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The prevalence of traditional bullying and cyber-bullying among university students

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A research project submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Masters of Education Psychology to the Faculty of Humanities, University of Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, 2019.

Declaration

I, Nasreen Saloojee, hereby declare that this dissertation is my own, unaided work. It is being submitted in partial requirements for the degree of Masters in Educational Psychology at the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg. To the best of my knowledge, it has not been submitted before in part or in full for any degree or examination at any other University.

_____

Nasreen Saloojee

Student no.: 732033

_____

Date

"Let people clearly realize that every time they threaten someone or humiliate or hurt unnecessarily or dominate or reject another human being, they become forces for the creation of psychopathology, even if these be small forces. Let them recognize also that every man who is kind, helpful, decent, psychologically democratic, affectionate, and warm, is a psychotherapeutic force even though a small one."

Maslow (1970, p.254)

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Mom and dad, I would be lost without you and all your wisdom.

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Dedications

My parents

Dr Marianne Kruger

Desiree Gaskin

Thank you for always believing in me and pushing me forward

&

For allowing me to bloom through all adversity



TABLE OF CONTENTS

DECLARATION.....i
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS iii
DEDICATIONS iv
TABLE OF CONTENTS v
APPENDICES.....ixx
LIST OF TABLES.....x
LIST OF FIGURES.....xii
ABBREVIATIONS..... xiii
ABSTRACT.....1
CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION.....2
1.1 Rationale.....4
1.2 Statement of the Problem 4
1.3 Aims of the Study.....5
1.4 Research Questions 5
1.4.1 Primary Questions 6
1.4.2 Secondary Questions 6
1.5 Hypotheses for Primary and Secondary Research Questions 6
1.6 Outline of the Chapters 7
CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW 8
2.1 Introduction 8
2.2 The Nature of Bullying 8
2.3 Feelings and attitudes toward bullying.....9
2.4 Definitions: Traditional Bullying and Cyber-Bullying 10
2.4.1 Direct Bullying 10
2.4.2 Indirect Bullying.....10
2.4.3 Traditional Bullying 11
2.4.4 Cyber-bullying.....11
2.5 Traditional Bullying versus Cyber-bullying 13
2.6 Prevalence of Traditional Bullying and Cyber-bullying within the University Context15
2.7 Demographic Factors to Consider.....18
2.7.1 Gender 18

2.7.2 Race 20
2.7.3 Age 20
2.8 South African Context 20
2.9 Trauma 21
2.10 Theoretical Framework 25
2.10.1 Microsystems 26
2.10.2 Mesosystems 27
2.10.3 Exosystems 27
2.10.4 Macrosystems 28
2.10.5 Chronosystems 28
2.11. Bullying in relation to the Social Ecological Model 28
2.12 Conclusion 29
CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODS 30
3.1 Introduction 30
3.2 Research Design 30
3.3 Measures 30
3.3.1 Demographic Questionnaire 31
3.3.2 The Revised Olweus Bully/Victim Questionnaire (R-OBVQ) 31
3.3.3 Cyber Bullying Behaviors and Victimization Experiences Measure 32
3.3.4 Impact of Event Scale-Revised (IES-R) 32
3.4 Sampling 34
3.5 Procedure 34
3.6 Ethical Considerations 36
3.7 Data Analysis 37
3.8 Conclusion 37
CHAPTER 4: PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF DATA 38
4.1 Introduction 38
4.2 Sample 38
4.3 Cronbach's Alpha 39
4.4 What is the prevalence of traditional bullying (for both the perpetrator and victim) among university students? 40
4.4.1 What are the predominant types of bullying behaviour among university students? 43

4.5 What is the prevalence of cyber-bullying (for both the bully perpetrator and victim) among university students? 44

4.6 Do bully victims disclose whether they are being victimised? 46

4.7 Who intervenes when bullying occurs? 47

4.8 What are the students' feelings and attitudes feelings towards bullying? 49

4.9 What roles do demographic factors; gender, race, and age play in traditional bullying and cyber-bullying of university students (specifically with regards to the victims who have been bullied)? 50

4.9.1 Are there differences in gender and the prevalence of traditional bullying and cyber-bullying? 50

4.9.2 Are there differences in race and the prevalence of traditional bullying and cyber-bullying? 53

4.9.3 Are there differences in age and the prevalence of traditional bullying and cyber-bullying? 55

4.10 Can the experience of being victim to traditional bullying and cyber-bullying be regarded as a form of trauma? 56

4.11 Conclusion 58

CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION 60

5.1 Introduction 60

5.2 What is the prevalence of traditional bullying (for both the victim and perpetrator) among university students? 60

5.2.1 What are the predominant types of bullying behaviour among university students? 61

5.3 What is the prevalence of cyber-bullying (for both the bully perpetrator and victim) among university students? 61

5.4 Do bully victims disclose whether they are being victimised? 62

5.5 Who intervenes when bullying occurs? 63

5.6 What are the students' feelings and attitudes feelings towards bullying? 64

5.7 What roles do demographic factors (gender, race, and age) play in traditional bullying and cyber-bullying of university students (specifically with regards to the victims who have been bullied)? 64

5.7.1 Gender 64

5.7.2 Race 65

5.7.3 Age 66

5.8 Can the experience of being victim to traditional bullying and cyber-bullying be regarded as a form of trauma?.....67
5.9 Limitation and recommendations for possible intervention and further research.....68
5.10 Conclusion.....70
REFERENCES.....72
APPENDICES.....87

APPENDICES

Appendix A: Demographic Questionnaire.....87
Appendix B: The Revised Olweus Bully/Victim Questionnaire (R-OBVQ).....89
Appendix C: Cyber Bullying Behaviors and Victimization Experiences Measure.....101
Appendix D: Impact of Event Scale-Revised.....103
Appendix E: Ethical Clearance Certificate.....108
Appendix F: Participation Email.....109
Appendix G: Questionnaire Introduction.....110
Appendix H: Questionnaire End.....111
Appendix I: Turnitin Report……...112

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1. *Frequency distribution of the sample (n = 148)* 39
Table 2. *Frequencies and percentages of the overall prevalence of traditional bullying* 40
Table 3. *Frequencies and percentages of the prevalence of perpetrating bullying in the past couple of months* 41
Table 4. *Frequency and Percentages of the individual that the bullied victim has disclosed to about being bullied* 47
Table 5. *Comparison of genders in terms of the absence/presence of traditional bullying* 51
Table 6. *Comparison of genders with regard to the absence/presence of cyber-bullying* 52
Table 7. *Comparisons of race types with regards to the absence/presence of traditional bullying* 53
Table 8. *Comparisons of race types with regards to the absence/presence of cyber-bullying* 54
Table 9. *Comparisons of age groups with regards to the absence/presence of traditional bullying* 55
Table 10. *Comparisons of age groups with regards to the absence/presence of cyber-bullying* 56
Table 12. *Pearson's chi-square test between the prevalence of traditional bullying and the total IES-R scores* 57
Table 13. *Pearson's chi-square test between the prevalence of cyber-bullying and the total IES-R scores* 58

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1: Social Ecological Framework in terms of bullying at university.....26
Figure 2: Frequency of the overall prevalence of traditional bullying 41
Figure 3: Prevalence of bullying other students 42
Figure 4: Percentage of the type of bullying that has been experienced 43
Figure 5: Prevalence of perpetrating cyber-bullying behaviours among students at university 45
Figure 6: Prevalence of a type of cyber-bullying victimisation.....46
Figure 7: Prevalence of lectures or other individuals in authoritative positions at university intervening when a student is being bullied.....48
Figure 8: Prevalence of students intervening when a student is being bullied.....49
Figure 9: Feelings and attitudes of students towards fellow students being bullied.....50

ABBREVIATIONS

APA	American Psychiatric Association
CLM Faculty	Commerce, Law and Management Faculty
DSM	Diagnostic and Statistic Manual of Mental Disorders
EBE Faculty	Engineering and the Built Environment Faculty
IES-R	Impact of Event Scale-Revised
PTSD	Posttraumatic stress disorder
R-OBVQ	Revised Olweus Bully/Victim Questionnaire
SEM	Social Ecological Model
SPSS	Statistical Package for the Social Sciences

ABSTRACT

Bullying has been widely recognised as a significant concern among primary and high schools as well as within the workplace setting. These settings have time and again been at the forefront of research. However, not much is known about the prevalence of bullying within the tertiary education setting. This research study explored the prevalence of traditional bullying and cyber-bullying among South African University students. This study also sought to investigate the role demographic factors play when university students experience traditional bullying or cyber-bullying in addition to the question of whether students who experience either form of bullying regard it as a form of trauma. A quantitative approach was used to carry out this study. The sample consisted of young adults between the ages of 18 and 23 years old (n = 148) and was non-representative. This study made use of a demographic questionnaire, the Revised Olweus Bully/Victim Questionnaire, the Cyber Bullying Behaviours and Victimization Experiences Measure, as well as the Impact of Event Scale-Revised, in order to attain data. The statistical analyses were carried out through the use of descriptive statistics, frequencies, cross-tabulations and Pearson's chi-square and correlation tests were carried out. The current study's overall results indicate that the prevalence of traditional bullying among university students is 25.8%, with 21.6% being verbally bullied, 32.5% experienced being socially excluded, and 19.8% experienced social bullying. In terms of being cyber-bullied, 31.1% of students admitted being afraid to go online, and 33.1% of students reported having had a social media post or message shared online about them which they did not want other people to see. In comparison, a total of 33.8% of students admitted to purposefully sending aggravating or humiliating text messages or instant messages from their cellphone to another individual. In terms of the demographic factors; gender, race, and age, were all not statistically significant in terms of the prevalence of traditional bullying and cyber-bullying. Furthermore, cyber-bullying and being a victim of traditional bullying were found statistically significant to post-traumatic symptoms.

Keywords: *Traditional Bullying, Cyber-bullying, Trauma exposure, University Students, Prevalence, Victim, Perpetrator, Demographics*

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Bullying is a well-known and universal issue that has spanned over generations. The actions of bullying were and are still sometimes believed to be *a rite of passage* for young individuals in order to build "character" (Dupper, 2013; Garland, Policastro, Richards, & Miller, 2017). There have been numerous studies done on the prevalence and prevention of bullying in primary schools, secondary schools, as well as within the workplace both internationally (Hinduja & Patchin, 2010; Li, 2006; Macdonald & Robert-Pittman, 2010; Rivers & Noret, 2010; Schenk & Fremouw, 2012; Walrave & Heirman, 2012) and in South Africa (Burton & Mutongwizo, 2009; Govender & Young, 2018; Greef, 2004; Isdale, Reddy, Juan, & Arends, 2017; Popovac & Leoschut, 2012). There is a growing body of literature on the concept of bullying among students within the higher education sector (Akbulut & Meyer & Cowie, 2016; Smith & Yoon, 2013; Zacchilli & Valerio, 2011; Zalaquett & Chatters, 2014). However, research on the prevalence and effects of bullying among university students is still under-researched in comparison to school environments and the work-place. Demographic factors, such as age, and gender, have also been regarded as risk factors in studies which have found them to be associated with bullying (Atik & Guneri, 2013; Pecjak & Pirc, 2017). Thus there is a further need to recognise the prevalence and demographic factors of traditional bullying and the relatively new phenomenon of cyber-bullying among university students and the traumatic effects it has on them.

Bullying is a complex social issue that has a negative effect on individuals' psychological and social well-being, as well as the overall culture and atmosphere of their environment (Juan, Zuze, Hannan, Govender, Reddy, 2018). It is a phenomenon that is evident through news reports and social media (Juan et al., 2018; Smit, 2015). In South Africa, a number of bullying research within the school context, both primary school and high school, have been conducted. In Tshwane, the prevalence of bullying was reported as high as 61% among high school students, Grades 8 to 12, (Neser, Ovens, Van der Merwe, Morodi, Ladikos, 2003). Similarly, Townsend and colleagues found 52% of high school students had been bullied in Cape Town (Townsend, Flisher, Chikobvu, Lombard, & King, 2008).

During South Africa's Apartheid era, policies enforced between 1948 and 1994, upheld a culture of racism and discrimination against, the majority of non-white South African (Nyahodza & Higgs, 2017). It was during the Apartheid era that inferior education and

learning opportunity policies for non-whites were enforced. There are many South African students entering university from a position of educational disadvantage, poor social support as well as poverty, being first-time university students in families (Chetty & Pather, 2015). There are a number of student dropouts due "to poor programme choice, maladjustment, social circumstances, health and finances" (Chetty & Pather, 2015, p.1). South Africa post-apartheid still experiences the unequal distribution of income and educational resources as well as high crime rates among society (Fuchs & Horak, 2008; Nyahodza & Higgs, 2017).

Universities are places of diversity, which makes it a fertile ground for all sorts of stereotypic behaviours that are informed mainly by lack of knowledge of others. In worst instances, discriminatory behaviours include traditional bullying and lately cyber-bullying. The widespread use of the internet at university through the access to free wifi within university vicinities as well as the use of internet through mobile devices has increased over the years (Popovac & Leoschut, 2012; Vodacom, 2017). Individuals use social networking sites as a way to go online and socialise, connect to peers, exchange to feel socially included and accepted into a collective (Farhangpour & Matendawafa 2014). Both traditional bullying and cyber-bullying affect the psychological well-being of individuals (Espelage, Hong, Rao & Low, 2013; Juvon, Wang & Espinoza, 2011). This can impact the everyday life of a person.

International studies have found that bullying is related to the climate and culture present within schools, these two factors influencing one another (Evans & Smokowski, 2016). Laftman, Östberg, and Modin (2017) found that positive climate and culture in schools are associated with decreased bullying behaviour. In order for universities to make policy changes with regard to bullying at university, the policy framework needs to address the prevalence and nature of bullying within the South African higher education context, in order for policymakers and implementers to appropriately direct resources and implement interventions in order to combat bullying (Juan et al., 2018).

The chapter serves as an introduction to the current study, and expands upon the rationale of the study, the statement of the problem, the aims as well the research questions that this study investigated.

1.1 Rationale

Bullying is a universal issue which can take place in various forms from physical and emotional bullying to cyber-bullying. Although bullying has been recognised as a severe issue, research has predominantly explored the occurrence of traditional bullying and cyber-bullying in primary school, high school as well as workplace settings (Lund & Ross, 2016; Sanchez, Romero, Navarro-Zaragoza, Ruiz-Cabello, Frantzisko, & Maldonado, 2016). However, there are limited studies that have investigated and explored traditional bullying and cyber-bullying within tertiary education institutions, the majority of which have been conducted in Europe and America (Dilmac, 2009; Finn, 2004; Macdonald & Roberts-Pittman, 2010; Smith & Yoon, 2013; Turan, Polat, Karapirli, Uysal, & Turan, 2011; Zalaquett & Chatters, 2014). This study affords the opportunity to gain a greater understanding of traditional bullying and cyber-bullying among university students as well as the demographic factors that may be associated, making the study even more significant and necessary. In order for "bullying" to occur it needs to be an act of intentional harm or aggressive behaviour that takes place repeatedly between two individuals that have an unequal power dynamic in their interpersonal relationship (Olweus, 1993; 1997). In recent years, posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD) is considered to be a disorder that affects victims of repeated traumatic incidents (American Psychiatric Association, 2013). Furthermore, based on the continuity of the acts of bullying, this leads one to consider whether bullying can be regarded as a form of trauma. Investigating whether bullying is a form of trauma through posttraumatic symptoms further highlights the significance of tackling and preventing bullying at a university (tertiary education) level.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

With a focus on instant connection and communication, the use of technology in today's society has become one of the most rapid and universal practices of this generation. Even though such technology has benefited many through the access of infinite and beneficial resources and is linked to the realm of social networking sites like Facebook, Twitter and Instagram, it also has a negative side. A negative impact of technology is that it may also be used as well to create maltreatment and harm (Aricak, 2009). As a result, this study investigated the prevalence of cyber-bullying among university students. There is evidence of traditional bullying and cyber-bullying occurring and affecting learners in primary school and high school as well as among adults in the workplace. However, there appears to be limited

research (both quantitative and qualitative) when it comes to the prevalence of traditional bullying and the relatively new phenomenon of cyber-bullying among university students. This research study aimed to address that gap and contribute to the existing pool of knowledge by exploring the prevalence of traditional bullying and cyber-bullying among university students, in terms of both the perpetrator and victim of bullying. This study is aimed to address the notion that bullying still occurs among young adults during their years of tertiary education and is not just a commonality that is associated with children in school and among people in the workplace. Furthermore, this study is also aimed at investigating whether bullying experiences, as a victim or perpetrator, is a form of trauma.

It is hoped that this study contributes to the on-going conversation about the role educational institutions play in terms of providing safe learning environments for their students.

1.3 Aims of the Study

The following guided the study:

1. To investigate the occurrence of traditional bullying and cyber-bullying among university students within a South African context.
2. To explore the role demographic factors play in experiences of traditional bullying and cyber-bullying among university students, with a focus on both the victims and perpetrators of traditional bullying and cyber-bullying.
3. To establish whether traditional bullying and cyber-bullying are regarded as forms of trauma.

1.4 Research Questions

This study undertakes to investigate the question as to whether bullying (in terms of both perpetrators and victims) occurs among university students in South Africa. As a result, the study investigates whether there is a prevalence of traditional bullying and cyber-bullying, how demographic factors play a role in students getting bullied, as well as how bullying can be regarded as a form of trauma. Furthermore, this research study aims to address the following questions:

1.4.1 Primary Questions

1. What is the prevalence of traditional bullying (for both the bully perpetrator and victim) among university students?
2. What is the prevalence of cyber-bullying (for both the bully perpetrator and victim) among university students?

1.4.2 Secondary Questions

1. What are the predominant types of bullying behaviour among university students?
2. Do bully victims disclose whether they are being victimised?
3. Who intervenes when bullying occurs?
4. What are the student's feelings and attitudes feelings towards bullying?
5. What roles do demographic factors; gender, race, and age play in the traditional bullying and cyber-bullying of university students (specifically with regards to the victims of bullying)?

    5.1 Are there differences in gender and the prevalence of traditional bullying and cyber-bullying?

    5.2 Are there differences in race and the prevalence of traditional bullying and cyber-bullying?

    5.3 Are there differences in age and the prevalence of traditional bullying and cyber-bullying?
6. Can the experience of being a victim to traditional bullying and cyber-bullying be regarded as a form of trauma?

1.5 Hypotheses for Primary and Secondary Research Questions

1. There would be a low prevalence of physical bullying and an increase in verbal bullying in terms of traditional bullying (perpetration and victimisation) among university students.

2. It was predicted that there would be a high prevalence of cyber-bullying (perpetration and victimisation) among university students.

3. Victims of bullying would not disclose to others when they are bullied.

4. Students intervene to stop bullying when bullying occurs

5. When students feel that bullying is not okay are likely to step in to stop it.

6.1 Males are more likely to commit traditional bullying and females are more likely to commit cyber-bullying

6.2 Individuals of colour (Black, Coloured, and Indian) are more at risk of being both traditionally bullied and cyber-bullied.

6.3 As age increases traditional bullying decreases, and in terms of cyber-bullying, cyber-bullying occurs regardless of age.

7. The experience of being a victim to traditional bullying and cyber-bullying can be regarded as a form of trauma as trauma symptoms are likely to be experienced by individuals bullied.

1.6 Outline of the Chapters

Chapter 2 is a review of the literature on bullying. Chapter 2 investigates the definitions of traditional bullying and cyber-bullying, as well as the difference between the two types of bullying. Additionally, it also looked at the prevalence of traditional and cyber-bullying, specifically within universities, as well as demographic factors to consider in terms of traditional bullying and cyber-bullying. Traditional bullying and cyber-bullying within the university as well as within the South African context was investigated. This chapter also expands upon the theoretical framework used (the Social-Ecological Model) in order to understand bullying behaviour within a university context. Finally, the issue of bullying as a form of trauma was also investigated. Chapter 3 expands on the methods used in the current research study. The research design outlines the descriptions of the measures used in this study, as well as the participant sample used, the procedure followed, the ethical considerations, and the statistical analysis utilised by this study. Chapter 4 presents the results of the current study. These results are presented according to the research questions outlined in Chapter 1. The final chapter, Chapter 5, provides a discussion of the findings of the study, followed by the limitations and recommendations appropriate for the study.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

Society is a competitive, conflict-riddled environment where bullying is dominant. Bullying is seen as one of the most widespread and underhanded acts of violence amongst children. Bullying traits and behaviour are evident in the workplace environment, in the political sphere; it is portrayed in the media, in sports and even occurs within households of individuals (Dupper, 2013; Rigby, 2002). Bullying is often considered to be an inherent part of growing up, with the attitude that "kids are being kids", these attitudes have played a role in research analysing bullying and the experiences linked to bullying among children and adolescents (Dupper, 2013; Garland, Policastro, Richards, & Miller, 2017). A plethora of studies of which have demonstrated and highlighted the prevalence and importance of engaging in this issue of bullying on school children (Greef, 2004; Hinduja & Patchin, 2010; Saarento, Boulton, & Salmivalli, 2014; Weathers & Keane, 2007; Newman, Holden, and Delville, 2005).

This chapter will further expand upon the nature of bullying, thereby expanding upon what is meant by traditional-bullying, followed by the definition of cyber-bullying. The prevalence of bullying will also be evaluated with regards to the South African context. The term bullying will be used throughout this study and will be used to refer to bullying; in general, this includes both traditional forms of bullying as well as cyber-bullying unless otherwise specified. It should also be clarified that bullying will be discussed in terms of the victims and perpetrators unless otherwise specified throughout this research study.

2.2 The Nature of Bullying

Bullying is associated with a sense of disempowerment and abuse of power (Boyes, Bowes, Cluver, Ward, & Badcock, 2014; Boyd, 2014; Dupper, 2013; Fargher & Dooley, 2001; Olweus, 1997). Bullying, whether in its traditional form (physical abuse or emotional abuse) or in its cyber context, can be harmful, invasive and violent in nature or may lead to incidents of violence. Bullying is seen as a series of continuous unprovoked, harmful acts resulting in victims being unable to defend themselves (Dupper, 2013; Olweus, 1997). An argument or conflict of interests between individuals of equal standing cannot be regarded as bullying (Olweus, 1997). Olweus (1997) has created a distinction between the term bullying and

teasing. The term teasing refers to friendly and good-natured social interactions or jests, which can occur continuously, but due to its nature, cannot be regarded as bullying (Olweus, 1997). Whereas, the term bullying refers to the continuous, malicious and demeaning teasing that occurs even after the victim portrays visible signs of suffering (Olweus, 1993; 1997). Olweus's (1993; 1997) definition of bullying is characterised by the continuous, intentional harm and unequal power balance in a relationship. Myers and Cowie (2016) stated that bullying perpetration among university students could occur in various forms and behaviours some of which include: threatening another person either online or directly in person; through spreading malicious rumours on the basis of gender, sexual orientation, race, religion, or disability to demean someone; unwanted sexual advances; or the spreading of confidential personal information to others. Thus victims of bullying struggle to defend themselves from continuous negative, harmful or violent actions from another student(s) that occur over a period of time (Olweus, 1993; Plexousakis, Kourkoutas, Giovazolias, Chatira, & Nikolopoulas, 2019). Bullying does not only occur between a perpetrator and the victim but can also be considered a group phenomenon that includes bystanders (Olweus, 2003; Plexousakis et al., 2019).

2.3 Feelings and attitudes toward bullying:

Olweus (2003) refers to there being bullies, supporters, bystanders and victims of being bullied. Salmivalli (2014) refers to bullying as a social incident since there are typically people (bystanders) present at the time of a bullying incident, either online or offline. Often it is the bystanders that create a sense of praise and incentive for bullies, either through laughing or spurring on the act at the expense of the victim (Myers & Cowie, 2016; Zacchilli & Vallerio, 2011). It is through these actions that bystanders either intentionally or unintentionally support bullying behaviour as spectators (Myers & Cowie, 2016). It is not a simple equation of bully or bullies (perpetrator) versus the victim, but rather it is a much more far-reaching problem affecting everyone whether their participation was active or passive in some way or any other way in which they are affected (Olweus, 2003). A Finnish study used an anti-bullying program to substantiate the claim further that through the use of an evidence-based program to prevent and tackle cases of bullying (Saarento, Boulton, & Salmivalli, 2014). The study carried out by Saarento, Boulton and Salmivalli (2014) took place during three intervals, in May 2007 the end of the academic year, in the middle of the academic year of program implementation (end of 2007/beginning of 2008) and May 2008.

The study was based on data collected from 7 491 students across 77 schools in Finland and found results that suggested the implementation of the anti-bullying program KiVa was successful in terms of counteracting both bullying and victimisation through influencing the attitudes of students toward bullying, bystander behaviours during acts of bullying, and the perceptions of teacher's attitudes towards bullying (Saarento, Boulton & Salmivalli, 2014).

In order to gain a further understanding the nature and extent of bullying, the definitions of direct bullying, indirect bullying, traditional bullying and cyber-bullying along with the main subcategories of these terms will be discussed below. These terms will be discussed in order to provide a more comprehensive understanding of bullying. Sinkkonen and colleagues (2014) found that 5% of university students from a Finnish university (n = 2 805) had experienced either direct verbal bullying or indirect public bullying on campus.

2.4 Definitions: Traditional Bullying and Cyber-Bullying

By defining and comparing the varying characteristics of traditional bullying and cyber-bullying, distinctive characteristics of each type of bullying will be highlighted together with the characteristics which coincide (Wong-Lo & Bullock, 2014).

2.4.1 Direct Bullying

Physical and verbal bullying is considered to be direct forms of bullying. Physical bullying involves aggressive physical acts like hitting, kicking, punching (Dupper, 2013; Baldry, 2004). Verbal bullying is seen as a direct form of bullying as it involves direct verbal aggression, e.g. direct name-calling (Baldry, 2004).

2.4.2 Indirect Bullying

Indirect bullying occurs when the victim is not directly bullied but somewhat indirectly bullied by the spreading of malicious rumours, being socially isolated or rejected (Dupper, 2013). The term indirect bullying does not only apply to verbal attacks but also through the use of social manipulation (Coyne, Archer, & Elsea, 2006). Indirect bullying is also known as social bullying because the perpetrator acts/attacks with the intention of damaging the victim's self-image and social relationships (Coyne et al., 2006).

2.4.3 Traditional Bullying

Central to Olweus's (1997) definition of traditional bullying are the concepts of repetition, aggression and the involvement of unequal power dynamics (Boyd, 2014). Olweus (1993; 1997) described traditional bullying as physical or "face-to-face" contact (Wong-Lo, Bullock, 2014). Thus the perpetration of physical bullying refers to an attack on a victim which is physical in nature; this includes kicking, punching, hitting, pushing or any other act of aggressive physical contact (Dupper, 2013). Verbal bullying applies to acts such as the malicious calling of names and teasing, taunting, and threats. Physical and verbal bullying are considered to be direct forms of bullying. Ultimately the most distinct definition of bullying deduced from these findings is that bullying is a deliberate and continuous act of malicious threat or action that may occur due to unequal power relations. Recently bullying has adapted to "cyber-bullying", which is also a form of harassment but utilises electronic devices and the use of networking platforms via the internet to do so (Schenk, Fremouw, & Keelan, 2013; Vivolo-Kantor, Martell, Holland, & Westby, 2014).

2.4.4 Cyber-bullying

The use of technological devices and social media today has become part of contemporary culture (Boyd, 2014; Simmons, Bauman, & Ives, 2016). For the purpose of this research study, the term social media will refer to social networking sites and services that allow individuals to upload and share personal content. Social media has become an integral and normative practice among people (Boyd, 2014). It has created an entryway into a much more efficient and readily accessible world in which information and content can be shared. From research, it is evident that the use of technological devices and social media is not likely to decrease in the near future (Burton & Mutongwizo, 2009). The way in which content is so effortlessly shared by means of social media can be regarded as both formidable and problematic.

The capabilities and principle of conveying messages which are enabled by social media is not something new and profound. Letters and messages have always been sent in the past either through post or telegraph. However, what social media has accomplished is that it has created a platform in which social situations can be amplified offering both technical capability and features which allow other individuals to engage in online content, either through commenting or posting their opinions (Boyd, 2014). Thus the use of social media has

turned attention to a pressing hallmark, that of cyber-bullying. Throughout this study, the term cyber-bullying will refer to bullying via the means of electronic devices and social media (like Instagram, Twitter, Facebook, or Whatsapp).

Cyber-bullying includes the sharing or posting of a private message(s), video or photo(s) without a person's permission, the posting of derogatory comments, or the sending of physically intimidating or threatening (Hinduja & Patchin, 2010). Cyber-bullying undoubtedly stems from traditional bullying as there is an extensive overlap between the two both in terms of the bullying and the victimising (Myers & Cowie, 2016). However, it is the irrevocable damaging of reputations which have become a particular of cyber-bullying. The anonymity and lack of accountability and supervision that apply to many of these electronic and social forms plays a significant role in terms of victimising others as well as being a perpetrator of cyber-bullying (Schenk et al., 2013; Zalaquett & Chatters, 2014). Cyber-bullying appears to be orchestrated by individuals who may not have the physical power or strength to traditionally bully others but can use technological devices and social media platforms to initiate bullying (Schenk & Fremouw, 2012). A study exploring the prevalence of cyber-bullying among Grade 8-12 learners, from a Gauteng based high school in South Africa (n = 3300), found that 54% of the learners received hurtful and upsetting messages, while 49% admitted to spreading gossip and rumours and 25% reported to receiving unwanted sexual remarks (Tustin et al., 2012). In a 1963 sample of middle-schoolers (6th to 8th graders) from one of the biggest districts in the United States, Hinduja and Patchin (2010) found that perpetrator behaviour of cyber-bullying ranged from 9.1% to 23.1% and cyber-bullying victimisation ranged from 5.7% to 18.3%. The 23.1% represented the most common form of cyber-bullying perpetration carried out, and this was: ''Posted something online about another person to make others laugh''. Another common form of cyber-bullying (18.3%), victims had received an upsetting email from someone they knew.

Cyber-bullying is a newer form of bullying that utilises the use of technology and social media to harass others (Schenk et al., 2013). This study will refer to the definition of cyber-bullying as the continuous use of technological devices (like cellphones or computers), electronic or digital media to threaten, intimidate, harass or humiliate an individual repeatedly over time (Kyriacou & Zuin, 2016; Mark & Ratliffe, 2011; Turan, Polat, Karapitli, Uysal & Turan 2011). This section is followed by the differences and similarities between traditional bullying and cyber-bullying.

2.5 Traditional Bullying versus Cyber-bullying

Even though there are similarities between traditional bullying and cyber-bullying, there are also aspects which are considerably different (Hinduja & Patchin, 2008). Cyber-bullying goes beyond the boundaries of time and space limitations (Bauman & Yoon, 2014). Whereas, traditional bullying within the context of school, higher education or the workplace varies from cyber-bullying in the way traditional bullying will cease to occur once the individual is at home or within their *safe place*. Individuals who are cyber-bullied are unable to escape the omnipresent feeling of torment even when they are within the confines of their own home or personal space.

Intimidation and name-calling are not regarded as new concepts. However, when such threats are spoken, they are transient in the sense that it is spoken word and not traceable (Bazelon, 2013). This is the opposite with regard to cyber-bullying, where screen-shots, printouts and the general sharing or forwarding of information (this includes images, text messages, audio and video clips) occurs (Bazelon, 2013). Unfortunately, the use of technology and social networks have created a more solidified and permanent manner of bullying where it is now much more observable to a broader audience and viral in nature (Bauman & Yoon, 2014; Bazelon, 2013). In traditional bullying, the victim knows who the bully is due to face-to-face interaction whereas, with cyber-bullying, it is not unusual to have to face an anonymous bully (Dupper, 2013). Kyriacou and Zuin (2016) stated that the anonymity that is associated with cyber-bullying results in a decrease or deficit of pro-social values and empathy towards others which may lead to the absence of moral involvement due to the lack of physical contact. Hence, cyber-bullies have a far greater chance of not encountering social disapproval or mediation from bystanders (Myers & Cowie, 2016). Leymann (1990) asserts that bullying behaviour is not necessarily the root cause of problems experienced by victims; instead, Leymann suggests that actual harm is subsequent due to the continuous and frequent acts of bullying, the unequal power dynamic between perpetrator and victim, the scenarios in which the bullying occurs, as well as the victim's sense of inescapability.

Both traditional bullying and cyber-bullying have been observed to have considerable negative impacts on the victims being bullied. Isaacs, Hodges and Salmivalli (2008) found that individuals who were continuous victims of bullying from childhood up until adulthood were negatively affected in terms of their well-being and their emotional health. Studies found that victims of bullying experience weaker psychosocial outcomes, particularly anxiety and depression both of which are referred to as internalising symptoms (Ghoul, Niwa, &

Boxer, 2013; Reinjntjes, Kamphuis, Prinzie, & Telch, 2010; Yen et al., 2013). In comparison to the research done on being a victim of bullying and internalising symptoms, the diminutive research that has been carried out on external symptoms have determined a link between bully victims and the high risk of externalising symptoms (which includes behaviours of self-harm, aggression, violence, substance abuse, and suicide) (Arseneault, Bowes, Shakoor, 2010; Arseneault, Milne, Taylor, Adama, Delgado, Caspi, Moffitt, 2008; Klomek, Marrocco, Kleinman, Schonfeld, & Gould, 2007; Radliff, Whaton, Robinson, & Morris, 2012; Reijntjes, Kamphuis, Prinzie, Boelen, van der Schoot, & Telch, 2011).

Due to the relentless nature of cyber-bullying occurring anywhere and at any time, it raises significant concerns about the impact cyber-bullying has on its victims. Rivers, Chesney, & Coyne (2011) stated that victims of cyber-bullying are reported to have experienced a sense of disempowerment and lack of self-worth. Dempsey, Sulkowski, Nichols and Storch (2009) found evidence of a weak yet positive relationship between cyber-bullying and symptoms of social anxiety. Through cyber-bullying, the additional risk factor of developing depressive symptoms was also found evident among university students (Aricak, 2009). Victims were reported to have experienced a higher likelihood of experiencing suicide ideation or having attempted suicide (Hinduja & Patchin, 2010). Research done on college students who were victims of cyber-bullying rated higher on phobic anxiety, paranoia, anxiety, and depression measures compared to their matched controls counterparts (Schenk & Fremouw, 2012).

Similar to the impacts of cyber-bullying, traditional bullying is also considered to have negative consequences. A longitudinal study done across four continents found that victims of bullying were associated with social anxiety, low self-esteem, school phobia, as well as depression (Greene, 2006). Other studies have also shown that both brief and chronic encounters of being bullied had negative psychological consequences for victims namely: undermining academic achievement and performance is one of them (Espelage, Hong, Rao & Low, 2013; Juvon, Wang & Espinoza, 2011; Ladd, Herald-Brown, & Reiser, 2008). Smith and Yoon (2013**)** surveyed 276 students from the University of Minnesota and found that students not only used social networking sites like Twitter, Facebook and YouTube to cyber-bully others, but that they were also cyberbullying peers through university technology infrastructures intended for educational purposes and other online platforms utilised for learning. They found that 10% of students had experienced being cyber-bullied by another student (Smith & Yoon, 2013). Of the 10%, over 46% reported experiencing some short-term adverse effects on life and learning. Four (14.3%) selected that the cyberbullying had a great

extent affecting life and learning and one (3.6%) as severely impacting emotional health and/or physical trauma. In Zalaquett and Chatters (2014) study, one of their research questions investigated what the direct psychological effects and actions were taken after being cyber-bullied among college students. The results yielded that of the participants that had been cyber-bullied left them feeling angry, sad, experienced an increase in stress and a loss of productivity (Zalaquett & Chatters, 2014). These results prompted Zalaquett and Chatters (2014) to suggest that the psychological impact of cyber-bullying does not decrease as the victim gets older. Sinkkonen and colleagues (2012), found that Finnish university students, who reported being a victim to traditional forms of bullying, reported feelings of stress, feeling low, fearfulness, reduced capacity, lack of self-efficacy and motivation as well as disengagement as a result. It is crucial to consider the prevalence of traditional bullying and cyber-bullying in context. Hence, the following section will discuss the incidence of both traditional bullying and cyber-bullying within a university context.

2.6 Prevalence of Traditional Bullying and Cyber-bullying within the University Context

There appeared to be a significant disparity in how "bullying" was defined, interpreted, and dealt with, from children to young adults, and adults within the work environment (Currie et al., 2012; Jacobson, Hood, & van Buren, 2014; Myers & Cowie, 2016). The term "bullying" and "cyber-bullying" may have an infantile association, which may not appear to match up with that of "adult" behaviour (Faucher, Jackson, & Cassidy, 2014). However, the different types of behaviours that some young adults and adults may experience, such as harassment, threats of an intimidating and aggressive nature, and degradation does fall within the overarching category of bullying (Faucher et al., 2014).

The adolescent years are a fundamental transitioning period in a young individual's life when he or she embarks on a journey of identity development and social interaction; a prime example of this being the social transition from primary school to high school (Dupper, 2013; Swearer, Espelage, Vaillancourt, & Hymel, 2010). Could the transition period not be similar to that of a university student, transitioning from high school to university, now trying to navigate his life both socially and academically?

Human beings are continuously evolving beings, changing and adapting to their new surroundings, so why should young adults be treated as anything different from that? Their

identities are far from being wholly formed as they are still undergoing a significant process of transition. Schulenberg and colleagues (1996) emphasised that critical development occurs during the transition between adolescence and young adulthood. Adjusting to university can be challenging, whereby attending university is met with new social and developmental challenges (Holt et al., 2014; Rospenda, Richman, Wolff, & Burke, 2013). Although research has primarily focused on both traditional bullying and cyber-bullying among primary school and high-school learners; traditional bullying and cyber-bullying can be viewed as the continuous behaviour from childhood, adolescence, through to adulthood (Faucher et al., 2014). Walrave and Heirman (2011) found that the increase of age slightly increases the prevalence of cyber-bullying as there is less computer supervision with the increase in age. When individuals attend university, there is little to no computer supervision, which, as Walrave and Heirman (2011) illustrated, can lead to an increased likelihood of cyberbullying taking place. A study conducted among 2, 805 Finnish university students found that 5% of the respondents had experienced either direct or indirect bullying by either a fellow student or university staff member (Sinkkonen, Puhakka, & Meriläinen, 2014). Sinkkonen and colleagues (2014) further found that half of the victims and half of the bullying perpetrators had previously been involved in bullying at school. This further demonstrates the continuum and continuity of bullying and its associated behaviours between the different life stages (Myer & Cowie, 2016) Furthermore Sinkkonen, Puhakka and Meriläinen (2014) suggested that bullying at a university level may occur when resources become limited, and competition arises in order acquire them.

Adekeye and colleagues (2016) found a high prevalence of bullying behaviour among Nigerian adolescents, in their study that sought to investigate the prevalence of bullying as well as to identify gender differences that might exist in bullying behaviour. The study found the reason for the high prevalence rates of bullying was due to the students need for control and attention, and as a result, the use of bullying behaviour was perpetrated in order to achieve such attention and control (Adekeye et al., 2016). Another study conducted among Ghanaian adolescent found that 56% of adolescents experienced bullying at least once (Acquah, Wilson, & Doku, 2014). Additionally, a study conducted in sub-Saharan Africa (particularly in Ghana, Malawi and South Africa) asked young people (9-25 years) whether they had ever received an unpleasant, upsetting, or unwanted text messages or phone call on their phone in the last 12 months (Porter et al., 2016). In Ghana, 16.35% of young people had experienced some form of unpleasant, unwanted or upsetting call or text, 27.6% in Malawi and 55% in South Africa (Porter et al., 2016). Govender and Young (2018) explored the

differences between learners who perpetrate cyber-bullying and traditional bullying in Gauteng on 279 Grade 6 and Grade 7 students from four primary schools in Benoni Gauteng. The results revealed that Grade 6 students were significantly more likely to perpetrate acts of traditional bullying compared to Grade 7 learners who were more likely to be perpetrators of cyber-bullying (Govender & Young, 2018).

Recent studies have found relatively high incidents of cyber-bullying compared to traditional bullying and among university populations around the world. However, such research in recent years, for the most part, has been conducted predominantly within a European (Dilmac, 2009; Turan, Polat, Karapirli, Uysal, & Turan, 2011); American (Finn, 2004; Macdonald & Roberts-Pittman, 2010; Smith & Yoon, 2013; Zalaquett & Chatters, 2014); and Asian context (Xiao & Wong, 2013) compared to the African context or the sub-Saharan context for that matter. Turan, Polat, Karapirli, Uysal and Turan (2011) found that 59.8% of the total 579 university students (18-30 years) surveyed from various universities across Istanbul identified as being cyber-bullied. A study conducted in the U.S. found that 21.9% of the 439 university students sampled were cyber-bullied and 8.6% had reported to cyberbullying others (MacDonald & Roberts-Pittman, 2010). A study conducted among Canadian university students with a total sample of university students found that 20% of the research participants had been victims of cyber-bullying within the past 12 months (Faucher et al., 2014). Furthermore, Zalaquett and Chatters (2014) found that 19% (n = 115) of university students from a south-eastern university in the United States of America experienced cyber-bullying; of the 19% of university bully victims, 30% reported cyberbullying had occurred based on sexuality, 10% on race and 8% on gender (Zalaquett & Chatters, 2014). In addition, Zalaquett and Chatters (2014) found that 50% of college student cyber-bully victims also reported being cyber-bullied when they were in high school. From two studies carried out on college students, study 1 consisted of 1 272 freshmen students and found that less than 1% of students reported having experienced cyber-bullying (Zacchilli & Valerio, 2011). Study 2 consisted of 34 seniors and 76 freshmen and found that 9% of the sample were victims of cyber-bullying, and 3.6% reported being a perpetrator of cyber-bullying (Zacchilli & Valerio, 2011). However, a study conducted among undergraduate students from Jackson State University in the US found low prevalence rates of cyberbullying at the university (Johnson et al., 2016). A South African study conducted among 1 726 individuals (ages 12 to 24 years old) across four cities, found that a quarter (25.6%) of their sample had experienced via text message some form of bullying on their cell phone within

the last 12 months before the study, and 46.8% had reported experiencing some form of cyber aggression along with harassment via the telephone (Burton & Mutongwizo, 2009). The use of technological devices among young South Africans was evident as 92.9% of the youngsters reported either having their own cell phone or having access to a cell phone that could use for personal use (Burton & Mutongwizo, 2009). However, a study conducted on 14 peer-reviewed studies on bullying and victimisation among college students, published between the years 2004 and 2010, found that while the prevalence rates varied across the 14 studies, an average of 20% to 25% of students were traditionally bullied and 10% to 5% reported being cyber-bullied (Lund & Ross, 2017). Approximately 5% of students were found to have perpetrated cyber-bullying, and on average, 20% of students had reported to perpetrating bullying during college (Lund & Ross, 2017).

Given that the prevalence of traditional bullying and cyber-bullying was found predominantly in Western countries and lesser in African countries, it is significant to study such occurrences or lack of among university students in South Africa. Individuals with low self-esteem are believed to be more prone to depression (Orth & Robins, 2013). "The exclusion of research inquiry into the HE (higher education) student context represents a missed opportunity to bridge the gap between bullying in compulsory educational contexts and that of the workplace" (Coleyshaw, 2010, p. 337).

2.7 Demographic Factors to Consider

This study aimed to explore the demographic factors and their effect on bullying further. This was significant due to the diverse community that makes up the South African context. This research study looked at demographic factors such as age, race, gender and nationality to see whether any differences occur in university student's experiences of bullying. Nationality appears to play a role in bullying with those recognised as having immigrant status being exposed to bullying based on their language competency and differing nationality (Kowalski, Morgan, & Limber, 2012).

2.7.1 Gender

Gender is often seen as playing a role in establishing the pattern between those who become victim to bullying and those who act like the bullying perpetrator. Males are most often

reported as being the perpetrators of bullying (Li, 2006). A research study conducted by Wong, Lok, Lo and Ma (2008) on primary school children in Hong Kong, found boys were more likely to become bullies as well as fall victim to physical bullying. Rivers and Noret (2010) have found that girls are more likely to act as perpetrators of cyber-bullying. Similarly, a study in South Africa found that compared to boys, girls were to some extent more vulnerable to cyber-bullying (Popovac & Leoschut, 2012). Zalaquett and Chatters (2014) found that 15.5% of females surveyed were cyber-bullied compared to 3.6% of males that reported being cyber-bullied. A Turkish study done exploring cyberbullying among postsecondary students found that females were more likely to report being victims of cyber-bullying, whereas males were more likely to admit to carrying out (perpetrating) cyber-bullying behaviour (Dilmac, 2009). However, another study conducted among Turkish university students found a greater likelihood of males acting as both victims and perpetrators of cyber-bullying (Akbulut & Eristi, 2011). Boyes and colleagues (2014) conducted a study among South African youth aged between 10 to 17 years old, part of the study explored the varying experiences of bullying victimisation in terms of gender and age (Boyes et al., 2014). The study found that more males were victim to direct bullying compared to their female counterparts who were victim to more indirect/relational bullying (Boyes et al., 2014). A qualitative study exploring the nature of bullying amongst eighteen Grade 5 (11 to 12 year old) girls from a parochial school located in the Western Cape, South Africa, found and categorised the bullying techniques carried out by the participants as verbal, non-verbal and two types of bullying with an intent to hurt: intentional and unintentional (Swart & Bredenkamp, 2009). This research study continued to investigate as to whether gender differences persisted into the post-secondary school years of young adulthood.

2.7.2 Race

Bullying based on race refers to hurtful and derogatory comments made about an individual's race or ethnicity (Olweus, 2003). A South African study that explored the prevalence of bullying among Grade 4 to Grade 6 students recorded significantly high levels of racial bullying among black students compared to their white student counterparts (Greef, 2004). Additionally, Burton & Mutongwizo (2009) in their sample of 1 726 youngsters, 47.4% were black, 25.4% were coloured, 18.9% were white, and 7.4% were Indian/Asian, found race to be significant both within the home and school environments. Black youngsters reported the highest incidence of cyber-bullying (49.1% at home and 39% at school) and one in five Indian/Asian (20.5%) reported cyber-bullying at home and one in ten (12.6%) experienced

cyber-bullying at school (Burton & Mutongwizo, 2009). In comparison, MacDonald and Robert-Pitman (2010) found there to be no difference between white US citizen college students and non-white or foreign national college students with regards to the prevalence of cyber-bullying and cyber-bullying behaviours.

2.7.3 Age

Govender and Young (2018) found that age was significantly associated with the perpetration of cyberbullying among 13-year-old students. They found that older students were more likely to perpetrate cyber-bullying behaviours compared to their 11 and 12-year-old counterparts (Govender & Young, 2018). However, in the same study, it was found that there was no significant association between age and traditional bullying (Govender & Young, 2018). Walrave and Heirman (2011) found that there was a slight increase in cyber-bullying and age among adolescents as there is less computer supervision and more access to the internet and social media. While a decline was found in traditional behaviour, specifically physical bullying, in the higher grades (Olweus & Limber, 2010). Borg (1998) put forward that while bullying appears to decrease over time it, in fact, just shifts to a more passive form of bullying (like verbal bullying). According to Schenk and colleagues (2013), there is a reason to believe that the trend of cyber-bullying will continue from high school to university, given the increase of cyber-bullying from middle school to high school.

2.8 South African Context

Bullying attitudes have become pervasive in everyday life (Dupper, 2013). While domestic violence and child abuse may not necessarily be recognised as bullying, such violent actions involve the basic element of bullying which is the unequal distribution and abuse of power (Dupper, 2013; Monks, Smith, Naylor, Barter, Ireland, & Coyne, 2009). Olweus (1993) went as far as to categorise bullying as a subtype of violent behaviour.

South Africa is known for its inherent traumatic and violent history, which dates back to the years of colonisation, through to the oppressive Apartheid era (Eagle, 2014). Today, South African societies, in post-Apartheid South Africa, are still faced with a myriad of extreme levels of trauma and violence from the outbreak of violent xenophobic attacks, and socio-economic problems to “violent service delivery protests” (Eagle, 2014, p. 2). The majority of

South African citizens are exposed to traumatic incidents daily (Kaminer & Eagle, 2010). Grief and Furlong (2006) warns one that it is violence in society in which bullying becomes a part of which perpetuates this continuous sequence of violence. Although this is not a South African study, it is interesting to see how domestic violence was found linked to bullying in Italy. This research was conducted among 8 to 15year-old Italian children from the Italian province of Rome found that exposure to domestic violence had negatively affected a child's behaviour and was ultimately linked to either bullying or being bullied at school (Baldry, 2003). Bullying will always be considered a serious concern, however, "it can become a serious trauma where the mental shield is broken" which can result in long-lasting social and emotional risk factors (Dooley et al., 2009; Fargher & Dooley, 2001, p. 202). Not only is bullying perpetration and victimisation associated with symptoms of behavioural or emotional reactions, that have a negative impact on a student's educational and psychosocial health, it is also associated with symptoms of psychological trauma (Plexousakis et al., 2019).

2.9 Trauma

Trauma can be understood as an unsolicited infiltration of experiences and emotions into an individual's psyche (Kaminer & Eagle, 2010). Carney (2008) found that the higher the exposure to bullying among sixth-graders resulted in their experiencing increased levels of trauma. Even though traditional bullying is considered to be a chronic form of stress, the way in which bullying attacks (both direct and indirect) on an individual can undoubtedly be regarded as being a traumatic incident to an individual's psyche. The same goes for cyber-bullying victims although cyber-bullying bears the element of surprise in that malevolent text messages, emails, pictures, comments and any other form of technological communication can appear at any given time to the victim. Individuals who are subject to constant traditional bullying or cyber-bullying may not have any escape out of what he or she may perceive as a "trapped" scenario. Espelage and colleagues (2016) study suggests that there is a link between bullying victimisation and post-traumatic stress disorder. The risk of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) appears to increase when the stress, in this case, bullying, is prolonged, repetitive, harsh, humiliating to the victim, and possibly creates a break in the victim's support system and community. Traumatic stress studies have become increasingly associated with PTSD research (Eagle & Kaminer, 2015). This emphasises the damaging effects of repeated physical, verbal, or cyber acts of aggression as a significant contributing factor in bullying relationships (Olweus, 1993; Mishna & Sawyer, 2012). Exposure to

bullying is the continuous act of harmful or negative acts over a lengthened period of time, instead of a once-off act, it is claimed that the distress victims experience is some-what equivalent to stress associated with traumatic events (Nielsen et al., 2015; Tehrani, 2004). The negative symptoms and psychological effects of bullying at times resemble the symptomology that characterises PTSD (Nielsen et al., 2015). Hence, it has been proposed that bullying being a victim of bullying may lead to PTSD. Therefore it is necessary to examine bullying and its effects in relation to trauma.

In the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders Fifth Edition* (*DSM-5*) of the *American Psychiatric Association* (*APA*), Posttraumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) is classified as a *Trauma- and Stressor-Related Disorder* that is defined by four main clusters of symptoms (re-experiencing, avoidance, arousal, and negative cognition and mood) (American Psychiatric Association, 2013). Unlike the previous edition of the *DSM*, *DSM-IV*, PSTD is no longer classified as an anxiety disorder or by the three diagnostic symptoms: re-experiencing, arousal, and avoidance (Tehrani, 2004). The four main cluster symptoms of PTSD according to the *DSM-5* will be expanded on below:

The re-experiencing symptom refers to re-living a traumatic event(s) through intrusive recollections (repeated, unintentional, intrusive memories of the event) (American Psychiatric Association, 2013). This includes spontaneous flashbacks or memories of the traumatic event, recurrent dreams associated with the event, or continued psychological distress (American Psychiatric Association, 2013). Avoidance is linked to unsettling and distressing feelings, emotions and memories regarding the related traumatic event (American Psychiatric Association, 2013). As a result, these individuals may avoid people, places, objects or situations as it may cause a recollection of the traumatic event or experience (American Psychiatric Association, 2013). Arousal refers to disturbed sleep, aggressive, self-destructive or reckless behaviour, as well as hyper-vigilance (American Psychiatric Association, 2013). Lastly, the negative mood and cognition concern an array of varying emotions and feelings, such as a distorted sense of self-blame or blaming of others, lack of interest in activities, withdrawal and estrangement from other individuals, as well as the inability to remember important details pertaining to the traumatic incident (American Psychiatric Association, 2013). Individuals who suffer from PTSD also experience anger outbursts and irritable behaviour; hypervigilance; they are easily startled; experience a lack of concentration; and sleep disturbance (American Psychiatric Association, 2013).

The diagnostic criterion relating to PTSD, for individuals above the age of 6-years-old, includes being exposed to a severe injury, sexual violation or experiencing a threatened or actual death (American Psychiatric Association, 2013). This includes the individual having directly experienced the traumatic event; having witnessed the traumatic event first-hand; receiving details regarding a traumatic event involving an immediate family member or close friend (the event being either accidental or violent) or; direct experiences with reiterated or severe contact and exposure to unpleasant and unwanted details of the traumatic event (American Psychiatric Association, 2013). Bearing in mind, that reiterated, or severe exposure to unwarranted details of traumatic events does not apply to exposure experienced through the genus of media, which includes newspapers, movies, television, or pictures, unless it is work-related (American Psychiatric Association, 2013).

The aforementioned criterion are some of the diagnostic criteria found in the *DSM-5;* however, it needs to be reiterated as is mentioned in the DSM-5, that these significant symptoms of distress or impairment are not the psychological result of medication, drugs, alcohol, or another medical condition (American Psychiatric Association, 2013). According to the behaviour described in the PTSD diagnostic criteria, the disturbance needs to occur for more than one month (American Psychiatric Association, 2013). A traumatic event, regardless of its nature of exposure, is described as that which causes significant clinical distress or impairment in an individual's social interactions, in their workability, as well as capacity to carry out other areas of functioning (American Psychiatric Association, 2013).

PTSD was traditionally considered to be a disorder that arose from a single traumatic experience. However, in recent years, experts have begun to identify a second definition for PTSD that has made allowance for the victims of repeated traumatising incidents. PTSD entails negative changes in both mood and cognition as a result of previous traumatic experiences; poor concentration, excessive vigilance and response, sleep disturbances, and intrusive symptoms (memories, nightmares and dissociative flashbacks about a past traumatic experience) (American Psychiatric Association, 2013; Kaminer, Eagle, & Crawford-Browne, 2018).

In this study, trauma has been defined as an emotionally distressing, painful or shocking experience that can have a marking impact on individuals involved in the traumatic situation (Weathers & Keane, 2007). Previous research conducted has found that continuous exposure to bullying leads to an increase in feelings of distress, as well as physical and psychological

signs among children (Garbarino, 2001). There is evidence of a strong association between bullying and PTSD symptoms, further highlighting that bullying can be more than just an acute stress experience and act as a form of continuous trauma (Kay, 2005; Nielsen, Tangen, Idsoe, Matthiesen, & Mageroy, 2015; Penning, Bhagwanjee, & Govender, 2010). Penning and colleagues (2010) investigated the relationship between bullying and trauma among South African male adolescents (12 to 17 years old) from a male-only high-school. They found that there was a significant relationship between bullying and trauma, specifically among victims (Penning et al., 2010). It was also found that as the frequency of bullying increased, so did the levels of trauma (Penning et al., 2010). A study conducted among 14 to 15-year-old Norwegian school children (n = 963) evidenced a greater instance of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) symptoms among pupils who were bullied (Idsoe, Dyregrov, & Idsoe, 2012). Approximately 33% of the participants who identified as being victims of bullying were found to have signs of PTSD symptoms (Idsoe et al., 2012). Idsoe and colleagues (2012) findings supported the notion that bullied students suffered a greater risk factor for symptoms relating to PTSD. Their study specifically looked at the two defined symptoms of PTSD: the degree of intrusive memories and avoidance behaviour among the students (Idsoe et al., 2012).

This study aimed at exploring the prevalence of traditional bullying and cyber-bullying among university students within a South African context. This was done in order to look at whether traditional bullying and cyber-bullying can be considered to be a form of trauma. Even if the majority of university students do not experience bullying as trauma, it highlights that a university environment in which a student experiences suffering and trauma for some who are victimised. As Newman, Holden and Delville (2005) stated, being a victim of bullying is a chronic stress that often results in traumatic reactions and responses.

Shariff and DeMartini (2016, p. 173) (as cited in Myers & Cowie, 2017) argued that:

"…bullying and cyberbullying behaviors are merely symptoms of discriminatory and hegemonic societal attitudes and beliefs. These are often deeply rooted in sexism, homophobia, racism and fear of difference. These perspectives and attitudes can influence and shape the adult personalities of post-secondary students, as they navigate their way through university life, and establish long-term partnerships, careers and social relationships." The following section expands upon the framework used to understand bullying further.

2.10 Theoretical Framework

Bullying does not occur on its own. It is a phenomenon that is influenced by the individual's relationships with family, friends, colleagues, university, community and culture (Espelage & Swearer, 2009; Swearer & Espelage, 2004). It is significant to understand the complex influences, interrelationships and interactions between individuals and the varying environments in which they are a part of. Thus, bullying can be understood in terms of Bronfenbrenner's Social Ecological Theory (Bronfenbrenner, 1979).

The Social Ecological Theory is understood as being a "series of concentric circles of influence, which include intrapersonal, family, peer, community, and wider social influences on behaviour and development" (Banyard, Cross, & Modecki, 2006, p. 1315). Thus from this perspective, bullying in general terms (both traditional bullying and cyber-bullying) can be regarded as being embedded within a much more broader social context, just as how Shariff and DeMartini (2016) have stated in the previous paragraph. Hence the Social Ecological Model (SEM) affords a holistic approach to further understanding the nuances and influences of behaviours (Donald, Lazarus, & Lolwana, 2010). The concept of social ecology is based on the analysis of people's interactions with and between the environments and contexts in which they are exposed to (Donald et al., 2010; Krieger, 2001). This approach takes into account the association between an individual's personal troubles and expands on how this interconnects within the world we live in and its societal matters (Bone, 2015). A research study conducted by Barboza et al. (2009) among 11 to 14-year-olds, found significant effects between bullying and varying environmental factors and found that bullying arose due to deficits in social climates. This theory regards the environment "as a nested arrangement of concentric structures, each contained within the next." (Bronfenbrenner, 1979, p.22). These structures are known as the Microsystems, Mesosystems, Exosystems, Macrosystems, and Chronosystems. The depiction of Social Ecological structures in relation to the university context can be seen in figure 1 below. The crux of this theory is how a change in one structure is affected or can affect other systems (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). These structures are further discussed below:

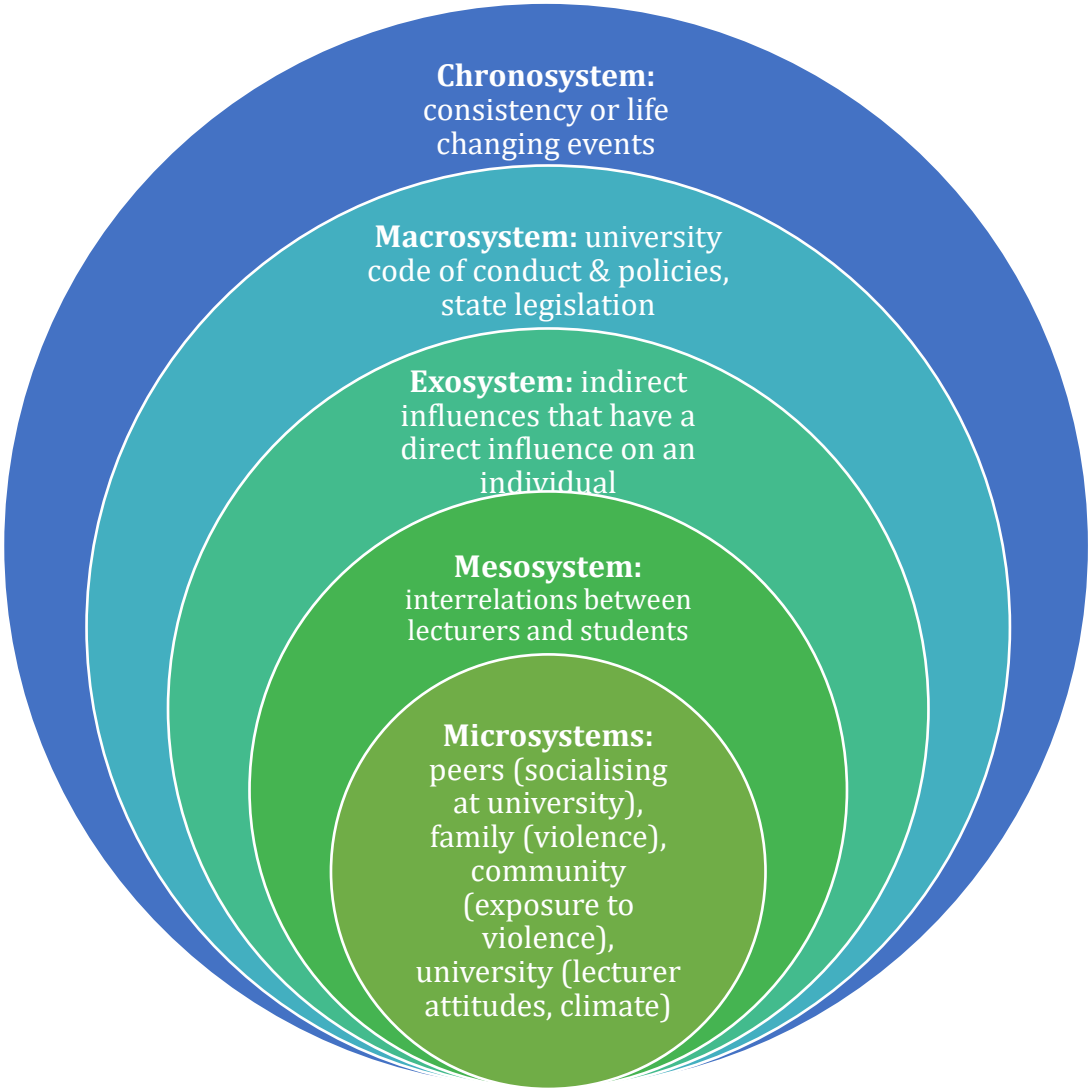

Figure 1: Social Ecological Framework in terms of bullying at university

2.10.1 Microsystems

The Microsystem is the first system that an individual is situated in (Bronfenbrenner, 1979; Rosa & Tudge; 2013). The interactions that occur within this system occur between the individual and critical members of the individual's environment. Key members that may be part of this first system include family members, friends, and peers (Bronfenbrenner, 1979; Donald et al., 2010; Rosa & Tudge, 2013). It is during this immediate system that distinctive personality traits, characteristics and belief systems influence development (Swart & Pettipher; 2016). These characteristics can either influence, foster or inhibit an individual's engagement with others (Swart & Pettipher; 2016). Socio-demographic factors (such as age, race, and gender) are an example of individual characteristics, and as Espelage (2014) stated, is often used to examine the prevalence of bullying behaviours. This system ultimately serves as a protective factor to individuals as it fosters support and belonging, however, it can

be compromised into a risk factor (e.g. through domestic violence, drug abuse, sexual harassment and bullying at university in this case) (Espelage, 2014; Swart & Pettipher; 2016). Bullying perpetration often takes place with other individuals present. Espelage, Green and Polanin (2012) pointed out how students may play a role in advocating the perpetuation of bullying either by joining in or by passively allowing the bullying behaviour to continue. However, students also have the power to stop bullying, intervene, or even defend the victim (Espelage et al., 2012). It is the social and interactive roles and relations as well as actions that frequently occur over time that are the essential elements of the Microsystems (Rosa & Tudge, 2013).

2.10.2 Mesosystems

Bronfenbrenner phrased the Mesosystem as being a "system of microsystems" (Bronfenbrenner, 1979, p.25). This means that the Mesosystem is made up of two or more Microsystems of an individual and the interactions between them (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). Interactions between the parent and child and the child's peer group, the interaction between the family and the university are examples of a Mesosystem. Espelage (2014) stated that the relationship between students, teachers and administrative staff is important. Educators can influence students and their relationships with their peers (Lee, 2009). Also, students may be more willing to seek help from their educators or administrative staff when educators intervene in conflicts between students (Aceves et al., 2009).

2.10.3 Exosystems

The Exosystem is the third level of the Ecological model (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). It is in this system that the individual does not actively participate in; however, the individual still experiences its influences (Bronfenbrenner, 1979; Rosa & Tudge, 2013). This system ultimately influences the individual's behaviour and experiences in the Microsystems (Thornberg, 2015). For instance, other peer's or colleagues home situations could result in an influence on another individual's life or the university's policy decision about the type of education and care the students receive at university. University policies, when effectively implemented, can ultimately improve the lives of all its students and if not effectively implemented, can leave students disempowered. Another example could be the problematic home life of a lecturer influencing the workplace (lecture).

2.10.4 Macrosystems

The Macrosystem differs from the rest of the systems in that it consists of broader structures, e.g. education, culture, social-economic, legal, as well as political systems (Rosa & Tudge, 2013; Thornberg, 2015), For Bronfenbrenner (1979) it was about how the Macrosystem influenced an individual's immediate system. The Macrosystem includes the university code of conduct, university policies, discipline policies as well as state legislation. Hatzenbuehler and colleagues (in press) went as far as to elaborate on innovative policy-level research in order to facilitate bullying interventions.

2.10.5 Chronosystems

The Chronosystem refers to the changes from significant events to experiences that occur within an individual's lifetime (Rosa & Tudge, 2013). Experiences can either occur externally or within an individual (Rosa & Tudge, 2013). Experiences that occur within the external environment include going to university, separating from a significant other, marriage, birth of a sibling while experiences that occur within an individual include getting ill or becoming pregnant for instance. Either change can be regarded as normative (e.g. university entrance), or it can be unexpected (e.g. a family or friend's death or the occurrence of a series illness). Another example of change many university students may face is having to move from their hometown to attend university in a new city. Either way, the significance of these experiences and events alters the relationship between an individual and their existing environment (Rosa & Tudge, 2013).

The Social Ecological Model provides an insight into the complexity of the interlinking systems and the impact they have on individuals. Thus it is with this exploration and understanding of the Social Ecological Theory, that the issue of bullying in relation to the Social Ecological Theory can be explored.

2.11 Bullying in relation to the Social Ecological Model

Bullying is regarded as a "social phenomenon" that occurs as a result of the intricate interplay between an individual and higher contextual factors (include the individual's home, community, university, and society) (Thornberg, 2015, p.182). This is further suggestive of the notion that the relationships an individual has with his/her family members, friends, peers, colleagues, lecturers, as well as social interactions may either influence the prevention or increase bullying behaviour (Thornberg, 2015).

Swearer and Hymel (2015) suggest that family characteristics can play a role in bullying behaviour. Factors such as domestic violence and parental conflict have been linked to bullying behaviours, and these are factors that can occur both at the level of the Microsystem as well as the Macrosystem of the Social Ecological Theory (Swearer & Hymel, 2015), Cultural, societal as well as political factors may also influence bullying behaviour (Swearer & Hymel, 2015). This includes society's attitudes toward traditional bullying and cyber-bullying behaviour (Swearer & Espelage, 2004). Some of these factors include inequality, poverty, the increased rates of violence and crime factors that are not uncommon to South Africa's context. As a result, the Social Ecological Theory was considered as an appropriate framework for this study.

2.12 Conclusion

This chapter reviewed the current topic and literature related to research on traditional forms of bullying as well as cyber-bullying. Through this review, the relevance of exploring the prevalence of both forms of bullying among university students, particularly with regards to the South African context has been displayed. In addition, the theoretical framework used in this study was discussed. The following chapter expands upon the research methods used in terms of conducting and collecting data for this study.

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODS

3.1 Introduction

This study aimed to explore the prevalence of traditional bullying and cyber-bullying among South African university students. This study also aimed to explore the role demographic factors play when university students experience traditional bullying or cyber-bullying as well as whether students who experience either form of bullying regard it as a form of trauma. This chapter will further explore the methodology of the current research study. In doing so, this chapter will provide the research design, a description of the measures used, and sample followed by the procedure and ethical considerations as well as a description of the data analysis used that were used and explored during this study.

3.2 Research Design

This research study is aimed to look at the prevalence of traditional bullying and cyber-bullying among university students. As a result, this study took a quantitative approach, thereby statistically analysing the responses of the student sample (Babbie, 2016a). This study is considered to be non-experimental as there was no random assignment or control group (Babbie, 2016a). This study made use of an electronic-based survey design. It was also considered to be non-experimental as this study made use of the distribution of electronic surveys in order to collect and record data. This study was also cross-sectional in nature as the variables were investigated at one point in time rather than over a period of time (Zheng, 2015).

3.3 Measures

This study made use of a demographic questionnaire (refer to Appendix A), the Revised Olweus Bully/Victim Questionnaire (Appendix B), the Cyber Bullying Behaviours and Victimization Experiences Measure (refer to Appendix C), as well as the Impact of Event Scale-Revised (refer to Appendix D). All questionnaires were formatted and compiled into one electronic online survey using the Google Forms platform (refer to Appendices A to D). Altogether the questionnaires were conveyed in the English medium. The use of English as a

standard for all questionnaires was considered suitable to use on the student sample as these participants attend an English medium university.

3.3.1 Demographic Questionnaire

The demographic questionnaire (See Appendix A) acquired demographic information based on age, gender, race, nationality, home language and year of study of participants (See Appendix A). These demographic factors contributed to analysing the distribution between these factors and the prevalence of both traditional bullying and cyber-bullying among university students as well as for descriptive purposes.

3.3.2 The Revised Olweus Bully/Victim Questionnaire (R-OBVQ)

Olweus (1996) developed the Revised Olweus Bully/Victim Questionnaire (R-OBVQ), which measured the experience of being bullied and bullying individuals (refer to Appendix B). The R-OBVQ is an anonymous questionnaire that comprises of 40 questions and measures the various forms of bullying individuals experience either through being bullied or by bullying others (Olweus, 1996; Smith, 2014). The R-OBVQ provides descriptive insight regarding the type of bullying as well as the prevalence of bullying. Kyriakides, Kaloyirou and Lindsey (2006) found this instrument to have suitable reliability and construct validity. The R-OBVQ has been translated into numerous languages and has been used in different countries, thus proving its general applicability (Smith, 2014; Kyriakides et al., 2006). This questionnaire was found to have satisfactory test-retest reliability as well as internal consistency reliability with Cronbach α values 0.80 or higher (Olweus, 1997; Kyriajides et al., 2006). The Brazilian version of the R-OBVQ attested to this satisfactory reliability scores for both the victim scales ($\alpha = 0.85$) and the bully scale ($\alpha = 0.87$) (Goncalves et al., 2016). Additionally, the questionnaire has been successfully used within the South African context by Darney and colleagues (2013), who explored the impact of bullying in schools.

In order to make the R-OBVQ more suitable for a university sample, specific terms used in the R-OBVQ have been replaced with terms deemed more appropriate for a university context. For example, the term “school” was replaced with *university*, and the term “teacher” replaced with *lecturer* (see Appendix B).

3.3.3 Cyber Bullying Behaviors and Victimization Experiences Measure

The Cyber Bullying Behaviors and Victimization Experiences Measure was created by Brett Holfeld and Bonnie Leadbeater (2015a; 2015b). This measure explored the behaviours of cyber-bullying as well as the victimization experiences of being cyber-bullied and was created based on items from the Bullying and Cyberbullying: Perpetrators, Victims, & Witness Survey (B&C: PVWS) (Holfeld & Leadbeater, 2015b). The Cyber Bullying Behaviors and Victimization Experiences Measure consisted of eight questions that are measured using a 5-point Likert-type scale (see Appendix C) (Holfeld & Leadbeater, 2015a; 2015b). The responses on the scale range from the answer 0 "never" to 4 "every day" (Holfeld & Leadbeater, 2015a). Four of the eight questions are based on perpetrating bullying, while the remaining four questions explore being a victim to bullying (see Appendix C) (Holfeld & Leadbeater, 2015a). The short measure was initially used by Holfeld and Leadbeater (2015b) among fifth-grade and sixth-grade Canadian school learners. Due to the age demographic of participants used, the researchers ensured that common and current language that the children were accustomed to was used in the questionnaire (Holfeld & Leadbeater, 2015b). Sixth-grader students were explicitly chosen as there appeared to be a higher report of access and use of technology among them compared to fifth-graders (Holfeld & Leadbeater, 2015b; Steeves, 2014). Holfeld and Leadbeater (2015b), found significant correlations between items from each scale. Convergent validity was also found for both bullying and victimisation (being a victim of bullying) (Holfeld & Leadbeater, 2015b). This measure appears not to have been utilised in South Africa until now.

Due to the use of the Revised Olweus Bully/Victim Questionnaire (R-OBVQ), as discussed previously in Section 3.3.2, the R-OBVQ already covered aspects of cyber-bullying. As a result, the use of the present Cyber Bullying questionnaire made use of only five of the eight questions. The five questions that were used for the present study consisted of three questions; carrying out cyber-bullying (perpetration) and two questions on cyber-bullying victimisation (victim of bullying). These five questions were added to the questionnaire as they were not already asked in the R-OBVQ questionnaire. The questions that were not added had already been asked in the R-OBVQ questionnaire (refer to Appendix B).

3.3.4 Impact of Event Scale-Revised (IES-R)

The Impact of Event Scale-Revised (IES-R) was developed and introduced by Daniel S. Weiss and Charles R. Marmar (1997). This scale was used to evaluate the extent of distress

an individual may feel in response to a traumatic experience or traumatic event. In this case, the traumatic incident/experience referred expressly to bullying. In this research study, the Impact of Event Scale-Revised (IES-R) was used to establish whether the experience of bullying (both traditional bullying and cyber-bullying) could be regarded as a trauma. The Impact of Event Scale-Revised (IES-R) (see Appendix D) consists of 22 items which are easily administered in the form of a self-report questionnaire (Christianson & Marren, 2013; Weiss & Marmar, 1997). Seven items were included in the original 15 item scale, thus making the revised edition, the IES-R (Horowits, Wilner, & Alvarez, 1979). The purpose of this revised edition was to further advance the usefulness of the original Impact of Event Scale (IES) along with its applicability to the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders* (DSM) of the American Psychiatric Association (APA) symptomology for Posttraumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) (Weiss & Marmar, 1997). This scale comprised of three subscales namely: the *intrusion subscale*, the *avoidance subscale*, and the *hyperarousal* subscale (Christianson & Marren, 2013; Hyer & Brown, 2008; Weiss & Marmar, 1997). The *intrusion subscale* was measured using scores from items 1, 2, 3, 6, 9, 14, 16 and 20 (Appendix D) (Weiss & Marmar, 1997). While items 5, 7, 8, 11, 12, 13, 17 and 22 measured the *avoidance subscale* and the *hyperarousal subscale* was measured using items 4, 10, 15, 18, 19 and 21 (Appendix D) (Weiss & Marmar, 1997). Participants were requested to assess their experiences using a 5-point Likert-type scale which measured from 0 “Not at all” to 4 “Extremely” (Weiss & Marmar, 1997).

The psychometric properties of the IES-R are suitable based on Weiss and Marmar (1997), who found the validity of the scale to be adequate. A test-retest reliability between 0.84 and 0.94 was established as well as found to be acceptable with a Cronbach α of 0.87-0.94 for the *intrusion* subscale, for the *avoidance* subscale α= 0.84-0.97 and for the *hyperarousal* subscale α= 0.79-0.91 (Creamer, Bell, & Failla, 2003; Motlagh, 2010; Weiss & Marmar, 1997). In a research study carried out by Creamer, Bell and Failla (2003) they too found prominent levels of internal consistency for the scale (α= 0.96). Studies done in South Africa using the IES-R have also found significant internal consistency and reliability (Peltzer, 2000; Ward, Lombard, & Gwebushe, 2006).

3.4 Sampling

This study made use of a convenience sample which consisted of students from the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg (Babbie, 2016b). Specifically, undergraduate and postgraduate students from the various University faculties (including the Faculty of Humanities; the Faculty of Commerce, Law and Management; the Faculty of Engineering and the Built Environment; the Faculty of Health Sciences; and the Faculty of Sciences) were approached. However, not all faculties participated due to Faculty refusal, whereby four of the Faculties after numerous attempts to contact them to send out the mass-generated introductory participation information email to the students registered within each of the faculties, the requests were left either unanswered or denied. Hence, this sample is a non-representative sample. Students who are younger than eighteen years old were also excluded from this study. Only students between the ages of eighteen and twenty-three were allowed to participate in this study. Hence the sample consisted of an age range of 18 to 23 years of age, and a mean age of M= 19.81 (SD= 1.500). Such an age range was sampled because this study aimed to evaluate the gap that is university students. This study assumed that students who are in their first year of university are aged eighteen years old and that students who are aged twenty-three years old were typically in their final year of university. Older students were excluded since some may already have full-time work commitments (studying part-time at university) or internship responsibilities outside of the university. These exclusions were stipulated in both the introductory participation information email as well as the of the research study. The sample consisted of 148 participants (n=148).

3.5 Procedure

i. Ethical clearance was attained from the Humanities Research Ethics Committee (Non-Medical) at the University of Witwatersrand in order to proceed with this research study (Protocol number: MEDP/17/009 IH) (see Appendix E).

ii. Permission was requested from the registrars of each faculty of the university. This included the Faculty of Humanities, the Faculty of Commerce, Law and Management, The Faculty of Health Sciences, the Faculty of Sciences as well as the Faculty of Engineering and the Built Environment.

iii. Once permission was granted from the respective university Schools and Departments involved, mass participation emails provided with an electronic link to access the

online-electronic questionnaire were emailed to the students via the official university email channels (See Appendix F).

iv. The introductory email sent to the students acquainted them to the research study as well as included the potentials risks and benefits with regards to their participation in such a study. Students were also notified about their guaranteed anonymity and confidentiality during their participation in this study and were informed that this study was based on voluntary participation (See Appendix F). Participants were also informed of consent: by participants completing the research questionnaires they were giving their consent to participate in this research study.

v. Students were not asked to place any form of identifying particulars on the electronic questionnaire.

vi. The researchers contact details were provided in both the introductory email as well as at the beginning and end of the online questionnaire should the participant have experienced any unease or raised any queries that needed to be facilitated (see Appendices F to H).

vii. Students who were willing to take part in the study received a combined set of self-report questionnaires (see Appendices A to D).

viii. The completion of the research questionnaires was expected to take between 20 to 25 minutes.

ix. Had participants experienced any discomfort or emotional distress during their participation, contact details of free counselling services were provided both in the introductory participant information email as well as in the electronic questionnaire (see Appendix F and H).

x. All raw digital data was kept safe on a password-protected laptop.

xi. All raw digital data was then transferred and formatted onto a digital spreadsheet using Microsoft Excel software. This step further ensured a de-identifiable data set.

xii. Thereafter the data was analysed using the statistical software SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences) version 25.

xiii. The results of the study are reported in the form of a Masters Research report.

xiv. Should participants be interested in the outcome of this study, they can receive a summary report of the research results on request by means of emailing the researcher using the contact details provided in the introductory participation information email as well as in the electronic questionnaire (see Appendix F and H).

3.6 Ethical Considerations

The application and obtaining of ethical clearance from the Humanities Research Ethics Committee (Non-Medical) at the University of the Witwatersrand was imperative to continue and complete this research study (Protocol number: MEDP/17/009 IH) (see Appendix E). The university was informed to receive consent to conduct the study. The respective heads of each faculty were also informed in order to receive their permission to conduct the study. All questionnaires remained confidential and anonymous as no identifying particulars were asked of the participants. Informed consent was guaranteed once participants started to complete the research questionnaire. Information concerning informed consent was disclosed both in the introductory participant information email as well as in the introduction brief of the online questionnaire. Participants were informed of the option to withdraw at any time during the answering of the questionnaire should they have felt the need to. The contact details of free and available counselling services, as well as the contact details of the researcher and researcher's supervisor, were provided to participants both in the introductory participant information email as well as in the introduction brief and end of the online questionnaire (see Appendix F to H).

During the collection of data, all digital data were collected and stored on password-protected software as well as on a password-protected laptop. The raw data set was further digitalised into a de-identifiable data set using Microsoft Excel. Thus all data collected were only viewed by the researcher and supervisor involved in this research study. Once the research study is complete and has been submitted, all forms of raw data will be destroyed.

The results of this study will be reported in the form of a Masters Research report and will be made available to the researcher's supervisor. Both internal and external panels observing and marking this research report will also have access to the results of this study. Should participants want to obtain a summary report on the research results of this study, they may do so by requesting a copy from either the researcher or supervisor of the researcher via their respective emails. All contact information was provided both in the introductory participant information email as well as in the introduction brief of the online questionnaire. Individuals who are interested in this area of research will also be able to access this research report through the main library on the campus of the University of the Witwatersrand as well as on the online Wits research repository.

3.7 Data Analysis

This study aimed to look at the prevalence of traditional forms of bullying as well as cyber-bullying among university students. In doing so, this study explored the descriptive statistics of the variables. The use of descriptive statistics and analysis were used to determine the frequency of distributions for descriptive questions. The reliability of each scale was also determined using Cronbach's alpha. In order to establish whether there was a link between demographic factors and traditional bullying and cyber-bullying, a series of cross-tabulations and Pearson's Chi-square analysis were carried out (Field, 2009a). Pearson's Chi-square analysis would show statistically significant differences in bullying by demographic variable categories (groups). The accepted level of significance for this research study included the five per cent level of significance for all chi-square values where $p < 0.05$ (Field, 2011). Since this study only dealt with categorical variables, this study worked with the frequencies of categories rather than the means (Field, 2009a). The data analysis of this research study was conducted using the SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences) software version 25.

3.8 Conclusion

This chapter outlined the research method used, and procedures followed in the current study. The purpose of this chapter was to describe the demographic constituents of the sample used. Descriptions of the measures used in this study were given, the procedure of the study, as well as the research design, were outlined, further clarifying the statistical procedures utilised for the data analysis. Thereafter the ethical considerations that were taken into account were discussed. The following chapter reports the results of the study.

CHAPTER 4: PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF DATA

4.1 Introduction

The primary aim of this study was to explore the prevalence (with regard to both victims and perpetrators) of traditional bullying and cyber-bullying among South African university students, along with the role demographic factors play when students experience traditional bullying or cyber-bullying. The study also delved into whether students who experienced either form of bullying regarded it as a form of trauma. This study selected a quantitative approach, thereby statistically analysing the responses of each participant to explore the aims and research questions of this study further. All analyses were conducted using the SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Sciences) software version 25. This chapter aims to examine the descriptive statistics as well as the cross-tabulations with chi-square. The research questions in Chapter 1 will guide the statistical analysis below.

4.2 Sample

The final sample consisted of 148 undergraduate (91.1%) and postgraduate students (8.1%) from the University of the Witwatersrand in South Africa, 20.3% of which were male participants and 79.7% female participants (refer to Table 1). The average age of this sample was M= 19.81 (SD= 1.500) with a range between 18 and 23 years old. However, 22 cases were excluded from the final analysis due to outliers and missing data. From the 148 participants, 44.6% were Black, 7.4% were Coloured, 18.2% were Indian, and 29.7% were White. Furthermore, 56.1% who participated identified English as their home language, while 2.0% identified Afrikaans as their primary language and 40.5% of participants identified Indigenous language (combining Ndebele to Xitsonga) as their home language, and 1.4% identified as Other (refer to Table 1). Other represented languages that fell outside what are considered to be the eleven official national languages of South Africa. The nine African languages can broadly be divided into the category **Nguni** (isiNdebele, isiXhosa, isiZulu, and siSwati), **Sotho-Tswana** (Sepedi, Sesotho, and Setswana), for the purpose of this study Afrikaans, Tshivenda, Xitsonga other languages were classified as **Other** and **English** was left as a classification on its own (Alexander, 2018). Due to not all the university faculties participating in this study, this study is considered to be a non-representative sample. As a result, the frequency distribution of the faculties that did take part was not included.

The sample composition and frequency distribution, which composes of the programme level, gender, race, home language and faculty are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Frequency distribution of the sample (*n* = 148)

Variable	*n*	%
Programme Level:		
Undergraduate	136	91.9
Postgraduate	12	8.1
Gender:		
Male	30	20.3
Female	118	79.7
Race:		
African/Black	66	44.6
Coloured	11	7.4
Indian	27	18.2
White	44	29.7
Home Language:		
English	83	56.1
Nguni	30	20.3
Sotho-Tswana	22	14.9
Other	13	8.8

4.3 Cronbach's Alpha

Cronbach's alpha measures scale consistency (reliability) in terms of the way participants responded to each scale (Field, 2011). Furthermore, the Cronbach alpha was explored in order to determine if the scales used in the current research study were reliable. The Cronbach's alphas of the following scales were explored: the victim of bullying scale and the perpetrator scale found in the Revised Olweus Bully/Victim Questionnaire (R-OBVQ); the Cyber Bullying Behaviors and Victimization Experiences Measure scale; and the Impact of Event Scale-Revised (IES-R). The value of at least 0.70 was used as an acceptable value for Cronbach's α. Values below the value of 0.70 suggest an unreliable scale (Field, 2011).

Cronbach's α of the victim of bullying items (Questions 3 to 13 of the R-OBVQ) and the perpetrator of bullying items (R-OBVQ Questions 25 to 33) were 0.858 and 0.772 respectively. This indicates that all items are positively contributing to the overall reliability

of the scale. The results show that the Cronbach α for the Cyber Bullying Behaviors and Victimization Measures scale is 0.667. Although α is less than 0.70, deleting of any of the items will not improve Cronbach's alpha. The IES-R scale was found to be highly reliable (21 items; α = 0.971).

4.4 What is the prevalence of traditional bullying (for both the perpetrator and victim) among university students?

The prevalence of bullying was explored using the Revised Olweus Bully/Victim Questionnaire (R-OBVQ). In order to investigate the prevalence of traditional bullying, only the responses that indicated either the occurrence or absence of bullying were considered. Table 2 illustrates the overall results, which indicate that 38 (25.8%) of the 148 students responded to the questionnaire that they had been bullied at university in the past couple of months or not. The remaining 110 (74.3%) of students reported that they did not experience bullying in the past couple of months (refer to Table 2).

Table 2. Frequencies and percentages of the overall prevalence of traditional bullying

Prevalence of being bullied (Victimisation)	n	%
Students who reported that they have experienced being bullied in the past couple of months	38	25.8
Students who reported that they have not experienced being bullied in the past couple of months	110	74.3
	n= 148	100

Additionally, out of the respondents who responded as being bullied within the past couple of months, 33 (22.3%) claimed to have only been bullied once or twice (see Figure 2). Other respondents stated that they experienced being bullied 2 (1.4%) about once a week; 2 (1.4%) several times a week; and 1 (0.7%) two or three times a week (see Figure 2). More specifically, 32 (21.6%) students responded to having experienced being verbally bullied, by means of being called mean names, made fun of or teased in a hurtful way (refer to Figure 4).

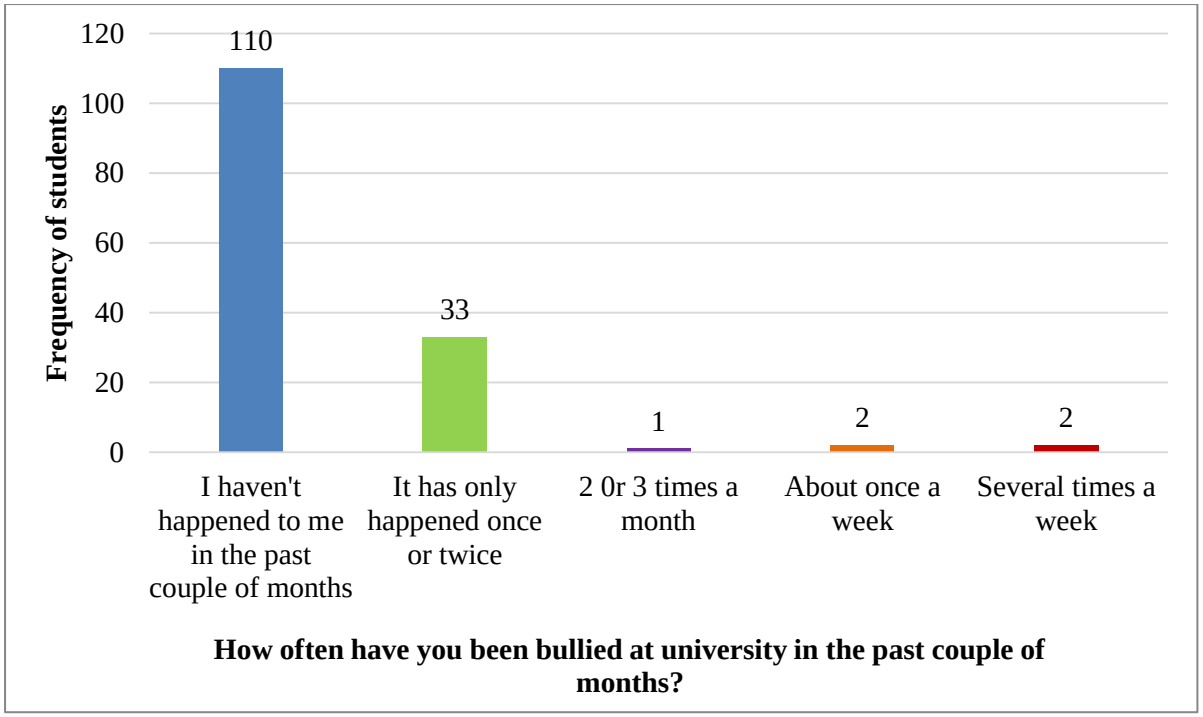

Figure 2: Frequency of the overall prevalence of traditional bullying

The R-OBVQ also gave a greater insight into the prevalence of acts of bullying perpetration.

Table 3. Frequencies and percentages of the prevalence of perpetrating bullying in the past couple of months

Prevalence of bullying others (Perpetrating)	n	%
Students who reported not having bullied another student(s) at university in the past couple of months	135	92.5
Students who reported having bullied another student(s) only once or twice in the past couple of months	10	6.8
Students who reported having bullied another student(s) about once a week in the past couple of months	1	0.7
	n = 146	100

The outcome revealed that out of 146 students (2 student responses were missing from the total sample of *n*= 148), 135 (92.5%) of student responses responded to not having bullied other students in university the past couple of months (see Table 3 & Figure 3). The remaining 11 (7.5%) students responded to having bullied student(s) in the past couple of months. Specifically, 10 (6.8%) students responded to have taken part in bullying another student(s) at least once or twice in the past couple of months at university (see Table 3 & Figure 3). With 1 (0.7%) student responded to bullying another student(s) at university about once a week in the past couple of months (see Table 3 & Figure 3).

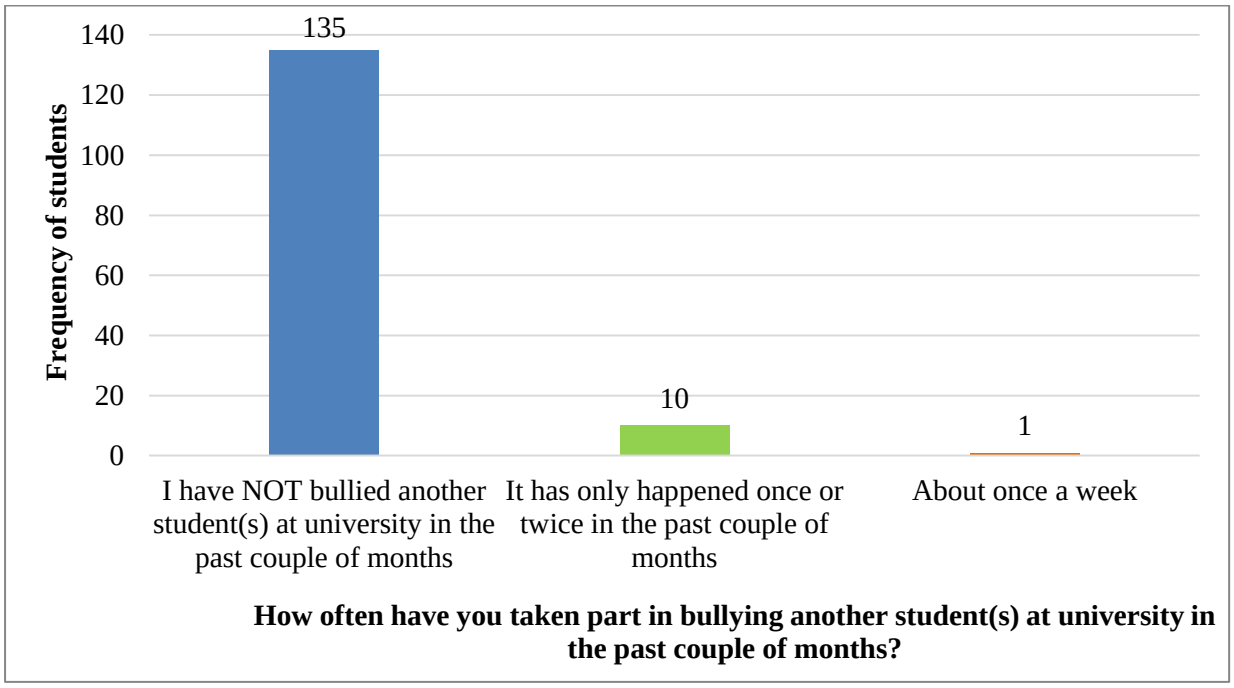

Figure 3: Prevalence of bullying other students

Responses suggest that 9 (7.2%) students admitted to calling other student(s) mean names and made fun of or teased another individual in a hurtful way. A total of 46 (31.1%) students admitted to bullying another student(s) on their cellphone or via the internet. In particular, 39 (26.4%) revealed that they bullied other students only through the use of their cellphones; 2 (1.4%) admitted to bullying another student(s) only over the internet from computers, and 5 (3.45%) admitted to bullying students both through the use of their cellphones and the internet via computers.

4.4.1 What are the predominant types of bullying behaviour among university students?

The following additional ways of being bullied were reported by the students who reported to being bullied within the past couple of months (see Figure 4).

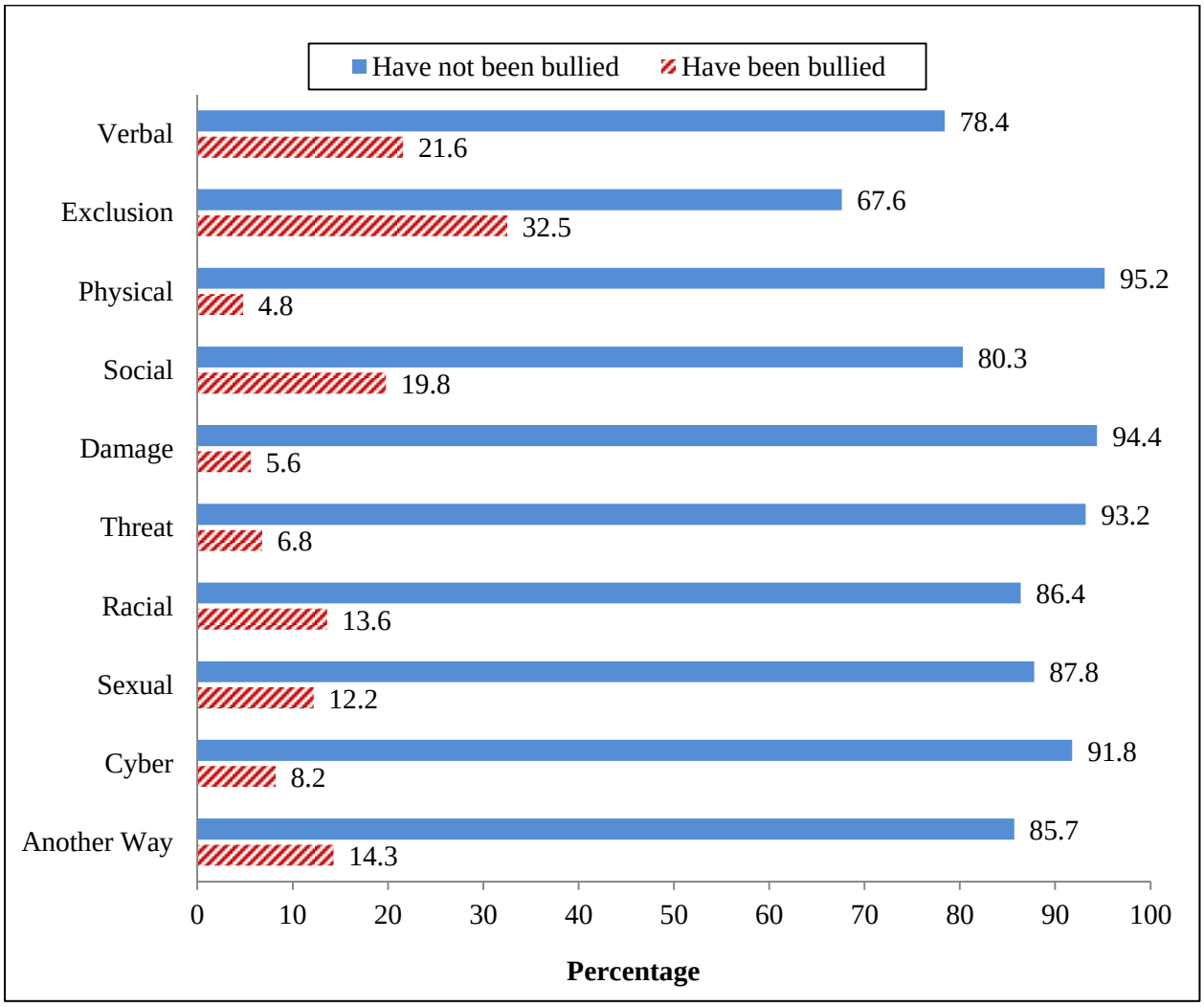

Figure 4. Percentage of the type of bullying that has been experienced

As illustrated in Figure 4, 48 (32.5%) of respondents experienced exclusion (other students left them out of things on purpose, excluded them from their group of friends, or completely ignored the individual). Additionally, of the 48 respondents, at least 33 (22.3%) students claimed to have experienced being excluded at least once or twice within the past couple of months.

A total of 7 (4.8%) students responded to having had experienced being physically bullied (for instance, they were hit, pushed or shoved around) within the past couple of months (see Figure 4). At least 29 (19.8%) students responded to having experienced being socially

bullied (see Figure 4). These students identified as having other students tell lies or spread false rumours about them and tried to make others dislike them. 10 (6.8%) Students admitted to having felt threatened (this includes feeling threatened or forced to do things he or she did not want to do) (see Figure 4).

In terms of being racially bullied (either mean names or comments about the individual's race or colour were made), 20 (13.6%) students responded to having been racially bullied within the past couple of months, of the 20 respondents,15 (10.2 %) of students responded to have experienced racial bullying only once or twice within the recent couple of months (see Figure 4).

At least 18 (12.2%) students responded to being bullied with names, comments, or gestures of a sexual nature; and 12 (8.2%) Students claimed to have experienced cyber-bullying (bullied with mean names or hurtful messages, calls, or pictures, or in other ways on their cell phone or over the internet) (see Figure 4).

The prevalence of bullying was then further specified to explore the prevalence of cyber-bullying, which will be further explored in Section 4.5 of this chapter.

4.5 What is the prevalence of cyber-bullying (for both the bully perpetrator and victim) among university students?

The Cyber Bullying Behaviours and Victimisation Experiences Measure shed insight specifically into the perpetration and victimisation of cyber-bullying. A total of 50 (34.5%) students indicated that they had sent someone a text message or instant message from their cellphone in order to make them angry or to make fun of that individual (see Figure 5). More specifically, 36 (24,8%) students, of the 50 students that reported sending provoking text messages and instant messages, had sent someone such a text message or instant message at least once or twice, while 11 (7.6%) students had sent such text or instant messages many times (see Figure 5). 95 (65.5%) Students responded to not having sent an individual an aggravating or humiliating text message or instant message from their cellphone (see Figure 5).

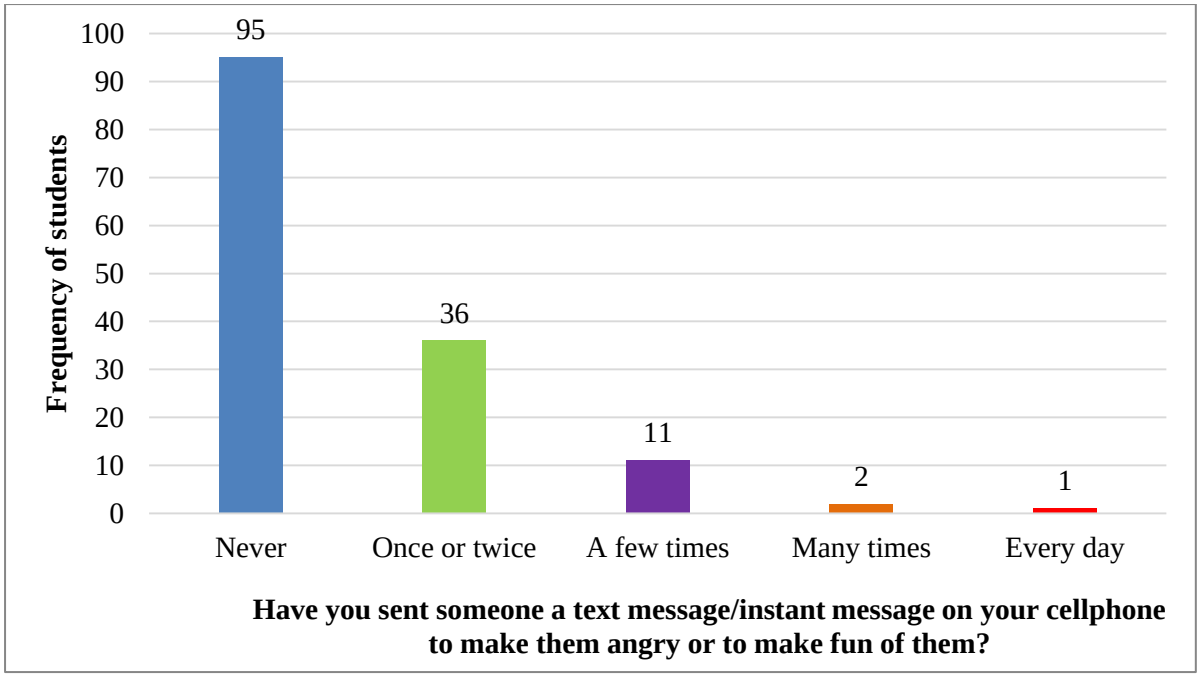

Figure 5: Prevalence of perpetrating cyber-bullying behaviours among students at university

A total of 22 (15%) student respondents admitted to posting something online about someone else to make other people laugh. 8 (5.5%) Students responded to having have started a rumour online about another person.

Victim:

Overall 46 (31.3%) students admitted to having felt afraid to go online; of that 27 (18.4%) students have felt afraid to go online at least once or twice within the past couple of months. While 49 (33.6%) students responded to having had experienced a post or message shared online about them that they did not want other people to see (refer to Figure 6). From the 49 students that had experienced either a post or message shared about them online that they did not want others to see, 34 (22.3%) students experienced it once or twice, 12 (8.2%) students experienced it a few times, and 3 (2.1%) students experienced it many times (see Figure 6).

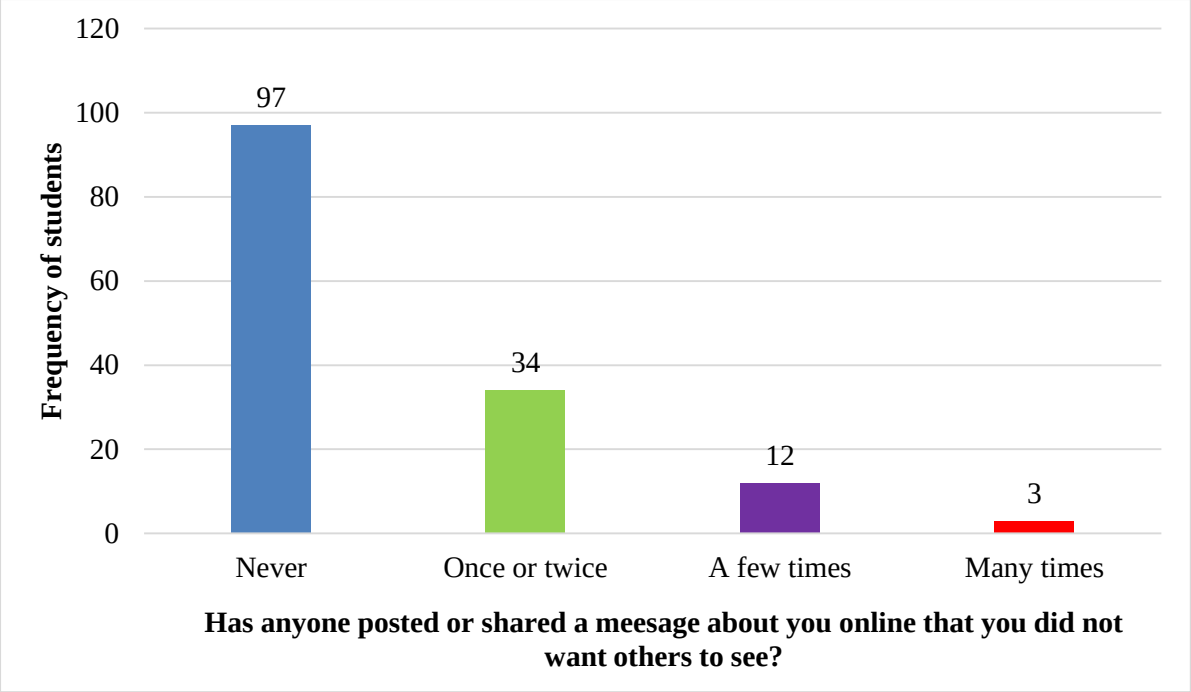

Figure 6: Prevalence of a type of cyber-bullying victimisation

Despite the difference in prevalence rates of traditional bullying and cyber-bullying, it has been highlighted that it is a problem within university environments and there appears to be a lack of immediate policy that enables one to understand or confront the issue (Myers & Cowie, 2016).

4.6 Do bully victims disclose whether they are being victimised?

The R-OBVQ also enlisted questions to help further identify whether or not students alert another individual (whether it be a family member, peer, lecturer, or university personnel) about being bullied. The results indicated that 11.6% (n = 17) of students reported having been bullied within the past couple of months but did not tell anyone about it, and 12.9% (n = 19) of students reported being bullied and had told someone about it. The following table (*Table 4.* indicates the frequency and percentage of students who did disclose they were being bullied and to whom they disclosed they were being bullied too.

Table 4. Frequency and Percentages of the individual that the bullied victim has disclosed to about being bullied

The individual that the bullied student has disclosed to about being bullied	n	%
Lecturer	3	2.7
Any other individual at university	9	8
Parent(s) or guardian(s)	17	15.2
Sibling(s)	19	16.8
Friend(s)	29	25.9
	n = 77	

From Table 4, it can be seen that 25.9% (*n* = 29) of bullied students reported that they told a friend about being bullied. 16.8% (*n* = 19) of Bullied students told their sibling (s); 15.2% (*n* = 17) told their parent(s) or legal guardian(s) about being bullied (see Table 4). Only 8% (*n* = 9) had told university personnel (this includes a tutor/ administrative staff/ counsellor/ psychologist, university security/caretaker/ cleaner) and only 2.7% (*n* = 3) of students reported that they were bullied to their lecturer (see Table 4).

4.7 Who intervenes when bullying occurs?

Research Question 21: "*How often do the lecturers or other individuals in authoritative positions at university try to put a stop to it when a student is being bullied at university?"* (Olweus, 2007). From the 148 participants that responded to this question, 7 responses were missing. Nevertheless, only 5.7% (*n* = 8) reported that lecturers or individuals in authoritative positions try to put an end to bullying (see Figure 7). While 28.4% (*n* = 40) reported that they almost never put a stop to a student being bullied; 24.8% (*n* = 35) reported that they once in a while put a stop to a student being bullied, and 29.8% (*n* = 42) reported that they sometimes put a stop to a student being bullied (see Figure 7).

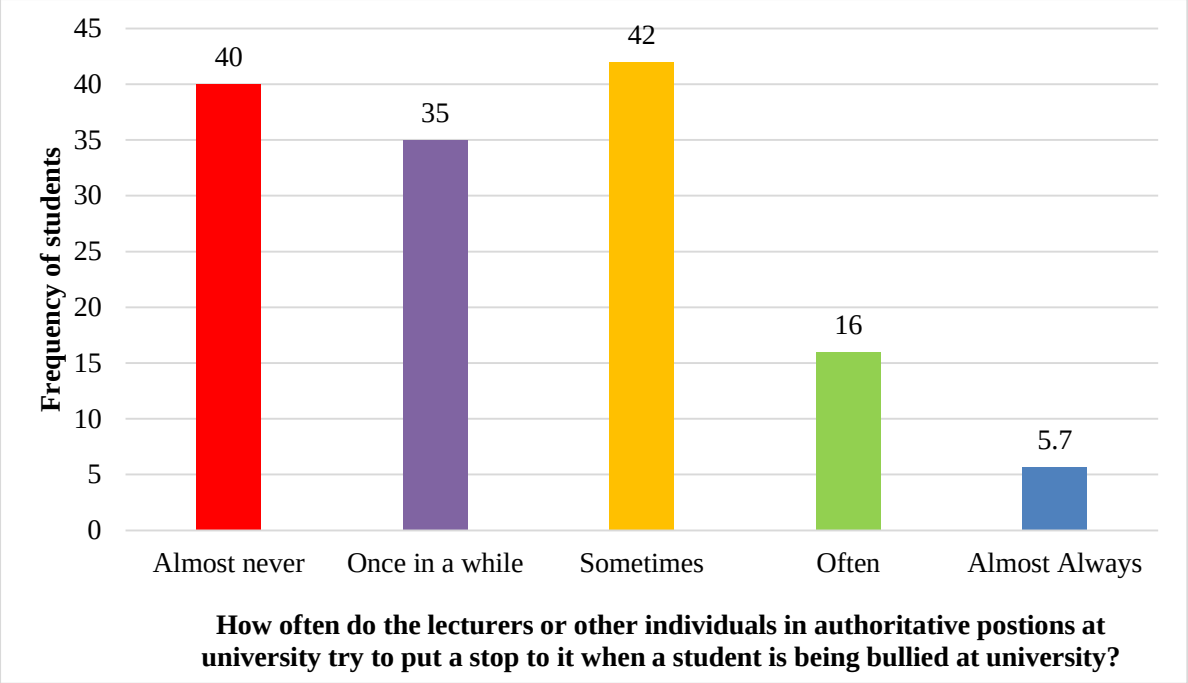

Figure 7: Prevalence of lectures or other individuals in authoritative positions at university intervening when a student is being bullied

Research Question 22: "*How often do other students try to put a stop to it when a student is being bullied at university?*" (Olwues, 2007). A total of 5 responses were missing for this question. 33.6% (n = 48) of students reported that other students would sometimes put a stop to another student being bullied. 28.7% (n = 41) of students reported that other students would almost never put a stop to another student being bullied, and 18.2% (n = 26) of students reported that other students would once in a while put a stop to another student being bullied.

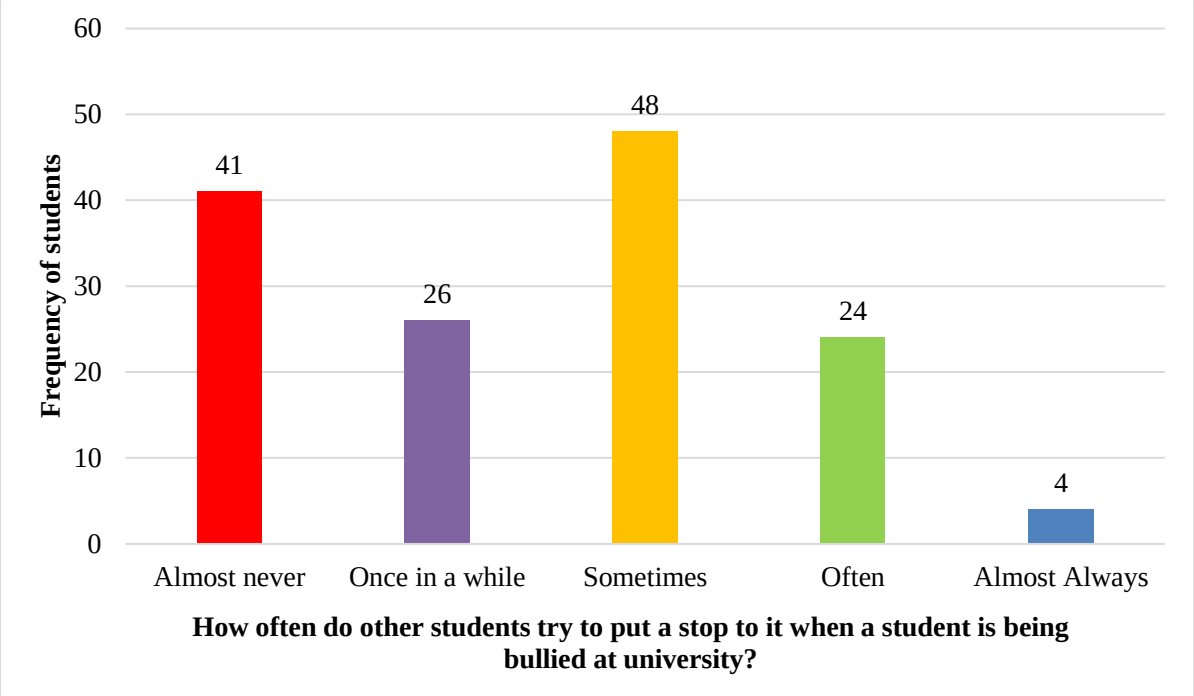

Figure 8: Prevalence of students intervening when a student is being bullied

4.8 What are the students' feelings and attitudes feelings towards bullying?

From the 148 participants that responded to this questionnaire, 2 responses were missing. At least 75.3% (n = 110) of students reported feeling sorry for the individual being bullied and wanted to help him/her. 19.9% (n = 29) reported that they feel a bit sorry for the individual and 4.1% (n = 6) of students reported that they do not feel much to witnessing another student similar in age being bullied at university.

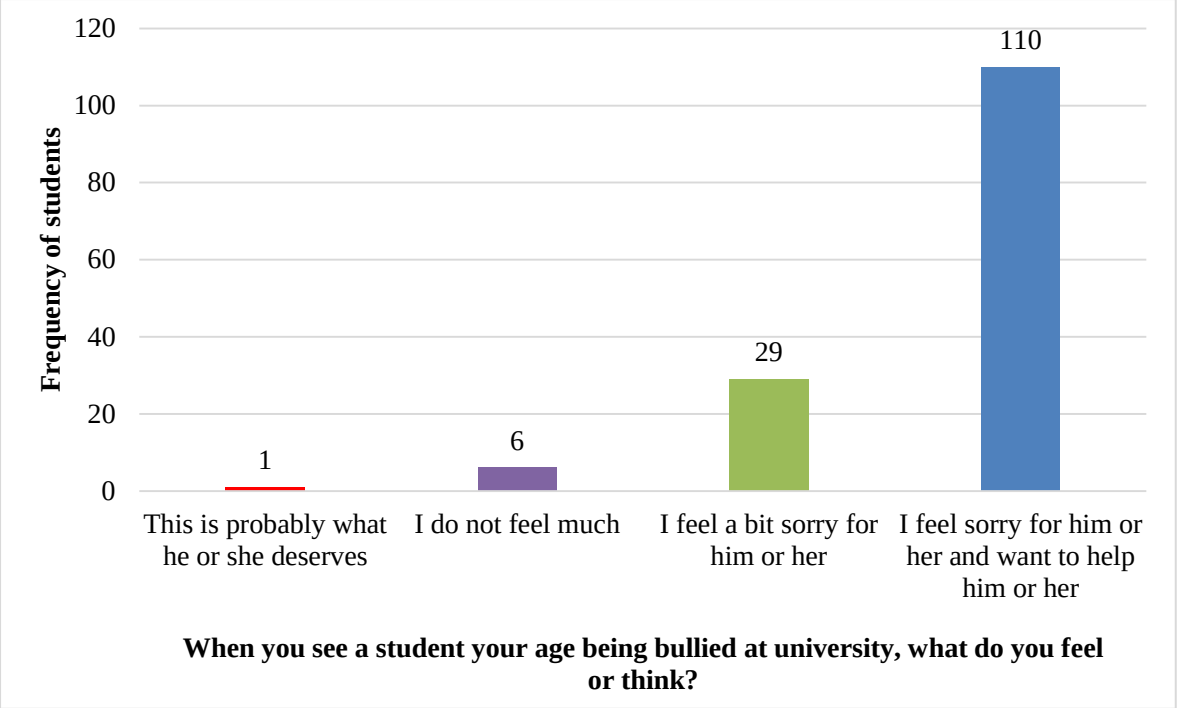

Figure 9: Feelings and attitudes of students towards fellow students being bullied

4.9 What roles do demographic factors; gender, race, and age play in traditional bullying and cyber-bullying of university students (specifically with regards to the victims who have been bullied)?

The following subsections (sections 4.6.1 to 4.6.3) will expand upon the findings of each demographic factor, specifically gender, race and age with regards to the perpetrators and victims of both types of bullying (traditional bullying and cyber-bullying).

4.9.1 Are there differences in gender and the prevalence of traditional bullying and cyber-bullying?

Only the responses of learners who had either indicated that they had not experienced bullying at all or had experienced bullying were taken into consideration for this analysis.

Table 5. Comparison of genders in terms of the absence/presence of traditional bullying

Prevalence of traditional bullying	Male		Female		Total	
	N	%	n	%	n	%
Students who have NOT been bullied in the past couple of months	17	56.7	53	45.3	70	47.6
Students who have been bullied in the past couple of months	13	43.3	64	54.7	77	52.4
Chi-Square Tests						
Df	1					
X^2	1.237					
P	.266					

**Sig. p* = 0.05

It appears that the prevalence of traditional bullying, in terms of victimisation (being bullied) is not different for males and females as there is no significant association between the type of gender and whether or not students had experienced bullying within the past couple of months χ^2_1 = 1.237, *p* = 0.266 (see Table 5).

Table 6 represents the differences between males and females with regards to the presence or absence of being cyber-bullied.

Table 6. Comparison of genders with regard to the absence/presence of cyber-bullying

Prevalence of cyber-bullying	Male		Female		Total	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
Students who have NOT been bullied in the past couple of months	9	31	47	40.9	56	38.9
Students who have been bullied in the past couple of months	20	69	68	59.1	88	61.1
Chi-Square Tests						
Df	1					
X^2	.943					
P	.332					

**Sig. p = 0.05*

As illustrated in Table 6, a chi-square test of independence indicated $\chi^2_1 = 0.943$, $p = 0.332$. Thus, no significant association between gender and the prevalence of cyber-bullying in the past couple of months.

4.9.2 Are there differences in race and the prevalence of traditional bullying and cyber-bullying?

Table 7. Comparisons of race types with regards to the absence/presence of traditional bullying

Prevalence of traditional bullying	Black		Coloured		Indian		White	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Students who have NOT been bullied in the past couple of months	26	37.1	8	11.4	15	21.4	21	30
Students who have been bullied in the past couple of months	39	50.6	3	3.9	12	15.6	23	29.9
Total	65	44.2	11	7.5	27	18.4	44	29.9

Chi-Square Tests	
Df	3
X^2	4.975
P	.174

Sig. p = 0.05

According to Table 7, χ^2_3= 4.975, *p* = 0.174, with the *p*-value equal to 0.174, there appears to be evidence that there is no significant association between race and the prevalence of traditional bullying.

Table 8 below will further explore the relationship between race type and the presence or absence of cyber-bullying.

Table 8. Comparisons of race types with regards to the absence/presence of cyber-bullying

Prevalence of cyber-bullying	Black n	%	Coloured n	%	Indian n	%	White n	%
Students who have NOT been cyber-bullied in the past couple of months	25	44.6	6	10.7	8	14.3	17	30.4
Students who have been cyber-bullied in the past couple of months	38	43.2	5	5.7	18	20.5	27	30.7
Total	63	43.8	11	7.6	26	18.1	44	30.6
Chi-Square Tests								
Df	3							
X^2	1.874							
P	.599							

Sig. p = 0.05

Table 8 depicts $\chi^2{}_3$= 1.874, p = 0.599. This suggests that there is no significant relationship between race and the absence/presence of cyber-bullying.

4.9.3 Are there differences in age and the prevalence of traditional bullying and cyber-bullying?

Table 9. Comparisons of age groups with regards to the absence/presence of traditional bullying

Prevalence of traditional bullying	18 yrs		19 yrs		20 yrs		21 yrs		22 yrs		23 yrs	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Students who have NOT been bullied in the past couple of months	14	48.3	25	54.3	14	51.9	11	44	2	28.6	4	30.8
Students who have been bullied in the past couple of months	15	51.7	21	45.7	13	48.1	14	56	5	71.4	9	69.2
Total	29	19.7	46	31.3	27	18.4	25	17	7	4.8	13	8.8

Chi-Square Tests	
Df	5
X^2	3.663
P	.599

Sig. p = 0.05

yrs = years

The data represented in Table 9 depicted, χ^2_5= 3.633, p = 0.599. This means that age is not statistically significant from the prevalence of bullying (see Table 9).

Table 10. Comparisons of age groups with regards to the absence/presence of cyber-bullying

Prevalence of cyber-bullying	18 yrs		19 yrs		20 yrs		21 yrs		22 yrs		23 yrs	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Students who have NOT been bullied in the past couple of months	13	43.3	19	43.2	8	29.6	12	48	2	40	2	15.4
Students who have been bullied in the past couple of months	17	56.7	25	56.8	19	70.4	13	52	3	60	11	84.6
Total	30	20.8	44	30.6	27	18.8	25	17.4	5	3.5	13	9
Chi-Square Tests												
Df	5											
X^2	5.462											
P	.362											

Sig. p = 0.05

With regards to the comparison of age in relation to the presence and absence of cyber-bullying, χ^2_5= 5.462, p = 0.362. Thus, age is not significantly associated with the prevalence or absence of cyber-bullying (see Table 10).

4.10 Can the experience of being victim to traditional bullying and cyber-bullying be regarded as a form of trauma?

Pearson's chi-square test was used to establish whether traditional bullying and post-traumatic symptoms were significant. Both the traditional bullying and cyber-bullying variables have been divided into two responses: students have not been bullied within the past couple of months or students have been bullied within the past couple of months. The IES-R (post-traumatic symptoms) variable has also been further divided into two possible responses. All students who had a total IES-R score between 0 to 32 were classified as one response while students who scored a total IES-R of 33 or more, to a maximum of 88 made up the

second response. IES-R scores of 33 or more suggest the likelihood of an individual experiencing PTSD (Weiss, 2007).

Table 11. Pearson's chi-square test between the prevalence of traditional bullying and the total IES-R scores

Prevalence of traditional bullying	IES-R total score (0-32)		IES-R total score (33-88)		Total	
	n	%	N	%	n	%
Students who have NOT been bullied in the past couple of months	42	54.5	7	17.5	49	41.9
Students who have been bullied in the past couple of months	35	45.5	33	82.5	68	58.1
Chi-Square Tests						
Df	1					
X^2	14.842					
P	.000					

Table 12 indicates, χ^2_1= 14.842, p = 0.000. Thus p < 0.05, which means that there is a significant association between the prevalence of traditional bullying and the total IES-R score. This means that higher percentages of students with trauma symptoms had been traditionally bullied compared to students that did not have trauma symptoms. 40 Students (34.2% of the total) scored out of the 117 students that completed the Impact of Event Scale-Revised (IES-R), scored 33 or more on the total IES-R score. This signifies the likely presence of PTSD among these students. Of these 40 students, 33 (82.5%) students had admitted to being a victim to traditional forms of bullying, while the remaining 7 (17.5%) students reported not being a victim to bullying but appeared to be experiencing symptoms of post-traumatic stress.

Table 12. Pearson's chi-square test between the prevalence of cyber-bullying and the total IES-R scores

Prevalence of cyber-bullying bullying	IES-R total score (0-32)		IES-R total score (33-88)		Total	
	n	%	N	%	n	%
Students who have NOT been bullied in the past couple of months	33	42.9	8	20.5	49	35.3
Students who have been bullied in the past couple of months	44	57.1	31	79.5	68	64.7
Chi-Square Tests						
Df	1					
X^2	5.656					
P	.017					

In terms of the prevalence of cyber-bullying and the total IES-R score, Table 12 indicates, χ^2_1= 5.656, p = 0.017. Thus p < 0.05, suggesting that there is a significant relationship between the prevalence of cyber-bullying and post-traumatic symptoms. Hence the higher the percentages of students with trauma symptoms had been cyber-bullied. 32 Students scores fell within the total IES-R scores that were equal to 33 or more, of these students, 31 (79.5%) of them were a victim to cyber-bullying. The remaining 77 student's total IES-R scores fell between 0 to 32.

4.11 Conclusion

This chapter provided the results of the research questions that have guided this study. The frequencies and percentages were presented for many of the questions that required descriptive information when exploring the nature of both traditional bullying and cyber-bullying. Chi-square results were also presented when investigating the differences between independent variables and the type of bullying (i.e. traditional bullying and cyber-bullying).

The prevalence of traditional bullying and cyber-bullying was explored, upon which it was found that 25.8% (*n* = 38) of students experienced traditional bullying at university, relatively between 31.3% to 33.1% (*n* = 46 to 49) students experienced cyber-bullying, and at least 6.8% (*n* = 10) of university students bullied another student(s) at least once or twice within

the past couple of months. The nature of bullying was also further looked into by investigating various aspects such as the types of bullying behaviour, the disclosure of bullying, intervention and feelings towards acts of bullying.

Additionally, the roles that demographic factors, such as gender, race, and age, were also explored in terms of their differences with regards to traditional bullying and cyber-bullying. No significant relationships were found between demographic factors and traditional bullying or cyber-bullying. This was followed by the investigation as to whether the experience of being victim to either traditional bullying or cyber-bullying could be regarded as a form of trauma. The significant results suggested that the increased percentages of students with trauma symptoms had been bullied.

The results provided in this chapter have been presented according to the research question defined in Chapter 1. The next chapter, Chapter 5, will in this manner provide a further discussion of these results.

CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION

5.1 Introduction

This study aimed to investigate the prevalence of traditional bullying and cyber-bullying (with regards to both victims and perpetrators) among university students. The role demographic factors play when a university student is a victim of traditional bullying or cyber-bullying. Furthermore, this study aimed to explore whether the experience of being a victim to traditional forms of bullying and cyber-bullying can be regarded as a form of trauma. The results presented in Chapter 4 will further be discussed in this chapter according to the research questions outlined in Chapter 1. Furthermore, this chapter will explain the limitations, recommendations and opportunities for future research, followed by the conclusion of this study.

This study offers further evidence that both traditional bullying and cyber-bullying is an occurrence that occurs beyond the primary and high school settings.

5.2 What is the prevalence of traditional bullying (for both the victim and perpetrator) among university students?

The results of this study showed that while the majority of students did not experience forms of traditional bullying at university at least, 25.8% (n = 38) of student participants did experience traditional bullying within the last couple of months at university. Sinkkonen and colleagues (2012) also found that 5% of their 2 805 university student sample had been bullied at university either through direct verbal bullying or indirect public bullying.

As with bullied students, it is also necessary to explore the prevalence of university students who are bullying others. One also needs to be cognisant of the fact that there can be a certain number of individuals, no matter how miniscule, who are both bullied and bully. This research study found that at least 7.5% (n = 11) respondents reported to having bullied student(s) within the past couple of months, and 6.8% (n = 10) students responded to having bullied student(s) at least once or twice within the past couple of months. Lund and Ross (2017) found across a pool of 14 studies that about 20 to 25% of students reported to being victims of bullying, this excluded acts of cyber-bullying, and approximately 20% of students appeared to perpetrate bullying.

5.2.1 What are the predominant types of bullying behaviour among university students?

According to the results from the Revised Olweus Bully/Victim Questionnaire (R-OBVQ), exclusion was found to be the most predominant type of bullying among university students (32.5%). Social and verbal bullying was also found to be a common type of bullying among university students. These findings appear to be consistent with a study conducted among Finnish university students (Sinkkonen et al., 2012). The study found that out the 99 (67%) students that reported being bullied at university, 48 students had experienced indirect public bullying (students had experienced discrimination, unfair or unequal treatment and exclusion from the group), and 32 students experienced direct verbal bullying (victims experience being called names, gossiped about, are picked on, ridiculed in public or reprimanded) (Sinkkonen et al., 2012).

5.3 What is the prevalence of cyber-bullying (for both the bully perpetrator and victim) among university students?

A total of 31.1% (n = 46) students admitted to having felt afraid to go online; with 27 (18.2%) having felt afraid to go online at least once or twice within the past couple of months. At least 33.1% (n = 49) students responded to having had experienced a post or message shared online about them that they did not want other people to see. The widespread use of technology and social media has increased the likelihood of cyber-bullying taking place (Zalaquett & Chatters, 2014).

The current research study's finding on victims of cyber-bullying appears to align with research done on other university populations which range between 10% (Smith & Yoon, 2013), 14% (Zalaquett & Chatters, 2014) and 18.3% (Hinduja & Patchin, 2010). Additionally, Zacchilli and Valerio (2011) found that from a sample of 76 freshmen and 34 seniors, 9% of the sample were victim to cyberbullying. These findings bear a resemblance to the current results, whereby students who reported experiencing cyber-bullying in the R-OBVQ component of the questionnaire were 8.2% (n = 12) of the students. Furthermore, Zalaquett and Chatters (2014) found that of the 19% of university students that reported being victims of bullying.

Perpetration:

In terms of the perpetration of cyber-bullying, at least 33.8% (n = 50) students indicated that they had sent someone a text message or instant message from their cellphone in order to make them angry or to make fun of that individual. Fifteen percent (n = 22) of students admitted to posting something online about someone else to make other people laugh, and 5.5% (n =8) responded to have started a rumour online about another person.

These findings appear to be in line with other research that found with research conducted among undergraduate students from Jackson State University in the US, which found low prevalence rates of cyberbullying at university (Johnson et al., 2016). Johnson and colleagues (2016) found that 73.62% of undergraduate students never experienced cyber-bullying, while 21.47% were reported to seldom being victims of cyber-bullying, and 2.45% reported that they often fell victim to cyber-bullying. It was also revealed that 93.29% of students never perpetrated cyber-bullied other individuals, while 1.22% had cyber-bullied others at least once a month (Johnson et al., 2016). This study's findings are also consistent with the findings of MacDonald and Robert-Pitman (2010) who found that only 21.9% (n = 439) were victims of cyber-bullying and 8.6% had reported cyber-bullying others.

Zalaquett and Chatters (2014) also found that half of the college students that reported being cyber-bully victims also reported being cyber-bullied during their high school years. This was enough evidence for Zalaquett and Chatters (2014) to suggest that cyber-bullying does not just stop after high school but continues to college. Taking this into consideration, according to the SEM, the continuation of cyber-bullying continuing from high-school to college indicates the chronosystem. Has the significant event or experience of being cyber-bullied in high-school disadvantaged the individual at being vulnerable to being bullied in their current environment, at university? In future, it will be interesting for research to bring in the aspect of whether or not university students have been bullied in high school and whether they continue to be victimised at university in South Africa.

5.4 Do bully victims disclose whether they are being victimised?

According to Rigby (2010), disclosing the issue of being bullied is regarded as an essential and significant step in terms of intervention purposes. School going children who are bullied often find it difficult or are afraid of disclosing the issue to adults, family or friends (De Wet,

2005). Specifically, the students felt as though they would not be helped due to individuals not taking the severity of the issue serious enough (De Wet, 2005).

Hence, it was interesting to note that university students who have been bullied were more likely to disclose being bullied to a friend or to friends (25.9%). This could perhaps be due to the difference in the age of the victim being bullied. Additionally, students told their sibling(s) 16.8% this was closely followed by students speaking to their parents or legal guardians about it 15.2%. In terms of the Social Ecological Model (SEM), students rely on their peer relationships, and this falls within the Microsystem. The stronger their peer relationships, the easier it is for a victim to disclose to someone close to them or within their Microsystem that they are being bullied.

5.5 Who intervenes when bullying occurs?

The varying answers of responses with regards to "*how often lecturers or other individuals in authoritative positions at university try to put an end to when a student is being bullied at university"* reflect that while some students (5.7%, *n* = 8) try to put an end to bullying, the majority of students reported that their lecturers or other individuals intervened between once in a while to sometimes, while at least 28.4% (n = 40) reported that intervention from lecturers or other individuals in authoritative positions almost never occurred.

With regards to the question of *how often do other students try and put a stop to when another student is being bullied at university,* 33.6% (n = 48) of students reported that other students would sometimes put a stop to another student being bullied, while 18.2% (n = 26) of students reported that other students would once in a while put a stop, and 28.7% (n = 41) of students reported that other students would almost never put a stop to another student being bullied.

As previously stated, most of the students reported that intervention on behalf of lecturers or other university personnel almost never happened. In terms of the Social Ecological Model (SEM), this would indicate bully victims feeling vulnerable within their microsystem and mesosystem as they no one to turn to within the university for help or support. This would also affect the victim's relationship in terms of believing the university's stance in terms of providing students with a safe space (exosystem).

5.6 What are the students' feelings and attitudes feelings towards bullying?

In this study, the reported levels of empathy for students who fall victim to bullying at university appear to be quite high. A total of 75.3% (*n* = 110) reported to having felt sorry and wanted to help the individual being bullied, and 19.9% (n = 29) reported to having felt a bit sorry for the bullied individual. Olweus (2007) stated that it is feelings of empathy that can turn into actions of helping the bullied student. This is also significant in terms of helping to create awareness to students at university about anti-bullying. At least 4.1% *(n* = 6) of students reported did not feel much when witnessing another student similar in age being bullied at university. This bystander apathy may be a result of witnessing many other peers also witnessing the bullying scenario but not acting, making it seem somewhat acceptable (Myers & Cowie, 2016). Thus, it appears that mobilising bystanders in anti-bullying strategies would prove more useful, as seen in the Finnish KiVa anti-bullying programme (Saarento, Boulton, & Salmivalli, 2014). This study found that most of the university students that participated had "prosocial attitudes toward bullying" (Garland et al., 2017, p. 80), as most students did not participate in traditional forms of bullying or cyber-bullying. However, there were still some students who did participate in victimising others and found it to be normal. These results are similar to the study conducted by Garland, Policastro, Richards and Miller (2017), which found that the majority of the university students were unlikely to support victim-blaming behaviours.

In relation to the Social Ecological Model (SEM), it appears that university peers and classmates can play either a positive or negative role in terms of impacting bullying within the university environment. Whether an individual has a close interrelationship with a bully victim or an "only know on a class term basis" relationship, the impact the individual has by stepping in and helping prevent a victim being bullied, this takes place within both the microsystem and mesosystem of the SEM.

5.7 What roles do demographic factors (gender, race, and age) play in traditional bullying and cyber-bullying of university students (specifically with regards to the victims who have been bullied)?

5.7.1 Gender

The results of this research study indicate that there is no significant relationship between gender and the prevalence of both traditional bullying and cyber-bullying. This was in line

with Sinkonnen and colleagues (2012) study, which found that there were 72% female and 27%, male student victims of bullying at university, but no statistical difference between men and women. Another study also found no significant difference by gender in terms of online or inbox-messenger (Finn, 2004).

However, results suggested that more females experienced bullying within the past couples of months compared to males, although not significantly. This may be due to the fact that there were many more female students than male students that made up the current sample. This appears to be consistent with prior studies that have considered gender and the aspect of bullying (Faucher, Jackson, & Cassidy, 2014; Zalquett & Chatters, 2014). One of such prior studies, conducted by Zalaquett and Chatters (2014) found that cyberbullying in college differed between males and females; only 3.6% of males surveyed reported being cyber-bullied compared to the 15.5% of females that were cyber-bullied. However, despite the similarity researchers Akbulut and Eristi (2011) observed that there was a higher likelihood of male Turkish postsecondary students as both cyber-bully victims and perpetrators. Another Turkish study also found male students more likely to report perpetrating cyberbullying, whereas reporting victimisation was found more likely among the female students (Dilmac, 2009). Similarly to Dilmac's (2009) findings, Faucher and colleagues (2014) found that male university students were far more willing to reveal whether they perpetrated cyber-bullying compared to their female counterparts. Faucher and colleagues (2014) findings also suggested that females were more likely to experience cyber-bullying, and as a result, there was a possibility of a victim having a relationship with the perpetrator.

The influence of gender in terms of bullying (traditional forms as well as cyber-bullying), according to the Social Ecological Model (SEM) suggests that gender norms can be influenced at a microsystemic level (e.g. home background individuals are brought up in) as well as on a macrosystemic level in terms of societal constructs and values.

5.7.2 Race

During this study, the majority of the students that participated were Black students and made up at least 50% of the students that reported being bullied within the last couple of months. Not many Indian and Coloured students took part in this study, and 29.9% of White students reported being bullied within a recent couple of months. The results suggested that there was

no significant relationship between race and the prevalence of bullying. Finn (2004) also found there to be no significance in gender and online harassment.

However, a South African study that looked at the prevalence of bullying, among grade 4 to grade 6 students, recorded significantly higher levels of racial bullying amongst black students than their white student counterparts (Greef, 2004). This is in line with the SEM, as bullying based on race can be considered to occur in the macrosystem as well as the chronosystem. This is based on the consideration of South Africa's Apartheid history, steeped in racism and segregation. While currently a democratic country, the remnants of racism still affect many South African individuals.

5.7.3 Age

Earlier research on bullying suggested a positive relationship between bullying and an individual's age (Olweus, 1993). It is not unusual to find that many studies associated younger children and adolescents with engaging in physical bullying, a form of traditional bullying (Dupper, 2013). This may be due to the fact that some young adolescents and children lack or are not yet in control of social skills like social expression and emotional control (Xiao & Wong, 2013). For instance, Govender and Young (2018) found that 13-year-old students were more likely to perpetrate cyber-bullying behaviours compared to their younger counterparts (Govender & Young, 2018). However, they also found that there was no significant association between age and traditional bullying among their sample (Govender & Young, 2018). Thus, there is the assumption that as a young adult or older individual they are more socially competent. However, with regards to the cyber-bullying context, research studies evidence has been mixed (Tustin et al., 2012). Since this study focuses on university students, it was initially thought that cyber-bullying would increase due to the constant use of technological devices and that traditional bullying would decrease. Alas, according to the results of this study, there is no statistical significance between age and the prevalence of bullying and this may be due to the fact of an unnecessary age limitation when sampling. If ages out of the 18 to 23-year-old age bracket were considered, more insight might have been gathered. A study conducted by Finn (2004) also found there to be no statistical significance between age and online harassment.

However, it is still interesting to note that some students still experience traditional bullying. At least 4.8% reported experiencing physical bullying, 32.5% of students experienced

purposely being excluded from friend groups or completely ignored as a person. 21.6% of students experienced verbal abuse at university, and 19.8% experienced being socially bullied. The percentage of students that experienced having a message or post shared online about them that they did not want others to see was 33.1%, and 31.1% reported feeling afraid to go online. This indicates that even though the majority of university students do not experience any form of bullying, there are some that do experience traditional bullying, cyber-bullying or both. This suggests that bullying does not just end after high school but continues into university.

5.8 Can the experience of being victim to traditional bullying and cyber-bullying be regarded as a form of trauma?

In this study, trauma has been defined as an emotionally distressing, painful or shocking experience that can have a marking impact on individuals involved in the traumatic situation (Weathers & Keane, 2007). Previous research conducted has found that continuous exposure to bullying leads to an increase in feelings of distress, as well as physical and psychological signs among children (Garbarino, 2001). Individuals may experience traumatic reactions to bullying either through *avoidance*, *intrusion* (re-experiencing or the repression of intrusive thoughts), or *hyperarousal* (composed of anger and irritability, being easily startled, lack of concentration and hyper vigilance) (American Psychiatric Association, 2013; Carney, 2008). Newman, Holden, and Delville (2005) stated that being a victim of bullying is a chronic stress that often results in traumatic reactions and responses.

The results of the current research study found significant results between bullying types (traditional bullying and cyber-bullying) and IES-R score categories. Furthermore, it was also found that 33 (82.5%) students that were traditionally bullied and completed the IES-R questionnaire scored 33 or more on the total score. This suggests that these bully victims have an increased presence of PTSD symptoms. (Refer to section 2.10 for further details regarding PTSD symptoms).Additionally, the Chi-square results indicated that there were significant relationships between traditional bullying and trauma symptoms and between cyber-bullying and trauma symptoms. The significant results indicate that the higher percentage of students with trauma symptoms had been bullied compared to students that did not have trauma symptoms.

A study conducted by Carney (2008) among 91 sixth grade children from the MidWest, USA, found that the rate of exposure to bullying events was a significant factor to predicting the level of trauma. Additionally, a study carried out within the workplace found that out of the 165 healthcare employees that participated, 40% had reported being bullied over a two-year period, and 44% experienced high levels of PTSD symptoms (Tehrani, 2004). Idsoe and colleagues (2012) found a relationship between PTSD symptoms and bullying among grade 8 and 9 students. Their findings indicated that a little more than a third of students who reported being a victim to bullying had scores that fell well within the clinical range for PTSD symptoms (Idsoe et al., 2012).

When considering the SEM, an individual experiencing bullying as a form of trauma through the presence of PTSD symptoms may experience difficulties in terms of their microsystem. For example, in the microsystem, individuals may isolate themselves from others (peer, friends, or family members) and may lead to an adverse ripple reaction throughout the remaining systems.

5.9 Limitation and recommendations for possible intervention and further research

This research study has encountered some limitations that have been considered. The limitations that were considered will be further expanded upon below.

The existing limited literature on traditional bullying and cyberbullying among university students yet alone South African university students appeared to have featured as a limitation for this research study. The literature review in Chapter 2 outlined the importance of bullying within a university context. The use of a larger and representative sample would have been far more useful for statistical purposes of such a research study.

A larger and representative participant sample will be needed in future to gain a more precise and accurate picture of the prevalence of traditional bullying and cyber-bullying. Regardless of the results, there is the possibility of it leading to larger statistics as mentioned in Chapter 2: Literature Review. We need to stay conscious of studies like this and be cautious when reviewing bullying within universities as well as changing the perceived notion and paradigm that it does not happen.

This study made use the Revised Olweus Bully/Victim Questionnaire (R-OBVQ) and the Cyber Bullying Behaviors and Victimisation Experiences Measure; both questionnaires

utilise definitions as to what bullying is. Providing a definition of bullying to participants helps to clarify what bullying is and entails. However, the provision of definitions of traditional bullying and cyber-bullying may also result in the underreporting of the behaviour (Holfeld & Leadbeater, 2015b; Mishna, Khoury-Kassabri, Gadalla, & Daciuk, 2012).

With regards to exploring the link between bullying and trauma, more detailed studies are required and suggested to explore that link. Although the Impact of Event Scale-Revised (IES-R) questionnaire specifically asked participants to complete the questionnaire related to episodes of bullying, it cannot disregard the likelihood that some responses may relate to other traumatic incidents instead (Idsoe et al., 2012).

A quantitative method was used in order to obtain statistical results, and while this proved useful in terms of collecting descriptive statistics, it did not capture the individual's complete perceptions and understanding of bullying. It may be useful to establish the perceptions of bullying from a qualitative stance as well.

It is hoped that the findings from this research study can help increase awareness that young adults may require support even after their bullying experience/s have ended (Idsoe et al., 2012). How much help victims of bullying receive afterwards has not been investigated. In future, it may be beneficial to investigate how much help is put into the victims and perpetrators of bullying among university students. The following recommendations will be expanded upon below:

The present research study primary finding indicates that bullying behaviour does not appear to stop during university and continues to affect some students. This suggests that universities may benefit from including items regarding being victims and perpetrators of bullying in student experiences and satisfaction questionnaires. The collection of such data can help universities to determine the extent to which bullying is an issue within their institution assessment and experience satisfactory surveys (Lund & Ross, 2016). This data will also help universities to identify further whether bullying is an issue as well as monitor whether policy changes or interventions set up to deal with bullying are useful or not. In terms of the Social Ecological Model (SEM) change in university policy or the active enforcement of such policy will impact students within their exosystem.

The most strategic way in which universities can tackle the issue of bullying at university is to collaborate with the onsite university counselling centers, the psychology faculty, and

other counselling facilities that will be willing to work with the university (Johnson et al., 2016). Psychologists and counsellors that are onsite will be able to help facilitate universities to develop prevention and intervention strategies as well as offer therapy services.

University counselling services can play a crucial role in tackling and helping both victims and perpetrators of traditional bullying and cyber-bullying. Thus it is crucial that university personnel, lecturers and counsellors be aware of the impact and seriousness of bullying, and ought to ensure that they do not trivialise the concerns of bullying victims (Myers & Cowie, 2017). In terms of the SEM, individuals who are victim or perpetrators of bullying will be impacted by counsellors and supporting and understanding lecturers within their microsystem as well as Mesosystem (that is if the two or more microsystems interact, e.g. peers and lecturers intervening during a bullying incident; or university and family members of bully victims collaborating together to support victims of bullying).

More research is required in order to gain a better understanding of bullying within a university environment. Additionally, researchers could even investigate the relationship between university bullying and high school bullying involvement, in order to explore whether the extent of which perpetration and aggression during high school may predict similar involvement during university as well as whether being a victim of bullying in high school is associated to being a victim of bullying in university (Lund & Ross, 2016).

5.10 Conclusion

An important aspect to remember when considering bullying is that bullying is bullying no matter where it occurs. However, with regard to research, this research study found that there is a limited yet noted growing body of literature pertaining to bullying in terms of both victim and perpetrator within a university context (tertiary context). Thus, this research study was aimed to shed greater insight into the prevalence of both traditional bullying and cyberbullying among university students within a local South African university as well as whether it is regarded as a form of trauma.

The results from the current research study found that 25.8% of university students experienced traditional bullying within the last couple of months at university. Furthermore, 33.8% of students admitted to sending someone a text message or instant message from their cellphone in order to make them angry or to make fun of that individual. While a total of

31.1% of university students admitted to having felt afraid to go online due to unwanted posts, text messages being sent to them or about them to others. These results portray the reality of bullying (both traditional bullying and cyber-bullying) at university.

In terms of the role demographic factors play with regards to traditional bullying and cyber-bullying, gender, race and age were all found to be not statistically significant with regards to the prevalence of traditional and cyber-bullying. Significant results were also found between types of bullying (traditional bullying and cyber-bullying) and trauma symptoms. This indicated that students with higher percentages of trauma symptoms had been bullied compared to students that did not experience trauma symptoms.

Whilst, this research study has outlined the importance of investigating bullying at university, there is still a necessity for more research to be done because studies like the current one indicate the necessity of monitoring bullying within its social and cultural context and in a university setting, which is considered to be an "adult" environment, but where individuals have chosen to further their education and study (Myers & Cowie, 2016). The study of traditional bullying and cyber-bullying among university students allows for the opportunity to gain a more comprehensive understanding of the interpersonal as well as social contexts "during the transition from adolescence to adulthood, from higher education to the workplace, and at later stages of the lifespan" (Myers & Cowie, 2017, p.19).

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APPENDICES

Appendix A: Demographic Questionnaire

A. Demographic Questionnaire

Please complete the following questions by ticking the appropriate box.

*Required

1. **Do you attend university at the University of the Witwatersrand?**
   Mark only one oval.
   - ◯ YES
   - ◯ NO

2. **Age** *
   Mark only one oval.
   - ◯ 18
   - ◯ 19
   - ◯ 20
   - ◯ 21
   - ◯ 22
   - ◯ 23
   - ◯ OTHER (Form will be submitted as student is out of age range) *After the last question in this section, stop filling in this form.*

3. **Gender** *
   Mark only one oval.
   - ◯ FEMALE
   - ◯ MALE
   - ◯ OTHER

4. **Race group (For statistical purposes only)**
   Mark only one oval.
   - ◯ ASIAN
   - ◯ BLACK
   - ◯ COLOURED
   - ◯ INDIAN
   - ◯ WHITE
   - ◯ Other: _____

5. **Nationality**

   _____

6. **Home Language**
Mark only one oval.

- ENGLISH
- AFRIKAANS
- IsiNDEBELE
- IsiXHOSA
- IsiZULU
- SEPEDI
- SESOTHO
- SETSWANA
- SISWATI
- TSHIVENDA
- XITSONGA
- SHONA
- Other: _____

7. **Year of Study**
Mark only one oval.

- 1st YEAR
- 2nd YEAR
- 3rd YEAR
- 4th YEAR
- HONOURS
- MASTERS
- OTHER

8. **Faculty**
Mark only one oval.

- Commerce, Law and Management
- Engineering and the Built Environment
- Humanities
- Health Sciences
- Sciences

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Appendix B: The Revised Olweus Bully/Victim Questionnaire (R-OBVQ)

B. The Revised Olweus Bullying/Victim Questionnaire (R-OBVQ)

Most of the questions are about your life in university in the past couple of months, that is, the period from the start of university at the beginning of the year until now. So when you answer, you should think of how it has been the past few months and not only how it is now.

1. **1. How do you like university?**
   Mark only one oval.
   - ◯ I dislike university very much
   - ◯ I dislike university
   - ◯ I neither like nor dislike university
   - ◯ I like university
   - ◯ I like university very much

2. **2. How many good friends do you have in your class/es?**
   Mark only one oval.
   - ◯ None
   - ◯ I have one good friend in my class/es
   - ◯ I have 2 or 3 good friends in my class/es
   - ◯ I have 4 or 5 good friends in my class/es
   - ◯ I have 6 or more good friends in my class/es

About being bullied by other students

Here are some questions about being bullied by others. First, we define or explain the word bullying:

We say a student is being bullied when another student, or several other students:

• Say mean and hurtful things or make fun of him or her or call him or her hurtful names.

• Completely ignore or exclude him or her from their group of friends or leave him or her out of things on purpose.

• Hit, kick, push, shove around, or lock him or her inside a room.

• Tell lies or spread false rumours about him or her or send mean notes and try to make other students dislike him or her.

• And other hurtful things that include being teased in a mean and hurtful way.

When we talk about bullying, these things happen repeatedly, and it is difficult for the student being bullied to defend himself or herself. Note that we also call it bullying when a student is teased repeatedly in a mean and hurtful way.

But, we don't call it bullying when the teasing is done in a friendly and playful way. Also, it is not bullying when students of about equal strength or power argue or fight.

3. **3. How often have you been bullied at university in the past couple of months?**
Mark only one oval.

- I haven't been bullied in the past couple of months
- It has only happened once or twice
- 2 or 3 times a month
- About once a week
- Several times a week

Have you been bullied at university in the past couple of months in one or more of the following ways?

Answer all questions 4 - 13

4. **4. I was called mean names, was made fun of, or teased in a hurtful way**
Mark only one oval.

- It hasn't happened to me in the past couple of months
- only once or twice
- 2 or 3 times a month
- about once a week
- several times a week

5. **5. Other students left me out of things on purpose, excluded me from their group of friends, or completely ignored me.**
Mark only one oval.

- It hasn't happened to me in the past couple of months
- only once or twice
- 2 or 3 times a month
- about once a week
- several times a week

6. **6. I was hit, kicked, pushed, shoved around, or locked indoors.**
Mark only one oval.

- It hasn't happened to me in the past couple of months
- only once or twice
- 2 or 3 times a months
- about once a week
- several times a week

7. **7. Other students told lies or spread false rumours about me and tried to make others dislike me.**
Mark only one oval.

- ◯ It hasn't happened to me in the past couple of months
- ◯ only once or twice
- ◯ 2 or 3 times a month
- ◯ about once a week
- ◯ several times a week

8. **8. I had money or other things taken away from me or damaged.**
Mark only one oval.

- ◯ It hasn't happened to me in the past couple of months
- ◯ only once or twice
- ◯ 2 or 3 times a month
- ◯ about once a week
- ◯ several times a week

9. **9. I was threatened or forced to do things I did not want to do.**
Mark only one oval.

- ◯ It hasn't happened to me in the past couple of months
- ◯ only once or twice
- ◯ 2 or 3 times a month
- ◯ about once a week
- ◯ several times a week

10. **10. I was bullied with mean names or comments about my race or colour.**
Mark only one oval.

- ◯ It hasn't happened to me in the past couple of months
- ◯ only once or twice
- ◯ 2 or 3 times a month
- ◯ about once a week
- ◯ several times a week

11. **11. I was bullied with mean names, comments, or gestures with a sexual meaning.**
Mark only one oval.

- ◯ It hasn't happened to me in the past couple of months
- ◯ only once or twice
- ◯ 2 or 3 times a month
- ◯ about once a week
- ◯ several times a week

12. **12. I was bullied with mean names or hurtful messages, calls, or pictures, or in other ways on my cell phone or over the internet (e.g. computer) (Please remember that bullying is not bullying when it is done in a friendly and playful manner.)**
Mark only one oval.

- ◯ It hasn't happened to me in the past couple of months
- ◯ only once or twice
- ◯ 2 or 3 times a month
- ◯ about once a week
- ◯ several times a week

13. **13. I was bullied in another way.**
Mark only one oval.

- ◯ It hasn't happened to me in the past couple of months
- ◯ only once or twice
- ◯ 2 or 3 times a month
- ◯ about once a week
- ◯ several times a week
- ◯ Other: _____

14. **14. In which class(es) is the student or students who bully you?**
Mark only one oval.

- ◯ I haven't been bullied at university in the past couple of months
- ◯ In my class
- ◯ In a different class but the same year
- ◯ In a higher year
- ◯ In a lower year
- ◯ In different years

15. **15. Have you been bullied by men or women?**
Mark only one oval.

- ◯ I haven't been bullied at university in the past couple of months
- ◯ Mainly by 1 woman
- ◯ By several women (a number of women)
- ◯ Mainly by 1 man
- ◯ By several men (a number of men)
- ◯ By both men and women

16. **16. By how many individuals have you usually been bullied?**
Mark only one oval.

- ◯ I haven't been bullied at university in the past couple of months
- ◯ Mainly by 1 individual
- ◯ By a group of 2-3 individuals
- ◯ By a group of individuals of more than 9 individuals
- ◯ By several different individuals or groups of individuals

17. **17. How long has the bullying lasted?**
Mark only one oval.

- ◯ I haven't been bullied at university in the past couple of months
- ◯ It lasted one or two weeks
- ◯ It lasted about a month
- ◯ It lasted about 6 months
- ◯ It lasted about a year
- ◯ It has gone on for several years

18. **18. Where have you been bullied?**
Mark only one oval.

- ◯ I haven't been bullied at university in the past couple of months *Skip to question 30.*
- ◯ I have been bullied in one or more of the following places in the past couple of months *Skip to question 19.*

19. **19a. During break times/lunch?**
Mark only one oval.

- ◯ No
- ◯ Yes

20. **19b. In the hallways/passages/stairwells?**
Mark only one oval.

- ◯ No
- ◯ Yes

21. **19c. In class (when the lecturer was in the room)?**
Mark only one oval.

- ◯ No
- ◯ Yes

22. **19d. In class (when the lecturer was NOT in the room)?**
Mark only one oval.

- ◯ No
- ◯ Yes

23. **19e. In the toilets/bathroom?**
Mark only one oval.

- ◯ No
- ◯ Yes

24. **19f. In the gym or the changing room?**
Mark only one oval.

- ◯ No
- ◯ Yes

25. **19g. In the Matrix/lunchroom?**
Mark only one oval.

- ◯ No
- ◯ Yes

26. **19h. On the way to and from university?**
Mark only one oval.

- ◯ No
- ◯ Yes

27. **19i. At the bus stop/taxi rank?**
Mark only one oval.

- ◯ No
- ◯ Yes

28. **19j. On the bus/taxi?**
Mark only one oval.

- ◯ No
- ◯ Yes

29. **19k. Somewhere else on campus?**
Mark only one oval.

- ◯ No
- ◯ Yes
- ◯ Other: _____

30. **20. Have you told anyone that you have been bullied at university in the past couple of months?**

Mark only one oval.

- ◯ I haven't been bullied at university in the past couple of months
- ◯ I have been bullied at university in the past couple of months but I have not told anyone
- ◯ I have been bullied and I have told somebody about it (continue with questions 20a - 20e, below)

Untitled section

31. **20a. Your lecturer?**

Mark only one oval.

- ◯ No
- ◯ Yes

32. **20b. Any other individual at university (a tutor/ administrative staff/ counselor/ psychologist, university security/care taker/ cleaner)?**

Mark only one oval.

- ◯ No
- ◯ Yes

33. **20c. Your parent/s or guardian/s?**

Mark only one oval.

- ◯ No
- ◯ Yes

34. **20d. Your brother/s or sister/s?**

Mark only one oval.

- ◯ No
- ◯ Yes

35. **20e. Your friend/s?**

Mark only one oval.

- ◯ No
- ◯ Yes

36. **21.How often do the lecturers or other individuals in authoritative positions at university try to put a stop to it when a student is being bullied at university?**
Mark only one oval.

- ◯ Almost never
- ◯ Once in a while
- ◯ Sometimes
- ◯ Often
- ◯ Almost Always

37. **22. How often do other students try to put a stop to it when a student is being bullied at university?**
Mark only one oval.

- ◯ Almost never
- ◯ Once in a while
- ◯ Sometimes
- ◯ Often
- ◯ Almost Always

38. **23. Has any individual at home contacted the university to try to stop your being bullied at school in the past couple of months?**
Mark only one oval.

- ◯ I have not been bullied at university in the past couple of months
- ◯ No, they have not contacted the university
- ◯ Yes, they have contacted the university once
- ◯ Yes, they have contacted the university several months

39. **24. When you see a student your age being bullied at university, what do you feel or think?**
Mark only one oval.

- ◯ That is probably what he or she deserves
- ◯ I do not feel much
- ◯ I feel a bit sorry for him or her
- ◯ I feel sorry for him or her and want to help him or her

About Bullying other students

40. **25. How often have you taken part in bullying another student(s) at university in the past couple of months?**
Mark only one oval.

- I have not bullied another student(s) at university in the past couple of months
- It has only happened once or twice
- 2 or 3 times a month
- About once a week
- Several times a week

Have you bullied another student(s) in the past couple of months in one or more of the following ways (Question 26-33)

41. **26. I called another student(s) mean names and made fun of or teased him or her in a hurtful way**
Mark only one oval.

- It has not happened in the past couple of months
- Only happened once or twice
- 2 or 3 times a month
- About once a week
- Several times a week

42. **27. I kept him or her out of things on purpose, excluded him or her from my group of friends or completely ignored him or her.**
Mark only one oval.

- It has not happened in the past couple of months
- Only happened once or twice
- 2 or 3 times a month
- About once a week
- Several times a week

43. **28. I hit, kicked, pushed and shoved him or her around or locked him or her indoors.**
Mark only one oval.

- It has not happened in the past couple of months
- Only happened once or twice
- 2 or 3 times a month
- About once a week
- Several times a week

44. **29. I spread false rumors about him or her and tried to make others dislike him or her.**
Mark only one oval.

- It has not happened in the past couple of months
- Only happened once or twice
- 2 or 3 times a month
- About once a week
- Several times a week

45. **30. I took money or other things from him or her or damaged his or her belongings.**
Mark only one oval.

- It has not happened in the past couple of months
- Only happened once or twice
- 2 or 3 times a month
- About once a week
- Several times a week

46. **31. I threatened or forced him or her to do things he or she didn't want to do.**
Mark only one oval.

- It has not happened in the past couple of months
- Only happened once or twice
- 2 or 3 times a month
- About once a week
- Several times a week

47. **32a. I bullied him or her with mean or hurtful messages, calls or pictures or in other ways on my cell phone or over the internet (computer)**
Mark only one oval.

- It has not happened in the past couple of months
- Only happened once or twice
- 2 or 3 times a month
- About once a week
- Several times a week

48. **32b. If you bullied another student(s) on your cell phone or over the internet (computer), how was it done?**
Mark only one oval.

- Only on the cell phone
- Only over the internet (e.g. computer)
- In both ways

49. **33. I bullied him or her in another way.**
Mark only one oval.

- ◯ It has not happened in the past couple of months
- ◯ Only happened once or twice
- ◯ 2 or 3 times a month
- ◯ About once a week
- ◯ Several times a week

50. **34. Has any lecturer or tutor talked with you about bullying another student(s) at the university in the past couple of months?**
Mark only one oval.

- ◯ I have not been bullied at university in the past couple of months
- ◯ No, they have not talked with me about it
- ◯ Yes, they have talked with me about it once
- ◯ Yes, they have talked with me about it several times

51. **35. Has any individual at home talked with you about your bullying another student(s) at university in the past couple of months?**
Mark only one oval.

- ◯ I have not been bullied at university in the past couple of months
- ◯ No, they have not talked with me about it
- ◯ Yes, they have talked with me about it once
- ◯ Yes, they have talked with me about it several times

52. **36. Do you think you could join in bullying a student whom you do not like?**
Mark only one oval.

- ◯ Yes
- ◯ Yes, maybe
- ◯ I do not know
- ◯ No, I do not think so
- ◯ No
- ◯ Definitely no

53. **37. How do you usually react if you see or learn that a student your age is being bullied by another student(s)?**
Mark only one oval.

- ◯ I have never noticed that students my age have been bullied
- ◯ I take part in the bullying
- ◯ I do not do anything, but I think the bullying is okay
- ◯ I just watch what goes on
- ◯ I do not think anything but I think I must help the bullied student
- ◯ I try to help the bullied student in one way or another

54. **38. How often are you afraid of being bullied by other students in your university?**
Mark only one oval.

- Never
- Seldom (rarely)
- Sometimes
- Fairly often
- Often
- Very often

55. **39. Overall, how much do you think your University has done to cut down on bullying in your university in the past couple of months?**
Mark only one oval.

- Little or nothing
- Fairly little
- Somewhat
- A good deal
- Much

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Appendix C: Cyber Bullying Behaviors and Victimization Experiences Measure

C. Cyber Bullying Behaviors and Victimization Experiences Measure

Below are questions pertaining to online activity which individuals may or may not partake in. Read each of the questions carefully and indicate by clicking on the answer you identify with. There is no right or wrong answers; just your own honest opinions.

1. **Have you sent someone a text message/instant message on your cellphone to make them angry or to make fun of them?**
   Mark only one oval.
   - ◯ Never
   - ◯ Once or twice
   - ◯ A few times
   - ◯ Many times
   - ◯ Everyday

2. **Have you posted something online about someone else to make other people laugh?**
   Mark only one oval.
   - ◯ Never
   - ◯ Once or twice
   - ◯ A few times
   - ◯ Many times
   - ◯ Everyday

3. **Have you started a rumour online about another person?**
   Mark only one oval.
   - ◯ Never
   - ◯ Once or twice
   - ◯ A few times
   - ◯ Many times
   - ◯ Everyday

4. **Have you been afraid to go online?**
   Mark only one oval.
   - ◯ Never
   - ◯ Once or twice
   - ◯ A few times
   - ◯ Many times
   - ◯ Everyday

5. **Has anyone posted or shared a message about you online that you did not want others to see?**

Mark only one oval.

- ◯ Never
- ◯ Once or twice
- ◯ A few times
- ◯ Many times
- ◯ Everyday

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Appendix D: Impact of Event Scale-Revised

D. Impact of Event Scale-Revised

The following is a list of difficulties people sometimes have after stressful life events. In this case the stressful life event will pertain to any experience of being either traditionally bullied or cyber-bullied AT UNIVERSITY.
Please read each item, and then indicate how distressing each difficulty has been for you with respect to the most recent stressful life event.
Please also try to also remember how you felt in the weeks after the event.

1. **Stressful/traumatic event:**

How much were you distressed or bothered by these difficulties?

Please answer the following statements with the above question in mind.

2. **1. Any reminder brought back feelings about it.**
   Mark only one oval.
   - ◯ Not at all
   - ◯ A little bit
   - ◯ Moderately
   - ◯ Quite a bit
   - ◯ Extremely

3. **2. I had trouble staying asleep**
   Mark only one oval.
   - ◯ Not at all
   - ◯ A little bit
   - ◯ Moderately
   - ◯ Quite a bit
   - ◯ Extremely

4. **3. Other things kept making me think about it.**
   Mark only one oval.
   - ◯ Not at all
   - ◯ A little bit
   - ◯ Moderately
   - ◯ Quite a bit
   - ◯ Extremely

5. **4. I felt irritable and angry.**
Mark only one oval.

- Not at all
- A little bit
- Moderately
- Quite a bit
- Extremely

6. **5. I avoided letting myself get upset when I thought about it or was reminded of it.**
Mark only one oval.

- Not at all
- A little bit
- Moderately
- Quite a bit
- Extremely

7. **6. I thought about it when I did not mean to.**
Mark only one oval.

- Not at all
- A little bit
- Moderately
- Quite a bit
- Extremely

8. **7. I felt as if it hadn't happened or wasn't real.**
Mark only one oval.

- Not at all
- A little bit
- Moderately
- Quite a bit
- Extremely

9. **8. I stayed away from reminders of it.**
Mark only one oval.

- Not at all
- A little bit
- Moderately
- Quite a bit
- Extremely

10. **9. Pictures of it popped into my mind.**
Mark only one oval.

- Not at all
- A little bit
- Moderately
- Quite a bit
- Extremely

11. **10. I was jumpy and easily startled.**
Mark only one oval.

- Not at all
- A little bit
- Moderately
- Quite a bit
- Extremely

12. **11. I tried not to think about it.**
Mark only one oval.

- Not at all
- A little bit
- Moderately
- Quite a bit
- Extremely

13. **12. I was aware that I still had a lot of feelings about it, but I didn't deal with them.**
Mark only one oval.

- Not at all
- A little bit
- Moderately
- Quite a bit
- Extremely

14. **13. My feelings about it were kind of numb.**
Mark only one oval.

- Not at all
- A little bit
- Moderately
- Quite a bit
- Extremely

15. **14. I found myself acting or feeling as if I was back at that time.**
Mark only one oval.

- Not at all
- A little bit
- Moderately
- Quite a bit
- Extremely

16. **15. I had trouble falling asleep**
Mark only one oval.

- Not at all
- A little bit
- Moderately
- Quite a bit
- Extremely

17. **16. I had strong waves of feeling about it.**
Mark only one oval.

- Not at all
- A little bit
- Moderately
- Quite a bit
- Extremely

18. **17. I tried to remove it from my memory.**
Mark only one oval.

- Not at all
- A little bit
- Moderately
- Quite a bit
- Extremely

19. **18. I had trouble concentrating.**
Mark only one oval.

- Not at all
- A little bit
- Moderately
- Quite a bit
- Extremely

20. **19. Reminders of it caused me to have physical reactions, such as sweating, trouble breathing, nausea or a pounding heart.**
Mark only one oval.

- Not at all
- A little bit
- Moderately
- Quite a bit
- Extremely

21. **20. I had dreams about it.**
Mark only one oval.

- Not at all
- A little bit
- Moderately
- Quite a bit
- Extremely

22. **21. I felt watchful and on guard.**
Mark only one oval.

- Not at all
- A little bit
- Moderately
- Quite a bit
- Extremely

23. **22. I tried not to talk about.**
Mark only one oval.

- Not at all
- A little bit
- Moderately
- Quite a bit
- Extremely

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Appendix E: Ethical Clearance Certificate

UNIVERSITY OF THE WITWATERSRAND, JOHANNESBURG

HUMAN RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE (SCHOOL OF HUMAN & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE	PROTOCOL NUMBER: MEDP/17/009 III
PROJECT TITLE:	The Prevalence of Traditional Bullying and Cyber-Bullying Among University Students
INVESTIGATORS DEPARTMENT	Saloojee Nasreen Psychology
DATE CONSIDERED	05/06/17
DECISION OF COMMITTEE^	Approved

This ethical clearance is valid for 2 years and may be renewed upon application

DATE: 10 May 2017

CHAIRPERSON
(Prof. Joseph Seabi)

cc Supervisor:

Prof. Joseph Seabi
Psychology

DECLARATION OF INVESTIGATOR (S)

To be completed in duplicate and **one copy** returned to the Secretary, Room 100015, 10th floor, Senate House, University.

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

This ethical clearance will expire on 31 December 2019

PLEASE QUOTE THE PROTOCOL NUMBER IN ALL ENQUIRIES

Appendix F: Participation Email

Good day,

My name is Nasreen Saloojee, and I am currently a full-time masters student in the Educational Psychology programme at the University of the Witwatersrand. Presently I am researching the prevalence of traditional bullying and cyber-bullying among university students.

Over the years, there have been numerous studies conducted locally and internationally on the prevalence of bullying among primary and secondary schools as well as in the workplace. However, there has been a deficit in the literature on the prevalence of bullying among university students. The purpose of this research study intends to contribute to the limited literature on bullying within a university context.

I am inviting you to be a part of the study through a short online survey. The survey will take no longer than 25 minutes of your time. It is an anonymous survey, and you will not be personally identified in the final report. By filling in the following questionnaire, you will be giving your consent to participate in this study.

Please click the link below to participate:
https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSe0vrUErqyKHXj0e3SOUsxonFuJSJzibyaAmgJXOUQRFARgvQ/viewform?usp=sf_link

OR
https://goo.gl/forms/xnWQeghjlm5LkiWN2

It must be stressed that your participation in this research study is voluntary, and should you wish to withdraw you may do so at any time. Participants will have the potential for minimal risk of distress and no benefits to yourself.

For some of you this research will be asking you to think of a difficult experience, if you begin to feel distressed in any way, please contact one of the following organisations who offer free counselling services:

Emthonjeni Community Psychology Clinic	**Tel: 011 717 4513**
Counselling and Careers Development Unit (CCDU)	**Tel: 011 717 9140/32**
National Counselling Line	**Tel: 0861 322 322**

The results of the survey will not be linked to any particular individual in the final report. The research undertaken is solely for academic purposes and once completed will be available electronically and can be accessed publicly. This research study has been approved by the Human Research Ethics Committee (Non-Medical), protocol number MEDP/17/009 IH.

If you have any further questions, concerns, or comments, or if you would like a summary of the research results, please feel free to contact me at: nasreen.saloojee@students.wits.ac.za or my supervisor Dr Simangele Mayisela at simangele.mayisela@wits.ac.za.

Your participation is much appreciated.

Appendix G: Questionnaire Introduction

The prevalence of traditional bullying and cyber-bullying among university students

My research study aims to explore the prevalence of both traditional bullying and cyber-bullying among students in university. As well as explore whether traditional bullying and cyber-bullying are regarded as a form of trauma. Over the years there have been numerous studies conducted locally and internationally
on the prevalence of bullying among primary and secondary schools as well as in the workplace. However, there has been a deficit in the literature on the prevalence of bullying among university students.
The purpose of this research study intends to contribute to the limited literature on bullying within a university context.

To conduct this research, I require participants to be Wits university students within the age range of 18 to 23 years old.

For some of you this research may have asked you to think of a difficult experience, if you are feeling distressed in any way please contact one of the following organisations who offer free counselling services:
Emthonjeni Community Psychology Clinic.....Tel: 011 717 4513
Counselling and Careers Development Unit (CCDU).....Tel: 011 717 9140/32
National Counselling Line.....Tel: 0861 322 322

If you have any further questions, concerns, comments, or if you would like a summary of the research results, please feel free to contact me at: nasreen.saloojee@students.wits.ac.za or my supervisor Dr Simangele Mayisela at simangele.mayisela@wits.ac.za.

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Appendix H: Questionnaire End

End!

For some of you this research may have asked you to think of a difficult experience, if you are feeling distressed in any way please contact one of the following organisations who offer free counselling services:

Emthonjeni Community Psychology Clinic.....Tel: 011 717 4513
Counselling and Careers Development Unit (CCDU).....Tel: 011 717 9140/32
National Counselling Line.....Tel: 0861 322 322

If you have any further questions, concerns, or comments, or if you would like a summary of the research results, please feel free to contact me at: nasreen.saloojee@students.wits.ac.za or my supervisor Dr Simangele Mayisela at simangele.mayisela@wits.ac.za.

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Appendix I: Turnitin Report