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Teacher-Targeted Bullying and Harassment (TTBH), Coping, Wellbeing, and Intention to Leave: A Quantitative Study in Gauteng Schools

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Teacher-Targeted Bullying and Harassment (TTBH), Coping, Wellbeing, and Intention to Leave: A Quantitative Study in Gauteng Schools.

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A research dissertation submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts (Organisational Psychology) in the Faculty of Humanities, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, March 2025.

Abstract

There has been a growing prevalence of bullying against teachers perpetrated by learners and their parents, especially in the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic, which prompted an exploration into the bullying that South African teachers face from learners' parents and its effects on various health indicators. While prior research has primarily focused on the experiences of South African teachers being bullied by learners and their parents, using a qualitative methodology, a notable gap existed in examining the effects of teachers being bullied by learners' parents, using a quantitative approach. This study addressed this gap by examining the impact of teacher-targeted bullying and harassment (TTBH) on teachers' physiological and psychological wellbeing and whether coping mechanisms could act as a resource that buffered the negative effects of TTBH on teachers' intention to leave the profession. Using Lazarus and Folkman's (1984) Transaction Model of Stress and Coping, a non-probability sample of 120 Gauteng primary and secondary school teachers (urban, government, private, fee-paying, and non-fee-paying) completed online surveys assessing their experiences of TTBH, its impact on their wellbeing, their intention to leave, and their use of psychological capital as a coping mechanism. Descriptive statistics were used to assess sample demographics, followed by correlation and moderated multiple regression analyses to examine relationships between variables. Results indicated that TTBH was significantly associated with poorer physiological and psychological wellbeing, as well as a higher intention to leave. Psychological capital helped alleviate distress and positively influenced intention to leave, but did not moderate the relationship between TTBH and any of the dependent variables. The study discusses its limitations, practical implications, and recommendations for future research.

Key Words: Teacher Targeted Bullying and Harassment (TTBH), Coping, Psychological Capital, Physiological and Psychological Wellbeing, Intention to Leave, Transactional Model of Stress and Coping, South African Schools.

Declaration

I, Bianca Moreira Da Silva, declare that this research proposal is my own, unaided work. It is submitted for the Master of Arts in Organisational Psychology degree at the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg. It has not been submitted before for any other degree or examination at this or any other university.

Signed: 

Date: 11/03/2024

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This work is dedicated to my late grandmother, whose love and resilience remain my greatest source of strength. Her legacy fuels my determination to persevere.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 Title

Teacher-Targeted Bullying and Harassment (TTBH), Coping, Wellbeing and Intention to Leave: A Quantitative Study in Gauteng Schools.

1.1 Introduction

Substantial research indicates a prevalence of bullying against teachers perpetrated by learners' parents. This phenomenon demonstrably has a detrimental impact on teachers' physiological and psychological wellbeing, potentially leading to teachers leaving the profession altogether (Billett et al., 2020; Gul et al., 2022; Jacobs & De Wet, 2018; Moodley, 2024; Uz & Bayraktar, 2019). The additional stress of working under COVID-19 conditions further exacerbated this pre-existing challenge (McCarthy et al., 2022; Oducado et al., 2021). Although this phenomenon is significantly on the rise in South Africa (Adewusi, 2021), research within the South African context is very limited. There has been some research done pre- and post-COVID-19, however, most of this research has been qualitative in nature. More research is required from a quantitative and stress and coping theoretical perspective, more specifically, in the South African context. Therefore, there is a need for research on this phenomenon's recent growth and its effects on teachers impacted by parent-enacted TTBH and the effectiveness of the psychological capital coping mechanisms they employ and its role in moderating the impacts on the teachers' physiological and psychological wellbeing and their intention to leave the profession.

In the following section, the research aims and rationale of the current study will be presented. This will be followed by Chapter 2, which presents the literature review and outlines the subsequent research questions that logically emerge from the current rationale, aims, and literature review.

1.2 Research Aims

This research sought to explore the effects of Teacher-targeted Bullying and Harassment (TTBH) by parents, on South African teachers' physiological and psychological wellbeing and intention to leave the profession, and whether the coping mechanism of psychological capital acts as a resource that buffers (moderates) the negative effects of TTBH on physiological and psychological wellbeing and intention of teachers to leave the profession.

The current research aimed to investigate the phenomenon of TTBH in the context of South African schools, with a specific focus on parent-enacted TTBH. The literature review to follow has established the significance of the study by highlighting the detrimental effects of general workplace bullying on individuals' physiological and psychological wellbeing, as well as its broader impact on organisations. It has gone on to outline the prevalence and consequences of TTBH, (as a specific sector-based type of bullying), emphasising the gap in the literature regarding parent-enacted TTBH and its implications for teachers and the education system.

Lazarus and Folkman's Transactional Model of Stress and Coping provides the theoretical foundation for understanding how individuals perceive and respond to stressors such as TTBH. This model posits that individuals engage in cognitive appraisal processes to evaluate the significance of stressors and assess available coping resources to manage them (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984). This model also considers the usage of 'resources' to cope with stressors. Within this study, psychological capital is a particular personal resource, comprising self-efficacy, hope, optimism, and resilience, and is considered a crucial internal coping resource that buffers the adverse effects of stressors on individuals' wellbeing (Bandura, 1997; Luthans et al., 2007).

1.3 Rationale

Previous research highlights the need for further research on TTBH, particularly parent-enacted TTBH, within the South African schooling context. Despite the documented prevalence of TTBH and its detrimental effects on teachers' wellbeing and the learning

environment, there is a lack of empirical studies addressing this issue quantitatively and within the South African context. By employing Lazarus and Folkman's Transactional Model of Stress and Coping, this study seeks to fill this gap by examining how teachers perceive and cope with parent-enacted TTBH and its implications for their physiological and psychological wellbeing, as well as their intention to leave the profession.

This research rationale is grounded in the importance of addressing TTBH as a significant occupational stressor in South African schools, especially in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, which has exacerbated existing challenges in the education sector (Alves et al., 2020; Oducado et al., 2020). Understanding the underlying mechanisms of TTBH and its negative impact on teachers' wellbeing is crucial for developing effective interventions and support systems to mitigate its adverse effects and promote a conducive learning environment for both teachers and learners. Additionally, as mentioned by Adewusi (2021), the South African schooling system is in a perilous state. Therefore, this loss of competent teachers is a specific issue in South Africa, as schools, particularly those in less affluent areas, cannot afford to lose qualified, experienced professionals due to a lack of resources, as there is already a shortage of good teachers in the country.

Overall, this research aimed to contribute to the existing literature by empirically investigating the prevalence, consequences, and coping mechanisms associated with parent-enacted TTBH in South African schools. By employing Lazarus and Folkman's Transactional Model of Stress and Coping, the study sought to provide valuable insights into the dynamics of TTBH and inform evidence-based interventions to support teachers and foster a positive work environment conducive to effective teaching and learning, resulting in fewer teachers leaving the profession. Furthermore, this research sought to explore the effectiveness of PsyCap as a coping strategy for teachers managing TTBH in their work settings.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

In this chapter, a detailed literature review will be explicated upon. The literature review component will focus on defining the concepts of workplace bullying in general and more specifically Teacher-targeted Bullying and Harassment (TTBH). Furthermore, this chapter will look at the consequences of parent-enacted TTBH and how they relate to the context of South African schools. Thereafter, this chapter will outline and define the Theoretical Framework of Lazarus and Folkman's (1984) Transactional Model of Stress and Coping, which will serve as the foundation for the current research. In addition, within this chapter, the gap in the literature will be elaborated upon, indicating why this current study is of relevance. Finally, the research questions of the study will be outlined.

2.2 Defining Workplace Bullying (WPB)

The concept of workplace bullying has experienced rapid growth, development, and maturity in recent times. Scholars worldwide have performed extensive research on workplace bullying in the last 20 years, following an emergence of interest over the past three decades (Branch et al., 2013). Rai and Agarwal (2016) reported that workplace bullying was initially utilised in the 1990s by Leymann (1990) and referred to recurrent inappropriate interpersonal behaviours that purposely inflict discomfort in the work environment. As a result of the immense traction that this phenomenon has built over time, workplace bullying is now regarded as one of the most harmful stressors in modern work environments (Maidaniuc-Chirilă, 2021).

There has been no exact, universally agreed-upon definition of what workplace bullying is and what it consists of. However, the definitions used in a large proportion of the literature share the following characteristics: (1) bullying is intentional, harmful behaviour, (2) occurring repeatedly over a prolonged period of time, (3) in an interpersonal relationship characterised by a power disparity (De Wet & Jacobs, 2006; Kõiv, 2015). Bullying has, however also been argued to occur as a single event or a series of events, resulting in unfavourable and negative effects similar to those experienced by individuals who are bullied more frequently (Capponecchia & Wyatt, 2009).

Bullying in the workplace can be psychological, verbal, or physical attacks that are perpetrated by individuals or groups (Cooper-Thomas et al., 2013; Einarsen et al., 2011). Workplace bullying can be generally defined as negative behaviours that are repeated over time with the intention of tarnishing an individual's reputation, performance, and professional life (Boudrias, et al., 2021). Workplace bullying can also be distinguished by negative behaviours that occur consistently, on a weekly basis and persist for at least six months (Einarsen et al., 2011). According to this approach by Einarsen et al. (2011), workplace bullying is a distinct and harmful form of aggressiveness (Maidaniuc-Chirilă, 2021).

In this way, workplace bullying occurs in a wide range of negative behaviours. These negative acts are clustered into the following categories which include public humiliation and criticism, verbal abuse, social exclusion, physically aggressive behaviour (threats of violence, abuse of power or physical attacks), intimidation, false accusations, rumour spreading, long-term silence and isolation, and undermining of the victims' professional status (Cunniff & Mostert, 2012; De Wet & Jacobs, 2021). Furthermore, bullying at work involves the extended and repeated exposure to these mentioned negative behaviours to intentionally cause distress, an unpleasant work environment, offence or humiliation, or to interfere with an individual's ability to perform their job and to negatively impact their work-related activities (Jacobs & De Wet, 2018; Fox & Stallworth, 2010).

For a negative act to be labelled as bullying in the workplace, an activity, interaction, or process must occur, as aforementioned, regularly every week and over a six-month period (Einarsen et al., 2011). Additionally, for a negative act against a victim to be classed as bullying, the victim must 'believe', that is, 'perceive' that they are subjected to repeated, patterned, persistent, or long-term hostile behaviour in the workplace that has an impact on their psychological, physiological and professional wellbeing (Byers, 2012). Due to individuals having to believe that they are subjected to workplace bullying, Jacobs and De Wet (2018) state that victims' subjective perceptions of workplace bullying can result in there being varying interpretations by various individuals. Therefore, Jacobs and De Wet (2021), proposed a list of categories that were mentioned above that could be used to examine perceived negative behaviour, and if most of these features were present, then perceived negative behaviour could then be labelled as workplace bullying.

As workplace bullying intensifies and progresses, the targeted individual is pushed into a subordinate position, increasing their vulnerability to harmful social behaviours (Samnani & Singh, 2012). Workplace bullies use their positions of authority and power to control, intimidate, disempower, undermine, dehumanise, or deprive their victims of their human rights in the workplace, such as the right to growth, voice, respect, or dignity (Woudstra et al., 2018).

As with many of the definitions above, Olweus (1993) and Nielsen & Einarsen (2018) note that workplace bullying has three primary characteristics. The first characteristic includes employees being often subjected to negative workplace behaviours. Second, the exposure lasts for an extended period of time. Third, it is noted that the one being targeted (bullied) feels as though they *are unable to simply leave the circumstance or stop the negative treatment* (Maidaniuc-Chirilă, 2021). Einarsen et al. (2003) confirm this perspective as they mention that workplace bullying is a chronic stressor that occurs frequently and over time, which leaves the victim feeling powerless and unable to defend themselves.

Research on this phenomenon has also indicated that workplace bullying is a significant stressor which negatively impacts victims' health and wellbeing (Cooper-Thomas et al., 2013; Cunniff & Mostert, 2012; Finchilescu et al., 2019; Maidaniuc-Chirilă, 2021).

2.2.1 Consequences of Workplace Bullying

Workplace bullying poses significant hazards and stressors for employees, with repercussions extending beyond their individual wellbeing to impact the broader work environment and work-related activities. Cross-sectional research has shown the numerous negative effects of workplace bullying on both individuals and organisations (Lutgen-Sandvik et al., 2007; Nielsen & Einarsen, 2012).

Below, follows a discussion of individual and organisational consequences.

2.2.2 Individual Consequences

Boudrias et al. (2020) highlight the detrimental impact of workplace bullying on individual employees' psychological and physiological wellbeing. Within the literature,

psychological wellbeing refers to an individual's mental health, while physiological wellbeing is used to refer to an individual's physical health (Danna & Griffin, 1999).

Agervold and Mikkelson (2004) highlight the diverse negative consequences of bullying, including diminished psychological wellbeing, increased worry and fear, and loss of self-esteem and confidence in professional abilities. Studies suggest that experiencing workplace bullying can result in various adverse psychological effects, such as anxiety, burnout, stress, and exhaustion (Høgh et al., 2021; Nielsen & Einarsen, 2012). Moreover, bullying has been associated with physiological illnesses like musculoskeletal disorders and sleep disturbances (Finchilescu et al., 2019; Hallberg & Strandmark, 2006; Hoch et al., 2011), as well as serious mental health conditions like major depressive disorder, PTSD, and even suicide (Rugulies et al., 2012). The referenced literature demonstrates that individuals who experience workplace bullying are at risk of significant psychological harm, which may extend to physical harm and other negative consequences that go beyond the individual.

2.2.3 Organisational Consequences

The consequences of workplace bullying extend to organisational outcomes, with victims exhibiting reduced job satisfaction, lower commitment, early retirement, and heightened turnover intentions (Appelbaum et al., 2012; Høgh et al., 2021; Hood, 2004). Some employees opt to leave their positions altogether to escape further victimisation and workplace bullying, while those who remain often report increased absenteeism due to medical or mental health concerns because of workplace bullying, or to altogether avoid further bullying incidents (Trepanier et al., 2016). The adverse health effects of workplace bullying can also impact personal relationships and family connections, potentially resulting in financial challenges due to medical costs (Tracy et al., 2006).

The literature on this concept thus illustrates that it impacts employees and organisations globally (Matthiesen & Einarsen, 2001; Vessey et al., 2009). Moreover, research has demonstrated that this issue adversely affects both physical and psychological wellbeing, contributing to sleep and eating disorders, anxiety, depression, lowered self-esteem, increased absenteeism, and a higher likelihood of employees considering leaving their profession (Cooper-Thomas et al., 2013; Cunniff & Mostert, 2012).

For teachers specifically, workplace bullying can give rise to feelings of helplessness, dysfunctionality, increased burnout, distress, indecisiveness, hypervigilance, obsessional thinking, panic attacks and leaving their profession (Jacobs & De Wet, 2018). Moreover, bullied teachers may grapple with a plethora of negative emotions and symptoms, ranging from inadequacy and self-doubt to insomnia, chronic fatigue, and fear of job loss (De Wet, 2010). Physiologically, workplace bullying can manifest in eating disorders, substance abuse, headaches, and various other health issues such as cardiovascular problems, respiratory problems, digestive problems, nausea, weight loss/gain, and increased risk of infection (De Wet & Jacobs, 2021; Fahie, 2014).

As alluded to above, the adverse effects of workplace bullying extend beyond individual teachers, significantly impacting the broader school environment. These effects include absenteeism, decreased work commitment and performance, employee turnover, and diminished productivity (Fox & Stallworth, 2010; Jacobs & De Wet, 2018). In the context of schools, high employee turnover rates among teachers can disrupt continuity and cohesion, leading to a decline in overall educational quality. The loss of experienced educators and the associated costs of recruiting, onboarding, and training new teachers strain school resources, creating additional challenges for maintaining effective teaching and learning environments (De Wet & Jacobs, 2021).

Workplace bullying in schools has been linked to changes in teachers' professional conduct and emotional engagement, further compounding its impact on learners. Teachers experiencing bullying often report feelings of detachment, reduced empathy, and decreased motivation, which can influence their lesson preparation and classroom interaction styles. This, in turn, may affect the quality of education that learners receive, as teachers struggle to manage both the psychological and professional demands of their roles (Jacobs & De Wet, 2018).

2.3 Defining Teacher-Targeted Bullying and Harassment (TTBH)

Bullying in schools is increasingly recognised as a critical issue, but the phenomenon of teacher workplace bullying, though less commonly discussed, is equally severe (Catherine Scheeler et al., 2022). Many people find it difficult to believe that teachers may be bullied or harassed by students and parents. Teachers are often viewed as being in control and being in

a position of authority in the educational setting; however, this may not be the case. Research indicates that teachers frequently experience powerlessness in the classroom and face Teacher-targeted Bullying and Harassment (TTBH) from students and their parents (Billet et al., 2019; McMahon et al., 2023).

The term TTBH was adopted to provide clarification regarding the concept of workplace bullying and its application in the teaching context. For the sake of this research, parent-enacted TTBH is defined as "a communication process that involves a real or perceived power imbalance wherein a teacher is subjected, by one or more parent(s), to an interaction that he or she perceives as insulting, upsetting or intimidating" (Fogelgarn et al., 2019, p. 8). This interaction can take various forms, including verbal, nonverbal, or physical; it can be premeditated or opportunistic; it can also be recurring, short-term, or long-term (Fogelgarn et al., 2019).

As aforementioned, there are two distinct types of TTBH encountered by teachers. The first type is learner-enacted TTBH which is more spoken of and in turn, slightly more researched globally and within South Africa (Jacobs & De Wet, 2018; Woudstra et al., 2018). Therefore, given the research gap, for the purposes of this research, parent-enacted TTBH will be focused on. In terms of parent-enacted TTBH by gender within the Billet et al. study (2019), 54.6% of female teachers and 58.7% of male teachers reported being victims of parental TTBH within the last 12 months. Parent-enacted TTBH can manifest itself in a wide range of behaviours, from parents engaging in direct physical actions (kicking, striking, verbal/physical aggressiveness, etc.) with their children's teachers, to indirect psychological acts (name calling, spreading rumours, yelling, insults, manipulation, threats, etc.) as well (De Wet 2012). The most common types of parent-enacted TTBH found in the Fogelgarn et al. (2020) study included verbally insulting a teacher (42.1%), yelling (26.4%), children engaging a parent to advocate on their behalf (26.4%), and children lying about a teacher to get them in trouble with their parents (24.4%).

A study conducted by McMahon et al. (2023) explored the issue of parental aggression towards teachers in their study, *"Understanding Parent Aggression Directed Against Teachers: A School Ecology Perspective."* The research identified various forms of aggression, including verbal abuse, threats, and physical intimidation, stemming from disputes over academic performance, disciplinary actions, or perceived biases. Such

aggression was shown to significantly impact teachers, leading to stress, emotional exhaustion, decreased job satisfaction, and strained teacher-student relationships (McMahon et al., 2023).

Additionally, within the literature, it is seen that teachers in economically deprived communities, in particular, are frequently bullied by learners' parents who come from backgrounds where violence is common, and this aggression spills over into schools and is directed at teachers (Billet et al., 2020). In such contexts, learners may involve their parents, framing conflicts in a way that prompts parents to take their side and confront the teacher (Moodley, 2024). As a result, what begins as student-directed aggression can escalate into parent-enacted bullying, further exacerbating the challenges faced by teachers in these environments. To make sense of the results found by Fogelgarn et al. (2020), 26.4% of children engage a parent to advocate on their behalf. There could thus be a link between a learner being considered as a 'problem' in class and then the parent bullying and harassing the teacher as they don't believe their child is the problem – rather, they believe it is the teacher's fault, and yet, the learner is lying to their parents about the teacher (Moodley, 2024). Thus, the learner encourages their parent to engage in parent-enacted TTBH based on wrongful information (Moodley, 2024). Thus, although this is distinct from learner-teacher bullying when a learner gets his or her parents to 'attack' the teacher on their behalf, it becomes parent-on-teacher bullying (Fogelgarn et al., 2020).

Parents may also challenge a teacher's competence and professionalism through persistent, ongoing advocacy, eroding their ability to criticise and control bad learners' behaviour which is also an experience that is both humiliating and disempowering for teachers (Fogelgarn et al., 2019).

Burns et al. (2020) state that within the Australian context, there have been few academic debates about TTBH. While there is considerable evidence that TTBH is an issue for many teachers (Fogelgarn et al., 2019), there remains a shortage of studies on this vital subject. Looking at studies done on TTBH within the South African context, the literature is very limited considering the massive influx of TTBH and teachers experiencing work-related stress in the country, especially since COVID-19 (Oducado et al., 2020). This can be seen in post-pandemic stress where teachers have returned to school extremely burnt out, having to cope with learners who are often also extremely psychologically damaged leads to an

environment in which learners are experiencing problems and in which parents can bully teachers further (Alves et al. 2020; Oducado et al., 2020).

The above definitions and studies indicate the multi-faceted nature and complex dynamics of TTBH. Understanding the multifaceted nature and dynamics of TTBH is essential for appreciating its profound impact. By exploring the dynamics of TTBH, including its prevalence and underlying mechanisms, it becomes evident that these behaviours are not isolated incidents but rather systemic issues within educational environments (Byers, 2012). The next section delves deeper into the consequences of TTBH, shedding light on the significant implications it holds for teachers' wellbeing, professional engagement, and overall functioning.

2.3.1 Consequences of Teacher-Targeted Bullying and Harassment

The adverse effects of TTBH on teachers mirror the negative impact of workplace bullying on employees, extending beyond individual wellbeing to influence the broader educational environment. Teachers, like any professionals, thrive in environments where they feel secure and supported, yet TTBH disrupts this essential dynamic, impairing both the teachers' physiological and psychological wellbeing and the quality of education they provide to their learners. Furthermore, it is important to note that low-stress conditions are required for effective teaching-learning processes and the achievement of educational objectives and goals (Byers, 2012).

To carry out effective teaching-learning activities, teachers must feel safe, comfortable, and at ease in their workplace (Uz & Bayraktar, 2019). However, previous research has found that TTBH has a negative impact on teachers' psychological and physical wellbeing, personal lives, relationships with others, performance, and the teaching-learning process (Burns et al., 2020; Gul et al., 2022; Uz & Bayraktar, 2019; De Wet and Jacobs, 2006; Jacobs and De Wet, 2018).

2.3.2 Individual Teacher Consequences

According to several studies, (Burns et al., 2020; De Wet & Jacobs, 2006; Gul et al., 2022; Uz & Bayraktar, 2019), bullied teachers may suffer from low self-esteem, increased

loneliness, anxiety, peer rejection, high blood pressure, disturbed sleeping patterns, migraines, weight loss or gain, heart attacks, stress, fatigue, nightmares, back pain, eating disorders, digestive problems, depression, fearfulness, anger, loss of energy, forgetfulness, emotional exhaustion, burnout, disturbing levels of attrition, post-traumatic stress disorder, stomach cramps, and migraines. TTBH may also result in "battered teachers' syndrome," which causes stress-related symptoms such as sleep difficulties, burnout, eating disorders, anxiety, disillusionment, apathy, and depression, which can lead to a decrease in job and life satisfaction (Gul et al., 2022).

TTBH may have an impact on teachers' personal lives, especially their relationships. For example, teachers' home lives may suffer when they vent their emotions on their children and spouses (Jacobs & De Wet, 2018). Teachers also report feeling unsafe on school grounds and in their communities (Burns et al., 2020). Teachers' financial situation is also damaged, as they may relocate, quit their positions, or be hesitant to apply for promotions due to TTBH (Jacobs & De Wet, 2018).

TTBH is often naively seen as a series of relatively harmless, independent events, but ultimately, over time, they progressively wear down and degrade teachers' feelings of efficiency, satisfaction at work, and self-confidence (Burns et al., 2020). This would be consistent with ideas on Life Events Stress (LES), in which the more stresses one encounters, the more they compound to create a cumulative effect over time that erodes one's long-term coping skills (Holmes & Rahe, 1967). Ongoing TTBH concerns cause teachers to lose interest in teaching because they are unable to re-ignite their enthusiasm for teaching and feel unmotivated (Burns et al., 2020). Furthermore, because of TTBH, teachers consider leaving the teaching profession or pursuing another career path, highlighting the need to explore the construct of intention to leave more explicitly.

2.3.3 Defining Intention to Leave the Profession

One of the most serious implications of TTBH is its association with teachers' intentions to leave the profession. Intention to leave refers to an individual's conscious and deliberate willingness to leave the profession or organisation (Tett & Meyer, 1993). It is often used as a proximal indicator of actual turnover and reflects not only dissatisfaction but also burnout, diminished commitment, and unresolved workplace conflict (Mobley et al., 1979).

A growing body of research indicates that exposure to workplace bullying significantly increases teachers' desire to exit the profession (Coetzee & van Dyk, 2018; Curran et al., 2019; Gkorezis et al., 2014; Trepanier et al., 2016). Specifically, teachers who feel unsupported, unsafe, and undervalued due to persistent bullying, particularly from learners' parents, are more likely to report an intention to leave (De Wet, 2010; Fahie, 2014; Jacobs & De Wet, 2018; Riley, 2018). For example, a study by Høgh et al. (2021) found that prolonged exposure to bullying among educators led to significantly increased psychological strain and turnover intentions. Similarly, De Wet and Jacobs (2018) noted that teacher attrition in South Africa is often driven by the emotional exhaustion and demoralisation associated with TTBH.

The problem is exacerbated in under-resourced contexts where teachers often lack access to formal support systems. In such environments, repeated exposure to parent-enacted bullying and harassment without adequate intervention may reduce job satisfaction and professional identity, further fuelling intentions to resign (Billet et al., 2020; Moodley, 2024). Teachers in these settings often express a sense of professional helplessness, where continuing to teach feels both emotionally and physically unsustainable (Burns et al., 2020; Fahie, 2014; Gul et al., 2022).

Furthermore, intention to leave is not just a personal consequence but a systemic one. High levels of teacher turnover are detrimental to educational quality, learner outcomes, and school stability (Ingersoll, 2001). Schools experiencing frequent teacher exits struggle to build institutional memory, maintain curriculum consistency, and foster trust among learners and parents (Carver-Thomas & Darling-Hammond, 2017; Ronfeldt et al., 2013; Simon & Johnson, 2015). In addition, there is a shortage of teachers, particularly teachers that are experienced and teachers qualified to teach STEM subjects (Molai, 2024). This is particularly concerning in the South African context, where qualified teacher shortages, especially in township and rural schools, already pose significant challenges (Du Plessis & Mestry, 2019; Muremela et al., 2021).

Given the severity of these implications, intention to leave is a critical outcome variable in the present study. By examining how TTBH contributes to turnover intention and whether PsyCap can buffer this effect, the current research seeks to highlight the need for systemic intervention strategies aimed at retaining qualified, motivated educators in the face

of bullying-related stressors. This growing intention to leave the profession not only reflects the individual toll of TTBH but also signals broader systemic risks for schools and educational institutions (De Wet, 2010; Jacobs & De Wet, 2018; Bernstein & Trimm, 2016; Du Plessis & Mestry, 2019; SADTU, 2018). As teachers begin to disengage or exit the profession, the organisational consequences for schools become increasingly evident (Bernstein & Trimm, 2016; Carver-Thomas & Darling-Hammond, 2017; Mokhele & Jita, 2010).

2.3.4 Organisational/School Consequences

Finally, schools where TTBH takes place may be affected. Bullied teachers may lose motivation, their performance may deteriorate within their job, they may lose attention, have low morale, and become disengaged from their work (Jacobs & De Wet, 2018; De Wet & Jacobs, 2006). TTBH also has a negative impact on the quality of teaching and learning, as teachers may fall behind on their work, struggle to teach, or discontinue teaching planned lessons, hence impeding learners' right to a quality education (Billet et al., 2020). Furthermore, absenteeism may rise as teachers take sick, unpaid, or vacation days to prevent continuous bullying and harassment (Burns et al., 2020).

The organisational consequences of such disengagement and attrition are far-reaching. As teachers begin to leave the profession, schools face instability, including the disruption of collaborative staff cultures, increased recruitment and training costs, and diminished learner outcomes due to the loss of experienced educators (Carver-Thomas & Darling-Hammond, 2017).

To conclude, with parental TTBH on the rise, the high stress that teachers may face could have a negative impact on their psychological and physical wellbeing, as well as the learning experiences of their students, as teachers lose the will and drive to teach successfully and may even leave the profession (Høgh et al., 2021; Trepanier et al., 2016). This loss of competent teachers is a specific issue in South Africa, as schools, particularly those in less affluent areas, cannot afford to lose qualified, experienced professionals due to a critical skills shortage of well-trained, experienced teachers (Du Plessis & Mestry, 2019).

The previous section has defined and examined the consequences of TTBH, highlighting its profound impact on teachers' psychological and physiological wellbeing, their professional lives, and the broader educational environment. These adverse outcomes underscore the importance of identifying strategies and resources that can help mitigate the harmful effects of TTBH. The following section will focus on Psychological Capital (PsyCap), a specific internal resource that has shown promise in enhancing individuals' resilience and ability to cope with stressors (Luthans et al., 2007), including that of TTBH.

2.3.5 Psychological Capital (PsyCap) and Teacher-targeted Bullying and Harassment (TTBH)

TTBH pose significant challenges to educators' professional efficacy as well as their psychological and physiological wellbeing. In addressing these challenges, there has been an examination of what interventions, external resources and/or internal coping resources teachers can use to cope with TTBH. In the broader literature on stress and coping, researchers have increasingly focused on the concept of PsyCap as a valuable internal resource for resilience and coping (Prayag et al., 2020; Rabenu et al., 2017; Zewude & Hercz, 2021).

2.3.6 Defining Psychological Capital

PsyCap comprises four core components: self-efficacy, hope, optimism, and resilience (Luthans et al., 2007). These components collectively form a positive psychological state that equips individuals with the tools to effectively navigate adversity (Prayag et al., 2020).

A fundamental aspect of PsyCap is self-efficacy, which refers to an individual's confidence in their ability to accomplish tasks and navigate challenges successfully (Byers, 2012; Luthans et al., 2007). Bandura's (1997) theory highlights the role of self-efficacy in shaping individuals' perceptions of difficult tasks as challenges rather than threats. Individuals can strengthen their self-efficacy and develop a proactive mindset toward achieving their goals through processes such as mastering tasks, observing others, receiving verbal encouragement, and experiencing emotional arousal (Bandura, 1997; Odendaal & Roodt, 2009).

Hope is another key component of PsyCap, and it encompasses both agency and pathways (Luthans et al., 2010). Luthans et al. (2007) suggest that individuals with high levels of hope demonstrate greater resilience in overcoming challenges and adapting their behaviour to successfully achieve their goals. Hope consists of two key components: agency, which drives motivation to initiate and maintain goal-directed efforts, and pathways, which involve identifying strategic routes to reach desired outcomes (Luthans et al., 2010). By cultivating a strong sense of agency and enhancing problem-solving adaptability, hope enables individuals to persist despite challenges (Luthans et al., 2007).

The third component of psychological capital is Optimism, which is characterised by a positive outlook on present and future success and plays a crucial role in shaping individuals' attributions of events (Luthans et al., 2007). Optimistic individuals typically credit positive outcomes to internal factors while attributing negative outcomes to external influences (Luthans et al., 2010). This attributional style enhances resilience by promoting adaptive coping strategies and facilitating the maintenance of psychological wellbeing amidst challenges.

Resilience is the final component of PsyCap, which refers to an individual's ability to bounce back from setbacks and adversity effectively. Resilient individuals demonstrate adaptive coping mechanisms and a capacity to transcend adverse circumstances to achieve success (Luthans et al., 2007). By fostering resilience, PsyCap equips individuals with the tools to navigate the complexities of teacher-targeted bullying and harassment while maintaining their sense of professional efficacy and psychological wellbeing.

Moreover, PsyCap is viewed as a malleable construct, open to development through training and intervention efforts (Luthans et al., 2010). This flexibility suggests that teachers can actively improve their PsyCap to mitigate the negative impacts of teacher-targeted bullying and harassment on their psychological and physiological wellbeing. It is thus possible to introduce interventions of PsyCap training to assist teachers in developing and enhancing their innate level of psychological capital and thereby their ability to cope, in the face of exposure to stressors associated with TTBH.

Empirical evidence suggests that PsyCap serves as a valuable coping resource in the workplace context, with positive correlations observed between PsyCap and physiological

and psychological wellbeing (Avey et al., 2011). Given the potential advantages of PsyCap in mitigating the impact of workplace stressors, it is imperative to explore its potential as a coping mechanism for teachers who are subjected to bullying and harassment by parents. For the present research, PsyCap is examined as the coping response to TTBH. When PsyCap is high, it is proposed that it will enhance an individual's ability to cope effectively, thereby mitigating the negative consequences associated with teacher-targeted bullying (Vilarino del Castillo & Lopez-Zafra, 2022). Conversely, when PsyCap is low, coping mechanisms are likely to be less effective, potentially exacerbating the negative outcomes of bullying, such as decreased wellbeing and increased intention to leave the profession. By examining the relationship between PsyCap and individual wellbeing within this specific context, this study can provide valuable insights into the usefulness of PsyCap as a coping mechanism for educators navigating TTBH in their professional environments. It can also suggest the utilisations of interventions for teachers, in order to further develop the level of PsyCap that they currently possess.

In conclusion, PsyCap offers a promising avenue for enhancing the psychological resilience of educators confronted with teacher-targeted bullying and harassment. By fostering self-efficacy, hope, optimism, and resilience, it can be expected that PsyCap will equip teachers with the psychological resources necessary to navigate TTBH and still thrive in their roles. Hence, this research will explore the potential applications of PsyCap in promoting and buffering the physiological and psychological wellbeing of teachers impacted by TTBH and their intention to leave the profession. It will also suggest whether interventions should be introduced to enhance teachers' PsyCap to cope with any bullying that they may experience in the future.

The previous section provided a comprehensive review of WPB, TTBH, and the outcomes at an individual and organisational level. In addition, the construct of PsyCap as a possible resource to cope with such bullying has also been outlined. The following section examines the schooling context within South Africa, which is fraught with difficulties that often create an environment in which TTBH could be fostered.

2.4 The Schooling Context in South Africa

Within the literature, it is seen that TTBH is significantly on the rise in South Africa (Adewusi, 2021). A study conducted by Langeveldt (2023) highlights that workplace bullying poses a significant problem for teachers in South Africa, severely impacting their physical and mental health, job satisfaction, and overall wellbeing. Workplace bullying is a prevalent issue in South African schools (Langeveldt, 2023), with some studies highlighting the extent of the problem (Adewusi, 2021; Mavungu & Napier, 2019; SADTU, 2018; Solomon, 2021). However, research on TTBH is still limited in comparison to research on workplace bullying in organisations and on bullying among learners in South African schools (Bernstein & Bachelor, 2022). Research by Mavungu and Napier (2019) revealed that 43% of surveyed teachers reported experiencing workplace bullying. Similarly, a survey conducted by the South African Democratic Teachers Union (SADTU) found that 62% of participating teachers had encountered bullying, harassment, or intimidation in the workplace (SADTU, 2018). In the multifaceted landscape of South African education, the intricate interplay between the schooling context and the prevalence of TTBH unveils a complex narrative. Various dimensions of the schooling context in South Africa create an environment that allows TTBH to flourish.

A key factor in understanding the rapid growth of TTBH is the demanding nature of teaching in South Africa. Teachers frequently operate in toxic environments characterised by dissatisfaction, overwork, and stress (Jacobs, 2014). These challenges are compounded by the ongoing socio-political changes affecting the education sector. Montgomery et al. (2005) highlight how factors such as affirmative action, mass retrenchments, and diversity exert considerable pressure on educators. These challenges manifest in the form of low decision-making authority, increased workload, overcrowding, and a shortage of essential resources (Woudstra et al., 2018; Montgomery et al., 2005). These stressors contribute to burnout, low morale, and significant strain among teachers, as highlighted by Woudstra et al. (2018) and Montgomery et al. (2005). The impact is especially severe in under-resourced schools in impoverished areas, where moral decline, violence, lawlessness, and economic hardship are prevalent (Ncontsa & Shumba, 2013).

To expand on the above, South Africa's education system is also grappling with significant challenges stemming from severe resource limitations and recent national budget

reductions, which have exacerbated the mentioned pre-existing issues. These challenges affect not only teachers' ability to perform their roles effectively but also their overall wellbeing and job satisfaction (IOL, 2024). Teachers in South Africa are at the forefront of an education system burdened by resource constraints. Many schools lack basic infrastructure, including safe buildings, reliable electricity, and adequate sanitation facilities (Amnesty International, 2020; Du Plessis & Mestry, 2019). These conditions create unsafe and often demoralising work environments for teachers, undermining their ability to focus on instructional delivery. Additionally, the lack of basic utilities forces teachers to find alternative methods to support their lessons, increasing their workload and stress levels.

An additional issue currently is the infrastructure development plans in South African schools that have been delayed or cancelled, leaving many teachers to continue to work in unsafe and unsuitable environments with no end in sight. This has a direct impact on teacher morale, as teachers are forced to navigate challenging teaching conditions while still being held accountable for learner outcomes (Daily Maverick, 2023).

Furthermore, the shortage of teaching materials, such as textbooks, desks, and other essential resources, adds to teachers' frustrations. Often, educators must share limited resources among learners or purchase materials out of their own pockets to ensure lessons can proceed (Amnesty International, 2020). These resource constraints leave teachers feeling unsupported, undervalued, and overburdened, contributing to burnout and dissatisfaction with the profession.

Classroom overcrowding in South African schools is another significant issue. In Wills' (2023) exploratory analysis of *South African teacher shortages as revealed through class sizes and learner-educator ratios*, it was seen that many classrooms in South Africa are accommodating between 35 to 60 learners. In a June 2022 article from *The Star*, former Basic Education Minister Angie Motshekga stated that there are no legally mandated guidelines or criteria for the ratio of students to teachers in public schools in South Africa (Nkosi, 2022). She noted that the absence of binding policies has led to overcrowded classrooms, with some instances reporting up to 74 learners per classroom, prompting protests and school shutdowns by concerned parents (Nkosi, 2022). This overcrowding not only compromises the quality of education but also places immense pressure on teachers to maintain discipline and ensure that learning objectives are met under challenging circumstances (Wills, 2023).

In such environments, parents may become frustrated with the poor education that their children are receiving, and they may well take out their frustrations on teachers in the form of TTBH. At the same time, teachers working under the immense stress that these environments imply may find their ability to cope with angry and frustrated parents being severely eroded.

To date, the Government's 2024 education budget reductions have further compounded these challenges, placing additional pressure on teachers. Basic Education Minister Siviwe Gwarube has acknowledged that these cuts have led to widespread inefficiencies in the education system, significantly affecting teachers' ability to perform their roles (SABC News, 2024). A primary consequence has been teacher retrenchments and an inability to fill vacant posts, which was also evident in Wills' (2023) study, where it is mentioned that these budget reductions exacerbate overcrowded classrooms and unequal teacher distribution, particularly in under-resourced provinces. With fewer teachers in schools, those teachers who remain are left to manage overcrowded classrooms and heavier workloads, often working unpaid overtime to meet the demands of their roles (Wills, 2023; SABC News, 2024). The finding from a report by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) underscores the adverse effects of the mentioned challenges as it found that 25% of South African teachers experience significant stress, with many considering leaving the profession due to work overload as the general cause of stress (IOL, 2020).

To sum up, failing infrastructure, overcrowding, resource constraints and budget cuts affecting South Africa's education system disproportionately impact teachers, who bear the brunt of these challenges. Overcrowded classrooms, insufficient materials and inadequate infrastructure create an unsustainable working environment, leading to increased stress, burnout, and reduced job satisfaction (IOL, 2020; Matsepe et al., 2019). In addition to these challenges, the actual organisational structure of schools and the climate therein can also foster TTBH.

In addition, power structures and safety climate in schools play a role in leading to the flourishing of TTBH. Schools, with their hierarchical structures and power disparities, emerge as fertile grounds for the expression of bullying behaviours. According to Li et al. (2023) and Vos and Kirsten (2015), school environments create conditions that facilitate the

persistence of TTBH, as they are often defined by high job demands and limited job resources. Moreover, Fahie (2014) delves into the critical role of leadership styles in shaping the culture within schools. Ineffective leadership, characterised by passive or laissez-faire approaches, not only fails to address bullying incidents but may inadvertently foster such negative behaviour (Fahie, 2014).

The safety climate within schools emerges as a crucial determinant of TTBH as well. Byers (2012) emphasises that schools failing to prioritise safety, both in policies and practices, contribute to negative safety climate perceptions among teachers. These perceptions, in turn, mediate the relationship between stress and bullying, exacerbating the prevalence of TTBH (Byers, 2012). Moreover, experienced bullying within the school environment tarnishes teachers' appraisal of their workplace, instilling a sense of feeling unsafe (Byers, 2012).

In addition to the factors discussed above, the COVID-19 outbreak's unanticipated occurrence further exacerbated the environment that has caused TTBH to flourish. Since the COVID-19 pandemic, stress has gained significant attention in the field of education (Oducado et al., 2020). According to Alves et al. (2020), the COVID-19 pandemic has had an impact on teachers' professional well-being. Nonetheless, stress has been a concern for teachers long before the pandemic. Despite being regarded as a noble vocation, teaching has a long history of unrest and distress (Alves et al., 2020). Previous research has found a moderate to high level of stress among teachers and faculty members in low to middle-income countries, such as Ethiopia (Kabito & Wami, 2020), Macedonia (Agai-Demjaha et al., 2015), and the Philippines (Tan, 2017; Alson, 2019). As demonstrated in the literature there has been some research done on low to middle-income countries similar to South Africa but there is a paucity of research being published from the South African perspective on TTBH, particularly from parents.

Additionally, the pandemic caused a paradigm shift in teaching and learning around the world (Guillasper et al., 2020; Mondol & Mohiuddin, 2020) and placed teachers under immense strain as they navigated a wide range of challenges (Reimer & Schleicher, 2020). Among these challenges, the transition to online teaching to engage students from early childhood to tertiary education not only led to increased workloads (Allen et al., 2020) but also exposed teachers to heightened risks of TTBH through the pervasive use of social media

(Moodley, 2024). Post-Covid, the online world has introduced a new dimension to TTBH, where platforms like WhatsApp and social media have become tools for parents to virtually harass, pressure, and attack teachers, often blurring professional boundaries and intensifying conflicts. This aligns with Hinduja and Patchin's (2013) definition of cyberbullying as intentional harassment conducted through online platforms, including chatrooms and social networking sites.

Moodley (2024) highlights the pervasive role of social media in parent-enacted TTBH, with platforms like WhatsApp and Facebook frequently weaponised to amplify public shaming, false accusations, and misinformation against teachers. WhatsApp, while offering accessibility, often becomes a source of unrelenting messaging and boundary violations, pressuring teachers to respond promptly and resulting in misunderstandings and emotional distress. Teachers also face aggressive and accusatory remarks in group chats, with parents leveraging the platform to escalate conflicts (Shin & Choi, 2021). Similarly, Facebook enables the spread of misinformation, rallying public judgment and even inciting physical threats against teachers, as parents form groups to disseminate false narratives and tarnish teachers' reputations through "flaming" (inflammatory messages) and "denigration" (spreading false statements to harm reputation) (Nadali et al., 2013). Anonymity on these platforms can also be an issue as it further exacerbates fear as teachers struggle to trace the origins of attacks, compounding their emotional and professional harm. These behaviours not only undermine teachers' wellbeing and professional standing but also highlight the urgent need for policies addressing cyberbullying and the ethical use of social media in teacher-parent interactions (Moodley, 2024).

These patterns of parent-enacted TTBH through the form of cyberbullying underscore the pressing need to examine the stress and coping mechanisms of teachers, particularly within the under-researched South African schooling context, where such behaviours have been linked to detrimental psychological and physiological consequences (Mariotti, 2015).

Given the pressing need to understand the stress and coping mechanisms of teachers facing parent-enacted TTBH, as mentioned in the introduction, this study will adopt Lazarus and Folkman's Transactional Model of Stress and Coping (1984) as its guiding framework. This model provides a valuable lens through which to explore how teachers appraise and respond to the stressors associated with TTBH, particularly within the under-researched

South African schooling context. The following section delves into the components of this model and its application to the constructs examined in this research.

2.5 Theoretical Framework of the Study: The Transactional Model of Stress and Coping

In examining the phenomenon of TTBH, this study will adopt Lazarus and Folkman's Transactional Model of Stress and Coping (1984). This theoretical framework illustrates how individuals respond to stressors through cognitive appraisal and coping mechanisms. According to Lazarus and Folkman (1984), cognitive appraisal involves evaluating a stressor's significance, that is, the level of threat, to one's wellbeing. The appraisal process consists of primary and secondary stages. During primary appraisal, a stressor may be perceived as insignificant, beneficial, or stressful. When an event is viewed as insignificant or benign-positive, the individual perceives it as harmless to their wellbeing (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984). A benign-positive outcome arises when the event is considered to either maintain or improve well-being (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984). In response to a perceived threat or challenge, individuals activate coping strategies to manage the situation (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984). Stressful events involve actual harm or loss, while a threat refers to anticipated harm or loss. A threat, on the other hand, represents an opportunity for growth when facing a stressor (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984).

After completing the primary appraisal, individuals proceed to the secondary appraisal, where they evaluate their available coping strategies if the event is perceived as a threat. Lazarus and Folkman (1984) explain that during this stage, individuals assess the effectiveness of their chosen coping strategy and its potential to successfully manage the situation. The relationship between these two stages of appraisal ultimately affects an individual's stress levels and the severity of their response (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984). When a threat is perceived, if the individual believes they lack the resources to cope, the outcome is likely to be more deleterious. In the context of this study, parent-enacted TTBH will serve as the perceived stressor, while psychological capital will act as the coping mechanism.

Following this model, if a teacher perceives TTBH to be stressful, they will use their psychological capital to cope, which is anticipated to mitigate the negative impact on their physiological and psychological wellbeing, as well as their intention to leave the profession.

As highlighted in the model, individuals engage their coping resources when faced with stressors to effectively manage the situation. Coping, as defined by Lazarus and Folkman (1984), encompasses cognitive and behavioural efforts to manage stressors. These efforts draw upon internal and external coping resources. Internal resources, such as personality traits, PsyCap, and self-efficacy, are inherent qualities that shape an individual's coping ability, as highlighted by Lu and Chen (2007) and van den Heuvel et al. (2014). On the other hand, external resources like support from leaders, the organisation, and social networks provide additional assistance in coping, as discussed by Lu and Chen (2007) and van den Heuvel et al. (2014). Drawing on the model developed by Lazarus and Folkman, Long (1998) asserts that an individual's choice of coping mechanisms has an impact on their physiological and psychological wellbeing.

It is important to note that while a vast array of coping strategies and resources may be available (as just outlined), the focus of this study is to assess individuals' level of PsyCap and the extent to which this internal coping resource can assist in moderating the impact of TTBH on health outcomes.

The diagram below depicts the theoretical framework that connects bullying to the Transactional Model of Stress in the context of TTBH. This model suggests that TTBH is perceived as a stressor that triggers a transactional process involving primary and secondary appraisals. PsyCap influences this appraisal process, acting as a buffer that either enhances or diminishes appraisal in terms of belief in coping capacity, thus determining the severity of the stress response and its subsequent effects on the individual.

Therefore, in this study, PsyCap will serve as the "internal coping response" at the core of the model. The outcomes that will be examined include the severity of stress responses, that is, overall wellbeing, and intention to leave the profession. It is hypothesised that high levels of PsyCap will be associated with a reduction in negative outcomes/consequences, including improved wellbeing and lower intention to leave, while low PsyCap will correlate with heightened stress perceptions and responses in terms of negative outcomes.

In addition to the above outcome variables, PsyCap will also be explored as a moderating factor within the transactional stress model. Specifically, the role of PsyCap in

moderating the relationship between TTBH and its associated outcomes, such as stress, wellbeing, and turnover intention, will be investigated. A diagram illustrating this model is presented below.

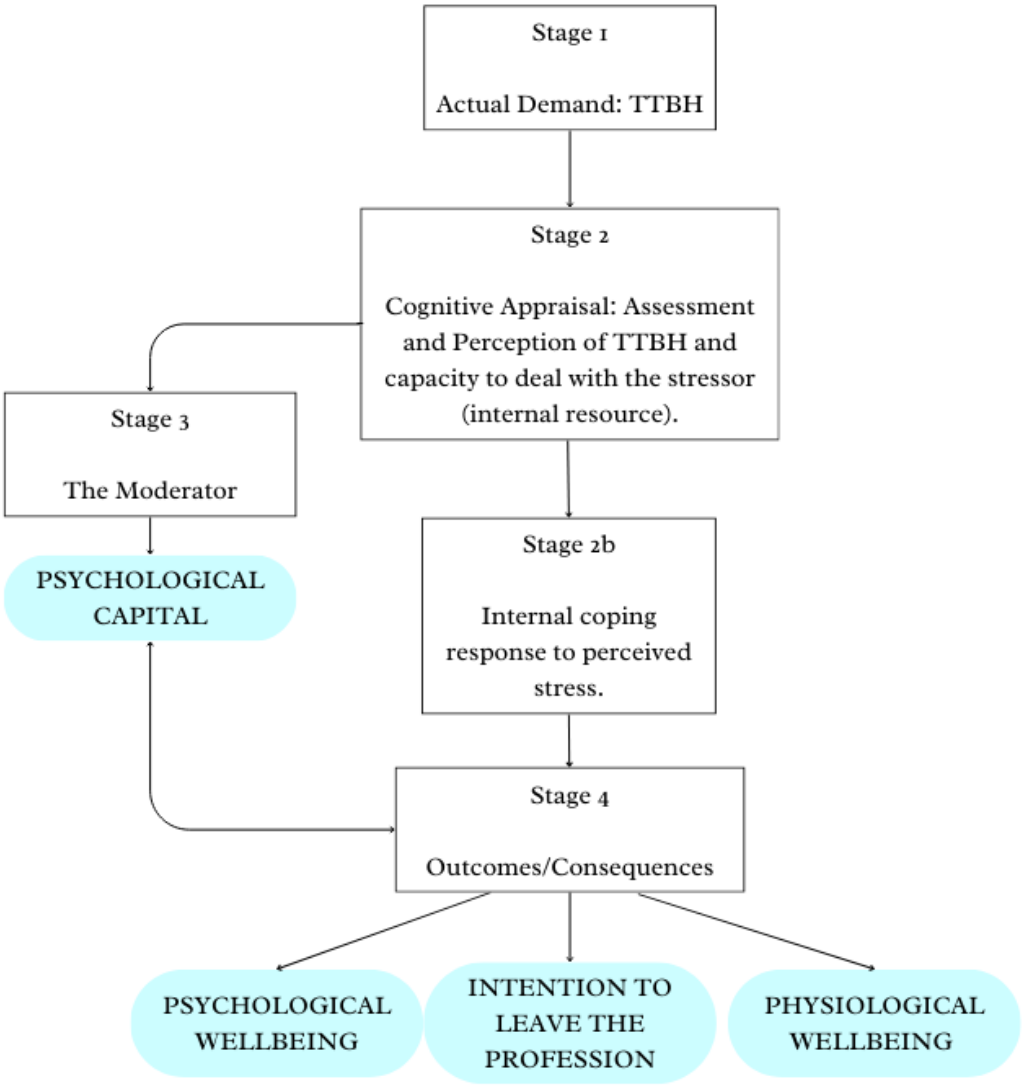


Figure 1: Transactional Model of Stress within the context of TTBH

(Adapted from Middleton, 2018).

Given the points discussed above, the Transactional Model of Stress and Coping is an ideal model for this study, as it provides a thorough framework for understanding how teachers perceive and respond to TTBH. By examining cognitive appraisal processes and coping mechanisms, this model explains the intricate dynamics between stressors, coping

resources, and outcomes. In the context of this study and through the lens of this model, it is assumed that PsyCap will alleviate the impact of perceived TTBH on teachers, preserve their individual physiological and psychological wellbeing, as well as decrease the likelihood of their intention of leaving the profession in response to TTBH.

2.6 Conclusion

Based on the literature review, it is evident that workplace bullying, particularly TTBH, has significant detrimental effects on teachers' physiological and psychological wellbeing, as well as on the overall quality of education. The literature underscores that TTBH is a pervasive issue within the educational sector, particularly in contexts such as South Africa, where systemic challenges exacerbate the problem.

TTBH manifests in various forms, including verbal, non-verbal, and physical aggression from both students and parents, contributing to a hostile work environment that undermines teachers' professional efficacy and personal wellbeing. The consequences of such bullying are severe, leading to burnout, diminished job satisfaction, and increased turnover intentions among teachers. Furthermore, the ripple effects of TTBH extend beyond individual teachers, impacting the broader school environment and ultimately hindering students' educational outcomes.

PsyCap emerges as a promising coping mechanism for mitigating the negative impacts of TTBH. Comprising hope, optimism, self-efficacy, and resilience, PsyCap equips teachers with the internal resources necessary to navigate the stressors associated with TTBH. High levels of PsyCap are associated with better psychological resilience, improved wellbeing, and a lower intention to leave the profession, highlighting its potential as a buffer against the adverse effects of bullying.

In the context of South African education, the integration of PsyCap into teacher support systems and interventions could play a crucial role in enhancing teacher retention and maintaining the quality of education. Given the rising incidence of TTBH, further research is essential to explore the effectiveness of PsyCap as a coping strategy and to develop targeted interventions that address the unique challenges faced by teachers in this context.

Consequently, this study aims to investigate whether TTBH adversely affects wellbeing and turnover intention and whether high levels of PsyCap can mitigate these impacts. This investigation will be framed within the Transactional Model of Stress and Coping, positioning PsyCap as both a coping response and a moderating factor in the relationship between TTBH and its outcomes. This study's findings aim to contribute to this growing body of knowledge, offering insights that could inform policies and practices designed to safeguard teachers' wellbeing and professional sustainability.

In conclusion, based on the above literature review, rationale and aims discussed in the previous chapter, this study has formulated the following research questions:

2.7 Research Questions

- Does parent-enacted TTBH have a direct impact on physiological wellbeing?
- Does parent-enacted TTBH have a direct impact on psychological wellbeing?
- Does parent-enacted TTBH have a direct impact on teachers' intention to leave the profession?

- Does PsyCap moderate the relationship between parent-enacted TTBH and teachers' physiological wellbeing?
- Does PsyCap moderate the relationship between parent-enacted TTBH and teachers' psychological wellbeing?
- Does PsyCap moderate the relationship between parent-enacted TTBH and teachers' intention to leave the profession?

2.8 Hypothesis

Direct Impact Hypotheses:

1. **H1:** Parent-enacted TTBH has a significant negative impact on teachers' physiological wellbeing.
2. **H2:** Parent-enacted TTBH has a significant negative impact on teachers' psychological wellbeing.
3. **H3:** Parent-enacted TTBH significantly increases teachers' intention to leave the profession.

Moderation Hypotheses (PsyCap):

4. **H4:** PsyCap moderates the relationship between parent-enacted TTBH and teachers' physiological wellbeing, such that higher PsyCap weakens the negative impact.
5. **H5:** PsyCap moderates the relationship between parent-enacted TTBH and teachers' psychological wellbeing, such that higher PsyCap weakens the negative impact.
6. **H6:** PsyCap moderates the relationship between parent-enacted TTBH and teachers' intention to leave the profession, such that higher PsyCap reduces the likelihood of intention to leave.

Chapter 3: Methodology

3.1 Introduction

The following chapter describes the current study's research design, sample and sampling technique, procedure, measuring instruments, data analysis, and ethical considerations. The following methodology has been undertaken to address the established research questions mentioned at the end of Chapter 2.

3.2 Research Design

This research followed a quantitative, non-experimental, cross-sectional, correlational design. There was no use of a control group, experimental group, or random assignment, which indicated that no causality could be established (Kramer et al., 2019; Salkind, 2012). The study used a non-experimental design since the independent variables were not manipulated (Kramer et al., 2019). This method was suitable for identifying and understanding the nature of the interaction or relationships between variables, even though it restricted the capacity to ascertain causal relationships (Tredoux & Smith, 2006).

This study was based on the positivist paradigm, which led to a generalised understanding of the data that was generated (Leedy & Ormrod, 2005; Terre Blanche et al., 2006) of the relationship between TTHB and its negative impacts on physiological and psychological wellbeing with teachers leaving the profession.

3.3 Sampling and Sampling

The sample used for this study arose from primary and secondary school teachers employed in urban, government, and private schools located in Gauteng, South Africa. The sampling strategy used was non-probability, convenience, and volunteer sampling. This sampling technique was appropriate because it yielded a large sample size in a short period at a low cost (Acharya et al., 2013). Convenience sampling was also used to some extent to gain access to the researcher's available schools. The major selection criteria were schools that

were convenient, easily accessible, and widely available (Neuman, 2014). The research team strived to gain access to as wide a range of schools as possible within the Gauteng area. By "wide range," the current research included public and private schools, as well as fee-paying and non-fee-paying institutions. The objective of this sampling strategy was to obtain a diverse set of responses from teachers. Given the variety of school types, it was anticipated that teachers would report varying levels of exposure to TTBH. Some teachers may have experienced lower levels of bullying, while others may have encountered higher levels. This diversity in experiences enabled the researcher to analyse and differentiate the relationship between varying levels of teacher-targeted bullying and the dependent variables under investigation. Furthermore, it allowed the researcher to ascertain the type of school they came from and where the prevalence of TTBH was.

These samples were expected to be typically easy and quick to obtain. It was also considered convenient because teachers from the schools the researcher invited and approached voluntarily participated in the study (Rosnow & Rosenthal, 2012). Additionally, this study undertook a purposive sampling technique as it sought to sample teachers with specific desired characteristics, such as having experienced parent-enacted TTBH (Neuman, 2014).

The proposed sample size was a minimum of 100 to 150 participants, as it was of sufficient power to enable adequate statistical analyses for moderated multiple regressions. The proposed sample size also hopefully included sufficient candidates to represent the South African population. The researcher also employed snowball sampling to enhance the size of the sample obtained. Snowball sampling is a strategy in which a researcher selects initial participants and then requests them to include other participants that meet the study's sampling criteria, such as teachers employed within Gauteng (Neuman, 2014). This technique was employed because the researcher was "interested in an interconnected network of people," (Neuman, 2014, p. 274) i.e., teachers who had experienced an extent of parent-enacted bullying and harassment. Additionally, this technique was used as participating teachers in the study may have known of other teachers who had experienced TTBH, and they could share the survey link with them. The researcher also attempted various methods to gain access to more teachers to attract more participants for the study.

3.3.1 Accessed Schools Sample

The first method utilised was gaining access to schools. The researcher visited various schools where permission had been granted to access and present the study to teachers in the staff room. During these sessions, the researcher provided an overview of the study, including its objectives and ethical considerations, ensuring that teachers understood the voluntary nature of participation, the confidentiality of responses, and the right to withdraw at any time without consequence. Teachers were also informed that the survey was anonymous and that they could return to complete the survey, provided they did not close the online window. In order to increase the study's reach, the researcher invited them to take part and encouraged them to forward the survey link to other Gauteng teachers they knew, their WhatsApp groups, and any other teacher forum groups they might have belonged to. It is important to note that permission from the Gauteng Department (GED) of Education was also sought and granted to gain approved access to Government schools within the Gauteng region (See Appendix M and N).

3.3.2 Social Media

In addition to these direct school visits, the researcher employed various strategies to attract more participants for the study. These methods included the use of social media platforms, online communities, and teacher-specific forums to try to engage teachers from diverse backgrounds and teaching environments in Gauteng.

To facilitate participation, the researcher created a digital flyer (Appendix A) containing essential information about the study, including eligibility criteria, a brief overview, and instructions for participation. The flyer featured a QR code and a direct link to the survey, making it easy for teachers to access the survey using their mobile devices or computers. The flyer also encouraged recipients to share the survey link with other teachers, expanding the study’s reach through word of mouth and professional networks.

The flyer was posted on LinkedIn, where it was regularly reposted to engage the researcher’s professional contacts, particularly teachers. Additionally, the flyer was shared on Facebook and WhatsApp, broadening the study’s visibility. Although the researcher sought permission to post the flyer in Facebook groups specifically dedicated to teachers, access was not granted despite multiple attempts. However, with consent, the flyer was successfully

shared in school WhatsApp groups, enabling direct communication with potential participants.

To further enhance participation, the researcher also sought access to teacher-focused social media groups and forums that are commonly used for professional networking and support. These platforms provided an additional avenue for sharing the flyer and connecting with teachers beyond the researcher's immediate network.

The use of the flyer, featuring the QR code and survey link, along with the encouragement for teachers to share the link with their colleagues or other teacher forums/groups that were members of, was aimed at increasing the study's visibility and promoting greater participation among a broader range of teachers in Gauteng. It is important to note that all social media participants accessed the same link as the school participants above, receiving identical Participant Information Sheets and Surveys as those accessed via school channels (see Appendix H, I, J and K). After downloading the data from all respondents and sources, all IP addresses were deleted to maintain participant anonymity and confidentiality.

3.4 Instruments

The data collection method used for this study was online self-report surveys/questionnaires administered to all voluntary participants.

3.4.1 Self-Developed Biographical Questionnaire

A self-constructed biographical questionnaire was used to measure the participants' demographics. The demographic questionnaire contained questions based on the participant's age, gender, race, home language, marital status, level of education, type of school category employed in, the role currently employed in, area of teaching, years of work experience as a teacher, and tenure in the current school they were working in. The purpose of the demographics was to enable an analysis of whether or not TTBH differed in extent and prevalence depending on demographic factors and the type of school participants worked in. Additionally, the independent, moderator, and dependent variables were measured in this study using five distinct instruments. These scales measured the level of TTBH experienced, the level of psychological capital and the level of wellbeing of each individual participant.

3.4.2 Teacher-targeted Bullying and Harassment

TTBH was measured using an instrument created by Fogelgarn et al. (2019) in their article entitled *Teacher-targeted Bullying and Harassment in Australian Schools: A Challenge to Teacher Professionalism*. The instrument comprises 13 items designed to track the prevalence of bullying and harassment among students and parents over 12 months. It was divided into smaller time intervals, such as "*last fortnight," "last month," "two to five months," "six to eight months,"* and *"nine to twelve months"* (Fogelgarn et al., 2019). For ease of understanding, the rating scales were modified to *"Never", "Daily", "A few times a week", "Weekly", "Every few months"* and *"Monthly"* (Refer to Appendix C). These rating scales ranged from (0) to (5). Scale 0 indicated the lowest frequency of TTBH experienced, and Scale 5 indicated a higher frequency of TTBH experienced.

The questions from the parent-enacted questionnaire included *"Which of the following behaviour(s) from a parent/guardian(s) have you experienced and in what frequency?"* Examples of the response items included *"Hitting or punching," "Harassing through phone calls or text messages,"* and *"Organising others against the teacher."* The original response item *"Yelling"* was modified to *"Shouting/Screaming"* in this study due to it being more understandable to the South African context as 'yelling' is not a word typically used by South Africans. Additionally, the original response item "Disparaging remarks" was also modified to "Insulting remarks" to simplify understanding.

The reliability of these chosen items had not yet been established in a South African sample but was done in the present study and discussed in the Data Analysis further along this chapter, and presented in the Results section as well (Refer to Chapter 4).

3.4.3 Psychological Capital

The Psychological Capital Questionnaire (PCQ-24R) created by Luthans et al. (2007) was used to measure an individual's level of PsyCap. The PCQ-24 is a 24-item questionnaire with items ranging from 1 (*Strongly disagree*) to 6 (*Strongly agree*). The PCQ-24 consists of four subscales: self-efficacy, hope, resilience, and optimism, each with six items. Subscale items were selected and modified from previously published instruments to ensure their relevance to the workplace. The items on the self-efficacy subscale were modified from Parker's (1988) scale, which included Items 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6. Snyder et al. (1996) selected

and altered the State Hope Scale for use in the hope subscale, which included Items 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, and 12. The resilience subscale was based on the Wagnild and Young Resilience Scale (1993), which included Items 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, and 18. The optimism subscale's items containing Items 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, and 24 were taken from Scheier and Carver's (1985) Life Orientation Test. Each subscale's score was calculated by summing the responses to the items within that subscale, and an overall/total PsyCap score was derived by summing all 24 item scores, with higher scores indicating higher levels of psychological capital. Görgens-Ekermans and Herbert (2013) validated the instrument in South Africa and found high overall internal reliability ($\alpha = 0.85$). An online application was submitted to Mind Garden, the organisation holding the rights to the PCQ-24, to obtain permission for its use in research.

3.4.4 Physiological Wellbeing

The Physical Health Questionnaire (PHQ-15), created by Kroenke et al. (2002), was used to assess physiological wellbeing. Item 11, "Pain or problems during sexual intercourse," was removed from the scale to ensure participant comfort and address potential cultural sensitivities within the study population. Participants in the modified PHQ-14 were asked to report any physical symptoms they had encountered during the previous four weeks. The questionnaire covered 14 common somatic symptoms that are relevant to both men and women. Responses were recorded using a Likert-type scale ranging from 0 (not bothered at all) to 2 (bothered a lot). Examples of symptoms included “Chest pain” and “Trouble sleeping.” Symptom severity was categorized based on total scores: 0–4 indicated minimal somatic symptomology, 5 and above suggested low levels, 10 and above signified medium levels and 15 or higher reflected strong symptomology, with adjustments made to account for the removed item. Previous studies have reported acceptable Cronbach’s Alpha values of 0.80, 0.79, and 0.80 for this measure (Kroenke et al., 2002; Interian et al., 2006; van Ravesteijn et al., 2009). A Cronbach's Alpha of 0.78 was obtained in a South African study (Fjeldheim et al., 2014), indicating that the scale had strong internal consistency reliability within the South African context. The removal of item 11 did not significantly affect the reliability of the scale, maintaining its suitability for assessing physiological wellbeing in this study.

3.4.5 Psychological Wellbeing

Zigmond and Snaith (1983) established the Hospital Anxiety and Depression Scale (HADS), which was used to measure psychological wellbeing. The HADS evaluated anxiety and depression in particular, as well as general mental health outcomes. Participants rated themselves on a scale of 0 to 3, with 0 denoting more favourable behaviour and 3 denoting less favourable behaviour, for the 14 questions in the survey. The questionnaire was divided into two subscales: anxiety (HADS-A) and depression (HADS-D), each containing seven items. An example from the HADS-A subscale was, “I get sudden feelings of panic,” while a sample item from the HADS-D subscale was, “I look forward with enjoyment to things”. Research (Michopoulos et al., 2008) has shown that exploratory factor analyses (EFAs) have been conducted to identify which items load onto the Anxiety and Depression subscales of the Hospital Anxiety and Depression Scale (HADS). According to a study conducted by Michopoulos et al. (2008), the Anxiety subscale (HADS-A) included Items 1, 3, 5, 7, 9, 11, and 13, while the Depression subscale (HADS-D) comprised Items 2, 4, 6, 8, 10, 12, and 14.

Each subscale was summed, producing a total score between 0 and 21. A score of 0 to 7 indicated normal functioning, while scores between 8 and 10 suggested borderline abnormal functioning, potentially signifying anxiety or depression. Scores from 11 to 21 reflected impaired functioning, suggesting a likely diagnosis of anxiety or depression. The instrument demonstrated strong internal reliability, with internal consistency values ranging from 0.78 to 0.93 for anxiety and 0.82 to 0.90 for depression (Mykletun et al., 2001). In a study of HIV/AIDS patients receiving antiretroviral medication in South Africa, Wouters et al. (2012) used this measure and found that its two-factor structure had a Cronbach's Alpha coefficient of 0.63. While this value is lower than the standard expectation, it was likely influenced by the translation of the instrument from English to Sesotho. In the present study, the English version of the measure was utilised.

Overall psychological wellbeing in this study was calculated by adding together all of the item scores; greater scores denoted worse psychological wellbeing, which was represented by higher degrees of depression and anxiety. Giusti et al. (2020) demonstrated that the HADS can function effectively as a unidimensional measure, with a reliability score of 0.88, thereby supporting the use of the total score over separate subscales.

3.4.6 Intention to Leave

The Propensity Intention to Leave Scale (Lyons, 1971) was used to measure employees' intentions to leave their jobs. The measure assessed respondents' intention to stay with their organisation. Three questions were asked: (1) how long would respondents like to stay employed at their current job; (2) if given the chance, would they stay at their current job; and (3) if they would return to their current job if they had to leave for a while because of pregnancy or illness. To optimise the response range, the first item was given a 6-point Likert response structure, with responses ranging from (1) "one year" to (6) "more than 10 years." The final two items used a three-point Likert format, with response options ranging from (1) "no" to (2) "not sure" to (3) "yes."

According to Upton (2010), a lower score on this scale indicated an increased inclination to quit, whereas a high or higher score reflected a low intention to leave. In previous studies (Bernstein & Trimm, 2016), this measure yielded a good internal reliability of 0.70 (Davidshofer & Murphy, 2005).

3.5 Procedure

Before data collection, researchers were required to obtain ethical approval from the Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC) at the University of the Witwatersrand. To acquire ethical approval, the researcher wrote a research proposal that described the nature of the study and how it would be conducted, filled out an ethics form, and contacted the Gauteng Department of Education (GDE) to obtain permission to access and invite principals and teachers in Gauteng schools. The researcher also emailed principals from several schools to invite them and request permission to access their specific schools. For the principals to make an informed decision about granting the researcher access to their schools, they were provided with a Participant Information Sheet (PIS) that explained the goal of the study (see Appendix H).

The researcher initially obtained conditional ethics clearance (Appendix L) (Protocol number: MAORG-24-07) from the HREC while awaiting approval of the permission letter submitted to the GDE (Appendix M). Data collection commenced once the GDE granted

permission (Appendix N), and full ethics approval was subsequently provided by the HREC (Appendix O).

Once all the necessary approvals were obtained, teachers were approached directly via email and invited to participate. Principals were asked to provide an email list of all teachers in their schools, and these teachers were then emailed an invitation to participate (See Appendix K) with an encrypted link to the survey included at the end. The online survey included a Participant Information Sheet for Teachers (See Appendix I), a consent form (See Appendix J), and the survey itself, which contained a demographic questionnaire and all the aforementioned measurement instruments. The PIS for Teachers (Appendix I), which was placed prior to the survey itself, provided prospective participants with information about the study's purpose and made it possible for the researcher to conveniently sample them by enquiring about their varying levels of experience with parent-enacted TTBH. Additionally, a consent form (Appendix J) was attached to the second page of the online questionnaire. Before beginning the questionnaire, participants were required to fill in a tick box on the consent form indicating their consent. Informed consent to take part in the study was also obtained by completing and submitting the questionnaire.

Furthermore, the PIS informed teachers that their participation would be kept confidential and anonymous. All potential volunteers were notified that their involvement was entirely voluntary and that there would be no reward or loss from deciding to participate or not. Additionally, prospective participants were informed that they would not be asked for any personal information, that their answers would only be accessible to the researcher and their supervisor, and that the survey results would be presented as a summary of general trends rather than their individual responses. Therefore, ethical considerations were adhered to. Similar information was presented to the principals as well (See Appendix H).

Teachers participated in this study via an online survey link sent by email. The email invitation (Appendix K) included an online encrypted link to the survey, which contained the Teacher PIS (Appendix I), an online consent form (Appendix J), the biographical questionnaire (Appendix B), and all the survey instruments (Appendix C, D, E, F and G). Although the IP addresses collected via the SurveyMonkey platform were displayed in the encrypted link, they were removed to ensure anonymity. The survey took approximately 30 minutes to complete.

As previously mentioned, this study utilised a cross-sectional approach, gathering data all at once through an online self-report survey sent to prospective participants. Participants were given four weeks to complete the questionnaire and were sent a reminder via email during this period if they had not yet filled it out. After four weeks, the survey link was closed, and responses were saved from SurveyMonkey and stored on a password-protected laptop until the data analysis process began.

3.6 Analysis

After data collection had been completed, the collected 169 responses were exported from SurveyMonkey into an Excel spreadsheet, where they were cleaned and verified for completion before being analysed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS), version 29. Of the 169 participants who began the survey, 49 did not complete the TTBH scale or demographic questionnaire. As these participants completed less than 75% of the survey, their responses were excluded, yielding a final dataset of 120 valid responses. The analyses included Descriptive statistics and inferential statistics such as Pearson's Correlation, Regression analysis and Moderated Multiple Regression (MMR), with results detailed in Chapter 4.

3.6.1 Descriptive Statistics

To begin the data analysis process, the mean and standard deviation for each scale were determined using descriptive statistics to provide a summary of the scores that were received. Frequencies for every demographic characteristic were also determined. To ensure that parametric assumptions were being followed, this approach also evaluated the data's normality (Thode, 2002). The data distribution was assessed using histograms, the central limit theorem, and skewness and kurtosis coefficient calculations. Additionally, the internal consistency reliability of the scales were assessed as well by calculating Cronbach's alpha coefficients.

3.6.1.1 Skewness and Kurtosis

To identify any asymmetry in the dataset, skewness was investigated (Field, 2009). This is determined by comparing the mean and mode; minimal skewness is indicated by

values between -1.00 and +1.00 (Field, 2013; Haslam & McGarty, 2003). Kurtosis was analysed to determine if the data distribution is heavy-tailed or light-tailed relative to a normal distribution, with acceptable values ranging from -3.00 to +3.00 (Ho & Yu, 2015). High kurtosis values may suggest the presence of outliers, which can influence both skewness and kurtosis (Field, 2013).

Outliers were identified and addressed using Tukey's (1977) outlier labelling rule. This method establishes boundaries based on the 25th percentile (Q1) and 75th percentile (Q3) of the dataset:

- **Lower Bound**: Q1−1.5×(Q3−Q1)Q1−1.5×(Q3−Q1)
- **Upper Bound**: Q3+1.5×(Q3−Q1)Q3+1.5×(Q3−Q1)

Observed values were compared against these boundaries, and any data points falling outside this range were treated as outliers, in line with Tukey's method (Tukey, 1977).

3.6.1.2 Internal Consistency Reliability

Cronbach's Coefficient Alpha was calculated for each scale to evaluate reliability, assess measurement consistency, and examine the homoscedasticity of the responses. This included the scales for Teacher-Targeted Bullying and Harassment (TTBH), Intention to Leave, Physiological and Psychological Well-being, and Coping (PsyCap). Cronbach's Alpha was employed to evaluate the internal consistency of each scale, confirming that items designed to measure the same construct produced reliable scores (Tang et al., 2014). With this approach, a single reliability estimate is given for every scale under consideration (Gliem & Gliem, 2003). In social science research, Nunnally and Bernstein (1994) propose that the lowest acceptable reliability threshold is an Alpha coefficient of 0.70.

3.6.2 Pearson's Correlations

In this study, correlation coefficients have been calculated based on the statistic known as "covariance," which measures the extent to which variables fluctuate together (Lee Rodgers & Nicewander, 1988). To examine the relationships between the study variables—TTBH, coping (with PsyCap acting as a moderating factor), physiological and psychological wellness, and intention to leave—Pearson's Correlation Coefficient technique was utilised.

For this method, covariance is standardised by dividing by the product of the variables' standard deviations, resulting in a correlation value that ranges between -1.00 and +1.00. The closer the value is to either extreme, the stronger the intensity of the relationship (Ong et al., 2016). The correlations between variables were thus reported in Chapter 4, including all relationships identified in the analysis. For each relationship, the nature of the correlation (positive or negative), its significance, and the corresponding effect size were described.

Table 1

Effect Size Interpretations for Correlations

Correlation Range	Effect Size
0 - .30	Small effect
.30 - .50	Medium effect
> .50	Large effect

Note. Effect size interpretations based on Cohen (1988).

Effect sizes were interpreted using Cohen D's guidelines for correlations as shown in the table above: correlations between 0 and .30 represented a small effect, correlations between .30 and .50 represented a medium effect, and correlations greater than .50 represented a large effect (Cohen, 1988).

Prior to performing a Pearson's correlation analysis, several presumptions need to be fulfilled (Ong et al., 2016):

1. The variables x and y must have a linear relationship.
2. The variables x and y ought to be unrelated to one another.
3. Random, independent sampling is necessary.
4. The variables need to be randomly distributed and continuous.
5. At the very least, both variables ought to be assessed at the interval level.
6. A normal distribution should be exhibited by both variables.
7. The variance should be homogeneous.

While true random sampling is challenging in a study of this nature, the researcher aimed to meet this assumption to the best extent possible by surveying working teachers in South Africa with access to a smart device, computer and the internet, giving them a reasonable opportunity to participate.

The dependent variables (Physiological and Psychological Wellbeing and Intention to Leave) have been considered as interval data, as each item holds a numeric value, a logical ordering relative to other responses, and an equal spacing between observations.

3.6.2.1 Alternative Analysis for Non-Normal Data

However, if the data were to be found as non-normally distributed, non-parametric alternatives to Pearson's correlation would be more appropriate, as they do not rely on the assumption of normality (Okoye & Hosseini, 2024). For such data, the researcher would have had to consider the following correlation analyses:

1. **Spearman's Rank-Order Correlation**: This method assesses the relationship between two variables by ranking the data before calculating the correlation coefficient. It is ideal when the relationship between variables may not be strictly linear, and it is robust against outliers and non-normal data (Puth et al., 2015).
2. **Kendall's Tau**: This is another non-parametric method suitable for smaller datasets or when there are many tied ranks. Kendall's Tau measures the ordinal association between two variables and is less affected by extreme values (Puth et al., 2015).

Both Spearman's and Kendall's correlations yield values between -1 and +1, similar to Pearson's, indicating the direction and strength of the relationship (Field, 2009). These methods are especially useful in studies where variables may be ordinal or non-normally distributed, allowing for a meaningful interpretation without the need for normality (Okoye & Hosseini, 2024).

For the current study on TTBH, coping (PsyCap as a moderator), psychological and physiological wellbeing, and intention to leave, using either Spearman's or Kendall's Tau would help ensure reliable insights into the relationships among these variables, even if the data does not meet normality assumptions.

3.6.3 Moderated Multiple Regression (MMR)

The study utilised moderated multiple regression (MMR) to investigate if coping, as assessed by PsyCap, moderated the relationships between TTBH and three key outcomes: intention to leave, psychological wellbeing, and physiological wellbeing. According to Field

(2009), MMR is helpful in determining whether an additional variable, like coping, affects the direction (positive or negative) and/or strength of the link between two other factors. In this study, the researcher analysed three pairs of outcome variables (Physiological Wellbeing, Psychological Wellbeing, and Intention to Leave) to evaluate whether PsyCap moderated one or more of these relationships. The presence of significance was determined at the 0.05 level across the aforementioned analyses.

Beyond the main effects of each variable alone, MMR's "interaction" term enables the evaluation of two variables' combined impact on variation in the dependent variable (Aguinis & Stone-Romero, 1997). The MMR model comprises an interaction term that reflects the relationship between the predictor and moderator, along with a dependent variable, a predictor variable, and a second predictor hypothesised to moderate the predictor-outcome relationship. Consequently, the model incorporates the moderator, predictor, and their interaction term, which captures the effect of their combined influence. This approach enables a more precise assessment of the independent variable's effect, accounting for potential confounding influences from other variables (Lewis-Beck, 1980). MMR was chosen because it offers insights that simple correlation analyses cannot provide, particularly in understanding the nuanced role of PsyCap in moderating TTBH's impact on teachers (Aguinis & Stone-Romero, 1997).

Field (2009) states that the following assumptions are necessary in order to conduct an MMR:

1. The dependent variable should be an interval or ratio variable.
2. There must be one independent variable.
3. Observations must be independent, meaning residuals should not be correlated.
4. The dependent and independent variables should have a linear relationship for every moderator level.
5. Homoscedasticity (consistent variance) is required.
6. No multicollinearity, as highly correlated independent variables challenge the variance explanation.
7. No significant outliers.
8. Residuals (errors) should follow a normal distribution.

In this study, observations were considered independent, as each participant completed only one survey, providing a single set of responses. Although some respondents might be employed by the same school, this does not mean that their responses are related, meeting the independence assumption. Additionally, for this analysis, the independent variable/predictor, TTBH and PsyCap were centred. This step, taken for both statistical and interpretive clarity, reduces multicollinearity and enhances the interpretability of the results (Kromrey & Foster-Johnson, 1998).

3.7 Ethical Considerations

An application was submitted to the University of the Witwatersrand Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC), which initially provided conditional ethical approval (Appendix L) (Protocol number: MAORG-24-07) pending approval of the research request letter by the GDE (Appendix M). Once the GDE approved the research request letter and issued an approval letter (Appendix N), the researcher submitted it to the HREC, which then granted full ethics clearance (Appendix O) to undertake the study (Haslam & McGarty, 2014).

The study complied with the following ethical guidelines, as stated in the procedure subsection. In terms of recruiting the actual sample: First, the principals of schools were contacted and invited to participate, regarding permission to access each of their schools and their teachers. Once principals agreed to participate, they were asked to provide the researcher with a letter of agreement to conduct research at their school. Secondly, the GDE was given a list of all the schools along with approval letters supplied by the principals, and GDE approval was sought by filling in their research request form (Appendix M). Once GDE approval was granted (Appendix N), principals were informed and asked for the email list of all their teachers. The teachers at the accessed schools were then emailed and invited to participate and were provided with a full PIS for teachers explaining what the study was about (see Appendix G, Appendix I, and Appendix K) (Fleming & Zegwaard, 2018).

The PISs were distributed via email to the principals and teachers invited to participate at the accessed schools. An explanation of the study's objectives, a participant information sheet, and an encrypted link to the questionnaire were all included in this email.

This participant information sheet provided participants with information on the study's goals, the use of the data, and the protection of their confidentiality and anonymity. It was stated that there would be no direct benefits to participating teachers because participation was entirely voluntary. Until they submitted their online questionnaire, teachers were allowed to leave the study at any point. Throughout the study, participants maintained their anonymity because no personal data, including identity or staff number, was collected. As there was no identifying information necessary, confidentiality was also maintained (Cacciattolo, 2015).

Quantitative responses were gathered via the online surveys, which were hosted on the SurveyMonkey platform. The questionnaires were only to be completed once by each participant, and they took about 30 minutes to complete. Before beginning the questionnaire, on the second page of the online questionnaire after the PIS form (Appendix I), participants were required to fill in a tick box indicating their consent (see Appendix J). The questionnaire link was deactivated after three weeks, and the collected responses were securely stored in a password-protected file until data analysis commenced (Connelly, 2014).

Since participants were not asked for names, staff numbers, or identity numbers, the sample was guaranteed to be anonymous. Since the results were presented in terms of general group trends, it was impossible to pinpoint specific replies. Once more, anonymity was guaranteed by deleting any IP addresses gathered via the SurveyMonkey platform. Only group data was reported for this study to protect confidentiality, which was required to guarantee that participants gave open and truthful answers. Answers to the questionnaire remained confidential by being stored in a password-protected file that only the supervisor and researcher could access.

Participants were informed that summaries of the final generalised study may be included in upcoming research publications or conference proceedings. With the consent of the principals and participants, the data was stored in the University's online repository, WIReDSpace, and may be used for secondary analysis and future conference proceedings. Upon completion of the study, participants and principals were given the option to receive an email including a summary of the findings. Should participants have had any questions, the contact information of the researcher, supervisor, and the University’s Ethics Committee (HREC) were provided in the PIS.

3.8 Conclusion

In conclusion, this methodology chapter has outlined the structured approach used to address the study's research questions. A quantitative, cross-sectional, correlational design was selected to explore associations between TTBH, teachers' physiological and psychological wellbeing, coping (PsyCap) and intention to leave the profession. This non-experimental approach aligns with the study's exploratory aims and the positivist paradigm.

The sampling strategy combined convenience, purposive, and snowball techniques, facilitating access to a diverse sample of primary and secondary school teachers in Gauteng, South Africa. Efforts to reach participants through both in-person visits and digital outreach were made to attempt to gain a broad representation of teachers' experiences with TTBH.

This study utilised validated instruments, including the Psychological Capital Questionnaire, the Physical Health Questionnaire, and the Hospital Anxiety and Depression Scale, ensuring a comprehensive measurement of participant experiences and wellbeing. The TTBH scale was validated within this study, with results presented in the following chapter. Ethical considerations, including confidentiality and informed consent, were followed, reflecting the study's adherence to the University's ethical standards.

The data analysis plan, encompassing descriptive statistics, correlation, linear regressions, and moderated multiple regression, provides a systematic approach for examining the study's hypotheses. With these methods, the foundation is set for interpreting results in the next chapter, contributing insights into the impact of TTBH on South African teachers' physiological and psychological wellbeing, the role of coping (PsyCap) and their intention to leave the profession.

Chapter 4: Results

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents an analysis of the findings from the study's data collection. It begins with an outline of descriptive statistics and frequency distributions for the sample as well as the research variables. This is followed by inferential statistical analyses, including correlation analysis, regression analysis, and multiple moderate regression (MMR).

4.2 Descriptive Statistics

Frequencies and percentages were computed to provide an overview of the demographic variables and the sample composition. These variables included age, gender, race, language, marital status, school type, teaching area, and tenure. The results are displayed in Table 2 below. Additionally, descriptive statistics, including means, standard deviations, skewness and kurtosis, were calculated to assess the levels of Teacher-targeted Bullying and Harassment (TTBH), Psychological Capital (PsyCap), Physiological Wellbeing, Psychological Wellbeing, and Intention to Leave within this sample. The results are displayed in Table 3 below.

4.2.1 Participants

The majority of participants were female (n = 100, 83.3%), with a substantial portion of the sample aged between 41–50 years (n = 31, 25.8%), followed by those aged 21–30 years (n = 29, 24.2%) and 31–40 years (n = 28, 23.3%), as shown in Table 2. Most participants (n = 82, 68.3%) identified as White, with other racial identities including Coloured (n = 17, 14.2%), Black (n = 13, 10.8%), and Indian (n = 7, 5.8%). The primary language spoken by participants was English (n = 92, 76.7%).

Regarding marital status, most participants were married (n = 71, 59.2%), while a notable proportion was single (n = 38, 31.7%). Participants were largely employed in primary schools (n = 64, 53.3%), followed by secondary schools (n = 43, 35.8%), and mainly in private school settings (n = 88, 73.3%). The most common occupational role was teacher (n =

91, 75.8%), with smaller proportions in head of department (n = 16, 13.3%), deputy principal (n = 5, 4.2%), and principal (n = 3, 2.5%) roles.

In terms of teaching areas, the largest proportion taught English (n = 34, 28.3%), followed by Mathematics (n = 17, 14.2%), with other subjects such as Afrikaans (n = 10, 8.3%), Life Orientation (n = 5, 4.2%), and Art (n = 5, 4.2%) represented at lower frequencies. Most participants had been registered in the profession for over 20 years (n = 39, 32.5%) or between 1–4 years (n = 29, 24.2%). Tenure at their current school was primarily between 1–4 years (n = 42, 35.0%) or 5–9 years (n = 37, 30.8%).

Table 2

Frequencies and Percentages for Sample (n = 120)

Demographic variable	Frequency	Percentage
Age		
18-20 years old	4	3.3%
21-30 years old	29	24.2%
31-40 years old	28	23.3%
41-50 years old	31	25.8%
51-60 years old	20	16.7%
60+ years old	8	6.7%
Gender		
Male	20	16.7%
Female	100	83.3%
Other	0	0%
Race		
Black	13	10.8%
White	82	68.3%
Coloured	17	14.2%
Indian	7	5.8%
Asian	0	0%
Other	1	0.8%
Home Language		
English	92	76.7%
Afrikaans	16	13.3%
isiZulu	9	7.5%
isiXhosa	0	0%
isiNdebele	0	0%
Sesotho	0	0%
Sepedi	0	0%
Setswana	1	0.8%
siSwati	0	0%
Tshivenda	0	0%
Xitsonga	2	1.7%
Other	0	0%

Marital status		
Single	38	31.7%
Married	71	59.2%
Divorced	11	9.2%
Level of Education Employed in		
Primary School	64	53.3%
Secondary School	43	35.8%
Other	13	10.8%
School Category Employed in	100	20.6
Public/Government school	29	24.2%
Private school	88	73.3%
Fee-paying school	2	1.7%
Non-fee-paying school	1	0.8%
Other	0	0%
Role Currently Employed in		
Teacher	91	75.8%
Head of Department	16	13.3%
Deputy Principal	5	4.2%
Principal	3	2.5%
Other	5	4.2%
Area of Teaching		
English	34	28.3%
Afrikaans	10	8.3%
Mathematics	17	14.2%
Life Orientation	5	4.2%
Art	5	4.2%
Science	6	5.0%
Sport and Health	4	3.3%
Hospitality	0	0%
Other	39	32.5%
Tenure of Registration		
1-4 years	29	24.2%
5-9 years	23	19.2%
10-14 years	17	14.2%
15-19 years	12	10.0%
20+ years	39	32.5%
Tenure in Current School		
1-4 years	42	35.0%
5-9 years	37	30.8%
10-14 years	13	10.8%
15-19 years	13	10.8%
20+ years	15	12.5%

4.2.2 Instruments

4.2.2.1 Means and Standard Deviations

The descriptive statistics for each instrument, including means, standard deviations, skewness, and kurtosis, are presented in Table 3. The TTBH scale showed a mean score of 9.64 (SD = 8.68), suggesting a moderate level of bullying and harassment experienced by teachers in this sample. Given that the scale ranges from 0 (never) to 5 (frequent experiences), this mean reflects occasional instances of bullying and harassment, with a positive skew (0.87) indicating that most participants reported lower levels of TTBH.

Table 3

Means, Standard deviations and Skewness and Kurtosis

Variable	N	Min.	Max.	Mean	Std. Deviation	Skewness	Kurtosis
TTBH	120	0	41	9.64	8.68	0.87	0.52
Psychological Capital	120	72	133	106.36	12.75	-0.65	0.36
Physiological Wellbeing	120	0	28	10.03	6.58	0.49	-0.19
Psychological Wellbeing	120	0	40	14.21	8.28	0.36	-0.27
Intention to Leave	120	3	12	8.33	2.92	-0.42	-1.05

PsyCap had a mean score of 106.36 (106.36/24= 4.43 average score) (SD = 12.75), reflecting generally high levels of psychological resources, such as resilience, self-efficacy, hope, and optimism, among participants. The negative skewness (-0.65) suggests that participants scored toward the higher end of the scale, consistent with strong psychological capital in the sample.

The Physiological Wellbeing measure yielded a mean score of 10.03 (SD = 6.58), indicating moderate somatic symptoms among participants, with scores of 5 and above signalling low to medium symptomology. The skewness (0.49) reflects a tendency for participants to report minimal somatic symptoms, with some reporting higher levels.

For Psychological Wellbeing, the mean score of 14.21 (SD = 8.28) suggests borderline to moderate psychological distress, as scores above 10 indicate possible cases of

anxiety or depression. The slight positive skew (0.36) implies that, while some participants experienced moderate distress, others scored lower, indicating normal distribution.

Finally, the Intention to Leave measure showed a mean score of 8.33 (SD = 2.92), which reflects a low to moderate inclination to leave among participants, as higher scores indicate a stronger intent to stay. The negative skew (-0.42) indicates that most participants reported a low intention to leave, suggesting a general commitment to their current roles.

4.2.2.2 Skewness and Kurtosis

The skewness and kurtosis values for each variable fell within acceptable ranges for parametric analysis (Ho & Yu, 2015), as shown in Table 3. TTBH showed skewness of 0.87 and kurtosis of 0.52. PsyCap had a skewness of -0.65 and a kurtosis of 0.36. Physiological Wellbeing displayed a skewness of 0.49 and a kurtosis of -0.19, while Psychological Wellbeing showed a skewness of 0.36 and a kurtosis of -0.27. Intention to Leave had skewness of -0.42 and kurtosis of -1.05. All skewness values were between -1 and 1, and kurtosis values were between -3 and 3, supporting the data's suitability for parametric testing as it was found to be of normal distribution (Field, 2013; Haslam & McGarty, 2003). Histograms in Appendix Q further illustrate the normality of the distributions, supporting the appropriateness of the data for further statistical analysis.

4.2.2.3 Central Limit Theorem

In this study, the Central Limit Theorem's assumption was also met. According to this theorem, sample sizes greater than 30 can be assumed to approximate a normal distribution (Field, 2013). With a sample size of n = 120, this condition was met, ensuring that the data distribution aligned appropriately with the significance testing requirements (Field, 2009). The shape of the histograms (Appendix Q) aligned with this assumption.

4.2.2.4 Internal Reliability

Table 4, presented below, displays Cronbach's Alpha coefficients, which measured the internal consistency reliability of the scales used in the study. The TTBH scale demonstrated excellent reliability (α=0.91). Similarly, the overall PsyCap scale exhibited strong reliability (α=0.86). The scales for Physiological Wellbeing (α=0.89) and Psychological Wellbeing (α=0.91), including subscales for Anxiety (α=0.87) and Depression

(α=0.81), also demonstrated excellent internal consistency. The Intention to Leave scale (α=0.72) reflected acceptable reliability.

Table 4

Cronbach's Alpha Coefficients for all Scales

Variable	Items	Cronbach's Alpha
TTBH	13	0.91
Psychological Capital	24	0.86
Physiological Wellbeing	14	0.89
Psychological Wellbeing	14	0.91
Anxiety	7	0.87
Depression	7	0.81
Intention to Leave	3	0.72

Overall, the scales demonstrated acceptable internal consistency, with Cronbach's alpha coefficients exceeding the threshold of 0.70, as recommended by Nunnally and Bernstein (1994).

4.3 Inferential Statistics

Inferential statistical analyses were conducted to explore the relationships between the variables in this study. The analyses included correlation analysis, which examined the strength and direction of relationships between the study variables, followed by regression analyses to assess the predictive relationships between TTBH and the dependent variables: Physiological Wellbeing (PHQ), Psychological Wellbeing (HAD), Intention to Leave (PLS), and PsyCap (PCQ). The findings are reported with corresponding tables to provide a comprehensive understanding of the results.

4.3.1 Correlation Analysis

The correlation analysis between TTBH, PsyCap, Physiological Wellbeing, Psychological Wellbeing, and Intention to Leave is presented in Table 5 below. The results revealed several significant relationships between TTBH, PsyCap, Physiological Wellbeing, Psychological Wellbeing, and Intention to Leave. The strength of these relationships was

interpreted using Cohen's D effect size guidelines (1988), where correlations between 0 and .30 indicate a small effect, correlations between .30 and .50 indicate a medium effect, and correlations greater than .50 indicate a large effect.

Table 5

Pearson's Correlations for TTBH, PCQ, PHQ, HAD and PLS

Variable	TTBH	PCQ	PHQ	HAD	PLS
1.TTBH	—	-0.23*	0.33**	0.34**	-0.38**
2. PCQ	-0.23*	—	-0.29**	-0.39**	0.33**
3. PHQ	0.33**	-0.29**	—	0.71**	-0.38**
4. HAD	0.34**	-0.39**	0.71**	—	-0.41**
5. PLS	-0.37**	0.33**	-0.38**	-.041**	—

Note. TTBH = Teacher-Targeted Bullying and Harassment, PCQ = Psychological Capital, PHQ = Physiological Wellbeing, HAD = Psychological Wellbeing, PLS = Intention to Leave.

*Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

**Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

A significant negative relationship was found between TTBH and PsyCap (r=−0.23, p=.012), indicating a small effect size. This suggests that as the frequency of bullying and harassment experienced by teachers increased, their levels of PsyCap, a measure of hope, resilience, self-efficacy, and optimism, decreased.

TTBH and Physiological Wellbeing were positively correlated (r=0.33, p<.001), reflecting a medium effect size. This suggests that higher frequencies of TTBH were associated with greater somatic symptomology, such as physical health problems, indicating poorer Physiological Wellbeing.

Similarly, TTBH and Psychological Wellbeing were positively correlated (r=0.34, p<.001), with a medium effect size. Higher frequencies of Bullying and Harassment were associated with greater symptoms of anxiety and depression, reflecting poorer Psychological Wellbeing.

A significant negative relationship was observed between TTBH and Intention to Leave (r=−0.37, p<.001), with a medium effect size. Higher frequencies of Bullying and Harassment were linked to a stronger intention to leave the organisation, as indicated by lower scores on the Intention to Leave scale.

PsyCap and Physiological Wellbeing showed a significant negative relationship (r=−0.29, p=.001), with a small effect size. Teachers with higher levels of PsyCap reported fewer somatic symptoms, indicating better Physiological Wellbeing.

A significant negative correlation was also found between PsyCap and Psychological Wellbeing (r=−0.39, p<.001), with a medium effect size. Teachers with higher PsyCap exhibited lower levels of anxiety and depression, reflecting better Psychological Wellbeing.

PsyCap and Intention to Leave were positively correlated (r=0.33, p<.001), with a medium effect size. Teachers with higher PsyCap were more likely to report a stronger intention to remain in their profession.

Physiological Wellbeing and Psychological Wellbeing demonstrated a strong positive correlation (r=0.71, p<.001), with a large effect size. Teachers experiencing more somatic symptoms also reported higher levels of anxiety and depression, indicating a strong relationship between Physiological and Psychological Wellbeing.

Physiological Wellbeing and Intention to Leave were negatively correlated (r=−0.38, p<.001), with a medium effect size. Teachers experiencing more somatic symptoms were more likely to express an Intention to Leave their profession.

Finally, a significant negative relationship was found between Psychological Wellbeing and Intention to Leave (r=−0.41, p<.001), with a medium effect size. Teachers with poorer Psychological Wellbeing, including greater symptoms of anxiety and depression, were more likely to intend to leave their profession.

4.3.2 Regression Analysis

Simple linear regressions were conducted to examine the main effects between the specified variables in the study. Specifically, the aim was to predict the values of Physiological Wellbeing (PHQ), Psychological Wellbeing (HAD), and Intention to Leave (PLS) based on the levels of TTBH.

4.3.2.1 TTBH and PHQ

The relationship between TTBH and Physiological Wellbeing (PHQ) was examined using a regression analysis. TTBH was entered into the regression equation as the independent variable, and PHQ was the dependent variable.

Table 6

Regression between TTBH and PHQ

	Unstandardised Coefficients		**Standardised Coefficient**	**t**	**Sig**
	B	**St. Error**	**Beta**		
(Constant)	7.620	.853	-	8.932	<.001
TTBH	.249	.066	.329	3.786	<.001
$F(1, 118) = 14.337, p < .001$					
$R^2 = .108$					

Note. Constant = Physiological Wellbeing (PHQ)

As shown in the regression table, the overall model was statistically significant ($F [1,118] = 14.337, p < .001$), with an R square value of .108, suggesting that TTBH explains 10.8 percent of the variance in Physiological Wellbeing.

TTBH was a significant predictor ($B = .249, p < .001$) of Physiological Wellbeing, suggesting that a unit change in TTBH will increase Physiological Wellbeing by .249 units. As higher scores on Physiological Wellbeing indicate worsened Physiological Wellbeing, this increase is in the expected direction. Since higher scores on Physiological Wellbeing reflect worsened Physiological Wellbeing, this relationship aligns with the expected direction.

4.3.2.2 TTBH and HAD

The relationship between TTBH and Psychological Wellbeing (HAD) was examined using a regression analysis. TTBH was entered into the regression equation as the independent variable, and HAD was the dependent variable.

Table 7

Regression between TTBH and HAD

	Unstandardised Coefficients		**Standardised Coefficient**	**t**	**Sig**
	B	**St. Error**	**Beta**		
(Constant)	11.056	1.069	-	10.342	<.001
TTBH	.327	.083	.343	3.961	<.001
F(1, 118) = 15.686, **p** < .001					
R² = .117					

Note. Constant = Psychological Wellbeing (HAD)

As shown in the regression table above, the overall model was statistically significant (F[1,118] = 15.686, p < .001), with an R square value of .117, suggesting that 11.7% of the variance in HAD is explained by TTBH.

Further examination of the coefficients indicated that TTBH was a significant predictor (B = .327, p < .001) of HAD, suggesting that a unit increase in TTBH is associated with a .327-unit increase in levels of Psychological Wellbeing. Since higher scores on Psychological Wellbeing reflect worsened psychological health, this relationship aligns with the expected direction.

4.3.2.3 TTBH and PLS

The relationship between TTBH and Intention to Leave (PLS) was examined using a regression analysis. TTBH was entered into the regression equation as the independent variable, and Intention to Leave was the dependent variable.

As shown in the regression table below, the overall model was statistically significant (F[1,118] = 19.087, p < .001), with an R square value of .139, suggesting that 13.9% of the variance in Intention to Leave is explained by TTBH.

Table 8

Regression between TTBH and Intention to Leave (PLS)

	Unstandardised Coefficients		Standardised Coefficient	t	Sig
	B	**St. Error**	**Beta**		
(Constant)	9.534	.372	-	25.653	<.001
TTBH	-.125	.029	-.373	-4.369	<.001

F(1, 118) = 19.087, **p** < .001

R² = .139

Note. Constant = Intention to Leave (PLS)

Further examination of the coefficients indicated that TTBH was a significant negative predictor (B = -0.125, p < .001) of Intention to Leave, suggesting that a unit increase in TTBH is associated with a decrease of 0.125 units in Intention to Leave. As lower scores on Intention to Leave indicate a higher intention to leave one's job, this inverse relationship was expected.

4.3.2.4 TTBH and PCQ

The relationship between TTBH and PsyCap (PCQ) was examined using a regression analysis. TTBH was entered into the regression equation as the independent variable, and PCQ was the dependent variable.

Table 9

Regression between TTBH and PCQ

	Unstandardised Coefficients		Standardised Coefficient	t	Sig
	B	**St. Error**	**Beta**		
(Constant)	109.590	1.705	-	64.267	<.001
TTBH	-0.335	0.132	-0.228	-2.545	0.012

F(1, 118) = 6.478, **p** = 0.012

R² = 0.052

Note. Constant = Psychological Capital (PCQ)

As shown in the regression table, the overall model was statistically significant (F[1,118] = 6.478, p = .012), with an R-squared value of .052, suggesting that 5.2% of the variance in PsyCap is explained by TTBH.

TTBH was a significant negative predictor (B = -0.335, p = .012) of PsyCap, suggesting that a unit increase in TTBH is associated with a decrease of 0.335 units in PsyCap. Since higher scores on PsyCap reflect greater levels of PsyCap, this inverse relationship suggests that higher levels of TTBH are linked to diminished PsyCap, aligning with expectations.

In the following section, the main effects between the variables in the study were evaluated using simple linear regressions. Specifically, these analyses aimed to predict the values of Physiological Wellbeing (PHQ), Psychological Wellbeing (HAD), and Intention to Leave (PLS) based on levels of PsyCap (PCQ).

4.3.2.5 PCQ and PHQ

The relationship between PsyCap (PCQ) and Physiological Wellbeing (PHQ) was examined using a regression analysis. PCQ was entered into the regression equation as the independent variable, and PHQ was the dependent variable.

Table 10

Regression between Psychological Capital (PCQ) and Physiological Wellbeing (PHQ)

	Unstandardised Coefficients		**Standardised Coefficient**	**t**	**Sig**
	B	**St. Error**	**Beta**		
(Constant)	25.937	4.868	-	5.328	<.001
PCQ	-0.150	0.045	-0.290	-3.292	.001

F(1, 118) = 10.837, **p** = .001

R² = .084

Note. Constant = Physiological Wellbeing (PHQ)

As shown in the regression table above, the overall model was statistically significant (F[1,118] = 10.837, p = .001), with an R square value of .084, suggesting that 8.4% of the variance in Physiological Wellbeing is explained by PsyCap.

PCQ was a significant negative predictor (B = -0.150, p = .001) of Physiological Wellbeing, suggesting that as levels of PCQ increase, levels of Physiological Wellbeing decrease by 0.150 units. Since lower scores on Physiological Wellbeing reflect better physical health, this inverse relationship was expected.

4.3.2.6 PCQ and HAD

The relationship between PsyCap (PCQ) and Psychological Wellbeing (HAD) was examined using a regression analysis. PCQ was entered into the regression equation as the independent variable, and Psychological Wellbeing was the dependent variable.

Table 11

Regression between Psychological capital (PCQ) and Psychological Wellbeing (HAD)

	Unstandardised Coefficients		**Standardised Coefficient**	**t**	**Sig**
	B	**St. Error**	**Beta**		
(Constant)	41.073	5.902	-	6.959	<.001
PCQ	-0.253	0.055	-0.389	-4.584	<.001
F(1, 118) = 21.013, **p** < .001					
R² = .151					

Note. Constant = Psychological Wellbeing (HAD)

As shown in the regression table, the overall model was statistically significant (F[1,118] = 21.013, p < .001), with an R square value of .151, suggesting that 15.1% of the variance in Psychological Wellbeing is explained by PCQ.

PCQ was a significant negative predictor (B = -0.253, p < .001) of Psychological Wellbeing, suggesting that as levels of PCQ increase, levels of Psychological Wellbeing decrease by 0.253 units. Since lower scores on Psychological Wellbeing indicate better Psychological Wellbeing, this inverse relationship was expected.

4.3.2.7 PCQ and PLS

To examine the relationship between PsyCap (PCQ) and Intention to Leave (PLS), a regression analysis was conducted. PsyCap was entered into the regression equation as the independent variable, and Intention to Leave was the dependent variable.

As shown in the regression table below, the overall model was statistically significant ($F[1,118] = 14.253$, $p < .001$), with an R square value of .108, suggesting that 10.8% of the variance in Intention to Leave is explained by PCQ.

Table 12

Regression between Psychological capital (PCQ) and Intention to Leave (PLS)

	Unstandardised Coefficients		**Standardised Coefficient**	**t**	**Sig**
	B	**St. Error**	**Beta**		
(Constant)	0.339	2.130	-	0.159	0.874
PCQ	0.075	0.020	0.328	3.775	<.001
F(1, 118) = 14.253, **p** < .001					
R² = .108					

Note. Constant = Intention to Leave (PLS)

PCQ was a significant positive predictor ($B = 0.075$, $p < .001$) of Intention to Leave, suggesting that a unit increase in PCQ is associated with a 0.075-unit increase in Intention to Leave. Since higher scores on Intention to Leave reflect a greater intention to stay, this positive relationship aligned with expectations.

4.3.3 Multiple Moderation Regression Analysis

Below is an outline of the results from the moderated multiple regression (MMR) analysis. The independent, moderator, and dependent variables of the MMR models are summarised. The analysis explored whether TTBH and 1) Physiological Wellbeing (PHQ), 2) Psychological Wellbeing (HAD), and 3) Intention to Leave (PLS) are moderated by PsyCap (PCQ).

4.3.3.1 TTBH, PCQ and PHQ

A multiple regression analysis (MMR) was conducted to examine the main effects of TTBH and PsyCap (PCQ), as well as their interaction, on Physiological Wellbeing (PHQ). To determine how much of the variance was explained by the predictors with and without the interaction, the analysis began by running the model with the uncentered interaction. If a potentially significant moderation effect was found, then the researcher would have run a regression on the centred terms to examine the effect. However, this was not the case in this study. As a result, running the regression on the centred terms to examine the effect was deemed unnecessary.

For all predictors in this section, tolerance levels were found to be above 0.1 and Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) values were below 10, indicating no multicollinearity issues. Specifically, the tolerance values were above .010, and VIF values ranged significantly below 10, confirming the independence of predictors.

To assess whether PsyCap (PCQ) moderates the relationship between Teacher-targeted Bullying and Harassment (TTBH) and Physiological Wellbeing (PHQ), a moderation analysis was conducted. The analysis involved two steps, which are displayed in the table below: In Model 1, the predictor variables (TTBH and PCQ) were entered into the regression equation to examine their main effects on the dependent variable. In Model 2, the interaction term (Uncentered TTBH × PCQ) was added to test for moderation.

As shown in Table 13, Model 1 was significant, $F(2,117)=10.901, p<.001$, accounting for 15.7% of the variance in Physiological Wellbeing ($R^2 = .157$). This indicates that TTBH and PCQ together significantly explain the variability in Physiological Wellbeing.

Table 13

Summary of Regression Models Assessing Moderation of PCQ on PHQ

Model	Predictors	Sum of Squares (Regression)	df (Regression)	Mean Square (Regression)	F	p-value
1	PCQ, TTBH	808.765	2	403.378	10.901	< .001
2	Uncentred TTBHxPCQ	819.976	3	273.325	7.324	< .001

Note. TTBH = Teacher-Targeted Bullying and Harassment, PCQ = Psychological Capital, PHQ = Physiological Wellbeing. Model 1 includes the main effects of TTBH and PCQ on PHQ. Model 2 includes the interaction term (TTBH × PCQ) to assess the moderating effect of Psychological Capital.

In Model 2, the interaction term (TTBH × PCQ) was added to assess the moderating effect of Psychological Capital. However, as shown in Table 14, the change in R^2 was minimal ($\Delta R2=.002$) and not statistically significant, $F(1,116)=.301$, $p = .585$. This indicates that the interaction term did not significantly improve the model's predictive power.

Table 14

Model summary for Moderation analysis between TTBH, PCQ and PHQ

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change
1	.396	.157	.143	6.090	.157	10.901	2	117	< .001
2	.399	.159	.138	6.108	.002	.301	1	116	.585

Note. TTBH = Teacher-Targeted Bullying and Harassment, PCQ = Psychological Capital, PHQ = Physiological Wellbeing. Model 1 includes the main effects of TTBH and PCQ on PHQ. Model 2 includes the interaction term (TTBH × PCQ) to assess the moderating effect of Psychological Capital.

Additionally, the results showcase that while TTBH and PCQ are independent predictors of HAD, PCQ does not buffer or amplify the effects of TTBH on HAD. Given this, running a further regression analysis on centred terms was deemed unnecessary.

4.3.3.2 TTBH, PCQ and HAD

An MMR analysis was conducted to examine whether PsyCap (PCQ) moderates the relationship between TTBH and Psychological Wellbeing (HAD). There were no tolerance levels under 0.1 or 0.2, and VIF values for the moderator and independent variables were not substantially above 1, indicating no issues with multicollinearity.

The analysis was performed in two steps: In Model 1, the predictors (TTBH and PCQ) were entered to test their main effects on Psychological Wellbeing (HAD). In Model 2, the interaction term (TTBH × PCQ) was added to test for moderation.

Table 15

Summary of Regression Models Assessing Moderation of PCQ on HAD

Model	Predictors	Sum of Squares (Regression)	df (Regression)	Mean Square (Regression)	F	p-value
1	PCQ, TTBH	1789.854	2	894.927	16.417	< .001
2	Uncentred TTBHxPCQ	1842.728	3	614.243	11.265	< .001

Note. TTBH = Teacher-Targeted Bullying and Harassment, PCQ = Psychological Capital, HAD = Psychological Wellbeing. Model 1 includes the main effects of TTBH and PCQ on HAD. Model 2 includes the interaction term (TTBH × PCQ) to assess the moderating effect of Psychological Capital.

As shown in Table 15, Model 1 was significant, R2=.219, F(2,117)=16.417, p<.001, explaining 21.9% of the variance in Psychological Wellbeing (HAD). This indicates that TTBH and PCQ together significantly predicted Psychological Wellbeing.

However, as shown in Table 16, adding the interaction term (TTBH × PCQ) in Model 2 did not result in a significant increase in variance explained (ΔR2=.006, F(1,116)=0.970, p=.327. This shows that the interaction term did not significantly predict Psychological Wellbeing.

Table 16

Model summary for Moderation analysis between TTBH, PCQ and HAD

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change
1	.468	.219	.206	7.383	.219	16.417	2	117	< .001
2	.475	.226	.206	7.384	.006	0.970	1	116	.327

Note. TTBH = Teacher-Targeted Bullying and Harassment, PCQ = Psychological Capital, HAD = Psychological Wellbeing. Model 1 includes the main effects of TTBH and PCQ on HAD. Model 2 includes the interaction term (TTBH × PCQ) to assess the moderating effect of Psychological Capital.

Therefore, as summarised in Tables 15 and 16, the interaction term (TTBH × PCQ) was not statistically significant (p=.327), suggesting that PCQ does not moderate the

relationship between TTBH and HAD. As a result, running the regression on the centred terms to examine the effect was deemed unnecessary.

4.3.3.3 TTBH, PCQ and PLS

Finally, a multiple regression analysis was conducted to determine whether PsyCap (PCQ) moderates the relationship between TTBH and Intention to Leave (PLS). There were no issues identified with multicollinearity, as indicated by a tolerance value of .010, which did not fall below the standard thresholds.

The analysis was performed in two steps: In Model 1, the predictors (TTBH and PCQ) were entered to examine their main effects on Intention to Leave (PLS). In Model 2, the interaction term (TTBH × PCQ) was added to test for moderation.

As shown in Table 17, Model 1 was significant, $R2=.202$, $F(2,117)=14.772$, $p<.001$, explaining 20.2% of the variance in Intention to Leave (PLS). This indicates that TTBH and PCQ together significantly predicted Intention to Leave.

Table 17

Summary of Regression Models Assessing Moderation of PCQ on PLS

Model	Predictors	Sum of Squares (Regression)	df (Regression)	Mean Square (Regression)	F	p-value
1	PCQ, TTBH	204.094	2	102.047	14.772	< .001
2	Uncentred TTBHxPCQ	204.196	3	68.065	9.770	< .001

Note. TTBH = Teacher-Targeted Bullying and Harassment, PCQ = Psychological Capital, PLS = Intention to leave. Model 1 includes the main effects of TTBH and PCQ on PLS. Model 2 includes the interaction term (TTBH × PCQ) to assess the moderating effect of Psychological Capital.

However, as shown in Table 18, adding the interaction term (TTBH × PCQ) in Model 2 did not result in a significant increase in variance explained ($\Delta R2=.000$, $F(1,116)=0.015$, $p=.904$). Accordingly, it may be concluded that the interaction term did not significantly indicate Intention to Leave.

Table 18

Model summary for Moderation analysis between TTBH, PCQ and PLS

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change
1	.449	.202	.188	2.628	.202	14.772	2	117	< .001
2	.449	.202	.181	2.639	.000	0.015	1	116	.904

Note. TTBH = Teacher-Targeted Bullying and Harassment, PCQ = Psychological Capital, PLS = Intention to leave. Model 1 includes the main effects of TTBH and PCQ on PLS. Model 2 includes the interaction term (TTBH × PCQ) to assess the moderating effect of Psychological Capital.

The results, as summarised in Tables 17 and 18, indicate that while TTBH and PCQ independently contribute to the prediction of Intention to Leave, the interaction term (TTBH × PCQ) was not statistically significant (p=.904). It appears from this that PsyCap has no moderating effect on the relationship between TTBH and Intention to Leave. Therefore, running the regression on the centred terms to further examine this effect was deemed unnecessary.

4.4 Conclusion

After the fundamental assumptions for linear regression, moderated multiple regression, and correlation were met, statistical analyses were performed.

The analyses revealed the following:

1. TTBH was significantly related to all dependent variables, with correlations observed in the expected directions. TTBH was positively associated with both Physiological and Psychological Wellbeing (indicating distress) and negatively associated with Intention to Leave.

2. TTBH and PsyCap: TTBH was inversely related to PsyCap, indicating that higher levels of TTBH were associated with lower levels of resilience, hope, optimism and self-efficacy among participants.

3. PsyCap demonstrated a positive main effect on all three dependent variables:
    a. PsyCap was negatively associated with both Physiological and Psychological Wellbeing, suggesting its role in reducing distress.

b. PsyCap was positively associated with Intention to Leave, indicating that individuals with higher PsyCap were more likely to remain in their teaching professions.

4. Interaction Effects: The moderated multiple regression analysis revealed no significant moderation effects of PsyCap in the relationships between TTBH and:
    a. Physiological Wellbeing,
    b. Psychological Wellbeing, and
    c. Intention to Leave.
    d. These results indicate that while PsyCap remains a vital resource for supporting Physiological and Psychological Wellbeing and Intention to Leave, it did not significantly buffer or exacerbate the effects of TTBH on the examined outcomes in this sample. The next chapter will further explore these findings in relation to the existing body of literature.

Chapter 5: Discussion

5.1 Introduction

This study aimed to explore the effects of Teacher-targeted Bullying and Harassment (TTBH) by parents on South African teachers, particularly its impact on their physiological and psychological wellbeing and their intention to leave. It further examined whether psychological capital (PsyCap) serves as a resource that moderates the adverse effects of TTBH on these outcomes. While the findings revealed that TTBH was significantly associated with both physiological and psychological wellbeing and intention to leave, PsyCap did not moderate the relationships between TTBH and wellbeing outcomes or intention to leave. However, PsyCap demonstrated a positive main effect, supporting overall physiological and psychological wellbeing and reducing the intention to leave.

This chapter examines the implications of these findings in greater depth. It discusses the correlations and linear regressions, examines the absence of moderation effects, and contextualises the results in relation to the sample's demographic characteristics. Furthermore, it discusses the study's limitations, provides recommendations for future research on TTBH, and offers practical guidance and interventions for individuals and organisations, including schools and educational institutions, to address and mitigate the detrimental effects of TTBH.

5.2. Significant Findings: Relationships between the Independent and Dependent Variables

The correlation analyses revealed several significant relationships between the independent and dependent variables. TTBH was positively correlated to both physiological and psychological wellbeing, indicating that higher levels of TTBH were associated with poorer physiological and psychological wellbeing. TTBH was also negatively correlated with PsyCap, suggesting that greater exposure to TTBH diminished key psychological resources such as resilience, optimism, hope, and self-efficacy. Additionally, PsyCap was positively correlated with better physiological and psychological wellbeing and a greater intention to stay in the profession.

These relationships align with existing literature highlighting the detrimental impact of TTBH on teacher wellbeing.

These findings reinforce previous research that identifies TTBH as a significant stressor that adversely affects teachers' mental, emotional, and physical health (Langeveldt, 2023; Mavungu & Napier, 2019). Studies have consistently shown that bullying and harassment in the workplace contribute to increased stress, anxiety, burnout, and decreased job satisfaction (Adewusi, 2021; Bernstein & Bachelor, 2022). The positive correlation between TTBH and decreased physiological and psychological wellbeing aligns with Langeveldt's (2023) findings that teachers experiencing frequent bullying and harassment exhibit higher stress levels, increased absenteeism, and a greater likelihood of developing anxiety and depressive symptoms.

The positive relationship between TTBH and diminished physiological and psychological wellbeing also aligns with research highlighting the harmful impact of workplace bullying on teachers. Studies show that TTBH contributes to increased stress, burnout, and emotional exhaustion, significantly impairing teachers' ability to function effectively (Bernotaite & Malinauskiene, 2017; Langeveldt, 2023; Mavungu & Napier, 2019). According to a South African Democratic Teachers' Union (SADTU, 2018) survey, 62% of teachers in the country reported having experienced intimidation, harassment, or bullying at work. Similarly, Adewusi (2021) identified workplace bullying as a prevalent issue affecting educators' mental and physical health. These findings are consistent with international literature demonstrating that exposure to bullying in school environments negatively impacts job satisfaction, morale, and retention rates among teachers (Curran et al., 2017; Solomon, 2021).

Moreover, research conducted by Woudstra et al. (2018) highlights that teachers exposed to high levels of stress and job-related harassment experience severe exhaustion and emotional disengagement, which aligns with this study's findings of decreased physiological and psychological wellbeing due to TTBH. Similarly, SADTU (2018) found that 62% of surveyed teachers reported feeling threatened, harassed, or bullied by parents, which was linked to higher levels of job dissatisfaction and an increased intention to leave the profession.

The negative correlation between TTBH and PsyCap suggests that bullying undermines essential psychological resources. Research indicates that prolonged exposure to workplace harassment erodes resilience and self-efficacy, making it more difficult for teachers to cope with stressors (Bernstein & Bachelor, 2022; Jacobs, 2014). PsyCap has been identified as a critical buffer against the negative consequences of workplace bullying, as individuals with higher levels of PsyCap exhibit greater perseverance and optimism in managing work-related challenges (Woudstra et al., 2018). This aligns with Lazarus and Folkman's (1984) Transactional Model of Stress and Coping, which posits that when individuals perceive a stressor as threatening, their ability to cope depends on their available psychological resources. Teachers with lower PsyCap may struggle to manage the effects of TTBH, leading to severe stress responses and an increased likelihood of leaving the profession (Montgomery et al., 2005).

The negative correlation between TTBH and PsyCap is also well-supported by prior research. PsyCap is a crucial personal resource for coping with work-related stressors, according to Luthans et al. (2007, 2010). However, ongoing exposure to psychosocial stressors, including TTBH, may weaken these psychological resources. More recent studies, such as Vilarino del Castillo & Lopez-Zafra (2022), support this claim, showing that teachers with high PsyCap exhibit lower vulnerability to occupational stress, whereas those with low PsyCap are more prone to burnout and mental exhaustion.

However, the observed slight increase in physiological and psychological distress among the teachers in this sample may also be attributed to general life stressors, reflecting a broader global and national trend of declining mental health. Globally, mental health disorders affect approximately one in two individuals during their lifetime (Kessler et al., 2023). In South Africa, the situation is particularly concerning as recent data indicates that the country has been ranked among the worst globally regarding mental health (EAPA-SA, 2022). Considering that levels of TTBH were only moderate, yet distress levels related to physiological and psychological wellbeing were more elevated, this suggests that external stressors beyond TTBH and workplace dynamics may be contributing to these outcomes. This widespread prevalence suggests that even within a robust sample, elevated levels of physiological and psychological distress are to be expected, as poor mental health has become a pervasive issue both nationally and worldwide.

Furthermore, the positive relationship between PsyCap and improved physiological and psychological wellbeing is supported by research demonstrating that inner psychological resources mitigate stress, anxiety and depression in high-demand professions such as teaching (Rodrigues et al., 2017). PsyCap has been linked to increased resilience, job engagement, and lower levels of emotional exhaustion in teachers (Lu & Chen, 2007; van den Heuvel et al., 2014), as well as job satisfaction and wellbeing in teachers (Jensen, 2020; Hansen et al., 2015). According to Long (1998), an individual's capacity to activate coping resources has a direct impact on their physiological and psychological wellbeing. Given that PsyCap encompasses hope, resilience, self-efficacy, and optimism, teachers with higher PsyCap are more likely to maintain a positive outlook and persist in commitment to their roles despite workplace challenges (Jensen, 2020; Luthans et al., 2007).

The linear regression analyses supported the above correlational relationships, demonstrating that TTBH was a significant predictor of poorer physiological and psychological wellbeing and a stronger intention to leave. This reinforces the central hypothesis that bullying has a direct negative impact on teachers' physiological and psychological wellbeing and intention to leave. PsyCap also emerged as a significant predictor, showing a potential positive effect by improving physiological and psychological wellbeing and reducing the likelihood of intention to leave the profession.

These findings align with previous research highlighting that TTBH has a strong predictive value for teacher wellbeing and retention. Studies by Jacobs & De Wet (2006, 2018) further demonstrated that teachers exposed to consistent bullying or harassment tend to show declining physiological and psychological wellbeing, contributing to a decrease in job and life satisfaction and increased intention to leave their positions and hesitation to apply for promotions. In particular, Blase et al. (2008) found that physiological and psychological distress resulting from bullying was a significant predictor of teacher turnover intentions. These studies consistently show that TTBH is a predictor of adverse outcomes in both physiological and psychological wellbeing as well as intention to leave. Similarly, Karsenti et al. (2015) emphasised that workplace mistreatment, including bullying and harassment, not only diminishes teacher wellbeing but also exacerbates feelings of professional disillusionment, ultimately influencing decisions to leave the profession. These studies consistently show that TTBH is a predictor of adverse outcomes in both physiological and psychological wellbeing as well as intention to leave.

The predictive nature of TTBH for Intention to Leave is also well-supported by previous literature. According to Montgomery et al. (2005), teachers who report bullying experiences tend to experience lower job satisfaction, which directly correlates with higher turnover intentions. In a recent study, Scheeler et al. (2022) examined the pervasiveness of teacher workplace bullying and its detrimental effects, noting how such bullying can diminish teachers' organisational commitment and job attachment—key predictors of increased intentions to leave the profession. Additionally, Keçeci and Kara (2023) explored the factors contributing to teacher attrition, further corroborating that negative workplace environments, including bullying, are central to teachers' decisions to exit the profession.

In addition to TTBH, PsyCap emerged as a significant predictor of physiological and psychological wellbeing and a reduced intention to leave. This is consistent with Luthans et al. (2007), who emphasised that PsyCap serves as a psychological resource that enhances teachers' ability to cope with workplace challenges. In line with Shin et al. (2022), the study suggests that teachers with higher PsyCap scores are more likely to perceive stressors as manageable, mitigating the impact of TTBH on their wellbeing. Furthermore, Mvana (2023) found that PsyCap acted as a predictor of job satisfaction and employee retention in high-stress professions, including teaching. This aligns with the current study, where teachers with higher levels of PsyCap reported better wellbeing and a lower intention to leave. The potential positive effect of PsyCap could thus serve as a crucial factor in reducing turnover rates, suggesting that developing teachers' PsyCap could help retain educators in the face of challenging work environments.

A relevant prior study (Hsing-Ming et al., 2017) has reinforced the predictive power of PsyCap in the context of teacher retention. However, more recent studies, such as Mvana (2024), found that teachers with stronger psychological resources, including PsyCap, are less likely to experience burnout and more likely to experience job satisfaction, and job engagement and thus be more likely to stay in their profession. This finding is supported by Xue et al. (2023), who demonstrated that teachers with high levels of PsyCap experienced significantly lower stress and greater job satisfaction, leading to increased career longevity.

However, the variance explained by these predictors was modest, suggesting that additional factors, such as organisational support and personal coping mechanisms, may also

play significant roles. Nielsen and Einarsen (2018) argue that bullying's effects are multifaceted, often interacting with individual and environmental factors to shape outcomes.

Studies have consistently shown that the impact of bullying extends beyond the individual and is shaped by a combination of personal, organisational, and environmental influences (Byers, 2012; Fox & Stallworth, 2010). For instance, it has been identified that social support—from coworkers and management alike—is an essential defence against the negative effects of bullying (Middleton, 2018; Sigursteinsdottir & Karlsdottir, 2022). The availability of a supportive work environment can reduce the likelihood of bullying escalation and mitigate its harmful effects (Kim & Lee, 2021), thereby enhancing teacher wellbeing and reducing the intention to leave the profession.

Personal coping strategies, in addition to organisational issues, are crucial in determining how bullying affects an individual's wellbeing. Lazarus and Folkman's (1984) Transactional Model highlights that the way an individual appraises and copes with stressors can influence the outcomes of stressful experiences like bullying. As such, personal coping strategies, such as resilience, self-efficacy, and optimism, can mitigate the adverse effects of bullying (Luthans & Youssef, 2004). PsyCap, a resource encompassing these qualities, has been shown to serve as a protective factor in educational settings, reducing the negative appraisals of workplace stressors, including bullying (Luthans et al., 2008). Teachers with higher levels of PsyCap demonstrate greater resilience, which helps them cope with the stress of bullying and maintain a positive outlook, reducing their intention to leave the profession (Bertieaux et al., 2024).

Moreover, organisational culture has a profound impact on the experiences of bullying (Gregg & Burleigh, 2022; Tambur & Vadi, 2012). A positive and inclusive culture promotes open communication, fosters trust, and provides opportunities for conflict resolution, which can reduce the likelihood of bullying incidents (Odor, 2018). In contrast, a toxic organisational culture, where bullying is either tolerated or not adequately addressed, can exacerbate the negative effects on teachers' physiological and psychological wellbeing and their intention to leave the profession (Pheko et al., 2017; Tambur & Vadi, 2012).

5.3 Non-Significant Findings: Moderation Effects

One of the study's key hypotheses—that PsyCap moderates the relationship between TTBH and physiological and psychological wellbeing, as well as intention to leave—was not supported. Although there is literature supporting this moderating effect (Hansen et al., 2015; Hsing-Ming et al., 2017; Luthans et al., 2008), Multiple moderated regression (MMR) analyses revealed no significant interaction effects between TTBH and PsyCap for physiological and psychological wellbeing, or intention to leave within the present study. Thus, although direct effects of PsyCap were observed, no moderation was captured.

The absence of moderation effects can be attributed to several factors, which will be discussed below.

5.3.1 Timing and the Coping Cycle

The timing of data collection likely influenced the findings. This is supported by Bernstein (1992), who emphasises that participants must be carefully assessed while actively participating in a coping process in order to detect a moderating effect. Similarly, Crozet (2019) notes the absence of moderating effects due to the timing of data collection. It is possible that the teachers in this study were not measured at the precise moment when they were using their PsyCap to cope with TTBH. Had data collection occurred after the deployment of PsyCap, participants might have more accurately recalled the extent of TTBH they were experiencing at that specific moment. However, their responses at the point of measurement may primarily reflect the aftereffects of moderation, showing relatively high levels of PsyCap and physiological and psychological wellbeing as the buffering was already completed.

While it could be argued that the accurate recall of levels of TTBH that occurred in the past could be lowered by current feelings of wellbeing, research has indicated that this may not occur. Branch et al. (2013) note that it could be unlikely that participants' recollections of bullying diminish over time, as such experiences can leave lasting psychological scars. They emphasise how detrimental workplace bullying (and thus, TTBH) can be, and how it may take months or even years for victims to recover. Similarly, Hallberg and Strandmark (2006) suggest that victims of workplace bullying often carry long-term emotional imprints. Given this, it is plausible that participants in this study were able to

accurately recall their level of TTBH experiences, as the psychological impact may have remained deeply ingrained, influencing their retrospective perceptions even after they had (successfully) coped with the stressor.

Thus, in this study, participants may have accurately recalled the levels of TTBH they experienced, but by the time of measurement, PsyCap had already been utilised as a coping resource. As a result, participants may have reported higher levels of physiological and psychological wellbeing in the present, reflecting the post-stressor resolution effect of PsyCap rather than its active role in moderating TTBH at the time of exposure. This suggests that the critical moment when PsyCap was mobilised and applied to mitigate the impact of TTBH was not captured, as seen in Figure 2 below.

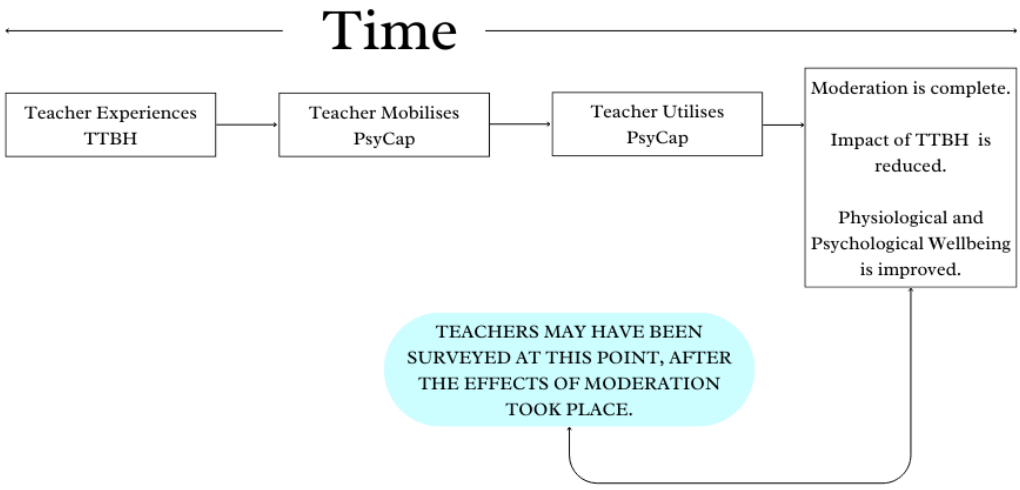


Figure 2: The Timing Effect on the Moderation Process

(Adapted from Bernstein, 1992)

To conclude, since the sample of teachers was not assessed at the exact point of interaction between TTBH and PsyCap, only post-interaction outcomes, such as high PsyCap and improved physiological and psychological wellbeing, were recorded, alongside an accurate retrospective account of TTBH exposure. This timing effect may explain why the study primarily identified the main effects of PsyCap (i.e., higher PsyCap levels being

associated with better physiological and psychological wellbeing) but did not observe significant moderating effects.

An additional and alternative explanation for the absence of moderation effects can be attributed to the fact that many teachers in the sample may have already utilised their PsyCap resources during the initial exposure to TTBH, that is, during the appraisal phases. In this regard, another timing issue that may have occurred was at the timing of the stages of 'appraisal'. As per the Lazarus and Folkman Transactional Model (1984), appraisal takes place after exposure to the stressor. This appraisal may take two forms, primary and secondary appraisal, as the individual is exposed to the stressor. In this study, TTBH appraises and thereby determines the level of threat they feel by being exposed to the TTBH.

Within this study, by the time data was collected, PsyCap might have already influenced the appraisal of threat, potentially lowering the appraisal of threat and thereby, reducing its perceived impact. This aligns with Lazarus and Folkman's (1984) Transactional Model of Stress and Coping, which suggests that coping mechanisms evolve over time as individuals assess and reappraise stressors.

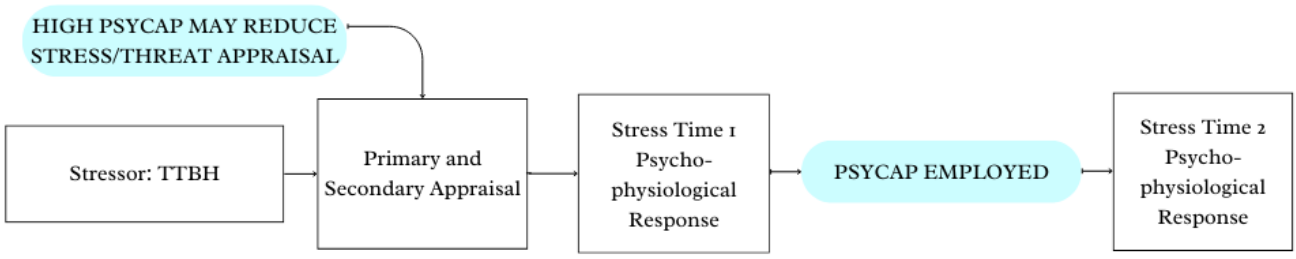


Figure 3: The Revised Appraisal Process

(Adapted from Bernstein, 2013 and Cohen & Wills, 1985).

As illustrated in Figure 3, the teachers in this sample would have initially engaged in a primary appraisal of TTBH, assessing its level of threat or stress. If they possessed high levels of PsyCap at that moment, they likely perceived TTBH as less threatening. While they may have still recognised TTBH as a potential stressor, they might not have experienced it as

significantly detrimental to their wellbeing. However, if threat perception was not substantially reduced at the primary appraisal stage, the secondary appraisal phase, where individuals evaluate their coping resources, could have further mitigated the stress response.

This interpretation aligns with Goh et al.'s (2010) Revised Transactional Model (RTM) of occupational stress and coping, which emphasises the dynamic and interactive nature of stress appraisal (Bernstein, 2013). According to Goh et al. (2010), stress reactions can occur almost instantaneously after an initial perception of threat, without a strict time delay between primary and secondary appraisals. Within this model, an immediate psycho-physiological response (Stress Time 1) occurs upon encountering a stressor, and if the stress is sufficiently distressing, coping behaviours are activated. If these coping mechanisms are effective, they alleviate stress; if not, stress levels may escalate, leading to heightened psychological and physiological distress (Stress Time 2) (Bernstein, 2013).

Applying this to the present study, participants with high PsyCap may have engaged in an adaptive reappraisal process at either the primary or secondary appraisal stage, which is directly at the start of the stress process, thus reducing the perceived threat of TTBH before it required further coping responses. In terms of the diagram displayed in Figure 3, where it is noted: 'PYSCAP EMPLOYED' – this would have been where possible moderating would have taken place if:

i) The perception of the stressor *was not reduced* in the primary/secondary appraisal phase, and

ii) The need to mobilise and utilise one's PsyCap resources to cope was initiated in the later phase illustrated above. (Though, as mentioned above, the study may have failed to capture respondents at this very time and therefore, no moderating was evidenced).

Consequently, their perceptions of TTBH may have been lowered at the primary and secondary appraisal phases, leading to reduced experience of stress. Therefore, there was no need to later mobilise and utilise the PsyCap resource as lowered stress and threat did not require this mobilisation. In essence, the effect of PsyCap may have been at play even before the need to mobilise explicit coping strategies, as individuals had already reframed TTBH as less harmful.

Lastly, the timing of data collection may have influenced the findings due to the primacy and recency effects. The primacy and recency effects refer to cognitive biases in which individuals tend to remember the first (primacy effect) and last (recency effect) items or events in a series more vividly than those occurring in the middle of the event cycle, moving from the initial emotional response to the adjustment phase, where PsyCap plays a critical role in reappraisal (Murdock, 1962; Ebbinghaus, 1885/1913) as shown in Figure 2.

As illustrated in Figure 4 below, these effects are particularly relevant in this study, as participants' recall of TTBH incidents may have been disproportionately influenced by TTBH events that occurred at the beginning or end of the survey's twelve-month time frame. Specifically, if a teacher experienced a highly distressing episode of TTBH early in the year (primacy effect) or shortly before completing the questionnaire (recency effect), these experiences may have been more salient in their memory, thus shaping their responses more strongly than events occurring in the middle of the timeframe.

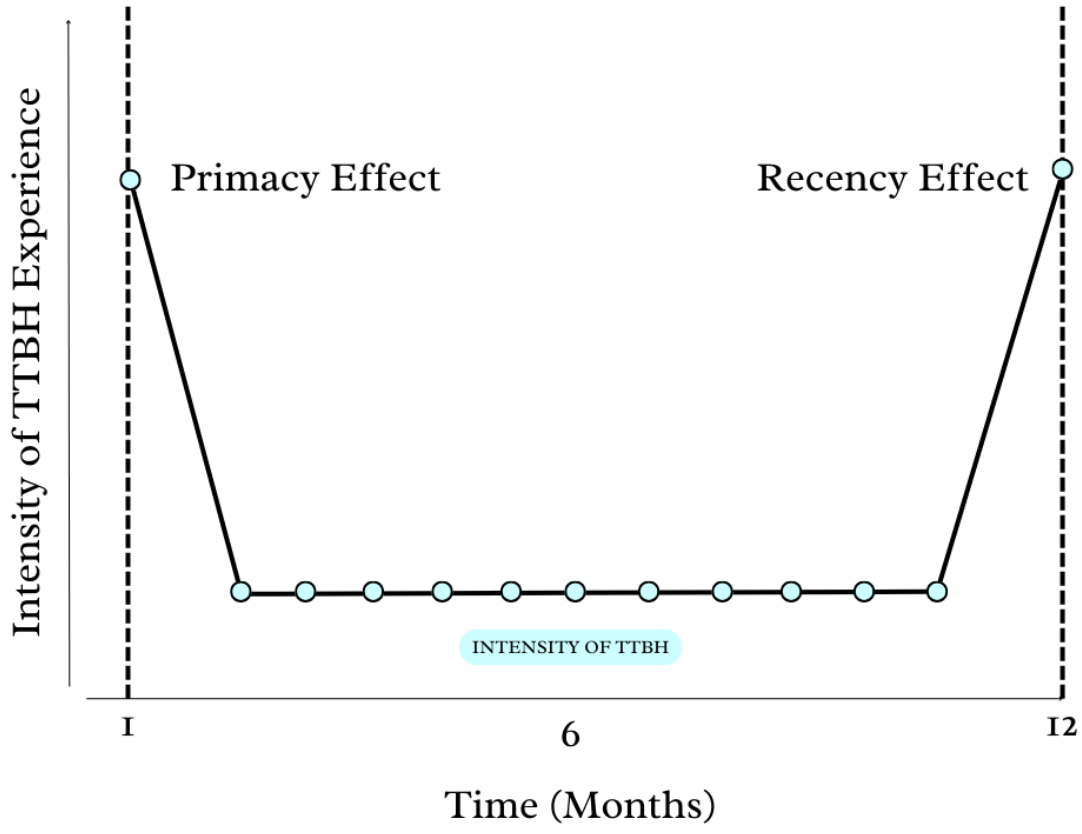


Figure 4: Primacy and Recency Effects on Recall of TTBH

This pattern, illustrated in Figure 4, shows that recall intensity is strongest at the beginning and end of the period, while incidents occurring in between are remembered less clearly. As a result, this cognitive bias may have led to an overemphasis on the most recent or initially distressing instances of TTBH, potentially skewing the data and underestimating the cumulative or intermittent effects of such behaviours over time.

This bias may have also been exacerbated by the study's cross-sectional design, which made it unable to track the entire progression of TTBH and coping over time. Participants may have recalled either their most intense or recent experiences of TTBH, leading to a biased representation of their overall exposure.

Although both the primacy/recency effects and the coping cycle influence recall, they operate in different ways. While the primacy/recency effects shape which experiences are recalled most vividly, the coping cycle affects how these experiences are evaluated at the time of measurement. As illustrated in Figure 2, if data collection occurred after participants had already processed and coped with TTBH through PsyCap, their retrospective perception of TTBH as a lesser threat may have contributed to lower reported scores, creating a potential mismatch between their actual past exposure and their current assessment.

5.3.2 Nature of the Sample

5.3.2.1 Psychometric Characteristics

The psychometric characteristics or profiles of the sample indicated teachers who (overall) exhibited moderate levels of TTBH, high PsyCap, and relatively low intention to leave. These results suggest a generally resilient and committed sample of teachers, with participants showing relatively high levels of psychological resources despite the challenges posed by their profession. High levels of PsyCap signify an individual's capacity to adapt positively to challenges (Egan et al., 2024; Macedo et al., 2014), playing a vital role in managing the effects of TTBH.

With regard to Higher levels of PsyCap:

As mentioned, the sample displayed relatively high levels of PsyCap, which might have influenced the perception of TTBH as less threatening (See discussion of Timing and Coping Cycle and Figure 3 above). The psychological resilience possessed by the sample could have resolved the acute impacts of bullying, leaving only longer-term wellbeing effects, such as moderately poorer physiological and psychological wellbeing.

Also, given that the teachers in this sample might have been surveyed at the end of their coping cycle after they had already drawn on PsyCap to manage the TTBH as their stressor. High levels of PsyCap at the time of measurement could have diminished their retrospective perception or evaluation of TTBH as a severe threat. As Figure 3 demonstrates, this reappraisal process takes place after the initial exposure, reducing perceived severity over time. Thus, TTBH may have been retrospectively perceived more as a past, resolved stressor rather than an ongoing threat, potentially obscuring its full impact. This dynamic (as mentioned), might have obscured evidence of interaction effects and underestimated the moderating role of PsyCap. In other words, if a teacher with high levels of PsyCap had already used it retrospectively to appraise *and cope* with TTBH, they may now perceive their experienced TTBH as less distressing. In this case, the appraisal process has already taken place, and PsyCap has functioned as a coping mechanism to minimise the impact of TTBH on both physiological and psychological wellbeing. Consequently, while participants may still recognise and accurately report TTBH, they no longer experience it as a significant threat.

Furthermore, after a period of reappraisal, a teacher who previously viewed their experience with TTBH as a severe stressor in primary and secondary appraisal may come to perceive it as less impactful. Although they previously rated themselves high on TTBH, their current perception at the time of data collection may be that their experienced TTBH is no longer significantly stressful. Therefore, the lack of a moderating effect in this study may be explained by the fact that they were not actively using PsyCap as a coping resource at the time that they were surveyed.

In summary, multiple timing effects, along with dynamic processes of appraisal and reappraisal, may have influenced whether PsyCap's moderating role was observable.

The lack of moderating effects of PsyCap in this study may also be explained by the Conservation of Resources (COR) theory and the idea of a resource caravan, as explained by Hobfoll (1989).

PsyCap may serve as an internal resource reservoir for teachers, as was previously established in the literature and discussion above (Avey et al., 2009; Hobfoll et al., 2018). For this reason, COR theory provides an additional explanation for why a moderating effect was not detected. Previous research (Aybas and Acar, 2017) has shown that employees with greater internal resources usually exhibit a higher level of mastery, which helps them effectively manage stressful and demanding situations and reduce negative outcomes.

Given that resource loss is more negatively psychologically impactful than resource gain (Hobfoll, 1989), it is possible that the teachers' high levels of PsyCap in the sample counterbalanced their moderate exposure to TTBH. That is, they had sufficient resources in their reservoir to enable them to appraise and possibly reappraise the stressor of TTBH as less stressful. This suggests that the two forces neutralised each other within the cognitive appraisal process, resulting in no significant resource loss or gain. Stated differently, the teachers' strong belief in their capabilities (PsyCap) may have decreased their perceived degree of threat, preventing any serious harm to their physiological and psychological wellbeing, even though they may have correctly perceived their TTBH as moderate.

Since PsyCap encompasses self-efficacy, and TTBH has been linked to diminished self-efficacy (Fogelgarn et al., 2019; Luthans et al., 2007), it follows that high PsyCap could counteract the effects of moderate TTBH. This aligns with Avey et al. (2009) study, which found that higher levels of PsyCap are associated with lower perceived stress and reduced intentions to quit among employees, thus allowing them to withstand workplace stress. As the majority of the sample exhibited high PsyCap, even if TTBH had a moderate adverse effect on physiological and psychological wellbeing, the protective influence of PsyCap remained stronger. Consequently, the lack of a moderating effect may be attributed to PsyCap and TTBH effectively offsetting each other.

Lastly, in relation to higher levels of PsyCap, Avey et al. (2011) highlighted that individuals with high PsyCap often perceive stressors as challenges rather than threats,

engaging in proactive coping strategies. This may have enabled participants to mitigate the effects of TTBH in the early stages of the coping cycle by proactively utilising these strategies at the appraisal stage before the impact of severe threat could take place.

Linked to the above and with regard to moderate levels of TTBH and moderate levels of distress on wellbeing indicators:

It is important to note that even though teachers demonstrated higher levels of PsyCap they still displayed moderate levels of TTBH indicating the persistent and enduring nature of TTBH. In addition, although teachers in the sample exhibited high levels of PsyCap, they also reported moderate levels of Physiological and Psychological distress. This aligns with research indicating that resilience and positive psychological resources do not necessarily equate to immunity from distress but rather facilitate recovery (Bonanno, 2004). For example, Luthans et al. (2007) found that while PsyCap serves as a protective factor, it does not completely prevent individuals from negatively appraising and thus experiencing distress in high-strain environments. Similarly, Tugade and Fredrickson (2004) demonstrated that resilient individuals can still experience significant psychological distress under prolonged exposure to stressors, albeit with potentially greater coping capacity. The lingering effects of TTBH, despite the presence of PsyCap, suggest that workplace stressors can exert a considerable toll that extends beyond the moderating effects of psychological resources alone. This finding aligns with earlier studies (Avey et al., 2009) that have demonstrated that prolonged organisational stressors can cause emotional and physical strain, even in individuals with high PsyCap. As noted by Oducado et al. (2020), even high levels of PsyCap cannot fully mitigate the toll of environmental and organisational stressors, which may explain the continued distress experienced by teachers in this study.

5.3.2.2 Demographic Characteristics and Job Resources/Social Support

The moderate levels of TTBH observed in this sample could also possibly be attributed to several contextual factors related to the demographic characteristics of the participants. The majority of teachers in this study were White, female teachers working in private schools, where the structural and social environment differs significantly from that of public schools (Dronkers et al., 2003). Research suggests that teachers in private schools typically benefit from better working conditions, including smaller class sizes, greater

institutional support, and more parental involvement in children's education (Van der Westhuizen & Maree, 2017). While parental involvement can sometimes translate into heightened expectations and complaints (Moodley, 2024), and thereby TTBH, private school teachers often have access to administrative and peer support structures (Ogari & Orwa, 2021) that can buffer against the severity of bullying experiences (Moodley, 2024).

This is a key possible reason for the moderate levels of TTBH in this sample, that is, the availability of institutional support provided by private schools. Unlike teachers in under-resourced public schools, who may lack effective mechanisms for addressing bullying, private school educators have more access to school leadership, counselling services (Ogari & Orwa, 2021), and formal grievance procedures that can mitigate the impact of bullying behaviours (Masoka, 2024; Moodley, 2024). This structural support can boost morale, allow teachers to feel emotionally supported (Ogari & Orwa, 2021), which could help teachers manage conflicts and navigate parental dissatisfaction before it escalates into persistent bullying or harassment.

Additionally, the quality of education and resources in private schools may reduce the likelihood of extreme parental aggression. Parents who invest in private education generally expect high standards (Gruijters et al., 2021), but their satisfaction with the enhanced learning environment, excellent facilities, and high teaching quality found in private schools may decrease their inclination to engage in hostile behaviour toward teachers. Research indicates that dissatisfaction and perceived inadequacies in education often fuel parental aggression toward teachers (Van der Westhuizen & Maree, 2017), suggesting that teachers in well-resourced schools may be less frequently targeted. However, this does not mean they are entirely exempt from bullying; as parents pay substantial fees, they may feel entitled to express their concerns forcefully, particularly when expectations are not met (Masoka, 2024; Moodley, 2024).

Thus, overall, while TTBH is present in this sample, the moderate levels can be understood in the context of a majority of the sample having access to private school resourcing, institutional support, and possibly higher levels of parental satisfaction, which collectively may serve to mitigate against more severe cases of bullying and harassment from parents.

5.3.2.3 Work Experience

The sample comprised a significant number of experienced teachers, which may have had a notable impact on the study's findings. Professional experience often enables individuals to develop more effective coping mechanisms, which can help them navigate the stressors and challenges inherent in the teaching profession (Nwoko et al., 2024). Teachers with greater experience typically possess a deeper understanding of their roles, enhanced problem-solving skills, and a greater capacity for emotional resilience and self-efficacy (Abun et al., 2021). These attributes help mitigate stress and enhance overall physiological and psychological wellbeing by enabling individuals to manage the inherent pressures of teaching more effectively (Klassen & Chiu, 2010).

In particular, greater professional experience is often linked to enhanced PsyCap and professional commitment, as found by Lee et al. (2017). These resources are essential for teachers to adapt positively to workplace stress (Zewude & Hercz, 2021) and maintain high levels of engagement and performance despite challenges (Nwoko et al., 2024). Teachers with higher PsyCap are better equipped to handle the emotional demands of their profession (Shi & Sin, 2024), even in the face of job-related stress, which can mitigate the negative effects of TTBH (Avey et al., 2010; Zewude & Hercz, 2021).

According to Lee et al. (2017), more experienced teachers are more likely to have mastered stress reduction techniques, work-life balance, and asking for help when needed. These strategies can buffer against the physiological and psychological toll of TTBH. However, while these coping mechanisms and psychological resources may provide a degree of protection, they do not fully eliminate the effects of TTBH. In fact, teachers with more experience may still experience moderate or high levels of TTBH and intention to leave due to the cumulative nature of bullying and harassment from parents over time and also increasing demands from workload and administrative expectations (Nwoko et al., 2024; Rodrigues et al., 2017), and systemic issues within the education system in the country (Bernstein & Batchelor, 2022; Du Plessis & Mestry, 2019; Jacobs, 2024).

Thus, while professional experience may contribute to higher levels of PsyCap and greater resilience against TTBH, it does not render teachers immune to the ongoing stressors

that contribute to TTBH. The intersection of these factors may explain the complex relationship between work experience, PsyCap, and TTBH in the teaching profession.

5.3.2.4 Implications of the Context

The broader socioeconomic and educational context of South Africa should be taken into consideration when interpreting the findings of the study. While systemic challenges such as economic instability, high unemployment, and socio-economic inequalities place significant pressure on public education, these issues predominantly affect government schools, particularly those in lower quintiles (Ncontsa & Shumba, 2013; Wills, 2023). Schools in these contexts often face financial constraints, limiting access to resources such as teaching materials, support services, and professional development opportunities for teachers (Du Plessis & Mestry, 2019; Rodrigues et al., 2017). These factors contribute to teacher burnout, anxiety, and elevated stress levels, which, in turn, negatively impact their physiological and psychological wellbeing (Matsepe et al., 2019; Rodrigues et al., 2017).

However, the schools sampled in this study were mostly private schools, which generally operate outside of the Gauteng Department of Education (GDE) and are less affected by these structural challenges (Molokomme, 2024). While some Model C schools were included in the sample and may experience certain pressures associated with the public education system, private schools typically have greater financial resources, smaller class sizes, and better infrastructure, mitigating many of the stressors faced by government school teachers (Barrett et al., 2019; Dronkers & Robert, 2003; Moodley, 2024, Ogbonnaya & Awuah, 2019).

That said, private school educators are not without challenges. In these contexts, pressures may arise from high parental expectations, demanding school cultures, and the need to maintain academic excellence (Moodley, 2024). Oducado et al. (2020) highlighted that systemic stressors, even in more privileged educational environments, significantly impact teachers' psychological wellbeing. While private schools may not face the same financial hardships as lower-quintile government schools (Molokomme, 2024), teachers in these institutions may experience stress related to performance expectations, increased administrative responsibilities, and the need to deliver high-quality education in a competitive environment, especially by parents (Dronkers & Robert, 2003; Moodley, 2024). Although

these pressures differ from those in under-resourced government schools, they may still contribute to physiological and psychological strain and occupational stress.

The limited variance explained by constructs such as TTBH and PsyCap in the regression models could suggest that the unique stressors within private schools—rather than the broader systemic hardships of public education—played a more significant role in shaping teachers' wellbeing. Thus, any conclusions drawn from the study must be mindful of the significant role that these factors play in shaping teachers' physiological and psychological outcomes.

5.3.2.5 Sample Size and Statistical Power

Finally, one needs to take into account sample size and statistical power. The sample size, while adequate for detecting main effects, was relatively small for identifying interaction effects. Moderation analyses often require larger sample sizes to detect subtle effects, as interactions inherently explain less variance than main effects (Aiken & West, 1991). The limited sample size may have constrained the statistical power needed to identify PsyCap's moderating role.

5.4 Limitations

Although this study yielded several significant findings and potential practical contributions to TTBH research, it was not without limitations. These included: 1) an unequal demographic representation in the sample, 2) a limited sample size, and 3) the use of a cross-sectional research design.

The sample was predominantly composed of female and white participants, limiting the generalisability of the findings to other demographic groups. While females constitute approximately 51.5% of South Africa's population (Statistics South Africa, 2023), 78% of this study's participants were female. Furthermore, the sample primarily consisted of white individuals, representing about 7.3% of South Africa's population (Statistics South Africa, 2023). This skewed representation makes it difficult to apply the results to the broader South

African population, particularly in diverse, under-resourced schools or those with higher proportions of male teachers.

In addition, as discussed in previous sections, most of the teachers sampled were from private schools (73.3%), which are typically better-resourced and more supported by school leadership (Moodley, 2024). This demographic homogeneity could have limited the generalisability of the study's findings to other educational contexts, particularly those in rural or underfunded urban schools, where teachers may experience significantly higher levels of stress due to resource constraints and systemic challenges (Bernstein & Batchelor, 2022; Sayed, 2020). Furthermore, the predominance of White participants (68.3%) suggests that the study may not adequately capture the experiences of teachers from historically marginalised communities, whose experiences of TTBH and physiological and psychological distress may differ due to factors such as socioeconomic background, race, and language barriers (Le Roux, 2020). The small and selective sample also makes it challenging to fully explore how factors such as resource constraints, school environments, and systemic challenges affect TTBH by parents and related outcomes.

Accessing participants from low-income schools presented significant challenges, largely due to ongoing issues such as unrest and gangsterism in these areas. These factors limited the representation of teachers working in underprivileged and lower-income environments, thereby narrowing the study’s scope and generalisability, as touched on above.

Furthermore, the lengthy nature of the survey may have exacerbated participant fatigue, leading to incomplete responses and reducing the final dataset size (Adams & Cox, 2008; Ghafourifard, 2024). This aligns with findings in the literature, which highlight that teachers, particularly those in resource-constrained settings (Ncontsa & Shumba, 2013), are often overworked and burdened with excessive responsibilities (Jacobs, 2014; Montgomery et al., 2005; Woudstra et al., 2018). The demands of the survey may have inadvertently added to their workload, potentially discouraging participation or full completion (Lavidas et al., 2022). Although the sample was mainly drawn from higher quintile schools, teachers in such schools are not immune to high demands, as this is characteristic of the teaching profession (Alves et al., 2020; Baeriswyl et al., 2021; Jacobs, 2024; Mihaela et al., 2022; Rodrigues et al., 2017). Therefore, despite the survey not being excessively lengthy, it could still have

contributed to participant fatigue (Ghafourifard, 2024), given its time-consuming nature (Lavidas et al., 2022).

This study's sample comprised 120 participants, which, while adequate for conducting the required statistical analyses, limited its ability to fully represent the broader South African population. A larger sample size would have enhanced the generalisability and statistical power of the findings, providing a more robust foundation for interpreting the effects observed in the study (Anderson et al., 2017; Hendrickson et al., 2019).

The cross-sectional design of this study limited the ability to draw conclusions about causality, as data was collected at a single point in time. Given the research project's size and time frame, this design was essential, but it fundamentally lacked the ability to establish and capture the sequence of events (Gravetter & Forzano, 2015). As a result, it is unclear whether exposure to TTBH preceded or resulted from the observed physiological and psychological outcomes, such as distress or resilience. This lack of temporal clarity makes it challenging to identify whether TTBH directly influenced physiological and psychological wellbeing and intention to leave outcomes or if these outcomes were shaped by prior or concurrent stressors.

Furthermore, the timing of data collection may have influenced the findings due to the primacy and recency effects. The primacy and recency effects refer to cognitive biases in which individuals tend to remember the first (primacy effect) and last (recency effect) items or events in a series more vividly than those occurring in the middle of the coping cycle (Murdock, 1962; Ebbinghaus, 1885/1913). These effects are particularly relevant in this study, as participants may have been influenced by their most intense or most recent experiences of TTBH when responding to the survey. For example, if a teacher experienced a highly distressing episode of TTBH at the start of their career (primacy effect) or shortly before completing the questionnaire (recency effect), these experiences could disproportionately shape their responses. This cognitive bias might have led to an overemphasis on either the initial or the most recent impact of TTBH, potentially skewing the data and underestimating the cumulative or intermittent effects of such behaviours over time. Additionally, the cross-sectional design did not allow for tracking the full progression (Wang & Cheng, 2020) of TTBH and coping, which may have contributed to this bias.

Participants may have been recalling either their most intense or most recent experiences of TTBH, potentially leading to a biased representation of their overall exposure. Additionally, participants might have been surveyed at the end of their coping cycle, after they had already drawn on PsyCap to manage the stressor. High levels of PsyCap at the time of measurement could have diminished their perception of TTBH as a severe threat, reflecting a resolved stressor rather than an ongoing one. This dynamic might obscure evidence of interaction effects and underestimate the moderating role of PsyCap.

Despite these limitations, the findings offer valuable insights into TTBH and its impact on teachers in South Africa. However, addressing the limitations highlighted in this study presents an opportunity for future research to build on these insights, which will be addressed below.

5.5 Recommendations for Future Research

To address the gaps and limitations identified in this study, several recommendations for future research are proposed. To address the possible participant fatigue experienced, future studies should explore alternative methods of engagement, such as shorter surveys.

While there is a considerable amount of qualitative research on this topic (Bernstein & Batchelor, 2022; Billet et al., 2020; Fogelgarn et al., 2019), a mixed-methods approach could enhance the depth and breadth of data collection (Almalki, 2016). This approach allows for richer, more nuanced insights without compromising the efficiency of gathering survey data from a larger sample (Dawadi et al., 2021). Qualitative methods such as interviews or focus groups enable more detailed and contextualised responses (Adams & Cox, 2008), addressing the limitations of surveys, which often restrict the ways in which participants can express their experiences (Albudaiwi, 2017).

Moreover, integrating qualitative and quantitative methods can improve the representativeness of findings (Almalki, 2016), ensuring that diverse teacher experiences across various contexts are adequately captured. This, in turn, would not only enhance the generalisability (Dawadi et al., 2021) of future research but also inform more targeted and

effective interventions tailored to the specific challenges faced by teachers in different educational settings.

Employing a longitudinal design would allow researchers to examine how TTBH and PsyCap interact over time, particularly given the possible timing of PsyCap's effects on long-term psychological outcomes. Unlike a cross-sectional approach, which captures data at a single point (Wang & Cheng, 2020), a longitudinal study would track changes in TTBH exposure and psychological responses over time (Caruana et al., 2015). This would help determine whether PsyCap consistently acts as a buffer or if its influence varies depending on when it is measured in relation to TTBH experiences.

By following participants across multiple time points, researchers could explore whether high PsyCap reduces distress immediately after TTBH exposure or if its benefits emerge later as individuals gradually adapt. This would provide insight into whether PsyCap primarily acts as a buffer—minimising the initial impact of TTBH—or as a recovery mechanism that aids long-term adjustment. Additionally, a longitudinal design would help clarify the bidirectional relationship between PsyCap and psychological outcomes, revealing whether individuals with higher PsyCap naturally experience lower distress or if overcoming TTBH strengthens their PsyCap over time.

Diversifying the sample to include more teachers from low-income and under-resourced schools is essential to understanding the full scope of TTBH, as these educators often face unique systemic challenges not captured in this study.

To address the limitations of the sample composition, future research should prioritise efforts to include more diverse and representative populations of teachers. Since females and teachers from private schools heavily dominated the current study's sample, it is important to expand research to focus on teachers in lower-income and under-resourced schools, where systemic challenges such as overcrowded classrooms (Nkosi, 2022; Wills, 2023), lack of resources (Du Plessis & Mestry, 2019; IOL, 2020; Matsepe et al., 2019; Nconsta & Shumba, 2013), and socio-economic pressures (Montgomery et al., 2005) may exacerbate the prevalence and impact of TTBH. Although these environments are frequently overlooked in research, they are essential to comprehending the broader effects of TTBH in South Africa.

Additionally, given the gender disparity in this study's sample, future research should aim to include more male teachers. While StatsSA (2019) reports that women dominate the teaching profession, especially in the foundation and intermediate phases, male teachers are more prevalent in secondary education. Exploring the experiences of male teachers could provide valuable insights into how gender dynamics influence the prevalence, perception, and coping mechanisms associated with TTBH. It is possible that male teachers encounter different forms of bullying or respond differently to such stressors, which would be critical to capture in order to tailor interventions effectively.

By focusing on these underrepresented groups—teachers in lower-income schools and male educators—future studies can generate findings that are more representative of the diverse realities of the teaching profession in South Africa. This would also contribute to a more holistic understanding of how socio-economic context and gender intersect to shape the experiences of TTBH, thereby informing more targeted and effective policies and interventions.

5.6 Theoretical and Practical Implications

The present study has shown that TTBH has a significant impact on teachers' physiological and psychological wellbeing, as well as their intention to leave the profession. Additionally, PsyCap plays a crucial role in influencing physiological and psychological wellbeing as well as intention to leave.

As highlighted in the literature review, poor teacher wellbeing and the prevalence of TTBH (Montgomery et al., 2005; Woudstra et al., 2018) can have far-reaching negative effects on school performance and learner outcomes (Daily Maverick, 2023; Jacobs & De Wet, 2018). Therefore, it is imperative for schools and principals to adopt practical interventions designed to foster PsyCap, mitigate TTBH, and improve teachers' physiological and psychological wellbeing. These measures are not only critical for reducing teachers' intentions to leave but also for promoting a healthier, more productive educational environment that benefits both teachers and learners (Kalman & Summak, 2017; Shi & Sin, 2024).

The findings of this study underscore the clear impact of TTBH on teachers' physiological and psychological wellbeing, as well as their intention to leave the profession. PsyCap emerged as a critical resource in shaping these outcomes, influencing teachers' ability to cope with bullying and harassment by parents and bolstering their overall wellbeing and commitment to their roles. These insights emphasise the urgent need for targeted interventions to mitigate the negative effects of TTBH and strengthen PsyCap among teachers. Although the study could not capture interaction effects for the reasons outlined above, the observed relationships between PsyCap and both the independent and dependent variables suggest a potential interplay. This highlights the importance of fostering and facilitating PsyCap as a key factor in influencing these dynamics.

PsyCap, comprising resilience, optimism, hope, and self-efficacy, is increasingly recognised as a valuable psychological resource in addressing workplace challenges. Studies, such as those by Lupșa et al. (2020) and Loghman et al. (2025), provide robust evidence supporting PsyCap interventions, highlighting their positive short- and long-term effects on individuals' wellbeing and performance. Salanova and Ortega-Maldonado (2019) further emphasise the flexibility of PsyCap interventions, showcasing their applicability across diverse organisational contexts, including educational environments. This is line with the findings of Bertieaux et al. (2024), who highlighted PsyCap's potential in improving teacher wellbeing, particularly by enhancing emotional and psychological resilience. These studies collectively support the recommendation for schools to implement PsyCap development programs as a practical measure to alleviate the adverse impacts of TTBH on teachers.

Kalman and Summak (2017) also examined the transformative effects of PsyCap training programs on teachers, demonstrating their effectiveness in reducing burnout and improving coping mechanisms. Given the current context, where TTBH exacerbates stress and lowers teacher wellbeing, this is particularly relevant. While research on PsyCap in educational settings has expanded, as noted by Burhanuddin et al. (2019), significant gaps remain in its application, highlighting the necessity for targeted and context-specific interventions in schools. By integrating PsyCap training into teacher development initiatives, schools can create a supportive environment that fosters resilience and reduces turnover intentions.

Practical PsyCap applications for fostering teacher resilience and wellbeing, as outlined by Falecki and Mann (2021), include mindfulness and stress-reduction programs, resilience training, and professional learning communities (PLCs). These initiatives equip teachers with tools to manage stress, build emotional regulation, and develop adaptive problem-solving skills.

In terms of psychological resources, recent research supports the protective role of PsyCap in educational environments. A 2024 study using Structural Equation Modelling found that PsyCap, combined with mindfulness, significantly reduces teacher burnout and enhances job engagement (Liu & Du, 2024). This finding suggests that developing PsyCap interventions could serve as a valuable strategy for improving teacher retention and reducing the negative effects of TTBH. Additionally, the creation of validated tools such as the Teacher Stress Scale (TSS) and the Teacher Thriving Scale (TTS) provides new methods for assessing teacher wellbeing and identifying individuals at risk of stress-related attrition (Chen et al., 2022). Further, a longitudinal study on stress management among educators concluded that teachers with high PsyCap reported greater career satisfaction and were more likely to persist in their roles despite adverse working conditions (Jensen, 2022). These findings underscore the importance of fostering psychological resources to counteract the detrimental effects of TTBH in school settings.

In addition to PsyCap interventions, implementing robust policies to protect teachers from TTBH is essential (Jacobs & De Wet, 2018; Langeveld, 2023). Schools must develop and enforce comprehensive anti-bullying policies that include preventive measures, clear reporting protocols, and consequences for perpetrators (Jacobs & De Wet, 2018; Langeveld, 2023). Creating a culture of respect and mutual support through training and awareness programs can further reinforce these policies (Langeveld, 2023). Providing teachers with safe and anonymous channels to report incidents of TTBH without fear of retaliation is a critical step in fostering a secure and supportive work environment (DBE, 2025). Moreover, government mandates requiring schools to adopt and adhere to anti-TTBH measures can ensure consistency and accountability across the educational system (Langeveld, 2023). For instance, the South African Council for Educators (SACE) has established a code of ethics that sets clear expectations for teacher conduct, explicitly prohibiting bullying behaviour (SACE, 2016). While these measures and existing legal frameworks play a crucial role in protecting teachers and ensuring a safe working environment, their effectiveness depends on

continuous support through research on anti-workplace bullying initiatives and collaborative development with key stakeholders (Jacobs & De Wet, 2018). This highlights the importance of structured, enforceable solutions to address TTBH while also enhancing teachers' awareness of their rights and available legal avenues (Jacobs & De Wet, 2018).

By combining PsyCap interventions with strong anti-bullying policies, schools can address both the individual and systemic factors contributing to TTBH and its effects. These measures will not only reduce teachers' intentions to leave the profession but also promote a healthier and more productive educational environment. Improved teacher wellbeing has far-reaching benefits, including enhanced school performance and better learner outcomes (Carroll et al., 2021; Turner & Theilking, 2019). Ultimately, fostering PsyCap and protecting teachers from TTBH are vital steps toward creating sustainable and supportive educational systems (Langeveld, 2023). Practical applications, as outlined by Falecki and Mann (2021), serve as actionable strategies for schools to foster teacher resilience and wellbeing, ultimately enhancing both teacher and learner experiences.

To sum up, this study highlights the significant impact of TTBH on teacher wellbeing and underscores the importance of PsyCap as a critical resource for mitigating these effects. The findings align with evidence from studies such as those by Lupșa et al. (2020), Loghman et al. (2025), Bertieaux et al. (2024), and Falecki and Mann (2021), which demonstrate the value of PsyCap interventions in promoting resilience and wellbeing. When combined with effective policies to address TTBH, these interventions can create a supportive framework that benefits both teachers and learners, contributing to a more positive and sustainable educational environment.

5.7 Conclusion

In conclusion, this chapter has explored the key findings, limitations, recommendations, and implications of this study on TTBH in South Africa. The results support the notion that TTBH has a significant negative effect on teachers' physiological and psychological wellbeing, as well as their intention to leave the profession. Additionally, the study has highlighted the crucial role of PsyCap in moderating these effects, offering valuable

insights into how teachers' resilience, optimism, hope, and self-efficacy can buffer against the stressors associated with TTBH, although a moderation was not found.

Despite the significant contributions of this study, it is acknowledged that several limitations, including the cross-sectional nature of the research, the limited and selective sample size, and the sample's unequal demographic representation, may have affected the findings. These limitations point to areas for improvement in future research, including diversifying the sample, employing longitudinal designs, and exploring mixed-methods approaches to better understand the dynamics of TTBH and its impacts.

The practical implications of this study are substantial, as it underscores the urgent need for targeted interventions aimed at fostering PsyCap among teachers and addressing TTBH through robust anti-bullying policies. By implementing these measures, schools can create a healthier and more supportive work environment that not only reduces teachers' intention to leave the profession but also contributes to improved school performance and better learner outcomes.

Overall, this study contributes to the expanding knowledge of teacher wellbeing and offers practical suggestions for enhancing the teaching profession in South Africa. Future studies, addressing the limitations and incorporating the suggestions for further research, will be crucial in continuing to explore and mitigate the challenges faced by educators in diverse contexts.

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Appendices

Appendix A:

Digital Flyer for Research Call for Participants



Appendix B:

Demographic Questionnaire

1. Please indicate your age
   - □ 18-20 years old
   - □ 21-30 years old
   - □ 31-40 years old
   - □ 41-50 years old
   - □ 51-60 years old
   - □ 60+ years old

2. Please indicate your gender
   - □ Male
   - □ Female
   - □ Other, please specify _____

3. Please indicate your race
   - □ Black
   - □ White
   - □ Coloured
   - □ Indian
   - □ Asian
   - □ Other, please specify _____

4. Please indicate your home language
   - □ English
   - □ Afrikaans
   - □ isiZulu
   - □ isiXhosa
   - □ isiNdebele
   - □ Sesotho
   - □ Sepedi

- Setswana
- siSwati
- Tshivenda
- Xitsonga
- Other, please specify _____

5. Please indicate your marital status.
   - Single
   - Married
   - Divorced

6. Please indicate which level of education you are employed in.
   - Primary school
   - Secondary school
   - Other, please specify _____

7. Please indicate which type of school category you are employed in.
   - Public/Government school
   - Private school
   - Fee-paying school
   - Non-fee-paying school
   - Other, please specify _____

8. Please indicate what role you are currently employed in.
   - Teacher
   - Head of Department
   - Deputy Principal
   - Principal
   - Other, please specify _____

9. Please indicate which area you teach in.
   - English
   - Afrikaans

- Mathematics
- Life Orientation
- Art
- Science
- Sport and Health
- Hospitality
- Other, please specify _____

10. Please indicate how long you have held registration as a teacher (years of work experience as a teacher).
    - 1-4 years
    - 5-9 years
    - 10-14 years
    - 15-19 years
    - 20+ years

11. Please indicate your tenure in the current school you are working in (years working in your current school).
    - 1-4 years
    - 5-9 years
    - 10-14 years
    - 15-19 years
    - 20+ years

Appendix C:

Teacher-Targeted Bullying and Harassment Scale

Parent-enacted TTBH is defined as a communication process that involves a real or perceived power imbalance wherein a teacher is subjected, by one or more parent(s), to an interaction that he or she perceives as insulting, upsetting or intimidating.

This interaction can take various forms, including verbal, nonverbal, or physical; it can be premeditated or opportunistic; it can also be recurring, short-term, or long-term.

The following questions ask you if you have experienced any such behaviours from parents. Please answer all questions and if you have experienced a behaviour answer whether it has happened monthly, every few months, weekly, a few times a week, or daily.

1. Over the last twelve months, **how often have you** experienced bullying or harassing behaviour(s) **from a parent/guardian(s)?**

	Never (0)	Monthly (1)	Every few months (2)	Weekly (3)	A few times a week (4)	Daily (5)
How often over the last twelve months, **have you** experienced bullying or harassing behaviour(s) **from a parent/guardian(s)?**						

2. Which of the following behaviour(s) from a **parent/guardian(s) have you experienced** and in what frequency? (Tick all relevant)

	Never (0)	Monthly (1)	Every few months (2)	Weekly (3)	A few times a week (4)	Daily (5)
Shouting/Screaming						

Swearing						
Hitting or punching						
Damaging personal property						
Insulting remarks (verbal)						
Insulting remarks (social media)						
Standing over/invading your personal space						
Organising others against you						
Lying about you to get you into trouble						
Harassing you through phone calls or text messages						
Engaging in discriminatory behaviour against you						
A learner using their parent to argue with you on their own behalf						

Appendix D:

Psychological Capital Questionnaire (PCQ) (Luthans et al., 2007)

Instructions: Below are statements that describe how you may think about yourself right now.

Use the following scale to indicate your level of agreement or disagreement with each statement. Please answer all questions.

Strongly disagree =1

Disagree = 2

Somewhat disagree = 3

Somewhat agree = 4

Agree = 5

Strongly agree = 6

Example of Efficacy scale:

Q1	I feel confident analysing a long-term problem to find a solution	1	2	3	4	5	6

Example of Hope scale:

Q11	I can think of many ways to reach my current work goals	1	2	3	4	5	6

Example of Resiliency scale:

Q16	I usually take stressful things at work in stride	1	2	3	4	5	6

Example of Optimism scale:

Q19	When things are uncertain for me at work, I usually expect the same	1	2	3	4	5	6

Please note: Only examples of the scale have been used due to copyright. However, the full PCQ will be used in the current study and shown to the participants.

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Appendix E:

Physical Health Questionnaire (PHQ) (Kroenke et al., 2002)

Instructions: The following questions ask about your physical health. Please answer all questions.

During the past **4 weeks,** how much have you been bothered by any of the following problems?	Not bothered at all (0)	Bothered a little (1)	Bothered a lot (2)
1. Stoedh pain			
2. Back pain			
3. Pain in your arms, legs, or joints (knees, hips, etc.)			
4. Menstrual cramps or other problems with your periods (WOMEN ONLY)			
5. Headaches			
6. Chest pain			
7. Dizziness			
8. Fainting spells			
9. Feeling your heart pound or race			
10. Shortness of breath			
12. Constipation, loose bowels, or diarrhea			
13. Nausea, gas, indigestion			
14. Feeling tired or having low energy			
15. Trouble sleeping			

Appendix F:

Hospital Anxiety and Depression Scale

Instructions: The following questions ask about how you are feeling emotionally. Tick the box beside the reply that is closest to how you have been feeling in the past week. Please answer all questions.

	Not at all (0)*	From time to time, occasionally (1)	A lot of the time (2)	Most of the time (3)*
1) I feel tense or 'wound up'				

	Definitely as much (0)	Not quite so much (1)	Only a little (2)	Hardly at all (3)
2) I still enjoy the things I used to enjoy				

	Not at all (0)*	A little, but it doesn't worry me (1)	Yes, but not too badly (2)	Very definitely and quite badly (3)
3) I get a sort of frightened feeling as if something awful is about to happen				

	As much as I always could (0)	Not quite so much now (1)	Definitely not so much now (2)	Not at all (3)*
4) I can laugh and see the funny side of things				

	Only occasionally (0)	From time to time, but not often (1)	A lot of the time (2)	A great deal of the time (3)
5) Worrying thoughts go through my mind				

	Most of the time (0)*	Sometimes (1)	Not often (2)	Not at all (3)*
6) I feel cheerful				

	Definitely (0)*	Usually (1)	Not often (2)	Not at all (3)*
7) I can sit at ease and be relaxed				

	Not at all (0)*	Sometimes (1)	Very often (2)*	Nearly all the time (3)
8) I feel as if I am slowed down				

	Not at all (0)*	Occasionally (1)	Quite often (2)	Very Often (3)*
9) I get a sort of frightened feeling like 'butterflies' in the stomach				

	I take just as much care as ever (0)	I may not take quite as much care (1)	I don't take as much care as I should (2)	Definitely (3)*
10) I have lost interest in my appearance				

	Not at all (0)*	Not very much (1)	Quite a lot (2)	Very much indeed (3)
11) I feel restless as I have to be on the move				

	As much as I ever did (0)	Rather less than I used to (1)	Definitely less than I used to (2)	Hardly at all (3)
12) I look forward to things with enjoyment				

	Not at all (0)*	Not very often (1)	Quite often (2)	Very often indeed (3)
13) I get sudden feelings of panic				

	Often (0)	Sometimes (1)	Not often (2)	Very seldom (3)
14) I can enjoy a good book or radio or TV program				

Appendix G:

The Propensity to Leave Scale (Lyons, 1971)

Instructions: the following questions ask about how you feel about staying or leaving your job. Please indicate with a cross (X) the response you consider to be the most appropriate to your current situation. Please answer all of the questions.

	1 Year (1)	2 Years (2)	3 Years (3)	5 Years (4)	10 Years (5)	More than 5 years (6)
1.How long would you like to continue working in your present job?						

	No (1)	Not sure (2)	Yes (3)
2. If you were completely free to choose, would you prefer to continue working in your present job?			
3. If you had to stop work for a while (for example, because of pregnancy or illness) would you return to your present job?			

Appendix H:

Participant Information Sheet for Principals

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

Dear Principal,

My name is Bianca Moreira Da Silva and I am conducting research to obtain a Master's degree in Organisational Psychology at the University of the Witwatersrand. I am required to complete a research report as part of my Master's degree. My research seeks to explore the effects of Teacher-Targeted Bullying and Harassment (TTBH) on South African teachers' physiological and psychological wellbeing and turnover intentions, and whether personal coping styles of teachers can act as a resource that reduces the negative effects of TTBH on teacher wellbeing and their intention to leave the profession. I am requesting permission to access and invite the teachers at your school to carry out my research.

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

However*, it must be emphasised that the wellbeing of all teachers who volunteer to partake in the study is of utmost importance. Therefore, while no harm is expected to be experienced by any teacher that volunteers to partake in the interview, should any teacher feel that they may need counselling after participating in the study, counselling will be arranged free of charge. This counselling will be provided through the Emthonjeni Centre at the University of the Witwatersrand. Please contact the supervisor or researcher should you need any contact*

details and/or further information regarding the research. The contact number of Paballo Lepota at the Emthonjeni Centre is (011) 717 4513, if you feel the need for more information regarding the counselling that will be provided. The researcher's contact details are listed below. Alternatively, we have provided Lifeline's contact details (086) 132 2322 2322 and SADAG (080) 056 7567 if a teacher prefers to contact them for telephonic counselling.

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

If your teachers choose to participate in this research, they will be sent a Participant Information Sheet outlining the details of the study and requested to complete an online questionnaire, either at work in their free time or at home. Teachers will be able to complete the online questionnaire through the distribution of the electronic link to your employees' email addresses, and no IP addresses will be recorded. A consent form will be attached to the second page of the online questionnaire. Before beginning the questionnaire, participants will be required to fill in a tick box indicating their consent. Completion and submission of the questionnaire will also act as informed consent to participate in this research. The overall research findings of this study will be summarised and sent to participants and your school upon request. With consent given from yourself and the participants, the research will be placed in the University's online repository (WIReDSpace) and findings may be used for future research publications or conference proceedings. However, as mentioned, findings are only reported as general trends and therefore employees' responses will remain completely anonymous.

Allowing teachers at your school to be invited to participate in this study would be greatly appreciated. This research will contribute to a larger body of knowledge on TTBH, stress and coping, individual wellbeing and workplace bullying within the schooling context. This research may provide valuable contributions and perhaps give you insights into the overall dynamics of your own school.

Additionally, the findings of this research study could assist in the long term by encouraging government institutions to improve environmental conditions within schools and thereby protect teachers from environments in which workplace bullying and its negative outcomes are induced.

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

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

Please click on the following link to access the online survey:
https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/BSFK8BR

Kind regards,

Bianca Moreira Da Silva
2306320@students.wits.ac.za
+27 (81) 837 3681

Dr Colleen Bernstein (Supervisor)
colleen.bernstein@wits.ac.za
+27 (11) 717 4538

For any information regarding the ethics of this study, you may contact Shaun Schoeman from the University's Ethics Committee (HREC).
shaun.schoeman@wits.ac.za
+27 (11) 717 1408

Appendix I:

Participant Information Sheet for Teachers

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

Dear Educator/Teacher,

My name is Bianca Moreira Da Silva, and I am conducting research to obtain a Master's degree in Organisational Psychology at the University of the Witwatersrand. I am required to complete a research report as part of my Master's degree. My research seeks to explore the effects of Teacher-Targeted Bullying and Harassment (TTBH) on South African teachers' physiological and psychological wellbeing and intention to leave the profession and whether their personal coping styles can act as a resource that reduces the negative effects of TTBH on teacher wellbeing and their intention to leave the profession. Thus, if you are a teacher in Gauteng who has experienced workplace bullying from a parent, I would like to invite you to kindly participate in my study.

Participation in this study includes the completion of an online questionnaire, by clicking the link at the bottom of this page. Completion of the questionnaire will take approximately 30 minutes. Please ensure that your completed questionnaire is submitted online within 2-3 weeks. Participation is completely voluntary, and there are no risks or benefits associated with your participation. You will have the right to withdraw from the study at any point up until you have submitted the online questionnaire.

Responses will remain strictly confidential and anonymous at all times, as no identifying information such as your name, staff number or ID number will be collected in the questionnaire. The name of the school for which you work will not be asked for, and your

school will not be identified by name at any point. No one at your school will know if you choose to participate or not. Responses to the questionnaire will only be seen by myself and my supervisor. IP addresses will not be recorded. Since the questionnaire is anonymous, there is no possibility of linking an individual to their questionnaire, therefore no individual feedback can be given, and the results will only focus on group trends. This further ensures that your individual set of responses cannot be identified.

A consent form will be attached to the second page of the online questionnaire. Before beginning the questionnaire, you will be required to fill in a tick box indicating your consent. Also, note that completion and return of the questionnaire will be taken as informed consent of your participation and for the use of your responses to be used for statistical analysis and research purposes only. With your consent, the research will be placed in the University's online repository (WIReDSpace) and findings may be used for future research publications or conference proceedings. However, as mentioned, findings are only reported as general trends and therefore your responses **will remain completely anonymous.** We will be able to provide you with a summary of the findings after the study is completed if requested.

It must be emphasised that your well-being is of utmost importance. Therefore, while no harm is expected to be experienced by any teacher who volunteers to complete the interview, should you feel that you need counselling after participating in the study, counselling will be arranged free of charge. This counselling will be provided through the Emthonjeni Centre at the University of the Witwatersrand. Please contact the supervisor or researcher should you need any contact details and/or further information regarding the research. The contact number of Paballo Lepota at the Emthonjeni Centre is 011 717 4513 if you feel the need for counselling. The researcher's contact details are listed below. Alternatively, we have provided Lifeline's contact details (086) 132 2322 and SADAG (080) 056 7567 if you prefer to contact them for telephonic counselling.

Please note that responses obtained from the online questionnaire will not be used for any purposes, other than academic research. Volunteering to participate in this study would be greatly appreciated as it will contribute to a larger body of knowledge on TTBH, stress and coping, workplace bullying, and teacher wellbeing within the schooling context. Additionally, the findings of this research study could assist in the long term by encouraging government

institutions to improve environmental conditions within schools and thereby protect teachers like yourself, from workplace bullying and its negative outcomes.

The research study is an independent study, which will be conducted under the supervision of an Industrial Psychologist at the University of the Witwatersrand. If you have any further questions or would like feedback on the results of this study, please feel free to contact me or my supervisor. Contact details are provided below. Thank you for considering taking part in this research. Your participation would be greatly appreciated.

Please click on the following link to access the online survey:
https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/BSFK8BR

Kind regards,

Bianca Moreira Da Silva
2306320@students.wits.ac.za
+27 (81) 837 3681

Dr Colleen Bernstein (Supervisor)
colleen.bernstein@wits.ac.za
+27 (11) 717 4538

For any information regarding the ethics of this study, you may contact Shaun Schoeman from the University's Ethics Committee (HREC).

shaun.schoeman@wits.ac.za
+27 (11) 717 1408

Appendix J:

Informed Consent Form

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

CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS STUDY

- I understand that participation involves the completion of questions pertaining to some personal information as well as my experiences and perspective pertaining to various events in the workplace.
- I understand that I will not benefit directly from participating in this research.
- I understand that all the information I provide for this study will be treated confidentially.
- I understand that in any report on the results of this research, my identity will remain anonymous. This will be done by not recording any personal information that could be utilised to identify any one individual or organisation.
- I am aware that the findings of this study will be processed into a research report, journal publications and/or conference proceedings, but that my participation will be kept confidential as all findings are reported as general trends. Therefore, my single responses cannot be identified in any way.
- I am aware that data from this research will be published in the Wits online research repository and may be used for publication and conference proceedings. All data stored and utilised in this manner will remain completely anonymous.
- I understand that I am free to contact any of the people involved in the research to seek further clarification and information.

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

☐ Yes

☐ No

Appendix K:

Email Invitation to Teachers

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

Dear Educator/Teacher,

My name is Bianca Moreira Da Silva and I am conducting research to obtain a Master's degree in Organisational Psychology at the University of the Witwatersrand. My research seeks to explore the effects of Teacher-Targeted Bullying and Harassment (TTBH) on South African teachers' physiological and psychological wellbeing and intention to leave the profession and whether their personal coping styles can act as a resource that reduces the negative effects of TTBH on teacher wellbeing and their intention to leave the profession I would like to invite you to participate in this study.

Participation involves completing an online questionnaire. You will be asked questions about you and your background, as well as about your experiences of parent-enacted Teacher-targeted Bullying and Harassment, your coping style and your physiological and psychological wellbeing.

Participation in this part of the study is voluntary. The survey should take a maximum of 30 minutes to complete. You will not be advantaged or disadvantaged for choosing to participate or not. Attached to this email, for your information, please find a Participant Information Sheet that will give you more in-depth details about this study so that you can make an informed decision about participating.

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

Please click on the following link to access the online survey:
https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/BSFK8BR

Kind regards,

Bianca Moreira Da Silva
2306320@students.wits.ac.za
+27 (81) 837 3681

Dr Colleen Bernstein (Supervisor)
colleen.bernstein@wits.ac.za
+27 (11) 717 4538

Appendix L:

HREC Conditional Ethics Clearance

UNIVERSITY OF THE WITWATERSRAND, JOHANNESBURG

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

CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE	**PROTOCOL NUMBER: MAORG-24-07**
PROJECT TITLE:	Teacher-Targeted Bullying and Harassment (TTBH), Coping, Well-being and Intention to Leave: A Quantitative Study in Gauteng Schools.
INVESTIGATOR	Moreira Da Silva Bianca
SCHOOL/DEPARTMENT OF INVESTIGATOR	SHCD/Psychology
DATE CONSIDERED	08 July 2024
DECISION OF THE COMMITTEE:	**Conditional Clearance: Data collection cannot commence until the permission letter from the GDE is submitted to the SHCD/Psychology Department HREC Non-Medical Committee**
RISK LEVEL	Minimal RISK
EXPIRY DATE	31 December 2026

ISSUE DATE OF CERTIFICATE 26 July 2024 **CHAIRPERSON** Aline Ferreira Correia
(Prof. Aline Ferreira Correia)

cc: Prof. Colleen Bernstein (Supervisor)

DECLARATION OF INVESTIGATOR

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

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

Signature **Date** 26 / 07 / 2024

PLEASE QUOTE THE PROTOCOL NUMBER ON ALL ENQUIRIES

Appendix M:

Gauteng Department of Education Research Request Letter

For admin. Use only:
Ref. no.:
Enquiries: 011 3550775/1379
Gumani Mukatuni/ Busi Mchunu

GAUTENG PROVINCE
EDUCATION
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

2023/2024 GDE RESEARCH REQUEST FORM

REQUEST TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN INSTITUTIONS AND/OR OFFICES OF THE GAUTENG DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

1. PARTICULARS OF THE RESEARCHER

1.1	Details of the Researcher
a) Surname and Initials:	Moreira Da Silva B
b) First Name/s:	Bianca
c) Title (Prof/Dr/Mr/Mrs/Ms):	Ms
d) Student Number:	2306320
e) SA ID Number:	0110010521083
f) Work permit no. (If not SA citizen)	

1.2	Private Contact Details
a. Home Address	*c. Postal Address (if different)*
21 Megs Place Place, Bergbron	
Gordonstoun	
Johannesburg	
b. Postal Code: 1712	*d. Postal Code:*
e. Tel:	*f. Cell:* 0818373681
g. Fax:	*h. E-mail:* 2306320@students.wits.ac.za

2. PURPOSE & DETAILS OF THE PROPOSED RESEARCH

2.1	Purpose of the Research (Place a cross where appropriate)
Undergraduate Study – Self	
Postgraduate Study – Self	X
Private Company/Agency – Commissioned by Provincial Government or Department	
Private Research by Independent Researcher	
Non-Governmental Organisation	
National Department of Education	
Commissions and Committees	
Independent Research Agencies	
Statutory Research Agencies	
Higher Education Institutions only	

2.2	Full title of Thesis / Dissertation / Research Project
Teacher-Targeted Bullying and Harassment (TTBH), Coping, Well-being and Intention to Leave: A Quantitative Study in Gauteng Schools.	

2.3	Value of the Research to Education (Attach Research Proposal)

2.4	Date
a. *Estimated* date of completion of research in GDE Institutions	
b. *Estimated* date of submission of Research Report /Thesis/Dissertation and Research Summary to GDE:	

2.5	Student and Postgraduate Enrolment Particulars
a. Name of institution where enrolled:	University of the Witwatersrand
b. Degree / Qualification:	Master of Arts in Organisational Psychology
c. Faculty and Discipline / Area of Study:	Humanities

d. Name of Supervisor / Promoter:	Prof. Colleen Bernstein
2.6	**Employer (or state Unemployed / or a Full Time Student):**
a. Name of Organisation:	Full-time Student
b. Position in Organisation:	
c. Head of Organisation:	
d. Street Address:	
e. Postal Code:	
f. Telephone Number (Code + Ext):	
g. Fax Number:	
h. E-mail address:	

2.7	**PERSAL Number (GDE employees only)**

3. PROPOSED RESEARCH METHOD/S

(Please indicate by placing a cross in the appropriate block whether the following modes would be adopted)

3.1 ***Questionnaire/s (If Yes, supply copies of each to be used)***

YES	X	**NO**	

3.2 ***Interview/s (If Yes, provide copies of each schedule)***

YES		**NO**	X

3.3 ***Use of official documents***

YES		**NO**	X
If Yes, please specify the document/s:			

3.4 ***Workshop/s / Group Discussions (If Yes, Supply details)***

YES		**NO**	X

3.5 ***Standardised Tests (e.g. Psychometric Tests)***

YES	X	**NO**	
If Yes, please specify the test/s to be used and provide a copy/ies			
Teacher-Targeted Bullying and Harassment Scale, Psychological Capital Questionnaire, Physical Health Questionnaire, Hospital Anxiety and Depression Scale, Propensity to Leave Scale			

4. INSTITUTIONS TO BE INVOLVED IN THE RESEARCH

4.1 ***TYPE and NUMBER of Institutions (Please indicate by placing a cross alongside all types of institutions to be researched)***

INSTITUTIONS	Write NUMBER here
Primary Schools	4
Secondary Schools	3
ABET Centres	
ECD Centres	
LSEN Schools	1
Further Education & Training Institutions	
Districts and/or Head Office	

4.2 **Name/s of institutions to be approached for research (Please complete on a separate sheet if space is found to be insufficient).**

Name/s of Institution/s
Delarado Primary School, Floridalaan Primary School, Milnerton Primary School, West Rand SDA Primary School,
Futura High School, Lancea Vale Secondary School, Roosevelt High School, MCK Special School for the Deaf

4.3 **District/s where the study is to be conducted.** ***(Please indicate by placing a cross alongside the relevant district/s)***

District/s			
Ekurhuleni North		*Ekurhuleni South*	
Gauteng East		*Gauteng North*	
Gauteng West		*Johannesburg Central*	
Johannesburg East		*Johannesburg North*	
Johannesburg South	X	*Johannesburg West*	X
Sedibeng East		*Sedibeng West*	
Tshwane North		*Tshwane South*	
Tshwane West			

If Head Office/s (Please indicate Directorate/s)

4.4 **<u>The approximate</u> number of learners to be involved per school (Please indicate the number by gender: M- Male and F- Female)**

Grade	*ECD*		*1*		*2*		*3*		*4*		*5*		*6*	
Gender	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
Number														

Grade	*7*		*8*		*9*		*10*		*11*		*12*	
Gender	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
Number												

4.5 **<u>The approximate</u> number of ECD Practitioners/educators/officials involved in the study (Please indicate the number in the relevant column)**

Type of staff	*Educator/s*	*ECD Practitioner/s*	*HODs*	*Deputy Principal/s*	*Principal/s*	*Office-Based Officials*
Number						

4.6 Letters of Consent (Attach copies of Consent letters to be used for Principal, SGB and all participants. For learners also include parental consent letter)

4.7 Are the participants to be involved in groups or individually?

Groups	N/A	***Individually***	N/A

4.8 Average period of time each participant will be involved in the test or other research activities (Please indicate time in minutes for ALL participants)

Participant/s	Activity	Time
N/A	N/A	N/A

4.9 Time of day that you propose to conduct your research.

Before school hours	X	***During school hours (for limited observation only)***		***After School Hours***	X

SEE Condition 5.4 on Page 7

4.10 School term/s during which the research would be undertaken

First Term		***Second Term***		***Third Term***	X

5. CONDITIONS FOR CONDUCTING RESEARCH IN GDE

Permission may be granted to proceed with the above study subject to the conditions listed below being met and permission may be withdrawn should any of these conditions be flouted:

1) ***The District/Head Office Senior Manager/s concerned, the Principal/s and the chairperson/s of the School Governing Body (SGB.) must be presented with a copy of this letter.***
2) ***The Researcher will make every effort to obtain the goodwill and co-operation of the GDE District officials, principals, SGBs, teachers, ECD Practitioners, parents, and learners involved. Participation is voluntary and additional remuneration will not be paid;***
3) ***Research may only commence from the second week of February and must be concluded by the end of the THIRD quarter of the academic year. If incomplete, an amended Research Approval letter may be requested to conduct research in the following year.***

4) *Because of COVID 19, pandemic researchers can ONLY collect data online, telephonically, or may make arrangements for Zoom with the school Principal. Requests for such arrangements should be submitted to the GDE Education Research and Knowledge Management directorate. The approval letter will then indicate the type of arrangements that have been made with the school.*
5) *The Researchers are advised to make arrangements with the schools via Fax, email, or telephonically with the Principal.*
6) *Research may only be conducted **BEFORE or AFTER** school hours so that the normal school program is not interrupted. The Principal and/or Director must be consulted about an appropriate time when the researcher/s may carry out their research at the sites that they manage.*
7) *Items 3 and 6 will not apply to any research effort being undertaken on behalf of the GDE. Such research will have been commissioned and paid for by the Gauteng Department of Education.*
8) *It is the researcher's responsibility to obtain written consent from the SGB/s; principal/s, educator/s, ECD Practitioners, parents, and learners, as applicable, before commencing with research.*
9) *The researcher is responsible for supplying and utilizing his/her research resources, such as stationery, photocopies, transport, faxes, and telephones, and should not depend on the goodwill of the institution/s, staff, and/or the office/s visited for supplying such resources.*
10) *All research conducted in GDE Institutions is anonymous. The names and personal details of the GDE officials, schools, ECD Centres, principals, parents, teachers, ECD Practitioners and learners that participate in the study may neither be asked nor appear in the research title, report/thesis/ dissertation, or GDE Research Summary.*
11) *On successful completion of the study, the researcher must supply the Director: Education Research and Knowledge Management, with electronic copies of the Research Report, Thesis, Dissertation as well as a Research Summary (on the GDE Summary template). Failure to submit these documents may result in future permission being withheld, or a fine imposed for BOTH the Researcher and the Supervisor.*
12) *Should the researcher have been involved with research at a school, ECD Centres, and/or a district/head office level, the Director/s and school/s concerned must also be supplied with a GDE Summary.*
13) *The researcher may be expected to provide short presentations on the purpose, findings, and recommendations of his/her research to both GDE officials and the schools concerned;*

6. DECLARATION BY THE RESEARCHER
6.1 I declare that all statements made by myself in this application are true and accurate.
6.2 I have read, understand and accept ALL the conditions associated with the granting of approval to conduct research in GDE Institutions and I undertake to abide by them. I understand that failure to comply may result in permission being withdrawn, further permission being withheld, a fine imposed and legal action may be taken against me. This agreement is binding.
6.3 I promise once I have completed my studies, (before graduation) or on successful project completion, to submit electronic copies of my Research Report / Thesis / Dissertation as well a GDE Summary on the GDE template sent to me with my approval letter or found on www. education.@gpg.gov.za

Signature:	
Date:	30 April 2024

7. DECLARATION BY SUPERVISOR / LECTURER / PROMOTER

7.1 I declare that: (Name of Researcher) ..Bianca Moreira Da Silva.....

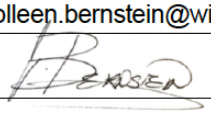
7.2 is enrolled at the institution / employed by the organisation to which the undersigned is attached.

7.3 The questionnaires / structured interviews/tests meet the criteria of:

- ***Educational Accountability;***
- ***Proper Research Design;***
- ***Sensitivity towards Participants;***
- ***Correct Content and Terminology;***
- ***Acceptable Grammar;***
- ***Absence of Non-essential / Superfluous items;***
- ***Ethical clearance***

7.4 The student/researcher has agreed to ALL the conditions of conducting research in GDE Institutions and will abide by them.

7.5 I will ensure that after successful completion of the research degree/project/study an electronic copy of the Research Report / Thesis / Dissertation and a Research Summary (on the GDE template) will be sent to the GDE. Failure to submit the Research Report, Thesis, Dissertation, and Research Summary may result in: permission being withheld from BOTH the student and the Supervisor in the future and a fine may be imposed.

7.6 Surname of the Supervisor :	Bernstein
7.7 First Name/s of the Supervisor :	Colleen
7.8 Title:	Professor
7.9 Institution / Organisation:	University of the Witwatersrand
7.10 Faculty / Department:	Psychology
7.11 Telephone:	0827709200 or 0117174538
7.12 E-mail address:	colleen.bernstein@wits.ac.za
7.13 Signature:	
7.14 Date:	10th June 2024

ANNEXURE A: **GROUP RESEARCH**

This information must be completed by every researcher/student/field worker who will be visiting GDE Institutions for research purposes, besides the main researcher who applied and the Supervisor/ lecturer / Promoter of the research.

By signing this declaration, the researcher/students / fieldworker accepts the conditions associated with the granting of approval to conduct research in GDE Institutions and undertakes to abide by them.

Supervisor/ Promoter / Lecturer's Surname and Name……

DECLARATION BY RESEARCHERS / STUDENTS:

Surname & Initials	Name	Tel	Cell	Email address	Signature

N.B. This form (and all other relevant documentation where available) may be completed and forwarded electronically to Gumani.Mukatuni@gauteng.gov.za, please copy (cc) ResearchInfo@gauteng.gov.za. The last 2 pages of this document must however have the original signatures of both the researcher and his/her supervisor or promoter. It should be scanned and emailed, posted, or hand-delivered (in a sealed envelope) to Dr. Gumani Mukatuni, 7th Floor Marshal Street, Johannesburg. All inquiries about the status of research requests can be directed to Dr. Gumani Mukatuni and/or Ms. Busi Mchunu on tel. no. 011 355 0775/1379.

Other Information:

i) On receipt of all emails, confirmation of receipt will be sent to the researcher. The researcher will be contacted via email if any documents are missing or if any additional information is needed.

ii) If the GDE Research request submitted is approved, a GDE Research Approval letter will be sent by email to the researcher as well as the Supervisor / Lecturer / Promoter. Please ensure that your email address is correct.

iii) After successful completion of your research, please send your Research Reports / Thesis / Dissertations and GDE Research Summaries (on the template provided to both the Researcher and the Supervisor with the GDE Research Approval letter) to the same addresses as the GDE Research Request documents were sent to, namely: Gumani.Mukatuni@gauteng.gov.za,

Busi.Mchunu@gauteng.gov.za and copy Faith.Tshabalala@gauteng.gov.za and ResearchInfo@gauteng.gov.za.

Appendix N:

Gauteng Department of Education Research Approval Letter

GAUTENG PROVINCE
Department: Education
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

8/4/4/1/2

GDE RESEARCH APPROVAL LETTER

Date:	**23 August 2024**
Validity of Research Approval:	**08 February 2024– 30 November 2024** **2024/307**
Name of Researcher:	**Moreira Da Silva B**
Address of Researcher:	**21 Megs Place,Bergbron**
	Gordonstoun/Johannesburg'
Telephone Number:	**081 837 3681**
Email address:	**2306320@students.wits.ac.za**
Research Topic:	**Teacher -Targeted Bullying and Harassment (TTBH), Coping,Well -being and intention to leave: A Qualitative Study in Gauteng Schools**
Name of University:	**Wits**
Type of qualification	**Masters**
Number and type of schools:	**4 Primary Schools, 3 Secondary Schools, 1 LSEN School**
District/s/HO	**Johannesburg South, Johannesburg West**

Re: Approval in Respect of Request to Conduct Research

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

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

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

1. *Letter that would indicate that the said researcher/s has/have been granted permission from the Gauteng Department of Education to conduct the research study.*
2. *The District/Head Office Senior Manager/s must be approached separately, and in writing, for permission to involve District/Head Office Officials in the project.*
3. ***Because of the relaxation of COVID 19 regulations researchers can collect data online, telephonically, physically access schools or may make arrangements for Zoom with the school Principal. Requests for such arrangements should be submitted to the GDE Education Research and Knowledge Management directorate.***
4. ***The Researchers are advised to wear a mask at all times, Social distance at all times, Provide a vaccination certificate or negative COVID-19 test, not older than 72 hours, and Sanitise frequently.***
5. *A copy of this letter must be forwarded to the school principal and the chairperson of the School Governing Body (SGB) that would indicate that the researcher/s have been granted permission from the Gauteng Department of Education to conduct the research study.*
6. *A letter / document that outline the purpose of the research and the anticipated outcomes of such research must be made available to the principals, SGBs and District/Head Office Senior Managers of the schools and districts/offices concerned, respectively.*
7. *The Researcher will make every effort obtain the goodwill and co-operation of all the GDE officials, principals, and chairpersons of the SGBs, teachers and learners involved. Persons who offer their co-operation will not receive additional remuneration from the Department while those that opt not to participate will not be penalised in any way.*
8. *Research may only be conducted after school hours so that the normal school programme is not interrupted. The Principal (if at a school) and/or Director (if at a district/head office) must be consulted about an appropriate time when the researcher/s may carry out their research at the sites that they manage.*
9. *Research may only commence from the second week of February and must be concluded before the beginning of the last quarter of the academic year. If incomplete, an amended Research Approval letter may be requested to conduct research in the following year.*
10. *Items 6 and 7 will not apply to any research effort being undertaken on behalf of the GDE. Such research will have been commissioned and be paid for by the Gauteng Department of Education.*
11. *It is the researcher's responsibility to obtain written parental consent of all learners that are expected to participate in the study.*
12. *The researcher is responsible for supplying and utilising his/her own research resources, such as stationery, photocopies, transport, faxes and telephones and should not depend on the goodwill of the institutions and/or the offices visited for supplying such resources.*
13. *The names of the GDE officials, schools, principals, parents, teachers and learners that participate in the study may not appear in the research report without the written consent of each of these individuals and/or organisations.*
14. *On completion of the study the researcher/s must supply the Director: Knowledge Management & Research with one Hard Cover bound and an electronic copy of the research.*
15. *The researcher may be expected to provide short presentations on the purpose, findings and recommendations of his/her research to both GDE officials and the schools concerned.*
16. *Should the researcher have been involved with research at a school and/or a district/head office level, the Director concerned must also be supplied with a brief summary of the purpose, findings and recommendations of the research study.*

The Gauteng Department of Education wishes you well in this important undertaking and looks forward to examining the findings of your research study.

Kind regards



.....

Mr. David Bapela
CES: Education Research and Knowledge Management

DATE: 23/08/2024

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

Appendix O:

HREC Unconditional Ethical Clearance

UNIVERSITY OF THE WITWATERSRAND, JOHANNESBURG

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

CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE	**PROTOCOL NUMBER: MAORG-24-07**
PROJECT TITLE:	Teacher-Targeted Bullying and Harassment (TTBH), Coping, Well-being and Intention to Leave: A Quantitative Study in Gauteng Schools.
INVESTIGATOR	Moreira Da Silva Bianca
SCHOOL/DEPARTMENT OF INVESTIGATOR	SHCD/Psychology
DATE CONSIDERED	08 July 2024
DATE CORRECTIONS CONSIDERED	21 February 2025
DECISION OF THE COMMITTEE:	Approved unconditionally
RISK LEVEL	Minimal Risk
EXPIRY DATE	31 December 2026

ISSUE DATE OF CERTIFICATE 21 February 2025 **CHAIRPERSON** Mpho Mathebula

(Dr Mpho Mathebula)

cc: Prof. Colleen Bernstein (Supervisor)

DECLARATION OF INVESTIGATOR

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

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

Signature **Date** 21 / 02 / 2025

PLEASE QUOTE THE PROTOCOL NUMBER ON ALL ENQUIRIES

Appendix P:

Letters of Research Approval from Principals

West Rand Seventh-day Adventist Primary School

Cnr 3rd Avenue & Thornton Road,
Westdene
2092

Telephone: 011 673 3835
Accounts: 010 824 0583
Email: admin@westrandps.co.za

14th May 2024

Dear Bianca Moreira Da Silva,

On behalf of West Rand Primary School, I am pleased to acknowledge your invitation and access request letter, wherein you express your interest in conducting research at our institution.

I am pleased to inform you that we are willing to grant you access to our teachers for your research. We are confident that your research will contribute positively to the advancement of knowledge in your field, and we look forward to assisting you with this.

Thank you for choosing West Rand SDA Primary to participate in your research. We are honoured to support your scholarly pursuits and wish you every success in your endeavours.

Yours sincerely,

Brown

Mrs E. Brown

Principal

011 782 4937
1 Thibault Street
Roosevelt Park
Johannesburg
2195

ROOSEVELT HIGH SCHOOL

26 July 2024

Dear Bianca Moreira Da Silva,

We are pleased to receive your invitation and research access request letter expressing your interest in conducting research at Roosevelt High School.

I am delighted to inform you that we will grant you access to our teachers for your research. We believe your study will make a significant contribution to the advancement of knowledge in your field, and we are eager to support you in this endeavour.

Thank you for selecting Roosevelt High School for your research. We are honoured to assist you in your scholarly pursuits and wish you great success.

Yours sincerely,

p.p.

Mr de Wet

Principal

FLORIDALAAN PRIMARY SCHOOL

4 Florida Avenue
Eldorado Park
Ext. 7
1812
Phone: 011 342 1014

P.O. Box 72
Kliptown
1812

GAUTENG PROVINCE
EDUCATION
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

E-mail: 120139.florida@gmail.com

17 September 2024

Dear Professor Bernstein

We hereby confirm that we will participate in the research study program on bullying in the workplace. Kindly forward the details of the next step to us so we may liaise with our staff and inform them timeously of our first meeting.

Thank you.

GAUTENG PROVINCE
Department of Education: D14, 2019-07-23
FLORIDALAAN PRIMARY SCHOOL

2024 -09- 17

4 FLORIDA AVENUE, ELDORADO PARK,
EXT: 7, 1811
TELL: 011 342 1014

Yours in education,

.....

SRS Alexander
(Deputy Principal – Teacher Development)

LANCEA VALE SECONDARY SCHOOL
MILNERTON STREET, EXT. 4, ELDORADO PARK 1811
P.O. BOX 93, ELDORADO PARK 1813. TEL: (011) 342-1096 FAX: (011) 945-5521

Email: lanceavalesecondaryschool@gmail.com

9 October 2024

Dear sir /madam

The principal and staff herewith agree to participate in the research study and grant you access into our school.

Yours in Education

Mrs.K.Griffiths

(principal)

GAUTENG DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
LANCEA VALE SECONDARY SCHOOL
MILNERTON STREET, EXT.4
ELDORADO PARK, 1811
2024 -10- 0 9
TEL: 011 342 1096/082 553 3746
EMAIL:lanceavalesecondaryschool@gmail.com
700120212@gdeschools.gov.za

Appendix Q:

Frequency Histograms

Figure 5: Teacher-targeted Bullying and Harassment Frequency

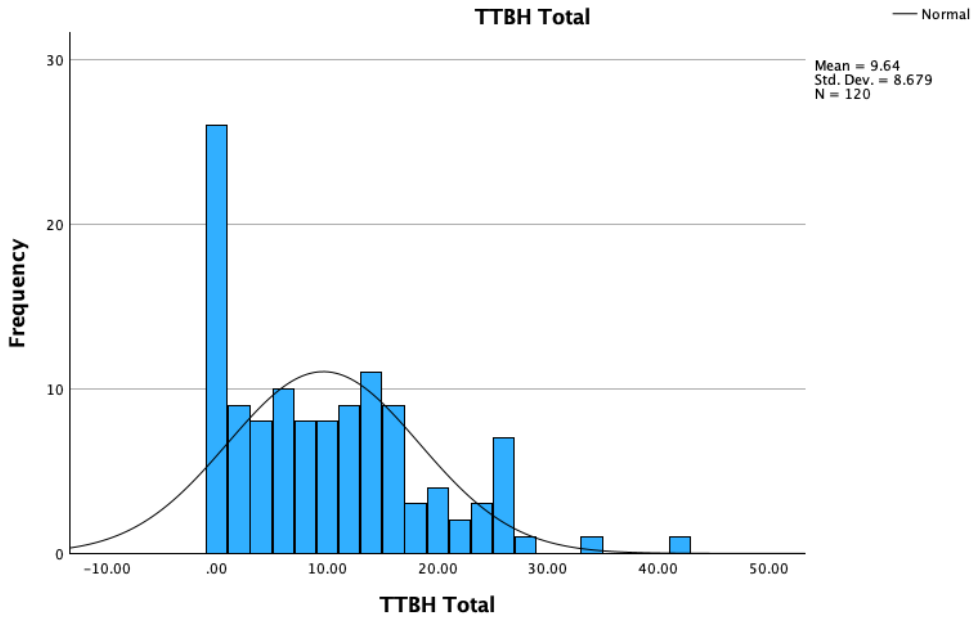


Figure 6: Psychological Capital Frequency

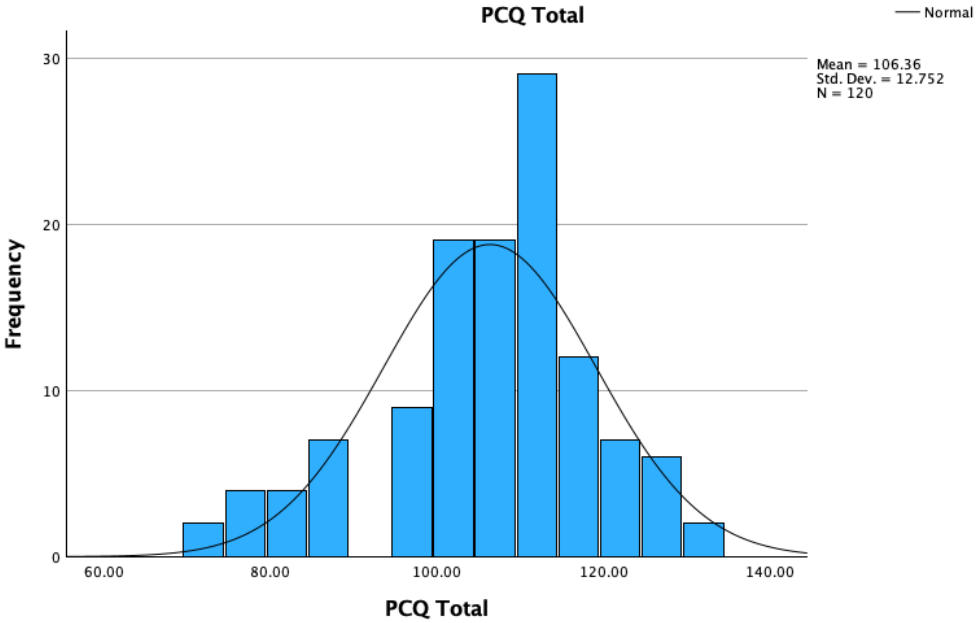


Figure 7: Physiological Health Frequency

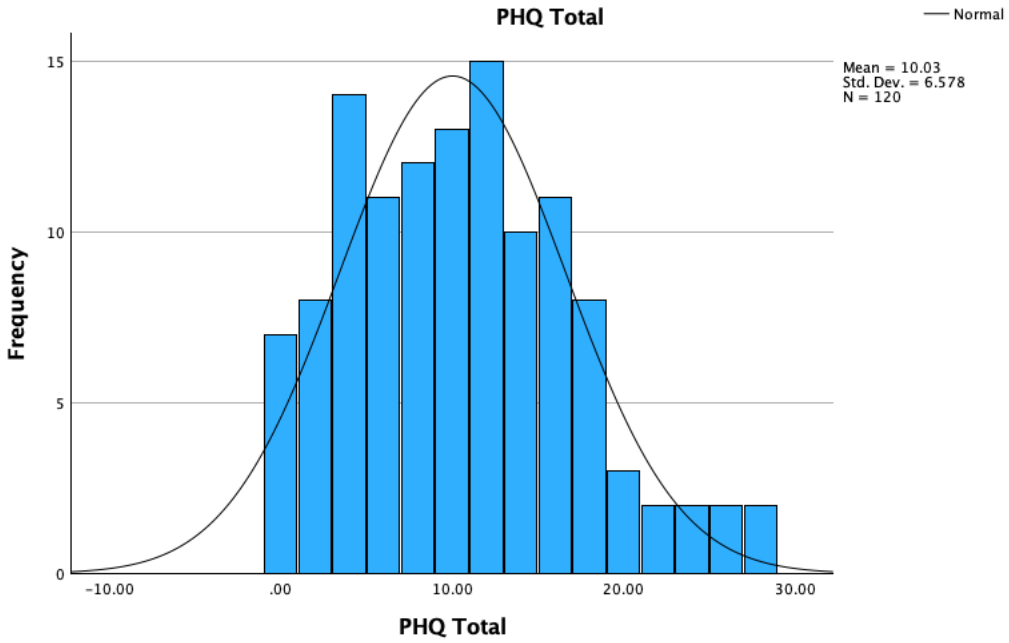


Figure 8: Psychological Health Frequency

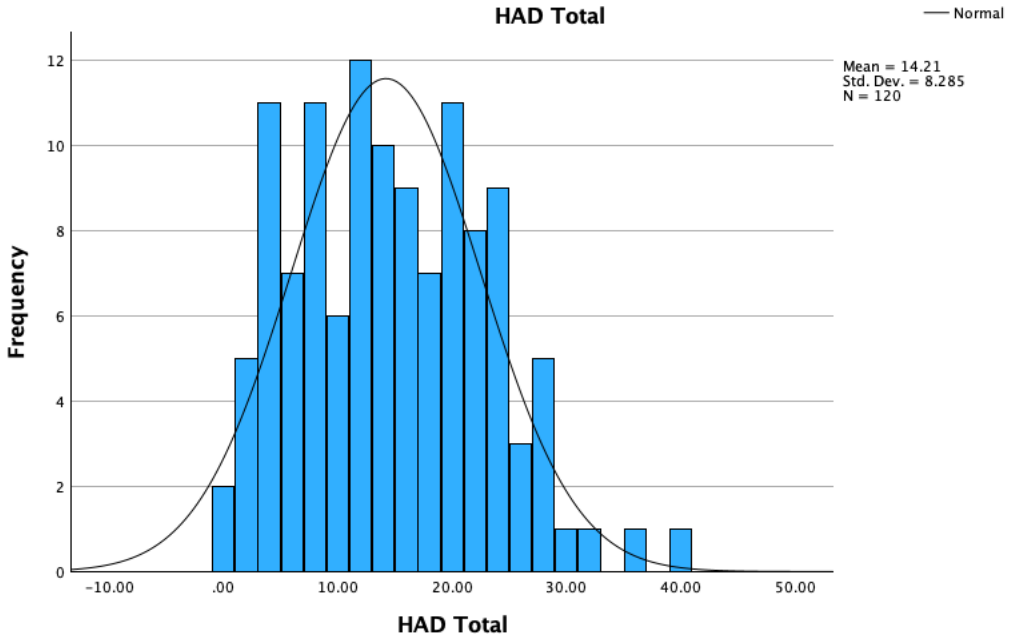
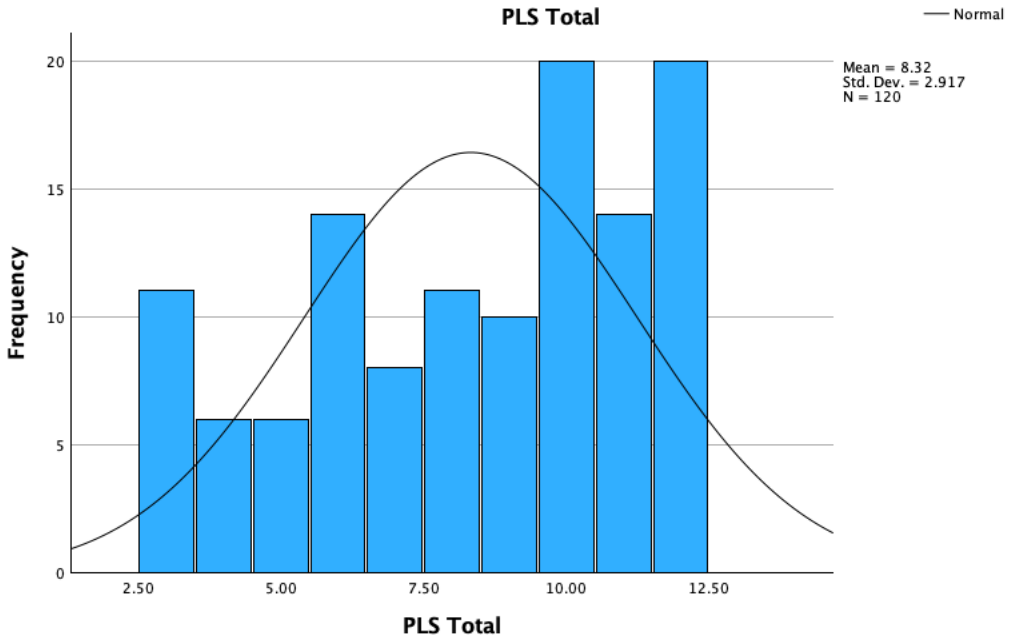


Figure 9: Intention to Leave Frequency



Appendix R:

Linear Regression Graphs

Figure 10: TTBH and PsyCap Regression Graph

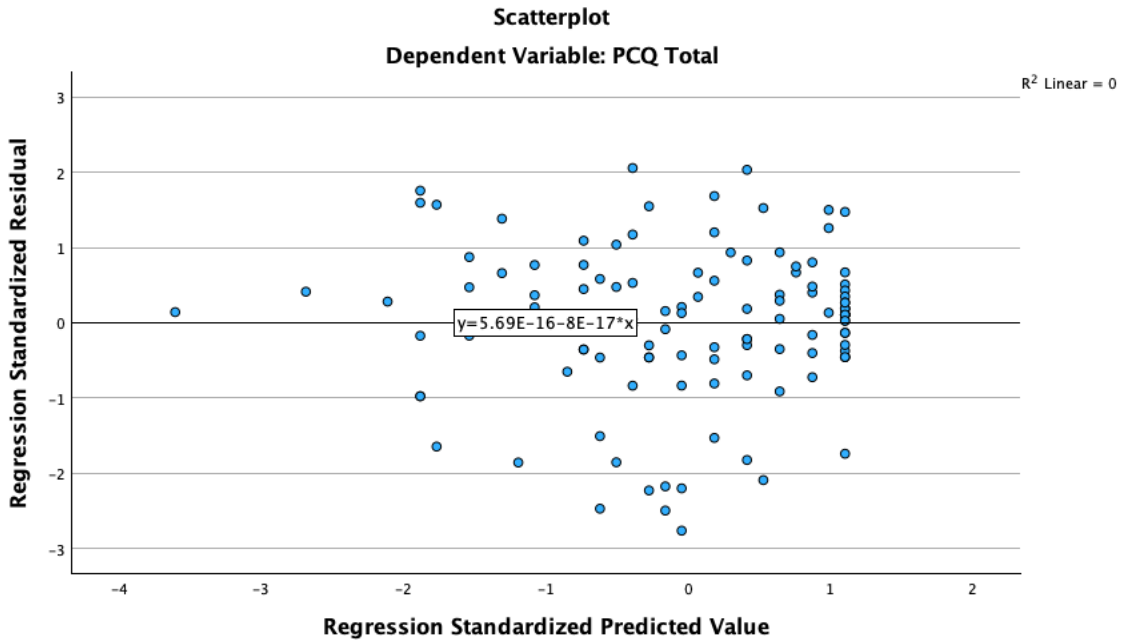


Figure 11: TTBH and Physiological Wellbeing Regression Graph

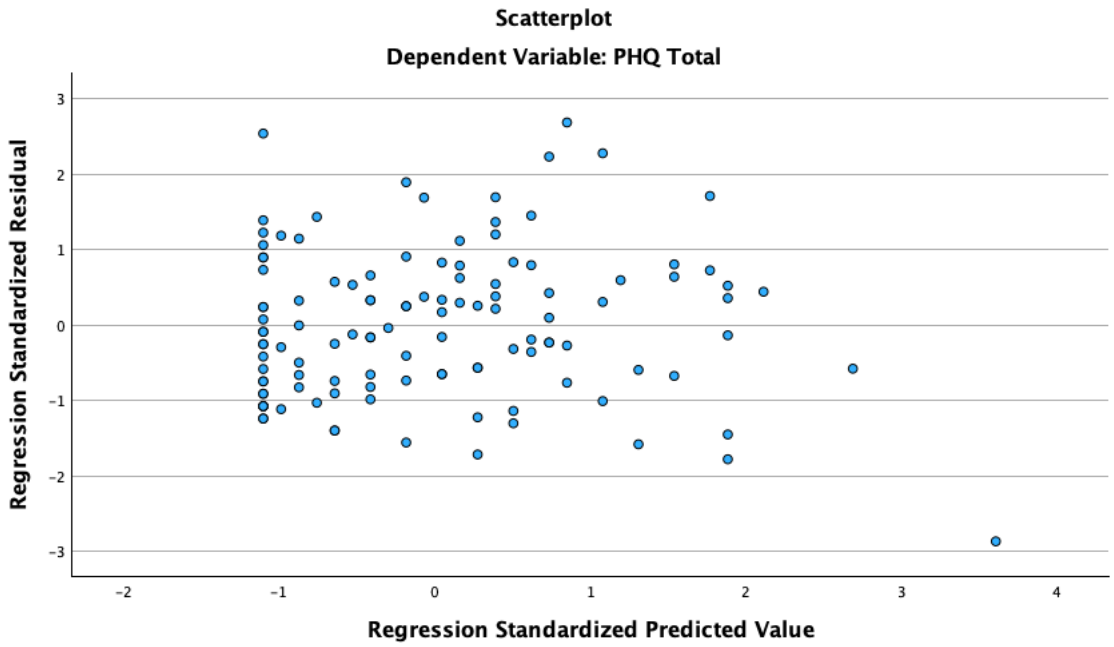


Figure 12: TTBH and Psychological Wellbeing Regression Graph

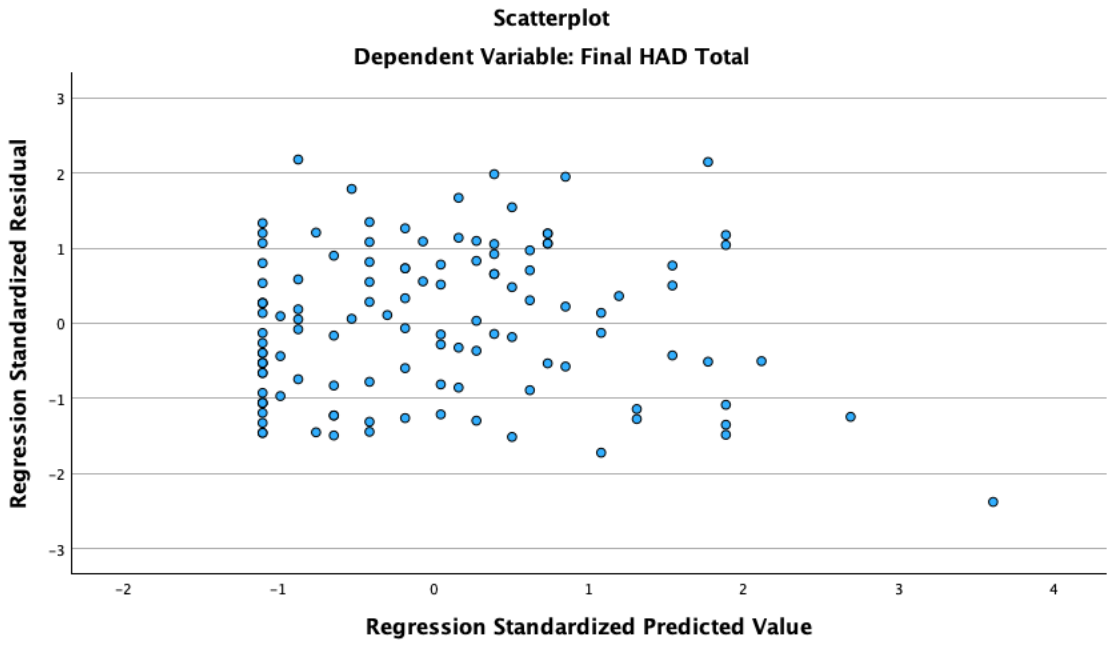


Figure 13: TTBH and Intention to Leave Regression Graph

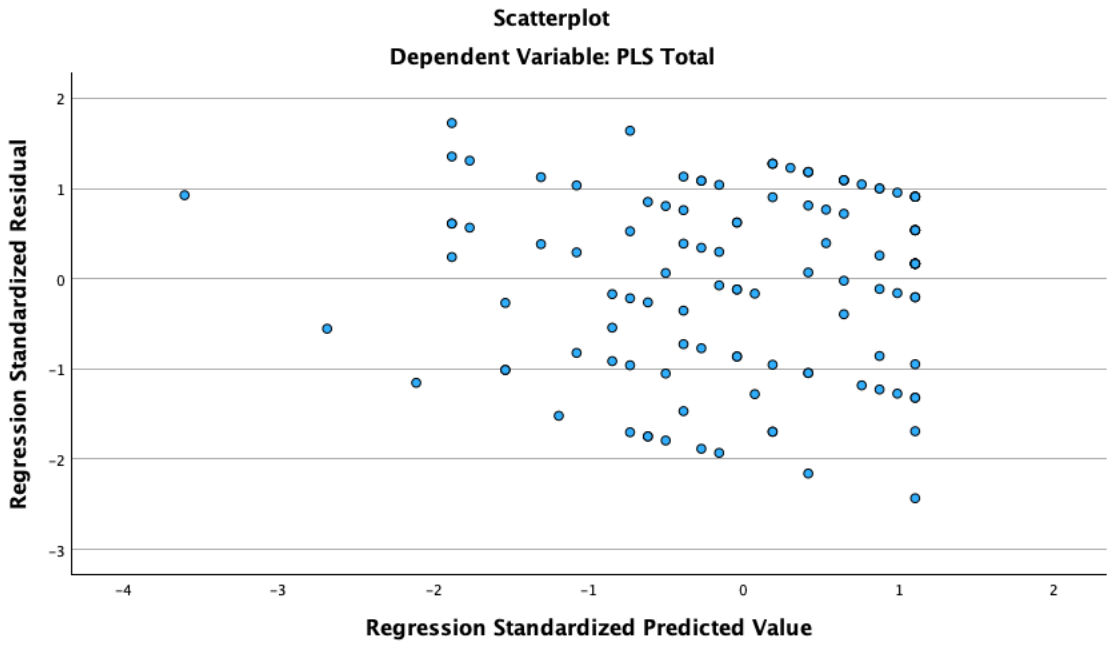


Figure 14: PsyCap and Physiological Wellbeing Regression Graph

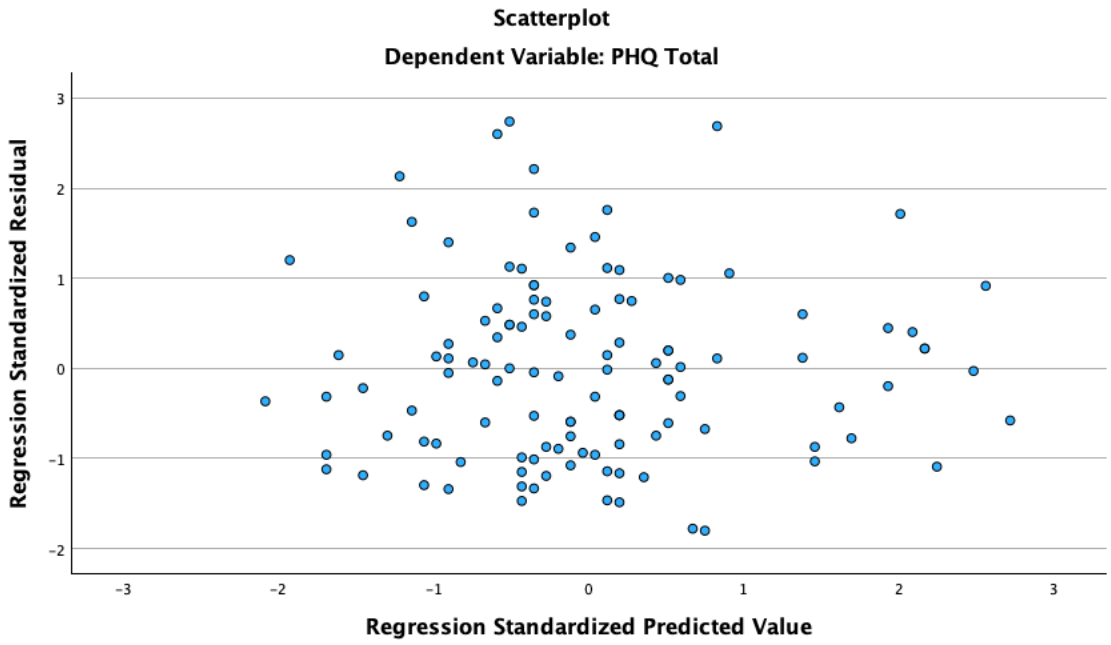


Figure 15: PsyCap and Psychological Wellbeing Regression Graph

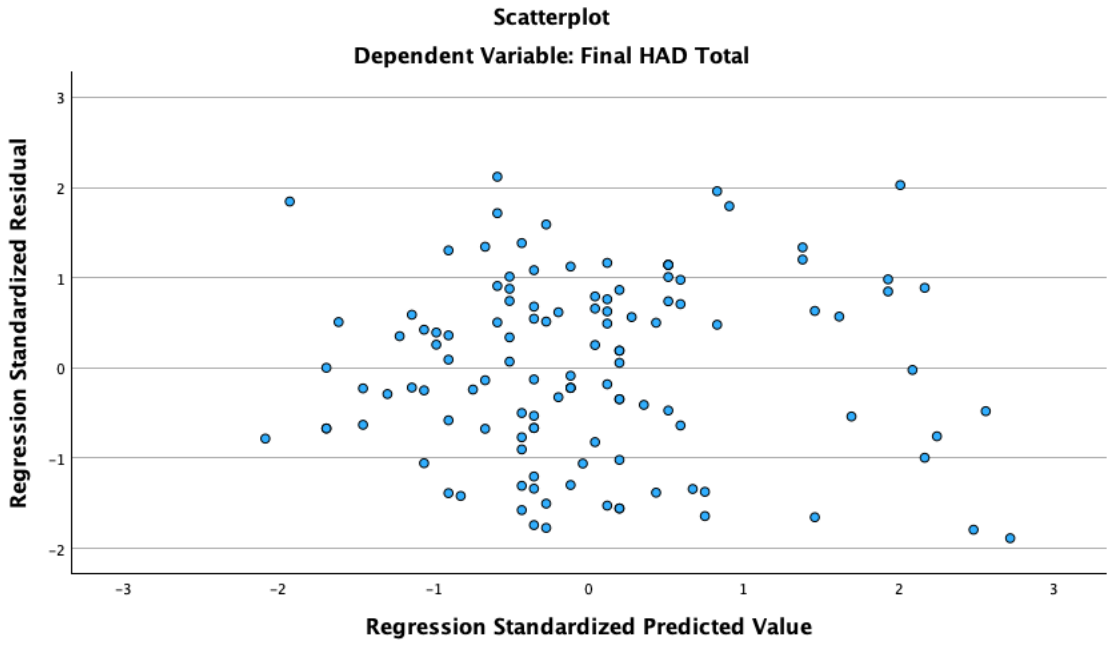


Figure 16: PsyCap and Intention to Leave Regression Graph

