95-101) (Lieberman, 1986; as cited in Bernstein, 1992). Thus, the observation of the subject at a certain point in time (or certain points in time as with longitudinal designs) may be *after* the moderating effect has taken place, resulting in the observation of main effects only (Bernstein, 1992). As a result, researchers recommend the use of questionnaires (Sudman, Greeley and Pinto, 1965) and personal interviews (Pietersen, 2007) in order to gain valuable and more accurate accounts from respondents.

DEALING WITH SPURIOUS DATA

Another limitation of the present study relates to spuriousness. According to Moreno-Jimenez *et al.* (2008) individuals experience the act of bullying at differing levels that may or may not lead to certain negative outcomes. As a result, individual factors are a necessary component to consider when explaining and/or predicting workplace bullying as well as the type of coping strategy preferred and/or employed. These individual factors may lead to spuriousness in the findings. A means of overcoming spuriousness is through the use of *multi-variate analysis*. The use of such an analysis suggests that one consider the *joint distributions* in the data (Miles *et al*., 2001). That is, instances where confounding variables are included in the design that can enhance both cross-sectional and longitudinal studies by way of checking for spuriousness. One particular variable of note with regard to spuriousness is personality variables that, as discussed above, may explain certain deviations in the results and hence lead to unexpected findings. Thus, on examination of the confounding variables, if any are found to exist they can be statistically removed or partialled out (Dooley, 1985; as cited in Bernstein, 1992).

CONCLUSION OF THE LIMITATIONS

With regard to the above recommendations and their relation to the present study, a cross-sectional research design was deemed appropriate due to the time constraints of the research. However, it is recommended that future studies be conducted in South Africa on a longitudinal basis that relate to workplace bullying. This technique may also allow more of an accurate observation of the moderating effects that were not significantly observed in the present research. Although direct relationships were found between the independent and the dependent variables, much of the total variance explained was significantly small. Perhaps a longitudinal study would enable more, and larger, significant results.

Although the sample size was relatively small for the present study, according to Miles *et al.* (2001), a research design with only one independent variable need not be large in sample size. In fact, Miles *et al.* (2001) state that approximately 100 participants, or at least 20 participants per independent

variable in a regression analysis are sufficient. Thus, the 98 responses considered useable for the present research were deemed satisfactory.

The technique of using questionnaires was deemed an appropriate data collection method as the researcher attempted to amass as many participants as possible for the present study. Conversely, self-report questionnaires are not without disadvantages. That is, self-report questionnaires are subject to response biases such as social desirability, false positives, or negatives and defensive tactics such as denial or rationalisation (Anastasi, 1982). Consequently, the subject of workplace bullying may be seen as a stigmatized/ stereotyped label whereby individuals in the situation are either labelled as *victim* or *bully*. Thus, individuals with previous bullying experience would be less likely to label themselves as victims through answering questionnaires for fear of appearing vulnerable once again (Bowie, Fisher, Cooper, 2005). Therefore, the low perception of bullying in the workplace observed may also be due to fear of stereotyping and/or vulnerability by the victim and/or bully.

Although the preamble attached to the questionnaires was designed to assure the participants of their confidentiality, the possibility still exists that respondents may have been biased or defensive in their responses for the above reason. Therefore, given the limitations of using self-report data sources, in future, multiple sources of data collection could be used to enhance the accuracy of scores reported by respondents (Miles *et al.*, 2001). Additional sources of data collection may include focus groups and/or personal interviews (Olafsson *et al.*, 2004; Pietersen, 2007).

With regard to spuriousness of data, the researcher included the possible confounding variables that relate to differences in the participants. It was found that the covariate of race had a significant inverse effect on the dependent variable of intention to leave when attempting to explain the relationship of bullying on the propensity for one to leave the organisation. The inverse relationship, as stated, further confirmed a low occurrence of bullying experienced by the racial groups examined in the organisation. Also,

as previously mentioned, results indicated a higher likelihood for 'non-Africans' to stay with the organisation. As discussed, the possible explanation for this may have been due to the current economic recession, less job opportunities due to lower educational qualifications for the African grouping in the sample as well as job security and the higher reported qualifications by Whites in the sample that suggests lower turnover (De Bartolo *et al*., 2008; Larsen, 2008). Furthermore, the low rate of bullying presented by the results may be explained by the culture of the organisation (and construction industry) that is characterised by personality characteristics such as hardiness, internal locus of control, a good sense of coherence and a positive attributional style (Rotter, 1966; Kobasa, 1979; Antonovsky, 1979; Hague, 1985; Hobfoll, 1985; Xenikou, 2005; Headey, 2008). The low perceptions of bullying may also be due to possible confrontational qualities that can be controlled by individuals who exhibit an internal locus of control. The racial groups in the sample may have developed controlled confrontational qualities due to the nature of the industry/organisation in which they are currently employed that encourages a low tolerance for bullying and increased job satisfaction by way of a positive acceptance of individuality (Hague, 1985).

There are, however, a number of other limitations within the present study. These pertain to the nature of the sample, the method of data collection, and that the scales used were designed for overseas samples.

In the present research, the sample used was for the most part White (41%) and Male (53%). As previously mentioned, race, gender and age can introduce variations in the manner in which bullying is perceived and reacted to (see Olafsson *et al*., 2004). Therefore, additional testing of the applicability of the measures specific to the Negative Acts Questionnaire-Revised and the modified Coping with Bullying Scale was thus required. In addition, the Model was assessed on a white-collar sample employed within a large construction company. As only one organisation was included in the study, the generalisability and applicability of the findings are restricted with regard to other organisational sectors. Future research should also be considered on the utility of the measures on a sample of blue-collar workers as well as within

other industries of interest. Therefore, the relationships between bullying, coping and individual and organisational outcomes should be examined across a broader range of organisational sectors and across a broad range of workers. In addition, different means of collecting data may be considered, for example, personal interviews, objective questionnaires and focus groups.

A final possible limitation could be that most of the questionnaires used in the present study were designed for overseas samples (Olafsson *et al.*, 2004; Matthiesen *et al.*, 2004). Although there is strong reservation against using measures designed for one culture on another, most of the overseas scales have been used on a South African sample similar to the present study and have reported acceptable reliability (see Bernstein, 1992; Altman, 2009; Botha, Basson, du Plessis, 2009). The Coping with Bullying Scale which was developed for use on an Icelandic sample, has been modified and demonstrates acceptable reliability in a South African setting (see Methodology discussion).

ADVANCES INDICATED BY THE PRESENT RESEARCH

The previous sections were devoted to a discussion of a number of limitations of the present research. Yet, in spite of these limitations, findings obtained in the present research also represent an advance over previous research, providing new insights in the understanding of workplace bullying in a South African context.

Findings obtained in the first phase of the study suggested that there is indeed a coping scale that can be utilized when attempting to understand the role that coping plays in moderating the effects of bullying. In addition, the modified coping scale indicates satisfactory psychometric properties when used on a South African sample. The effective utilization of this four subscale measure thus provides future researchers with a reliable and valid measurement tool, the utility of which can be further assessed when used in such future research.

In the second phase of the study, workplace bullying was regressed onto four dependent variables, namely, psychological and physiological health and well-being, self-esteem, job satisfaction and intention to leave. Previous research on workplace bullying, and workplace bullying in South Africa does not report to have assessed all of these specific relationships. Direct main effects where found for all of the above relationships. In addition, coping was assessed for the relationship between bullying and the dependent variables. Although only one effect was found for coping on the dependent variables, namely avoidance on job satisfaction, some interaction effects indicated that specific styles of coping were utilized when experiencing, or having experienced bullying which were more effective than others.

THEORETICAL IMPLICATIONS
RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

Based on the above discussion of the significant findings, limitations and advances of the present research, a number of theoretical implications for future research become apparent.

With regards to the limitations, it is suggested that there is a need for a longitudinal research design with a critical emphasis on the correct selection (and priority) of time facets. Future studies of this nature need to be more finely tuned with respect to the timing of workplace bullying and the type of coping strategy utilized, and the positive or negative consequences of these. Research suggests that longitudinal studies that relate to bullying are most beneficial in obtaining necessary information related to the subject (Beehr *et al.*, 1978; Ostroff *et al.*, 1997; Hansen, Hogh, Persson, Karlson, Garde and Orbaek, 2006; Moreno-Jimenez *et al.*, 2008). Future research should also consider the different types and situations of bullying. This can also be explored within different organisational sectors. Furthermore, Pietersen (2005) suggests the use of qualitative data in order to gain more accurate and concentrated data from respondents on the subject of workplace bullying.

Additionally, longitudinal studies may also assist in understanding the type of individual employed (i.e. individual characteristics) and their intention towards tenure within the organisation as a result of the person-environment fit. That is, to examine whether people who do not fit the work environment leave, whether those who "do not fit and do not leave change their work-relevant personalities over time in the direction of the organizational climate", or if they change their immediate work environment over time to match their personalities (Ostroff *et al.*, 1997, p. 185). Furthermore, as suggested by Einarsen's (2003 *et al.*; as cited in Einarsen 2005) Model titled 'A Conceptual Framework for the Study and Management of Bullying at Work' (p. 22), future research should consider the role of personality in the bullying situation and how it may be linked its to causes and consequences. Researchers have found that victims of bullying tend to exhibit neurotic, hypersensitive, anxious and introverted tendencies (Einarsen, 1999; Einarsen, 2005; Glasø, Matthiesen, Nielsen and Einarsen, 2007); whereas bullies tend to exhibit aggressive, extraverted behaviour (Radke-Yarrow *et al.*, 1990; Einarsen, 1999; Olafsson *et al.*, 2004; Branch *et al.*, 2008).

There is also a need to further explore the nature of the organisational culture in which organisations operate as this may help in explaining the occurrence or non-occurrence of bullying in the workplace, and the type of individuals employed in the organisation which may contribute to the positive or negative attributional style of the organisation (Rooke, Seymour, Fellows, 2003; Xenikou, 2005). In this instance, there was a low occurrence of bullying and therefore it may have been advantageous to examine the organisational culture of the organisation under investigation in order to understand what the organisation is doing "right", apart from the overall traditional culture of the construction industry as a whole.

Although significant findings were demonstrated for all four of the dependent variables, only psychological and physiological well-being, and self esteem illustrated moderating effects. Thus, future research on the subject may also consider the possibility of including variables such as employee commitment (as opposed to intention to leave), and job performance (as opposed to job

satisfaction). The above discussion gives reason for this as an empowered organisation leads to employee commitment and trust with the organisation and improved productivity (Wheatley 1997; as cited in Lingard *et al.*, 2007).

In addition, it seems that the covariate of race may have played a role in the outcome of some of the relationships illustrated. Whilst research does support the fact that Whites are less bullied than minority groups (Fox *et al.*, 2005; Altman, 2009), the specific type of coping and type of bullying occurring, for example common- or race-related bullying within and amongst these groups may be valuable for future research to consider.

Subsequent to this, although four coping strategies were proposed (Olafsson *et al.*, 2004); the specific type of coping strategy employed under certain stressful conditions was not examined. Moreover, the specific type of bullying experienced by 19% of the respondents was not examined (see Table 5, p. 57) for "rarely", "now and then", and "daily" results). Respondent that considered themselves as 'bullied', or not was only assessed. According to Einarsen, Hoel and Notelaers (2009) there are three types of bullying that have been noted: personal bullying, work-related bullying and physically intimidating forms of bullying. These types of bullying may be assessed using the NAQ-R (Matthiesen *et al.*, 2007). Moreover, Lewis and Gunn (2007; as cited in Altman, 2009) also note the occurrence of 'social bullying'.

Recent research on workplace bullying has illustrated its importance in industry (Stern, 2009; Botha *et al.*, 2009). Organisations are encouraged to introduce employee assistance programmes or implement policies to assist in helping employees deal with the stresses of negative acts and for those who perceive themselves to be bullied (Pritchard *et al.*, 1973; Beehr *et al.*, 1978; Ostroff *et al.*, 1997; Richards *et al.*, 2003; Dao *et al.*, 2006; Lingard *et al.*, 2007). Future research should consider exploring the existence, implementation and usefulness of such policies.

The absence of significant findings on the interaction effect of 'job satisfaction' and 'intention to leave' may be attributable to individual differences, the low occurrence of workplace bullying, and the assumed empowered culture of the

organisation. Ilgen *et al.* (1977) suggest an *additive* model as opposed to a *moderator* model. As discussed, a person's intention to leave (or *stay* with) the organisation is somewhat reliant on their job satisfaction (Ilgen *et al*., 1977). Thus, Ilgen *et al.* (1977) propose that the additive model is used to assess the experience of role pressure and job satisfaction that contributes independently to absenteeism and turnover. Such an approach will facilitate a better understanding of the relationships between job satisfaction, turnover and workplace bullying (if added to the model).

CONCLUSION

It seems evident that there are many aspects to consider with regard to coping and workplace bullying before one can determine with reasonable confidence the situations in which the four styles of coping will be optimally effective. Findings obtained in this study represent a step in the direction towards clarifying this complex process. It is thus recommended that future research take cognisance of the suggestions made in the present study with regard to both the limitations and the theoretical implications, which may help to further clarify our understanding of the severe experiences that individuals are exposed to, as well as the resources that one could utilize in attempting to subsist the process. Ultimately organisations, HR practitioners and psychologists working within organisations have a responsibility to ensure the productivity of the system by ensuring that the workforce is operating at an optimal level and in a positive environment that is conducive to ongoing performance.

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APPENDIX A

Coping Scale (Olafsson and Johannsdottir, 2004)

Please indicate your response with a cross (✕) by marking one option per item number that best describes **how you would react if you were subjected to bullying in your workplace?**

	I have done it (1)	I would do it (2)	I would probably do it (3)	I would probably not do it (4)	I would never do it (5)
1. Tell my boss					
2. Take sick leave					
3. Wait and hope it stops					
4. Answer back					
5. See psychologist (or other) for counsel					
6. Talk to union representative at work					
7. Ask colleagues for help					
8. Not let it affect me					
9. Talk to the bully and ask him/her to stop					
10. Feel helpless					
11. Tell the HR director at work about it					
12. Quit my job					
13. Bully the bully myself					
14. Ignore it and do nothing					
15. Ask for transfer with the company					
16. Go to my union					

APPENDIX B

Coping With Bullying Scale

The following phrases seek to determine your preferred coping style if subjected to bullying behaviour in your workplace. For example, for item number one, if you feel that you would immediately tell your superior about the situation, you could then indicate that by (1). If you would probably tell your superior, then indicate (2). If you feel that you would probably not tell your superior, indicate this by marking (3), and if you feel that you would rather never tell your superior, then indicate (4). There are no correct answers. Please answer as honestly as possible. PLEASE MAKE SURE THAT YOU ANSWER ALL 16 ITEMS.

Please indicate your response with a cross (✕) by marking one option per item number that best describes **how you would react if you were subjected to bullying in your workplace.**

AFTER FILLING IN THE FOLLOWING SECTIONS PLEASE COMPLETE THE RESPONSE QUESTIONS ON PAGE 2.

If subjected to bullying at work I would:	**I would do it (1)**	**I would probably do it (2)**	**I would probably not do it (3)**	**I would never do it (4)**
17. Tell my boss				
18. Take sick leave				
19. Wait and hope it stops				
20. Stand my ground and answer back				
21. See a psychologist (or other) for counselling				
22. Seek advice from a family member				
23. Ask colleagues for help				
24. Not let it affect me				
25. Talk to the bully and warn him/her to stop				
26. Feel helpless				
27. Tell the HR director at work about it				
28. Quit my job				
29. Fight back by bullying the bully myself				
30. Ignore it and do nothing				
31. Ask for transfer with the company				
32. Seek advice from a friend				

APPENDIX C

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 Leanne Upton, and I am presently completing my Masters degree in Industrial Psychology at the University of the Witwatersrand. In fulfilment of this degree my area of research is designed to investigate the impact of workplace bullying on individual and organizational well-being in a South African context, and the role of coping as a moderator of the effect of the bullying – well-being relationship. Participation in the pilot study is voluntary, and you will not be advantaged or disadvantaged in any way for choosing to complete or not complete the questionnaire.

Anonymity will be assured as there will be no identifying characteristics that will lead to the exposure of your identity. While questions are asked about your personal circumstances, no identifying information, such as your name or I.D. number is asked for, and as such you will remain anonymous. Moreover, you are requested to return all completed questionnaires to a sealed envelope whose contents only the researcher will have access to. This will ensure that no one will have access to the completed questionnaires, and will ensure your confidentiality. Responses will not be used for any purposes, other than research. Informed consent is assumed by the completion of the questionnaires. However, you will be able to withdraw from the study until such time as you submit the questionnaires.

The purpose of this questionnaire is to confirm the validity and the reliability of a modified version of the original coping questionnaire. That is, respectively, to ensure that the questionnaire assesses what it is meant to assess, and that it does so consistently. These steps form part of a standard process when developing a new questionnaire to be used in research.

Be assured that data would solely be used for academic purposes and would in no way be accessed by the management in the organization as the organization will only receive a summary of the overall statistics. The results will be presented as group trends, which make it impossible to identify any particular respondent.

Your participation in this pilot study would be greatly appreciated. This research will contribute both to a larger body of knowledge on workplace bullying within South Africa and to understanding the dynamics of workplace bullying and coping strategies. This will assist your organisation by making informed decisions on policy, procedure and employee assistance programmes that will in turn make your work environment more manageable.

The pilot study is an independent study which will be conducted under the supervision of an Industrial Psychologist at Wits University. Please contact me or my supervisor should you have any questions.

Kind Regards

Leanne Upton
Masters Student
Email: leanneu@gmail.com

COLLEEN BERNSTEIN
Supervisor
Department of Psychology
University of the Witwatersrand
Email:colleen.bernstein@wits.ac.za

APPENDIX D

Demographic Questionnaire

*Please indicate your response with a cross (**X**).*

1. What is your gender?

☐ Male ☐ Female

2. How old are you?

_____

3. Please indicate your racial grouping (optional):

☐ Black ☐ Coloured ☐ White

☐ Asian ☐ Other, please specify_____

4. Please indicate your home language:

_____

5. Please indicate the highest level of education that you have completed:

☐ Standard 8 or below ☐ Matric ☐ Diploma/ Certificate(s)

☐ Degree ☐ Postgraduate degree

☐ Other, please specify _____

6. Please indicate your marital status:

☐ Single ☐ Married ☐ Divorced ☐ Widowed

7. Please indicate your current job grading:

_____

8. Please indicate your current job title:

_____

9. Please indicate the name of the organisation where you work (optional)

_____

10. Please indicate the number of years employed in your current organisation:

_____

APPENDIX E

Coping with Bullying Scale

Details of the subscale items

Subscales	Item Number	Item Wording
Seeking Help		
	1	Tell my boss
	5	See a psychologist (or other) for counselling
	6	Seek advice from a family member
	7	Ask colleagues for help
	11	Tell the HR director at work about it
	16	Seek advice from a friend
Avoidance		
	2	Take sick leave
	10	Feel helpless
	12	Quit my job
	15	Ask for transfer with the company
Assertiveness		
	4	Stand my ground and answer back
	9	Talk to the bully and warn him/her to stop
	13	Fight back by bullying the bully myself
Do nothing		
	3	Wait and hope it stops
	8	Not let it affect me
	14	Ignore it and do nothing

APPENDIX F

Response Questions

Based on the questionnaire that you have just completed, please answer the following below by marking with a cross (✕) your response in the block provided. If you indicate "Yes" to any of the following questions, please explain your answer by giving a brief explanation in the lines provided below each question.

1. Were there any items in the scale that you did not understand?

Yes ☐ No ☐

_____
_____
_____
_____

2. Were there any items that you felt were ambiguous?

Yes ☐ No ☐

_____
_____
_____
_____

3. Were there any aspects that were included that you felt should have been excluded?

Yes ☐ No ☐

_____
_____
_____
_____

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

Yes ☐ No ☐

_____
_____
_____
_____

5. Were there any aspects that you thought should have been included in the scale that were not included?

Yes ☐ No ☐

_____
_____
_____
_____

THANK YOU

APPENDIX G

Coping With Bullying Scale

The following phrases seek to determine your preferred coping style if subjected to bullying behaviour in your workplace. For example, for item number one, if you feel that you would immediately tell your superior about the situation, you could then indicate that by (1). If you would probably tell your superior, then indicate (2). If you feel that you would probably not tell your superior, indicate this by marking (3), and if you feel that you would rather never tell your superior, then indicate (4). There are no correct answers. Please answer as honestly as possible. PLEASE MAKE SURE THAT YOU ANSWER ALL 24 ITEMS.

Please indicate your response with a cross (✕) by marking one option per item number that best describes **how you would react if you were subjected to bullying in your workplace.**

AFTER FILLING IN THE FOLLOWING SECTIONS PLEASE COMPLETE THE RESPONSE QUESTIONS ON PAGE 3.

If subjected to bullying at work, I would:	**I would do it (1)**	**I would probably do it (2)**	**I would probably not do it (3)**	**I would never do it (4)**
1. Tell my boss				
2. Take sick leave				
3. Stand my ground and answer back				
4. Wait it out				
5. Tell the HR director at work about it				
6. Quit my job				
7. Talk to the bully and warn him/her to stop				
8. Hope it stops				
9. See a psychologist (or other) for counselling				
10. Look out for other job opportunities outside of my company				
11. Rally support for myself against the bully				
12. Ignore it				
13. Tell the bully that his/her behaviour is unacceptable				
14. Seek advice from a family member				
15. Look out for a transfer within the company				
16. Make sure that nothing I do in my work gives the bully an opportunity to bully me				

If subjected to bullying at work, I would:	I would do it (1)	I would probably do it (2)	I would probably not do it (3)	I would never do it (4)
17. Do nothing				
18. Ask colleagues for help				
19. Avoid that colleague				
20. Publicly confront the bully				
21. Pretend it is not happening				
22. Seek advice from a friend				
23. Keep to myself and avoid others while at work				
24. Think of ways of getting back at the bully				

APPENDIX H

Coping with Bullying Scale

Details of the subscale items

Subscales	Item Number	Item Wording
Seeking Help		
	1	Tell my boss
	5	Tell the HR director at work about it
	9	See a psychologist (or other) for counselling
	14	Seek advice from a family member
	18	Ask colleagues for help
	22	Seek advice from a friend
Avoidance		
	2	Take sick leave
	6	Quit my job
	10	Look out for other job opportunities outside of my company
	15	Look out for a transfer within the company
	19	Avoid that colleague
	23	Keep to myself and avoid others while at work
Assertiveness		
	3	Stand my ground and answer back
	7	Talk to the bully and warn him/her to stop
	11	Rally support for myself against the bully
	13	Tell the bully that his/her behaviour is unacceptable
	16	Make sure that nothing I do in my work gives the bully an opportunity to bully me
	20	Publicly confront the bully
	24	Think of ways of getting back at the bully

Subscales	Item Number	Item Wording
Do nothing		
	4	Wait it out
	8	Hope it stops
	12	Ignore it
	17	Do nothing
	21	Pretend it is not happening

APPENDIX I

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 Leanne Upton, and I am presently completing my Masters degree in Industrial Psychology at the University of the Witwatersrand. In the fulfilment of this degree my area of research is designed to investigate the impact of workplace bullying on individual and organizational well-being in a South African context, and the role of coping as a moderator of the effects of the bullying – well-being relationship. Participation is voluntary, and you will not be advantaged or disadvantaged in any way for choosing to complete or not complete the questionnaire.

Anonymity will be assured as there will be no identifying characteristics that will lead to the exposure of your identity. While questions are asked about your personal circumstances, no identifying information, such as your name or I.D. number, is asked for, and as such you will remain anonymous. Moreover, you are requested to return all completed questionnaires to a sealed box whose contents only the researcher will have access to. This will ensure that no one will have access to the completed questionnaires, and will ensure your confidentiality. Responses will not be used for any purposes, other than research. Informed consent is assumed by the completion of the questionnaires. However, you will be able to withdraw from the study until such time as you submit the questionnaires.

Be assured that data would solely be used for academic purposes and would in no way be accessed by the management in the organization as the organization will only receive a summary of the overall results. The results will be presented as group trends, which make it impossible to identify any particular respondent.

Your participation in this study would be greatly appreciated. This research will contribute both to a larger body of knowledge on workplace bullying within South Africa and to understanding the dynamics of workplace bullying and the effects of bullying on the victim's well-being and on the organisation. This will assist your organisation by making informed decisions on policy, procedure and employee assistance programmes that will in turn make your work environment more manageable.

The research study is an independent study which will be conducted under the supervision of an Industrial Psychologist at Wits University. Please contact me or my supervisor should you have any questions.

Kind Regards

Leanne Upton
Masters Student
Email: leanneu@gmail.com

COLLEEN BERNSTEIN
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University of the Witwatersrand
Email:colleen.bernstein@wits.ac.za

APPENDIX J

Demographic Questionnaire

Please indicate your response with a cross (✗).

1. What is your gender?

☐ Male ☐ Female

2. How old are you?

_____

3. Please indicate your racial grouping (optional):

☐ African ☐ Coloured ☐ White

☐ Asian ☐ Other, please specify_____

4. Please indicate your home language

_____

5. Please indicate the highest level of education that you have completed:

☐ Standard 8 or below ☐ Matric ☐ Diploma/ Certificate(s)

☐ Degree ☐ Postgraduate degree

☐ Other, please specify _____

6. Please indicate your marital status:

☐ Single ☐ Married ☐ Divorced ☐ Widowed

7. Please indicate your current job title

_____

8. Please indicate the number of years employed in your current organisation

_____

APPENDIX K

Negative Acts Questionnaire

The following behaviours are often seen as examples of negative behaviour in the workplace. Over the last six months, how often have you been subjected to the following negative acts at work?

Please circle the number that best corresponds with your experience over the last six months:

1	2	3	4	5
Never	Now and then	Monthly	Weekly	Daily

1)	Someone withholding information which affects your performance	1	2	3	4	5
2)	Being humiliated or ridiculed in connection with your work	1	2	3	4	5
3)	Being ordered to do work below your level of competence	1	2	3	4	5
4)	Having key areas of responsibility removed or replaced with more trivial or unpleasant tasks	1	2	3	4	5
5)	Spreading of gossip and rumours about you	1	2	3	4	5
6)	Being ignored, excluded or being 'sent to Coventry'	1	2	3	4	5
7)	Having insulting or offensive remarks made about your person (i.e. habits and background), your attitudes or your private life	1	2	3	4	5
8)	Being shouted at or being the target of spontaneous anger (or rage)	1	2	3	4	5
9)	Intimidating behaviour such as finger-pointing, invasion of personal space, shoving, blocking/barring the way	1	2	3	4	5
10)	Hints or signals from others that you should quit your job	1	2	3	4	5
11)	Repeated reminders of your errors or mistakes	1	2	3	4	5
12)	Being ignored or facing a hostile reaction when you approach	1	2	3	4	5
13)	Persistent criticism of your work and effort	1	2	3	4	5
14)	Having your opinions and views ignored	1	2	3	4	5
15)	Practical jokes carried out by people you don't get on with	1	2	3	4	5
16)	Being given tasks with unreasonable or impossible targets or deadlines	1	2	3	4	5
17)	Having allegations made against you	1	2	3	4	5
18)	Excessive monitoring of your work	1	2	3	4	5
19)	Pressure not to claim something which by right you are entitled to (e.g. sick leave, holiday entitlement, travel expenses)	1	2	3	4	5
20)	Being the subject of excessive teasing and sarcasm	1	2	3	4	5
21)	Being exposed to an unmanageable workload	1	2	3	4	5
22)	Threats of violence or physical abuse or actual abuse	1	2	3	4	5

23. Have you been bullied at work? We define bullying as a situation where one or several individuals persistently over a period of time perceive themselves to be on the receiving end of negative actions from one or several persons, in a situation where the target of bullying has difficulty in defending him or herself against these actions. We will <u>not</u> refer to a one-off incident as bullying.

Using the above definition, please state whether you have been bullied at work over the last six months?

No ☐
Yes, but only rarely ☐
Yes, now and then ☐
Yes several times per week ☐
Yes, almost daily ☐

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The General Health Questionnaire (Goldberg, 1972)

Please mark with a cross (✕) the response which best suits the way that you have felt, thought and behaved in the past few weeks.

Have you recently…

	Better than usual (1)	Same as usual (2)	Worse than usual (3)	Much worse than usual (4)
1. been able to concentrate on what you're doing?				

	Not at all (1)	No more than usual (2)	Rather more than usual (3)	Much worse than usual (4)
2. lost much sleep over worry?				

	More so than usual (1)	Same as usual (2)	Less useful than usual (3)	Much less useful (4)
3. felt that you are playing a useful part in things?				

	More so than usual (1)	Same as usual (2)	Less so than usual (3)	Much less capable (4)
4. felt capable of making decisions about things?				

	Not at all (1)	No more than usual (2)	Rather more than usual (3)	Much more than usual (4)
5. felt constantly under strain?				

	Not at all (1)	No more than usual (2)	Less able than usual (3)	Much less able than usual (4)
6. felt that you could not overcome your difficulties?				

	More so than usual (1)	Same as usual (2)	Less so than usual (3)	Much less than usual (4)
7. been able to enjoy your normal day-to-day activities?				

	More so than usual (1)	Same as usual (2)	Less able than usual (3)	Much less able (4)
8. been able to face up to your problems?				

	Not at all (1)	No more than usual (2)	Rather more than usual (3)	Much worse than usual (4)
9. been feeling unhappy and depressed?				

	Not at all (1)	No more than usual (2)	Rather more than usual (3)	Much worse than usual (4)
10. been losing confidence in yourself?				

	Not at all (1)	No more than usual (2)	Rather more than usual (3)	Much worse than usual (4)
11. been thinking of yourself as a worthless person?				

	More so than usual (1)	About the same as usual (2)	Less so than usual (3)	Much less than usual (4)
12. been feeling reasonable happy, all things considered?				

The Self-Esteem at Work Scale (Quinn & Shepard, 1974)

The following words and phrases ask you how you see yourself in your work. For example, in answer to question number 1, if you think you are very successful in your work, put a mark in the box right next to the word "Successful". If you think you are not at all successful in your work, put a mark in the box right next to the words "Not Successful". If you think you are somewhere in between, put a cross (✕) where you think it belongs. PLEASE MAKE SURE THAT YOU ANSWER ALL FOUR QUESTIONS BELOW.

1. Successful								Not Successful
2. Important								Not Important
3. Doing my best								Not doing my best
4. Happy								Not Happy

The Overall Job Satisfaction Scale (Warr, Cook and Wall, 1979)

How satisfied are you with the following aspects of your job? Please place a cross (✕) in the appropriate box.

	Extremely dissatisfied (1)	Very dissatisfied (2)	Slightly dissatisfied (3)	Neutral (4)	Slightly satisfied (5)	Very satisfied (6)	Extremely satisfied (7)
1. The physical work conditions							
2. The freedom to choose your own method of working							
3. Your fellow workers							
4. The recognition you get for good work							
5. Your immediate boss							
6. The amount of responsibility you are given							
7. Your rate of pay							
8. Your opportunity to use your abilities							
9. Industrial relations between management and workers in your firm							
10. Your chance of promotion							
11. The way your firm is managed							
12. The attention paid to suggestions you make							
13. Your hours of work							
14. The amount of variety in your job							
15. Your job security							
16. Taking everything into consideration, how do you feel about your job as a whole?							

The Propensity to Leave Scale (Lyons, 1971)

Please indicate with a cross (✕) the response you consider to be the most appropriate to our current situation.

	1 YEAR	2 YEARS	3 YEARS	5 YEARS	10 YEARS	MORE THAN 10 YEARS
1. How long would you like to continue working in your present job?						

	NO	NOT SURE	YES
2. If you were completely free to choose, would you prefer to continue working in your present job?			
3. If you had to top work for a while (for example, because of pregnancy or illness) would you return to your present job?			