



Master's in Education Research Report

Title: An investigation of foundation phase teachers' experiences of workplace bullying in Johannesburg schools.

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DECLARATION

I, **Kim Claire Miller**, declare herewith that the research report entitled: An investigation of foundation phase teachers experiences of bullying in Johannesburg schools which I herewith submit to the University of the Witwatersrand as partial completion of the requirements set for the degree Masters in Education, is my own work, has been text edited and has not already been submitted to any other university.

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Signed at **University of the Witwatersrand** on **17th of March 2020**.

ABSTRACT

Workplace bullying is a worldwide phenomenon that is known to have severe effects on an individual's health and professional status. Workplace bullying in schools is a phenomenon that is known globally to affect teachers, and South African teachers are not excluded from this. The purpose of this study was to examine the impact that workplace bullying has on Foundation Phase teachers in Johannesburg.

This study focused on the experiences of Foundation Phase teachers of workplace bullying at three schools in Johannesburg, South Africa. The primary aim of this study was to examine the lived experiences of workplace bullying of Foundation Phase teachers and to identify key factors that contribute towards workplace bullying. This study examined the impact and effects that workplace bullying has on a foundation phase teachers. This was achieved through this qualitative study that utilized a questionnaire in order to investigate the experiences and perceptions of workplace bullying by Foundation Phase teachers. It also explored the contributing factors of workplace bullying which the Foundation Phase teachers highlighted in the completed questionnaire.

The theoretical framework that this research study used was based on three theories; the first theory was the organisational theory which elaborates on the structure of an organization, the second theory was the workgroup manipulation theory which focuses on the bully and how they manipulate their environment to bully other employees. Lastly, the inclusion and exclusion theory in the workplace was relevant as it highlights how certain factors and characteristics of an organisation can either enable inclusion of all employees or allow workplace bullying to occur.

This study showed that teachers indicated that the main perpetrators in workplace bullying incidents varied from other teachers to head of departments, admin staff and principals. The bullying behaviours portrayed in these bullying incidents were intended to negatively impact the teacher personally and professionally. The reports in this study showed that teachers were first impacted psychologically, and this rippled into their personal and professional well-being as Foundation Phase teachers. In addition, the participants shared their experiences of how workplace bullying affected their teaching practices and suggested a few strategies to deal with workplace bullying effectively in the school environment.

KEY WORDS

Workplace bullying; bullying; foundation phase teacher; school, physical bullying; emotional bullying; factors; prevalence; workplace trauma; stress.

ABBREVIATIONS

DoBE - Department of Basic Education

OBE - Outcomes Based Education

CAPS - Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement

NCS - National Curriculum Statement

WPB - Workplace Bullying

FP - Foundation Phase

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CHAPTER ONE: BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

1. Introduction

Workplace bullying has a huge impact on individuals' social, psychological and physical health as well as on small work groups and organisations as a whole. Teachers are similarly affected by this phenomenon. While no universal definition of workplace bullying has been established the phenomenon has been described as repeated and unreasonable actions of an individual/s directed towards an individual in the workplace which is aimed to humiliate and/or intimidate the person (Dickson, 2005). Bullies make use of verbal and non-verbal behaviours that may appear benign to other employees. This chapter presents the background knowledge to the overall problem statement and objectives of this study as well as the description of the research question, sub-questions, purpose and overall scope for this research study.

1.1 Education in the South African Context

In 1994, South Africa became a democratic country, and this led to a transformation in the education sector. This transformation began with Outcomes-Based Education (OBE), which was then changed to the National Curriculum Statement (NCS) and then the current Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS), which is being utilised by teachers in South African schools (Jansen, 2008). These drastic measures were put into place to eliminate the inequalities and imbalances within the education system, which were introduced by the Apartheid government prior to 1994, whereby schools' characteristics were determined by racial factors (Maharajh, Nkosi & Mkhize, 2016). OBE was one of the first curriculums that has implemented changes to teaching strategies and practices, moving from teacher-centred to learner-centred methods. This meant that later when the NCS curriculum was implemented the teachers who were trained based on the OBE curriculum had to make adjustments to the way they taught. Later, CAPS transformed the way in which assessments are executed: teachers are given timeframes for tasks as well as a variety of teaching methods to implement. Although these changes may have benefited the South African education system, it seems that it has put undue pressure on the teachers who have reported often feeling unsupported and frustrated with the transformation of the curriculum. Teachers felt that they have not been well-equipped to execute and implement these new teaching

techniques and have also suggested that they lack the theoretical knowledge and information that seems to form the foundational principals of the curriculum changes (Mdtshane, 2006).

The teaching profession is complicated in that teachers are expected to adapt and adjust to the ever-changing practices in relation to a number of contextually based internal and external factors that play a role in the South African context. For example, the characteristics of learners and how each learner learns (Adam, 2009). This understanding, portrayed by Adam (2009) and Mdtshane (2006), assumes the position whereby teachers from all levels of experiences and abilities are expected to change and adapt to their ever-changing responsibilities in order to ensure that students are learning.

Research done by Matoti (2010) has shown that there are a number of factors that play a role in the quality of education, specifically in the foundation phase (Grade R – Grade 3), such as the high rate of teacher attrition, unsafe working environments, poorly resourced schools, over-crowded classrooms and the changes in policies and curriculum. All of these add to the frustration experienced by foundation phase teachers in South African schools. As a result of these factors, Alam (2011) suggests that teachers faced with such circumstances and working conditions begin to show signs of stress, become unmotivated and lose the passion they had for teaching. According to De Wet (2014), workplace bullying is another factor that contributes towards teachers' stress and frustrations in schools.

1.2 The Prevalence of Workplace Bullying

Bullying is a prevalent problem in our South African schools and society as a whole; it also has a significant impact on the school atmosphere and negatively affects students' ability to learn in a safe and secure environment without being fearful (Hymel & Swearer, 2015). In the last decade, bullying has been extensively researched and has shown to have long-term effects on the academic, physical and emotional development and success of an individual who is seen as either the victim or the bully (Wolke & Lereya, 2015). Bullying studies and research that has been done in schools normally focuses on learner bullying rather than teacher bullying (De Wet, 2010). Workplace bullying is a relatively new phenomenon that is known as a key "psychosocial stressor" (De Wet, 2014) and has some harsh consequences on people all around the world. There has been a rise in the number of studies done on workplace bullying in the last two decades. A study conducted by Tolentino (2016) in the

Philippines showed that the teachers experiences of bullying are a common phenomenon. This study also showed that different types of bullying occurred but focused on teachers' emotional bullying in particular; it did not elaborate on the other types of bullying experienced by the participants.

The bulk of research conducted in the field of workplace bullying is in Europe (Zapf & Einarsen, 2003) and the USA (Hollis, 2017) there seems to be a limited amount of research done in South Africa in this field (De Wet & Jacobs, 2015). Nonetheless, two extensive South African studies have been done by Steinman (2003) and Cunliffe and Mostert (2012). Both of these studies showed an extensive number of participants were victimised and bullied in their workplace settings. Although these studies do not specifically look at teachers in isolation, De Vos and Kirsten (2015) claim that teachers have been identified as individuals who are affected extensively by workplace bullying.

De Vos and Kirsten (2015) suggest that one of the factors that contribute to the occurrence of workplace bullying is that schools are structured in a hierarchical manner, where power dynamics automatically come into play. This environment is susceptible to workplace bullying as a result of the power dynamic that is put in place. It is evident that a co-worker or principal, and even a student in some instances, can bully teachers (De Vos, 2010). Not only does this power dynamic play a role but so do dysfunctional school settings. The South African Institute for Race and Relations (SAIRR) announced in 2012 that 80% of government schools in South Africa are dysfunctional, which means they do not function well enough to produce top results (De Vos & Kirsten, 2015). According to De Vos and Kirsten (2015), one of the factors that results from this dysfunctional system within schools could be workplace bullying within the school whereby teachers are unable to perform accordingly.

Although this harassment and bullying has been happening for many years, it has been recognised only recently as a substantial problem. With this acknowledgement comes the understanding that workplace bullying is a serious problem (Kitt, 2004). Workplace bullying in schools is a relatively new phenomenon that impacts teachers all around the world (De Wet & Jacobs, 2013). This research study aims to build on this frame of knowledge and will explore the experiences of workplace bullying of Foundation Phase teachers in three Johannesburg primary schools.

1.3 Problem Statement

Bullying is a current behavioural issue that is often ignored or not taken seriously. Research on bullying experiences of teachers has significant value as it affects teachers' overall performance such as their teaching practices, students' results, personal well-being and mental health. Tolentino (2016) suggests that teachers are exposed to different types of bullying in the workplace, such as "emotional bullying, verbal bullying, physical bullying and cyber bullying" (p. 20). Teachers who have been victims of bullying often take more sick leave than others in the workplace due to anxiety, stress and ill health (Espelage & Swearer, 2003).

According to Adebayo and Juliet (2014), bullying of teachers can have negative effects on the students with whom the teachers engage; it can affect the teachers' confidence and results in a significant increase in teachers' resignations. The effects of bullying are not only detrimental to the teacher; it also negatively affects the students, parents and society with which the teacher has direct contact (Tolentino, 2016). There is an increasing amount of literature and policies on workplace bullying in Europe, Africa, Asia, America and Tanzania, but very little research has been conducted in the education sector (Kyellu, 2016). Therefore, this research study is aimed at exploring how Foundation Phase teachers in South Africa experience workplace bullying and what contributes towards workplace bullying and what impact workplace bullying has on Foundation Phase teachers.

1.4 Purpose of this Study

The information collected in this research study was used to analyse the experiences of workplace bullying by Foundation Phase teachers in Johannesburg. It also explored the factors which encourage workplace bullying as well as the effects it had on the participants work related performances and personal well-being. The purpose of this study was also to identify intervention strategies which would be valuable to school leaders. Additionally this study is valuable to researchers and other professionals who are working on addressing workplace bullying in any work related context.

1.5 Objectives

The objectives of this study are:

- To explore Foundation Phase teachers' experiences of workplace bullying in three schools in Johannesburg,
- To investigate the factors that contribute towards workplace bullying as perceived by Foundation Phase teachers and
- To determine the impact and effects that workplace bullying has on Foundation Phase teachers.

1.6 Overall Research Question

The overall research question is:

What are Foundation Phase teachers' experiences of workplace bullying?

1.6.1 Sub-Research Questions

The following sub-questions are linked to the overall research questions:'

- How do teachers define workplace bullying?
- Which factors contribute to Foundation Phase teachers' experiences of workplace bullying?
- What impact does workplace bullying have on Foundation Phase teachers?
- What strategies do Foundation Phase teachers use to cope with workplace bullying?

1.7 The Rationale of this Study

This research study on Foundation Phase teachers' experiences of workplace bullying will make the following contributions towards the overall literature of workplace bullying. This research study provides significant awareness for the South African government, Department of Education and School Governing Bodies (SGB's) in Johannesburg about the occurrences of workplace bullying. It will also be useful for the management of schools in Johannesburg to ensure that workplace bullying is dealt with accordingly so that schools can create and put

in place policies against workplace bullying. It aims to create a framework for future research to be conducted on workplace bullying in schools and adds to the body of knowledge of workplace bullying. This research study could also contribute by informing schools about workplace bullying and how it has negatively impacted the teachers in this study and can indirectly have an impact on the school as well. Lastly, the results of this research study can provide principals and other school leaders with some insight as to how they can ensure that their schoolworking environment is productive and safe for teachers.

1.8 The Scope of this Study

This research study was conducted at three schools in Johannesburg and investigated the impact of workplace bullying on 17 Foundation Phase teachers. This research study also examined the Foundation Phase teachers experiences of workplace bullying and what contributing factors enabled workplace bullying.

1.9 The Breakdown of this Research Study

This research report is broken down into six chapters:

Chapter one provides insight to the background knowledge of the study. It also provides an explanation of the research problem statement, the objectives, research question and sub-questions. Chapter two presents the conceptual and key definitions of the study as well as the literature review and theoretical framework that is relevant for this study. Chapter three provides the research design and methodology and includes the site, populations, sampling size and the sampling techniques that were used. Chapter four discusses the methods of data collection and analysis used in this study and highlights the reliability, validity and ethical considerations for this study. In chapter four, the data is presented in themes and patterns that are relevant to the main research question and sub-questions. Chapter five encapsulates the interpretations of the data, the analysis and the discussion of the themes and patterns of the data. The final chapter of this study, Chapter 6, presents a summary of the study, the final conclusions and the limitations and recommendations for future studies.

1.10 Conclusion

This chapter has provided an in-depth overview of the research study and what it entails. In Chapter two, this research study will deal with the literature that is relevant to the phenomenon of workplace bullying in an Educational context.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter focuses on a discussion of different types of workplace bullying and the factors that play a role in the occurrence of workplace bullying. It will also include the personal effects of workplace bullying as well as how organisations like schools can implement interventions to prevent workplace bullying. This chapter also provided the discussion of the theories in the theoretical framework: namely the organisational theory, the workgroup manipulation theory and the inclusion and exclusion theory on workplace bullying. Lastly, it will define the relevant key concepts for this study.

2.1 What is Workplace Bullying?

According to Aquino and Thau (2009) traditional bullying is a specific type of aggressive behaviour towards a group or individual. Studies have shown that, even in the animal world, behaviour exists whereby the ‘weaker’ members of a group are often ignored or excluded for the survival of the remainder of the group (Williams, 2007). Therefore, it should not be in disbelief that this same behaviour exists in society. According to Zapf and Gross (2001), bullying is about long-term experience to unwanted behaviours that affect the individual physically and psychologically. The frequent and persistent exposure to these conditions can have a serious impact on the individual’s day-to-day activities.

Prior to the term ‘bullying’, Leymann (1990) used the term ‘mobbing’ to refer to the phenomenon amid children or adults that involved the continuous exposure to indirect forms of aggressive behaviour. Leymann (1990) contrasted the term ‘mobbing’ to ‘bullying’ as the term ‘bullying’ was used in incidents that involved direct physical aggressive behaviour. In recent studies, diverse terms have been used to describe the passive and less direct aggressive behaviour in workplaces such as: ‘harassment’ (Brodsky, 1976), ‘abusive supervision’ (Tepper, 2000), ‘incivility’ (Blau & Anderson, 2005), ‘emotional abuse’ (Keashly, 1998) and ‘victimisation’ (Aquino & Bradfield, 2000). However, in most research conducted globally, the term ‘workplace bullying’ emerged (Einarsen, Hoel, Zapf & Cooper, 2003).

The research conducted within the field of study of workplace bullying has produced a variety of definitions linked to workplace bullying. Researchers have continued to explore the phenomenon of workplace bullying. De Vos and Kirsten (2015) state that a broad number of

definitions of workplace bullying include a continuation or repetition of a certain behaviour whereby one individual has power over another within the workplace setting. De Vos and Kirsten (2015) continue that the individual experiencing workplace bullying is seen as the victim. Workplace bullying has an impact on the victims' "physical, emotional and professional health" (De Vos & Kirsten, 2015). Another definition of workplace bullying, according to De Wet (2014), is that it is a repeated act and practice aimed at one or more individuals, and these acts are done purposefully in order to cause harm to an individual. As a result, the victim will show signs of stress and their ability to work will be negatively impacted. In addition, Bartlett and Bartlett (2011) suggest that workplace bullying is a continuous practice of "an imbalance of power" between the victim and the bully.

The component of 'subjectivity' comes into play when the victim's perspective of this specific behaviour and the effects thereof is impacted. Einarsen et al (2003) define workplace bullying as bullying that occurs in the workplace whereby an individual purposively offends, harasses and socially excludes someone and can lead to negatively affecting the victims' work performance and overall well-being. In order for one to label an individual as a bully, the interaction and behaviour of the individual doing the bullying has to be regular or repeated over a period of time. A disagreement cannot be referred to as a bullying incident if it occurs in isolation. Based on these definitions and for the purpose of this study, the definition of workplace bullying that will be used is: workplace bullying is a repetitive act of violence or the humiliation of an individual in the workplace, which has an impact on their overall well-being and their work performance.

2.2 Workplace Bullying Behaviours

Table 1 lists different workplace bullying behaviours put together by O'Connell, Calvert and Watson (2007) that can occur within an unhealthy workplace setting; these behaviours are relevant to this study as they are linked to workplace bullying and are the different types of behaviour that a perpetrator displays directly or indirectly. The categorisation of the different bullying behaviours shows the connection between the tactics or strategies that a bully uses either to isolate / exclude, intimidate, threaten, humiliate, cause damage to one's professional status, limit professional growth, impact an individual's personal growth and affect an individual economically.

Table 1: The Different Bullying Behaviours (O.Connell, Calvert & Watson, 2007)

Bullying Behaviours	Tactics Used by the Bully
Isolation and Exclusion	Ignoring Excluding from conversation Isolating from colleagues Excluding from activities Singling out Silent treatment
Intimidation and Threats	Staring Watching Following Shouting Intrusion Pestering Spying Stalking Glaring Encouraging other to turn against another
Belittlement and Humiliation	Spreading rumors Gossiping Insulting Demeaning Undermining Discounting thoughts / ideas Harsh criticism Verbal put-downs Degrading nicknames Blaming Feeling stupid / incompetent Suggesting medical / psychological conditions Publicising mistakes

Damaging Professional Identity	Attacking character Attaching ability Demeaning work Questioning skills Slander Excessive questioning Rumors Negative feedback Offensive emails Sabotage
Limiting Professional Growth	Setting up to fail Ensuring failure Being overlooked for promotion Excluding from activities Denying or excluding from professional development
Making Work Difficult	Relocating job Excluding from information Isolating work opportunities Excessive / unreasonable workload Undoable demands Sabotaging work Excessive scrutiny Setting up to fail Blocking access to resources Assigning unsafe work conditions
Economic Sanctions	Interfering with paycheck

2.3 Workplace Bullying in the School Context

Workplace bullying is a serious issue that teachers face in schools (Fahie & Devine, 2014) even though there is a limited amount of literature on workplace bullying in schools. De Wet and Jacobs (2013) suggest that workplace bullying is still prevalent amongst South African teachers. These studies indicate that workplace bullying is context-based and the prevalence

of it varies from country to country. De Wet (2014) is one of the researchers who has done extensive research on workplace bullying, and has reported that there is a limited amount of research that has been done on this phenomenon in South Africa. Steinman (2003) and Cunniff and Mostert (2012) both did independent studies in South Africa and found that there is a large number of the participants who claim to have experienced workplace bullying (cited in De Wet & Jacobs, 2015).

The main studies that have been conducted worldwide include one done amongst 475 Lithuanian teachers (De Wet & Jacobs, 2015), showing that a mere 1.9% of teachers suggested they experienced workplace bullying “several times a week” while 0.7% of the teachers suggested they were bullied severely on a daily basis. In contrast to this study, Cemalogu (2007) found, using the Negative Act Questionnaire (NAQ), that 50% of the teachers who participated in this study reported having experienced workplace bullying. In Croatia, 764 teachers took part in a survey done by Russo, Millic, Knezevic, Mullic and Mustajbegovic (2008); the survey found that 22.4% of these teachers experienced workplace bullying and 31.7% of the teachers were bystanders to workplace bullying. A study done by the National Association of Schoolmasters Union of Women Teachers (NASUWT, 2012) suggests that 22% of 3028 teachers in British schools who participated suggested that they have either been a victim of or a witness to workplace bullying. All this data that has been conducted shows that workplace bullying is a phenomenon that is prevalent to teachers worldwide.

A South African study that was conducted across occupations by Marais-Steinmann from 1998-1999 established that 77.8% of South Africans were experiencing bullying within their workplaces. A later study done by Marais-Steinman in 2003 found that 49.5% of individuals in the health sector stated that they had experienced workplace bullying (De Vos & Kirsten, 2015). A study done by De Wet and Jacobs (2013) showed that 90.8% of the participants were victims of workplace bullying in the twelve months prior to the study. Of these victims, 89.1% were exposed to at least two different types of workplace bullying. 80.9 % of these participants were isolated or undermined by their bully.

Although a fair amount of research has been done on workplace bullying in South Africa, there seems to be a rise in workplace bullying or unfair treatment within the public services sector, which includes teachers.

2.4 Factors that Contribute Towards Workplace Bullying

There are a number of reasons why the prevalence of workplace bullying has been on the rise. According to Farmer (2011) we live in a globalised world in which issues such as unemployment occur, and this gives rise to competition within the workplace. This factor plays a role in the increase of workplace bullying as the workplace setting is structured through a culture of competitiveness in which employees all aim for the top spot in their organisation (Farmer, 2011). In a school context, one of the main factors that contributes towards workplace bullying is that teachers are in direct competition with one another for their job status or position or they are jealous of their peers' achievements (Björkqvist, Österman & Hjelt-Bäck, 1994).

Lines (2008) suggests that a school as an organisation has a hierarchical structure that is naturally instituted in order for the organisation to function productively. This instils an active power dynamic that leads to individuals using their power and position over the next person, which enables workplace bullying (Fapohunda, 2013). This use of power in schools can lead to an imbalance and inequality of individuals that leads to a dysfunctional structure in schools. A study done by De Vos and Kirsten (2015) shows that South African schools that have a dysfunctional structure enabled the occurrence of workplace bullying. This study also found that male school principals were mostly recognised as bullies, which shows a dynamic within schools where leadership uses its power in a negative way to control and bully others in the workplace. Furthermore, if an individual is new to a workplace or considered different to others, this may make them a target to the rest of the group (De Vos & Kirsten, 2015).

2.5 Personal Effects of Workplace Bullying

A number of studies have proven that workplace bullying has a significant impact on individuals. For example, research shows that workplace bullying can have a negative impact on the "quality of life, health and well-being" of an individual (Carroll & Lauzier, 2014, p. 82). De Vos and Kirsten (2015) have suggested that an individual can be affected psychologically, socially and physically in their daily lives. De Vos (2013) conducted a further study to show that when an individual experiences workplace bullying, they are affected psychologically through their perception of the bullying, which later results in the

physical and social aspects of the individual being negatively affected. In this study, the participants suggested that workplace bullying was a distressing experience. Fapohunda (2013) has also suggested that workplace bullying has a negative effect on an individual's self-esteem as well as on the organisation's ethos. De Wet and Jacobs (2015) show that workplace bullying for teachers has effects on their psychological health in that participants expressed emotions of sadness as one of the common effects, others suggested that they have a tendency to want to cry when recalling the experiences of workplace bullying. Similarly, De Vos (2013) suggested that the feeling of sadness and a desire to cry were common effects of workplace bully. As a result of workplace bullying, De Wet and Jacobs (2015) suggested that the participants in their study thought they suffered from anxiety while a professional diagnosed others with depression. Turney (2003) states that the negative effects of workplace bullying include: fear, anxiety, depression, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), stress, stress-related illnesses and sleep disorders.

De Wet and Jacobs (2015) suggest that individuals exposed to workplace bullying seemed to be less attached to their work, which resulted in them isolating themselves and becoming less committed to their work. They also found that individuals reported that they struggled to concentrate in their workplaces, which lead to them making mistakes and a decrease in their quality of work and productivity. In relation to teachers, De Wet and Jacobs (2015) state that workplace bullying showed that teachers were not able to be productive.

Research done by Balducci, Fraccaroli and Alfano (2009) has proven that workplace bullying does not have a negative impact on the victim alone. Essen, Esquivel and Jha (2014) suggest that workplace bullying also has a significant impact the organisation as employees are absent from work and suffer from mental health issues that affect their performance on a daily basis; this has a collective effect on the organisation. In addition, employers lose many employees due to workplace bullying: individuals targeted in the workplace often said that they felt stressed and these negative outcomes would most likely have a negative impact on their job satisfaction, which means that is an increase in resignations due to workplace bullying (Carroll & Lauzier, 2014). Turney (2003) similarly states that not only are individuals affected but the employers of organisations can be disadvantaged too. The organisation can be impacted on a short- and long-term basis by low productivity, increased absenteeism and a high rate of staff turnover as a result of workplace bullying.

2.6 Workplace Bullying Solutions and Interventions

Some of the solutions and interventions that need to be put into place to avoid workplace bullying often requires effort from everyone within the organisation. Essen et al (2014) state that leadership and those in management positions need to establish processes to deal with agreements and disagreements in a professional manner. Essen, Esquivel and Jha (2014) accentuate that the leadership of an organisation needs to set an example to the other employees. This includes body language as well as tone and word choice when communicating with others in the workplace. It is also important that leadership gives equal opportunities to everyone and that bullying workshops are attended by all employees. In schools, it is important that principals and the school's leadership ensure that the school's culture is one where all staff are treated respectfully and with dignity in order to create a workplace that supports a non-violent and no bully zone (Fahie & Devine, 2014). Participants who took part in a study conducted by Kruger (2011) suggested that schools need to host discussions run by professionals in the field of bullying that should not only be aimed at the students but also the school's staff and leadership. Some of the teachers also note that posters and signs should be put up in the school grounds to raise awareness of bullying and how it can impact the lives of individuals.

In conclusion, although there has been a fair amount of research done on workplace bullying in South African schools, it seems that the literature shows teachers worldwide have become targets. In South Africa, it is a common phenomenon that is rarely dealt with as the law does not have boundaries that limit these experiences. It is important for schools to maintain an appropriate culture within their structures to prevent workplace bullying.

This section has discussed the prevalence of workplace bullying and how it affects teachers in schools. It has also discussed workplace bullying in the South African and international context. Furthermore, it has examined the factors that contribute to workplace bullying. The next section will examine three theories that are relevant to this study, namely: the organisational theory, the workgroup manipulation theory and the inclusion and exclusion workplace theory.

2.7 Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework is underscored by three theories that are relevant to this study. The first is the organisational theory, which elaborates on the structure and how certain aspects of an organisation like a school can enable workplace bullying. The second theory is the workgroup manipulation theory, which focuses on the bully and how they are able to manipulate their environment to bully others. Lastly, inclusion and exclusion theory in the workplace is discussed and highlights how certain factors and characteristics of an organisation can either enable inclusion of all employees or allow workplace bullying to occur, which leads to the exclusion of some employees in whole group social and professional activities.

2.7.1 Organisational Theory

In order to improve the understanding of workplace bullying, the organisational theory by Hoel and Salin (2003) examined workplace bullying from an organisation's perspective. The focal point of this theory is the role organisations play in allowing workplace bullying to occur. According to this theory, there are a number of distinctive characteristics that can enable the occurrence of workplace bullying. Samnani and Singh (2012) suggest that characteristics such as the culture, environment and management of an organisation have an impact on the occurrence of workplace bullying. This is relevant for this study as none of the schools that participated in this research had official policies to assist the school as a whole to resolve severe workplace bullying incidents. From what Samnani and Singh (2012) have stated, it is important to note that how an organisation is managed plays a big role in enabling workplace bullying (Hoel & Salin, 2003).

Hoel and Salin (2003) state that there are two management types that encourage workplace bullying. The first is *laissez-faire*, which is when the organisation lacks a manager or individual or fails to fill their position as management. This allows bullying to occur and to continue over a long period of time as the management or individual in charge has not established rules or boundaries for their employees. The second is referred to as the highly authoritarian leadership or management whereby the environment created by this type of leadership is quite strict and firm, and management has power over other employees. With the use of this power, the organisation's management encourages the imbalance of power and

uses this power to control others. Similarly, Young (1990) states that an organisation that holds a strong hierarchical presence may lead to employers having a dominant presence over others in the workplace. In this study, all the schools were managed in a hierarchical manner: the principal, head of department and administrative staff were the sole decision makers on the site while governing body operated off site. The short-term decisions such as teachers' workload distribution, leave approvals and day-to-day responsibilities were determined by the principal and the head of grade / department, which meant that the teachers had a limited amount of input in the duties they were given.

Baillien, Neyens, De Witte and De Cuyper (2009) suggest that the culture and atmosphere of an organisation is important in the way employers and employees interact with one another. If an organisation's culture encourages gossiping or disrespect amongst each other, it will allow for workplace bullying to occur more easily than in an organisation that does not enable this behaviour. The participants in the study conducted by Baillien et al. (2009) shared that they felt like victimised, and the witnesses felt as though they could not confide or seek support from the school's leadership because there are no serious consequences in the schools code of conduct for the occurrence of workplace bullying . The schools indirectly supported workplace bullying as they had no strict policy's or structures to support the victims in the incidents. Thus, the reluctance of the superiors in the school to intervene in the workplace bullying incidents may suggest to staff that workplace bullying is acceptable. For Hoel and Salin (2003, p. 210), another aspect is that organisations going through transformation or change enable bullying. For example, a school and other educational institutions that are constantly changing, places the organisations at risk of workplace bullying. In the case of a school experiencing change such as curriculum changes, where new teaching styles and methods are introduced, staff feel pressurised and workload may increase (Katrinli, Atabay, Gunay & Cangarli, 2010). Change of management or heads of school also enables uncertainty with unclear boundaries, unclear expectations from management and unclear steps to take to work productively with the new management; therefore, a situation as mentioned will increase the opportunity for workplace bullying and other employees may take the opportunity to bully others as no clear-cut boundaries are in place (Shaw, 2017).

2.7.2 Workgroup Manipulation Theory

Hutchinson (2012) examines workplace bullying as some form of workgroup manipulation

whereby manipulation can be categorised into four different types. Shaw (2017) explains these as influencing, which refers to the social intellect of the bully. For Shaw (2017), the bully is able to use “relational aggression” (p. 22) to influence and encourage others to assist in bullying the victim by damaging their social status within the school or workplace. In this way, the victim is isolated or excluded from the group of employees. Following this practice of influence, the bully then uses their social advantage by repeatedly attacking the victim. The bully also persuades the rest of the group to follow suit, thereby strengthening the bully’s main group; those who do not participate in this are seen as weak and may also be bullied (Hutchinson, 2012).

The next phase of manipulation is the rationalising phase whereby the bully traps the victim into thinking that they deserve the treatment. As a result, the victim will continue to isolate and to exclude themselves from the environment. The main workgroup then begins to rationalise the bullying behaviour that they have executed by making the victim feel unworthy or incompetent. In this research study, participants stated that they felt demotivated and less confident and became self-conscious about their own worth and ability to fulfil their duties at school.

The last phase includes the individuals who are witnesses to the bullying; although they are not directly involved, they also do nothing to stop the bullying from occurring. This is referred to as the notion of complying where, through the experience of watching bullying occurring over a period of time, the witnesses become accustomed to the act of bullying and it becomes a norm within the workplace environment. Consequently, the witnesses comply with this behaviour and the bully supports the individuals who are in favour of it. Witnesses safeguard themselves as they do not want to confront the bully in fear of becoming victims themselves of workplace bullying (Hoel & Salin, 2003).

2.7.3 Workplace Inclusion and Exclusion Theory

This section will highlight how workplace bullying has an impact on the inclusion of teachers in the school environment. The Workplace Inclusion and Exclusion Theory is explained in detail in this section.

2.7.3.1 *Theory of Inclusion*

Hyter and Turnock (2009) suggest that for a person to be successful in the workplace they need to be given the opportunity to develop and grow as individuals, which needs to be observable by others as success is not an innate ability. In a school, inclusion is a concept in which all teachers are given the same opportunities as certain roles are not limited to specific individuals since all staff are able to apply or to fulfil the responsibility. With the use of this theory of inclusion, a school's productivity will be maximised as there is no favouritism and all staff feel that they belong and are accepted and respected (Hanamura, 2009). This also promotes a productive environment and impacts the organisation positively. Hanamura (2009) suggests that there are four factors that determine if an organisation will be inclusive or exclusive: an individual feels as though they are competent for a position; the manager or principal has set out clear boundaries and expectations so that employees observe and understand what is expected from them and everyone has a common goal, and everyone involved is aware of the goal that needs to be reached. There is also an appreciation factor whereby employees are rewarded for their hard work equally. From what Hanamura (2009) has stated, it is clear to assume that there are a number of elements that enable inclusion in a workplace setting.

2.7.3.2 Theory of Exclusion

Hitlan, Clifton and Desoto (2006) state that there is a natural tendency for employees to want to belong and feel accepted within a group of people in which they work with. An environment that enables exclusion of individuals can have a negative impact on an individual as well as the workplace itself. Employees feeling a sense of rejection by others may interfere with that individual's ability to create and to maintain positive relationships, a good work ethic and reputation within the workplace. Exclusionary behaviour occurs in a number of forms within the workplace. For Leary (2001), it is when an individual is ignored, mobbed, shunned or rejected by a group of individuals.

This section has looked at the prevalence of workplace bullying within the education sector using previous research that has been conducted. It has also discussed the following theories: organisational theory, the workgroup manipulation theory and the inclusion and exclusion theory on workplace bullying. In the next section, the key concepts will be defined.

2.8 Key Concepts

For the purpose of this research, the following concepts will be defined: workplace bullying, Foundation Phase, bully, victim, bystander, stress, factors and impact.

2.8.1 Workplace Bullying

According to Oade (2009), bullying is seen as a repeated, persistent and continuous behaviours that aim to impact another negatively; it is usually associated with power imbalances between the victims and the perpetrator. There are a number of definitions for workplace bullying. Matthiesen and Einarsen (2007) define workplace bullying as a situation in which one or more persons are exposed to negative treatment over a long period of time from one or more persons in the workplace. The victim struggles to defend themselves against the bully in the workplace.

This research study was based on the definition that workplace bullying is a repetitive act of violence or humiliation of an individual that has an impact on their overall well-being and work performance. Workplace bullying is often associated with weak management skills and the workplace management are often not aware of the impact that workplace bullying can have on the environment and the individuals in the workplace.

2.8.2 Bullying Behaviour

The term ‘bullying’ includes bullying behaviour that can be verbal, physical, relational, cyber or workplace related. Bullying can be described as an individual who engages with different bullying behaviour that targets an individual or group (Carlisle & Rofes, 2007).

2.8.3 Foundation Phase

According to the Department of Education, education in the Foundation Phase in South African schools comprises Grade R to Grade 1 and generally caters to children from the age of five to nine years of age. All the participants in this study were qualified Foundation Phase teachers (South Africa, 2011).

2.8.4 Bully

A bully, also referred to as the perpetrator, is viewed as an individual who participates in bullying behaviour towards other individuals. The bully is an individual who intends to hurt others by making them feel inferior and uncomfortable (Blendo, 2006). There are different types of bullies: chronic, optimistic and situational.

2.8.4.1 *Chronic Bully*

The chronic bully is an individual who has learned childhood behaviour or who has a personality disorder that has the potential to create this kind of workplace bully. They are known to be the most dangerous as chronic bullies do not interpret or process social cues accurately and often misinterpret the intentions of others. The bully internally conceptualise that they are superior to others and lack empathy towards others (Christen & Soberman, 2006).

2.8.4.2 *Optimistic Bully*

According to Adams (2007, p. 179), the optimistic bully is self-absorbed, overly ambitious and will do anything to succeed over others. They strive to make full use of contacts, circumstances and exposure to get ahead of their other colleagues and will bully anyone who gets in the way of their success.

2.8.4.3 *Situational Bully*

A situational bully is an individual who takes advantage of the workplace environment and uses the organisation's weaknesses to their benefit. For example: if an organisation is going through changes, has a weak or dictator style management and / or poor hierarchy outlines that enable the situational bully to take advantage. The situational bully is known to bully in groups and usually attacks individuals who are lower down in the workplace hierarchy (Lee & Brotheridge, 2006).

2.8.5 Victim

A victim, also referred to as a target, is an individual who is bullied by another person. The term ‘victim’ emphasises the unequal balance of power and also suggests that the victim is in some way being “physically, psychologically and/ or socially” negatively impacted by the bully (De Vos, 2010, p. 37). The participants of this study filled the role of being either being a victim to workplace bullying or playing the part of the witness / bystander in the incidents that were reported in this study.

2.8.6 Bystander

The act of bullying does not only include the victim/s and the bully; it also affects the witnesses of the act who are also known as bystanders. These are individuals who choose to witness an act of bullying without getting involved or trying to stop the bullying from happening. Although not directly involved, these individuals encourage the bullying to occur (Kruger, 2011).

2.8.7 Stress

Stress symptoms are an “arousal of the mind and body in response to demands made on them” (Schafer, 2000). The stress that results from workplace bullying can be transferred to other aspects of an individual’s life. For example: school environment and classroom productivity (De Vos, 2013, p. 6). In this study, the participants reported to have mild to severe symptoms of stress and anxiety due to workplace bullying, which lead to the decline in their work performance and overall well-being.

2.8.8 Factors

A factor refers to a circumstance, fact, influence or the cause of a situation where it contributes or enables to a result or outcome. In terms of workplace bullying in schools, there are a number of contextual factors that contribute to and enable workplace bullying to occur, such as weak leadership (Farmer, 2011).

2.8.9 Impact

The term ‘impact’ refers to the consequence, effect or influence that a person or their actions

can have on another person. In relation to workplace bullying, it affects the victims' social, emotional and physical well-being (Fapohunda, 2013). In the incidents that were reported in this study, workplace bullying impacted the participants negatively and had negative effects on their work performance and health.

2.9 Conclusion

Research on workplace bullying has developed extensively in a short time frame. Bullying has been considered one of the most detrimental issues in the workplace. Existing research has provided a somewhat solid and extensive understanding for the prevalence, outcomes and predictors of bullying but there are still gaps in the literature within the field. There is a lack of theoretical principals which should help guide our understandings and explanations of workplace bullying (Zapf & Einarsen, 2005). Research studies on workplace bullying are difficult to interpret or translate into practice due to the lack of theoretical frameworks. As a result of this Escartin (2016) has highlighted that there is a lack of interventions against workplace bullying therefore in order to develop sustainable and effective interventions there is a need for further research of this nature to be conducted. In this chapter, I provided the literature review and theoretical framework, and has defined the key concepts that are relevant to this study. In Chapter three, the research design methods will be discussed.

CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHOD

3.1. Introduction

A research design is the way in which the research will provide how, when and where the relevant information will be collected and how it will later be analysed (Walker, 2005). Merriam (2009, p. 14) suggests that qualitative research focusses on the understanding of how individuals interpret their worlds through experiences. The researcher is the primary source of data collection and analysis. This chapter outlines the paradigm of this study, the ethics involved in this research process and the process of inquiry that was used to generate the data that was analysed.

3.2 Research Paradigm

A paradigm is a general set of frameworks that provides ways of looking at the world, they are based on sets of assumptions about the nature of reality (Denzin & Giardina, 2009). Denzin and Giardina (2009, p. 16) state that a paradigm is a set of beliefs that are based on “human constructions” of the world around them. My methods and analysis are informed by the functionalists, social constructionist and post-modernist viewpoints. The paradigms in this research study enabled me to merge together different experiences from the participants to formulate social interventions that institutions and organisations could use to alleviate workplace bullying.

An essential principal of the postmodern discourse which is the basis of my approach to this research is that the world arises through social interactions and the growth of shared meaning and communication (Willis, 2007, p. 192). Social constructivists believe that individuals construct meaning of reality through his or hers experiences and interactions with the world. Through this lens of social constructivism, I was able to understand that there are multiple perceptions of realities that all co -exist (Merriam, 2009, p. 92). From this position I also became aware of the dynamic nature of these multiple realities that co – exists and that each participant has their own view and experience of workplace bullying. The use of a questionnaire allowed the researcher to gain knowledge from the participants experiences which was analysed coherently.

The functionalism paradigm takes the approach that suggests knowledge can be acquired and discovered through social experiences, thus workplace bullying researchers has considered the functionalist approach previously (Samnani & Singh, 2012). Researchers who have adopted this approach has looked at the experiences of the participants through the use of quantitative tools. The functionalist approach allows for the researcher to provide effective and practical solutions and interventions thus contributing to the growth of knowledge and awareness (Samnani & Singh, 2012).

3.2.1 Epistemology

Merriam (2009, p. 9) defines epistemology as the “nature of knowledge” and it is argued that epistemology refers to “our theories of knowledge” and what we know about the world around us. Based on the underlying beliefs of the theoretical framework of functionalism that knowledge is acquired and discovered through social experiences and that elements of society impact and influences one another (Samnani & Singh, 2012). My epistemological assumption stems from the belief that society is a system that functions through interconnected parts that work together in order to maintain a state of equilibrium for the whole (Mooney, Knox and Schacht, 2007). This functionalist outlook implies that each element of society influences and/or is influenced by one another. For the purpose of this study, the researcher used this assumption and found that bullying behaviours within the school environment had a negative effect on the teachers work performance and their overall emotional well – being.

3.2.2 Ontology

Merriam (2009, p. 9) defines ontology as the “nature of reality” whereby it represents our views of the world and how we go about to study it. Social constructivism is an ontological assumption whereby individuals actively construct meaning of their environment through their historical experiences and social contexts. Through this multiple meanings of the same information can co-exist (Cohen & Morrison, 2003). The researcher in this study viewed workplace bullying through the lens of the participants, whereby the participants experiences were constructed through their own experiences. The researcher was interested in the participants constructed experiences in terms of workplace bullying, and with the use of the questionnaire the researcher was able to make meaning of the participants personal

experiences of workplace bullying.

3.2.3 Axiology

Axiology is defined as a branch of philosophy that focuses on the “nature of values and value judgements” (Ryan & Cooper, 2010, p. 293). Values are an imperative element of the research inquiry process. Axiology also forms part of the foundation of the philosophical dimensions of a paradigm (Guba & Lincoln, 2005, p. 200) and therefore guides the research decisions (Mertens, Homes & Harris, 2009) The post-modern axiology forms the foundation of this research study will be discussed in relation to reflexivity. This aspect was chosen in order to ensure that this research study is a true reflection of the participants experiences of workplace bullying.

Reflexivity in qualitative studies examines the interconnected relationships between knowledge, experience, research roles and the social world (King & Horrocks, 2010, p. 125). The researcher in a qualitative study is viewed as a research tool in the research process thus the multiple selves that researchers assume in a research study. It is important to indicate that as a researcher we bring a variety of identities of oneself and therefore these identities can present itself in the research (Guba & Lincoln, 2005, p. 211). As a qualitative researcher it was important to reflect on my own subconscious purpose in this research study and the analysis of the data from the questionnaires. I purposively shaped and managed the way in which I actively engaged with the data and it is important for me to state that as a researcher I unavoidably co-constructed the experiences that took place.

3.3 Research Methodology

The methodology (design and methods) of a research study is defined as the assumption that brings out the different approaches and implications for the conducting of a research study for the development of a theory. This section will examine the research methods used in the conducting of this research study. Qualitative design was used as it allowed the researcher to focus on lived experiences of Foundation Phase teachers (Papadopoulos & Lees, 2002). A qualitative research approach was adopted by this research study as it allowed the researcher to use field notes, interviews and questionnaires as qualitative tools to obtain information and knowledge. The information obtained through these instruments help the researcher to gain

knowledge about a specific phenomenon (Merriam, 2009).

Due to the sensitive nature of this research study, the use of a qualitative research method assists in gaining insights into the educational and social issues by examining the different experiences of bullying behaviours, opinions, ideas and emotions of the individuals who have had lived experiences of workplace bullying (Seidman, 2006). Qualitative research allows the researcher to gain knowledge from different voices, which allows for a broader perspective to be explored (Barbour, 2007). A phenomenological approach will be adopted as it allowed for the researcher to explore a number of lived experiences to a specific phenomenon; this allowed for the researcher to look into the insights of the teachers with their personal experiences of workplace bullying (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2009).

3.4 Research Protocol

The aim of each research question in this study is to unpack Foundation Phase teachers' experiences of workplace bullying at three schools in Johannesburg. The use of the questionnaire assists in understanding and finding mutual themes and patterns in terms of experiences of workplace bullying by Foundation Phase teachers. This next section provides a discussion of the research site, the participants, the questionnaire, interviews (data collection) and the data analysis techniques that were used in this research study.

3.5 Research Site

The research study site, which is also known as the context, is the environment and conditions where the research will take place. This also includes the background knowledge of the participants and the site used (Holloway & Wheeler, 2002). This research study was conducted at three primary schools in Johannesburg. These sites were specifically chosen for this research study because it was convenient for the researcher to access the sites and also travel to and from the site. According to Lavrakas (2008, p.149) Convenience sampling is a non - probability sampling method simply where participants are chosen because they are "convenient" participants for the researcher. It is easy for the researcher to have access of the participants which makes them a convenient sample of participants.

All three schools have a mixed demographic of teachers, which enabled the researcher to

approach both male and female Foundation Phase teachers.

3.6 Sampling and Selection of Participants

Patton (1990) states that sampling is a method that focuses on the selection of a group of a larger population and using the data collected from this group of individuals, uses that information as researched data. This sample of people can also be called a “subgroup of a population” (Patton, 1990). This research study made use of a demographic sampling method for the questionnaires, which is where a large population is used to get a general idea of views and perceptions relevant to a specific topic (Patton, 1990).

This research study used a non-probability sample selection method known as purposive or judgmental sampling where the selection of participants for the interview was based on the judgment of the researcher. This depended on which participants were available and would provide the best information in relation to aims and objectives of this study. The researcher focused on the participants who have experiences and information on workplace bullying and who were willing to share and discuss their experiences about the phenomenon (Etikan & Bala, 2017).

All teachers were asked to give permission to participate in this research study and those who gave consent was selected to complete the questionnaire. For the interview, the teachers who volunteered to take part in the interview will be purposively selected as the researcher will select participants who have experiences of workplace bullying (Etikan & Bala, 2017).

3.7 Sample Size

The sample size selected in qualitative research does not have any effect or impact on the quality of research, and there are no rules or boundaries that decide the sample size in qualitative research (Holloway & Wheeler, 2002). This research study included Foundation Phase teachers at three chosen schools in Johannesburg. Of the 17 participants who returned the questionnaire, two teachers volunteered to participate in the interview but declined at a later stage. The sample size is a suitable number of participants as the researcher found it was a practical amount of participants to manage within the given time constraints of the research study (Henry, 1990)

3.8 Participants

Table 2: Demographic Information of the Foundation Phase Teachers

Classifications	Variations	Number of Participants	Percentage
Age Groups	20 – 25 Years	2	12%
	26 – 30 Years	5	29%
	31 – 35 Years	4	24%
	36 – 40 Years	0	0%
	41 – 45 Years	2	12%
	46 and over	4	24%
Gender	Female	17	100%
	Male	0	0%
Overall Teaching Experience	Less than a year	0	0%
	1-5 Years	8	47%
	6-10 Years	4	24%
	11-15 Years	0	0%
	16-20 Years	0	0%
	21-25 Years	3	18%
	26 and over	2	12%
Teaching Experience at Their Current School	Less than a year	2	12%
	1-5 Years	12	71%
	6-10 Years	2	12%
	11-15 Years	0	0%
	16-20 Years	0	0%
	21-25 Years	1	6%
	26 and over	0	0%
Grade	Grade R	1	6%
	Grade 1	4	24%
	Grade 2	5	29%
	Grade 3	5	29%

	Not stated	2	12%
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This study consisted of 17 participants who were Foundation Phase teachers. The teachers' years of experience varied from first-year teachers to fairly experienced teachers who have taught more than 10 years. The teachers' ages varied from early twenties to late forties.

The demographic information (represented in Table 2) that was retrieved from the completed questionnaires shows that the Foundation Phase teachers who participated in this research study were female. This shows a commonality that Foundation Phase teachers are female.

The ages of the participants in this study included: 20–25 years of age (2 participants, 12%), 26–30 years of age (5 participants, 29%), 31–35 years of age (4 participants, 24%), 41–45 years of age (2 participants, 12%) and 46 years old and older (4 participants, 24%).

3.9 Data Collection Tools

The first data collection tool that was used was a questionnaire, which required the participants to answer a number of questions on a sheet of paper (see Appendix 5). This questionnaire was used to get a broad understanding of the experiences from the teachers about workplace bullying (Oppenheim, 1992). It is important to note that the questionnaire was anonymous for the participants who opted to participate; there was a section for the participants to leave their personal details if they wanted to be contacted for the interview process.

The second data collection tool that was used was an open-ended interview. The interviews would have been done on a one-to-one basis. The data that would have been collected in the interviews would have been based on personal engagements between the participants and the researcher (Fontana & Frey, 2000). Unfortunately, only two participants volunteered to participate in the interview process but later declined due to their busy schedule with end-of-term deadlines.

3.10 Data Analysis

The data was analysed by adopting a thematic qualitative method that allowed the researcher

to identify, analyse and report on issues and patterns identified in the data. This method also focused on the organisations and data descriptions (Braun & Clarke, 2006). In addition, an inductive approach was used in the analysis of the data whereby the questionnaire was transcribed; from these transcriptions, the researcher was able to gather themes and patterns that were prominent in the data that was collected. It is important to mention that this coding and data analysis was not based on the researcher's personal viewpoints or perceptions but rather came from the data itself (Patton, 1990).

3.11 Validity and Reliability

Validity and reliability are two key aspects that play an important role in qualitative research as the researcher's perceptions can easily cloud the interpretation of the information gathered. As such, the data could be analysed from a personal perspective, which hinders true and accurate studies being conducted. Validity in a research study refers to the accuracy and the truthfulness of the data and the findings thereof (Le Compte & Goetz, 1982, p 32). The aspects from this research study that enabled validity of the study is that the researcher gave the participants to complete the questionnaire in their own time and space. The researcher ensured that all this information collected in the questionnaire is accurately transferred into tables and diagrams.

Reliability in a research study refers to the consistency, stability and repeatability of the participant's accounts of information and the ability of the researcher being able to capture the data collected from the participants accurately. Reliability also depends on the possible replication of the research method. This study was conducted in three schools, which will enable the researcher to use the research tools and methods on a repeated basis. With the use of the methods at all the schools, the researcher is able to interpret the patterns and themes from the participants effectively and accurately across various school contexts.

3.12 Ethical Considerations

Ethical considerations are an important factor to consider in the research process as this ensures that the data that is analysed is led purely by the data collected and no other interest or perceptions can influence the interpretation and understanding of the data (Fisher & Anushko, 2008). The ethical considerations for this research are to ensure that the

information provided by the participants are kept confidential because it is sensitive information that the teachers would not want to have exposed to their co-workers or others. With this in mind, the researcher took extra care when engaging with the participants to avoid any participant from feeling insecure or violated at any stage of this study. The University of the Witwatersrand has a research policy that requires the researcher to obtain clearance from the ethics committee and from the Department of Education. Extensive documentation was required in this process to show how the research process would adhere to certain ethical considerations.

Lincoln (2009) states that there are many principals that guide an ethical study. This study aimed to contribute towards social justice and to ensure all participants' human rights were taken into consideration. This research study was voluntary for participants to take part in, and they have the opportunity to withdraw at any stage of the study. The researcher will not use the real names of the participants or the school to protect the identity of everyone involved.

3.12.1. Consent

Informed consent required the researcher to inform the participants about the aims, objectives and purpose of the study as well as the benefits of their participation and the risks involved (Kvale, 2007). The researcher was able to gain informed consent by ensuring that participants would be respected in all stages of this research study. This was obtained by the researcher ensuring that all participants were well-informed about the study. The participants were informed that this study was voluntary, and they could refuse to participate in the study. The participants were also informed that should they give consent they were able to withdraw from the study at any time. The participants completed a written consent form (see appendix 4) to participate in this research study.

3.12.2. Confidentiality and Anonymity

Confidentiality and anonymity will assist in ensuring that participants and the research site cannot, at any stage of the research study, be identified (Barbour, 2007). As workplace bullying is a sensitive topic, the researcher had to ensure that the descriptions and explanations in the research study did not reveal any personal information. This researcher made use of pseudonyms and kept all contact details and documents of this research study

secure and protected by a password on a laptop. All participants in this study were informed about who had access to the transcripts and what their human rights were in accessing the transcripts. With this being said, there are certain limits to confidentiality and anonymity, so the researcher will need to ensure that under all circumstances the personal information is protected.

3.13 Conclusion

This chapter has provided the research design and methods that were employed in this research study as well as the research paradigm, epistemology, ontology and axiology that encompassed this study. The next chapter provides the presentation of data and discussion of the findings.

CHAPTER FOUR: PRESENTATION OF THE DATA

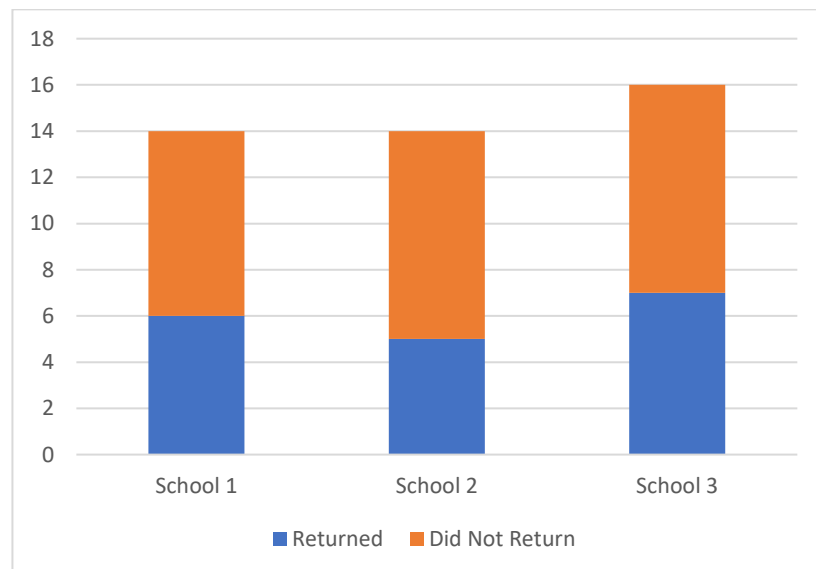
4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the data that were obtained through the questionnaires.

The questionnaire engaged with participants' reports of workplace bullying and the effects it had on their physical, psychological and social health.

4.2 Demographic Results Questionnaires Completed

This section presents the demographic results from the questionnaires by the participants which can be seen in Graph 1.



Graph 1: Questionnaires that were returned or not returned from the Foundation Phase teachers

Of the nine schools that were approached to participate in this study, only three schools gave consent. In the three schools, a total of 43 questionnaires were given out and only 17 of these questionnaires were returned. In school one, six of the 14 questionnaires were returned and completed in full; in school two, five of the 14 questionnaires were returned on time and at school three, seven of the 15 questionnaires administered to the school were returned. This adds up to the 18 questionnaires. Overall, two participants volunteered to participate in the interview process but later withdrew from the process.

4.3 Definition of Workplace Bullying by Foundation Phase Teachers

There are a number of definitions for workplace bullying in the literature. Lutgen-Sandvik, Tracy and Alberts (2007) state that the majority of definitions in the literature they found for workplace bullying advise that the victim of workplace bullying at some stage feels incapable, useless or powerless towards the bully, which results in a power struggle between the victim and the perpetrator.

In the questionnaire, a number of participants made reference to workplace bullying in terms of a power dynamics that occurs between a bully and a victim. Participant one stated that workplace bullying is when a colleague passes “snide comments” or “belittle[s] fellow colleagues.” Participant one continued that “ignoring or excluding a person” from whole group activities was also workplace bullying for her. Participant five had similar views, saying that “bosses us[e] their position as a threat,” which shows how the individuals in management use their status to bully others. Similarly participant 10 referred to workplace bullying as a “hostile environment that involves intimidating, humiliating and offensive behaviour.” Participant 1 had similar views and also used the word “humiliation” in their definition of workplace bullying.

From the questionnaires, 94% of the participants in this study were able to define what workplace bullying means to them personally. The following table shows the variations of what each participant defined what workplace bullying is.

Table 3: The Definition of Workplace Bullying Provided by Foundation Phase Teachers

Participants	Definition of Workplace Bullying
1	Workplace bullying is when a colleague or boss is not willing to listen or participate in a conversation or even in a mature manner. Snide comments and belittling fellow colleagues. Ignoring or excluding a person although the work requires you to work together.
2	Bullying happening at your workplace

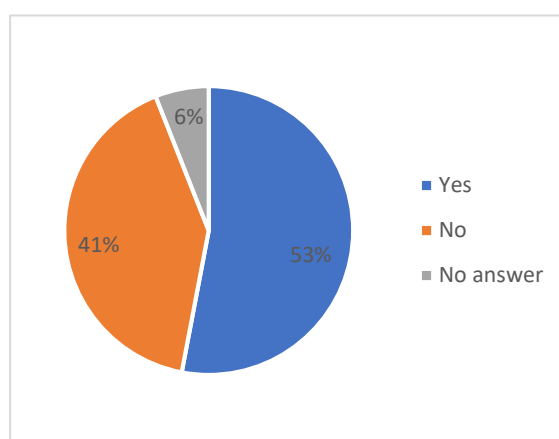
3	Feeling forced to agree with decisions that you do not agree with. Also if one is spoken to rudely and one feels powerless to retaliate. Being excluded can also be a form of bullying.
4	People bully each other in the workplace i.e. school environment
5	Colleagues trying to manipulate others and bosses using their position as a threat
6	Workplace bullying is when your colleagues don't let you voice your option (<i>sic</i>) and when you do they make snide, judgmental comments. When colleagues shout at you in front of other people, when you are too scared to come to school or say anything because you might be shouted at.
7	Gossip, pressurising one to complete work for them and making them feel inferior.
8	Mistreatment of others – this occurs on a regular basis
9	Our school defines bullying as something said or done to you (to cause harm), repeatedly. I think that's what it is... just in the place of work.
10	Workplace bullying is a hostile work environment which involves intimidating, humiliating and offensive behaviour.
11	When one colleague emotionally abuses another. This can be through verbal, psychological (<i>sic</i>) or through humiliation.
12	Removed this page from the questionnaire.
13	When one colleague emotionally abuses another. This can be through verbal, psychological (<i>sic</i>) or through humiliation.
14	Continuous or repetitive unfair treatment of an individual or group.
15	When a colleague verbally, physically, or emotionally makes you feel bad about yourself/ ability, multiple times in an unhelpful way.
16	It is using one's authority incorrectly or for self-gain.
17	When others bully you and take advantage of you at the workplace.

Overall, when defining workplace bullying, the participants focused on the issue of exclusion and isolation from the whole work group. Other bullying behaviours that were mentioned frequently included: physical, emotional and psychological abuse. The participants also mentioned that the workplace was seen as a hostile environment as a result of workplace bullying. The victims of workplace bullying also defined workplace bullying as when an

individual feels fearful and inferior to the other teachers because the victim is being targeted by certain individuals and the rest of the group sides with the perpetrator. Lastly, participants also referred to humiliation and intimidation when defining workplace bullying.

4.4. Foundation Phase Teachers' Experiences of Workplace Bullying

The questionnaires that were administrated to the Foundation Phase teachers at three different schools in Johannesburg focused on their lived experiences of workplace bullying (See graph 2 below). In graph 2, 53% of participants had lived experiences of workplace bullying while 41% stated that they have had no experience of workplace bullying in their teaching career. The remaining 6% of teachers declined to answer this question and left it blank.



Graph 2: Foundation Phase Teachers' Experiences of Workplace Bullying

The participants in this research study presented their personal experiences of Workplace Bullying along with the impact it had on their well – being as a Foundation Phase teacher, refer to Table 4 for these responses.

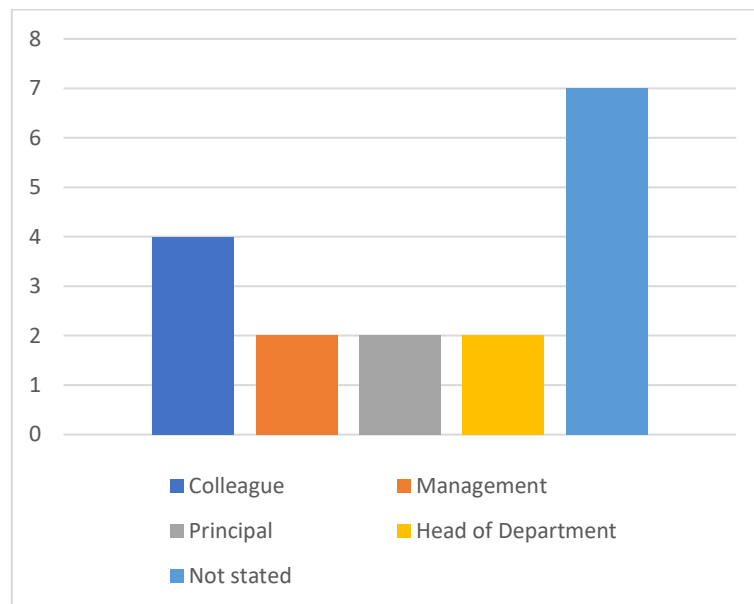
Table 4: Participants' Responses with Regards to Experiences of Workplace Bullying

Participant	Participant responses with regard to experiences of workplace bullying
1	Yes. I have been too afraid to state my opinion or voice my ideas due to judgement, nasty comments or a hostile environment. I am made to feel like an incapable teacher at times. I have been shouted at by a fellow colleague which is not only highly unprofessional but also highly immature. There are often days I dread coming to school because I genuinely fear them.

3	I have been spoken to rudely and felt that I could not do anything about it because this teacher worked at the school for long and seemed to be a favourite
4	Yes, bullied by my principal and sometimes parents
5	Yes, the principal was a terrible bully. She frequently criticised my clothes, called me nasty things (you look like Bozo the clown) in front of the other staff members. (<i>sic</i>) Abused her power to punish me financially for taking a few extra days off for a personal holiday although my immediate boss had granted this as paid leave.
6	Yes I have, (<i>sic</i>) I've had colleagues shout at me in front of my children and other teachers, I have been bullied by mean words when I have tried to address an issue. I go very quiet when I am afraid to get in trouble, so I don't talk to the people who have bullied me. I have had others make me feel worthless and that I am not doing my job correctly – as other colleagues think that they are more experienced – they don't take other ideas to heart. I am too afraid to address serious issues because I am too scared of the behavior of others.
7	Yes, having to do work others required to do, being told I am not up to standard and management telling me what to do and not being asked.
11	Yes, a colleague uses psychological tactics to put the blame on you. Not taking responsibility for their own failures or not taking ownership of own lack of responsibilities and puts the blame on you.
13	Yes, this happens most often with management imposing Dept. policies without considering the impact it has on teachers. Cliques form amongst teachers.
15	Yes, a colleague verbally assaulted me on school property. She questioned my ability to do my job at the time in an unfair way. She questioned small and large decisions.

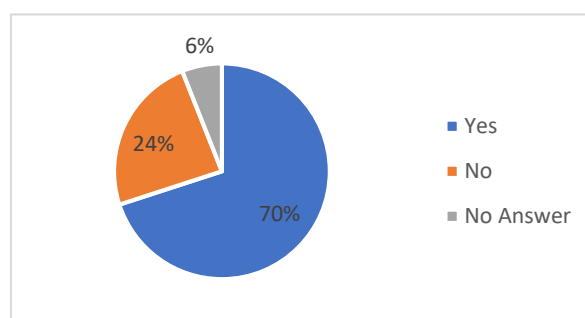
In summary, based on the experiences reported by the participants in Table 4, nine participants had experienced workplace bullying first-hand within the school setting. The participants shared that they no longer enjoy being at school; they used negative terms such as “afraid,” “fearful,” “nasty” and “worthless” to describe how they feel in the school environment. Participant one said, “often days I dread coming to school” (*sic*) due to being afraid that the bullying would continue. One participant described the workplace as a “hostile environment” as a result of the bullying that was occurring. The teachers feel they are

“incapable” and “worthless” as they are being made to feel as though they are not able to succeed within the environment. The participants experienced verbal abuse from others in the workplace and stated that “a colleague verbally abused me,” “I’ve been spoken to rudely” and “colleagues shout at me in front of my children and other teachers.” Furthermore, the participants reported that they were bullied by their colleagues, administrative staff, the head of department and principals as represented in Graph 3 below.



Graph 3: Foundation Phase teachers have been bullied by in the workplace.

Graph 4 shows the Foundation Phase teachers who have witnessed workplace bullying in the school environment. 70% of the teachers have experienced workplace bullying in school. 24% of participants responded that they had not experienced workplace bullying and the remaining 6% of teachers declined to answer this question.



Graph 4: The Witnesses / Bystanders of Workplace Bullying

The teachers who answered yes suggested that they witnessed different kinds of bullying from a range of individuals in the school environment. In this research study, participants said that other teachers who witnessed the humiliation, intimidation, threats and other forms of bullying that occurred publicly did not notify the management about incidents of workplace bullying as they felt that they were not directly involved and preferred not to be involved directly in the incidents.

4.5 The Effects of Workplace Bullying on Foundation Phase Teachers

From the participants who had experienced workplace bullying, four suggested that the workplace bullying impacted their ability to carry out well-structured lessons in the classroom and their overall work performance was negatively affected. Participants also referred to how the behaviour of their fellow colleague/s had negative effects on their physical well-being. One participant suggested that they had thoughts about resigning from the school they worked at as the bullying made the workplace unpleasant for them. Another participant suggested that she became physically sick as a result of the workplace bullying and found that the impact of workplace bullying affected her immune system. This also led to her being absent from her job regularly.

One teacher suggested that workplace bullying has also affected the work ethics of a team when one of the teachers was being bullied by another. The remaining six participants did not answer or mention how workplace bullying has affected them in the workplace. Participants also suggested that their teaching has been affected by the workplace bullying that they have experienced. Of the participants who suggested they have experienced workplace bullying, nine stated that it has negatively affected their teaching practice and negatively impacted the learners in their classroom.

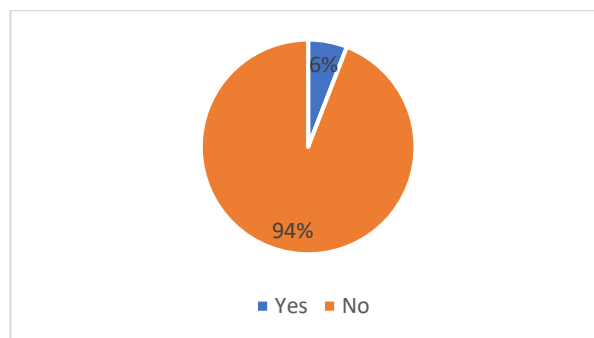
Lastly, an effect of workplace bullying lead to victims of workplace bullying being excluded by their circumstances. The participants felt that in order to avoid the continuous bullying, they would need to isolate themselves from the bully. The participants also reported that they felt alone, fearful and demotivated at work due to this exclusion and isolation. As a result, the impact of exclusion on the teacher can be detrimental to their health and overall commitment and performance within their workplace (Hitlan, Clifton & Desoto, 2006).

4.6 Reporting of Workplace Bullying

It was clear from the data that only four participants reported the occurrence of workplace bullying to either the principal or their head of the department. From the cases of workplace bullying that were reported, none were resolved and there were not consequences for the bully.

The participants who responded no to this question found that there was no reason they should report it as there were minimal consequences; others felt that the bullying would get worse if they were to report it to anyone in the school. One participant said she could not report it to the principal because the principal was the individual bullying the teachers in the school.

4.7 School Structures / Policies of Workplace Bullying



Graph 5: Schools with Policies to Address Workplace Bullying Incidents

94% of the teachers who responded to the questionnaire feel that workplace bullying is not being taken seriously in schools. Participant three suggested that workplace bullying is not taken seriously at their school as there are “no structures, protocols or policies” that are in place to deal with such a phenomenon.

Participant 5 said that they are often sent on workshops that deal with bullying of all kinds, but the execution of what is learned in these workshops is what the school struggles with as workplace bullying still continues to occur. This participant also added that there are no protocols or structures in place to ensure that the skills learned in the workshops are executed

accordingly. Participant six said that the school does not take bullying seriously as there were no consequences for the individual who bullied this participant.

The participant who suggested that workplace bullying is taken seriously said that the management team would confront all the individuals involved in the bullying incident in a formal meeting where minutes are taken to ensure that teachers understand the severity of workplace bullying . With regards to the lack of structure or policies in the schools that participated in this research, the participants mentioned that there is no formal document or policy from the Department of Education they feel could protect teachers from experiencing workplace bullying in the school environment.

4.8 Conclusion

This chapter has presented the data provided in the questionnaire by 17 Foundation Phase teachers in three schools in Johannesburg. In Chapter five, I provide the data analysis and discussion of the participants experiences of workplace bullying.

CHAPTER FIVE: DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

5.1 Introduction

This chapter highlights the analysis of the data that was presented in chapter four. This chapter discusses the experiences of workplace bullying from the Foundation Phase teachers lived experiences. Figure 1 below is an outline of the overall themes and patterns that will be discussed in this chapter.

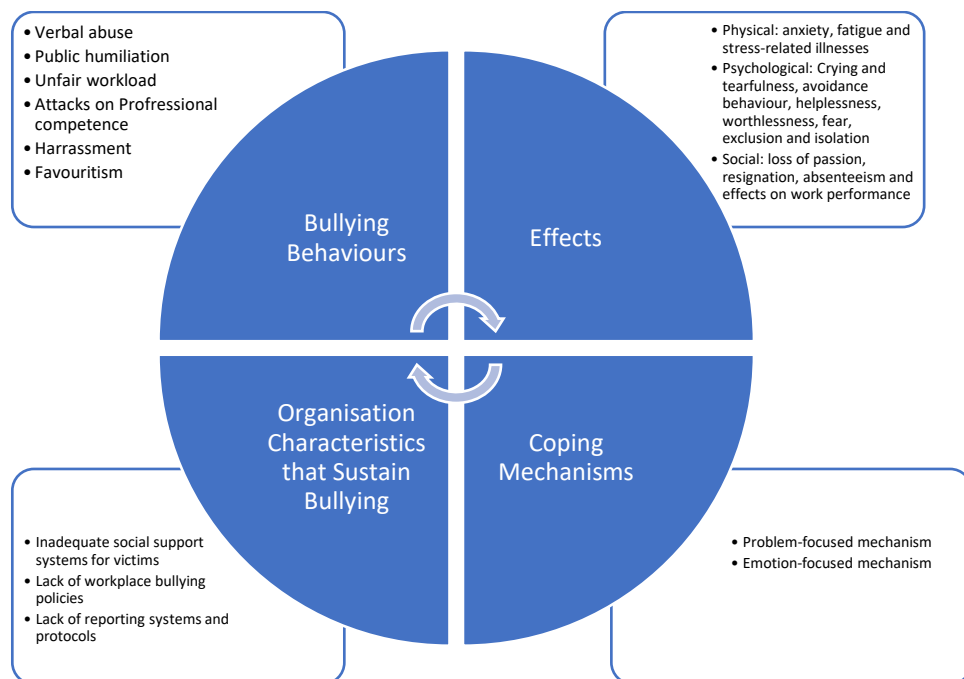


Figure 1: The Overall Themes and Patterns of this Research Study

5.2 Findings

This section will discuss the findings that emerged from the questionnaires that were administrated to the Foundation Phase teachers at three schools that agreed to participate in this research. The questionnaire's overall objective was to determine the nature of Foundation Phase teachers' experiences of workplace bullying in schools. In order to answer the main research question of this study, the following aspects will be discussed in this section: how Foundation Phase teachers make meaning of workplace bullying, the Foundation Phase teachers' experiences of workplace bullying, the effects of workplace bullying on Foundation

Phase teachers and the strategies and coping mechanisms that they use in order to cope with workplace bullying.

5.3 The Definition of Workplace Bullying by Foundation Phase Teachers

The definitions of workplace bullying that were provided by the participants had a number of similarities. Overall, 64% of the participants defined workplace bullying as a form of verbal and emotional abuse, saying that the bully could be anyone in the workplace such as “colleagues, principals and head of departments. These participants described workplace bullying behaviours as “*snide comments and belittling fellow colleagues*” in a public place, teachers being “*spoken to rudely*” and made to feel “*powerless*” and “*worthless*”, “*judgemental comments [being] made in front of other people in the workplace*”, fellow colleagues “*gossiping about others*” and lastly “*when one colleague emotionally abuses another*” in front of others or in private. The participants all related to workplace bullying in a negative way based on how they each defined workplace bullying. De Vos and Kirsten (2015) suggest that workplace bullying is a continuation or repetition of a specific behaviour where one individual has power over another within a workplace setting. In addition, workplace bullying involves a repeated act or practice that is targeted towards one or more individuals with the intention of harming their well-being and professional performance (De Wet, 2014).

The Foundation Phase teachers were able to define workplace bullying and then shared their own personal experiences of workplace bullying, which will be discussed in the next section.

5.4 The Nature of Workplace Bullying Behaviours Experienced by Foundation Phase Teachers

The findings of this research study have shown that workplace bullying in the school environment is initiated and perpetrated mostly by principals, heads of departments or heads of grades as well as other teachers in the school who hold positions of power. These perpetrators bully their victims in a number of ways, which is referred to as bullying behaviours. There are many kinds of bullying behaviours that occur on a continuous basis within the workplace. This consists of actions towards an individual that vary from direct or indirect assaults, threats verbal abuse and other hindering behaviours (Baele, 2001).

Even though some of the workplace bullying that teachers experienced was against both the teachers' human and labour rights, few teachers decided to report it. From this research report, a mere 23% of teachers who have experienced workplace bullying reported it to someone in the school. From the participants who reported the incidents of workplace bullying, 23% suggested that they were bullied by their colleagues, 11% by administrative staff, 11% by the head of department and 11% by the principal; the rest of the participants (41%) did not state by whom they were being bullied. Table 4 shows the examples of bullying behaviours that have been reported by the participants. These bullying behaviours have been divided into four groups namely: threat to professional status, threat to personal standing, isolation and overwork – this was adapted from Baele's (2001) ideas of bullying behaviours individuals experienced in the workplace. The table is discussed in points 5.4.1 – 5.4.4.

Table 5: The Nature of Bullying Behaviours Experienced Within Workplace Bullying Studies (Adapted from: Baele, 2001, p. 80).

The Emergent Themes in Workplace Bullying	Bullying Behaviours Experienced by Foundation Phase Teachers
Threat to professional status	Persistent attempts to belittle and undermine your work Persistent and unjustified criticism and monitoring of your work Persistent attempts to humiliate you in front of colleagues Intimidating use of discipline or competence procedures
Threat to personal standing	Undermining your personal integrity Destructive innuendo and sarcasm Verbal and non-verbal threats Making inappropriate jokes about you Persistent teasing
Isolation / Exclusion	Withholding necessary information from you Ignoring or excluding someone from the main group Unreasonable refusal of applications for leave
Overworked Teachers	Undue pressure to produce work Pressure to complete others work

5.4.1 Threat to Personal Standing

The Foundation Phase teachers mostly experienced verbal abuse from colleagues, principals, heads of departments and management. The verbal abuse was mostly intended to publicly humiliate or to intimidate teachers in front of other employees in the workplace. The following participants said that through their experiences of workplace bullying they have been exposed to verbal abuse: Participant 1 stated that they experienced “*judgement and nasty comments as well as a hostile environment*” and that “*[they] have been shouted at by a fellow colleague which is not only unprofessional but also highly immature*”. Participant 3 also experienced similar occurrences of verbal abuse in the workplace and said “*I have been spoken to rudely and felt I could not do anything about it*”. Participant 6 was verbally abused by a colleague in front of the learners in the class: “*I’ve had colleagues shout at me in front of my children and other teachers, I have been bullied by mean words*”. Participant 15 has also experienced verbal abuse within the workplace and shared that “*A colleague verbally assaulted me on school property, she questioned my ability to do my job at the time in an unfair way*”. Lastly, Participant 5 was humiliated in front of other staff members by the principal of the school: “*The principal was a terrible bully. She criticised my clothes, called me nasty names in from of the other staff members*”.

Teachers stated that they were verbally humiliated in front of learners and / or other teachers in the school. Participant 5 said that they would often be “*called...nasty names like Bozo the clown in from of other teachers*”. This behaviour is how an individual is able to gain social power over another in the workplace.

5.4.2 Threat to Professional Status

The Foundation Phase teachers have suggested that they have been excluded from workplace conversations. The teachers suggested that they feel isolated and excluded from the workplace because they are being bullied by the “*popular*” or “*favourite*” colleagues. The results of this research study showed that often the bully is put in charge of a specific group of teachers and are able to gain control and power over their colleagues as a result. In saying this, Participant 1 said that “*older teachers feel they are entitled to more and feel as though their opinions tramp (sic) others, so if anyone challenged them they would react in a negative way*”. Participant 1’s experience supports the idea that the social status of an individual

within the workplace can enable them to bully others in public or in private spaces in the workplace. Although there are a variety of factors to take into consideration when examining a bullying incident, the power imbalances within an organisation make the environment conducive to bullying as evidenced in the quote from Participant one.

The workgroup manipulation theory states that favouritism or the social power that one holds within the workplace environment can enable an individual to bully others as a way to emphasise their position in power (Shaw, 2017). The theory of manipulation is relevant to this research study. The participants who experienced workplace bullying suggested that the bully would publicly harass, intimidate, victimise and isolate their victims to gain power as other staff members were afraid to stand up to the bully and instead engaged by encouraging the bullying to occur. The policies within the school body would not allow or support victims experiencing workplace bullying, which also enabled the bullying to occur regularly.

Beale (2001) reports that biased favouritism of certain employees at the cost of other employees is also workplace bullying. As a result, this also encouraged teachers not to report the workplace bullying as they felt it would be pointless because the bully held a higher status in the workplace. Participant 3 experienced favouritism in the school environment and reported that when workplace bullying occurred *“I could not do anything as the teacher worked at the school for long and seemed to be a favourite”*. Another participant had a similar experience: Participant 6 suggested that *“Other colleagues think that they are more experienced – they don’t take others (sic) ideas to heart”*. In addition, Participant 7 suggested that the perpetrator in the situation felt entitled to bully others and indicated that the individual *“abused her power to punish me financially”*.

This also shows that, as in organisational theory, the organisation enables this behaviour. Samnani and Singh (2012, p. 587) suggest that the culture, environment and management of an organisation has an impact on the occurrence of workplace bullying. In addition, Samnani and Singh (2012, p. 588) suggest that the type of environment that the leadership of the organisation creates can enable workplace bullying. For example: Participant three felt inferior to teachers who were longer at the school due to their social status.

5.4.3 Overworked Teachers

Management, principals and heads of departments have the power to give teachers certain responsibilities that add to the teachers' overall workload. This can sometimes lead to a teacher being overworked and results in burnout in the long-term. Participant 9 experienced this: *"often tasks that are not one teacher's responsibility gets (sic) forced upon them by another and it gets done to avoid confrontation"*. Participant 7 experienced similar behaviour and reported *"having to do work that others are required to do, being told I am not up to standard and management demanding work to be done unprofessionally"*. This can also lead to a teacher resigning from their position in the workplace. Teachers also found that bullies who have power or control over them overly criticise or compare their performance to other teachers in the workplace, which leads to teachers feeling demotivated and less passionate about their profession. Participant 6 reported: *"I have had others make me feel worthless and that I am not doing my job correctly – as other colleagues think that they are more experienced and don't take mine or others (sic) ideas to heart"*.

In the questionnaire, Participant 4 said that *"to a certain extent, workplace bullying is a result of the style of management or the structure of the schools, (sic) teachers have no input or recourse"*. According to Lines (2008), a school as an organisation naturally has hierarchical structures for it to function productively: the governing body, the principal, the head of each grade and the teachers. Naturally, power dynamics come into play, and depending on how an individual uses that power either professionally or unprofessionally determines if the culture in place will hinder or encourage workplace bullying (Fapophunda, 2013).

5.4.4 Isolation and Exclusion

The exclusion theory of workplace bullying states that there is a natural tendency for one to want to feel that they belong and are accepted in the workplace environment, especially with colleagues and management (Hitlan et al., 2006, p. 230). Exclusionary behaviours can occur in a number of ways such as an individual being purposefully ignored, mobbed, shunned or rejected by others in the workplace environment (Leary, 2001, p. 24). Participant 1 stated that she is often ignored or excluded even when certain activities require a group effort or involvement and continued that she *"often walk[s] up to colleagues and the conversation goes silent – deliberate exclusion and nasty gossiping done blatantly in front of [her]"*. As a new teacher, Participant 7 found that when she started at the school teachers were in cliques.

These experiences can have negative effects on a teacher's performance and commitment to their work responsibilities (Leary, 2001). From this study, a number of participants related to situations where they felt excluded in the sense that information was withheld from them, they have been isolated from the 'popular' or 'liked' colleagues and some felt to an extent they were being victimised by having finances withheld from them.

5.5 The Effects of Workplace Bullying on Foundation Phase Teachers

Foundation Phase teachers reported having experienced a variety of effect when faced with workplace bullying. These ranged from psychological, physical and emotional stress to illnesses. According to Carroll and Lauzier (2014, p. 87), workplace bullying can have a negative impact and effect on an individual's overall "*quality of life, health and well-being*" (p. 82). In addition, social aspects and dynamics within the work environment may be negatively affected (De Vos & Kirsten, 2015, p. 8). Table 6 below shows the effects teachers suffered from when faced with workplace bullying at their schools.

Table 6: The Emergent Themes of the Effects of Workplace Bullying on the Overall Well – Being of Foundation Phase Teachers in Schools of Johannesburg who Participated in this Research Study

The Emergent Themes	The Effects of Workplace Bullying on the Well-being of a Foundation Phase Teacher
Socio and Emotional Effects	Crying and tearfulness Avoidance Behavior Feelings of anxiety and fearfulness Feelings of worthlessness
Physical Health Effects	Physical illness due to stress
Effects of Relationships at work	Relationships with colleagues Relationships with learners
Overall Effect of the School	Loss of passion for teaching Negative effects on teaching performance Absenteeism

	Resignation
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In the next section I discuss each emergent themes from Table 6 and show how the effects of workplace bullying impact teachers in a negative manner.

5.5.2 Socio and Emotional Effects

The negative effects of workplace bullying are well-documented in the literature, and it is seen as a “*more crippling and devastating problem for employees than all other kinds of work-related stress*” (Zapf & Einarsen, 2003, p. 176). This section aims to discuss the effects of workplace bullying and how it impacts Foundation Phase teachers.

5.5.2.1 Crying and Tearfulness

Table 6 shows how Foundation Phase teachers have suffered from workplace bullying. Crying and tearfulness due to workplace bullying was experienced by a participant experienced, who said “*I have cried in front of my class which is not right. This behaviour upsets me as I am a very sensitive person*”. According to the literature, a continuation of crying and emotional breakdowns is an effect of workplace bullying (Lee & Brotheridge, 2006).

5.5.2.2 Avoidance Behaviour

A Participant who has experienced or are currently experiencing workplace bullying has chosen to not be in contact with the bully on the school property to avoid any further bullying incidents (Matthiesen & Einarsen, 2004, p.). Participant 4 said “*I tried as far as possible to avoid this person*”, while Participant 6 indicated that they “*don’t talk to the people who have bullied*” them. Lastly, Participant 9 suggested that they avoid certain people in the workplace: “*Just trying to avoid confrontation*”. These participants all indicated that distancing themselves from the perpetrator is a short-term coping mechanism but does not deal with the workplace bullying in the long-term.

5.5.2.3 Feelings of Anxiety and Fear

According to Tehrani (2004, p. 44), when an individual is exposed to workplace bullying, the victim may experience social anxiety and fear of those around them. In this research study, participants made direct reference to anxiety and there were indirect references to their fear of being in the environment as a result of anxiety that the workplace bullying caused.

Participant 1 stated that *“I have been too afraid to state my opinion or voice my ideas”* and *“I am still anxious there will be an outburst or snide comments”*, while Participant 4 noted that the bully *“left me tense and not as friendly as I should be in class”*. As a result of this anxiety and fear, the workplace is not a pleasant place for the victims.

5.5.2.4 Feelings of Worthlessness

The effects of being bullied in the workplace is also linked to feelings of worthlessness or lowering of one's self-esteem and confidence in teaching. Participant 6 indicated *“I am not a confident person to start off with, so this makes me feel even worse”*. Similarly, Participant 9 reported *“I felt unsure about myself”*. The participants in this research study suggested that they feel as though they were not good enough teachers and their self-esteem and self-confidence were negatively impacted. Participant 6 shared that their *“self-esteem is negatively impacted and I doubt myself as a teacher due to their opinions and negative behaviour towards me”*.

5.5.2.5 Feelings of Helplessness

A prominent theme in the responses to the questionnaire was that teachers feel helpless when faced with workplace bullying at school as there is limited organisational support and assistance for the teachers who report the bullying. The participants in this research who experienced workplace bullying feel that reporting workplace bullying in their schools does not change or assist them in any way. Participant 4 felt that workplace bullying was not taken seriously enough within the school environment and stated that *“as the principal is the ‘boss’ of the school and nothing can be done as its their word against ours”*. Participant 5 said that workplace bullying was ignored as it was assumed that there were other *“bigger issues”* to deal with. Participants 6 and ten both shared that their schools had no consequences for individuals who bullied others in the workplace. Participant 6 shared the following: *“It is not*

taken seriously at all. If it was then serious actions would have been done (sic) to the person who bullied me". Participant 8 shared that they felt that workplace bullying was not taken seriously and *"the assumption is that we can defend and stand up for ourselves as adults"*.

In conclusion, the socio and emotional effects of workplace bullying go beyond the bullying incident. Not only is the victim affected by the bullying but also the organisation and witnesses involved.

5.5.3 Physical Illness

The trauma that is linked to workplace bullying may have an effect on victims' immune systems (Leymann, 1990, p. 120). There have been reports of doctors witnessing "cases of cancer" (Leymann, 1990, p. 124). The victims may display illnesses in different severities depending on how long their immune system has been weak. The effects of workplace bullying on teachers' immunity and physical health was mentioned by Participant 7 in the following quote: *"I am constantly sick, having to go to the doctor at least once a month"*.

5.6 The Overall Effects of Workplace Bullying on the School

When people think about workplace bullying they often only associate the negative effects on the victim, but the effect on the organisation as a whole are also detrimental (Rayner & Cooper, 1997). When looking at a school as a whole object, Rayner and Cooper (1997) state that workplace bullying can have negative effects of productivity, absenteeism and employee turnover as a result of employees feeling stressed, anxious and fearful in their work environment. Although this research study did not aim to explore the organisational effects, the individual effects in the latter impact the organisation as a whole through, for example, loss of motivation, decrease in self-esteem and worth and physical illnesses.

According to Vartia (2003), workplace bullying is an indication that an organisation or school is not functioning in a healthy manner. As discussed previously, teachers have said that workplace bullying has affected them socially, emotionally, psychologically and professionally. Participant 1 said that *"it definitely affected my work as this behaviour upsets me and as much as I try not let it influence my classroom it really does"*. Participant 3 went on to say *"I hated work and really did not want to be at school"*. Paying attention to the

lowering of self-esteem and self-confidence has a negative impact on a teacher's performance and commitment to their overall responsibilities and school (Hoel & Cooper, 2000). As a result of the negative effects on the self-esteem or confidence of teachers and their practice, teachers may also lose their passion and motivation to carry out good teaching etiquette. Participant 14 stated that workplace bullying "*can cause unmotivated or uninspired teacher – lack of passion or will to work hard*". Adding to this point, workplace bullying can also negatively impact the teachers' relationships with their learners as they are less warm and caring (Blasé, Blasé & Du, 2008). Employees being absent from work can be a strategy for them to avoid the workplace because of the bullying environment (Hoel & Cooper, 2000). In addition, teachers may also resign from their jobs or the teaching profession as a whole as indicated by Blasé et al (2008). 76.7% of teachers have stated that they would leave the teaching profession; of this, 49.4% suggested it was from mistreatment within the workplace.

The effects of workplace bullying have been examined and show that Foundation Phase teachers are impacted in a negative way. The next section will discuss the strategies and coping mechanisms teachers used when they experienced workplace bullying.

5.7 The Strategies and Coping Mechanisms Used by Foundation Phase Teachers

The study by Blasé, Blasé and Du (2008) showed that teachers cope with workplace bullying by sharing their lived experiences with either a co-worker or a family member but were quite reluctant to share it with anyone in the management of the school. Similarly, Aquino and Thau (2009, p. 726) found that victims of workplace bullying found "problem-focused" or "emotion-focused" coping mechanisms. Problem-focused coping mechanisms involve taking direct action against the perpetrator either by getting revenge on the individual or support from others in the workplace or in their personal reach outside of the workplace. Emotion-focused coping mechanisms involve using humour, abusing substances or alcohol, forgiveness of the perpetrator and not reporting it to anyone. Participant 4 mentioned that they felt the only coping mechanism that they could use was to resign and completely remove themselves from the workplace bullying. According to Fahie and Devine (2014, p. 244), a study by the Irish National Teachers Organization (INTO, 2006) uncovered that one tenth of the participants said resigning from their job was a direct coping strategy to avoid workplace bullying. Participant 5 shared her relief when the perpetrator resigned and expressed that it was a relief for the whole school as well. Participant 11 had a more relaxed approach towards

coping with workplace bullying and said “*I thought it would be better to let things work itself out*”.

This section has discussed the coping mechanisms and strategies used by the Foundation Phase teachers who were victims to workplace bullying. The next section will look at how the lack of policy within schools affects the occurrence of workplace bullying within schools.

5.8 Human Rights, School and GDE Workplace Bullying Policy

According to De Vos (2013), it should be a requirement for all schools to have an anti-bullying policy in place not only for the learners at the school but also the teachers. The workplace bullying policy for schools should incorporate the prohibition of violent behaviour (physical and non-physical) in the school setting (Lutgen-Sandvik, Namie & Namie, 2009). From the schools that participated in this research study, only one had a policy that the teachers were aware of. The school called this policy “*Rules of Engagement*,” it was put into place to control how the teachers and other staff members interact with one another within the school environment. Although this policy was not an official document, these “Rules of Engagement” assist the school to control workplace bullying. The remainder of the schools did not have any formal policy in place and teachers were advised to report any workplace bullying either to the heads of departments or to the head / principal of the school. Participants in this study suggested that they felt that because of the lack of policy concerning the occurrence of workplace bullying “*not many people report it as it is not taken seriously*”. Participant 4 noted that often when an individual is being bullied by their ‘boss’ nothing can be done about it as it would be “*their word against ours*”. Participant 12 suggested that they struggle to report workplace bullying as “*it is very difficult as management often don’t witness the behaviour or are snowed under with paper work*”. Similarly, Participant 13 suggested that workplace bullying is not taken seriously at their school as “*there is no formal human relations department in the school so formal complaints that are anonymous cannot be filed*”. The participants in this study who reported experiences of workplace bullying suggested that even reporting it to a head of department or principal did not help with the workplace bullying and, in some instances, it worsened the situation.

Although none of the participants who participated in this research study sought legal representation, the literature shows that a teacher who decides to get legal representation in a

workplace bullying situation would be able to claim a reimbursement for the harm and trauma that they have experienced. Legally, teachers have the right to report any kind of unfair work distribution and harassment (includes bullying) in accordance with South Africa's labour law (South Africa, 1998). The teacher would need to produce sufficient evidence to show that they have undergone psychiatric treatment or any other hospitalisation as a result of workplace bullying and that this has been an expense for them. However, teachers are generally reluctant to get legal representation as it is expensive and is also known to be a stressful process (Le Roux, Rycroft & Orleyn, 2005).

5.9 Conclusion

This chapter provided the findings that stemmed from the questionnaire distributed to three schools in Johannesburg and that were completed by Foundation Phase teachers. The results showed that workplace bullying is done by various individuals in the school: colleagues, heads of departments, admin officials and principals. The bullying behaviours, both personal and work-related, which were prominent in this study included verbal, psychological and emotional bullying behaviours towards others. As a result of the workplace bullying experiences, the teachers endured physical and psychological effects that impacted them negatively. The overall well-being of the school was also indirectly affected as teachers experienced a lack of passion towards their jobs and this lowered their overall productivity at school. This chapter concluded with the coping mechanisms that teachers use to tolerate the workplace bullying as reporting workplace bullying has no impact and sometimes worsened the situation.

CHAPTER SIX: SUMMARY OF STUDY, LIMITATIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

6.1 Introduction

The final chapter of this research study will begin by summarising Chapters One to Five. It will provide the concluding statements and results of this study. Lastly, this chapter provides the limitations of this study and future recommendations for workplace bullying research overall.

6.2 Summary of this Research Study

This section summarizes each chapter in this research study.

6.2.1 Chapter One: Background to the Study

This chapter provided an overview of this research study. It started by introducing the broad topic of workplace bullying by presenting research studies done. Chapter One explored the background and context of the school environments and how these environments are stressful, complicated and ever-changing in the South African context (Adam, 2009). It further discusses the history and prevalence of workplace bullying and how it has a negative effect on individuals (Hymel & Swearer, 2015). The literature discussed in chapter one shows that individuals who have lived experiences of workplace bullying have been negatively affected physically, psychologically and socially. This chapter concluded with the objectives, overall research question and sub-questions. The objectives of this study were:

- To examine Foundation Phase teachers' experience of workplace bullying in three schools in Johannesburg,
- To investigate the factors that contribute towards workplace bullying as perceived by Foundation Phase teachers and
- To determine the impact and effect that workplace bullying has on a Foundation Phase teacher.

The objectives of this study were reached by focusing on an overall question that was accompanied by sub-questions. The overall research question was: What impact does workplace bullying have on foundation phase teachers? In order to gain understanding of the overall research question, sub-questions were asked:

- How do teachers define workplace bullying?
- Which factors contribute to Foundation Phase teachers' experiences of workplace bullying?
- What strategies do Foundation Phase teacher use to cope with workplace bullying?

6.2.2 Chapter Two: Literature Review

In Chapter Two, the relevant literature involving the nature of workplace bullying and how it has increased within schools locally and worldwide was discussed. This chapter began by discussing different studies that define workplace bullying. The chapter examined the different kinds of workplace bullying behaviours, which are categorised into personal and work-related bullying. The various factors that enable workplace bullying were also explored in this chapter and the theories of strong management skills and workplace bullying were discussed and contrasted to one another. The personal effects of workplace bullying were also explored in depth in this chapter, which refers to the impact on social, psychological, physical well-being and how an individual's performance at work can be affected as well. It also explored the relationship between workplace bullying and the school context and incorporated research previously conducted in different schools. Workplace bullying interventions and solutions were also discussed in this study. Essen et al (2014, p. 840), Fahie and Devine (2014, p. 243) and Kruger (2011) found a number of interventions and solutions to workplace bullying. This chapter was concluded with the different theoretical perspectives, such as work group manipulation, organisational and exclusion theory, which describe the complex social dynamics of workplace bullying as well as the key concepts relevant to this study.

6.2.3 Chapter Three: Research Design and Methods

This chapter discussed the blueprint and approach used in this study, which includes the research design and methods, data analysis approach, the reasons for using a qualitative approach and the ethical considerations. A qualitative approach and a phenomenological

research design were used in this study to assist in the investigation of Foundation Phase teachers' lived experiences of workplace bullying. In total, 17 participants were involved in this research study. The intention of this research approach was to collect data through an interview process as well; unfortunately, only the questionnaires were filled out and the participants did not want to take part in the interview. The approach used in this study was to ensure that participants felt safe and secure, which was included in the anonymity and consent section in the ethical considerations that concluded this chapter.

6.2.4 Chapter Four: Presentation of the Data

The data was presented in Chapter Four: prominent themes and patterns that stood out in this study were presented in graphs and tables. The themes and patterns found in the research were presented in a way to show the lived experiences of workplace bullying, the effects of workplace bullying and the coping mechanisms that teachers used. The prominent themes and patterns were that Foundation Phase teachers who experienced workplace bullying had negative social, emotional and physical effects. Teachers were able to identify and define workplace bullying well. Another theme was that schools lack a workplace bullying policy and there is a lack of structures in place to ensure workplace bullying is dealt with effectively. Schools have a lack of support to assist teachers who have experienced workplace bullying and many participants shared that they do not feel that the phenomenon is taken seriously in Johannesburg schools.

6.2.5 Chapter Five: Data Analysis and Discussion

This chapter examined the conclusions of this study and recapped the objectives that were mentioned in Chapter One. It also included a discussion of the concepts of workplace bullying in relation to this study. According to the information from previous studies – for example: De Vos and Kirsten (2015), De Wet (2014) and Bartlett (2011) – studies have shown that workplace bullying perpetrators are principals, heads of departments or other colleagues who have been at a school for a longer period than the victim. In this research study, heads of departments, principals and administrative staff were the main perpetrators of workplace bullying. Participants in this research documented various bullying behaviours that they have experienced, and this was discussed in the findings of this research study. The bullying was intended to attack the individual on both a personal and professional level. The

personal attacks included public humiliation in front of learners and other staff members, verbal abuse and attacks, favouritism of staff that lead to them gaining power over others and the exclusion of the victim from the larger group. The professional attacks were noted in ways where other staff, such as the principal or heads of department, used organisational avenues to bully teachers through the withholding of finances and unfair allocation of teacher duties.

The findings in this research study show that the teachers who experienced workplace bullying in school suffered from stress that affected them socially, psychologically and physically. Teachers noted that they felt afraid, tearful and withdrawn from their work environment. They also noted that they experienced anxiety and mood fluctuations as a result the experiences of workplace bullying.

Workplace bullying also had an overall effect of the productivity of the school in terms of teachers being absent from school and there being a high turnover of teachers. As reported in the findings, the participants noted that they had lost their passion and motivation to be in the classroom and teachers considered resigning from their positions. Teachers also noted that even when they suffered from the effects of workplace bullying they would still come to work in fear of what may happen if they were absent.

Findings from this research study showed that the factors that enable and support the occurrences of workplace bullying are personal and institutional characteristics. The participants made no reference to race, gender or any other demographic characteristics in relation to the occurrences of workplace bullying. In terms of the structure of the school, teachers suggested that workplace bullying occurs in schools because it is not taken seriously by the school's managerial staff. The participants also shared that they had a lack of support from the managerial staff and have no support system within the school structure.

6.3. Limitations of this Study

Despite the participants' responses, the information provided by some participants was limited in terms of their lived experiences of workplace bullying. The use of the self-reporting strategy of dependent and independent variables can generate a number of issues in terms of validity as some participants may over- or under-accent certain ideas in their

explanations, which may have an impact on the interpretation of their experiences of workplace bullying (Razavi, 2001). This is a limitation as, according to Hubbard (1939), obtaining information with the use of only a questionnaire becomes problematic as it cannot be entirely reliable; therefore, it should be supported with an interview or other research techniques.

The participants in this study did not volunteer to be interviewed following the questionnaire. The teachers who did volunteer later withdrew from taking part in the interview as they had teacher responsibilities and limited time to meet with the researcher. The scheduling and timing of this study may have affected the outcome of the results as this was the third term when teachers had deadlines for assessments and report cards. This time of the term is when teachers are under a lot of pressure and working with time constraints and in stressful conditions. This is considered a limitation as the interview could have added value to this research study by allowing the researcher to obtain more information and to seek clarity on some information reported in the questionnaire.

This research study anticipated more participants but only 17 participants were confident enough to complete the questionnaire and share their lived experiences of workplace bullying. This study was only conducted at three schools in Johannesburg, and expanding the study to more schools in Johannesburg would result in an expansion of this study's scope. Although the study does provide informative points about workplace bullying in schools, it cannot make the assumption that all schools in Johannesburg have the same circumstances or that all Foundation Phase teachers in Johannesburg are affected by workplace bullying.

6.4 Recommendations for Future Studies

Excluding the limitations provided previously, this study has provided some important input towards the research of workplace bullying. The research of workplace bullying is fairly new in South Africa and only emerged in 1998 with Marias-Steinman. It is important that, as a society, we become mindful of the occurrences and incidents of workplace bullying in the school environment.

Future research recommendations may suggest that the research results of this study can be presented to the Department of Education to advise of them of the incidents of workplace

bullying that has been occurring in schools in Johannesburg. This document should include the reported incidents, the effects of workplace bullying and ways that they could intervene to eliminate the occurrences of workplace bullying.

Further research should also be conducted to establish if Foundation Phase teachers are more susceptible to workplace bullying occurrences or if all teachers are vulnerable in the school environment. Furthermore, research should be conducted in other phases, such as the Intermediate or Senior phases, to explore if teachers in the higher grades also experience workplace bullying. More research on the perspective of the bullies and perpetrators in the school environment to understand their viewpoint on workplace bullying could contribute to the field of workplace bullying research.

All schools should consider implementing workplace bullying intervention systems to ensure that workplace bullying is kept to a minimum. This way, more teachers may remain passionate and motivated to continue teaching. Further research needs to be done on intervention programmes that could work effectively in schools in Johannesburg. Teachers also need to be informed about their legal rights as the Employment Equity Act, Section 6 protects individuals in the workplace against harassment. Teachers who are not informed of their rights in this regard will not know they have a legal right to report workplace bullying to management.

It is important that schools not only educate their staff about their legal right but also have a policy in place to protect employees from the occurrences of workplace bullying in order to ensure that teachers have a formal platform available to report the occurrences of workplace bullying. Schools need to implement these policies along with a reliable support team that is able to assist in the implementation of the workplace bullying policies within the school system (Steinman, 2003).

6.5 Conclusion

The results of this research study show that Foundation Phase teachers in three schools in Johannesburg have been negatively impacted by workplace bullying within the school environment. In the teaching profession, the main focus is to set aside time to teach children about bullying and how it can negatively impact the life of a child, so it is important that

teachers themselves are educated about the negative effects and impact of their actions towards others in the workplace. The participants in this study stated that although workplace bullying did not affect their performance at school, it did have a major impact on them personally.

Although the research done on workplace bullying is fairly recent, it is necessary to gain an overall understanding of this phenomenon and how it affects the lives of teachers in South African schools. More extensive research in this field would encourage a better way of identifying the incidents of workplace bullying and create policies, procedures and strategies that will explicitly be to define workplace bullying and bullying behaviours along with established consequences and steps to deal with the situation effectively. Schools need to identify the problem within their staff in order to implement an effective workplace bullying programme that assists and supports all staff who experience workplace bullying.

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Appendix 1: Letter to Principal

Dear Sir/ Madam

My name is Kim Claire Miller (Student number: 322511) and I am currently a Masters student in the School of education at the University of the Witwatersrand.

I am doing research on Foundation Phase teachers experiences of workplace bullying, in the school environment. The focus of my research is to explore the nature of Foundation Phase teachers experiences of workplace bullying in primary schools.

The reason why I have chosen your school is because it is a primary school in which I can explore my relevant topic on workplace bullying. My research study may guide the school management to ways to support teachers who are experiencing workplace bullying within the school. It would be of great help if you could grant me permission to conduct this study at your school during convenient times for the Foundation Phase teachers that would not conflict with the school day or any of their school responsibilities.

My research will include a questionnaire which will allow the Foundation Phase teachers to respond with some detail about their experiences of workplace bullying. This questionnaire will take about 45 minutes of their time. From these questionnaires I will give the teachers the opportunity to indicate their details in order to participate in a one-on-one interview in order to which is a follow up on their questionnaire in order to gain more insight about their experiences of workplace bullying.

The Foundation Phase teachers will not be disadvantaged or advantaged in the process of my research study and all teachers can withdraw at any time of the study without any consequence. All the names of the teachers as well as the schools name and identity will be kept confidential at all times in the write up of including the write up of this research study, any journal articles or conference presentations.

All the information that will be collected will be kept in a safe place and it will only be utilized for my research, possible journal articles and conference presentations. This data will also be stored at Wits School of Education for three to five years. After three to five years all data will be destroyed accordingly. The final research report will be available to the school once it has been completed.

Please let me know if you need any further information, I look forward to your response

Yours sincerely,

Kim Claire Miller
Masters Student
School of Education
University of the Witwatersrand
Email: 322511@students.wits.ac.za
kimclairemiller@yahoo.com

Appendix 2: School Consent Form

Dear Sir/ Madam

April 2018

Please fill in and return the reply slip below indicating your willingness for the school to participate in my voluntary research project called: An exploration of Foundation Phase teachers experiences of workplace bullying in six primary schools.

Informed Consent

I understand that:

- The name of the school and all teachers who participate in this study will not be revealed.
- The school and its teachers can withdraw from the study at any given time.
- All the data collected during this study will be destroyed within 3-5 years after completion of my project.

I, _____ (Principal Name) give my consent for this research study to

be conducted at _____.

Sign _____ Date _____

Appendix 3: Letter to participants (Foundation Phase Teachers)

Dear Sir/ Madam

My name is Kim Claire Miller (Student number 322511) and I am currently a Masters student in the School of education at the University of the Witwatersrand.

I am doing research on Foundation Phase teachers experiences of workplace bullying, in the school environment. The focus of my research is to explore the nature of Foundation Phase teachers experiences of workplace bullying in primary schools.

The reason why I have chosen your school is because it is a primary school in which I can explore my relevant topic on workplace bullying. My research study may guide the school management to ways support teachers who are experiencing workplace bullying within the school. I am cordially inviting you to part take in my study, and assist me in gaining new knowledge in this area of study. Your participation in my study will be of great help and I will appreciate your involvement and participation. Please accept my invitation to participate in my research study. I would be thankful if you accepted this invitation.

My study will entail you completing a confidential questionnaire that should take about 45 minutes to complete. This questionnaire will include short questions on your experiences of workplace bullying, effects of bullying, coping mechanisms used and school policies. The questionnaire will remain confidential as only I will have access to your personal information that will be provided in this questionnaire. The names of all participants and schools involved in my study will be kept confidential at all times including the writing up of my dissertation, journal articles and conference presentations. Your individual privacy will also be maintained throughout my research study as well as in any published written work and my dissertation by ensuring that no personal information is revealed. You as a participant in this study will be guaranteed confidentiality and anonymity at all stages of my study.

If you are willing to participate in the interview at a later stage you will be requested to provide your details at the end of the questionnaire in the space provided. This will indicate that you are giving me consent to interview you about your experiences of workplace bullying. I will be tape recording the interview to assist me to accurately transcribe your experiences for the purpose of my research. You will be given a pseudonym in order to protect your name so that you cannot be identified.

All personal information will be kept confidential and all data that will be collected in my study will be kept on a computer that will be protected with a password. All other documents will be locked away safely. All information collected in my research study will only be used for my research study, journal articles and conference presentations. It will not be shared with anyone except my supervisor. This data will also be stored at the Wits School of Education for three to five years. All information will be destroyed after five years of the completion of my study.

My study will not be able to benefit you personally but with all the information gathered it will assist in contributing towards the knowledge in this field of study by identifying the nature of workplace bullying experienced by Foundation Phase teachers. My final dissertation will be made available to you and the school once it has been completed.

Your participation in this research study is voluntary and you may refuse to participate in it or you may withdraw as a participant at any time of the study without any consequence.

Please do not hesitate to contact me with any concerns or questions.

Yours Sincerely,

Kim Claire Miller
Masters Student
School of Education
University of the Witwatersrand
Email: 322511@students.wits.ac.za
kimclairemiller@yahoo.com
Cell: 0826941433

Appendix 4: Foundation Phase Teachers Consent Form

Dear Sir/ Madam,

Please fill in and return the reply slip below indicating your willingness to be a participant in my voluntary research project called: An exploration of Foundation Phase teachers experiences of workplace bullying in six primary schools.

I, _____ give my consent for the following:

Permission for questionnaire

I agree to fill in a questionnaire for this study YES/NO

Permission to be interviewed

I would like to be interviewed for this study. YES/NO

I know that I can stop the interview at any time and don't have to answer all the questions asked. YES/NO

Permission to be audiotaped

I agree to be audiotaped during the interview YES/NO

I know that the audiotapes will be used for this project only YES/NO

Informed Consent

I understand that:

- My name and information will be kept confidential and safe and that my name and the name of my school will not be revealed.
- I do not have to answer every question and can withdraw from the study at any time.
- I can ask not to be audiotaped, photographed and/or videotape
- All the data collected during this study will be destroyed within 3-5 years after completion of my project.

Sign_____ Date_____

Appendix 5: Teacher Questionnaire

AN EXPLORATION OF FOUNDATION PHASE TEACHERS EXPERIENCES OF WORKPLACE BULLYING IN SIX PRIMARY SCHOOLS.

THIS IS A CONFIDENTIAL DOCUMENT

APRIL 2018

INSTRUCTIONS: Please place an (x) in the appropriate box or write in the space provided to indicate your answer.

1. Please indicate your age group

20 – 25 years	
26 – 30 years	
31 – 35 years	
36 – 40 years	
41 – 45 years	
46 and over	

2. Please indicate your gender

Female		Male	
--------	--	------	--

3. Please indicate how long you have been teaching for?

Less than a year	
1 – 5 years	
6 – 10 years	
11 – 15 years	
16 – 20 years	
21 – 25 years	
26 and over	

4. Please indicate how long you have been teaching at your current school.

Less than a year	
1 – 5 years	
6 – 10 years	
11 – 15 years	
16 – 20 years	

21 – 25 years	
26 and over	

5. What grade do you currently teach?

Grade R	
Grade 1	
Grade 2	
Grade 3	

6. In your own words how would you define workplace bullying?

7. Have you experienced workplace bullying at school? (This can include previous schools that you worked at) Please explain.

8. Please indicate the duration that the workplace bullying occurred for

Weeks	
Months	
Years	
You are still experiencing it	
Until you left or Changed schools	
Other	

Please briefly explain the duration of the workplace bullying, when did it occur?

9. When was the last time you experienced work place bullying?

A week to a month ago	
A month – 6 months ago	
6 months – 1 year ago	
1 – 2 years ago	
3 – 5 years ago	
5 – 10 years ago	
11 or more	

10. Who were you being bullied by?

11. What effects did the bullying have on you as a Foundation Phase teacher? Please provide examples.

12. How does workplace bullying influence/ affect your teaching?

13. Have you reported the bullying, and who did you report it to? If no, why have you not reported it?

14. Did this resolve or put a stop to the workplace bullying? Please provide an explanation.

15. Have you witnessed a colleague being bullied in the workplace? Please explain.

16. To what extent is workplace bullying taken seriously in schools? Why do you think this is the case?

17. Are you aware of any GDE policy's that are put in place to hinder workplace bullying? If no, would a policy be valuable?

18. What is your understanding of this policy?

19. What support structures are in place at your school with regard to workplace bullying? What is the process or protocols teachers would follow if they were being bullied? Please explain.

20. If you have experienced workplace bullying and you like to volunteer to be interviewed, please complete your details below:

Name:

Contact Number:

THANK YOU FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION

IF YOU HAVE EXPERIENCED ANY EMOTIONAL DISCOMFORT DUE TO THE
RECALL OF UNPLEASANT EXPERIENCES IN FILLING OUT THIS
QUESTIONNAIRE PLEASE CONTACT:
Life Line on 011 728 1331 for free counselling

Appendix 6: Interview Questions

1. Can you please tell me about your experiences with workplace bullying?
2. What impact/ effect did workplace bullying have on you as a Foundation Phase teacher?
3. What did you struggle with the most?
4. Which coping mechanisms did you use to manage these effects?

Appendix 7: Ethics Approval Letter

Wits School of Education

27 St Andrews Road, Parktown, Johannesburg, 2193 Private Bag 3, Wits 2050, South Africa. Tel: +27 11 717-3064 Fax: +27 11 717-3100 E-mail: enquiries@educ.wits.ac.za
Website: www.wits.ac.za

12 April 2018

Student Number: 322511

Protocol Number: 2018ECE006M

Dear Kim Claire Miller

Application for Ethics Clearance: Master of Education

Thank you very much for your ethics application. The Ethics Committee in Education of the Faculty of Humanities, acting on behalf of the Senate, has considered your application for ethics clearance for your proposal entitled: **An exploration of Foundation Phase teachers experiences of workplace bullying in six primary schools** the committee recently met, and I am pleased to inform you that **clearance was granted**. Please use the above protocol number in all correspondence to the relevant research parties (schools, parents, learners etc.) and include it in your research report or project on the title page. The Protocol Number above should be submitted to the Graduate Studies in Education Committee upon submission of your final research report.

All the best with your research project.

Yours sincerely,

Wits School of Education

011 717-3416

cc Supervisor - Dr. Moeniera Moosa