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The Experience of Workplace Bullying Amongst Teachers: A Qualitative Study



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A Research Project Submitted in Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements for the Bachelor of Arts Master's Degree (Industrial Psychology) in the Humanities Faculty, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg.

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

Plagiarism Declaration

I, Toni Batchelor (931115 0122 085), hereby declare the following:

- I am aware that plagiarism (the use of someone else's work without their permission and/or without acknowledging the original source) is wrong.
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Signature: **Date:**

_____ _____

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Abstract/Summary

Over the years, researchers have found the teaching profession as being one of the most stressful occupations, as it is characterised by excessive job demands and limited job resources. Recently, news reports and social media accounts have also highlighted the toxic environment which exists within schools, as there has been an increase in workplace bullying reports between teachers and teachers and learners. This is a very serious situation as decades of research done on the workplace highlights the detrimental effects of workplace bullying, as it is regarded as a psychological and physical stressor that severely affects the wellbeing of individuals as well as organisations.

Considering this research, the present study utilised the Job Demand-Resource model (JD-R model) as a theoretical approach to contextualise and gain a more in-depth understanding of workplace bullying amongst South African teachers. The research method used was qualitative and the data was collected using face-to-face semi-structured interviews. Thirteen teachers in Gauteng were interviewed and a thematic content analysis (TCA) was used to analyse the data collected. The main findings of this study indicated that the participants perceived the teaching profession as being characterised by high job demands and low resources, and that these conditions negatively affected the wellbeing of participants. Participants expressed feeling stressed, frustrated and fatigued. Further, the participants perceived their stressful working conditions and the poor wellbeing that it has caused, as contributing to the increase of workplace bullying reports within schools. Being exposed to bullying behaviors over time led to participants feeling immense emotional trauma, with participants expressing feelings of depression, stress and incompetence. Further, participants expressed how workplace bullying negatively effected the functioning of schools, leading to an increase in turnover intentions, absenteeism, and a breakdown in working relationships.

The implications of the study's findings are that they contribute to the awareness of the environmental conditions of teachers and how this may be promoting workplace bullying that occurs amongst teachers within South African schools.

In doing so, this study may encourage governmental departments to improve environmental conditions within schools and thereby protect teachers from the escalation of workplace bullying and its concomitant individual health impairments. National legislation and support networks could also be developed and implemented to protect teachers from bullying at work. The results of this study therefore contribute to a knowledge base bringing awareness to the importance of effectively managing working conditions and thereby reducing the possibility of workplace bullying.

Keywords: *Teachers, Workplace Bullying Experiences; Job Demands; Job Resources; Job Stress; Wellbeing*

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Chapter One: Introduction

1.1 Framing the examination of workplace bullying amongst teachers within South African schools

Research on workplace bullying is not a new phenomenon. In fact, there has been a substantial increase in research regarding workplace bullying (De Wet, 2014; Georgakopoulos, Wilkin, & Kent, 2011). However, while there are extensive studies done on workplace bullying within organisations and a large body of research on bullying between pupils in South African schools, there has been very little research on understanding workplace bullying between teachers within South African schools. In addition, there has been very little research done in South African schools on bullying utilising the JD-R framework of examining environmental demands and resources. This is despite the fact that, research has recognised the teaching environment to be highly stressful and an environment where teachers are high at risk of experiencing workplace bullying.

Schools in South Africa have within recent years undergone extensive political and societal transformations, which has led to continuous yet often ineffectual changes being made to government policies. This has significantly affected the job demands of teachers without supplying the necessary job resources (De Wet & Jacobs, 2013; Montgomery, Mostert, & Jackson, 2005). These jobs demands will only be listed in this section, as it will be examined later in literature review (See pg. 17). These job demands include but are not limited to the following:

- High pupil-teacher ratios
- High workloads due to an increase in the school population
- An increase in diversity in school populations
- An increase in problematic child behavioural cases due to the increase in crime within broader communities
- Role ambiguity as there are constant changes within the profession about the scope of syllabuses
- A lack of career development opportunities
- A lack of opportunities for promotion
- A low salary amidst the increase in the cost of living

- Difficult interactions with external bodies such as parents of students as well as student bodies
- Performance appraisal systems amidst the lack of resources and
- The demands of unions

(Santavirta, Solovieva, & Theorell, 2007; Van Tonder & Fourie, 2015).

Dr Lynette Jacobs a lecturer in educational studies states that, "*South African teachers are working in toxic environments characterised by disgruntled, overworked, and stressed teachers*" (Jacobs, 2014, p.1 as cited in News24, 2014). These conditions are particularly apparent and far more intense within schools located in poor environments, which are known to be under-resourced and are fraught with moral degradation, violence, lawlessness, and economic despair (Harber & Muthukrishns, 2000; Human Rights Commission, 2006; Ncontsa & Shumba, 2013; Prinsloo, 2008). Within such schools, demands are excessively high on teachers who are expected to work with a lack of resources to meet performance outcomes (Ncontsa & Shumba, 2013). Dr Lynette Jacobs additionally states, "*In schools where despair and disrespect prevail, teachers often turn on one another. Yet, there still is a lack of research on workplace bullying among teachers"* (Jacobs, 2014, p.1 as cited in News24, 2014). Thus, while numerous reports and anecdotal evidence exists, which highlight the high degree of bullying and violence occurring in schools, to the researcher's knowledge, academic research on workplace bullying, done within a framework of examining environmental demands and resources within South African schools, particularly amongst teachers, is still lacking. Consequently, interventions aimed at combating workplace bullying within the teaching environment is often generic or based on generally accepted solutions from research conducted within corporate organisations (De Wet & Jacobs, 2013). In understanding workplace bullying, one recognises how problematic this is, as it does not account for the context specific unique nature of bullying experienced within schools. As such *'corporate style'* intervention strategies that may be implemented are possibly questionable regarding their efficacy in addressing school related problems.

Given the context provided above, the aim of this study was to understand the specific context and nature of workplace bullying experienced between teachers within the teaching context. The JD-R model was utilised as a guiding framework to examine the role of job demands and resources in relation to workplace bullying amongst South African teachers. Utilising this model assisted in framing the factors that contributed to exacerbating or alleviating workplace bullying within South African schools. This model enabled the researcher to structure a broad list of job characteristics that arose as antecedents of workplace bullying and the resources that may mitigate these demands within the South African schooling context. In addition, this study also aimed to explore teachers' perceptions of their experience of workplace bullying and how these perceptions may influence their perceptions and experiences of a wide range of psychological and physiological symptoms. A thorough understanding of the context, the experiences of workplace bullying as well as the effects of workplace bullying on teachers highlighted the seriousness of the phenomenon and could allow for the future development of context specific, tailor-made interventions. This would assist in preventing and/or mitigating workplace bullying experienced in South African schools, which currently face an education crisis that requires motivated and dedicated teaches to "*rebuild the faltering schooling system*" (Jansen, 2011, p.2 as cited in De Wet & Jacobs, 2013).

1.2 The structure of the research report

To address the above mentioned aims in a structured format, this research report is demarcated into different chapters. These chapters are demarcated as follows:

Chapter one has presented an introduction to the rationale behind conducting this research study along with the aims and contribution that this study may have within the South African schooling context.

Chapter two is devoted to a review of literature that explores workplace bullying, the consequences of workplace bullying, the coping strategies adopted by targets of workplace bullying, the JD-R model as the theoretical framework and available literature on the teaching profession.

Chapter three adresses how the empirical investigation was conducted within schools in Gauteng. It indicates the different standardised methods and techniques used by the researcher to gather information to adequately answer the research question. This includes the research design, the sampling technique, the process used to gather the information required and the ethical measures taken.

Chapter four reports on the findings elicited from the semi-structured interviews conducted. These findings are presented in the form of themes and are integrated with the findings in literature. In addition, to capture the truthfulness of the themes, direct quotes from the transcripts are included in the write up.

Chapter 5 includes the practical implications, limitations, recommendations and conclusion of the study.

Chapter Two: Literature Review

2.1 Defining the concept of workplace bullying

For many years, researchers have grappled with establishing a uniform definition of workplace bullying. According to Branch, Ramsay and Barker (2013) there is however, an agreement within the academic community on important broad characteristics that determine what this complex phenomenon is. The most comprehensive definition that encapsulates the broad agreed upon characteristics of workplace bullying is offered by Matthiesen and Einarsen (2007) whereby workplace bullying is defined as:

> *"a situation in which one or more persons systematically and over a long time perceive themselves to be on the receiving end of negative treatment in a situation in which the person exposed to the treatment has difficulty defending themselves" (p. 735).*

It can be deduced from the above-mentioned definition that workplace bullying is not a once off incident. Instead, it consists of the target of workplace bullying being exposed to the repeated negative treatment for long period of time, which is usually a minimum of six months (Einarsen, 2000; Pietersen, 2007). This repeated exposure to the negative treatment is argued to exhaust the coping strategies employed by targets resulting in the behaviour becoming destructive to the wellbeing of targets (Einarsen, Hoel, Zarf, & Cooper, 2011; Heames & Harvey, 2006; Matthiesen & Einarsen, 2007). This distinguishes workplace bullying from other occasional negative behaviours that employees may be experiencing (Einarsen et al., 2011). It should however be noted that the repeated exposure to the negative behaviour as a criterion for workplace bullying, remains a contested debate between researchers. Some researchers argue that in some cases, single incidents of extreme aggression may be considered as acts of workplace bullying, if the single incident has a sufficiently negative effect on the wellbeing of the employee exposed (Baldry, Farrington, & Sorrentino, 2017; Einarsen, 2000; Tehrani, 2012).

This negative treatment referred to above (be it single or multiple), encompasses numerous forms of negative behaviour directed at a target. According to Cunniff and Mostert (2012), these behaviours can include both direct and indirect bullying acts towards the target. Currently, researchers have not established a “definitive list” of negative behaviours, which constitute workplace bullying (Cunniff & Mostert, 2012). Some of the direct and indirect acts identified by researchers include: personal behaviours such as physical and verbal aggression; occupational related behaviours such as withholding important information and/or documentation, preventing access to career advancement opportunities; public displays of professional humiliation, belittling opinions, devaluing contributions, overwork/underwork targets; as well as social isolation such as ignoring and/or excluding individuals from events and/or plans (Cowie, Naylor, Rivers, Smith, & Pereira, 2002).

Non-professionals, in the bullying field, often question as to why targets of workplace bullying fail to do anything about the continuous exposure to the negative treatment. This leads to the next characteristic entrenched within the definition provided, which is the inability to defend oneself. This inability to defend may often be related to the power imbalance between the perpetrator and target. Targets of workplace bullying often have difficulty in defending themselves due to the perceived or actual power differences that exists between targets and perpetrators (Baillien, Escartin, Gross, & Zapf, 2017; Branch, Ramsay, & Barker, 2013; Samnani, 2013). Power differences can stem from the physical aspects of the perpetrator (e.g. being muscular); the position of the perpetrator in the organisation’s hierarchy and/or from the support that the perpetrator gathers, that is, the number of co-perpetrators that the perpetrator gathers around him or her, thus bullying the target with a ‘gang’ (Baillien et al., 2017; Cunniff & Mostert, 2012). The perpetrator is therefore perceived as having informal or formal power over the target. This power difference is argued to be the characteristic that allows for the repeated exposure to the negative treatment and consequently the negative consequences, as targets perceive themselves as being in a helpless and inferior position to the perpetrator and therefore unable to resist and thereby cope (Einarsen et al., 2011).

2.2 The consequences of exposure to workplace bullying

It is not enough to only understand what constitutes as workplace bullying, but it is also important to be aware of the consequences thereof, as this will highlight the seriousness of workplace bullying. As previously mentioned, for behaviour to constitute as workplace bullying, it must result in some form of harm to the target. Targets of workplace bullying are therefore subject to a range of psychological and/or physical harm. Studies have found that being exposed to workplace bullying can manifest in the development of numerous negative psychological symptoms that include anxiety, burnout, stress, fatigue and depression (Agervold & Mikkelson, 2004; Bowling & Beehr, 2006; Nielsen & Einarsen, 2012). In addition, other health problems that are physiological, such as high blood pressure, heart circulation problems, allergies and skin conditions may ensue (Bowling & Beehr, 2006; Kivimaki et al., 2003). Studies have also found that in severe cases the development of suicidal thoughts (including the act of suicide) and post-traumatic stress disorder may be present within targets of workplace bullying (Iglesias & Vallejo, 2012; Nielsen, Tangenc, Idsoe, Matthiesen, & Magerøy, 2015). These negative consequences on the health of targets have further been found to damage personal relationships and family bonds and may result in targets experiencing financial difficulties due to medical expenses (Tracy, Lutgen-Sandvik, & Alberts, 2006).

Workplace bullying, furthermore, stretches beyond the parameters of the individual target as it creates further negative consequences for organisations (Balducci, Allfano, & Fraccaroli, 2009; Nielsen & Einersen, 2012; Nielsen & Knardahl, 2015). This is due to targets of workplace bullying often suffering from decreased job satisfaction and motivation, which may lead to negative consequences on the productivity of employees and which may result in a substantial increase in absenteeism and turnover rates (Branch et al., 2013; Dehue, Bolman, Vollink, & Pouwelse, 2012). These consequences, especially the high turnover rates, result in the decrease in productivity levels due to the loss of specialised skills and an increase in expenditures incurred by organisations to rehire. According to Dehue et al. (2012) the cost incurred in finding, developing and training new employees can be very costly for organisations.

The impact of workplace bullying can also have a ripple effect, resulting in employees who witness the bullying also bearing the negative health outcomes mentioned above (Dehue et al., 2012).

It is evident that the mitigation and/or the prevention of workplace bullying is important for the lives of individuals as well as organisations at large. This is particularly important within the lives of South African teachers, as workplace bullying would not only bare negative consequences on the personal lives of teachers but would also negatively affect the way teachers deliver their essential service. This was evident within the limited studies done on workplace bullying within the South African schooling environment. For example, Corene De Wet who is a prominent South African researcher who focuses on workplace bullying within educational settings found that workplace bullying had a detrimental effect on the professional and private wellbeing of teachers who were targets of workplace bullying (2014). In a study conducted by De Wet in (2010) on principal-on-educator bullying, it was found that targets expressed suffering from depression, headaches, stress and burnout. In addition, targets reported feeling less committed, experiencing low levels of morale, feelings of mediocrity, and an emotional and psychological withdrawal from any social and professional activities. Furthermore, in a study conducted by De Vos (2013) within South Africa, teachers had decided to leave the profession as a coping mechanism to the bullying behaviour. These findings bring awareness to the impact of workplace bullying and how it would bare negative consequences on the teaching and learning process as morale, motivation and the overall wellbeing of teachers is important for quality education. In addition, losing employees in a specialised field such as teaching where graduates are scarce may be particularly detrimental, especially given that a replacement teacher may not be readily available. These consequences would bear further negative consequences on an already faltering South African schooling system and thereby, on the lives of learners.

2.3 Coping with bullying behaviour

The above-mentioned consequences of workplace bullying are argued to occur because of adopting ineffective coping strategies. Coping refers to the actions taken by individuals to deal with and/or avoid being harmed by any strenuous situation (Pearlin & Schooler, 1978). Similarly, Lazarus (1993, p. 237) defines coping as the "*ongoing cognitive and behavioural efforts to manage specific external and/or internal demands that are considered as taxing or exceeding the resources of the person*". As workplace bullying occurs within different contexts and arises within different forms, which last for different durations of time, and, individuals have different personalities, beliefs and values, it is often found that targets of workplace bullying may employ different copying strategies (Dehue et al., 2012). Therefore, coping strategies may be context and person specific. Research done on the coping strategies employed by targets of workplace have been a testament to this.

Olafsson and Johannsdottir (2004) examined coping strategies specifically in relation to workplace bullying and identified four coping strategies namely seeking help, avoidance, and assertiveness and doing nothing. These four strategies can further be classified into two broad categories namely, active and passive strategies. Active strategies as the name suggests, refers to "*active*" and/or overt behaviours displayed by targets to manage and/or stop the bullying encounters (Dehue et al., 2012; Olafsson & Johannsdottir, 2004). Therefore, from the four strategies identified seeking help and assertiveness are examples of active strategies (Bernstein & Trimm, 2016). Seeking help referring to the target actively asking for assistance from others and assertiveness, refers to the target actively relying on his or her own resources, by standing up to the perpetrator, to stop the bulling behavior (Bernstein & Trimm, 2016). It must be noted that these behaviours are argued to be adopted when there are structures in place to assist in managing bullying experiences and during the first initial bullying encounters with the perpetrator (Bernstein & Trimm, 2016; Dehue et al., 2012; Olafsson & Johannsdottir, 2004).

Passive strategies on the other hand, are indirect actions taken by the target to stop the bullying (Dehue et al., 2012; Olafsson & Johannsdottir, 2004). Therefore, from the four strategies identified avoidance and doing nothing are examples of passive strategies (Bernstein & Trimm, 2016).

Avoidance is also referred to as escape as it involves actively escaping from or avoiding the perpetrator. On the other hand, doing nothing refers to the target pretending not to be bothered by the bullying behaviour and/or even ignoring the fact that the bullying is occurring i.e. not reacting at all to the bullying behaviour. The premise behind adopting passive strategies is that the perpetrator will eventually tire out, lose interest and just stop (Dehue et al., 2012).

How efficient a copying strategy is, varies from situation to situation (Van den Brande, Bernstein, Reknes, & Baillien, 2018). There have been extensive debates between researchers around the effectiveness of the different copying strategies within different situations. Research has however; more frequently found passive strategies to be less effective than active strategies (Van den Brande et al., 2018). Passive strategies are argued to have a greater chance of leading to poor wellbeing associated with depression and feelings of helplessness (Penley, Tomaka, & Wiebe, 2002; Schreuder et al., 2012). In addition, passive strategies have been found to lead to targets staying absent and leaving the organisation to cope (Dehue et al., 2012; Olafsson & Johannsdottir, 2004). However, according to Bernstein and Trimm (2016) even though active coping strategies may be more efficient in lessening the impact of workplace bullying, whether this copying mechanism will be adopted is questionable due to targets perceptions of the power imbalance, which exists between the target and perpetrator. In fact, Bernstein & Trimm (2016) note that in certain instances assertiveness can escalate into aggression and worsen the situation, leading to a cycle of escalated bullying and aggression between perpetrator and target. This is because aggressive behaviour may inflame and infuriate the perpetrator leading to an excessively confrontational and destructive interaction between the target and the perpetrator (Upton, 2009).

Considering the above mentioned, according to Van den Brande et al. (2018) it is important for more research to be conducted which examines the conditions in which coping strategies either attenuate or amplify negative outcomes. Investigating and analysing the coping strategies employed by different targets within different situations is important, as findings have indicated that although efficient coping mechanisms are able to improve functioning and possibly remove a stressor, ineffective coping mechanisms have been associated with increased levels of strain (Van den Brande et al., 2018).

Within the context of this study, effective coping strategies may lessen and/or eradicate of the bullying behaviour experienced by targets. However, if an ineffective copying strategy is adopted, it could lead to an increase in bullying behaviours experienced by targets and an increase in strain outcomes, that is, psychological and physiological ill effects.

2.4 Theoretical framework – The JD-R model and its utilisation within the context of workplace bullying.

The following section outlines the theoretical framework utilised for the present study and explores how this framework can be utilised to understand workplace bullying and more specifically to understand workplace bullying within the context of South African schools.

2.4.1 The JD-R model

The JD-R model is an occupational stress model which states that characteristics of a job namely the demands and resources enshrined within a job, can influence the wellbeing of employees (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007; Simbula et al., 2012). Job demands refers to aspects of a job, which are taxing on employees' personal capacity. These aspects require sustained physical or mental effort to cope with them (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007). Examples of job demands would be a high workload and/or role conflict (Simbula et al., 2012). When job demands are too taxing on employees, poor psychological and/or physiological wellbeing can ensue such as strain and burnout (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007; Xanthopoulou et al., 2007). Job demands have therefore, been found within research studies to have a negative impact on the energetic process of employees.

Job resources on the other hand, are job characteristics that can mitigate the negative impact of job demands, aid employees in the achievement of work goals and stimulate learning and development (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007). Examples of job resources would be social support and task autonomy (Simbula et al., 2012). Job resources have also been found to result in motivated employees, which enhance employee work engagement (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007; Bakker, 2011).

Job resources have therefore, been found to impact positively on the wellbeing and energetic process of employees.

Job demands, and job resources have in addition, been found to interact. In the interaction, job resources have been found to have the ability to buffer (lessen) the effects of job demands to such an extent that employees experiencing high job demands may to a lesser extent experience the psychological and physiological effects of being exposed to excessive job demands (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007; Bakker, Demerouti, De Boer, & Schaufeli, 2003). Employees therefore benefit from job resources when working under demanding conditions.

The JD-R model is a recognised and frequently used model within the context of occupational stress and strain (Baillien, Neyens, De Witte, & De Cuyper, 2009). Researchers have used this model in numerous studies and have applied the model to various occupations and to different set of outcomes. Job demands and job resources has been shown to have an influence on health and wellbeing, occupational attitudes and organisational behaviours. Examples of the different set of outcomes include burnout, work engagement, organisational commitment, job satisfaction, and turnover rates (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007; Baillien, et al., 2009). These studies illustrate that the JD-R model is not only useful in understanding the effects that job characteristics have on individuals, but rather that the JD-R model is also useful in understanding the effects that job characteristics have on organisations (Baillien et al., 2009; Van den Broeck, Baillien, & De Witte., 2011). More recently, researchers have started to examine the JD-R model in relation to workplace bullying wherein job demands can create an environment in which bullying is fostered while resources enable one to cope with demands and any workplace bullying that such demands may precipitate.

2.4.2 The JD-R model in relation to workplace bullying

As previously stated, a large number of empirical studies have been conducted on the JD-R model in relation to occupational stress and strain. More recently this model has been utilised to explore the possible antecedents of workplace bullying.

These studies have highlighted an association which exists between the job characteristics of the JD-R model and the characteristics identified as antecedents of workplace bullying.

Drawing on the JD-R model literature, there are numerous reasons as to why high job demands and a lack of resources could enable target and perpetrator reports of bullying. The perspective adopted in this study, is in accordance with Van den Broeck et al. (2011) and Baillien et al. (2009) whereby employees become vulnerable to becoming targets of workplace bullying when they offer little resistance against workplace bullying. This is argued to be, because of being exposed to excessive job demands and a lack of resources, which impacts negatively on the wellbeing of employees as it results in employees feeling emotional and physical exhaustion. Exhausted employees are also argued to complain a lot more and embark on behaviours, which violate norms, and expectations, which may become "annoying" to others, resulting in the employee becoming a target of workplace bullying (Baillien et al., 2009; Van Den Broeck et al., 2011).

Perpetrators on the other hand, are argued to be motivated to bully other colleagues when they experience emotions associated with poor wellbeing. High job demands, and low resources are argued to result in employees experiencing immense frustration and as a result such employees may take out their frustrations by bullying others (Baillien et al., 2009; Van Den Broeck et al., 2011). According to the World Health Organisation (2018), frustration is one of the many different negative emotions experienced when an individual experiences poor wellbeing because of being faced with stressful situations (high demands and low resources). In this instance, workplace bullying is argued to be a coping mechanism used by perpetrators, to express their frustration or to salvage some control over their surroundings (Baillien et al., 2009; Van Den Broeck et al., 2011).

This perspective on the part of the perpetrator, is echoed in a well-known hypothesis, namely the Frustration- Aggression hypothesis which is one of the most seminal theories in aggression research. While there has been several changes or additions to the theory over many years, the basic assumption is that frustration which is often understood as an event, increases the tendency of individuals to act aggressively.

This argument is based on the premise of what Sigmund Freud introduced to the field of psychology termed as catharsis (Breuer and Freud, 1895). Catharsis is based on the premise that individuals need to express emotions to reduce the emotion (Denzler & Förster, 2012). Therefore, to reduce the feeling of aggression, individuals need to engage in an activity to release it. Similarly, Dollard, Doob, Miller, Mowrer, & Sears (1939, as cited in Denzler & Förster, 2012) who are the founders of the frustration aggression hypothesis argued that when an individual is prevented from achieving a goal by an external factor, it will result in frustration. According to Dollard et al. (1939, as cited in Denzler & Förster, 2012) frustration will always lead to aggression which in agreement with the law of catharsis, can only be reduced by engaging in an activity to release it. Deciding on an activity to release this aggression is however argued to be complex, as it is not always possible for individuals to embark on an activity that is directed at the source of their frustration (Denzler & Förster, 2012). This may be due to power differences or even that the source of frustration is a "thing/item" such as money. Therefore, individuals often need to adopt other mechanisms to release their aggression (Denzler & Förster, 2012) such as taking up a sport or meditation or in the context of this study engaging in workplace bullying. Frustrations may therefore cause workplace bullying by venting one's aggression on a colleague.

Considering the above-mentioned arguments, the advantage of using the JD-R model in relation to workplace bullying, is that it allows one the ability to specify the content of poor job characteristics in terms of both the presence or absence of job demands and the presence or absence of job resources and how this relates to bullying outcomes (Baillien et al., 2009). This being particularly important within the present study as research reveals that the work environment of teachers is very stressful, as it is comprised of a serious lack of job resources amidst an increasing list of job demands (De Wet & Jacobs, 2013; Simbulaa et al., 2012; Van Tonder & Elsa Fourie, 2015). In accordance with the JD-R model, a stressful working environment, which is comprised of excessive work demands and a lack of job resources, negatively affects the wellbeing of employees, which are key antecedents for a high incidence of workplace bullying.

This study is therefore important as it contributes to the awareness of the environmental conditions of teachers and how this may be contributing to the workplace bullying that occurs amongst teachers within South African schools. The results of this study therefore contribute to a knowledge base bringing awareness to the importance of effectively managing working conditions and thereby reducing the possibility of workplace bullying.

2.4.3 Antecedents of workplace bullying: Job demands and lack of resources in relation to workplace bullying

Considering the above mentioned, it becomes evident that the JD-R model aids one to better understand the possible antecedents of workplace bullying. While research has identified individual personality characteristics such as neuroticism, conscientiousness, over-achieving, submissiveness and/or being introverted, as characteristics that may make targets more prone to workplace bullying behaviours (Coyne, Seigne, & Randall, 2000); research has further identified workplace bullying antecedents in relation to the '*work environment hypothesis'.* This latter hypothesis forms the base of the JD-R model and is based on the premise that workplace bullying occurs and flourishes when stressful work environmental conditions can proliferate within the organisation (Baillien et al., 2009; Van Den Broeck et al., 2011). In this regard, studies detailing workplace bullying have examined various job characteristics elicited from targets reports of workplace bullying. This body of research has resulted in the development of a broad list of job characteristics, (demands and resources) which can be linked to targets reports of bullying.

A high degree of perceived demands such as the exposure to a high degree of workload, a high degree of cognitive and emotional demands, role ambiguity, low task autonomy and job insecurity may increase workplace bullying in accordance with target reports (Akar, 2013; Baillien & De Witte, 2009; Branch et al., 2013; Salin, 2015; Samnani & Sigh, 2016; Xanthopoulou et al., 2007). Conversely, job resources such as a higher degree of autonomy, skill utilisation, and social support (from colleagues, supervisors and/or protective organisational policies and procedures) have been found to have a negative relationship to targets reports of workplace bullying (Branch et al., 2013; Salin, 2015; Van Den Broeck et al., 2011; Xanthopoulou et al., 2007).

It can be deduced from these studies that job demands and job resources play a role in fostering (boosting) and mitigating (buffering) workplace bullying, that is, job demands can increase the potential of workplace bullying while job resources can reduce the potential of workplace bullying. Similarly, within the JD-R framework, workplace bullying can be fostered in an environment characterised by high demands and low resources, where you may have an increase in 1) perpetration and/or the 2) likelihood of being a target of workplace bullying. The process in which this occurs is that perpetrators use workplace bullying as coping mechanism in order to express their frustration/stress about their demanding work environment. Whilst targets experience additional work stress/poor wellbeing as they must deal with being bullied amidst an environment characterised by excessive work demands and limited resources. This cumulative effect of multiple stressors may in turn lower targets capacity to deal with the bullying which may further manifest in poor well-being.

Considering the above mentioned, researchers have identified teaching as a profession faced with multiple job demands and limited access to resources (De Wet & Jacobs, 2013; Montgomery et al., 2005; Simbula et al., 2012). However, as mentioned previously, most of the studies conducted on workplace bullying antecedents, were done on workplace bullying within organisations with limited research done on workplace bullying within the context of schools. In addition, there has to the researcher's knowledge, been no qualitative research done on workplace bullying within the framework of the JDR-model between teachers within South African schools. This study thus aims to contribute to this body of research by qualitatively exploring job demands and resources within the teaching profession and whether participants perceive their job demands and resources or lack thereof, as contributing to their experience of workplace bullying.

The following section will provide a more in-depth examination of the working conditions and wellbeing of teachers in South Africa. It will further contextualise the job demands and wellbeing of teachers within the framework the JD-R model and workplace bullying.

2.5 Job demands and the wellbeing of teachers, the JD-R model and workplace bullying

The revised Personnel Administrative Measures (PAM) which is applicable to educators in the public service was published by the Minister of Basic Education in Government Gazette No. 396684 on 12 February 2016. The Minister of Basic Education, in terms of Section 4 of the Employment of Educators Act 1998, determined and consolidated the terms and conditions of employment of educators. This document therefore outlines the workload expected of teachers to complete which includes the duties to be covered by teachers during the formal school day and outside of the formal school day. This section will briefly highlight some of the duties outlined.

The basic role of teachers is to conduct class teaching with all the educational, administrative and disciplinary functions. These functions more specifically include but are not limited to the following: participate in class teaching, develop a meaningful progression in learning that is consistent with the curriculum, prepare lessons and to take a leadership role in respect to the various areas of learning as the teacher creates the stimulating learning environment, which allows the learner to become an active participant. Teachers are also expected to administer, assess, and report on a learners' academic performance. Outside of the formal school day, for the school to meet the needs of all learners, extra and co curricula activities are conducted. Facilitating extra and co curricula activities is argued to promote the holistic development of a learner. Therefore, the duties and responsibilities would reflect the nature, approach and needs of the school and learners. In addition, teachers are expected to interact with various stakeholders at schools. Teachers are expected to participate in the school governing body and often interact with parents and the broader communities in which they function. They are also expected to participate in the performance appraisal process of colleagues and reviewing their professional practice, with the aim of improving and developing teaching and learning. Teachers are perceived as lifelong learners and are expected to be informed of developments in educational thinking and therefore are also expected to attend workshops and seminars outside of the formal school day.

Within this role, the teacher is catalyst for learning as the teacher creates the stimulating learning environment. The wellbeing of teachers is therefore important, as it would have a direct impact on the quality of the service provided and teacher retention.

As with the definition of workplace bullying, wellbeing is a concept that has been defined differently by different researchers. According to Lyubomir (2001, as cited in Zheng, Zhu, Zhao, Zhan, 2015, p.622) wellbeing is one of those concepts in which "*everyone understands the meaning, but nobody can give a precise definition*". Within recent times, researchers have used a multiple-measure approach to understand wellbeing as this is argued to encapsulate the various elements of wellbeing (Zheng et al., 2015). Wellbeing is therefore defined as a multi-faceted concept, which refers to a positive state of being which encompasses physical, mental, psychological, emotional, and social wellbeing (Brown & Alcoe, 2010 as cited in Nel, 2018).

According to Kaplan, DeShon, Tetrick (2017) who report on behalf of the Society for Human Resource Management and the Society for Industrial and Organisational Psychology, a wealth of research on employee wellbeing, highlights the positive outcome that wellbeing has for organisations and on the personal life of individuals. Employees exhibiting high levels of wellbeing have been found to be more motivated, productive, innovative, and cooperative, experience fewer health-related problems, increased confidence and happiness and are more engaged with the achievement of organisational goals (Danna & Griffin, 1999; De Neve, Diener, Tay, & Xuereb, 2013; Kaplan, DeShon, Tetrick, 2017; Nielsen et al., 2017). Poor wellbeing, on the hand, has been found to result in organisations experiencing more costs as opposed to profits, as employees would engage in frequent absenteeism, experience physical health problems (frequent headaches; cardio vascular diseases) and psychological problems (anxiety and depression), resign from the organisation and behave in a less productive manner (Kaplan, DeShon, & Tetrick, 2017; Shi, Coberley, & Pope, 2013; Rothman & Cooper, 2008).

Job stress is one factor that has been found to result in poor wellbeing (strain). Job stress results from a lack of equilibrium between job demands and job resources (stressful working environment) and the employee's perception of their ability to meet the demands (Kaur, 2011). South African teachers are faced with very demanding job conditions due to the political and social changes that has taken place (Montgomery et al., 2005). These changes are argued to have had a huge influence on educational structures and consequently increased the job description of teachers. The dawn of democracy, diversity, affirmative action, retrenchment, and redeployment of teachers are some of the changes, which have influenced the role of teachers.

As societies continue to evolve, it is expected that teachers are able to adapt and meet the new challenges that arise. However, the role descriptions of teachers and the resources required, often do not meet these changing conditions. Teachers are required to complete the above-mentioned job description amidst significantly higher learner numbers; increased diversity in school populations, learner ill behaviour due to socio economic conditions, an increase in departmental accountability measures, curriculum changes, an increase curriculum and assessment requirements, performance appraisal systems and an increase in demands of unions. It could be argued that despite the increase in demands, the wellbeing of teachers appears to not be a priority within the educational system as job stress and burnout among teachers have increasingly received recognition as a widespread problem and global concern (Jackson, Rothmann, & Vijver, 2006; Kaur, 2011). According to Machado-Taylor, et al., (2013), within contexts of learning and teaching, job stress has implications for these institutions in terms of work performance, as teachers are likely to be less productive, prone to making poor decisions, as well as likely to stay absent and/or resign from the profession.

Considering the above-mentioned, the JD-R model and workplace bullying literature, job stress is postulated to result from a lack of equilibrium between job demands and job resources, which may increase the risk of workplace bullying. Workplace bullying has therefore been argued to be a consequence of job stress.

However, research has also recognised workplace bullying as a severe stressor (demand) in and of itself due to the psychological and physical trauma that it can result in. Kaur (2011) for example, defines stressors as events that induce psychological and/or physiological symptoms i.e. stress. Therefore, it can be argued that the stressful schooling environment characterised by excessive job demands and a lack of resources, allows for the establishment of workplace bullying. This could be particularly detrimental to the physical and psychological health of teachers given that workplace bullying would be an additional demand added to the job demands faced by teachers.

Below are two diagrams that illustrate the underlying theory of how workplace bullying is argued within literature to be related to the JD-R model. Please note within this study, these diagrams do not imply a causal relationship but is a sheer diagrammatical illustration of the relationship that workplace has to the theoretical framework as per available literature.

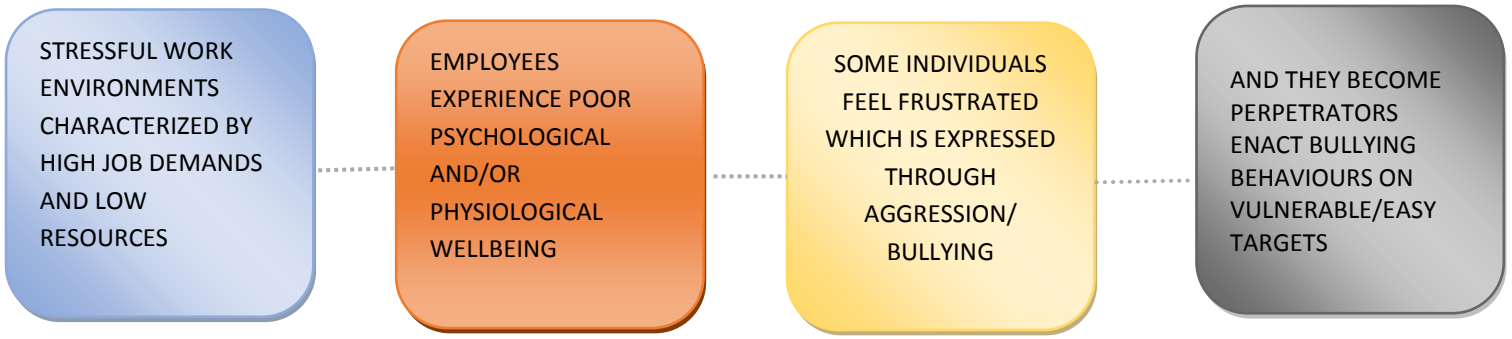


Diagram 1: Relates to vulnerability of individuals becoming Perpetrators of workplace bullying

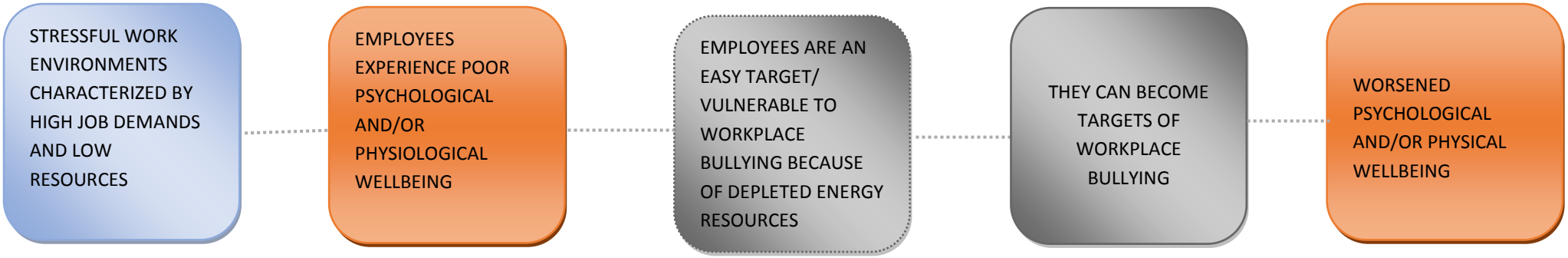


Diagram 2: Relates to vulnerability of individuals becoming Targets to workplace bullying behaviour

2.6 Conclusion of literature review

Based on the discussions above and the literature outlined, workplace bullying is a stressor which would be particularly detrimental within the teaching profession, as the quality of teaching is dependent on the wellbeing teachers. It is therefore imperative to develop an in-depth understanding of workplace bullying within schools, as this would allow for an increase in awareness of the phenomenon.

The JD-R model provides a framework in which workplace bullying can be contextualised because it allows researchers the ability to specify job characteristics in terms of both the presence of high job demands and the low levels or absence of job resources and how this relates to the creation of an environment in which bullying is fostered (Van den Broeck et al., 2011). Once bullying is experienced, for the targets this manifests in negative health outcomes. In using the JD-R framework, one can establish the process that is likely to take place in terms of antecedents and implications of workplace bullying within specified contexts such as schools. To the researcher's knowledge there is however a dearth in research done in South Africa which uses the JD-R model to explore workplace bullying especially within the teaching environment. Therefore, this study is of importance as it used a well-known model, to bring awareness to the possible workplace bullying antecedents and workplace bullying outcomes, within the teaching profession in South Africa. This exploration is also to the researcher's knowledge the only study that has been done qualitatively in South Africa. This therefore allowed the researcher to gather a rich and new in-depth understanding of how teachers perceived this complex phenomenon. The researcher gathered rich and in-depth information on how job demands, and resources are perceived to be contributing to workplace bullying and the outcomes thereof. This information is important as it is a starting point for research into the effective development of interventions to reduce and/or eradicate workplace bullying within the teaching context. Teachers play a vital role not only in the lives of learners but in our society and overall economy and it is therefore imperative that interventions are put in place to ensure teacher wellbeing.

The methodology used to operationalise this present study on workplace bullying and South African teachers is outlined in detail within the following Chapter, that is, Chapter 3.

Chapter Three: Research Design and Methodology

The present chapter outlines in detail research design and the methodology utilised in the study.

According to May and Sutton (2011) a research design provides a framework for the collection and analysis of data from a particular population. This provides a structure for the researcher, which enables the systematic gathering of information through different standardised methods and techniques in pursuit of answering the research question (Babbie & Mouton, 2001; Mouton, 2002). This systematic pursuit for answers includes a planned examination of how the data is to be collected and analysed. This includes the where, when, how and from whom information will be collected from. Establishing the appropriate research design is of utmost importance as it contributes to the establishment of an appropriate research method and to the objectivity and rationality of the research findings (Babbie & Mouton, 2001). Therefore, the selection of the research design needs to be treated with care and vigilance. This chapter will firstly outline the study's research design followed by the research methodology, which will outline the method and tools, which will be used to adequately address the focus of the study, this includes the sample, data collection technique, procedure to be followed, ethical considerations to be adhered to, and the method of analysis.

3.1 Research design

A descriptive and exploratory qualitative research design was utilised in this study. The purpose of a descriptive research design is to provide an accurate and precise detailed description of an individual, group, situation or social setting (Babbie & Mouton, 2001; Glaser & Strauss, 2009). In this study, the job demands and resources embedded within the teaching profession and experiences of workplace bullying relayed by participants, were the described phenomenon. Conversely, the purpose of exploratory research is to explore relatively new or under researched areas which usually contributes to limited knowledge and/or leads to new insights regarding a particular topic (Babbie & Mouton, 2001; Babbie, 2015).

This research study was exploratory in nature as it explored the possible contribution that job demands and resources may have on the development and flourishing of workplace bullying amongst teachers within the schooling context.

This research design was appropriate as it allowed the researcher to gather in-depth and detailed information from participants (Greenstein, Roberts, & Sitas, 2003). This is because qualitative research is concerned with non-statistical methods and instead emphasises the human factor with a focus on the 'experiences' of participants (Greenstein et al., 2003). The researcher was thus able to explore, understand, and interpret the experiences of teachers. This research design moreover allowed the researcher to collect data from a small sample who provided specific insight into the topic. This enabled the researcher to develop a rich description of the job demands and resources embedded within the teaching profession, the bullying experiences of teachers and the possible contribution that the imbalance between job demands and resources may have on the development and flourishing of workplace bullying within schools.

3.2 Research question and research instrument

Guided by the JD-R theoretical framework, the current study aimed to explore how job demands and resources could contribute to teachers' experience of workplace bullying and the relationship that their experiences of workplace bullying may have upon their health, that is, their psychological and physiological wellbeing.

To answer the research question, semi-structured interviews were conducted with 13 teachers in Gauteng that have experienced workplace bullying within a school, by colleague/s or supervisors. Semi-structured interviews were conducted as this allowed the researcher to elicit in-depth and detailed information by exploring the experiences and feelings of teachers. The researcher was also able to observe non-verbal behaviour and establish a rapport with participants due to the face-to-face nature of the interviews. Semi-structured interviews also allowed for the use of an interview schedule as a research instrument. Previous literature pertaining to workplace bullying and the JD-R model was utilised to inform the construction of the interview schedule.

The interview schedule consisted of 25 questions, which explored the job demands and resources available to teachers within their respective roles, their understanding of the construct of workplace bullying, their experience of workplace bullying, and the impact of workplace bullying on their overall lives (psychologically and physically). The researcher in addition was also able ask probing questions, where necessary. Having an interview schedule as a research tool, ensured that the interview remained focused as it guided participant's responses, however still allowed participants to express their opinions relevant to the topic. The interview schedule further ensured a level of consistency across different interviews, which created a sense of order (Doody & Noonan, 2013). This tool assisted the researcher in ensuring that essential in-depth information relating to the topic was gathered from participants, thereby adequately answering the research question (Refer to: Appendix D).

It is important to note that in conducting the interviews the researcher is the primary instrument who uses the interview schedule as an assistive tool. It was therefore important to ensure that the researcher's values, anticipations and desires, did not influence the interpretation of the data collected. To do this, the researcher kept a *reflexivity diary* throughout the research process, to acknowledge the presence of any subjectivity on the part of the researcher. In the diary, the researcher reflected on her expectations, biases and values throughout the research process. The researcher additionally worked closely with her supervisor throughout the data collection and analysis process. This included working together on the conducting of all interviews as well as working together to identify and analyse all the codes and themes, as both the researcher and supervisor examined the transcripts. This served as an additional way of reducing any bias on the part of the researcher as her supervisor was able to determine whether the personal judgements of the researcher influenced the analysis and interpretation of the findings in any way. The researcher remained flexible and open to the feedback provided by the supervisor throughout the process.

3.3 Sample

According to Fink (1995 as cited by May & Sutton, 2011) a sample refers to a portion of a larger group referred to as a population. It is pivotal for the sample used within a research study, to be representative of the broader population for which the results will be applicable (May & Sutton, 2011). It is therefore crucial to determine who and how a sample is collected. The sampling method used in this study was a non-probability purposive, convenience sampling technique.

A purposive sampling technique, which is a non-random sampling technique, was used to ensure that the participants selected embodied the necessary characteristics to answer the research question (McBurney & White, 2007). The necessary characteristics for this study was that participants needed to be teachers in Gauteng, who have specifically experienced workplace bullying from another teacher and/or staff member, and who was willing to be interviewed. To ensure that these characteristics were met, teachers were provided with a participant information sheet (PIS) which asked teachers whether they have experienced workplace bullying within a school in Gauteng (Refer to: Appendix B). Only if the teacher met these characteristics, were they invited to participate in the study. This sampling technique was suitable for the current study as it allowed for a more accurate description of workplace bullying experiences within the schooling context, because it focused on teachers who had a direct experience of workplace bullying.

To obtain the sample, potential participants were emailed the participant information sheet through the contact person at each school. It must be noted that participants in the study were able to ask any clarifying questions at the beginning of the interview and were asked to sign a consent form: the consent to be interviewed and audio-recorded (For further details regarding the procedure – refer to the procedure section below pg.28). The sample consisted of 13 teachers (10 female and 3 male). The gender composition of the sample, although very unequal, is typical within bullying literature, as there is often an underreporting of males who have experienced bullying due to reasons such as the fear of being perceived as weak and vulnerable (De Vos, 2013). Participants fell between the ages of 23 and 56.

The sample included participants who identified their race as Black (n=3), White (n=3), Coloured (n=5), and Indian (n=2). The sample furtherly identified their school's quintile as 1 (n=10) and 2 (n=3). A quintile is used as a method to assess the degree to which schools are well resourced or not, which is accorded by the South Africa Department of Education. This system categorises schools into five groups (quintiles) based on the wealth of its surrounding community. Schools in the poorest communities form part of quintile 1 and schools serving the wealthiest community form part of quintile 5. Thus, participants within this study were by and large within schools that are under resourced.

As previously indicated, qualitative research allows for a small sample size. This allowed the researcher to obtain an in-depth and a detailed description of the participant's experience (Fossey, Harvey, McDermott, & Davidson, 2002). Data saturation refers to the point in which no new information is brought forth by interviewees (Guest, Bunce, & Johnson, 2006). It would have been ideal to sample until a point of data saturation, as this would have ensured the collection of a more complete and comprehensive data set. However, this was not possible because of the time constraints imposed on the researcher by the University to complete the research report. Nonetheless, having the sample size of thirteen did allow the researcher to obtain an in-depth understanding and a detailed description of the job demands and resources embedded within the teaching profession, the bullying experiences of teachers and the possible contribution that the imbalance between job demands and resources may have on the development and flourishing of workplace bullying within schools.

3.4 Procedure

To operationalise this study a planned and systematic procedure was followed to try as best possible to avoid experiencing any problems within the research process and to ensure that the research study adhered to ethical considerations.

One of the conditions set by the University of the Witwatersrand is that before any research is conducted, the researcher must draft a proposal, detailing what the purpose of the research is and how the research is to be conducted. Due to the nature of this study, the Universities Ethics Committee additionally required the consent of the Gauteng Department of Education (GDE) to access teachers within their district. The researcher therefore drafted a proposal and contacted the GDE to obtain their consent. However, the GDE required a written letter of consent from principals at the respective schools where the research would take place. The researcher therefore contacted various schools (physically, telephonically and emailed) requesting permission from principals to allow the researcher access to the teachers at their respective schools. Principals were provided with a participant information sheet (PIS), which detailed the study, to get their permission (Refer to: Appendix A).

Within the PIS it stipulated that principals were not only to provide verbal consent but were also required to provide the researcher with a formal letter agreeing to allow the researcher access to their school, as this was needed by the GDE. Once the Principals provided the researcher with the written permission letters, the researcher emailed the letters to the contact person at the GDE requesting their overall permission to utilise teachers within schools in Gauteng to complete the interview, as per their protocol. Once the GDE granted the permission, a written proposal and the GDE'S letter of approval was sent to the University's Ethics Committee by the researcher. The University's Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC) approved the research (Ethics Protocol number H18/06/07).

Data collection then commenced with teachers from the schools at which permission was granted, being provided with a PIS that invited them to be interviewed (Refer to: Appendix B). The PIS was distributed to all teachers through the contact person within the school.

The researcher also handed out hard copies of the PIS to teachers after school at the gate of each school. The PIS served to inform potential participants about the nature of the study and invited them to participate. The PIS also served to purposively sample potential participants as they were asked if they have ever experienced bullying from other teachers or school staff. Teachers were requested and encouraged to liaise directly with the researcher regarding their willingness to partake in the study and/or any concerns they might have, therefore ensuring the confidentiality and anonymity of the teacher within the school context.

Participants that contacted the researcher regarding their willingness to partake in the semi-structured interview, were then provided with a venue, time and place which best suited them. On the day of the interview, the researcher introduced herself and verbally explained the nature of the study and provided participants with the PIS again, and the consent form (Refer to: consent form to be interviewed and to be audio recorded – Appendix C). Participants were encouraged to read the PIS again and then sign the consent form. This introduction was important as it provided a platform for the researcher to develop a healthy rapport with the participant. The interview started once the researcher started the audio recording.

The researcher ensured a comfortable environment by presenting with an open, and comfortable demeanour. More importantly, the researcher actively listened to participants, showing a sincere interest in the participant and their experience. At the end of the interview, participants were thanked for availing themselves and any further questions were addressed. The researcher also reminded participants about the importance of their wellbeing and thus encouraged participants to contact the researcher or the Emthonjeni Centre at the University of the Witwatersrand should they be experiencing any stress and/or anxiety. Lastly, the researcher informed participants that feedback regarding the research would be provided upon request in the form of a summary report. Once the interview stage concluded, the researcher commenced with the transcription and analysis process.

3.5 Ethical considerations

Once given ethical clearance from the Universities Ethics Committee (HREC), the researcher as mentioned above, gathered a sample and together with each individual participant decided on the date, time, and place to conduct the interview. On the day of the interview, the researcher firstly introduced herself to the participants and verbally reiterated the ethical considerations that were contained in written format in the PIS. Thus, the researcher explained that the research was being conducted as part of the requirements of completing a Master's degree in Organisational Psychology.

It was fully explained to all participants that participation within the study was voluntary. The voluntary nature of this study was explained in terms of participation being a choice and that choosing to partake in the study would in no way advantage or disadvantage anybody who chooses or chooses not to participate in the study. It was further explained that due to the face-to-face nature of the interviews the researcher could not ensure anonymity but that the interview would be treated with the strictest confidentiality. Confidentiality was explained by the researcher to be achieved in two ways. Firstly, audio recordings and transcribed data would be kept in storage under lock and key and in a password-protected computer, in an office that is locked and only be accessed by the researcher and supervisor of the study. Secondly, although quotes from the interviews would be used in the research report, the report would not contain the names of participants or any information that may result in identity of participants being revealed. Additionally, interviewees were also informed that if they so wished, an opportunity would be provided to verify that no identifying information is present within the report, as interviewees were asked if they would like a copy of the research report before the submission of the report to the University. This was done to ensure the comfort of the participants and encourage honesty. This was important because the accuracy of the research within a qualitative study is dependent on the honesty of participants (Legard, Keegan and Ward, 2003). The importance of the participant's psychological health was also emphasised.

Even though no psychological harm was expected, participants were informed that should any participant experience feelings of stress/anxiety after the interview, counselling with a clinical psychologist would be provided through the Emthonjeni Centre at the University of the Witwatersrand. This counselling service offered was free of charge and participants could make appointments on their own (if they so wish) or participants could request of the researcher to set up the appointment, at their convenience. This centre was set up on in April 2007, by the School of Human and Community Development to offer psychological, social work, speech pathology and audiology services to the public (University of the Witwatersrand, 2018). Contact details of the researcher and for the Centre was provided to all participants on the PIS, of which participants were encouraged to use at any point in time (Refer to: Appendix B). The researcher further stated that participants could refrain from answering any question as well as withdraw from the study at any point in time. Finally, participants were informed that should they want feedback regarding the research they could contact the researcher and feedback would be given on request.

Participants were also informed that the research report would be available on a public online platform, and that data could be used for publication purposes or conference proceedings but at all times the data will be fully anonymised and sanitised as there will be no way of identifying any participants responses. Once the researcher believed all the above mentioned was explained, read and understood by participants, the researcher required participants to sign the consent form to be interviewed and audio recorded. Once the form was signed, the researcher again verbally reminded participants that they could refrain from answering any question, stop the interview and/or withdraw from the research study, at any point in time. The researcher then commenced with the interview. At the end of the interview, participants were debriefed, and the researcher answered any questions and concerns brought forth by participants.

3.5.1 Protection and storage of the data during and after the research is completed

The transcriptions were completely sanitised and thus all identifying information removed. Participants were given pseudonyms, which were used in the transcripts and in the written report.

After the transcription, audio tapes were destroyed. Transcribed data however, is to be kept in storage under lock and key and in electronic form in a password-protected computer in an office that is locked and can only be accessed by the researcher and supervisor of the project. This data will be kept for a period of five years after which it will be destroyed. This was agreed to by participants. During this period, it will always be kept in a password-protected computer and this computer will be securely kept in an office under lock and key that no one other than the researchers have access to.

3.6 Data analyses

Thematic content analysis (TCA) was used to analyse the data collected from the interviews. This type of analysis is according to Anderson (2007), is a descriptive presentation of qualitative data. TCA, coined by Braun and Clarke refers to the systematic identification of themes and patterns across a data set (Kawulich & Holland, 2012). This analysis allowed the researcher to highlight similarities and differences across the transcripts, reveal significant underlying information, and provided the researcher with an opportunity to generate comprehensive themes. In doing so, a thick description of the data was ensured, which allowed the researcher to develop an enhanced understanding of the research topic. This systematic approach to data analysis is comprised of six steps in accordance with Braun and Clark. These steps were adhered to in this study and are described below:

In the first step, the researcher listened to the audio recordings and transcribed the data. To ensure the accuracy of the transcriptions, the researcher double-checked the transcripts against the original audio recordings. The researcher thereafter needed to develop an in-depth understanding of the data. To achieve this, the researcher repeatedly read and studied the transcripts. By continuously actively engaging with the transcripts, new insights were developed, which the researcher noted as she typed them out.

Once familiar with the data set *the second step* commenced which is the coding of the data. Coding is the process in which the researcher adds short notes to the data in the transcripts that are important in addressing the research question (Kawulich & Holland, 2012).

Coding is therefore an important assistive device aimed at assisting the researcher in formulating a meaningful assessment of the data and the identification of possible themes and patterns. To do this the researcher systematically worked through the transcripts and colour coded interesting phrases, words and sentences that were related to answering the research question.

The researcher once complete with the coding process, moved onto *the third step* of data analysis, which was to analyse the codes. In so doing, the researcher was able to group the coded information, which were related to each other, to make sense of the data to create themes. The researcher at this stage also started noticing relationships between themes, which lead into *fourth stage* in which the themes were reviewed by the researcher to ensure that there was no repetition and that the themes were the most accurate representation of the data findings. In this step, the researcher removed, combined, and added new themes to ensure that codes most accurately represented the themes that it was assigned too. The researcher also returned to the original transcripts to gain a sense of whether the themes accurately and comprehensively represented the data collected. The researcher continuously moved back and forth during this process until satisfied.

The researcher once complete with the reviewing of themes was now able to name and define each theme, which is the *fifth step* in the data analysis. A detailed analysis of each theme was then done to clearly indicate the scope that each theme would cover. In doing the analysis, the researcher was also able to identify themes, which were dominant from those that formed sub themes. This allowed for the development of a structure, which made the analysis easier to read and understand. The researcher further listed all the quotes relevant to each theme and linked it to the research question.

Finally, the researcher was able to produce a report that is valid and reliable also known as trustworthiness in qualitative research. *Trustworthiness* was achieved by ensuring four characteristics are met namely: *Credibility* which is the provision of evidence that the report is based on the actual data collected (Kawulich & Holland, 2012); *Transferability* which is the assurance that the data collected and the report findings or themes are similar in terms of the judgements made (Kawulich & Holland, 2012);

Dependability which refers to whether the findings is reasonable based on the data collected; *Confirmability* which refers to whether the findings being made being is as a result of the data collected and not based on the researcher's construction (Kawulich & Holland, 2012).

To establish trustworthiness the researcher wrote clearly, logically and concisely throughout the report. To strengthen arguments brought forth in the report, the researcher used theoretical and empirical research. In addition, the report contains direct quotes from the transcripts, to validate the truthfulness of any claim brought forth by the researcher. In doing so, readers of the report would also be able to evaluate the truthfulness of the claims brought forth. The researcher also presented a detailed description of the findings and a rich interpretation to aid readers in understanding the findings in relation to the research topic. To further ensure trustworthiness the researcher and supervisor worked together throughout the data collection and analysis process. This included working together on the conducting of all interviews as well as working together to identify and analyse all the codes and themes, as both the researcher and supervisor examined the transcripts. This was done as an additional way of reducing any bias on the part of the researcher. The researcher throughout the research process also kept a *reflexivity diary* to acknowledge the presence of any subjectivity on the part of the researcher. Throughout the writing process, the main aim of the researcher was to generate a comprehensive report that included all relevant information, ensuring that a truthful picture is depicted regarding the workplace bullying currently faced by teachers in Gauteng.

The data analysis resulted in the identification of the following themes, which captured the experiences of workplace bullying amongst teachers within the framework of the JD-R model.

1. Schools as excessively demanding working environments
2. Workplace bullying rife amongst teachers
3. Experienced perpetrators enacted on novice targets
4. The damaging aftermath of workplace bullying on targets
5. The damaging aftermath of workplace bullying on schools

6. Actively and passively coping with workplace bullying in schools

These themes are discussed in greater depth in the following chapter, that is, Chapter 4: Results and Discussion.

Chapter Four: Results and Discussion

The purpose of this study was to describe and explore teachers' experiences of workplace bullying within the context of the JD-R model. This chapter will identify and discuss the predominant themes that emerged from the data set analysis. The JDR-model and existing literature on workplace bullying will be used to explore the themes identified. In addition, to capture the truthfulness of the themes identified, direct quotes from the transcripts are included in the write up (Fossey et al., 2002; Kawulich & Holland, 2012). This chapter will also highlight the implications of the findings that emerged from the analysis. Lastly, the limitations of the study as well as recommendations for future research will be explored.

4.1 Theme One: Schools as excessively demanding working environments

Teaching is a profession characterised by demanding conditions. These demands are often coupled with limited resources to cope with the demands. Research has therefore, identified the teaching profession as being one of the most stressful work environments (Simbula et al., 2012; Stoeber & Rennert, 2008). Jacobs (2014) argues that South African schools are toxic working environments characterised by disgruntled, overworked, and stressed teachers. Although numerous studies have been done, which quantitatively and qualitatively explore the stressors embedded within the teaching profession, it must be acknowledged that as society changes so does the role of teachers. According to Cox (1978) individuals also perceive and experience a stressor (demand) in different ways and times, due to factors such as differences in personalities, beliefs, values and the context in which the stressor is experienced. Therefore, the researcher within this study, started off by investigating the demands and resources embedded within the role of teachers.

By qualitatively examining the role of teachers, the researcher was able gather in-depth information of the current perceptions that teachers have of their teaching profession. This allowed the researcher to asses participant's perceptions of the extent to which they perceived their role demands and resources. In addition, to comprehensively explore the experiences of workplace bullying within the lens of the JD-R model, teachers' perceptions of their work role needed to be explored.

This theme will address the common demands and lack of resources identified by participants to be contributing to what they referred to as "*their stressful teaching environment*".

4.1.1 Sub-theme: Intense teaching workload: The never-ending teaching workload

Over the years, the curriculum coverage expected of teachers to complete has increased in scope. This is largely due to community, educational, employer, as well as political pressures. Teachers are expected to teach an increasing number of subjects to an increasing number of students, which results in a substantial increase in workload for teachers (Simbula et al., 2012). In addition, teachers are expected to teach multiple grades and have differentiated teaching i.e. teach different subject content. This in turn increases preparation of assessments, recording of marks and administration work. Consolidating work through teaching and changing methodology to suit different students and grades, creates additional workload for teachers. According to participants "*the workload is hectic, the reason that I say hectic is because I teach and mark 11 different classes"* (Participant N). Participant D states, "*Having 35 children per classroom and teaching two grades at the same time, so having 8 classes in a day is a heavy load of work. You have to make sure that all 8 classes stay up-to-date with the content which is ridiculous in scope, and you must stay up to date with all the paperwork, planning and marking*". Participant B echoing, "*There are 40 students in each class so big classes, three English three EMS and two technology classes. The content that you are expected to cover is also so f****** much. But yes, I have 8 different classes to teach daily*".

The amount of work to be covered, often results in teachers continuously working whether at school or at home, "*I'm never free, and I'm always trying to catch up with admin. The admin is ridiculous, the marking does not end. It's a certain amount of content a day and now that we're piloting a new curriculum, you sort of to an extent, chasing curriculum "(*Participant M). Similarly, participant N stated, "*Almost all of our personal time goes into school.*

Even when you not here you are doing work. Remember while you have contact time (with) learners, you can't plan or prepare or anything you (are) interacting with learners, you (are) marking, you (are) teaching, you not even marking while the learners are there, you teaching, you re-teaching, you checking and noting who understands, who doesn't, whether you going to redo the lesson, how you going to re-enforce it. Those kinds of things, it's after-hours that we need to lesson plan that we need to mark, that we need to assess". Compounding this excessive load is the special needs curriculum. In 2018, the Gauteng Department of Education introduced D – CAPS, a differentiated curriculum that addresses the needs of learners with special needs. Teachers are expected to develop individualised lesson plans for learners. This curriculum has been piloted at LSEN schools and the roll-out into full service schools is expected in 2019. The demands on teachers are expected to increase exponentially. Participant F who has been part of one of the schools that piloted this curriculum indicating, "*After going back to D-CAPS everything is storming again because firstly, you need to rearrange your paperwork and mind-set. So, all that old learning material needs to be trashed out because a new system is coming into place. Secondly, it is so much more work required of teachers. I am stressed, its way more work.*"

According to PAM, the duty of a teacher during a formal school day also includes extra and co-curricular duties, pastoral duties and professional duties (meetings, workshops, seminars) over and above their teaching and marking (Government Gazette, 2016). The Department of Education considers these services as essential to teaching and learning process. Participant C and Participant A felt that extra-curricular activities, meetings and workshops added to the demands of teachers as opposed to benefiting the teaching and learning process. "*You need to read, you need to analyse scripts and that takes up a lot of time and obviously in-between if its cycle tests you need to mark them, you need to prepare for your lessons and still teach in-between. You cannot even sit during breaks and mark because there is break duties, then to top it all off, you cannot go straight home after school and mark because there are extra mural activities that you must do, there are workshops you must attend, there are meetings you must attend. *sigh* it is a lot, I feel like it is an added burden we have to bare as teachers and I honestly do not see the benefits*" (Participant C).

Participant A similarly lamented "*Then there's also outside work we have to do that is just dreadful. Compulsory extra mural activities take up time. I am doing drama, so I have to work on the script, I have to work on the drama actual teaching, and all of that stuff. I have to work on the props, I have to work on the stage, and all that stuff. This is added work and then there is school matric dance that I have to be part of, I have to find the top photographers, I have to set up, I have to fund raise and there is just a lot of other admin work that is compulsory for me to do outside of actual teaching. I have so much to do as is, and yet this is what I am still expected to do. It is not fair*. *Let's not even speak about the workshops *sigh* It's dreadful*" (Participant A). One Participant compared the role of a teacher to a slave, "*to be a teacher is to just be a slave… You just work, work, work, work, check the time and work some more" (Participant H).* These job demands are expected to be completed by teachers no matter the time or place as the PAM document clearly identifies the workload of teachers that is to be completed outside of the formal school days, which affects teachers after school hours, weekends, and holidays.

It can be stated that the majority of the participants in the study perceived their workload to be a job demand that is excessively onerous on their overall lives. This is especially true for teachers, as it becomes clear how easily their work demands spill over into their personal time whereby the "*never ending increase in workload*" and general work demands often results in teachers working after hours, on weekends and even during holidays. This blurs the lines between the work life and personal life of employees i.e. work-life balance. Work-life balance refers to the split between the work life and personal life (activities completed that do not involve work, outside of work) of employees (Navarathinam, 2016). This split in accordance with the theory, must be maintained for the wellbeing of employees (Navarathinam, 2016). An imbalance between work life and personal life activities, has been found to result in high levels of work-life conflict which has not only been associated with ill-health such as stress and strain but also family conflicts (Allen, Herst, Bruck, & Sutton, 2000; Bellavia & Frone, 2005; Henz, Ursula, Mills, & Colin, 2014). In this study, it became evident that the excessive job demands, and expectations of teachers often forced teachers to blur the lines between work time and personal time.

These findings validate available research that has found teaching as being one of the most stressful professions of (De Wet, 2010; De Vos, 2013; Jackson et al., 2006; Simbula et al., 2012). Consequently, many educators have expressed the negative impact that their demanding work roles have had on their individual wellbeing (Van Tonder & Fourie, 2015).

4.1.1 Sub-theme: Increased time pressure: Too much to do with too little time to care

According to PAM, all teachers are expected to be at school during the formal school day, which is not less than 7 hours per day. In general, scheduled teaching time takes up 85 to 90 percent of the school day and the remaining time is used for sports, social, cultural and community activities. Educators are also required to attend programmes for ongoing professional development up to a maximum of 80 hours per year and need make time to discuss the progress of learners at parents' meetings (Government Gazette, 2016). These programmes are conducted outside of the formal school day.

The workload expected to be completed by teachers is additionally intensified by the fact that the curriculum is to be completed within a certain amount of time (Ballet & Kelchtermans, 2009; Brownell, 1997). This often places teachers under immense stress and pressure, as participants argue that the demands are often unattainable due to extraneous conditions, which result in the curriculum not being completed. Participants in this study expressed that "*We work within a framework, but often you cannot meet the demands of the framework, because you work with learners with different abilities, you also have different demands placed on you either from management or from the department. So, you work with restricted time and time pressure and yet you have learners that you have to accommodate and a million other responsibilities. You try to work through it by stealing time, which you just do not have. You constantly feel under pressure and stressed really"* (Participant P). Similarly, participant C expressed: "*last term I did not get to complete the curriculum due to the copious amount of work that I was meant to cover for the term and because learners do not play their part.*

They do not do what they need to do or simply cannot do what is expected of them. Yet, still you as the teacher are put under pressure to miraculously complete work within the time, they give you".

Participants reflected that time pressure affects the teaching and learning process as teachers neglect or compromise teaching, which further contributes to the stress experienced by teachers. According to a participant who has been in teaching for 32 years, "*…the workload has increased over the years substantially, particularly with the numbers. It is detrimental to the learners because given the amount of time that you have and the number of learners and workload, you have very little time to dedicate to individual attention. So then, you are left questioning what your role as a teacher is? We are failing the learners I think that's my biggest stress*" (Participant P). Participant Y expressed similar sentiments "…*there is no time to explain the lesson, the child just needs to write, irrespective if they understand or not. Tell me is this fair? It upsets me because I know my learners could do much better with less work and more time".* This negative impact on the teaching and learning process is argued by participants to be against what teaching ought to be as. Participant G states, "*We get a curriculum and the purpose of the curriculum is to ensure that we complete work in specific periods of time … Sometimes this becomes very problematic, because we are not doing justice to ensuring that children understand what learning and teaching is supposed to be".*

Time pressure has also limited teacher and student engagement times. Informal discussions with learners during lessons and/or pursuing the interests of learners during a lesson are limited. Participant G stating: "*There is very little room to manoeuvre and that is what I think causes a lot of our frustration. Things happen during the day that will cause you to want to move away from what you are supposed to be doing. There might be an issue where a child is faced with a crisis and one just needs an opportunity to discuss what affects them but unfortunately because it's not your subject and you stressed because you need to get done with your work and there are other 40 other learners, you cannot veer of the topic as it were*". Participant N stated, "*The department does not consider extraneous situations that occur within the class. Fights break out, children have problems and our community faces problems.*

Yet we cannot speak about these issues because we trying to push curriculum expectations within their time frame. We cannot educate learners on what really matters because you are so stressed about the time". Similarly, participant Z expressed "*I even have to explain to learners that if they have any questions or problems, they have to speak to me after school or during break. It could be very important issues but as you can see, I am very pressed for time.*"

It can be stated that most of the participants in the study perceived time pressure to be a demand, which not only places undue pressure on teachers but also affects the quality of teaching learners receive. Time constraints contribute to an incomplete curriculum covered and a compromised assessment process of learner performance. This is perceived by participants as contributing to a stressful learning and teaching environment. Research has found that high workload coupled with time pressure as one of the biggest contributors to stress and a decline in job satisfaction (Brownell, 1997; Scheopner, 2010; Simbula et al., 2012). It can be deduced from this study, that the participants formed part of a high stress group as they are confronted with too much paperwork, too many deadlines, and too little learner preparation time. Therefore, time pressure was perceived by participants as a demand contributing to the stressful profession of teachers.

4.1.2 Sub-theme: Emotional exhaustion: The spill-over of socio-economic community problems, poverty, lack of social cohesion in communities and the abdication of parenting by learners' parents

In South Africa, the common law principle is that a teacher conducts their duties in "*loco parentis*" which refers to the teacher acting as the parent when the learner arrives at school (Segalo & Rambuda, 2018). This is an important non-core teaching task required of teachers. However, schools are becoming increasingly responsible to undertake the responsibilities formerly or poorly performed by parents. This is particularly true within schools located in low socio-economic communities in South Africa. Some of the responsibilities and challenges that teachers face include student ill-discipline, a lack of parental involvement, a poor orientation towards school and learning; low achievement; juvenile crime and violence; physical, sexual and substance abuse; early school leaving illiterate community members and language difficulties (Kalam, 2016).

Within these circumstances, schools have become the first-place go to for many children in crisis. Participants expressed that this was not part of their training yet are forced to take on the role. Participant G indicated, "*The learners that we have, they come from a specific social background and that in itself brings a whole lot of psychological problems and barriers with it. If we look at most of our learners, most of our learners come from families where there is extreme poverty. So, the child comes to school not having something to eat, not knowing where the next meal is coming from. The child comes from a family where education is not valued. You have to deal with youngsters in terms of substance abuse or before they arrive at school have already taken in something, whether its dagga or alcohol. So how do you begin to deal with these issues and the challenge that we have, is that we are expected to provide support to these learners, but we do not have the skills? Nobody has taught us how to be social workers, to be lawyers, to be doctors to be all those things that are expected of us*". Similarly, participant A indicated, "*I had a student that didn't have money to get to school every day, so I'd have to then fundraise to give her money to come to school every day. So, there are big issues like students who don't have food, so I have to then ask permission to send them to the kitchen or students who have mother's that keep threatening to run away. I have to deal with this but a lot of the time I don't know how to deal with student problems*". Being confronted with these situations has resulted in participants feeling emotionally, physically and mentally drained, "*I must admit it tends to drain you emotionally, because what can you as a teacher really do*? (Participant O). Similarly, Participant E indicating, "*It's physically and emotionally, mentally, spiritually draining.*"

Participants expressed a lack of capacity or training to deal with these challenges. They also perceived this role to be not part of their responsibilities. They felt overwhelmed by the intense level of psychosocial support learners required. According to Potgieter-Groot, Visser and Lubbe-de Bee (2012) this is not uncommon as there are many teachers within mainstream education who lack the training to deal with learners experiencing behavioral and emotional barriers. This often results in teachers spending far too much time managing learner behavior such as disruptive behavior, aggression, vandalism, withdrawal and depression (Prinsloo, 2005, as cited in Potgieter-Groot et al., 2012).

According to Potgieter-Groot et al. (2012) this has been found to have a negative impact on the learning and teaching process resulting in many teachers feeling stressed, demotivated and frustrated.

4.1.3 Sub-theme: Teachers under attack: Learners' behaviour as a demand which compounds teacher demands

Following from the previous theme it has also increasingly been brought to light that teachers are being confronted with behavioural challenges of learners. According to Kourkoutas and Wolhuter (2013) learner ill-discipline is a major problem in South African schools and is a factor that contributes to interpersonal stress experienced by teachers. In a study conducted by Marais (1992), ill-discipline was ranked as the seventh highest contributor to stress experienced by teachers out of 84 factors.

Participants indicated that the learners are disrespectful and often disrupt the learning and teaching process, "*I've seen the ill-discipline of youngsters where they have rights, they do not accept responsibilities, and there's nothing that you can do to address when learners are out line. I'm also not sure whether most of our parents are simply young parents but the ill-discipline at home, the lack of respect, you know it's almost as if families have become totally dysfunctional so that even when learners are not wanting to be at school or not performing at school or disrupting schooling for the rest, there's no way to address it because your parents are not going to come to meeting, they are not going to participate in any intervention strategies and as a result you just don't know how to deal with some of these cases*". This perspective was echoed by Participant B and C "*Some kids are clearly very troubled, have a difficult home life, no kind of parental involvement in their work or seemingly in their behaviour the way they carried on, the way they respected adults or lack thereof*" (Participant, B), "*Learners just do what they want. They say what they want and like I said earlier on, I can't describe how many times I've actually cried because of what had transpired in class. Learners just do and say as they please and as a teacher, you can never or there's not much you can do and there's not much support you have or any backup you have. It does not really escalate after. So, learners treat you as they please an example is the second day at the school, a learner called me a b*****" (Participant, C)."

In addition to learners' ill-behaviour, one teacher mentioned feeling bullied by learners, "*I feel like learners bully me in the classroom. One student through me out of the classroom door because I wouldn't allow him to listen to music*."

Learner-to-teacher bullying in South Africa has recently captured the attention of South African citizens. There have been numerous emerging news reports and social media video clips of students physically assaulting teachers within schools that has gone viral (Magwedze, 2018; Malingo, 2018; Manyane, 2017; Miya, 2018). This is a phenomenon that has in past years been virtually absent within public and political discourse (Garrett, 2014). This absence of dialogue has contributed to the chaotic and often absent response from schools, the government and researchers (Garrett, 2014). This lack of discourse and consequently lack of awareness and understanding has also left many teachers confused on whether the behaviour exhibited by learners are acts of bullying or just merely ill- discipline. This became evident in the interviews as a few participants asked the researcher to clarify on whether the discipline problems experienced where acts of bullying or simply "naughtiness" or "learnt behaviour". For example, Participant B relayed "*they would tease me every day when I tried giving a lesson and one child actually hit me on my arm and I bruised. But his just naughty and not disciplined enough at home so that's his way of communicating*". Similarly, Participant E stated "*learners come from difficult backgrounds and they learn certain behaviours such as shouting at teachers or pushing them around. I'm not sure if this can be classified as bullying or just learnt behaviour. I mean I am sure they come from abusive homes. I know I have been hit numerous times by learner*"".

According to Woudstra, Van Rensburg, Visser and Jordaan (2018) negative behaviours on the part of learners occurs at the teacher's place of work and thus should form part of the definition of workplace bullying. Thus, the same criteria used to distinguish bullying from conflict should be used to distinguish bullying from ill-discipline. Therefore, as discussed in the literature review, bullying is characterised by being a target to repeated negative treatment and there must be a power difference. Within the schooling context participants viewed the power indifference appears to stem from the abolishment of corporate punishment within schools and the disinterest and tolerance of parents to the behaviour of their children.

Participant E stating "*we no longer have power to address learners' behaviours, they have so many rights. Contacting their parents is also a waste of time, as they do not care what their children do to us as teachers.* In this regard, there is little teachers can actively do to address this type of behaviour.

While the researcher intended to look at bullying amongst teachers with the scope of the present study not including this recent phenomenon - the learners emotional and sometimes physical assaults of teachers has further poisoned the school environment making working conditions ever more difficult/demanding for teachers as it creates an extremely tense environment. According to De Wet (2010) learner to teacher bullying is a serious problem that warrants urgent attention, as it has negative implications on the wellbeing of teachers as it often results in teachers feeling a sense of isolation and shame. Ill-discipline and/or bullying behaviours disrupt the learning programme and there is a lack of intervention programs within school-based support structures. This has been perceived by participants as contributing to their poor wellbeing. Research has found ill-discipline and learner to teacher bullying to be a contributor to poor wellbeing. The behaviours of learners were perceived by participants as a job demand contributing to the stressful profession of teachers.

4.1.4 Sub-theme: Lack of resources: Lack of control - unilateral decision making

Organisational theorists argue that participatory decision-making holds numerous benefits for organisations as it positively influences employee moral (Wadesango, 2012). Participative management is thus generally perceived as an ideal management style. This is supported by the JD-R model as participatory decision-making environment is often listed by theorists as a job resource, as it is viewed as characteristic that supports employees, facilitates task accomplishment and contributes to the development of employees in performing their job (Schaufeli & Taris, 2014). Bureaucracies on the other hand are argued to impose restraints on employees and thus decreases employee morale as it undermines the ability of employees to act as mature individuals capable of self-direction (Wadesango, 2012).

Participants within this study expressed being subjected to a very rigid bureaucratic decision-making process. Participants lamented that they have a lack of control over the curriculum selection, development, and implementation. The curriculum is developed and changed every time a perceived problem or gap in knowledge occurs without their input. These changes are implemented without adequate training, a lack of consultation and a poor roll out plan. Participants expressed their lack of control about evaluating or providing feedback on new programs. According to participants, this lack of control on their part undermines their professional standing. Participant G lamented: "*I think teachers have undergone about three curriculum changes, and every time we have to get training and we are told that this is the last change. Please bear in mind this came with additional paper work. Then after all, that training and the changes they made, teachers were told no they needed to change again and again! So, teachers are constantly changing, adapting and committing. Teachers are being told by people that are sitting either in the offices somewhere, who are coming up with their wonderful and brilliant ideas that has an impact in terms of teaching on the ground. We as teachers know that their changes make no sense to what is actually happening on the ground. I think the teaching profession has changed because teachers know what is right and what can be taught and how to teach, however this was taken away from us. As a result, you just implement what you are being told because that is what is expected of you knowing very well that it will fail".* Participant F similarly expressed her disapproval of these changes by people outside of the teaching environment, "*Previously there wasn't D - CAPS (curriculum) but now they feel as if a mistake was made so we are going back to D - CAPS. So, people who are not even teachers, who do not even visit schools, are constantly changing what teachers teach. We move forward and backwards, swopping and changing as if we are just puppets who must adapt to their ridiculous standards. Once things change, everything starts storming because now you need to rearrange your paperwork because as I said all that learning material from then needs to be trashed out, to introduce a new system that is likely to fail again*".

This lack of control does not only apply to the constant changes to the curriculum but also to the development of the content included in every curriculum change. Participants expressed that the material expected of teachers to cover often do not match the capabilities of learners.

Participant N stated, "*I feel the content is just too much and a lot of our kids have a difficulty reading, they have difficulty writing and spelling. So, for them to be accessed by what is often included in these curriculums, I think it's just too much, but I must do it according to the department*". Similarly, participant Z expressed "*I've got my grade 1's teaching a grade 7 child how to read. Yet, I have to explain a seduko worksheet as per the curriculum to my poor children (*Seduko is a complex maths puzzle usually completed by adults. Refer to Chi & Lange, 2012 for more details regarding this puzzle)*. They cannot even do 3+2 or 5+7 so how will they do this. However, I have to do it. Why do they not thoroughly consult with us as teachers? We know what learners can and cannot do*". This argument was echoed by Participant B who expressed, "*Teachers are expected to complete work that do not benefit the learner after school. We are expected to load them with content that they do not grasp and would never really use after school. Let us not even speak about how stupid the assessments have become.*" Participant X who became very emotional and requested a short break, relayed her sympathy she felt towards her grade one learners, "*They expect me to asses my grade one learners, with a question paper that consists of 21 pages? An 8-year-old must write a 2-hour exam. Is that right? My poor children become so anxious and exhausted. I can't handle it*"

From these findings it can be argued that there is a perceived disconnect between policy planners and teachers who are expected to implement policy. Decisions and agreements between officials and worker unions are made in various bargaining chambers with very little consultation with teachers. This has created a sense of lack of control/participation that participants have over their workload. According to the JD-R model, having control over workload is viewed as a resource reducing the strain of work demands. This is congruent with the perceptions of participants as they expressed an increase in strain due to a lack of decision-making latitude. The curriculum selection, development, and implementation is imposed on teachers rather than agreed upon through collaboration. Giorgi et al. (2017) present the argument that developments and changes within the work environments create stress amongst employees especially if employees have little or no control over the process.

In addition, research done on change management reveals that a lack of involvement and participation on the part of employees in formulating and/or implementing a change programme is one of the inhibitors of successful organisational change (Jones Seraphim, 2008). This is often because a failure to be involved increases job stress and lowers the commitment of employees to the programme which eventually results in the failure thereof (Mosadeghrad & Ansarian, 2014). In South Africa, the educational system has changed rapidly and tremendously due to extensive political and societal transformations. Today, these changes are still occurring which can be argued to be stressful for teachers as they are forced to adapt to their new realities and they have no say in the changes that are made and imposed by the external governing bodies, that is, national and provincial departments of education. According to Blom (2018), although change is necessary, as it is a part of society's behaviour, if it occurs too frequently, too intensely and with little or no involvement from those whom it affects, negative results can only be expected.

4.1.5 Sub-theme: Lack of resources: The absence of perceived organisational support offered to overwhelmed teachers

To meet the demands expected of a teacher, school-based support teams have been established (Makoelle, 2014). This multi-disciplinary team is aimed at providing support to teachers, identifies the needs of the school, develops strategies to address needs and barriers to learning within the school, monitors the availability and use of resources and assesses the general operation of the school (Department of Education, 2005). In addition, district-based support teams, which includes, educational specialists, psychologists and social workers are available which is there to strengthen and support the school base team (Department of Education, 2005). However, in practice these support structures appear to be rendered completely ineffective as the demands of schools outweigh the inherent capacity of the structures.

Perceived organisational support refers to the beliefs that employees have about whether the organisation values employee contributions and their wellbeing (Eisenberger, Huntington, Huntington, Hutchison, & Sowa, 1986 as cited in Roemer & Harris, 2018). This is based on the employee's perception of whether the organisation embodies qualities such as being caring, fair and supportive.

Thus, perceived organisational support goes beyond the provision of actual support structures (which as mentioned are largely ineffective) and embraces personal forms of social support which could or should be provided by colleagues and superiors. House (1981, as cited in Muñoz-Laboy, Severson, Perry, & Guilamo-Ramos, 2014, p.4) defines social support as the "*perception and actuality that one is cared for, has assistance available from other people, and that one is part of a supportive social network*". Social Support is thus associated with having a network of people to lean on and to assist especially with coping with stressful events. House (1981) differentiates between four types of social support. The first is emotional support. Emotional support involves providing empathy, love, trust, care and sharing life experiences (Muñoz-Laboy et al., 2014). The second is instrumental support. Instrumental support involves actively assisting a person who needs help or is in need. It is provided by close friends, colleagues and neighbours (Muñoz-Laboy et al., 2014). The third is informational support. Informational support involves providing advice, suggestions and information to an individual that can be used by the individual to address their problems. (Muñoz-Laboy et al., 2014) The fourth is appraisal support. Appraisal support involves providing feedback and affirmation for purposes of self-evaluation for example telling people that they are managing the situation well, dealing with it properly etc. (Muñoz-Laboy et al., 2014).

Participants expressed that there was a distinct lack of any form of support from the schools and a lack of trust and respect permeating throughout the schooling environment. Furthermore, participants relayed how processes to address any concerns or structures to support teachers, which would alleviate some of the pressure experienced, were non-existent.

Participant C lamented*: "There's no trust so there's definitely no support, no one will pat you on the back if you're had a good lesson or learners have enjoyed your lesson or if learners have improved on their test. There is no one to say well done and even if you not doing so well or if you do something wrong it is just like whatever. They will reprimand you before they help you, so there's not much support or guidance."* This perceived lack of support was echoed by participant E and F as they stated, "*There is not really support, everyone is just there to get their job done, to get their pay check, and leave after that. Senior Management just sees us as teachers who need come and our jobs and as long as we get the job done that's good enough, they don't care." (Participant E), "The logistics of how education is structured, there's not that support whereby an independent HR was actually supposed to be employed that deals with Labour Relations matters on site because nobody at the school really cares about your wellbeing, they give you shit rather than give a shit "(Participant F).* Participant N concluded that having support would really help as it would motivate teachers, *"I would find my job less demanding and draining if management was a bit more compassionate about us as teachers and our job and how difficult it is. If they could come in and really see what we go through on a daily basis and even the heavy workloads in the classrooms and the markings. I mean they really need to put themselves in our shoes to see what we go through. But, from what I see no one cares about us as teachers. Ask anyone. So, we work like slaves and still get treated like slaves too."*

Perceptions of social support is also influenced by whether employees believe that they have been rewarded sufficiently. If not, employees are likely to feel a sense of injustice and unfairness. Participants indicated that there is a serious mismatch between the amount of work that they complete daily and their salary and career advancement prospects. Participant O lamented, "*It's like I'm stunted here now because there's no growth opportunities and therefore no pay increase. There is only so much HOD's that can come out of the system. How unfair is that given everything that teachers do?*" Similarly, participant H and F indicated that *"Teachers wait for the HOD's to die *giggles*. I have heard some of them saying ok are they getting older enough? So, will be position be vacant soon? They (are) very frustrated especially the young ones because no career advance means no pay increase" (Participant, H)*,

"*HOD positions have a bigger job spec but chances is we like 15 and there's only one post. So, I will remain poor until a position is vacant in 30 years' time or so" (Participant, 0).* Participant B indicated that the renumeration was one of the main reasons behind her plans to leave the profession, *"…compared to what we as teachers have to put up with, I mean teachers don't get paid nearly enough ever, it's very disheartening and definitely not worth it. I know I am leaving. It's like people are telling us as teachers that we are not important and that they can do without" (Participant B).*

It can be deduced that participants are dissatisfied with the lack of organisational and social support received within the schooling environment. According to Adams Equity Theory interpersonal relationships are viewed as social interactions in which resources are exchanged amongst individuals (Al-Zawahreh & Al-Madi, 2012). This exchange must be perceived by individuals as being equal because an unequal exchange will be perceived by individuals as being unjust and can result in tension (Al-Zawahreh & Al-Madi, 2012). In this study, teachers perceived their interaction with management as being unequal and argued that their efforts were not recognised and granted with equitable support and finance as compared to the effort which they were exerting. This becomes problematic because in according with Adams Equity Theory when this occurs individuals will act to correct the inequity by either lowering their productivity or reducing the quality of their job, such behaviours stemming from individuals often feeling dissatisfied and angry because of the inequity and lack of recognition, resources and reward (Al-Zawahreh & Al-Madi, 2012). Participants indicated that having support would make the demands feel more bearable and just. In accordance with a study conducted by Hämmig (2017) supervisor support positively influences the health and well-being of employees at work. In addition, a study conducted by Roxana (2013) revealed that social support received from colleagues is a particularly valuable resource for employees who provide public services as it results in an increase in job satisfaction amidst the emotionally demanding working conditions. The lack of perceived social support within the schooling environment within this study is perceived as further contributing to the overall poor wellbeing of teachers.

4.1.6 Conclusion of theme: Schools as stressful working environments

Linked to all the experiences elucidated in the above-mentioned theme and sub-themes, many of the participants displayed characteristics associated with poor wellbeing, which included feelings of being emotionally and physically drained. In accordance with the JD-R model, this can be argued to be due to the imbalance that exists between job demands, the resources available to participants and the perceptions that they have regarding their ability to cope with the demands (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007; Xanthopoulou et al., 2007).

Job stress is one factor that has been found to result in poor wellbeing. Job stress results from a lack of equilibrium between job demands and job resources and the employee's perception of their ability to meet the demands (Kaur, 2011). Participants within the present study relayed feelings of being stressed, overwhelmed and under-equipped to deal with some of the excessive demands embedded within the profession. This is a sentiment that has been expressed within various studies done on the teaching profession. This has captured the attention of the Department of Education in the UK, due to the negative effect that poor wellbeing has already had on the teaching profession. For example, in 2017, the Department of Education conducted an online survey and a telephonic interview with teachers who left the profession to enquire as to why they had left the profession. The participants relayed job demands such as the excessive workload, which they noted were unsustainable and further, participants reported feelings of being 'overwhelmed' by the amount of marking, planning and data tracking expected (Department of Education, 2018). Other factors such as the enforcement of inflexible teaching policies, learner ill behaviour, a lack of social support and inadequate pay and performance management were also some of the demands listed by teachers for leaving the profession (Department of Education, 2018). The research additionally reported that participants suffered from job stress and health issues due to heavy workloads coupled with the lack of support (Department of Education, 2018).

The commonality found within the present study and the study conducted by Department of Education in 2018, suggests that these experiences are likely to be experienced by numerous other teachers within the profession in South Africa and Internationally. The environmental conditions of teachers have however been reported to change yearly, as the job demands increase substantially as societies evolve. Therefore, it was imperative for the researcher to gain a comprehensive picture of the current perceptions that teachers have regarding their role. The advance that this research represented was by exploring the relationship between these demands and resources with workplace bullying amongst teachers, a topic that is often taboo amongst teachers and the DoE, existing as a silent epidemic that no-one is willing to discuss.

This study, therefore, contributes to the awareness of participant's current perceptions of their work environment. Addressing these issues in conjunction with workplace bullying and finding solutions is imperative, as the wellbeing of teachers is important, as it would have a direct impact on the quality of the service provided and teacher retention. Losing employees in a specialised field such as teaching where graduates are scarce may be particularly detrimental, especially given that a replacement teacher may not be readily available.

4.2 Theme Two: Workplace bullying rife amongst teachers

As outlined in the literature review, the JD-R model provides a possible explanation for the establishment of workplace bullying in schools. The model states that an imbalance between excessive job demands and a lack of resources has an effect of an individual's psychological and physical wellbeing (Baillien et al., 2009; Bakker & Demerouti, 2006; Van den Broeck et al., 2011). This negative impact on employees' psychological and/or physical wellbeing is argued to contribute to the vulnerability of employees to becoming targets of workplace bullying and/ or provokes the individuals (through frustration and thereby aggression) to become perpetrators and to find others to vent on and bully (Baillien et al., 2009; Van den Broeck et al., 2011). The information brought forth by participants, aligned to the propositions of this framework.

The previous theme highlighted the job demands and lack of resources that participants felt contributed to what they perceived as their “stressful” teaching work environment. This following theme, discussed below, focuses on participants’ reflections of their workplace bullying experience. Participants expressed how their stressful working conditions may have influenced their wellbeing and why they thought workplace bullying was a common phenomenon within school environments.

4.2.1 Sub-theme: Stress, anger and frustration: Individuals as perpetrators

The Frustration Aggression Hypothesis, which is aligned to the argument brought forth as to how the JD-R model links to workplace bullying, postulates that stressful situations that result from the presence of excessively high job demands and low job resources, may result in employees becoming perpetrators of workplace bullying (Baillien et al., 2009; Van Den Broeck et al., 2011). As explained in the literature review (see page 14) this is argued to be due to the bullying behaviour becoming the coping strategy of the perpetrator, to reduce their feeling of frustration. Workplace bullying is argued to be the coping strategy as it is not always possible for individuals to reduce their frustration by directly dealing with the source of their frustration. This may be due to power differences or even that the source of frustration being a “thing/item” such as money or working conditions. Therefore, employees often need to adopt other mechanisms to release their frustration such as taking up a sport or meditation or in this case finding an outlet to vent on by engaging in bullying behaviours. Frustrations may therefore cause workplace bullying by venting one’s aggression onto a colleague, which leads to becoming a perpetrator of bullying. It can therefore be argued that through the bullying behaviour, the perpetrator is believed to regain some control over their environment and their inner feelings (Baillien et al., 2009; Van Den Broeck et al., 2011). This study yielded accounts, which were congruent with this framework as participants expressed how stressful the schooling environment, often leads to employees experiencing immense frustration. According to the World Health Organisation (2018), frustration is one of the many different negative emotions experienced when an individual is faced with stressful situations.

Participant B perceived the bullying to be a coping strategy employed by the perpetrator to deal with the stressful environment, *"I think it's a stressful environment, so bullies take out all their angst and frustration onto those who you know are weaker or in a position of less power. Everyone adopts different copying mechanisms and I guess that was hers*".

Similarly, Participant C expressed that, "*Teachers become bullies because everybody feels so burdened and so damn frustrated. Everybody has so much to do with very little assistance or help. Psychologically the bully is just messed up and so you find a way to rid of your frustration even if that means bashing on your colleagues".* This argument was further mirrored by Participant F who lamented on the job stress experienced by teachers due to the lack of control that teachers have in changing their excessively high and often unachievable work demands, "*Bullying happens because of the frustration of things not working out. The frustration is that we supposed to be performing at a certain standard nationally as per the government, but we are far from performing at that standard. This makes us frustrated because there is an expectation of us that we cannot reach because we do not have all the resources. I believe that my bully bullied me because she could not deal with all the demands. Psychologically she was just very frustrated. The stress of the job was definitely getting to her".*

Participants also perceived that perpetrators used bullying as a mechanism to regain control over their stressful environment by alleviating some of their work demands. For example, Participant A indicated, "*I am a new teacher and she delegates new things for me to do often and I am too scared to say no. I think she has taken advantage of this, as she bullies me into doing all her work."* This argument was supported by participant P who indicated that *"*"*When managers are faced with their own pressures and they are often inexperienced, they do not have enough classroom experience, nor do they have enough human relations experience to be able to deal with the stressful situations. So, bullying is on the increase because people that are in these positions of power cannot cope with the demands of the job. So, they do not have the experience and knowledge that goes with the job, so sometimes it is easier to find an outlet to lash out at someone else and often you find that many incompetent managers bully their subordinates into doing their work to gain some control over their lives*."

From these accounts, it can be deduced that when individuals are stressed, they may display negative behaviour. It became evident within this study that due to an imbalance between job demands and resources within schools, perpetrators are feeling immense frustration and an inability to cope. The JD-R model indicates that the poor wellbeing experienced due to job stress can be argued to act as a driving force behind the perpetrators displaced behaviour. Working under excessive demands and a lack of resources, grants perpetrators a way to express their frustration or to salvage some control over their surroundings (Baillien et al., 2009; Van den Broeck et al., 2011).

4.2.2 Sub-theme: Scrapping for limited promotional opportunities: Fighting for bones - dog eats dog

In most professions, employees have some assurance that through hard work and dedication career mobility is likely to occur. However, a different reality exists within the South African teaching profession as even though the Employment of Educators Act (1998) identifies and acknowledges different ranks and grades for teachers, the reality of teachers is completely different (Quan-Baffour & Arko-Achemfuor, 2013). This argument was echoed in this study as participants highlighted the competitive nature of the teaching profession, due to limited promotional opportunities.

Participant E lamented, *"I think the bullies are under pressure to achieve within this competitive environment. They hate their stagnation, so it frustrated them to see me achieve certain things, so in order to beat the competition they bully you hoping that you give up. I mean this would mean you have one less person to worry about when it comes to becoming an HOD."* Participant O similarly expressed "*I know I was bullied because I was seen as a threat to a vacant HOD position. She knew I knew my work and she wanted the job, so she tried to get rid of me because she probably feels stuck. She would even say, she's been here for years and she needed the extra money and she would do whatever it takes*". From these accounts it can be argued that there appears to be a lack of career pathing and a clear criterion for promotion. According to Quan-Baffour and Arko-Achemfuor (2013) a teacher may teach and remain in their entry post to which s/he was appointed for their entire teaching life.

In addition, participant G expressed how promotional opportunities are often reserved for union affiliates and not based on teaching qualifications and experience. According to Participant G "*anybody will tell you that the whole educational system has collapsed. One of the reasons why it's collapsed, is the role of teacher unions and the influence that they have. We are speaking about the career advancement of teachers to limited positions. The limited job post will be posted and it's expected that the best person will be selected for the job, but in past we have now seen that the unions have such a lot of influence. At the end of the day specific people are ear marked for certain jobs and they get it. As a result, you get these poor teachers who are lazy and incompetent appointed*." This argument was echoed by participant P who lamented "*You know, promotion simply works, a vacancy comes up and in most cases in current education, if you are a union member or you belong to a particular union, you are likely to get promoted. So, promotion is not often granted on abilities, but these days it's granted on affiliation to organisations, and in many cases currently, the person that's being promoted does not have the capacity, the abilities, nor even the attitude for the job."* This according to Quan-Baffour and Arko-Achemfuor (2013) can result in the qualified and dedicated teachers in such schools feeling disillusioned and frustrated.

In accordance with the JD-R model, promotional opportunities/career advancements are classified as job resources which positively influence the motivation and job satisfaction of employees (Schaufeli and Taris, 2014). In the absence of such a resource, employees could thus become demotivated and dissatisfied. This became evident within this study as participants lamented on the feelings of dissatisfaction and frustration felt by teachers as promotional positions are scare and, in some cases, rigged. In addition, the bullying behaviour exhibited by some perpetrators to eliminate the competition, is congruent with the frustration aggression hypothesis whereby it is argued that when individual is prevented from achieving a goal by an external factor, it will result in frustration and they could seek a target to vent their aggression, with such venting also serving to eliminate competition for a scarce resource.

4.2.3 Sub-theme: Exhaustion, weakness and vulnerability: Individuals as bullying targets

Employees perceived as being weak by perpetrators become vulnerable to bullying behaviours (Van den Broeck et al., 2011). The JD-R model argues that job demands deplete the energy processes of employees. This is argued to lead to exhaustion, which may translate, into constant complaining, poor performance, and behaviours outside of the norm, on the part of targets (Van den Broeck et al., 2011). Participants in this study mirrored this argument.

Participants in this study were all targets of workplace bullying who unanimously expressed their exhaustion. The interviewer additionally, noticed the exhaustion of participants, as participants looked physically tired and once seated, the researcher made notes of the remarks made by participants such as "*I hope the interview questions are not difficult, my brain is exhausted*" or "*Please excuse me if I can't answer some questions, I can't think anymore. I'm as good as dead the way I am so tired*". These sentiments were also expressed during the interview, when participants were asked about their job role as teachers. Participant A expressed: "*I am always very tired given the work load because it's go to work, come back home, work at home and like travelling around takes up a lot of your time so you never really stopped working, you constantly doing it every single day"*. Participant X and E mirrored this sentiment by stating, "*As I'm sitting here, I am thinking about everything I still need to. Our work just never stops, I'm so exhausted I can cry*" (Participant X), "*I am always tired. It's physically and emotionally, mentally, spiritually draining."* (Participant E). The exhaustion of the targets also became evident in their inability to defend themselves against their perpetrator. The researcher asked participants whether they reported incidents of bullying. Participants expressed that they were too exhausted to complain and had very little time to do so admits their demanding role, "*I won't bother reporting it because that is a lot of added work. I am so tired as it is* (Participant C), "*There's no time or energy to report incidents, and I also don't have time or energy for all that investigations. I have enough on my plate*." (Participant H).

The above-mentioned behaviour on the part of targets could be perceived as weakness. This would be congruent with the argument that employees become vulnerable to the bullying behaviour because of their exhaustion. For example, the physical appearance of the interviewees and their openness about their exhaustion could be perceived as a sign of weakness by perpetrators and therefore are perceived as weak and an easy target (Baillien et al., 2009; Van den Broeck et al., 2011). Additionally, teachers relayed how their exhaustion lead them to not report or actively deal with their bullying experience. This is in alignment with the argument that employees become vulnerable to becoming targets of workplace bullying when they offer little resistance against workplace bullying because of their exhaustion due to being burdened with excessive job demands (Baillien et al., 2009; Van den Broeck et al., 2011). It therefore became evident within this study that being exposed to excessive job demands depletes the energy processes of employees and consequently contributes to the vulnerability of employees to becoming targets of workplace bullying.

4.2.4 Sub-theme: *Lack of experience and seniority: Older teachers targeting younger – less experienced teachers*.

Participants argued that they might have become vulnerable to bullying behaviours, due to being perceived of as inexperienced. Their inexperience and uncertainty lead them to asking too many questions and older experienced staff perceived this as being annoying. Participants who were new within the teaching profession mentioned that their lack of experience within the field may have annoyed the more experienced teachers, provoking bullying behaviours.

Participant C indicated*: "They know that as a new teacher, we don't know much so maybe they think I'm stupid and weak. I am always asking questions about the way things are done because I am always confused and worried. I mean there is always so much to be done. I'm sure I must have annoyed everyone."* This argument was echoed by participant G who lamented, *"I think you are a target because you are younger than the rest and you know less than the rest which can be very annoying for older teachers who need to train you. Also, new teachers when they come in have a very idealistic view of teaching.*

So, they come in with new ideas, a million questions, and new personalities, which is annoying for older teachers who know that most of the ideas are not obtainable. The older teachers see you as coming to create more chaos and by asking a million questions you also just create more work. So, change and questions is always going to seem as a threat to existing norms."

A perpetrator of workplace bullying, who through personal reflection recognised her bullying tendencies expressed that the curiosity and ignorance of new teachers lead her to becoming a perpetrator. She expressed that *"When the new teachers come to teach, they don't know what they supposed to be doing. They spent 4 years being trained and they do not know what to do when they step into the school. They do not know how to prepare their lessons because they were given an idea, a very idealistic idea, of what a lesson is but (they) cannot teach. As an HOD this is very frustrating, and it annoys me because I must train them, I must show them how and answer all their questions on top of my demanding workload. They have a distorted reality regarding what a teacher is, so then I need to listen to their ideas, which are farfetched and so ill informed. They want to challenge norms they know nothing about. All this just adds onto my workload and my patience does run thin."*

Research which has explored the relationship between individual personality characteristics and workplace bullying has often found that a significant relationship exists between workplace bullying and targets displaying high levels of neuroticism and conscientiousness (Coyne, Seigne, & Randall, 2000; Francioli, et al., 2016; Glasø, Matthiesen, Nielsen, & Einarsen, 2007). Neurotic people are argued to present characteristics such being nervous, tense, and tend to worry often (Bashir, Hanif, & Nadeem, 2014) and thus they may often present as an easy target for perpetrators. Conscientiousness on the other hand refers to are people who are generally cautious, dependable, organized, and responsible (Bashir et al., 2014). These are some of the characteristics expressed by participants as being displayed by new graduates entering the teaching profession which annoy perpetrators. This is because they are hard workers and overly cautious which may irritate their colleagues who then perpetrate upon them by bullying them.

From these accounts, it can thus be argued that, in accordance with the framework, high job demands, and limited resources depletes the energy resources of participants, which contributes to employees displaying characteristics which make them vulnerable to becoming targets of workplace bullying (Baillien et al., 2009; Van den Broeck et al., 2011). Within a stressful environment, inexperienced teachers worry, ask additional questions or aspire to challenge norms which may be perceived as annoying to well-seasoned colleagues resulting in bullying encounters where the latter may bully the former because it creates additional demands.

4.2.1 ***Conclusion of theme: Workplace bullying rife amongst teachers***

It can be deduced from the above accounts that high job demands coupled with limited resources were perceived as depleting the energy resources of targets, increasing the frustration levels of perpetrators and creating an environment in which teachers bully each other as opposed to helping and supporting each other. According to participants and aligned to the model, excessive job demands and a lack of resources, through its impact on the wellbeing of participants, has led to the vulnerability of targets to the bullying behaviour, and can be argued to be the driving force behind the perpetrators bullying behaviour and the targets vulnerability to the bullying (Baillien et al., 2009; Van den Broeck et al., 2011).

4.3 **Theme Three: Experienced perpetrators enacted on novice targets.**

In accordance with workplace bullying research, the perpetrator often has power over the target (Branch et al., 2013; Samnani, 2013). Participants echoed this characteristic of workplace bullying, as they relayed examples of how the perpetrators of bullying within schools would use their power to bully targets. This power stemmed from the formal power perpetrators have, because of their experience within the school. Participants expressed that they were often bullied by colleagues who have worked at the school for a long time. The bullying behaviours experienced by participants included verbal abuse, being ignored and humiliated, being tasked with additional demands, and being sabotaged.

4.3.1 Sub-theme: Perpetrators verbally abuse targets

Verbal abuse seemed to be the most common type of bullying behaviour experienced, as participants indicated: "*Being a young teacher, I was being picked on by more experienced colleagues as some of them would scream at me and criticise me. They try to make you feel like that specific position is not meant for you or what you are doing is not right and they tell you that you are not good enough at your job. They basically verbally belittle you in the way that you end up feeling insecure about your job" (Participant D).* Participant F and H mirrored this view and added that the verbal abuse often contained racist and sexual connotations, "*they would verbally belittle you to a point of self-doubt and would even go as far as issuing racist remarks" (*Participant, F*), "Sometimes he makes improper rude remarks about the work completed to belittle you. He would even make sexual advances (Participant, H)".* Further, participant B indicated that the verbal abuse often extended outside of the private realm to public spaces "*she started dropping rude insulting comments in the staffroom in the mornings that were definitely related to me. Our interactions were always just a confrontation not an explanation. She would just shout and belittle me in front of everyone*". Similarly, Participant F expressed that she felt undermined as she was shouted at in front of a group of male colleagues "*I felt undermined because the fact I was rudely shouted at in front of a group of male colleagues who then laughed at me. She is my age and reprimanded me like a small child by shouting because I never greeted her when she wanted me to. This was the first time she bullied me in front of a crowd"*.

Aligned to a study done by De Wet (2010) on teachers' experiences of workplace bullying, it was also deduced within this study, that verbal abuse was the most common type of bullying behaviour. In addition, verbally abusing teachers in public to humiliate teachers has been reported as a common bullying tactic according to Blasé & Blasé (2007). De Wet (2010) argues that public ridicule of educators in front colleagues is a very disempowering experience, which may have long-lasting effects. These effects include embarrassment, a loss of respect from their learners, depression, stress, and burnout, and health related problems such as headaches and sleep deprivation (De Wet, 2010).

Similarly, Einarsen et al. (2011) argues that verbal and/or nonverbal negative and aggressive behaviours directed at targets or their work situation may affect employee's self-esteem and consequently competence within their job role. Verbal abuse therefore is a type of bullying behaviour, which could result in negative physical and psychological symptoms.

4.3.2 Sub-theme: Invisibility, ignoring and isolation

Perpetrators were reported to have ignored the contributions as well as the general presence of targets. For example, Participant F lamented "*They enforce their beliefs and wants on you and they do not even care about your concerns. They go as far as ignoring your contributions or any feedback you want to give or receive for that matter*". Similarly, Participant P stated, *"Your views are not respected or listened to and you are not treated with the same respect and dignity that is offered to your seniors or managers*. *In meetings you are ignored and excluded from discussions*". Participant G provided an example of the disregard experienced, by expressing that "*Older teachers know which grades would be the most challenging, they know which subjects would be the most challenging, their time tables are worked out so that even if there is free periods in terms of administration, it works out always in their favour .You cannot even disagree when they assign classes and roles because they do not care about your opinion and so you just do it. To not have the ability to say no, I feel that is a form of bullying."* Participant M provided another example stating, "My *HOD doesn't give me the year plan, she does not give me feedback, she doesn't give me meetings, whereas she does everyone else in my department, I am basically ignored or non-existent. I feel like I'm drowning alone"*.

Further, this disregard is demonstrated as participants indicated that perpetrators go as far as not acknowledging their presence by greeting. Greeting is known to be an act of communication in which individuals make their presence known to one another, show attention to and suggest a type of relationship between people meeting each other (Krizan, Merrier, Logan, Williams, 2016). Participants F and M expressed "*They do not acknowledge you by greeting at least, instead you are ignored like a dog, but people even greet dogs! This is done by people that feel they are more knowledgeable, because they have been teaching longer*." (Participant F),

"*I am constantly being shut down because of my differences, and I am not even given the opportunity to make contributions in meetings, you are ignored and treated as incompetent. They act as if you not even in the meeting. They do not even blady greet you when they see you. No matter how much you may hate me, surely greeting to acknowledge someone is the first thing you do when you see someone. After all the sh*t I been through, that's the least that could have been done"* (Participant M).

According to De Vos (2013), ignoring targets can be categorised as a form of isolation. It is apparent from the experiences of participants, that by being ignored, participants were left feeling alienated and were unable to access essential information. In a similar South African study on the experiences of workplace bullying of teachers, the feeling of being isolated resonated most with respondents (De Wet and Jacobs; 2013), Akella (2016) arguing that social isolation and exclusion can be very debilitating to the mental health of targets.

4.3.3 Sub-theme: Perpetrators burden targets with menial tasks

Participants also expressed being assigned all the menial tasks that needed to be done within the school. For example, participant A indicated that she is forced to complete an array of additional tasks outside of her work as a teacher "*she throws me into new things often and I'm too scared to say no because she is a bully. Like every other day I have a new responsibility that she ought to complete. I think because she's deputy she has power. Like for instance when I started, she asked me to be part of the matric dance and for drama and that was that and I accepted it. Now, I have to be part of the team building functions that have to happen every month. I have to set these functions up every month which is a lot of work because then I have to go around collecting money from people. I have to go around placing orders and collect food and setting it all up which is a big responsibility. Then I have to be part of the matric jackets. I have to help them with the designs, I have to help them with ordering materials and the making and sizing and all of that. Then I have to setup a comment call for every student where as other teachers only set up for their register class. I have to do a lot more stuff than what she expects from other teachers."*

This argument was mirrored by participant G who confirmed for menial tasks were handed over to targets to complete "*when it came to tasks such as sports or extra mural activities or menial duties you are just given this to do and you can't say no so you just accepted it. You did not even know that you had a right to disagree. There were times you would have such a simple thing such as the school has a dance as a fundraising raising and you get taxed, and you get told you will be taxed with four tickets. I'm a teacher trying to raise funds for the school but I'm being told that I'm being taxed and I don't have an option. So, somebody is scratching in my wallet without me having a say*"

Fox and Stallworth (2006) acknowledge that within bullying literature, particularly workplace bullying literature, targets are often subjected to bullying behaviours such as being allocated with a high workload and/or allocated menial tasks. Within the context of this study, it can be argued that this, in turn, contributes to the high demands and consequently job stress experienced by participants.

4.4 Theme Four: Suffering the aftermath: The impact of workplace bullying on targets

In accordance with research, the inability to cope with the bullying behaviours may result in targets of workplace bullying experiencing negative psychological and physiological effects (Van Schalkwyk, Els, Rothmann, 2011). These damaging effects are further argued to threaten the targets perceptions of their self-worth (Agervold, 2007; Fox and Cowan, 2015; Rodrigues- Munoz, Anito, Sanz-Vergel, 2017). The psychological effects of bullying and the implications that this has had on targets self-esteem, became a prominent theme that arose in this study along with concomitant feelings of depression and anxiety.

4.4.1 Sub-theme: Depression, stress and anxiety experienced by targets

Workplace bullying resulted in teachers experiencing an array of psychological effects, due to the bullying behaviours. This became evident as during the interviews the researcher observed that the participants' body tensed up, they fidgeted, appeared agitated and their voices became emotionally strained as they began to retrieve and relive their memories of their workplace bullying experience.

Participants also deflected and spoke about unrelated "schooling" matters when they appeared to be rattled and uncomfortable. Participants reported that they often felt anxious, stressed and depressed. "*Every weekend I would get a bit anxious about going back or knowing that she's in my working life. I was emotional. I was so stressed*" (Participant B). Participant N and E shared this perspective and lamented, *"I felt so depressed and on edge, I felt so belittled and so stressed and anxious that I would pull my hair out"* (Participant N). "*It hurt me, it used to depress me. I really thought I'd be booked into hospital a couple of times the way I was so depressed and stressed about going to work every day. I had no nails left to bite* (Participant E). At this point in the interviews the researcher noted the change in the behaviour participants. Their eyes became filled with tears and their voices became strained. However, participants insisted on carrying on with the interview, with one participant stating, "*Our stories need to be heard*" (Participant, E).

Additionally, participants relayed how these feelings resulted in emotional and untimely outbursts "*I was so miserable, hopeless, stressed, upset and I even began crying in class in front of learners*" (Participant N). Echoing this Participant, A and C relayed "*I would just cry anywhere honestly, sometimes even in class with learners seated there"* (Participant A). "*I think I cry almost every second day at school*" (Participant C). This reflects the argument presented in literature, that workplace bullying negatively impacts on the emotional wellbeing of targets (Bowling & Beehr, 2006). In addition, according to Bowling and Beehr (2009) the emotional effect of workplace bullying is deep and may cause lifelong emotional scarring. Most of the participants in this study were however, recent targets of workplace and therefore could not convey any lifelong scarring experiences. Participant O was the only participant who was able to express the lifelong emotional scarring that occurs because of workplace bullying. Participant O, who left her organisation two years ago, still appeared to be emotionally damaged and requested for a break once she began recounting her experience of workplace bullying. She expressed "*Till this day, I still suffer from anxiety and sever panic attacks. I still hear her shouting at me*". Thus, Participant O reports a reliving of the traumatic experience which is a classic symptom of post-traumatic stress.

Based on the above information, workplace bullying can be argued to be a psychological trauma with anxiety, stress and depression being commonly reported by participants within this study. This psychological effect is congruent with available research on teachers who are bullied in South Africa and within general workplace bullying literature on targets of workplace bullying (Agervold & Mikkelson, 2004; Blasé & Blasé, 2007; Bowling & Beehr, 2006; De Vos, 2010; De Wet, 2010; De Wet, 2011; Nielsen & Einarsen, 2012). Further, although not unanimous within this study, whether still at the organisation or long moved on targets may still manifest post-traumatic symptoms.

4.4.2 Sub-theme: Feelings of incompetence and impoverished self esteem

Most of the participants indicated that workplace bullying did not directly affect their teaching. However, it became apparent that workplace bullying affected how the participants perceived their teaching skills. Participants were emotionally diminished by the bullying experience and began to question their own self-worth. Participants in fact, at times, began validating the perpetrators perceptions of them. This became evident as participants constantly questioned their abilities to perform at an acceptable standard. For example, Participant F began to question whether the teaching profession was a vocation that suited her abilities, "*It made me feel like I'm not competent or I'm not qualified to be a teacher, maybe it is true that teaching is not really meant for me*". This was echoed by Participant M who expressed "*I think it also left me very disillusioned in the sense that I've wondered if I went into the right profession, if I'm doing the right thing with my life" (*Participant M).

Alternatively, Participant B and A expressed how being bullied at work, created additional job demands, as they constantly tried to do more to prove their worth. They expressed double-checking their work, due to their feelings of incompetence. Participant B and A expressed, "*She just made me feel like what I was doing was really not enough… So, at times, I would go over and beyond what was expected of me, even if it meant creating my own tasks. I would make sure that everything I did was done close to perfect. This took so much time and effort and after it all I would still not be satisfied"* (Participant B).

Similarly, Participant A expressed, "*A lot of the time I just felt under-qualified for what I'm doing. So, I would double-check everything multiple times and still not feel happy with my work. I would do it over and over again which just created more work for me*" (Participant A).

Low self-esteem and anxiety regarding their standard of work and vocational choices was a recurring experience echoed by participants. They doubted their own professional abilities during their bullying experience. This manifestation of psychological distress is clearly aligned with available literature, which describes the impact of workplace bullying on targets (De Wet, 2010; Iglesias & Vallejo, 2012; Van Schalkwyk et al., 2011). In addition, according to De Vos (2015) the aftermath of workplace bullying on the health of targets poses real challenges, for an educational system, because may it result in teachers compromising quality education. Consequently, it may result in learners lacking the essential skill needed to successfully function and contribute towards the South African economy.

4.5 Theme Five: The damaging aftermath of workplace bullying on schools

In accordance with research on workplace bullying, the negative psychological and physical effects experienced by targets has further damaging effects on organisations. Targets of workplace bullying have been found to suffer from decreased levels of job satisfaction and motivation, which in turn has negative consequences on the productivity of employees and results in a substantial increase in absenteeism and turnover rates (Dehue et al., 2012). The findings in this study were congruent with available literature.

4.5.1 Sub-theme: Increased absenteeism and turnover intentions

Absenteeism occurs when an employee stays away from work. Absenteeism affects consistency in terms of productivity and the ability to perform required tasks. Absenteeism would therefore severely affect the quality of teaching in schools, as teachers are complete a set amount of work daily (De Vos, 2013). It has been found in literature that targets of workplace bullying may engage in absenteeism as a legitimate avoidance technique to cope with bullying (De Vos, 2013; Hoel & Cooper, 2000).

This became evident within this study as Participant O stated*: "I would get up in the morning and say, "I'm not going", and just not go to work. It just made me feel like I do not want to be there. So, to avoid everything I would just stay at home"*.

Similarly, Participant A stated *"I think I was the only new teacher that stayed absent so much. I would just not go, to avoid the drama and honestly, I eventually got to a point where I did not care. So, I wouldn't even provide a doctor's note*". Further, as per previous literature, workplace bullying has been also been found to be associated with increased levels of long-term sickness absenteeism (Hoel & Cooper, 2000). One of the participants in this study indicated, "*I was always sick. I would be booked off. I would stay out of work for like 5 or 6 months or 3 months ...I'm taking anti-depressants"* (Participant E).

An increase in absenteeism often goes hand in hand in hand with an increase in intentions to leave the organisation. According to Cohen and Golan (2007) an increase in absenteeism is an early indication of a further withdrawal process. However, intentions to leave an organisation is not an indicator of actual turnover, as not all employees who would like to quit, are able to do so, or to do so immediately, due to financial constraints. Therefore, participants are more likely to use absenteeism as an intermediate coping mechanism, which does may illuminate the desire of targets to eventually leave the organisation as soon as possible. Ultimately actual turnover is costly to organisations because of the loss of skills (Dehue et al., 2012). Losing employees in a specialised field such as teaching where suitably qualified graduates are scarce may be particularly detrimental, especially when a replacement is not readily available.

In a press release in 2017, the Department of Education expressed that there is "*a tremendous shortage in teachers*" which has resulted in the schooling system being flooded with under-qualified teachers (Times live, 2017). Throughout the data collection process, it became clear that most participants intended to resign from the teaching profession with some actively searching for another job. Participant A lamented: "*I cried a lot and considered changing jobs a few times, but I stuck around because I don't know, I need the job and opportunities are very scarce, so I stuck around, I pushed through it, but I do plan on leaving as soon as a find a completely different job, that's a promise*."

Participant D stated: *"…she drove me to a point where I wanted to leave so I went, and I queried with the principal and I told him she's making me feel like I need to leave…Like I don't belong there or fit. I still do feel this way, so I am in the process of finding a new job."*

Similarly, participant M expressed*: "I was at the point of resigning, even my family said you know, just resign, don't even wait for another post, and if you are that miserable, then just resign. Next week I intend on enrolling to study further and resigning".* Some participants left the profession. Participant B expressed: "*I was led to believe I was there because I was the 5th teacher coming into that position because the kids were just so unruly but I know after dealing with her, she must have been a factor as well and I've been told by others who've been there a long time that she makes people's lives hell by being a bully*". Participant O indicated: "*I changed jobs because of the bullying. I could not stand it any longer. My next step is to find a job that has no relation to teaching because no matter where you go the bullying follows you"*.

In addition, participants lamented on how new teachers are also leaving the profession due to the bullying occurring within schools. Participant W stating" *…it affects newcomers in particular, and they actually leave the school after say a month, which shouldn't happen".* Another participant expressed similar sentiments *"…not many young people going into teaching. Those that are going into teaching do not remain in the profession due to bullying" (Participant G).* The learning and teaching process is compromised by absenteeism and turnover. Participant B expressed, *"I think it can be unsettling for learners especially learners who are trying to learn. I think being introduced to new kind of teaching styles all the times is very disruptive*. This participant also lamented on how turnover rates within the school where he worked affected the quality of the service produced by teachers, "*So I knew I had to push the learners, because of all the changes with the different teachers, and exams approaching. I came into the school just before exams, so I was just trying to get them all up to the same point and finish the second term before exams. I mean I just kind of went through the work and made sure I had verbally and physically given it to them. Unfortunately, their understanding of it was probably not as taken care of as it could've been. But I got there I don't know two or three weeks before exams as four other teachers resigned that term before I came*.

Given that South Africa is currently faced with a serious shortage of skilled teachers (Jackson et al., 2006) the aftermath of bullying in terms of absenteeism and turnover has extremely negative long-term ramifications for schools. With workplace bullying influencing the wellbeing and morale of targeted teachers and with the unanimous echo of absenteeism and turnover intentions expressed by participants, combating workplace bullying is essential. The teaching profession may be crippled by workplace bullying as it increases sick leave, staff turnover, lack of employee loyalty and overall teacher commitment. While the specialities of teachers were not explored in this study, it is known that South Africa suffers particularly from a shortage of suitably qualified teachers in the field of mathematics and the sciences (Moodley, Adendorff, & Pather, 2015). This has consequently led the government to placing a greater emphasis on investing in mathematics and science teachers in schools and tertiary institutions to address the shortage of skills within this area (Moodley et al., 2015). Therefore, if such teachers are bullied their withdrawal through absenteeism and turnover is especially troubling in relation to a shortage of such critical teaching skills. Discussions about appropriate interventions to combat workplace bullying and promote teacher retention will be discussed in the section's practical implications and recommendations in Chapter 4

4.5.2 Sub-theme: Break down in working relationships

Working relationships are important as it contributes to the wellbeing of employees and the organisation (Vakola & Nikoloau, 2005). Researchers have found that relationships such as co- worker relationships, supervisory support and effective leadership influence employee wellbeing, stress and burnout (Zabrodska et al., 2014). One of the main impacts of workplace bullying that emerged from this study, is that participants perceived there to be a serious breakdown in relationships within the schooling environment.

4.5.3 Sub-theme: Breakdown in working relationships between teachers

Participants in the study perceived that workplace bullying tainted their working relationships with other teachers. Participants expressed, "*I try to stay out of their way as much as possible. I come in, I greet and if you speak to me, I speak to you and I go to my classroom. I don't really interact with the other teachers or try to build any relationships with any of them*" (Participant C).

Participant B indicating "*I just became even more, I don't want to say deviant, but I would kind of avoid her personally and consequently everybody else when I could and then I would just make sure I done everything I needed to do on my own*".

Participants expressed how the break down in relationships between teachers affected the quality of the work being delivered. For example, Participant A, a new teacher, expressed that she does not ask or receive any feedback regarding her work, which often left her wondering if she was administering appropriate assessments, "*Not having a relationship with my colleagues limits me. I would have to use less effective worksheets or material to teach my students because I just didn't want to ask anyone for anything and neither did, I want anyone to help me. So, the first time I set up test it was too difficult for my students and most of them failed and then I setup another test which is a lot easier and most of them failed again but I don't get feedback on what I'm doing wrong and what I'm doing right. I just keep doing it. You see when everyone knows there are bullies in the midst, and then nobody wants to even take a chance and ask for help or share any ideas*". Similarly, Participant C lamented, "*I have noticed in terms of experienced staff, they won't really share resources. So, at the end of the term, because they get more practice, their marks will then reflect that. I do not blame them though, because once you start sharing, you do not know who will bully you for all your work… Rather stay behind closed doors and protect your resources."*

According to Rayner, Hoel and Cooper (2002) targets of workplace bullying may withdraw from relationships at work in attempts to avoid the bully and/ or potential bullying situations because of feeling a sense of exclusion and distrust. The participants expressed their distrust as the reason for their withdrawal as they indicated that bullying behaviours had made them weary about the intentions of colleagues. "*We rather go home, and you know speak to somebody else at home and others from outside because you even too afraid to trust anyone*" (Participant N). "*I started relying more on myself and I started believing anything that I was doing is right and I stopped taking advice because you start not trusting people*" (Participant G). "*Teachers don't trust or care about one another. So, it is in your own interest to not confide or engage with anyone*" (Participant C).

4.5.4 Sub- theme: Witnesses withdraw from targets

Participants further expressed that teachers who witness the bullying behaviour would withdraw their support and/ or involvement with targets. Participants expressed that this could be due to fear that they may become bullied due to association or because the witnesses have become so custom/immune to the bullying because of their own experiences and are now desensitised to the bullying behaviours. For example, Participant B expressed, "*It's kind of glossed over by the rest who are just kind of glad it's not them you know what I mean. So, they just watch you get bullied. They do not even want to be your friend*". Participant C expressed '" *the more experienced teachers feel like they suffered when they were new teachers. So, they have this attitude and notion that they will not help or befriend you because you need to go through it. So, they will treat you the way they were treated when they were first year teachers and they will make it known*. Participant G, who was bullied in the past recognised that he has become a withdrawn witness. He expressed that "…*bullying shapes who you are, and it shapes your identity, because automatically, depending on how you handle it, in my case I'm saying you become stronger, but you also become desensitised because as long the bullying shifts and shifts to somebody else it is okay then with you. You just happy it's not you*."

This reaction on the part of witnesses is in line with available research whereby it has been found that witnesses take a passive role, as they fear vengeance (Caponecchia & Wyatt, 2011). This results in more negative consequences for the efficiency of any organisation, as the work group becomes more fragmented, due to the withdrawal from targets as well as witnesses (De Vos, 2013).

4.5.5 Sub-theme: Break down in relationship between teachers and students

Lastly, participants expressed the impact of workplace bullying on the relationship between teachers and learners. Prior research has found that the mistreatment of teachers may negatively affect teaching and learning in schools (Blasé & Blasé, 2007; De Wet, 2010). Participants expressed that the bullying experience has affected their motivation to do their best within the schooling context.

This has consequently affected the positive relationship between teachers and learners, as learners fall victim to inadequate teaching. "*You don't give your best in the classroom because you so disillusioned that you don't feel like doing it because on the other hand, you feel like everything that you do, is not good enough. So why must you even make the effort if it's just going to be shot down or there is just going to be an issue anyway… so there were days when I did not even informally speak to learners*" (Participant M). This was echoed by Participant G who stated that "*As an older teacher you have been through everything, you then simply seen to be doing a job to get it over with, no additional effort is made or emotional connections made with learners.*".

Participant additionally expressed that they would "*flare up at learners because you can't get your things to balance or the bullying to stop*" (Participant H). Similarly, participant M expressed "*sometimes I would feel so bad because I would snap and start shouting at learners for small matters just because I hated my circumstances*." More alarmingly, participants expressed how workplace bullying creates an environment where learners emulate the behaviours of teachers and would even go as far as taking advantage thereof. "*When educators bully each other, the learners emulate it... the children adapt that because you going to speak in front of children*" (Participant F). Similarly, participant H expressed that "*It affects the students as well because they pick up on the tension and take advantage of the tension*. *They end up bullying each other or playing the teachers off one another"* (Participant H). This adds to the fragmentation of relationships within the schooling context.

4.5.6 Conclusion of theme: Suffering the aftermath

The above findings on the effects of workplace bullying on teaching environment, are particularly problematic as it takes away from what a school can and should be. A school should be a place where learning and teaching takes place. Where learning is a shared experience amongst teachers, amongst teachers and learners and amongst everybody within the school as everyone has a role to play (Smith, 2015). Ideas, skills, and knowledge should be freely exchanged, and everybody should feel part of and work towards a common good and a common goal (Smith, 2015). However, when bullying occurs, a situation is created whereby everybody retreats and looks after their individual interest (De Vos, 2013).

Knowledge becomes stagnant and learning a halt. As a result, the ethos that is created in the school is one of mistrust, one of selfishness, which cannot be a positive learning environment. In addition is has been found that poor working relationships affects the overall wellbeing of employees (Hämmig, 2017).

4.6 Theme Six: Actively and passively coping with workplace bullying in schools

According to Karatuna (2015), the type of copying strategy adopted by targets may escalate or de-escalate workplace-bullying behaviour. Therefore, exploring the types of copying strategies employed by targets became important within this study. Participants were divided regarding the coping strategies employed, which is aligned available research that indicates the person and context specific nature of copying strategies (Karatuna, 2015).

4.6.1 Sub- theme: Teachers "passively" cope with workplace bullying

Passive strategies are indirect actions taken by the target to manage their bullying experience. According to Bernstein and Trim (2016) passive strategies are likely to be adopted by targets of workplace bullying due to the power imbalance that exists between the target and perpetrator of workplace bullying. Targets have less power to directly stop or lessen the bullying behaviour. Participants echoed this argument as they adopted passive strategies to cope with the bullying experienced, due to power differences.

This power stemmed from the experience/ length of time that perpetrators had been within the school, which consequently meant that more established working relationships with people in power where developed. It also stemmed from the physical attributes of the perpetrator in some cases. Participants revealed that they relied on support structures outside of the school. They vented to family and friends about their bullying experience, "*My only support structure, I guess was when I got home and vented to my family. It didn't help much but what else could I do? She was there longer and that was the power she had. She knew more people and I didn't*". Participant B expressed in a loud voice "*She was married to the head Master! There was nothing I could do but vent to my mother and girlfriend*".

Similarly, Participant M and O expressed that "*I have my friend outside of the school that I low down on and my husband. I always go to him and you know, just speak. Just discussing it with others that would understand*. *I must admit, it only made me feel better in the moment because I knew the next day, we would be back at square one. But what else could I do, she was close with the Principal*"**, "***I would only speak to my husband and so much that one day he just said if you're so unhappy and if you're so miserable going to school then that's it. He said put in your resignation. I didn't know who else to turn to, she had friends in powerful places"* (Participant M). Further, participants expressed that staying absent and/or avoiding the perpetrator were behaviours adopted, as the perpetrator was observably bigger and stronger. Participant B lamented that "*I would avoid her as much as possible. I am a man, but she looked very scary and intimidating*. Participant O on the other hand expressed "*I would stay absent just to avoid facing her. She looked like a bull! Big built with a manly voice. Even describing her makes me shake".*

Participants perceived there to be a lack of social support within schools due to the relationships that perpetrators had to people in powerful positions and therefore reporting the bullying was perceived as futile. According to Gardner, Bentley, Catley, Cooper-Thomas, O'Driscoll and Trenberth (2013) a lack of support within an organisation can further exacerbate workplace bullying, as targets of workplace bullying are afraid to voice their dissatisfaction due to a belief that very little will be done to change their situation. In addition, Garner et al. (2013) stated that targets of bullying isolate themselves when they have limited access to social support to prevent/avoid the bullying behaviour. Participants reverted to venting to family members who according to research would amplify the negative effects of workplace bullying as family and friends cannot exercise control over the stressful situation by intervening on the target's behalf (Scott, Schippers, Purvis, & Cruz, 2014). Similarly, avoidance as a coping strategy has been found to amplify the effects of workplace bullying as it has been linked to increased levels of stress, anxiety and depression (Nahlen et al., 2016).

4.6.2 Sub-theme: Teachers "actively" cope with workplace bullying

Active strategies are overt behaviours aimed at stopping bullying behaviour (Ollafesen, et, al. 2004). Some participants expressed that to cope with the bullying they reverted to physical and verbal confrontations. For example, Participant F expressed that after being exposed to workplace bullying for an extended period, she eventually lost her self-control and physically attacked the perpetrator, "*I confronted the person very robustly. I went, and I pointed at her in her face. I did it in a very unprofessional manner. I almost embarked on a full-on fight because I knew this was the only way*". This behaviour was mirrored by participant B and E who expressed, "*I basically just lost my sh*** *and I started shouting at her and I started like just telling her how I really just don't appreciate her leadership…I didn't care if I got fired either or asked to leave because you know I had enough and nothing was ever going to be done if I complained anyway. Like I just had enough*." (Participant B)." *It was bad to such an extent that I had to exchange words with this teacher. I even wanted to smack her, so I walked up to her and was pulled away, because we were like verbally fighting* (Participant E).

Participants expressed that actively standing up to the perpetrator was the only way to temporarily stop the bullying behaviour. Participant E expressed "…*As time goes by you learn the only way to survive is to stand up and defend yourself even if it means physically assaulting the person".* Similarly, participant G lamented*, "I discovered as soon as you become more rebellious and you become a loud and you come louder than everybody else, everybody backs off for a while. It does not mean that you are going to become a bully, but it just means that as soon as you shift that dynamic where you begin to speak out and things, they soon begin to backtrack."*

This aggressive active approach to coping with the bullying behaviour, stemmed from the perceived lack of support within the schooling context. Other less aggressive, active copying behaviours such as reporting the behaviour to management, was regarded as being ineffective due to the lack of support and structures available within schools.

Participant G expressed that "*Bullying can happen simply because there are no repercussions for bullying. Who are you going to report to? Who is going to recognise that you are being bullied? You are just going to be told that you know this is how we do things, this is how things are supposed to be done. Who do you go report to your deputy, to your principal or to HR, to a grievance committee at the district office? You go there the first thing they going to ask is who is the person. To which union does the person belong to? And if they hear it belongs to a specific union you know nothing is going to happen. So, bullying will continue simply because there are no repercussions hence, I say fought back on your own*". Similarly, participant A expressed "*If you're being bullied by your principal or your deputy principal what procedure do you take? Who do I report to? Fight your way out of it! "*

The impact of bullying on the emotional wellbeing participants resulted in participants reverting to aggressive outbursts. Namie and Namie's (2009, as cited in De Vos, 2013) argues that anger, as a coping strategy is only a façade for a range of other emotions (e.g. hurt, envy, shame, fear, frustration, amongst others). Research has however linked assertiveness, which includes the confronting the perpetrator and expressing anger reduced stress levels and a higher self-esteem (Parrary & Kumar, 2017). This was evident as participants indicated that it elevated the bullying behaviour for a time being. However, this is not always a solution and/or effective coping strategy as in certain instances aggression and can worsen the situation, leading to a cycle of escalated bullying and aggression between perpetrator and target. This is because aggressive behaviour may inflame and infuriate the perpetrator leading to an excessively confrontational and destructive interaction between the target and the perpetrator. Therefore, it may work in some cases however it must be emphasised that more research must be conducted on effective ways of alleviating / managing workplace bullying (Bernstein et al, 2016).

The practical implications, limitations, and recommendations for future studies will be discussed below in Chapter 5: Contributions, Implications, Recommendations and Limitations.

Chapter Five: Contributions, Implications, Recommendations, Limitations and Conclusion

5.1 Contributions

This research report focused on understanding workplace bullying amongst teachers within the framework of the JD-R model. The JD-R model aims at integrating two independent research traditions namely poor wellbeing (stress/strain) and motivation. This model is often used by researchers to explain the effect that job demands and resources have on the wellbeing of employees. Given the empirical support that this model has received, researchers have argued that the model can be extended to understanding the establishment and flourishing of workplace bullying (Baillien et al., 2009; Van Den Broeck, et al., 2011). Workplace bullying within this framework is argued to be a consequence of job stress. Based on this research, the present study felt that this framework was appropriate to be used to examine workplace bullying amongst teachers within South African schools. Teachers are under huge pressure and job stress, as they face excessive amount of job demands and a lack of resources.

The findings highlighted, high job demands (high workload, time pressure and emotional upsetting situations) and low resources (lack of control and lack of perceived emotional support) as a serious problem within the teaching profession, as it negatively affected the wellbeing of teachers. In addition, workplace bullying was perceived to be rife amongst teachers. High job demands coupled with limited resources were expressed as firstly depleting the energy resources of teachers, which resulted in teachers feeling exhausted. This was argued as one of the reasons that contributed to the vulnerability of targets to the bullying behaviour, as teachers relayed how their exhaustion lead them to adopting ineffective coping mechanisms. Active coping mechanisms to actively deal with the bullying behaviours, were perceived as requiring too much effort and were therefore avoided. The exhaustion and passive stance adopted by participants may have been perceived as a sign of weakness resulting in their vulnerability to the bullying behaviour.

Secondly, some participants, particularly the new teachers, perceived their "questioning", "complaints" and "worrying" regarding their conditions of employment (high job demands and limited resources) as possible sources of annoyance to the more experienced teachers. This was perceived as possibly contributing to being targeted by perpetrators, as their questioning and complaints about work overload annoyed their seniors who then targeted them as a form of dealing with their annoyance and the added burden of younger teachers' inability to cope with their work. Lastly, participants expressed the immense frustration experienced by teachers due to the imbalance between job demands and resources. The frustration experienced, was perceived by participants as the driving force behind the perpetrators bullying behaviour. The bullying behaviour argued to be the coping strategy adopted by the perpetrator to rid themselves of some of their frustration. Workplace bullying also resulted in immense emotional trauma, as participants expressed feelings of depression, stress, anxiety, and incompetence. Further, participants expressed how workplace bullying negatively affected the functioning of schools, as participants expressed an increase in turnover intentions, absenteeism, and a breakdown in working relationships.

This study contributes to the limited body of knowledge on the experience of workplace bullying among teachers in South Africa. Using the JD-R model as a guiding framework, allowed for an in-depth understanding of the context specific and nature of workplace bullying experienced within the teaching context, that is one that is known to be characterised by excessive demands and low resources. This model contributes to workplace bullying literature, as it provides a framework that could contextualise the phenomenon. The model also allowed the researcher to structure the broad list of job characteristics that were perceived as antecedents of workplace bullying and the resources that were perceived as potentially mitigating workplace bullying within the South African schooling context. In addition, this study contributed to the limited body of knowledge regarding the relationship that teachers' experience of workplace bullying has to their experience of a wide range of psychological and physiological symptoms. A thorough understanding of the context, the experiences of workplace bullying as well as the effects of workplace bullying on teachers highlighted the seriousness of the phenomenon.

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5.2 Practical implications and recommendations

It is hoped that by raising awareness of the implications of workplace bullying amongst teachers, the DoE may act upon the levels of workplace bullying experienced by teachers within schools. This is particularly important, as research on workplace bullying has revealed that if there are no interventions in place to stop or prohibit workplace bullying from occurring, the bullying flourishes. As indicated in the rationale of this study, the JD-R model may thus be a very useful tool for tailoring workplace bullying interventions to specific contexts. The findings of this study indicate that to prevent workplace bullying there has to be an active implementation of actions aimed to improve the work environment of teachers. A reduction of job demands, and an increase of job resources may be relevant in preventing or reducing workplace bullying amongst teachers. Based on this premise, the following recommendations are made:

To address the high job demands as a workplace bullying prevention or reduction measure, the DoE could identify and eliminate job demands that contribute to stress and incite workplace bullying amongst teachers. According to Baillien et al. (2009) redesigning the job role for example, could be one of the most effective ways to reduce occupational health problems and consequently decrease incidents of workplace bullying. As such schools can restructure certain elements relating to the scope of work covered by teachers. This includes reducing the number of tasks, duties and responsibilities embedded within teaching profession. Alternatively, targets of workplace bullying could be encouraged to remedy their own job demands (job crafting) by seeking out help from colleagues to manage their job demands (Baillien et al., 2009). In addition, providing training to teachers on how to cope better with their job demands may also be useful. This is aligned to the argument brought forth by Bernstein and Trimm (2016) who argue for the benefit that employee assistance programmes could have on the lives of targets and perpetrators of workplace bullying. These programmes could be used to coach targets and perpetrators on how to better manage their feelings and interpersonal interactions.

To address the limited job resources reported by participants, the DoE could develop and implement interventions to optimize job resources, therefore ensuring that teachers are able to better cope with their job demands which might lead to the improved wellbeing of teachers. Within this study it became evident that schools should increase job resources such as job autonomy by increasing teacher's decision-making abilities especially as it relates to the curriculum and scope of practice. The Department of Education could facilitate a harmonious and collaborative relationship with teachers. This can be achieved by having regular consults with representatives from schools regarding the development and implementation of the curriculum expected of teachers to cover. There also needs to be an increase in social support from management and colleagues which could be achieved by providing teachers with opportunities to raise concerns and discuss with management any problems experienced at their workplace.

In addition to the high demands and low resources that is available to teachers within this study, it also became evident that leadership skills and coaching and mentoring skills are vital within the teaching field, as within many schools a number of teachers will become managers within their professional career, that is HoD's and principals. Yet, it is often these self-same teachers that may along the way become perpetrators of bullying. Therefore, having leadership training for teachers who have entered the profession would provide them with the opportunity to gain a skill set that will assist them in managing other teachers. As graduates enter, the teaching environment they may consequently encounter more experienced teachers who have the skills to create positive work environments that provide resources required to maintain the health and wellbeing of teachers, to cope with the stresses inherent in the profession. In addition, according to Bernstein and Trimm (2016) effective leaders that model constructive behaviours, make appropriate and inappropriate behaviours clear. Thus, with regard to bullying, training new teachers on constructive leadership skills would create awareness of what is acceptable and what is not acceptable leadership behaviours.

This study supports the growing body of literature that the work environment is a key factor in contributing to workplace bullying. It is therefore important to understand the environment to develop effective interventions to combat workplace bullying.

Teachers mould and shape the lives of young people yet very few studies have investigated the work environment of teachers and workplace bullying experienced amongst teachers in South African schools. Workplace bullying has detrimental effects on teachers which impacts directly on an already faltering schooling system. The lack of investigation and interventions is thus surprising and warrants urgent attention. The next section will therefore address future research recommendations.

5.3 Future research recommendations

To establish a more comprehensive understanding of workplace bullying amongst teachers through the lens of the JD-R framework, future research could quantitatively sample teachers from a variety of schools that may to varying degrees be under resourced or well resourced - the latter likely to be Model C and former private schools. The degree to which schools are well resourced or not could be identified by the quintiles that they are accorded by the South Africa Department of Education. This system categorises schools into five groups (quintiles) based on the wealth of its surrounding community. Schools in the poorest communities' form part of quintile 1 and schools serving the wealthiest community form part of quintile 5. A comparison could then be made regarding the frequency, degree and nature of bullying within the varying environmental contexts. This approach may provide additional information on the experiences of workplace bullying within South African schools more broadly.

It may also be worthwhile to explore perpetrator accounts of workplace bullying to determine their understanding of the phenomenon. Research regarding perpetrator accounts is very limited. Exploring this would be beneficial, as it would allow for a broader understanding of workplace bullying which could result in the establishment of appropriate interventions. Additionally, in doing this, researchers can explore whether interventions have been adopted by some schools as well as perpetrator recommendations on how to address workplace bullying.

It may also be worthwhile to determine how particular demographic factors such as race and gender, affect perceptions of job demands and resources, and consequently experiences of workplace bullying. Additionally, from this study it appears that new teachers, felt that perpetrators more frequently targeted them.

Therefore, it might be useful to explore whether tenure within school's impact experiences of workplace bullying and to explore the perceptions perpetrators have of new teachers.

According to De Wet (2010) behaviours that undermine the confidence and authority of teachers is argued to be learner to teacher bullying behaviours. These behaviours would include continued disruptive behaviours during classes, insubordination and attempts to challenge teacher's authority to disempower them (De Wet, 2010). It was beyond the scope of this research report to investigate whether the ill behaviour exhibited by students was bullying behaviours. However, the researcher believes the behaviour described by the participants, although not comprehensively analysed in this study, aligned to the argument brought forth by De Wet (2010). The researcher did however not receive ethical clearance to investigate this and therefore was not able to gather enough information to make a solid argument thereof. Therefore, the researcher would encourage future research to investigate experiences of learner to teacher bullying. Within recent times, this phenomenon has received a substantial amount of attention from South African journalists and on social media sites.

Lastly, it is suggested that a longitudinal study be conducted determining whether the intentions to leave teaching expressed by teachers, become a lived reality within South African schools. It would also be worthwhile to find teachers who have left the profession to determine the reasons thereof and the link that it may have to the experience of job demands and resources as well as workplace bullying.

5.4 Limitations

The data collected in this study was collected through self-report and is therefore susceptible to social desirability bias (Barriball & While, 1994). This refers to when participants provide information that they think would please the researcher. Face to face interviews therefore always run the risk of participants not answering truthfully (Barriball & While, 1994). However, according to Qenani, MacDougall & Sexton (2014) exploring participant's experiences and perceptions is important as the way people behave is often based on their perceptions.

The researcher therefore tried to as best possible create an environment where the participants felt safe and comfortable. This was done by choosing a venue where the participant felt safe, reassuring participants about the confidentiality clause and by actively listening and showing an active engagement to what the participants had to say (on and off the topic).

The researcher's interpretation of the findings could have been influenced by the researcher's values, anticipations, and knowledge of prior research (Babbie & Mouton, 2001). However, the researcher by reflecting and developing a self-awareness of her values, anticipations, and biases made every attempt to mitigate this. The researcher believed by maintaining a self-reflexive journal and by having constant critical discussions with her supervisor throughout the research process, that this concern to some extent was addressed.

In accordance with an argument brought forth by De Wet (2014) by emphasising a theory, the researcher may have utilised a limited lens to contextualise the phenomenon, in this case, it would be contextualising workplace bullying within the framework of the JD-R model. However, the researcher made every attempt to probe beyond the limits of this lens within interviews which generated additional themes. Examples of some of these themes and sub-themes are, theme 3 "*Experienced perpetrators enacted on novice targets*"; sub-theme 4.2.2 "*Fighting for bones- dog eats dog -the scrapping for limited promotional opportunities" and sub-theme* 4.2.4 *"Lack of experience and seniority – older teachers targeting younger – less experienced teachers.* In addition, most of the findings were supported by direct quotations from the transcripts which aligned with main concepts proposed by the JDR theory. The researcher also avoided generalising the findings - the aim of this study was to explore the participating teachers' experience of workplace bullying. The participant sample consisted of 13 teachers (10 female and 3 male). The sample included participants who identified their race as Black (n=3), White (n=3), Coloured (n=5), and Indian (n=2). The sample furtherly identified their school's quintile as 1 (n=10) and 2 (n= 3). The findings of this study are therefore limited to this sample description.

The overall summation and conclusion of this research report is conveyed below.

5.5 Conclusion

Workplace bullying is a serious and growing problem affecting a significant proportion of organisations, which includes schools. The negative impact of workplace bullying on teachers and schools is alarming. Even more alarming is the dearth of research within the South African context regarding workplace bullying amongst teachers. There is a sense of "*helplessness"* that participants expressed as there lacks awareness to the matter in schools and participants feel as if schools in general do not have the capacity to deal with workplace bullying which furthermore perpetuates the bullying cycle. Further research exploring factors that contribute to emergence and development of workplace bullying amongst teachers is therefore important, as this would increase awareness and shed light on the development of interventions to combat workplace bullying. This is particularly true for the South Africa as teachers are invaluable and scarce within our society.

Aligned to the JD-R model, workplace bullying is pondered as a complex phenomenon that arises due to the dynamic interaction between demands and resources. Although limited, this research report provides reasonable evidence that may be significant to those responsible for human resource policies and school administrators as they may contribute to the reduction of workplace bullying by adjusting working conditions. This study also offers the basis for further studies concerning workplace bullying within the educational sector. To compete in the educational sector, retain qualified and experienced teachers, it is vital for schools to implement strategies to reduce workplace bullying. It is therefore suggested that more comprehensive studies are done on workplace bullying amongst teachers using the JD-R model framework. Workplace bullying appears to be crippling our schools and the solutions lie in the hands of research to intensify its importance and possibly enhance policy and the implementation thereof of in South African schools.

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Appendix A - Access letter to school – PIS for the Principal of the school

SCHOOL OF HUMAN & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

UNIVERSITY OF THE WITWATERSRAND

Private Bag 3, WITS, 2050

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

Dear Sir / Madam

My name is Toni Batchelor, and I am presently completing my Master's degree in Industrial/Organisational Psychology at the University of the Witwatersrand. As part of the requirements for my degree, my area of research is designed to investigate environmental demands and resources and how these factors may foster or reduce workplace bullying amongst teachers. The study will further explore the relationship that the experience of workplace bullying may have on the experience of a wide range of psychological and physiological symptoms including burnout and work engagement. To carry out this research project, I would like to invite the teachers at your school to participate in this study, which will involve an interview with educators who volunteer to be part of the study. The interview should take approximately one hour to complete. The interview will take place at a time and venue suitable for the teacher. Hard copies of a Participant Information Sheet, which details the study, will be printed and provided to all teachers in the school.

Please note the following regarding the individual interview

Participating in the interview process is completely voluntary and teachers will be not be advantaged or disadvantaged in any way for choosing or not choosing to partake in the interview. Due to the face-to-face nature of the interview, anonymity cannot be guaranteed as in the case with the online survey, however, confidentiality will be assured, as there will be no identifying information present in the write up of any written report and any possible journal article or any conference presentation that may ensue.

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

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

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

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

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

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

Kind Regards

Masters Student: Toni Batchelor
Email: 75077l @students.wits.ac.za
Cell Phone: 0827709200
Office Phone 011 7174538

Supervisor: Dr. Colleen Bernstein
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Paballo Lepota 011 7174513
HREC number: H18/06/07

Appendix B: PIS for Teachers

SCHOOL OF HUMAN & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

UNIVERSITY OF THE WITWATERSRAND

Private Bag 3, WITS, 2050

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

Dear Sir / Madam

Invitation for your participation in a research project!

My name is Toni Batchelor, and I am presently completing my Master's degree in Industrial/Organisational Psychology at the University of the Witwatersrand under the supervision of Dr Colleen Bernstein. As part of the requirements for my degree, my area of research is designed to explore the experiences of teachers that have been bullied. The study will explore environmental demands and resources within schools and how these can affect teacher's experience of workplace bullying. The study will further explore the relationship that the experience of workplace bullying may have on the experience of a wide range of psychological and physiological symptoms including burnout and work engagement. Thus, if you are a teacher in Gauteng that has experienced workplace bullying from another teacher and/or staff member, I would like to invite you to please participate in my study.

Participation in this study would involve an interview that should take approximately one hour to complete. Please note that participating in the interview process is completely voluntary and you will be not be advantaged or disadvantaged in any way for choosing or not choosing to partake in the interview. Due to the face-to-face nature of the interview, anonymity cannot be guaranteed. However, confidentiality will be guaranteed in the recording of the transcripts and in the write up of any written report and any possible journal article or any conference presentation that may ensue. This is because while questions will be asked about your personal circumstances and quotes will be used in the write up of the report, no identifying information, such as your name or the name of your school will be mentioned.

Pseudonyms will be used in place of your name and the name of the school in all written reports including the transcripts. In this regard, all identifying information will be completely sanitised and removed once your recordings are transcribed. Additionally, all electronic interview data (audio recordings and transcripts) will be safely stored away in a secure password-protected computer that only the supervisor and researcher will have access to. Any hard copies of any interview data will also be safely stored away in a locked cupboard in the supervisor's office.

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

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

Please note that responses obtained from the interview will not be used for any purposes, other than academic research. Volunteering to participate in this study would be greatly appreciated as it will contribute to a larger body of knowledge on demands, resources, workplace bullying, burnout and work engagement within the schooling context. Additionally, the findings of this research study could assist in the long term by encouraging government institutions to improve environmental conditions within schools and thereby protect teachers like yourself, from workplace bullying and its negative outcomes.

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

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

Kind Regards

Masters Student: Toni Batchelor
Email: 75077l @students.wits.ac.za
Cell Phone: 0827709200

Supervisor: Dr. Colleen Bernstein
Colleen.Bernstein@wits.ac.za
Cell Phone: 0823022940
Office Phone 011 7174538

Paballo Lepota 011 7174513

HREC number: H18/06/07

Appendix C : Consent Form

SCHOOL OF HUMAN & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

UNIVERSITY OF THE WITWATERSRAND

Private Bag 3, WITS, 2050

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

I hereby confirm that:

- I have been briefed on the research that Toni Batchelor and Dr Colleen Bernstein are conducting on workplace bullying amongst teachers in Gauteng.
- I understand what participation in this study entails.
- I understand that I am volunteering to participate in the study and that there is no penalty for withdrawing or refusing to participate.
- I understand that the interview will be audio recorded
- I understand that I can refrain from answering any question I am not comfortable with and there is no penalty for refusing to address these questions
- I understand that at any point in time during the interview I can choose to end the interview if I wish to do so and that there will be no penalty for doing so.
- I understand that any information that I share will be held in the strictest confidence by the researcher and the supervisor.
- I understand that no identifying information for example my name or the school that I work for will be recorded on the interview transcription
- I understand that the findings of this research may be used in academic publications and conference proceedings but that my identity will be completely sanitised and nowhere will my name of any other identifying information be revealed
- I understand that if I agree to participate that I need to sign this form as proof of my acceptance
- I understand the conditions and accept to participate in this study voluntarily

Optional clauses:

□ I hereby consent to being audio recorded

□ I hereby request a copy of the research report

Signed by _____ on_____ at _____

Signature _____

Appendix D: Interview Schedule

Aim: The interviewees understanding of the demands and resources available to participants and how this made participants feel

1. What is your understanding of what it means to be a teacher? Is this it always clear-cut?

2. What is your experience of being a teacher (what do you do on a daily basis)

3. How do you feel about the workload, which comes with being a teacher (amount of work/time pressure/emotional upsetting situations/work variety)

4. Are you able to influence the planning of you work activities or is fixed (part of decision making)?

5. If necessary, can you ask your colleagues and or management for help in managing all your work activities? Please elaborate on why you think you can or why you think you cannot

6. As a teacher do you have many opportunities for personal growth and development? Please elaborate?

7. As teacher does your job offer you the possibility of progress financially? Please elaborate.

8. Do you feel secure in your job as a teacher? Please elaborate.

9. Do you find the work that you do full of meaning and purpose? Please elaborate.

10. When you get up in the morning, do you feel like going to work. Are you enthusiastic or do you dread the thought of going to work? Please elaborate.

11. Do you persevere, even when things do not go well? Please elaborate.

Aim: The interviewees understanding of the meaning of bullying at work and their recounting of the actual events they experienced:

12. What is your understanding of what it means to be bullied at work?

13. Have you experienced workplace bullying? If yes, what was your experience of being bullied (who bullied you, how/ what did he / she / they do)

Aim: Report of the perceived impact of bullying upon participants and their ability to perform at work.

14. How did this make you feel?

15. How did this affect you?

16. What was the effect of this bullying on you personally?

17. What was the effect of this bullying on your ability to carry out your work?

Aim: Report on how participants coped with the bullying experience

18. Did you have any support structures? (in the school and/or outside of the school? Prob into the responses

Aim: Report of the perceived reasons why participants think the bully targeted them.

19. Why do you think you were bullied?

20. Do you think it was something about you?

21. Do you think it was something about the person who bullied you?

Aim: **Report on the perceived reasons why participants think bullying happens in schools and what could or should be done about it.**

22. Why do you think bullying occurs or is allowed to occur in your school?

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

24. Do you think that senior management and/or unions clearly considers the psychological health of employees to be of great importance? Please elaborate.

25. How could your school prevent or better manage work place bullying interactions

(Probes of high demands and lack resources, as contributors to a poor environment within the school)