

The Prevalence of Cyber bullying in Gauteng private schools among Grade 7 to 9 learners

A research report submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Masters in Educational Psychology in the Humanities Faculty, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg

Annelet Liebenberg 697610

Supervisor: Prof. Joseph Seabi

The Prevalence of Cyber bullying in Gauteng private schools among Grade 7 to 9 learners

Abstract

This study investigated the prevalence of cyber bullying among Grade 7, 8 and 9 learners in private schools within the Gauteng area. The research design was quantitative, exploratory and contextual. Data collection was done through a self-developed structured questionnaire survey. Data analysis was done through descriptive statistics. The sample for this research was 60 learners from 2 schools in Grade 7, 8 and 9. Results showed that girls were twice as likely to be victims as well as perpetrators of cyber bullying as compared to boys. The anonymity of cyber bullying was shown not to be relevant as the perpetrators of cyber bullying were known to 85% of the victims and all the victims were known to the perpetrators. The results show that 62% of the victims reported being cyberbullied at home and 100% of the perpetrators of cyber bullying did so from their homes. It is a concern that 40% of learners were not aware of any programmes at their school to prevent cyber bullying. Most parents in this study spoke to their children about cyber bullying, internet danger and online safety. However, they still did not have enough systems in place to protect their children from these very real dangers. The educational implications of this study needs to be seen from the perspective of each learner having the right to a safe environment that is conducive to learning. Cyber bullying interferes with this right. Therefore schools need to become proactive at establishing classroom interventions as well as individual interventions when cases of cyber bullying come to light. This type of intervention can however only be effective if there is parental involvement. The results of this study should be seen as an exploratory pilot study and should be replicated as it is with a larger sample.

Key Words: Cyber world; cyber bullying; perpetrator; victim; anonymity; flaming, harassment, denigration, impersonation, outing, exclusion and cyber stalking

With Gratitude

I would like to thank my mother, father and son, Julian who are always supportive in all that I do. You always believe in me and give me the courage to continue on my path.

Thank you to Jarred Hart for his assistance with the statistics part of this research study.

Thank you to Ina Jansen Van Rensburg for her assistance with editing.

Last, but not least, I would like to thank my supervisor, Prof. Joseph Seabi for his guidance and patience.

Contents

| | |
|--|-----------|
| CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION | 7 |
| 1.1. Overview | 7 |
| 1.2. Statement of the Problem | 7 |
| 1.3. Rationale | 8 |
| 1.4. Objectives of the Study..... | 8 |
| 1.5. Conceptual Framework and Research Process | 9 |
| 1.6. South African Context..... | 10 |
| 1.7. Research Questions..... | 12 |
| 1.8. Structure of Report | 13 |
| 1.9. Conclusion | 13 |
| CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW..... | 14 |
| 2.1. The “Wired Generation” | 14 |
| 2.2. The Difference between Traditional Bullying and Cyber bullying..... | 15 |
| 2.3. Forms of cyber bullying..... | 16 |
| 2.4. Theories relating to cyber bullying..... | 17 |
| 2.5. Gender and age group of bully and victim | 18 |
| 2.6. Impact on bully and victim | 20 |
| 2.7. The prevalence of cyber bullying..... | 21 |
| 2.8. Technology used in cyber bullying | 22 |
| 2.9. Reporting of cyber bullying | 23 |
| 2.10. Awareness of cyber bullying..... | 24 |
| 2.11. Methods used in cyber bullying research | 25 |
| 2.12. Conclusion | 25 |
| CHAPTER 3: METHODS | 26 |
| 3.1. Introduction | 26 |
| 3.2. Research design | 26 |
| 3.3.1. Participants | 26 |
| 3.3.2. Instruments..... | 27 |
| 3.3.3. Procedure | 28 |
| 3.3.4. Data analysis | 28 |
| 3.3.5. Ethical Considerations | 28 |
| CHAPTER 4: RESULTS AND DISCUSSION..... | 30 |
| 4.1 Introduction | 30 |
| 4.2 Technology used in cyber bullying | 30 |
| 4.3 Prevalence of Cyber bullying | 34 |

| | |
|--|-----------|
| 4.4 Age and Gender of Victims and Perpetrators of Cyber bullying | 36 |
| 4.5 Victims and Perpetrators of Cyber bullying | 42 |
| 4.6 Impact of Cyber bullying | 45 |
| 4.7 Reason for Cyber bullying | 46 |
| 4.8 Reporting of Cyber bullying | 47 |
| 4.10 Limitations and implications of this study | 52 |
| 4.11 Recommendations | 53 |
| 4.12 Conclusion | 54 |
| Appendix A: | 61 |
| Appendix B: | 69 |
| Appendix C: | 70 |
| Appendix D: | 72 |
| Appendix E: | 74 |
| Appendix F: | 75 |

List of Figures

| | |
|--|----|
| Figure 1.1: Conceptual framework | 9 |
| Figure 1.2: The Research Process..... | 10 |
| Figure 4.1. Access to Technology | 31 |
| Figure 4.2. Frequency on the Internet..... | 31 |
| Figure 4.3. Frequency of Cell Phone Use..... | 32 |
| Figure 4.4. Technology used most when Cyberbullied | 32 |
| Figure 4.5. Technology used most when Cyber bullying | 33 |
| Figure 4.6. Victims of Cyber bullying..... | 34 |
| Figure 4.7. Proportion of Perpetrators of Cyber bullying..... | 35 |
| Figure 4.8. Participants Awareness of a Victim of Cyber bullying | 36 |
| Figure 4.9. Identity of Person who Cyberbullied..... | 43 |
| Figure 4.10. Identity of Person who was Cyberbullied | 43 |
| Figure 4.11. Location of Cyber bullying | 45 |
| Figure 4.14. Reaction to being Cyberbullied..... | 45 |
| Figure 4.13. Reason for Cyber bullying | 46 |
| Figure 4.14. How Cyber bullying ended for Victims | 47 |
| Figure 4.15. How Cyber bullying ended for Perpetrators..... | 48 |
| Figure 4.16. Reporting Cyber bullying..... | 48 |
| Figure 4.17. Support when Cyberbullied..... | 49 |
| Figure 4.18. Awareness of Programmes at School to Prevent Cyber bullying..... | 51 |
| Figure 4.19. Protection by Parents from Cyber bullying and Internet Danger | 52 |
| Figure 4.22. Knowledge of what to do if Cyberbullied | 52 |

List of Tables

| | |
|--|----|
| Table 3.1 Sample | 27 |
| Table 4.1: Age Group and Gender of Victims of Cyber bullying | 37 |
| Table 4.2: Age Group and Gender of Perpetrators of Cyber bullying..... | 37 |
| Table 4.3: Cross tabulation of Victims of Cyber bullying..... | 38 |
| Table 4.4: Link between Gender and Victim of Cyber bullying | 39 |
| Table 4.5: Cross tabulation of Perpetrators of Cyber bullying..... | 40 |
| Table 4.6: Link between Gender and Perpetrator of Cyber bullying..... | 40 |
| Table 4.7: Victims/Perpetrators of Cyber bullying..... | 42 |

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

“There is no single aspect of UNICEF’s (United Nations Children’s Fund) activities, whether it is around education, or water and sanitation, or child protection or health that isn’t going to change when you have major internet penetration. When children’s social environment is no longer only physical but also digital, then that’s got to have an impact on almost every aspect of their lives.” *Christopher De Bono. Head of Communication, UNICEF* (Livingston & Bulger, 2013). This is no truer than in the case of cyber bullying which has penetrated every aspect of children’s lives.

1.1. Overview

This Chapter provides a rationale for, and an overview of the study. It also highlights the need for such a study to be conducted within the South African context due to the fact that little research has been conducted in South Africa regarding cyber bullying.

1.2. Statement of the Problem

The digital environment exposes adolescents to all manner of abuse through the form of cyber bullying. Cyber bullying is considered a new form of bullying that is on the increase among specifically middle school learners and the concern is that the extent of the problem is often underestimated and that learners, educators and parents do not know how to deal with this issue effectively (Walton, 2012). Bullying is a form of aggressive behaviour through the use of force or coercion to affect others and includes verbal bullying, social bullying and physical bullying with the intent to cause harm. It features an imbalance of power between perpetrator and victim (Graham, 2010). At some time or another in a child’s life, they will be exposed to bullying, whether as a victim, a perpetrator or a bystander. Bullying can take place in various forums such as traditional face to face bullying and more recently cyber bullying. The prevalence of cyber bullying in private schools in Gauteng among grade 7 to 9 learners was investigated in this research, focussing specifically on technology used, gender, victims and perpetrators and who these learners turn to for help. Grade 7 to 9 learners were chosen to participate in this research as they are in the senior phase of their schooling and are being exposed to more experiences and changes within themselves and their peer group. They are in transition from primary to high school and it is often at this time that they are undergoing emotional and physical changes due to puberty.

1.3. Rationale

According to UNICEF, the continual change and rapid development of the information and communication Technology (ICT) environment re-shapes children's lives, whether negatively or positively (Livingston & Bulger, 2013). While the internet offers vast opportunities by allowing people to communicate, learn, socialise, stay informed, be creative and entertain themselves; the negative result is however the very concerning phenomena of cyber bullying (Jacobs, 2010). According to Kowalski, Limber, and Agatson (2012), cyber bullying, which is also known as electronic bullying or online social cruelty, is any bullying done through the medium of email, instant messaging, text messaging, websites, social media and other technological media. Sithole (2012) reports that cell phones are mostly used when cyber bullying is carried out. The aim is to harass, intimidate, embarrass, or demean others and this can be done through insults, starting rumours, making threats or sexually offensive remarks, and posting unflattering pictures or videos (Sithole, 2012). Cyber bullying can go undetected as there is often a lack of parental supervision; it can occur anonymously as the perpetrator can pose as someone else; and the audience can be virtually limitless (Jacobs, 2010).

Private schools in Gauteng were researched as the learners in these schools generally come from financially affluent families and possibly have greater access to the technology involved in cyber bullying. Mitchell (2010) states that there is a complex relationship between adolescents' socio-economic status and their use of social media, but research supports that the higher socio-economic status of the parents of adolescents leads to more accessible access to technology and while cell phones are to a large extent bridging the digital divide, internet access on cell phones is still too expensive for adolescents from less privileged homes. It is important to gather information on cyber bullying to raise awareness of it among learners, educators and parents in order to equip them to deal with it more effectively.

Misha, Cook, Gadalla, Daciuk, and Solomon (2010) conducted a study on cyber bullying behaviours of victims and perpetrators among middle and high school learners and found that while almost half of the students had been involved in bullying, they did not tell anyone about the bullying and the incidents left them feeling sad, depressed and angry. Clearly the repercussions of cyber bullying on those involved affect them emotionally and this could lead to further problems. The vulnerability of learners who are targeted could lead to emotional, social and academic consequences (Misha et al., 2010). Learners, educators and parents need to be supported in the understanding of cyber bullying.

1.4. Objectives of the Study

The goal of the study was to investigate the prevalence of cyber bullying among Grade 7, 8 and 9 learners in private schools within the Gauteng area. Specifically, this study intended to ascertain the degree to

which cyber bullying takes place; the most prevalent forms of technology that adolescents have access to which could lead to cyber bullying, the extent of the problem for both victims and bullies, the difference in gender of bullies and victims, and the awareness in the sample group of cyber bullying. Another aim was to ascertain who these learners would turn to for support if they were cyberbullied.

1.5. Conceptual Framework and Research Process

Figure 1.1 shows the conceptual framework of the study with the main focus being on technology, prevalence, consequences, and support related to cyber bullying for victims and perpetrators thereof in Grade 7 to 9 in private schools in Gauteng.

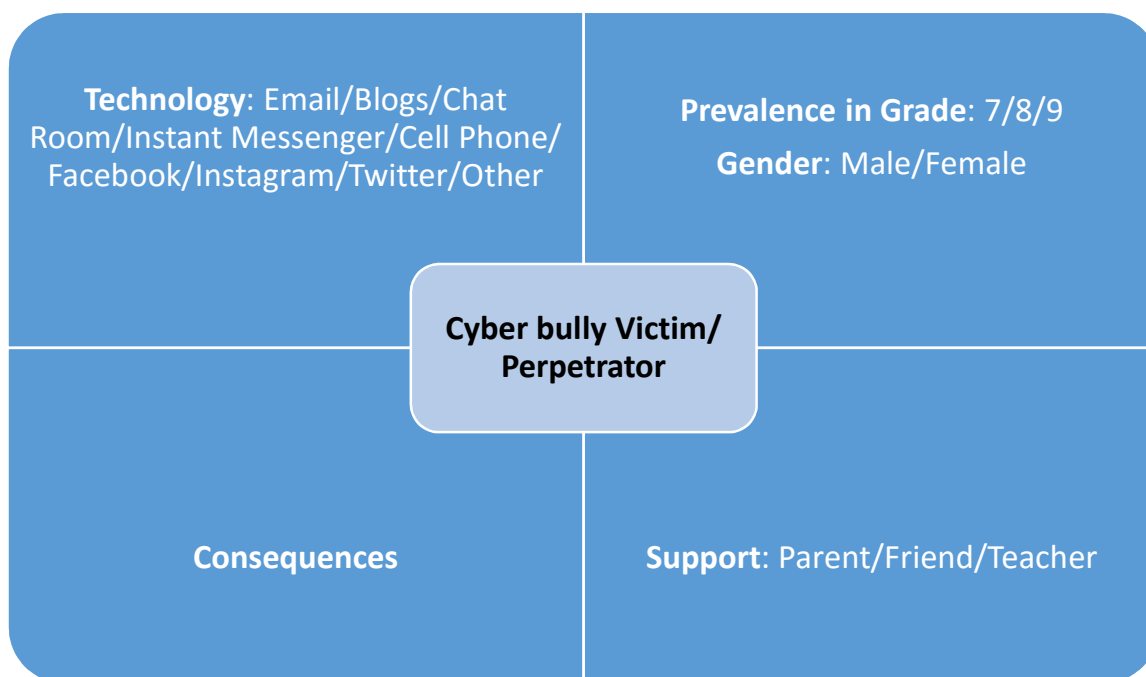


Figure 1.1: Conceptual framework

Figure 1.2 depicts the research process. The observation of the problem is the prevalence of cyber bullying among Grade 7 to 9 learners in two private schools in Gauteng. A literature review was done on existing research in the area of cyber bullying. The research design was quantitative, exploratory and contextual. Data collection was done through a structured questionnaire survey. Data analysis was done through descriptive statistics. The interpretation of the data was depicted in the research results, discussion; strengths and limitations and recommendations. This was linked to the literature review. The presentation of the data took the form of this research report.



Figure 1.2: The Research Process

1.6. South African Context

In order to redress the injustices of the past, the education section of the Bill of Rights in South Africa's Constitution states that: '...all learners have a right to basic education' (Republic of South Africa, 1996, p. 29). The 1996 Constitution requires education to be transformed and democratised in accordance with the values of human dignity, equality, human rights and freedom, non-racism and non-sexism, and it also guarantees the right to basic education for all. Technology would make up part of this transformation, but with the access to technology, the occurrence of cyber bullying becomes a real problem.

A recent South African survey found that 81% of 13 to 17 year olds have access to a computer at home, making this form of bullying easy to access for the perpetrator and it becomes a reality (Popovac & Leoschut, 2012). A study done by Mark and Ratliffe (2011) found that the more access learners have to the internet, the more likely they are to become a cyber-victim, cyber-bully, or both. According to Popovac and Leoschut (2012), research on cyber bullying at a national level in South Africa has not kept up with the increase of

information and communication technologies (ICTs) in this country. They state that this is possibly due to the fast pace of technological rollout, lack of funding and above all a lack of awareness of the extent of the problem.

Alfreds (2013) states that young people in particular are exposed to cyber bullying. Popovac and Leoschut (2012) mention that 69.7% of perpetrators of cyber bullying have also been victims of this type of bullying in South Africa, indicating that the lines between the roles of bully and victim are blurred. Cyber bullying is on the increase internationally and in South Africa, and therefore needs to become a more researched area. According to Popovac and Leoschut (2012), in 2009 the Centre for Justice and Crime Prevention (CJCP) conducted a study involving 1726 young people from Gauteng, Cape Town, Durban and Port Elizabeth and found that almost half the respondents had been subjected to cyber bullying in some form. Another study conducted with 1594 learners from 6 schools found that 16% had experienced cyber bullying and 37% had received nasty messages, comments, photos or videos (Popovac & Leoschut, 2012). The CJCP issued another paper in 2012 concerning cyber bullying where they mention that comparative data suggests that South Africa has one of the highest usages of mobile phones and social networking on the continent; thereby increasing the likelihood of learners being exposed to some form of cyber bullying (Popovac & Leoschut, 2012).

People who are affected by the problem of cyber bullying are not just the learners themselves, but also the educators and parents. In general there seems to be a major disconnect between what educators need to learn and what they are taught about dealing with inter personal problems of their learners. The learning environment constructed by the educator must inspire and motivate, taking the context of the child into consideration (National Education Policy Act, 1996). Carl (2010) sees the empowered educator as having curriculum skills and knowledge at their disposal, allowing them to be effectively involved within the classroom as well as out of it. Carl (2010) goes on to say that the educator has a primary responsibility for what occurs in the classroom. This implies that not only is the educator responsible for learning that occurs in the classroom, but also for the classroom environment as far as ethos, discipline and inter-class relationships are concerned. The ideal in the school environment is for an educator not only to be able to create a positive classroom environment that motivates the learner to follow the curriculum while effectively facilitating learning but also to know how to cope with problems such as cyber bullying (Strydom, 2011). De Wet (2005) did extensive research on bullying in the South African context and she states that it is important for educators and parents to work with children in teaching them to use technology with respect, understanding and responsibility.

In the South African context, the implementation of new curriculum systems such as CAPS (Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement), has left educators overloaded with administrative work and mastering a new way of teaching. Training programmes organised by the Education Department focus on training educators in implementation of the new curriculum, but do not give them the skills to identify and

manage emotional problems faced by their learners (Walton, 2012). As a result many educators by necessity focus on teaching the content of the curriculum to the majority of the learners and those learners with emotional issues caused by a problem like cyber bullying are often left to develop their own coping skills. This could create problems with learners' social skills. Teaching and learning occurs in a social context and is a social process (Donald, Lazarus & Lolwane, 1999).

Educators face the difficulty of having to cope with curriculum and administrative needs and also assist these learners in learning the core social skills necessary to cope with emotional dilemmas such as bullying and cyber bullying. Unfortunately, as parents are also ill equipped to deal with this problem, what is acquired at school is often lost in the home environment (Strydom, 2011). Far too many schools do not have programmes to identify and work with at-risk learner and as a result the educator and the parent feel isolated and unsupported. Support systems in the school as well as in the community need to be in place so that the educator and the parent are not expected to deal with problematic issues on their own (Strydom, 2011).

In line with this view, educators need to recognise that social interaction creates a community of practice that stimulates learning that may be precisely what is needed by the learners (Walton, 2012). Hence a study like this may be valuable in contributing to knowledge in the area of cyber bullying in South Africa, the prevalence thereof and the support structures children could access if they are bullied.

1.7. Research Questions

The research questions for this study were:

1. What access does Grade 7 to 9 learners in private schools in Gauteng have to technology and what are the most prevalent forms of technology used in cyber bullying?
2. What is the prevalence of cyber bullying among Grade 7 to 9 learners in private schools in Gauteng?
3. What are the differences in age group and gender of perpetrators and victims of cyber bullying among Grade 7 to 9 learners in private schools in Gauteng?
4. Who participates in cyber bullying in private schools in Gauteng and where does it take place?
5. What is the impact on the victim of cyber bullying among Grade 7 to 9 learners in private schools in Gauteng?
6. What is the reason for the perpetrator participating in cyber bullying in private schools in Gauteng?
7. Who would Grade 7 to 9 learners from private schools in Gauteng turn to for support if they were cyberbullied?
8. What is the awareness of cyber bullying prevention among Grade 7 to 9 learners in private schools in Gauteng?

1.8. **Structure of Report**

This report on the prevalence of cyber bullying in private Schools in Gauteng among grade 7 to 9 learners is divided into five Chapters. The second Chapter provides a review of the literature related to the research topic, indicating what has been researched and identifying the gaps in the research. The third Chapter explains and discusses the method followed in the research, including the main research questions, method, sample and sampling, data collection, data analysis, and ethical considerations. Chapter four presents the results of the findings. The final Chapter provides a discussion of the findings, discusses the limitations, draws a conclusion and provides recommendations for future research.

1.9. **Conclusion**

This Chapter aimed to provide a rationale for, and overview of this research report, including the structure of the report and the need for this research in the South African context. The following Chapter provides a review of the existing literature related to the research topic.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

In the previous chapter, a rationale and overview of this study was provided. In this chapter, the existing literature related to the prevalence of cyberbullying among learners will be discussed. Attention will be given to providing a definition and context internationally to the problem of cyberbullying as well as the South African context. This will provide a background understanding of the theoretical evidence at hand as well as the implications of this evidence in a South African context motivating for further investigation.

2.1. The “Wired Generation”

Our modern world is fast changing and with it the perceptions of all generations regarding the use of technology. The people most affected by this technology are the youth and as a result the older generations need to be able to understand this world in order to provide the guidance and protection deserved by the youth.

Adolescents are moving in a world where a new environment has been created by the internet and other forms of technology. The web has created a space for teenagers to enter that does not have the usual barriers of physical life (Mura, Topcu, Erdur-Baker, & Diamantini, 2011). It is an interactive world away from adult supervision (Beale & Hall, 2007). In this environment, they are expected to make decisions regarding appropriate behaviour and in many cases, they are not yet developmentally equipped to do so (Miller, Thompson & Franz, 2009). According to Miller et al. (2009), adolescents are part of a wired culture where they are not only using the internet to access information, but they are in fact creating their own content as well. This daily exposure to technology changes the way this generation relates to each other online (Mark & Ratliffe, 2011). It is clear that whole relationships are forged online and therefore all the elements related to online interaction need to be understood.

Factors which influence the response of children to technology include their social orientation, as well as their access and use of computers (Kirmani, Davis & Kalyanpur, 2009). Technology has increased the level of interactivity among adolescents which allows for great opportunities for learning, but also increased risk for harm of a vulnerable population (Wartella & Jennings, 2000). Dempsey, Sulkowski, Nichols and Storch (2009) maintain that as cyberspace becomes easier for adolescents to navigate, they are more liable to be exposed to cyber bullying regardless whether they are exposed to bullying in other settings. It appears that the availability of computer technology in schools has left parents and educators unprepared for how to monitor adolescents' use and misuse of technology (Chibbaro, 2007).

2.2. The Difference between Traditional Bullying and Cyber bullying

Traditional bullying research was pioneered in the 1970s by Dan Olweus who built up a large amount of information about this concept, thereby building a foundation for our knowledge of bullying today. He defined bullying as perpetual intentional aggressive behaviour concerning an imbalance of power which could be social or physical (Stauffer, Heath, Coyne & Ferrin, 2012). Smith, Mahdavi, Carvalho, Fisher, Russell, and Tippett (2008) identify the main traditional types of bullying as physical, verbal, relational and indirect. Traditional bullying can be overt or covert, with overt bullying taking on the form of physical aggression and covert bullying referring to exclusion from peer groups, stalking, staring and gossiping, verbally threatening and harassing (Shariff & Hoff, 2007). Cyber bullying can now be added to this worldwide list as a new form of bullying, allowing individuals to extend their dominance through technology. It has its roots in traditional bullying, but provides adolescents with new weapons to perpetrate social cruelty, creating numerous challenges.

The difference between cyber bullying and traditional bullying seems obvious, but they both have the same main elements in the sense that they are both based on an imbalance of power between perpetrator and victim, and on the repetitive nature of the bullying. Solberg, Olweus, and Endresen (2007) maintain that the problem of bullying has a characteristic of an imbalance of power between the perpetrator and the victim which is rooted in perceived strength, mental or physical or by number of perpetrators. Cyber bullying is a covert form of verbal and non-verbal bullying (Mason, 2008). In traditional or face to face bullying, the imbalance of power is related to the physical or psychological power of the perpetrators in the real world, whereas this could be similar in cyber bullying, it is also related to the power of technology (Dooley, Pyzalski, & Cross, 2009). Repetition on the other hand is behavioural repetition by the perpetrator in traditional bullying, and in cyber bullying the difference lies in the technology and not necessarily the intention and behaviour of the initial perpetrator (Dooley et al., 2009). In cyber bullying, the perpetrator may cyberbully once and have it extend into repetition through the wide exposure by technology to the incident. The main element of cyber bullying, as with traditional bullying is thus the repeated nature of it (Burton & Mutongwizo, 2009).

According to Olweus (2003), the bullying circle affects all adolescents as they all have a role in it. The roles are: the bully/ bullies who start the cycle and participate actively; the followers who participate but do not start the bullying; the supporters who support the bully but don't participate; the passive supporters who enjoy the bullying but don't openly support it; disengaged onlookers who watch what is happening, but don't take a stand; the possible defenders who dislike what is occurring and consider taking a stand; the defenders of the victim who dislike the bullying and try to help the victim; and the victim who is exposed (Olweus, 2003). This makes it clear that no-one comes out of a bullying incident unaffected; everyone participates in one way or another, whether actively or passively.

It is unclear when the term cyber bullying first came into use, but one of the earlier definitions by Olweus (1993) describes this phenomenon as the intentional act of intimidation, embarrassment or harassment through online or digital media. Mark and Ratliffe (2011) state that this novel threat to students occurs due to access to technology and introduces new elements to the problem of bullying. They go on to say that technology has become very important to teenagers who rely on it to communicate and maintain their social identity (Mark & Ratliffe, 2011). Bullying is considered a major public health concern facing youth and cyberspace is thus a fertile ground for bullying (Juvonen & Gross, 2008). It becomes evident that the prevalence of cyber bullying is not likely to decrease in the future as technology is evolving and becoming more sophisticated, creating more avenues for this type of bullying to occur (Burton & Mutongwizo, 2009). Muru et al. (2011) state that cyber bullying is an international problem across different age groups and cultural backgrounds.

Greif and Furlong (2006) explain that bullying becomes part of the cycle of violence in society. It could start with bullying in primary school and progress to harassment and assault in high school, then move on to domestic violence and hate crimes in adulthood, which is then passed on to the next generation, perpetuating the cycle. It therefore becomes clear that all types of bullying behaviour, including cyber bullying needs to be researched thoroughly.

2.3. Forms of cyber bullying

The six main types of cyber bullying according to Eden, Heiman, and Olenik-Shemesh (2013) are: email, instant messaging (IM), chat rooms or bash boards, small text messaging (SMS), web sites, and voting booths.

Emails may be used to send harassing or threatening messages and it is very difficult to prove who used the email account to send the message (Beale & Hall, 2007). Instant messaging is real-time communication between two or more people used to type texts on computers connected to the internet (Bhat, 2008). Chat rooms are the use of computers initially to communicate with other people on a specific topic and can occur through verbal, audio and video chat (Bhat, 2008). Bash boards are a form of a chat room where people can write anything anonymously on a topic, whether it is true or not. Small text messaging is used to send short messages via mobile phones and can be forwarded to large groups of people (Beale & Hall, 2007). Web sites can be set up by cyberbullies where they can mock, antagonise or harass people and voting booths allow people the opportunity to vote for someone as being the ‘ugliest’, ‘fattest’, ‘stupidest’, and so on (Beale & Hall, 2007).

Cyber bullying has created its own vocabulary which include words such as flaming, harassment, denigration, impersonation, outing, exclusion and cyberstalking (Willard, 2006). According to Willard (2006): flaming is online fighting; harassment is repeatedly sending insulting messages to someone; impersonation

involves assuming someone's identity online; outing is sharing embarrassing information from someone else online; exclusion is not including someone in a friends list; and cyberstalking involves sending intimidating messages online.

In research done by Cassidy, Brown, and Jackson (2012), parents have identified that their children are cyberbullied through derogatory messages relating to their appearance, messages threatening their security, spreading of false rumours, the sending of sexual messages and pictures, masquerading, and excluding. Another form of cyber bullying is "happy slapping" which involves one person making another appear silly while it is filmed by someone and then circulating this by cell phone (Smith et al., 2008). These are just a few of the forms of cyber bullying. It is evident that cyber bullying is a social construct, not an individual problem as it is perpetrated with a public nature.

2.4. Theories relating to cyber bullying

Social presence is how people create connections with one another while communicating (Sia, Tan & Wei, 2002). The social presence theory relies on the individual being able to respond to another individual appropriately according to their reaction and this is therefore a major part of social development and maturity (Mark & Ratliffe, 2011). In the case of cyber bullying, appropriate reactions are not observed and this could negatively impact on social development among adolescents as they do not see the reactions of the people they are interacting with. According to the social presence theory, ordinary communication is difficult in the cyber world as there is a lack of immediate feedback and adolescents involved in cyber bullying incidents cannot accurately assess each other's reactions (Mark & Ratliffe, 2011). As a result, interaction becomes impersonal and leads to reduced sensitivity and increased confrontation (Shariff & Hoff, 2007). Situations that are considered high in social presence allow people to treat one another as social beings with feelings that cannot be ignored (Sia et al., 2002). Mason (2008) talks about the "disinhibition effect" which is behaviour on the internet without concern for self-preservation and consideration for others. This poses a danger to adolescents as it affects their reasoning and ethical decision making abilities (Mason, 2008). Situations such as cyber bullying that are low in social presence could lead to depersonalisation of the individual being bullied and reduces social accountability as well as impacting negatively on positive social development (Sia et al. 2002).

According to Sia et al. (2002), a reduction in communication cues changes social presence and alters group polarization. Anonymity as occurs in the cyber world reduces social cues and as a result reduces the social presence among those participating. The main social cues are verbal, visual and textual. Sia et al. (2002) describes verbal cues as the tone of voice and rate of speech, while visual cues are related to facial expression and body language, and textual cues refer to written information. Miranda and Saunders (2003) claim that the social setting in which communication occurs contributes to its meaning and could have different meanings to different people depending on their biographies and position in the social setting. As there is no interaction in

written texts, the recipient puts their own subjective interpretation on it and often construction of meaning requires reciprocity or interaction (Miranda & Saunders, 2003). This would mean that in cyber bullying the perpetrator and victim are involved in a relationship with low social presence and intentions and reactions are unclear.

Closely linked to the social presence theory is the social information processing model which has five interrelated cognitive behaviours that are believed to affect social behaviour (Dooley et al. 2009). These are: encoding of internal and external stimuli; interpretation of this encoded information and attributions of intent and causality; generating a social goal; generating possible responses; and choosing the response with the highest value (Dooley et al. 2009). In cyber bullying, the stimuli is received through some form of technology, interpreted by the victim as threatening in some form, intended by the perpetrator to achieve some type of social goal, a response is generated and acted on by the victim and the perpetrator.

Another theory called the social dominance theory states that harassing behaviour has as its aim to force someone into a submissive position (Beran & Li, 2005). Social dominance theory implies that even in stable societies, struggles occur in order to establish and enforce the social hierarchy through group oppression (Beran & Li, 2005). Goddard stated that the biological and social programming of individuals, as well as the competitive culture adolescents are raised in, suggests an inability to eliminate hierarchies (2008). Cyber bullying by its very nature puts the victim into a submissive position in relation to the perpetrator. This theory can therefore be applied to cyber bullying as victims experience fear and possibly helplessness (Beran & Li, 2005). It is felt that all these theories assist in describing why cyber bullying occurs and why the prevalence of this phenomenon is so vast.

2.5. Gender and age group of bully and victim

In the research done, there appears to be conflicting findings on the difference between involvements of gender in cyber bullying. According to Li (2006), traditional bullying and cyber bullying follow the same pattern regarding gender with males being more prone to be bullies than females. Some research found no large differences in the prevalence of cyber bullying between genders and according to Mishna et al. (2010), girls and boys are equally involved in cyber bullying with the only difference appearing to be in the type of bullying. Girls are more prone to being involved in indirect bullying (rumour spreading or impersonating someone else), while boys are more prone to direct or overt bullying (threatening) (Mishna et al., 2010).

Dooley et al. (2009) state that females would more likely communicate with email and text messages and therefore it is reasonable to expect that the differences in gender perpetration of cyber bullying would not be as marked as in traditional bullying. Environmental factors are also found to impact on how the genders respond to technology in that exposure to gender specific roles, expectations and attitudes through the media and educational materials affect adolescents' access and use of computers (Kirmani, Davis, & Kalyanpur,

2009). In their study on cyber bullying, Juvonen and Gross (2008) found that girls were more frequent users of email, profile sites, blogs and cell phones than boys. As a result, Goddard (2007) states that girls are more drawn to electronic meanness and seem to have more social power.

It was found that girls would do more direct bullying online, whereas boys would enact their online taunting through gaming. Mason (2008) found that male cyberbullies rated 22% as opposed to 12% of females, but there was no significant difference in the genders regarding being victims. However in a different study done by Smith et al. (2007), it was found that girls were more likely to be cyber victims than boys and the perception of those in the study was that girls were more involved in cyber bullying than boys. Holfeld and Grabe (2012) found in a study they conducted that girls were more likely to be involved in cyber bullying than boys. They considered a possible reason for this the over representation of girls in their sample but went on to say that cyber bullying supports the type of bullying girls are traditionally involved in due to its covert nature whereas boys engage in more physical bullying which is not supported online.

In a South African study it was found that girls are slightly more susceptible to cyber bullying than boys (Popovac & Leoschut, 2012). A possible reason for this is that cyber bullying is an easier medium for girls to be involved in (Holfeld & Grabe, 2012). Stauffer et al. (2012) identified a relevant problem with the study of gender in cyber bullying in that they state that up to 50% of victims may not know the identity of their cyberbully, including the gender. It is apparent that there is no consensus in the research regarding the involvement of gender in cyber bullying and much more research would need to be done in this field to get clarity on this issue.

In previous research, the grade level of grades 7 to 9 (Middle School) has been identified as a time when cyber bullying steadily increases in a linear pattern (Mark & Ratliffe, 2011). A possible explanation for this is that older learners have more access to technology such as the internet and cell phones (Stauffer et al., 2012). Adolescence is a time when adult roles and values are challenged and learners search for their own identity while making a transition from one social group to another, in this case from elementary school to secondary school (Goddard, 2007). Goddard (2008) goes on to say that in this age group, bullying is most prevalent as adolescents experience changes in their bodies, become interested in the opposite sex and adjust their social roles.

Beale and Hall (2007) state that cyber bullying increases through elementary school, peaks in middle school and declines in high school. Middle school has been labelled the 'brutalising period' of adolescence where peer status can be established through the disruptions in social networks (Li, 2006). The exposure of children to media begins early in their lives and climbs to a peak by eleven and twelve years of age. This adds to risk taking behaviour and diminishes personal adjustment and school performance (Roberts & Foehr, 2008). It is therefore essential for more studies to be done within this age group of Grade 7, 8 and 9 learners which constitute middle school in South Africa in order to establish what the prevalence is of cyber bullying within this age group. It is only by doing so that these adolescents can be assisted with this problem.

2.6. Impact on bully and victim

Bullying, as well as victimisation, can cause psychological and social maladjustment issues which could include health problems, school dropout, gang membership, substance abuse, crime and even suicide (Jose, Kljakovic, Scheib & Notter, 2011). Burton and Mutongwizo (2009) found that when adolescents are cyberbullied, they feel isolated and alone as they are usually alone when it occurs. This undermines the formation of healthy positive social relationships for the victim (Burton & Mutongwizo, 2009). Briere and Elliot (1994) state that bullying is threatening and disruptive, interfering with the adolescent's developing sense of security and belief in a safe world. It interferes with the adolescent's development of a sense of self and they may lack the ability to comfort themselves adequately, leading to overreactions to stress (Briere & Elliot, 1994).

Cyber bullying not only has an emotional-social impact in that it leads to emotional and peer problems, it also has an impact on the learning process as it creates an atmosphere that reduces learning opportunity (Eden et al., 2013). In addition to this, Jose, Kljakovic and Notter (2011) conclude that bullying and victimisation have a reciprocal relationship, with the one reinforcing the other. The repetitive nature of cyber bullying is exacerbated by the fact that a single incident can result in widespread exposure causing it to be continually relived due to its relative permanence online. This has the potential then of causing long lasting social and emotional harms (Dooley et al., 2009).

In adolescence, peer opinion is very important and the nature of cyber bullying often causes conditions where this is negatively affected, contributing to depression and anxiety (Cassidy et al., 2012). Symptoms of depression are presented through somatic complaints, sadness, poor school performance and concentration, crying, irritability, fatigue, insomnia, increased or decreased motor activity, worry and low self-esteem. Suicidal thoughts and attempts at suicide become more prevalent in this age level (Zahn-Zahn-Waxler & Klimes-Dougan-Dougan, 2000). They tend to see themselves in a negative light, pity themselves and have a constant feeling of vulnerability (Hubert, 2012). Symptoms differ from individual to individual as some adolescents have a better resiliency.

There is an absence of non-verbal cues online which diminishes an empathic reaction from a cyber bully (Popovac & Leoschut, 2012). Adolescents involved in cyber bullying avoid responsibility for their misconduct and as a result their fear of getting caught and punished is reduced (Strom & Strom, 2005). Online harassment should be considered an act of violence due to the fact that it affects the physical, psychological and emotional well-being of the victim (Shariff & Hoff, 2007).

Humans are by nature social beings and desire to be part of a group where they are accepted for who they are. People are interdependent of each other. Strydom (2011) maintains that people are continually part of relationships and a healthy interdependence should exist with family, community and culture. In order for

this to occur successfully, people need certain skills such as awareness and acceptance of themselves, as well as the regulation of thoughts, emotions and behaviours (Strydom, 2011). People need to know what is socially acceptable and what should be avoided. They need to take responsibility for what they say and do, be able to understand that actions have consequences and be able to relate to the people around them. These are considered social skills and this includes the effective management of conflict and being able to see another persons' point of view (Strydom, 2011). The social development of adolescents are affected by cyber bullying as social development includes the ability to see the perspective of others, make moral judgements and have a grasp of basic social skills (Wartella & Jennings, 2000). In a study conducted by UNISA (University of South Africa), it was found that the effect of bullying caused the following reactions: 21.8% experienced sadness, 10% felt depressed, 9.7% felt powerless and hopeless, 9.7% felt angry, and 7.2% felt degraded (Tustin, Goetz, de Jongh, Basson, Zulu, Leriba, & Mayatula, 2012).

Cyber bullying is considered a structure-oriented behaviour as it often occurs in school context, but is directed at an individual as a social being within the school structure (Festl & Quandt, 2013). This severely affects the adolescent who is going through the phases of personality development where social context is paramount. Cyber bullying is dependent on social constructs embedded in the larger social structure and environment of the adolescent. This influences the formation of functional and healthy relationships (Festl & Quandt, 2013). While cyber bullying can occur anonymously, the action of perpetrators is aimed at a social result and as such, it is usually directed at a known member of the social group. It is generally done to improve the bully's social position at the expense of the victim's position (Festl & Quandt, 2013).

2.7. The prevalence of cyber bullying

Cyber bullying is a relatively new form of bullying and as such is of increasing interest to researchers. Mitchell (2010) highlights one of the problems regarding research into the prevalence of cyber bullying as differences in definitions used, time frame being referenced, and age group being studied. This could lead to differing results from research done. As reported in Festl and Quandt (2013), Tokunaga (2010) did a summary of previous research on cyber victimisation and found that 20% - 40% of all learners had experienced cyber bullying in some form. As yet, prevalence of cyber bullying has not reached the extent of traditional bullying, but it is a definite problem in society and is on the increase (Festl & Quandt, 2013). A study conducted by Smith et al. (2007), found that while 14.1% of their sample had been exposed to traditional bullying often within the previous months, and 31.4% only once or twice, the prevalence of cyber bullying was 6.6% often and 15.6% only once or twice. This shows the prevalence of cyber bullying at about half the rate of traditional bullying, however the perception of adolescents in focus groups is that 67% - 100% of them would have experienced cyber bullying due to the fact that everyone receives possible cyber bullying messages as everyone

has a phone (Smith et al., 2007). In a study conducted by Holfeld and Grabe (2012), in their sample of 665 middle school students, one in five reported having been cyberbullied within the previous year.

Various studies have been undertaken in mostly Europe and America, while in South Africa, limited research has been done. There is a growing body of empirical evidence showing that cyber bullying is a widespread phenomenon among the youth (Eden et al., 2013). Studies in Britain found that 20%-25% of teenagers have experienced cyber bullying, while in Sweden it was found that 12% of participants in the study had been victims of cyber bullying and 10% had themselves cyberbullied (Cotter & McGilloway, 2011). A study conducted in Belgium by (Walrave & Heirman, 2009), found the prevalence of cyber bullying to be widespread as one-third of their sample had experienced cyber bullying and one-fifth had cyberbullied. In a Canadian study, 35% of 12 to 14 year olds reported being cyberbullied and 22% reported cyber bullying others, while in the USA, 49% of participants in a study of 13 to 18 year olds had been cyberbullied and 21% had cyberbullied others (Cotter & McGilloway, 2011). In two studies done in South Africa, 46.8% of teenagers admitted to being cyberbullied and this seems to be in line with international statistics (Popovac & Leoschut, 2012). A study conducted by UNISA found that one in five learners experience cyber bullying. Half of these learners received upsetting messages, had gossip and rumours spread about them, and were called names (Tustin et al., 2012).

2.8. Technology used in cyber bullying

Due to the nature of cyber bullying, perpetrators and victims would necessarily need to have access to the technology in order to be involved in cyber bullying, whether as perpetrator or victim. It has been found that cyberbullies and cyber-victims are frequent internet users and attach great importance to the internet (Walrave & Heirman, 2009). ICTs therefor expand the possibilities of perpetration and victimisation. The Internet World Stats (2008) showed that there were 1,319,872,109 internet users in the world at the end of 2007. The top five countries for the most internet users were the United States, China, Japan, Germany and India (Internet World Stats, 2008). Social networks have become very popular. Facebook is the most popular social networking site with an estimated 750 million visitors monthly and Twitter has an estimated 250 million visitors monthly (Blazer, 2012). The proliferation of ICT usage among the youth in South Africa has increased the likelihood of cyber bullying. A study done in 2009 found that 73.9% of adolescents have access to the internet, 31.4% had a profile on a social networking site and 30.4% participated in online chat rooms and used instant messaging (IM). In 2011 it was found that 90% of adolescents were using social networking sites (Popovac & Leoschut, 2012). This shows how in a short period of time the increase in online activity by adolescents has escalated.

Juvonen and Gross (2008) state that 12 to 17 year olds' use of the internet has dramatically increased over the last number of years and due to lack of adult supervision online, cyberspace has become a fertile

ground for bullying. They feel that information about the communication tools used for cyber bullying is critical to educate adolescents, parents and schools regarding the risks. They found that the most likely technology used in cyber bullying was IM and message boards (Juvonen & Gross, 2008). Beran and Li (2005) found in their study that 53% of their respondents reported being cyberbullied by email or instant messaging, 46% via the internet, 11% in chat rooms, 3% on web pages and 25% by cell phone.

In South Africa, a study done by CJCP (Centre for Justice and Crime Prevention) found that 92.9% of young people own or have access to cell phones and almost half of them (47.9%) have access to the internet on their phones. In addition to this, 31.4% have their own social networking space and 30.4% participate in online chatrooms (Burton & Mutongwizo, 2009). Of the participants in the study, 49.8% reported having experienced cyber bullying. They experienced this cyber bullying in the form of voice calls, text messages, instant messages, emails, videos and photographs. Text and voice messages are the most pervasive as most young people have their phones with them at all times, leaving them vulnerable to this type of cyber bullying (Burton & Mutongwizo, 2009).

It is therefore clear that the prevalence of cyber bullying across the world is on the increase and that it is not limited to certain population groups or nationalities. It is a worldwide phenomenon and the youth are the ones being most affected by it.

2.9. Reporting of cyber bullying

Cyber bullying is an activity that often slips under the radar for a number of reasons (Walrave & Heirman, 2009). Learners perpetrating cyber bullying generally do this from their own computer in their room rather than a public computer where what they are doing can be monitored. It seems that few learners report being cyberbullied to their parents or educators (Mishna et al., 2010). A possible reason for this is that they fear the consequences of having their own computer and phone privileges monitored or limited and they also feel that adults can do nothing about the problem of cyber bullying (Mark & Ratliffe, 2011). In a study conducted by Juvonen and Gross (2008), youth feel they need to deal with the problem of cyber bullying themselves. They also fear restriction of their internet access and as a result 90% do not tell adults about cyber bullying incidents (Juvonen & Gross, 2008). Smith et al. (2007) found in their study that 43.7% of victims of cyber bullying told no-one about it, 26.8% told friends, 15.6% told parents and 8.5% told educators. Even when parents and educators are informed of cyber bullying, it is very difficult to stop it from happening or continuing as there are so many avenues for its occurrence. Holfeld and Grabe (2012) report that even when cyber bullying was reported, the victims often did not receive effective assistance, suggesting that encouraging adolescents to report incidents loses credibility if they do not receive the assistance they require.

In a study conducted in South Africa by UNISA, it was found that 40.3% of those bullied did not report it, 8% were unsure and 51.6% reported it. Of those that reported it, 53.8% reported it to parents,

32.4% reported it to friends, 25.1% reported it to educators and 2% reported it to organisations. The bullying is continuing for 26.8% of those who reported it and it has stopped for 73.2% (Tustin et al., 2012). It appears that these statistics are in line with international statistics.

Most adults interact differently to technology than adolescents as they see it as a functional tool rather than an essential aspect of their social lives and as a result they struggle to deal with cyber bullying that is reported to them (Strom & Strom, 2005). Mason (2008) states that adolescents will not disclose cyber bullying incidents to an adult as many parents are resistant to engage with their children regarding technology as they themselves have not yet adapted to the online environment to the extent that their children have. Even when cyber bullying is reported, adults may not feel they are knowledgeable enough with the technology used in order to intervene (Holfeld & Grabe, 2012).

The reaction of the people to whom victims report cyber bullying also influences future reporting of incidents. It was found by Shariff and Hoff (2007) in a survey conducted that schools often felt that if they had an anti-bullying policy, they were absolved from any further responsibility. Internet providers also absolve themselves from responsibility by referring to the freedom of expression rights of citizens and they often refuse to close websites and block emails (Shariff & Hoff, 2007). Adolescents who are aware of cyber bullying incidents often choose to remain quiet about it and not report it to adults as they feel adults are ineffective in dealing with it, they also fear reprisals (Li, 2006). In the UNISA study, more than a third of respondents felt that the bullies themselves should take responsibility for the cyber bullying. One in five respondents felt that parents and government should provide online protection (Tustin et al., 2012).

Parenting styles of parents which include low levels of affection and support for their children as well as being hostile and cynical, could also lead to children developing depression if confronted by cyber bullying (Zahn-Zahn-Waxler & Klimes-Dougan-Dougan, 2000). Ybarra and Mitchell (2004) state that a poor relationship between parent and child is related to cyber bullying with children that have a poor emotional bond with their parents being twice as likely to participate in cyber bullying incidents.

If adolescents do not get the help they need to deal with cyber bullying, they will be discouraged from reporting it and as a result, this phenomenon of cyber bullying can continue unhindered (Holfeld & Grabe, 2012). It seems that traditional responses to bullying is ineffective for cyber bullying due to the anonymous nature of this type of bullying, as well as its capacity for an infinite audience and participation in it (Shariff & Hoff, 2007). Cyber bullying therefore becomes a social problem on its way to escalation in our society.

2.10. Awareness of cyber bullying

The lack of awareness of cyber bullying among parents, educators and schools appears to be a concern. Shariff and Hoff (2007) state that in a survey conducted by the NCHTM (National Children's Home and Tesco

Mobile) in Britain, knowledge of cyber bullying among caregivers was limited with 56% of them not being concerned about cyber bullying occurring and 19% believing that cyber bullying incidents were rare. In the same study 50% of educators confirmed that their students had been cyberbullied. These shows disconnect between home and school. Shariff and Hoff (2007) state that lack of school and parental rules regarding cyberspace creates isolated spaces where perpetrators have a borderless playground. Beran and Li (2005) state that while the dangers and prevalence of traditional bullying has been recognised by educators and schools, few are aware of the extent of cyber bullying. Parents are mostly unfamiliar with the newer forms of online social networking and are not overly concerned about cyber bullying (Cassidy et al., 2012). Chibbaro (2007) states that parents and schools have a legal obligation to monitor online activities.

Adolescents themselves are aware of the prevalence of cyber bullying, but there seems to be a fatalistic attitude regarding this with the idea that little can be done to reduce cyber bullying (Smith et al., 2008). In a study conducted by Smith et al. (2008), most participants said they dealt with cyber bullying by ignoring it or blocking it. There appears to be a generational gap between what adolescents know and what adults know regarding the problem of cyber bullying. It is clear that adolescents, educators, schools and parents need to be educated on cyber bullying and need to work together in order to reach solutions for the problem.

2.11. Methods used in cyber bullying research

In a review of 35 studies on cyber bullying done by Patchin and Hinduja (2012), it was found that outcomes of research showed high levels of variability in results, possibly due to differences in the studies regarding populations, instrumentation used, data collection methods and time frames. However, there is no doubt that despite this variability, many adolescents are affected by cyber bullying and it is on the increase across the world (Patchin & Hinduja, 2012). Methods used in research on cyber bullying are mainly self-report surveys, interviews and focus groups (Patchin & Hinduja, 2012). Other methods include online surveys or questionnaires and observations. The assessment of cyber bullying is relatively new in the world of research and as such, measures have not yet undergone rigorous psychometric evaluations (Diamanduros, Downs & Jenkins, 2008).

2.12. Conclusion

In this Chapter, a review was given of existing literature related to research on cyber bullying. As this Chapter has shown, cyber bullying is a relevant issue among adolescents and ongoing research, education and intervention is needed on this topic, especially in the South African context. Chapter three discusses the research methods that were used in order to gather data for this particular study.

CHAPTER 3: METHODS

3.1. Introduction

In the previous Chapter, literature relating to the research topic was discussed. This Chapter explores the method of the present study with attention paid to the research design, sample, measures, procedures, data analysis and ethical considerations.

3.2. Research design

This was a quantitative research project. Data was collected by means of questionnaires handed out to learners. The design of the study was a survey which is a type of data collection known as self-report data where individuals complete the survey themselves. As the population of interest was Grade 7 to 9 learners, a sample survey was done.

3.3.1. Participants

The sample was a convenience sample of Grade 7 to 9 learners from two diverse private schools in Gauteng. Participants were selected through non-probability, purposeful sampling. The participants were selected purposefully as the study was concerned with cyber bullying among Grade 7 to 9 learners. Non-probability sampling requires participants to be selected who are conveniently available and demonstrate the characteristics required for the study (Creswell, 2008). The only criterion for inclusion was the grade of the learners as the focus of the research was Grade 7 to 9 learners who are entering the senior phase of their schooling.

The reason for the selection of this sampling process was the ease of access geographically to this group. Convenience sampling narrows the sample so as to avoid cultural and religious bias. Five schools were approached and two agreed to have the research conducted in the schools. A possible reason for not all the schools consenting to the study is the sensitivity of the topic as well as the denial by certain schools that cyber bullying is an issue in all schools. The sample for this research was 60 learners (12 from one school and 48 from the other school) in Grade 7, 8 and 9. Table 3.1 shows the breakdown of the sample. There were 23 (38%) Grade 7s, 20 (33%) Grade 8s and 17 (29%) Grade 9s in the study. The total number of boys was 33 (55%) and the total number of girls was 27 (45%). The average age of Grade 7 learners is 13 years old, Grade 8 is 14 years old and Grade 9 is 15 years old, making the mean age of the sample 14 years old.

Table 3.1 Sample

| AGE | BOYS %) | GIRLS %) | TOTAL n (%) |
|--------------|--------------------|---------------------|------------------------|
| 13yrs | 10 (17%) | 13 (22%) | 23 (38%) |
| 14yrs | 16 (27%) | 4 (6%) | 20 (33%) |
| 15yrs | 7(11%) | 10 (17%) | 17 (29%) |
| TOTAL | 33 (55%) | 27 (45%) | 60 (100%) |

Both schools are located in relatively affluent areas in Johannesburg. The average school fee in these schools is R48900 per annum. Due to the limitation of the sample however, results could be limited in terms of generalisability, so these schools were carefully chosen to represent a diversity of religious, cultural and language differences. Private schools were chosen due to the learners having easier access to technology in their homes.

3.3.2. Instruments

The instrument used in the survey was a questionnaire directly administered to the participants by the researcher (See Appendix A). The questionnaire was made up of a checklist where learners ticked off the statement most appropriate for them. Some questions only allowed for one answer while others had more choices and multiple answers could be checked. One of the advantages of this type of questionnaire was that the researcher was available to provide assistance and answer questions. A disadvantage was that time was a restriction regarding administration of the questionnaire as the school did not want to lose teaching time. The questionnaire was made up of a 34 item survey focusing mainly on the extent and characteristics of cyber bullying. This questionnaire had been adapted slightly from research done by Mark and Ratliffe (2011). It explored basic demographic information regarding gender and grade. There were four main sections asking questions about general use of technology, experiences of cyber victims, experiences of cyberbullies, and awareness of cyber bullying

This questionnaire was piloted by Mark and Ratliffe (2011) in Hawaii and the conclusion was drawn that the questionnaire was representative of, and relevant to cyber bullying and provided content related evidence of validity. However, no psychometric data was available for this study.

3.3.3. Procedure

The study was approved by the research and ethics committee of the University of the Witwatersrand (See Appendix B). Letters were sent to the principals of five private schools in the Gauteng area asking them to participate in this important research (See Appendix C). Two schools agreed to participate.

On a pre-arranged date, the researcher administered the questionnaires to the learners who had consent to participate. This was done in a group context per grade in a classroom provided by the school. The questionnaire took approximately 30 minutes to complete. All questionnaires were collected and sorted by the researcher so that only those that had been fully completed were used in the data analysis.

3.3.4. Data analysis

In this study, descriptive statistics were used to analyse the data. Due to the categorical nature of the survey questions, descriptive analysis was used to determine the frequency distribution. In order to determine if there was a link between gender and being a victim of cyber bullying in private schools in Gauteng, a cross tabulation and Pearson chi-squared test was done in order to determine if there was a link between gender and being a victim of cyber bullying. Data from the participating schools was analysed together in order to minimise the likelihood of the identification of specific schools.

3.3.5. Ethical Considerations

The sample for this research was Grade 7 to 9 learners. This put the sample in the vulnerable group as they were minors under the age of 18 years. Ethics clearance was therefore obtained from the research and ethics committee of the University of the Witwatersrand (See Appendix B). Consent was obtained from the school, the legal guardians of the learners, as well as from the learners themselves. Confidentiality was assured by the researcher for the schools as well as the learners who participated as anonymity was maintained by the fact that no names appeared on any of the questionnaires. Once the schools agreed to participate, letters of consent were sent home to the guardians of these learners, asking their permission for the learners to participate in the study as well as giving them information on the study (See Appendix D). Learners were also given assent forms asking them to participate in the study (See Appendix E). Once again confidentiality was assured, as well as the learner's right to withdraw from the study at any time. This was done by setting meetings with the principals in order to explain the research project. Once the schools agreed, the class educators for Grade 7 to 9 handed out letters to the learners and parents. The anonymity of the learners was protected as the questionnaires did not ask for names and confidentiality was ensured as data was handled by the researcher and the supervisor.

The topic of bullying and cyber bullying is a sensitive one with possibilities of victims and perpetrators reacting in a negative way after completing the questionnaire. The researcher discussed means of containment with the schools' psychologists. Containment was made available through individual therapy for learners who requested it, either by the school psychologist or through the Emthonjeni Centre. The research protected the rights and the welfare of the participants and was conducted in accordance with ethical and professional guidelines.

CHAPTER 4: RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Introduction

In this Chapter the findings of the study obtained during data collection are presented concurrently with the discussion. The limitations and recommendations of this study are presented. It is important that new and relevant research on cyber bullying is considered within the South African context in order to generate a body of knowledge to help educators understand cyber bullying more comprehensively.

4.2 Technology used in cyber bullying

As already mentioned, Question One stated: “What access do Grade 7 to 9 learners in private schools in Gauteng have to technology and what are the most prevalent forms of technology used in cyber bullying?” In order to determine which technology the learners used, it was important to establish different forms of technology accessible to the participants (see Figure 4.1; 4.2; & 4.3).

Figure 4.1 shows the access that the participants in the study have to the internet at home which is 85% (n=51) as opposed to 15% (n=9) that did not have internet access in their homes. This figure shows that 89% (n=53) owned a cell phone whereas 11% (n=7) did not own a cell phone. When looking at the access to the internet, this study shows a higher access at 85% than the study done in 2009 which found that 73.9% of adolescents have access to the internet (Popovac & Leoschut, 2012). This could possibly be because the previous study was not done specifically in private schools. Another explanation for this is that the internet has become more accessible to learners in South Africa. This study however shows a slightly lower rate of ownership of cell phones by learners in the sample population at 89% as compared to 92.9% in the study conducted in 2009 (Popovac & Leoschut, 2012).

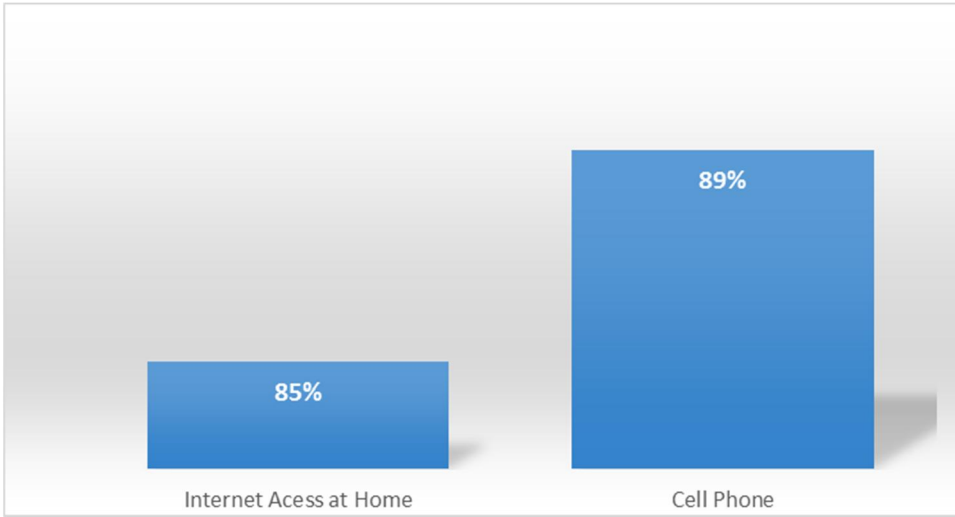


Figure 4.1. Access to Technology

Figure 4.2 shows how often the participants visited the internet to check their email; visit chat rooms; go on Twitter; go on Facebook; visit Instagram, go on WhatsApp; and Instant Messenger. The results revealed that 60% (n=37) visited the internet daily. It becomes clear that this sample has access to the internet and as such is more at risk of being exposed to cyber bullying as cyber bullies and cyber victims are reported to be frequent internet users (Walrave & Heirman, 2009; Wartella & Jennings, 2000).

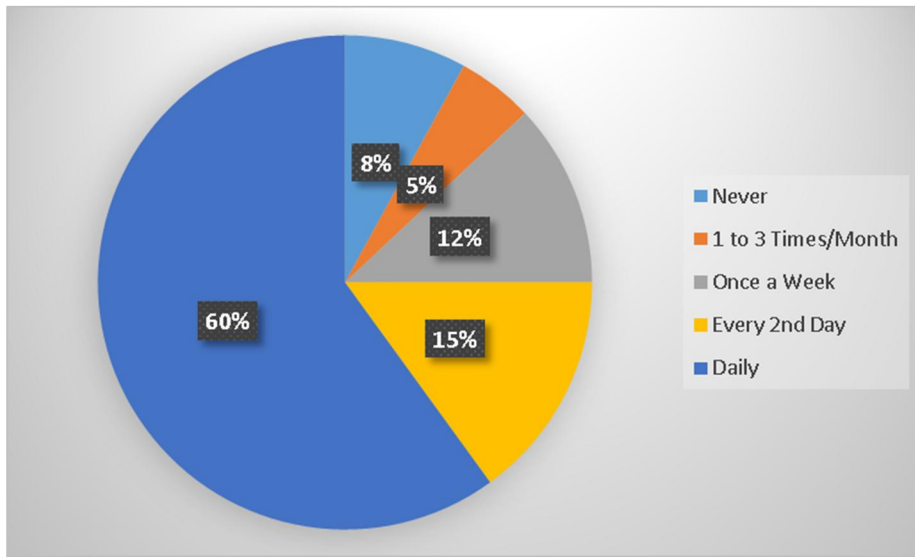


Figure 4.2. Frequency on the Internet

Figure 4.3 shows how often the participants used a cell phone to call or text message friends or to take pictures. The results revealed that 52% (n=32) used cell phones daily. Consistent with these results, Mitchell (2010) states that the higher socio-economic status of the parents of adolescents leads to more accessible access to technology and this is shown in the high access by this sample of private school learners.

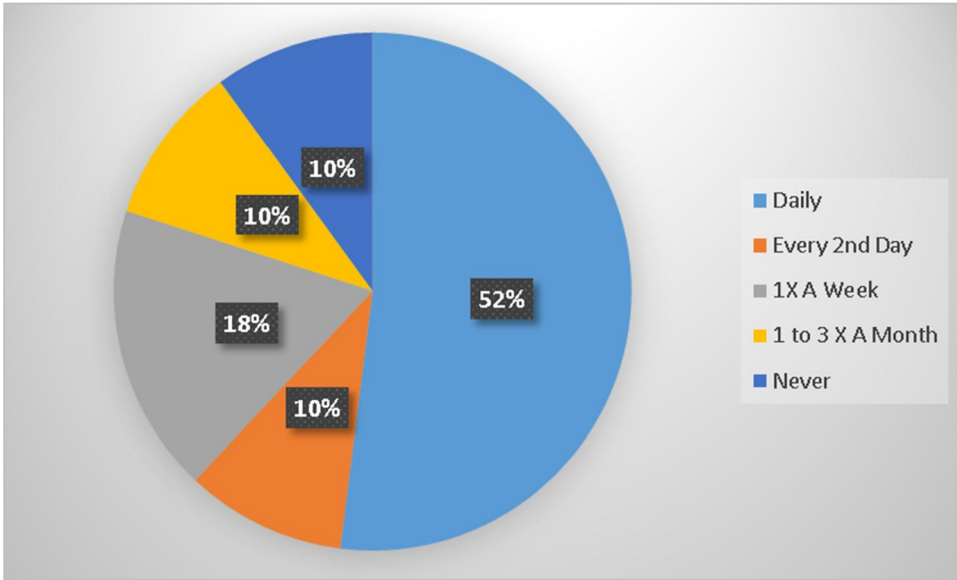


Figure 4.3. Frequency of Cell Phone Use

In order to determine what technology was used the most during cyber bullying, the different types of technology were reported on. In Figure 4.4 the technology used the most for cyber bullying was reported on by the victims of cyber bullying. Cell phones were reported as the most used mode of technology through which victims were cyber bullied at 32%. It is noted that cell phones can access all of the forms of technology mentioned.

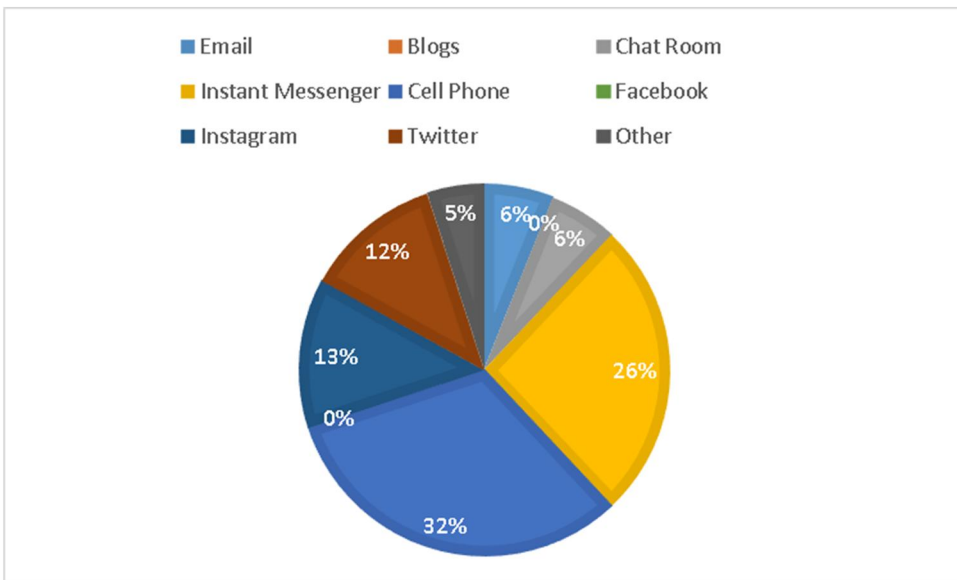


Figure 4.4. Technology used most when Cyber bullied

In Figure 4.5 the technology used most for cyber bullying was reported on by the perpetrators of cyber bullying. Cell phones were reported as the most used mode of technology through which perpetrators cyber bullied at 63%.

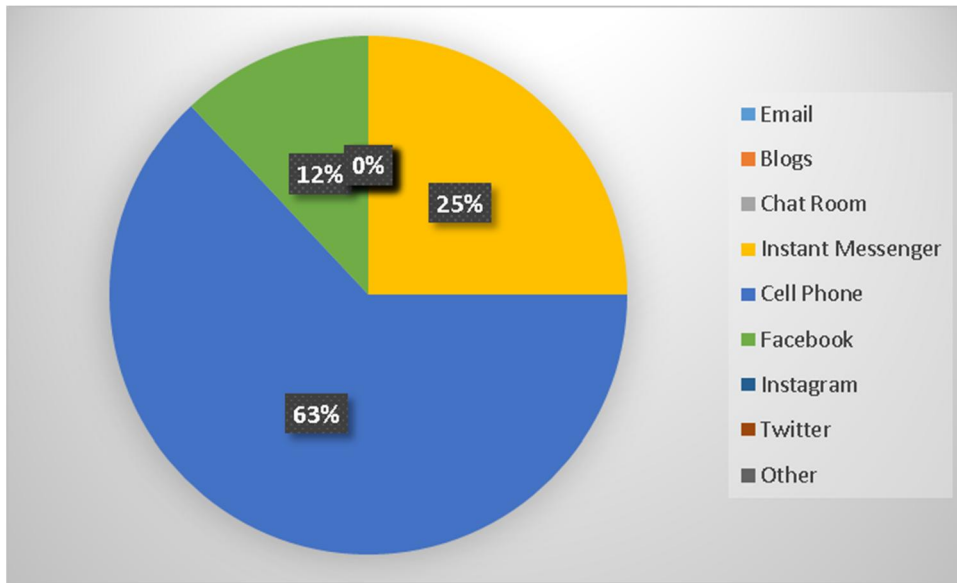


Figure 4.5. Technology used most when Cyber bullying

The technology used the most for cyber bullying was reported on by the victims of cyber bullying with cell phones coming out as the most used mode through which they were cyber bullied at 32%. The technology used most for cyber bullying was also reported on by the perpetrators of cyber bullying and as with victims; cell phones came out the highest, being used by 63% of the perpetrators. Learners have easy access to their cell phones and 89% of the participants reported that they have their own cell phones and the majority use them on a daily basis. This creates opportunity to use the cell phone for cyber bullying.

Sithole (2012) reported that cell phones are mostly used when cyber bullying in South Africa and this is shown in the results obtained in this study. Juvonen and Gross (2008) found that the most likely technology used in cyber bullying was IM (Instant Messaging) and message boards which are all accessible from cell phones. Beran and Li (2005) found in their study that 25% of their respondents reported being cyber bullied by cell phone. Mark and Ratliffe (2011) further state that digital devices such as cell phones can record compromising situations which could then be used to cyberbully. In a South African study conducted, text and voice messages were the most used technology in cyber bullying and a reason given for this was that most young people have their phones with them at all times (Burton & Mutongwizo, 2009). The results of this study regarding the technology mostly used in cyber bullying are similar to that found in international and local research.

4.3 Prevalence of Cyber bullying

As already mentioned, Question Two stated: “What is the prevalence of cyber bullying among Grade 7 to 9 learners in private schools in Gauteng?” In order to determine the prevalence of cyber bullying among these learners, it was important to establish who had been a victim of cyber bullying and who had been a perpetrator of cyber bullying (see Figure 4.6, 4.7 & 4.8).

Figure 4.6 shows the proportion of participants who admitted to being victims of cyber bullying. The results show 29% (n=17) of the sample admitted that they had been cyber bullied with an average of having been cyber bullied 6.9 times, and 71% (n=43) said they had not been victims of cyber bullying. In international cyber bullying research done, it was reported that 20% to 40% of all learners experienced cyber bullying (Festl & Quandt, 2013). This study therefore falls within this range at 29% and thus seems to be in line with international trends. The results of this study show less cyber bullying than previous research done in South Africa where it was reported that 46.8% of learners admitted to being cyber bullied (Popovac & Leoschut, 2012). A possible reason for this is the nature of how learners perceive cyber bullying. They may not realise that they are in fact being cyber bullied. The results are however more in line with another study conducted in South Africa which found 20% of the participants had been cyberbullied (Tustin et al., 2012). The nature of cyber bullying means that the victim often feels shame and embarrassment about being a victim. As a result there is the possibility that not all participants who were in fact victims of cyber bullying admitted to it.

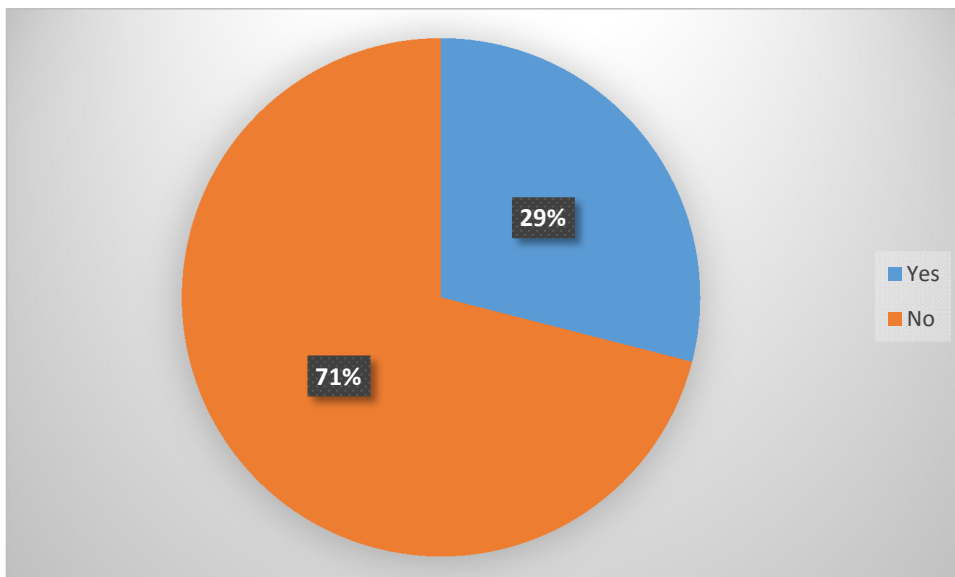


Figure 4.6. Victims of Cyber bullying

Figure 4.7 shows the proportion of participants who admitted to being perpetrators of cyber bullying. The results show 13% (n=8) of the sample admitted that they had been perpetrators of cyber bullying, and 87% (n=52) said they had not been perpetrators of cyber bullying. In research on perpetrators of cyber bullying it is noted that there were always fewer participants who admitted to being perpetrators as opposed to victims

(Festl & Quandt, 2013). A Canadian study found that while 35% reported being victims of cyber bullying; only 22% reported being perpetrators (Cotter & McGiloway, 2011). This was also the case in the USA where 49% reported being victims and 21% reported being perpetrators (Cotter & McGiloway, 2011). It would seem logical that there are at least as many perpetrators as victims because for each victim there should be at least one perpetrator. However, most perpetrators of cyber bullying are aware of the fact that what they are doing is wrong and as a result would not readily own up to being a perpetrator of cyber bullying. This could be the reason that so few participants admitted to being perpetrators as they feared there may be consequences for their actions.

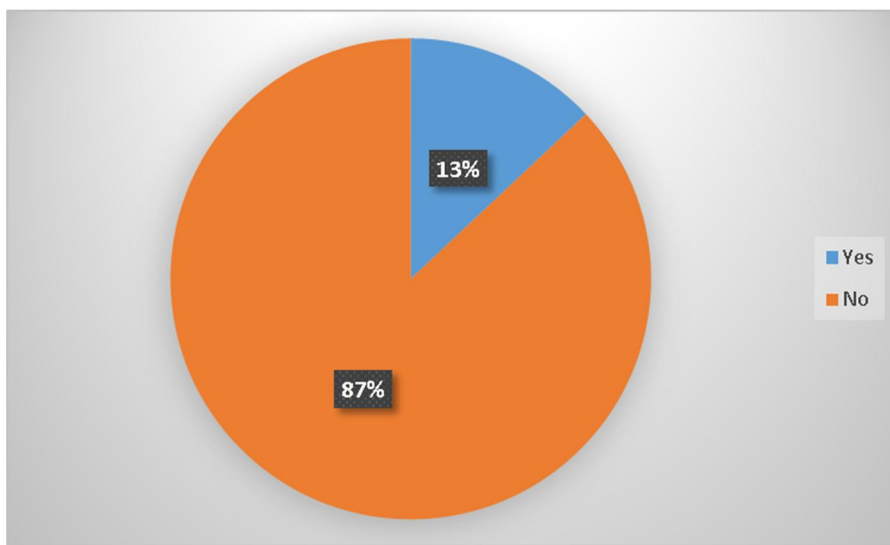


Figure 4.7. Proportion of Perpetrators of Cyber bullying

Figure 4.8 shows how many participants knew someone who had been cyber bullied. The results show 22% (n=13) of the participants in the study had no knowledge of anyone being cyber bullied whereas 78% (n=47) knew someone who had been cyber bullied. It is important to note that while so few of the sample admitted to being victims or perpetrators of cyber bullying, so many of them knew someone affected by cyber bullying as 78% of the total sample population reported knowing someone who had been cyberbullied. This indicates a possible discord in the results as the learners who admitted to knowing someone who had been cyberbullied would likely know them from within their peer group in their school. This brings up the question of whether those that stated they were not involved in cyber bullying were being truthful when answering the questionnaire. When answering a questionnaire on such a sensitive topic, learners do not always disclose their involvement due to the fact that they fear the repercussions, despite the fact that confidentiality had been assured. They may fear that their involvement is disclosed to authority figures and that they may be disciplined due to this disclosure. It is safer for them to deny involvement and admit to awareness.

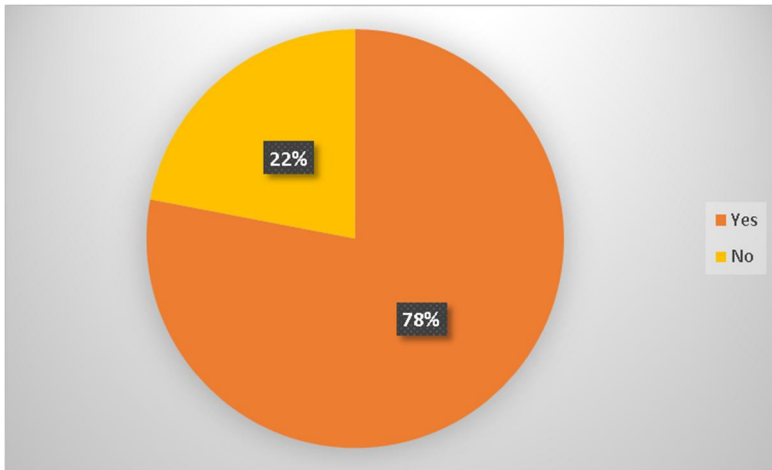


Figure 4.8. Participants Awareness of a Victim of Cyber bullying

4.4 Age and Gender of Victims and Perpetrators of Cyber bullying

As already mentioned, Question Three stated: “What are the differences in age group and gender of perpetrators and victims of cyber bullying in private schools in Gauteng?” In order to determine the differences in age and gender of victims and perpetrators of cyber bullying, it was important to establish the gender (see Table 4.1 & 4.2).

Table 4.1 shows the prevalence of victims (n=17) of cyber bullying across grade and gender. In Grade 7 the victims were 30% of the total number of victims of whom 1 was a boy and 4 were girls. In Grade 8 the victims were 47% of the total made up of 6 boys and 2 girls. In Grade 9 the victims were 23% of the total victims and all 4 were girls. It therefore becomes clear that while the difference is not large, more girls are victims of cyber bullying than boys in Grade 7 and 9, while Grade 8 has more boys falling victim to cyber bullying. Although the sample size was small, it is interesting to note that there is an increase in cyber bullying in the Grade 8 year which could be because learners are entering high school in South Africa and as a result they are being exposed to more opportunities for cyber bullying to take place. The fact that it reduces in Grade 9 could be because the social positions of all participants has been established and the hierarchy of the social peer network has been built up. Overall, the victims in Grade 7 to 9 were mostly girls at 59%.

Table 4.1: Age Group and Gender of Victims of Cyber bullying

| GRADE & AGE | BOYS | GIRLS | TOTAL |
|------------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| | <i>N (%)</i> | <i>N (%)</i> | <i>N (%)</i> |
| 7 (13 yrs) | 1 (6%) | 4 (23%) | 5 (30%) |
| 8 (14 yrs) | 6 (35%) | 2 (13%) | 8 (47%) |
| 9 (15 yrs) | 0 (0%) | 4 (23%) | 4 (23%) |
| TOTAL | 7 (41%) | 10 (59%) | 17 (100%) |

Table 4.2 shows the prevalence of perpetrators (n=8) of cyber bullying across grade and gender. In Grade 7 the perpetrators were n=1 (13%) of the total and were all girls. In Grade 8 the perpetrators were n=4 (50%) of the total made up of n=2 (25%) boys and n=2 (25%) girls. In Grade 9 the perpetrators were n=3 (37%) of the total made up of n=1 (12%) boys and n=2 (25%) girls. So, while the victims in Grade 7 to 9 were mostly girls, the perpetrators were also mostly girls at 63%. The research showed that girls are 2.18 times more likely to be cyberbullied according to the odds ratio, but this was not significant due to the small sample size.

Table 4.2: Age Group and Gender of Perpetrators of Cyber bullying

| GRADE & AGE | BOYS | GIRLS | TOTAL |
|------------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| | <i>N (%)</i> | <i>N (%)</i> | <i>N (%)</i> |
| 7 (13 yrs) | 0 (0%) | 1 (13%) | 1 (13%) |
| 8 (14 yrs) | 2 (25%) | 2 (25%) | 4 (50%) |
| 9 (15 yrs) | 1 (12%) | 2 (25%) | 3 (37%) |
| TOTAL | 3 (37%) | 5 (63%) | 8 (100%) |

In order to determine if there was a link between gender and being a victim of cyber bullying in private schools in Gauteng, it was important to do a cross tabulation and chi-squared test (see Table 4.3 & 4.4). However, because of the small size of the sample, it failed to reach significance.

In Table 4.3 a cross tabulation was done of the participants who were victims of cyber bullying. The count shows 10 of the 17 participants who admitted to being victims of cyber bullying were girls and 7 of the 17 participants who admitted to being victims of cyber bullying were boys. The expected count would be the

results if all things were equal according to the sample, showing the expected victims of cyber bullying being 19.4 with 7.7 girls and 23.7 with 9.4 boys. These are the expected frequencies.

Table 4.3: Cross tabulation of Victims of Cyber bullying

| | | Victims of Cyber bullying | | Total |
|-------|-------------------|---------------------------------|------|-------|
| Girls | Count | 17 | 10 | 27 |
| | Expected Count | 19.4 | 7.7 | 27.0 |
| Boys | Count | 26 | 7 | 33 |
| | Expected Count | 23.7 | 9.4 | 33.0 |
| Total | Count | 43 | 17 | 60 |
| | Expected Count | 43.0 | 17.0 | 60.0 |

In Table 4.4, the Pearson's chi-square value is 1.831 and the degrees of freedom (*df*) is 1 showing a significance of .176. The continuity correction is 1.135 with *df* 1 and significance at .287. The likelihood ratio is 1.829 with *df* 1 and significance .176. A chi-square test was performed and the probability associated with the chi-square of 1.831 is .176, indicating the relationship between gender and victims of cyber bullying. Therefore as can be seen in Table 4.3 and 4.4, girls are 2.18 times more likely to be cyberbullied according to the odds ratio, but this is not significant at probability of $p=.176$. This is due to the small sample size.

Table 4.4: Link between Gender and Victim of Cyber bullying

| | Value | df | Asymp. Sig. (2- sided) | Exact Sig. (2- sided) | Exact Sig. (1- sided) |
|---------------------------------------|--------------------|----|------------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Pearson Chi-Square | 1.831 ^a | 1 | .176 | | |
| Continuity Correction ^b | 1.135 | 1 | .287 | | |
| Likelihood Ratio | 1.829 | 1 | .176 | | |
| Fisher's Exact Test | | | | .251 | .143 |
| Linear-by- Linear Association | 1.801 | 1 | .180 | | |
| N of Valid Cases | 60 | | | | |

a. 0 cells (0.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 7.65.

b. Computed only for a 2x2 table

In order to determine if there was a link between gender and being a perpetrator of cyber bullying in private schools in Gauteng, it was important to do a cross tabulation and chi-squared test (see Table 4.5 & 4.6). However, because of the small size of the sample, it failed to reach significance.

In Table 4.5 a cross tabulation was done of the participants who were perpetrators of cyber bullying. The count shows the results obtained from the study where 5 of the 8 participants who admitted to being perpetrators of cyber bullying were girls and 3 of the 8 participants who admitted being perpetrators of cyber bullying were boys. These are the observed frequencies. The expected count would be the results if all things were equal according to the sample, showing the expected perpetrators of cyber bullying being 23.4 with 3.6 girls and 28.6 with 4.4 boys. These are the expected frequencies.

Table 4.5: Cross tabulation of Perpetrators of Cyber bullying

| | | Perpetrators of Cyber bullying | | Total |
|-------|-------------------|--------------------------------------|-----|-------|
| Girls | Count | 22 | 5 | 27 |
| | Expected Count | 23.4 | 3.6 | 27.0 |
| Boys | Count | 30 | 3 | 33 |
| | Expected Count | 28.6 | 4.4 | 33.0 |
| Total | Count | 52 | 8 | 60 |
| | Expected Count | 52.0 | 8.0 | 60.0 |

In Table 4.6, the Pearson's chi-square value is 1.142 and the degrees of freedom (*df*) is 1 showing a significance of .285. The continuity correction is .475 with *df* 1 and significance at .492. The likelihood ratio is 1.140 with *df* 1 and significance .286. A chi-square test was performed and the probability associated with the chi-square of 1.142 is .286, indicating the relationship between gender and perpetrators of cyber bullying. The odds ratio is therefore not significant at the probability of $p=.176$. This is due to the small sample size.

Table 4.6: Link between Gender and Perpetrator of Cyber bullying

| | Value | <i>df</i> | Asymp. Sig. (2- sided) | Exact Sig. (2- sided) | Exact Sig. (1- sided) |
|---------------------------------------|--------------------|-----------|------------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Pearson Chi-Square | 1.142 ^a | 1 | .285 | | |
| Continuity Correction ^b | .472 | 1 | .492 | | |
| Likelihood Ratio | 1.140 | 1 | .286 | | |
| Fisher's Exact Test | | | | .448 | .246 |
| Linear-by- Linear Association | 1.123 | 1 | .289 | | |
| N of Valid Cases | 60 | | | | |

a. 2 cells (50.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 3.60.

b. Computed only for a 2x2 table

Results on research related to gender of learners involved in cyber bullying were inconsistent. However, various studies found that it was more prevalent among girls (Juvonen & Gross, 2008; Holfeld & Grabe, 2012; Smith et al., 2007; Popovac & Leoshut, 2012). The reason given for this was that girls were more frequent users of email, profile sites, blogs and cell phones than boys, and were possibly more drawn to this indirect way of bullying through electronic means in order to have more social power as it was an easier medium for them to be involved in (Goddard, 2007; Holfeld & Grabe, 2012; Juvonen & Gross, 2008). The occurrence of this in Grade 7 to 9 is explained by the fact that middle school has been labelled the ‘brutalising period’ of adolescence where peer status can be established through the disruptions in social networks (Li, 2006). Girls interact with each other differently from boys and as a result use emotional tactics and are more covert in their bullying, making cyber bullying more appealing. Boys on the other hand can be more aggressive and would prefer physical bullying. It can be said that relational bullying is more effective for girls than overt bullying as intimacy within the peer group is important for girls.

In order to determine if the victims and perpetrators of cyber bullying in private schools in Gauteng overlapped, it was important to see if victims also admitted to being perpetrators as well as what their gender was (see Table 4.7).

In Table 4.7 it shows how many victims of cyber bullying were also perpetrators of cyber bullying. Of the n=17 victims, 36% (n=6) were also perpetrators of cyber bullying. It is evident that 12% (n=2) of boys who were victims of cyber bullying were also perpetrators of cyber bullying and 24% (n=4) of girls who were victims of cyber bullying were also perpetrators of cyber bullying. Girls are therefore twice as likely to be victims as well as perpetrators of cyber bullying as compared to boys. Festl and Quandt (2013) state that perpetrators and victims are often intertwined and are in a reciprocal relationship. This indicates that it is easier for a victim to become a perpetrator as they possibly share similar characteristics. This study therefore showed a much lower prevalence of victim/ perpetrator combinations as was found in the study conducted by Popovac and Leoschut (2012) who mention that 69.7% of perpetrators of cyber bullying have also been victims of this type of bullying in South Africa. A reason for this lower prevalence could be the small sample size which affected the results.

Table 4.7: *Victims/Perpetrators of Cyber bullying*

| GRADE | Victim and Perpetrator N (%) | Gender | |
|--------------|---------------------------------|---------------|----------------|
| | | Boys N (%) | Girls N (%) |
| 7 | 0 (0%) | 0 (0%) | 0 (0%) |
| 8 | 4 (24%) | 2 (12%) | 2 (12%) |
| 9 | 2 (12%) | 0 (0%) | 2 (12%) |
| TOTAL | 6 (36%) | 2 (12%) | 4 (24%) |

4.5 Victims and Perpetrators of Cyber bullying

As already mentioned, Question Four stated: “Who participates in cyber bullying in private schools in Gauteng and where does it take place?”

In order to determine who the victims and perpetrators of cyber bullying were, it was important to establish the identity of the perpetrators who cyberbullied the victims and the victims who were cyberbullied by the perpetrators.

In Figure 4.9 the identity of the perpetrator who cyberbullied the victim as reported by the victim is shown. The results indicate 20% of the victims reported that they were cyberbullied by one student from their school or more than one student from their school; 15% of the victims reported that they were cyberbullied by one student from another school or more than one student from another school; 15% reported being cyberbullied by an adult; and 15% reported they were cyberbullied by someone unknown to them. Therefore the perpetrators of cyber bullying were known to 85% of the victims.

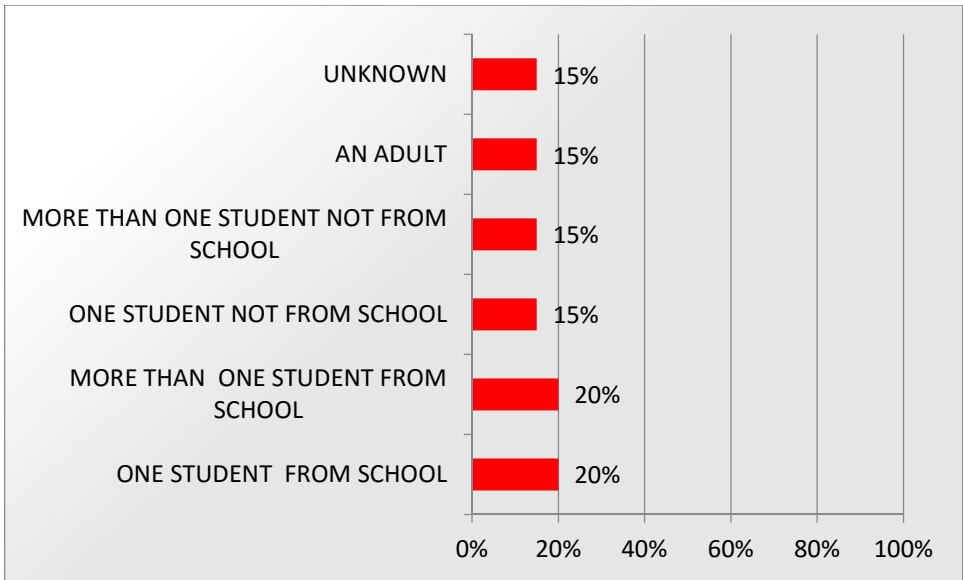


Figure 4.9. Identity of Person who Cyberbullied

In Figure 4.10 the identity of the victim who was cyberbullied by the perpetrator, as reported by the perpetrator, is shown. The results show that 25% of the perpetrators reported that they cyberbullied one student from their school, 50% reported that they cyberbullied one person not from their school, and 25% reported they had cyberbullied more than one student from another school. All the victims were known to the perpetrators.

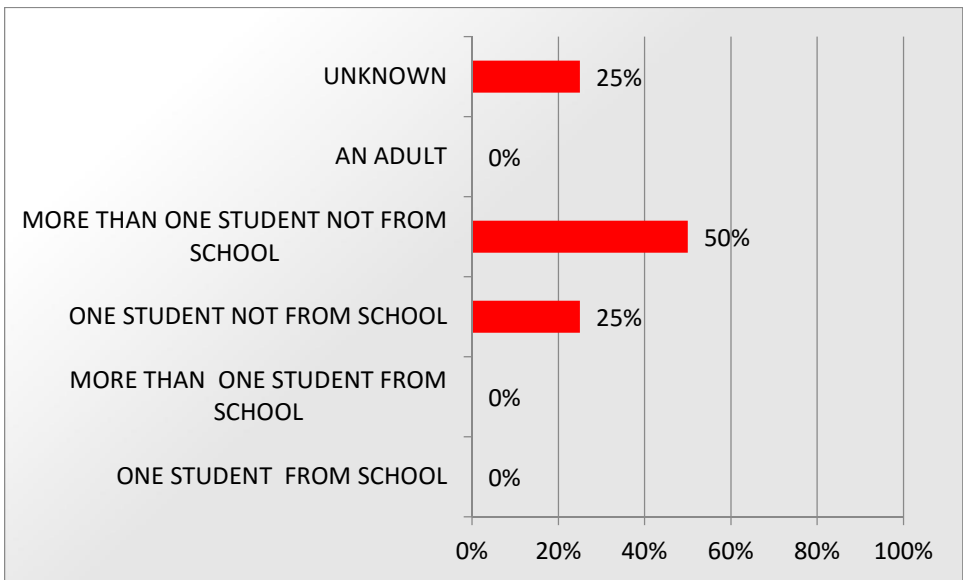


Figure 4.10. Identity of Person who was Cyberbullied

Previous research states that cyber bullying occurs mostly anonymously and Stauffer et al. (2012) stated that up to 50% of victims may not know the identity of their cyberbully. This was not the case in this study as 85% of the victims did know the identity of the people who were cyber bullying them and 100% of the perpetrators knew their victims. While it is true that cyber bullying can occur anonymously, it is aimed at

a social result and as such, it is usually directed at a known member of the social group and is generally done to improve the bully's social position (Festl & Quandt, 2013). It was found in previous research that cyber bullying often occurs in school context, directed at an individual within the school structure (Festl & Quandt, 2013). Mishna et al. (2010) reported that cyber bullying occurs in the learners' existing social relationships. This therefore supports the idea that cyber bullying would occur among peers who are acquainted with each other.

It was important to establish the location where the cyber bullying took place (see Figure 4.13) and results indicated that it mainly occurred at home. Figure 4.11 indicates the location where the victim was cyberbullied. The results show 62% (n=12) of the victims reported being cyberbullied at home. The results indicated that 100% (n=8) of the perpetrators of cyber bullying did so from their homes. Therefore in both the case of the victim and the perpetrator, the location where cyber bullying mostly occurs is in the home. This is in line with the nature of cyber bullying which makes the victims feel isolated as they are usually alone when it occurs and this then undermines the formation of healthy positive social relationships for the victim (Burton & Mutongwizo, 2009). Shariff and Hoff (2007) state that this isolation puts the victim in the position of being exposed to further abuse. The possibility of being caught at home is also less as most of the participants reported that their home computers were not placed in a family area. Schools are faced with the problem of what their legal rights are to intervene when cyber bullying occurs from home (Shariff & Hoff, 2007). The schools who participated in the study had small class sizes and as a result the assumption is that learners will be supervised at all times while on the school premises. As a result they have less opportunity to perpetrate cyber bullying at school.

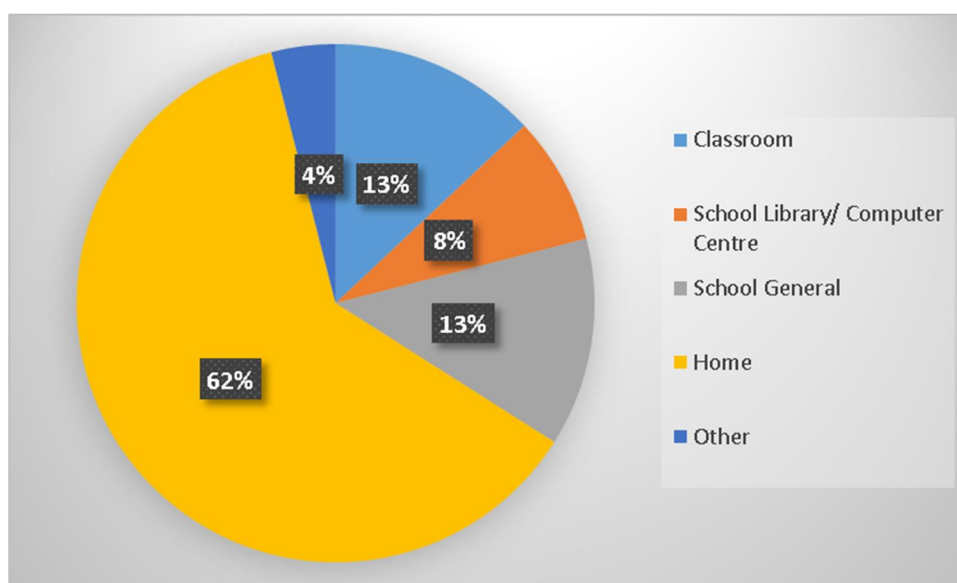


Figure 4.11. Location of Cyber bullying

4.6 Impact of Cyber bullying

As already mentioned, Question Five stated: “What is the impact on the victim of cyber bullying among Grade 7 to 9 learners in private schools in Gauteng?” In order to determine the impact on the victim of cyber bullying in private schools in Gauteng, it was important to establish the reaction of the victim to the cyber bullying (see Figure 4.12).

Figure 4.12 shows the reaction of the victims that were cyberbullied. The predominant impact of cyber bullying on the victim is being sad (35%). The study conducted by Tustin et al. (2012) found that the effect of cyber bullying caused 21.8% of the victims to experience sadness as a result of cyber bullying. Cyber bullying therefore has an emotional-social impact leading to emotional and peer problems (Eden et al., 2013). The findings of this research are therefore consistent with previous literature.

Different individuals react differently to being cyberbullied and at school, those learners who have been affected by cyber bullying continually have to return to the social environment where they are at risk and the school atmosphere and general environment of the learner becomes affected. Learners who report being sad could very well start suffering from depression and a feeling of hopelessness regarding their situation.

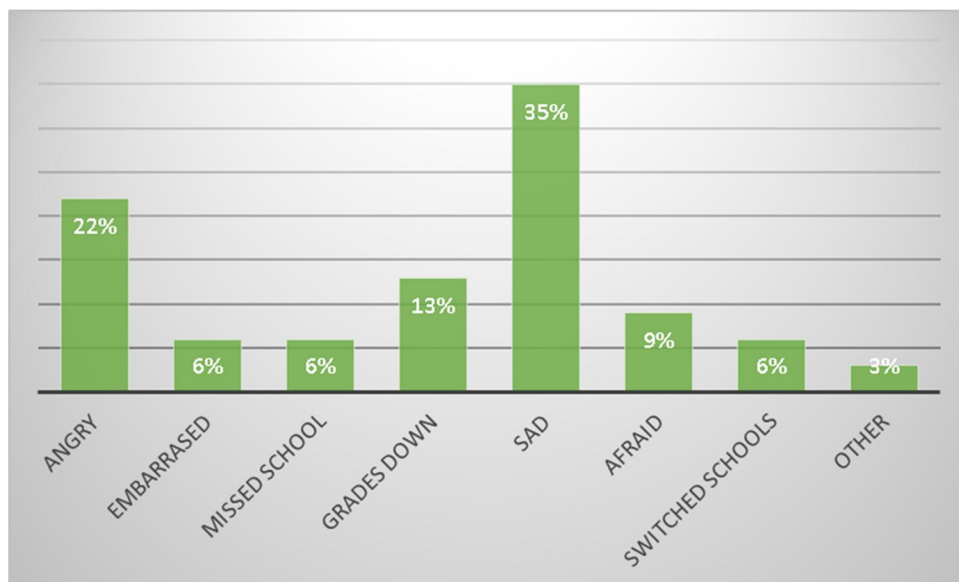


Figure 4.14. Reaction to being Cyberbullied

4.7 Reason for Cyber bullying

As already mentioned, Question Six stated: “What is the reason for the perpetrator participating in cyber bullying in private schools in Gauteng?” In order to determine the reasons for cyber bullying, it was important to establish the reason why the perpetrator cyberbullied (see Figure 4.13).

Figure 4.13 depicts the reason why the perpetrator cyberbullied their victims. The results show 18% of the perpetrators claimed they did not know the cyber bullying was wrong and 46% stated the reason for cyber bullying was revenge. None of them 0% thought that it was funny. The fact that 18% of the perpetrators did not know that cyber bullying is wrong, supports the social presence theory which relies on the individual being able to respond to another individual appropriately according to their reaction (Mark & Ratliffe, 2011). This indicates that perpetrators are not aware of the negative consequences of their bullying on the victim as cyber bullying, which is low in social presence, could lead to depersonalisation of the individual being bullied and reduces social accountability (Dooley et al., 2009; Sia et al. 2002). As 46% of the perpetrators stated their reason for cyber bullying was revenge, this connects with the social dominance theory where harassing behaviour has the aim of forcing someone into a submissive position (Beran & Li, 2005). Burton and Mutongwizo (2009) state that there is an element of automatic retaliation. This indicates that perpetrators of cyber bullying often respond to social situations by getting back at their victims for a perceived offence perpetrated against them.

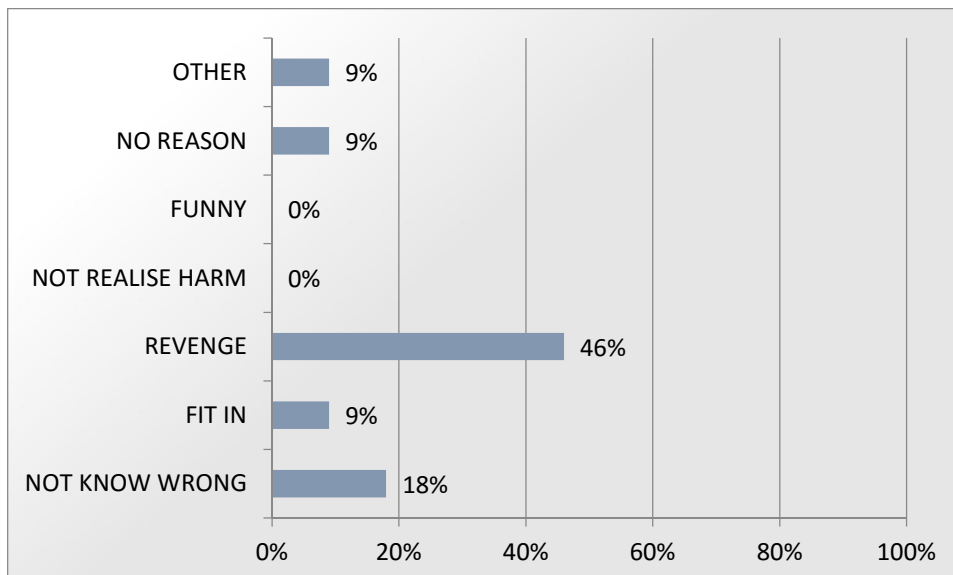


Figure 4.13. Reason for Cyber bullying

4.8 Reporting of Cyber bullying

As already mentioned, Question Seven stated: “Who would Grade 7 to 9 learners from private schools in Gauteng turn to for support if they were cyberbullied?”

In order to determine who Grade 7 to 9 learners in private schools in Gauteng would report cyber bullying to, it was important to establish how incidences of cyber bullying were resolved (see Figure 4.14 & 4.15). Participants were then also asked who they would turn to for support if they were cyberbullied (see Figure 4.16 & Figure 4.17).

Figure 4.14 shows all the ways the cyber bullying that learners were victims of was stopped. The results show 10% of victims said the cyber bullying was stopped by a educator; 16% said it was stopped by a friend; 16% reported that the cyber bullying was ongoing; 21% said it was stopped by a parent; 21% reported that the cyber bullying stopped on its own; and 16% gave other reasons for the cyber bullying coming to an end.

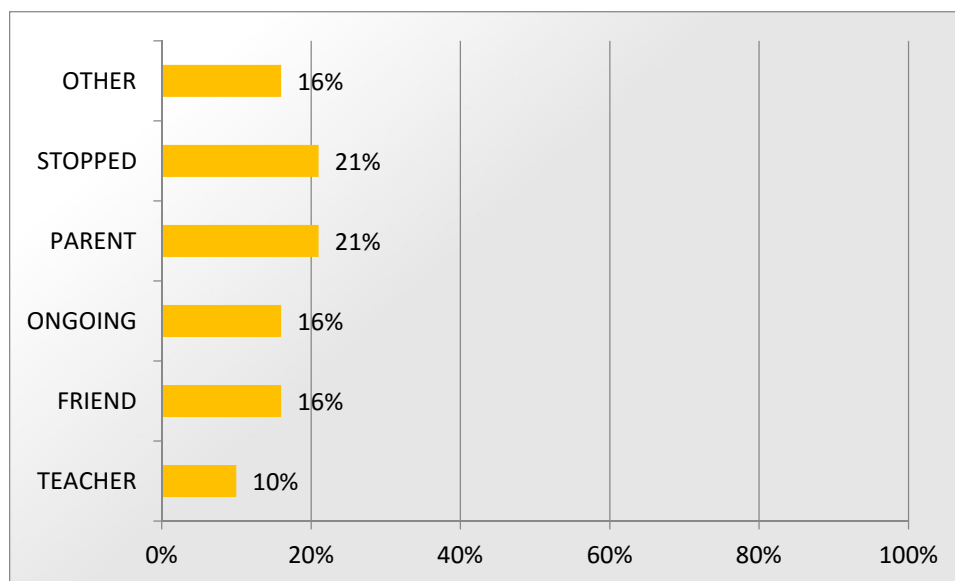


Figure 4.14. How Cyber bullying ended for Victims

Figure 4.15 shows all the ways the perpetrators were stopped. The results indicate 12% of perpetrators said the cyber bullying was stopped by a educator; 38% said it was stopped by a friend; 13% said it was stopped by a parent; and 37% reported that the cyber bullying stopped on its own.

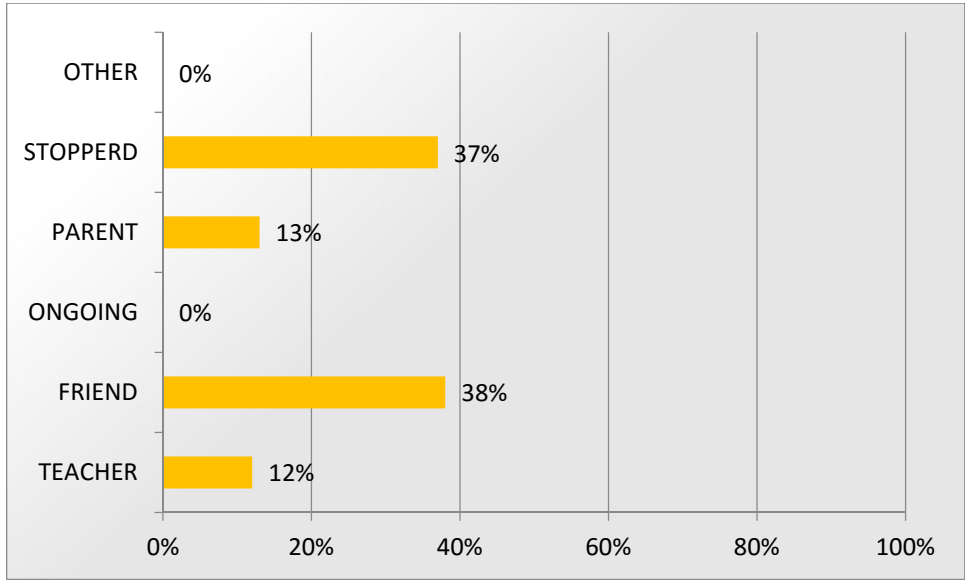


Figure 4.15. How Cyber bullying ended for Perpetrators

Figure 4.16 shows whether learners who are aware of someone being cyberbullied (n=47) reported it or not. The results show 70% (n=33) of the learners said they did not report it and 30% (n=14) said they did report it.

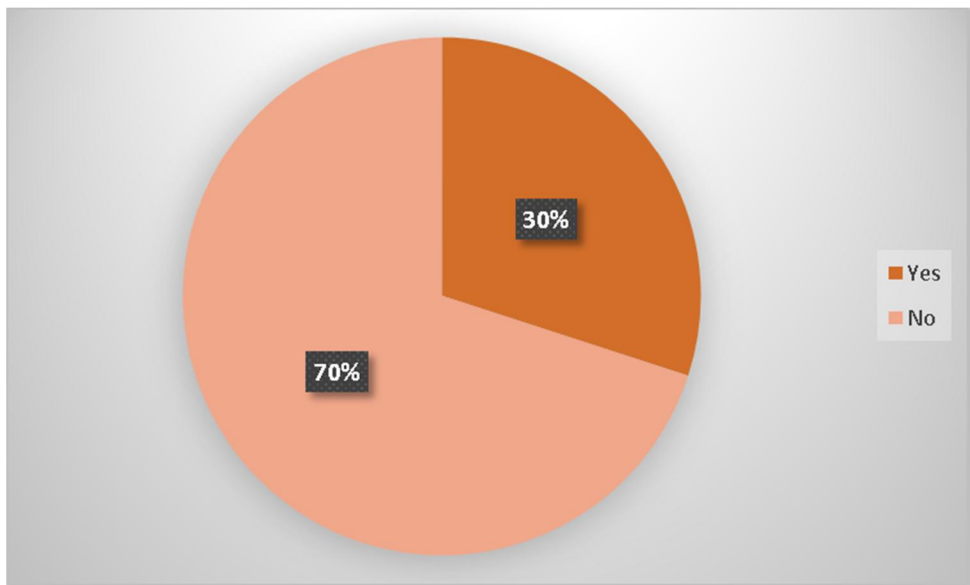


Figure 4.16. Reporting Cyber bullying

It was important to establish how incidences of cyber bullying were resolved in order to determine who victims and perpetrators would turn to for support. Of the victims, 10% said the cyber bullying was stopped by an educator; 16% said it was stopped by a friend; 16% reported that the cyber bullying was ongoing; 21% said it was stopped by a parent; 21% reported that the cyber bullying stopped on its own; and 16% gave other reasons for the cyber bullying coming to an end. On the other hand, 12% of perpetrators said the cyber bullying

was stopped by an educator; 38% said it was stopped by a friend; 13% said it was stopped by a parent; and 37% reported that the cyber bullying stopped on its own. In the study conducted by Tustin et al. (2012), it was reported that the bullying is continuing for 26.8% of those who reported it and it has stopped for 73.2%. Holfeld and Grabe (2012) reported that even when cyber bullying was reported, the assistance received was not effective and this leads to learners feeling that it does not help to report incidents. A reason for this is that adults may possibly feel unequipped to deal with the problem due to their limited knowledge of the technology used (Holfeld & Grabe, 2012). This could be a reason why this study showed that only 70% (33) of the learners who are aware of someone being cyberbullied said they did not report it and 30% (14) said they did report it. This rate of reporting is much lower than was found in a study conducted in South Africa by Tustin et al. (2012), where 40.3% of those bullied did not report it, 8% were unsure and 51.6% reported it. Another possible reason for this low rate of reporting in this study is the fear of restriction of internet access, as well as the fear of retaliation from the cyberbullies (Juvonen & Gross, 2008; Mishna et al., 2010).

Figure 4.17 shows who the Grade 7 to 9 learners would turn to for support if they were cyberbullied. The results indicate 63% (n=38) would turn to their parents for support; 35% (n=21) would turn to their educators for support; and 63% (n=38) would turn to friends for support. Participants were able to choose more than one option leading to the unequal percentages.

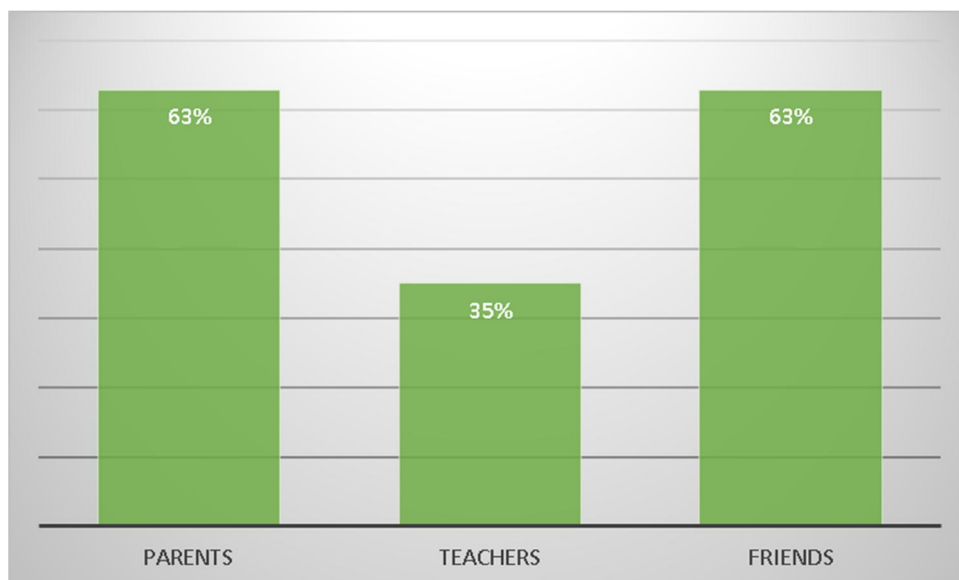


Figure 4.17. Support when Cyberbullied

It becomes clear that friends and parents are mostly reported to, but it is concerning to note that educators are reported to the least. However, the rate of reporting to educators is higher than found in other studies. Smith et al. (2007) found that 43.7% of victims of cyber bullying told no-one about it, 26.8% told friends, 15.6% told parents and 8.5% told educators. In a study conducted in South Africa, it was found that

of the learners affected by cyber bullying who reported it, most reported it to parents at 53.8%, 32.4% reported it to friends, 25.1% reported it to educators and 2% reported it to organisations (Tustin et al., 2012).

4.9 Awareness of Cyber bullying

As already mentioned, Question Eight stated: “What is the awareness of cyber bullying prevention among Grade 7 to 9 learners in private schools in Gauteng?” In order to determine the awareness that learners in selected private schools in Gauteng have of cyber bullying prevention, it was important to establish whether they knew of programmes in their schools related to cyber bullying (see Figure 4.18), as well as if their parents took measures to protect them from cyber bullying and internet danger (see Figure 4.19). Learners were then also asked whether they knew what to do if they were cyberbullied (see Figure 4.20).

Figure 4.18 shows the learners’ awareness of programmes in their schools to prevent cyber bullying. The results show 30% (n=18) said staff took cyber bullying seriously when it was reported to them; 35% (n=21) said their schools had assemblies about bullying and cyber bullying; 27% (n=16) stated that their schools gave class lessons about bullying and cyber bullying; 20% (n=12) stated that their school had strict computer and cell phone rules; 17% (n=10) said their school provided counselling for learners affected by cyber bullying; and 40% (n=24) of learners were not aware of any programmes at their school to prevent cyber bullying. It was important to establish whether learners knew of programmes in their schools related to cyber bullying. It is a concern that 40% of learners were not aware of any programmes at their school to prevent cyber bullying. It appears that schools do not have programmes in place and as a result the learner, educator and parent feel isolated and unsupported. Strydom (2011) states that it is important to have support systems in the school as well as in the community. The growing use and development of computer technology in schools has occurred so rapidly that parents and educators feel unprepared (Chibbaro, 2007). While many schools do have an anti-bullying policy in place, Shariff and Hoff (2007) state that this often made the schools feel they were absolved from any further responsibility. They go on to say that schools need to assist in developing learners’ moral compass in an electronic age (Shariff & Hoff, 2007). This creates a problem if learners are not aware of policies within their schools regarding bullying as a whole and cyber bullying specifically. The respondents came from two schools and the fact that their awareness of policies within the school to deal with cyber bullying was scattered and 40% were unaware of any policy could mean that the schools are not communicating effectively with the learners.

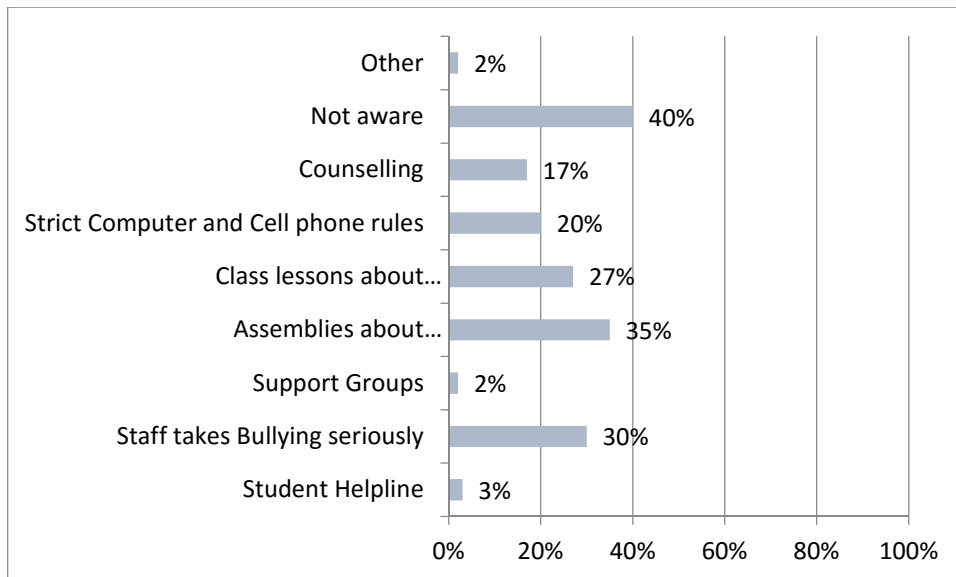


Figure 4.18. Awareness of Programmes at School to Prevent Cyber bullying

Figure 4.19 shows the learners' awareness of measures taken by their parents to protect them from cyber bullying and internet danger. The results show 20% (n=12) stated that their parents used computer software to prevent them from accessing unsafe sites; 15% (n=9) said their parents monitor their cell phone use; 10% (n=6) said their parents monitor their email; 42% (n=25) of learners stated that their parents talk to them about online safety; 18% (n=11) said their parents monitor their computer use; 13% (n=8) said parents monitored their social media pages; 28% (n=17) of learners stated that the computer is kept in a family area of the house; 28% (n=17) of learners said their parents talk to them about cyber bullying; and 7% (n=4) stated there were other ways their parents protected them from cyber bullying and internet danger. As learners had the option of more than one choice, this accounts for the varying percentages. Mason (2008) states that adolescents do not readily disclose cyber bullying incidents to an adult as many parents have not yet adapted to the online environment and are unaware of the dangers and how to deal with them. Most parents in this study spoke to their children about cyber bullying, internet danger and online safety, and a reason for this could be that these learners came from affluent homes where parents were possibly more knowledgeable about technology. However, they still did not have enough systems in place to protect their children from these very real dangers.

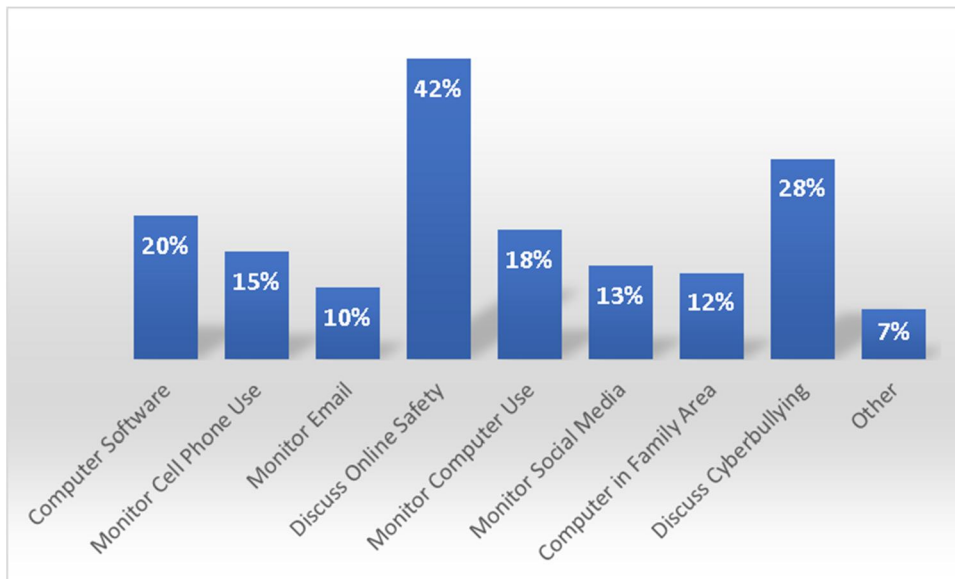


Figure 4.19. Protection by Parents from Cyber bullying and Internet Danger

Figure 4.20 indicates whether the learners who participated in the research know what to do if they are cyberbullied. The results show 23% (n=14) stated that they did not know what to do if they were cyberbullied and 77% (n=46) stated that they did know what to do if they were cyberbullied. This result is directly connected to learners' awareness of programmes in their schools for the prevention of cyber bullying and the procedures to follow if cyber bullying occurs. Schools therefore need to communicate more effectively with their learners.

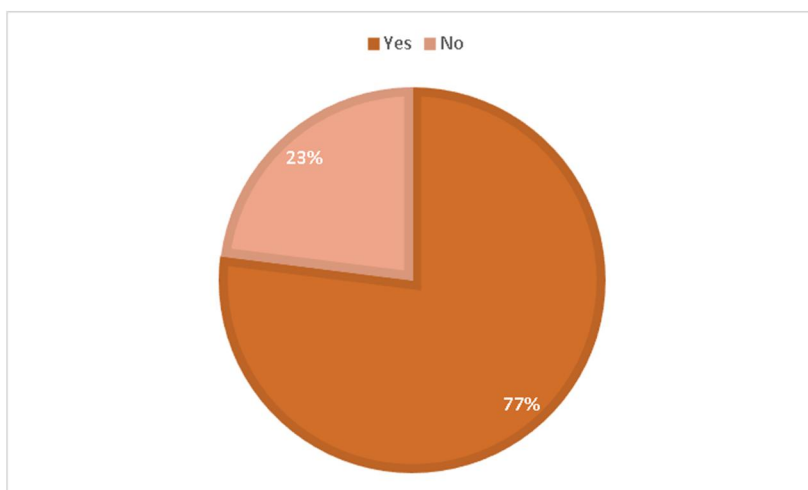


Figure 4.22. Knowledge of what to do if Cyberbullied

4.10 Limitations and implications of this study

There are certain limitations in this study that need to be mentioned. This was a limited local study, conducted in selected Gauteng urban private schools and due to the small sample size, the results may not be

generalised to the larger population of learners in private schools. A small sample size also meant that only basic statistical analyses could be conducted. The target group was limited to only two schools comprised middle to upper class Grade 7 to 9 learners who had the resources and skills to access the internet. As a result the sample was not representative of the majority of the South African population and is not generalisable.

Most of the literature consulted was from an international perspective due to the limited South African research and literature available on the topic of cyber bullying. Acquiring appropriate test measures for the present study were difficult due to the limited amount of research done in cyber bullying in the South African context. This questionnaire was piloted by Mark and Ratliffe (2011) in Hawaii and the conclusion was drawn that the questionnaire was representative of, and relevant to cyber bullying and provided content related evidence of validity. However, the questionnaire had not been used in South Africa before and should have been piloted before use in order to establish validity for the South African population. The questionnaire relied on the honesty of the participants and their willingness to disclose. As a result the tool of research is considered a limitation as participants could possibly not answer all questions with complete honesty and exaggeration or under reporting may have occurred. It is often difficult for victims and perpetrators to admit to being involved in cyber bullying. The information gained from the questionnaire was limited in the sense that it was only directed at the learners and input from parents and educators could have given a clearer picture of the prevalence of cyber bullying in these schools as well as the awareness of it.

This study does however hold value in that it emphasises the fact that cyber bullying is a very real phenomenon in South African schools. Theoretically, the social presence theory is shown as being problematic among learners who are interacting more regularly on social media than face to face. This will create a generation who become unaware of correct social responses. Practically, this study adds to the knowledge of an ever growing problem in South African schools where bullying has progressed into the cyber world. It also highlights the need for more research and intervention in this field. The educational implications of this study needs to be seen from the perspective of each learner having the right to a safe environment that is conducive to learning. Cyber bullying interferes with this right. Therefore schools need to become proactive at establishing classroom interventions as well as individual interventions when cases of cyber bullying come to light.

4.11 Recommendations

The recommendations for future research that should be conducted in South Africa based on the results obtained in this research are as follows:

The relationship between frequency of internet use and cyber bullying should be explored in more depth. The relationship between victims and perpetrators and what causes them to become involved in cyber bullying should be researched. The research on the prevalence of cyber bullying should be done in private as well as government schools and the areas should be expanded to include urban and rural areas. Gender and

cyber bullying need to be further researched in order to get a clearer picture of whether boys or girls are more involved in cyber bullying. The results of this study should be seen as an exploratory pilot study and should be replicated as it is with a larger sample.

4.12 Conclusion

This study indicated that most of the total sample reported having internet access at home and owned their own cell phones. This study showed that 29% of the sample admitted that they had been cyberbullied and 13% of the sample admitted that they had been perpetrators of cyber bullying. However, 78% of the total sample population reported knowing someone who had been cyberbullied. This indicates that the prevalence of cyber bullying among Grade 7 to 9 learners in selected private schools in Gauteng is high, but yet in line with international reports.

Overall, the victims in Grade 7 to 9 were mostly girls. The research showed that girls are twice as likely to be cyberbullied compared to boys. Overall, the perpetrators in Grade 7 to 9 were also mostly girls. It also became clear that girls are twice as likely to be victims as well as perpetrators of cyber bullying. Cyber bullying therefore seems to be mostly prevalent among girls in Grade 7 to 9 in private schools in Gauteng.

Anonymity in cyber bullying is disproved in this research as most of the victims knew the identity of the people who were cyber bullying them and all of the perpetrators knew their victims. In both the case of the victim and the perpetrator, the location where cyber bullying mostly occurs is in the home and cell phones were reported as the most used mode of technology in cyber bullying. The predominant impact of cyber bullying for the victim is being sad and the main reason for the perpetration of cyber bullying is revenge. The study also shows where learners are aware of someone being cyberbullied, 70% of the learners did not report it and 30% did report it. With regards to whom learners turn to for support if they were cyberbullied, most would turn to their parents and friends and only a third said they would turn to their educators for support. Regarding awareness of school programmes to prevent cyber bullying, 40% of learners were not aware of any programmes at their school. Learners reported that parents mostly talk to them about online safety but only 28% of learners said their parents talk to them about cyber bullying. In this study, approximately a quarter of the total sample population stated that they did not know what to do if they were cyberbullied.

In our society, adults are responsible for the protection of children from all forms of physical and mental harm. Mark and Ratliffe (2011) state that while learners saw cyber bullying as a serious problem, they did not have faith in the ability of their parents and educators to resolve it due to their lack of knowledge. When looking at the problem of cyber bullying and the awareness thereof, prevention and intervention efforts need to occur with the collaboration of schools, families and the community who need to cooperate with one another to raise the awareness of the problem of cyber bullying. Schools have the ideal platform from which this can be done as they can reach all of these role players and so have an impact on the community. It is stated

by Shariff and Hoff (2007) that lack of supervision in this area of cyber bullying can lead to the breakdown of social and ethical norms and structures. Curriculum based anti-bullying programmes would assist in this area in order to create a safe learning environment for all learners. Schools need to become proactive at establishing classroom interventions as well as individual interventions when cases of cyber bullying come to light. This type of intervention can however only be effective if there is parental involvement. Educators and parents should model appropriate behaviour online so that adolescents can mirror this behaviour. To this aim, schools and communities can become involved in developing coping strategies for learners, educators and parents.

References

- Alfreds, D. (2013, August 12). Cyberbullying growing in SA. Retrieved from <http://www.news24.com/printArticle.aspx?iframe&aid=b6996d4f-040f-4451-9e7f-74>.
- Beale, A. V. & Hall, K. R. (2007). Cyberbullying: What school administrators (and parents) can do. *The Clearing House*, 81 (1), 8-12.
- Beran, T. & Li, Q. (2005). Cyber-harassment: A study of a new method for an old behaviour. *Journal Educational Computing Research*, 32 (3), 265-277.
- Bhat, C. S. (2008). Cyber bullying: Overview and strategies for school counsellors, guidance officers, and all school personnel. *Australian Journal of Guidance & Counselling*, 18 (1): 53-66.
- Blazer, C. (2012). Social networking in schools: Benefits and risks; review of the research; policy considerations; and current practices. *Miami-Dade County Public Schools: Information Capsule: Research Services*, 1109, 1-23.
- Briere, J. N. & Elliott, D. M. (1994). Immediate and long-term impacts of child sexual abuse. *The Future of Children: Sexual Abuse of Children*. 4(2), 54-69.
- Burton, P., & Mutongwizo, T. (2009). Inescapable violence: Cyber bullying and electronic violence against young people in South Africa. *Centre for Justice and Crime Prevention*, 8, 1-12.
- Carl, A. E. (2010). *Teacher empowerment through curriculum development: Theory into practice (3rd Ed.)*. Cape Town: Juta & Company Ltd.
- Cassidy, W., Brown, K., & Jackson, M. (2012). "Making kind cool": Parents' suggestions for preventing cyber bullying and fostering cyber kindness. *Journal Educational Computing Research*, 46(4): 415-436.
- Chibbaro, J. S. (2007). School counsellors and the cyber bullying: Interventions and implications. *ASCA/ Professional School Counselling*, 11 (1): 65-68.
- Cotter, P. & McGilloway, S. (2011). Living in an 'Electronic Age': Cyber bullying among Irish adolescents. *Irish Journal of Education*, 39:44-56.
- Creswell, J. W. (2008). *Educational research. Planning, conducting, and evaluating quantitative and qualitative research*. (3rd Ed.). New Jersey: Pearson Merrill Prentice Hall.

- De Wet, C. (2005). The voices of victims and witnesses of school bullying. *Koers: Bulletin for Christian Scholarship*, 70 (4): 705-725.
- Dempsey, A. G., Sulkowski, M. L., Nichols, R. & Storch, E. A. (2009). Differences between peer victimization in cyber and physical settings and associated psychosocial adjustment in early adolescence. *Psychology in the Schools*, 46 (10): 962-972.
- Diamanduros, T., Downs, E., & Jenkins, S. J. (2008). The role of school psychologists in the assessment, prevention, and intervention of cyber bullying. *Psychology in the Schools*, 48(8): 693-704.
- Dooley, J. J., Pyszalski, J. & Cross, D. (2009). Cyber bullying versus face-to-face bullying: A theoretical and conceptual review. *Journal of Psychology*, 217 (4): 182-188.
- Donald, D., Lazarus, S. & Lolwana, P. (1999). *Educational Psychology in Social Context*. Cape Town, South Africa: Oxford University Press.
- Eden, s., Heiman, T., & Olenik-Shemesh, D. (2013). Teachers' perceptions, beliefs and concerns about cyber bullying. *British Journal of Educational Technology*. 44(6): 1036-1052.
- Festl, R. & Quandt, T. (2013). Social relations and cyber bullying: The influence of the individual and structural attributes on victimisation and perpetration via the internet. *Human Communication Research*, 39:101-126.
- Goddard, C. (2007). H8 @ skul: Cyber world bullying. *The Illinois School Board Journal*, 75: 13-20.
- Graham, S. (2010). What educators need to know about bullying behaviours. *The Phi Delta Kappa*, 92:66-69.
- Greif, J. L. & Furlong, M. J. (2006). The assessment of school bullying: Using theory to inform practice. *Journal of School Violence*, 5 (3): 33-50.
- Holfeld, B. & Grabe, M. (2012). Middle school students' perceptions and responses to cyber bullying. *Journal Educational Computing Research*, 46(4): 395-413.
- Hubert, T. J. (2012). *Anxiety and depression in children and adolescents: Assessment, intervention and prevention*. New York, NY: Springer Science + Business Media.
- Internet World Stats. (2007). Top 20 countries with the highest number of internet users. Retrieved from <http://www.internetworldstats.com/top20.htm> 2015, March 15.

- Jacobs, T. (2010). *Teen cyber bullying investigated: Where do your rights end and consequences begin?* Minneapolis, MN: Free Spirit Publishing Inc.
- Jose, P. E., Kljakovic, M., Scheib, E., Notter, O. (2011). The joint development of traditional bullying and victimization with cyber bullying and victimization in adolescence. *Journal of Research on Adolescence*, 22(2): 301-309.
- Juvonen, J. & Gross, E. F. (2008). Extending the school grounds? – Bullying experiences in cyberspace. *Journal of School Health*, 78(9): 496-505.
- Kirmani, M. H., Davis, M. H., & Kalyanpur, M. (2009). Young children surfing: Gender differences in computer use. *Dimensions of Early Childhood*, 37(2): 16-22.
- Kowalski, R. M., Limber, S. P., & Agatson, P. W. (2012). *Cyber bullying in the digital age*. Great Britain, West Sussex: Wiley-Blackwell.
- Li, Q. (2006). Cyber bullying in schools: A research of gender differences. *School Psychology International*, 27 (x): 1-14.
- Livingston, S., & Bulger, M. E. (2013). *A global agenda for children's rights in the digital age: Recommendations for developing UNICEF's research strategies*. UNICEF office of Research: Florence.
- Mark, L. & Ratliffe, K. T. (2011). Cyber Worlds: New playground for bullying. *Computers in the Schools*, 28: 92-116.
- Mason, K. L. (2008). Cyber bullying: A preliminary assessment for school personnel. *Psychology in the Schools*, 45(4): 323-348.
- Miller, N. C., Thompson, N. L., & Franz, D. P. (2009). Proactive strategies to safeguard young adolescents in the Cyber age. *Middle School Journal*, 41:28-34.
- Miranda, S. M. & Saunders, C. S. (2003). The social construction of meanings: An alternative perspective on information sharing. *Information Systems Research*, 14 (1): 87-106.
- Mishna, F., Cook, C., Gadalla, T., Daciuk, J., & Solomon, S. (2010). Cyber bullying behaviours among Middle and High School students. *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry*, 3:362-374.
- Mitchell, K. (2010). Remaining safe and avoiding dangers online: A social media Q & A with Kimberley Mitchell. *The Prevention Researcher*, 17: 7-9.

- Muru, G., Topcu, C., Erdur-Baker, O., & Diamantini, D. (2011). An international study of cyber bullying perception and diffusion among adolescents. *Procedia Social and Behavioural Sciences*, 15: 3805-3809.
- Olweus, D. (2003). A profile of bullying. *Educational Leadership*, March: 12-17.
- Patchin, J. W. & Hinduja, S. (2012). Cyber bullying: An update and synthesis on the research. In J. W. Patchin & S. Hinduja (Eds.), *Cyber bullying and response: Expert perspectives* (pp. 13-36). New York: Routledge.
- Popovac, M. & Leoschut, L. (2012). Cyber bullying in South Africa: Impact and responses. *Centre for Justice and Crime Prevention*, 13: 1-16.
- Republic of South Africa. (1996). National Education Policy Act, No. 27 of 1996. *Government Gazette*, No. 17118, 24 April, Pretoria.
- Republic of South Africa. (1996). The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa 1996, No. 108 of 1996. *National Gazette*, No 17678, 18 December, Pretoria.
- Roberts, D. F. & Foehr, U. G. (2008). When teens turn cyberbullies. *The Educational Forum*, 70: 21-36.
- Salmivalli, C., Kaukiainen, A. & Voeten, M. (2005). Anti-bullying intervention: Implementation and outcome. *British Journal of Educational Psychology*, 75: 465-487.
- Shariff, S. & Hoff, D. L. (2007). Cyber bullying: Clarifying legal boundaries for school supervision in cyberspace. *International Journal of Cyber Criminology*, 1 (1): 76-118.
- Sia, C., Tan, B.C.Y. & Wei, K. (2002). Group polarization and computer-mediated communication: Effects of communication cues, social presence, and anonymity. *Information Systems Research*, 13 (1): 70-90.
- Sithole, B. (2012, August 22). Cyber bully scourge. Retrieved from <http://www.timeslive.co.za/thetimes/2012/08/22/cyber-bully-scourge?>
- Smith, P. K., Mahdavi, J., Carvalho, M., Fisher, S., Russell, S., & Tippett, N. (2008). Cyber bullying: its nature and impact in secondary school pupils. *Journal of Child Psychology and Psychiatry*, 49(4): 376-385.
- Solberg, M. E., Olweus, D., & Endresen, I. M. (2007). Bullies and victims at school: Are they the same pupils? *British Journal of Educational Psychology*, 77: 441-464.
- Stauffer, S., Heath, M. A., Coyne, S. M., & Ferrin, S. (2012). High School teacher' perceptions of cyber bullying prevention and intervention strategies. *Psychology in the Schools*, 49(4):353-367.

- Strom, P. S. & Strom, R. D. (2005). When teens turn cyberbullies. *The Educational Forum*, 70: 21-36.
- Strydom, I. (2011). Addressing Life Skill Challenges. In E. Landsberg, E., D. Kruger, & N. Nel (Eds.), *Addressing barriers to learning: A South African perspective* (2nd ed. pp. 106-123). Pretoria, South Africa: Van Schaik Publishers.
- Tokunaga, R. S. (2010). Following you home from school: A critical review and synthesis of research on cyberbullying victimization. *Computers in Human Behavior*, 26 (3): 277-287.
- Tustin, D. H., Goetz, M., de Jongh, P., Basson, A., Zulu, G., Leriba, N. J. & Mayatula, S. (2012). Nature, extent and impact of bullying among secondary learners in Gauteng. *UNISA Bureau of Market Research*: 1-22.
- Walrave, M. & Heirman, W. (2011). Cyber bullying: Predicting victimisation and perpetration. *Children & Society*, 25:59-72.
- Wartella, E. A. & Jennings, N. (2000). Children and computers: New technology – old concerns. *The Future of Children. Children and Computer Technology*, 10(2): 31-43.
- Walton, E. (2012). Learner support through differentiated teaching and learning. In N. Nel, M. Nel, & A. Hugo (Eds.). *Learner support in a diverse classroom: A guide for foundation, intermediate and senior phase teachers of language and mathematics*. Pretoria, South Africa: Van Schaik Publishers.
- Willard, N. (2006). Flame retardant. *School Library Journal*, April: 54-56.
- Ybarra, M. & Mitchell, K. (2004). Youth engaging in online harassment: associations with caregiver-child relationships, Internet use, and personal characteristics. *Journal of Adolescence*, 27: 319-336.
- Zahn-Waxler, C. & Klimes-Dougan, B. S. (2000). Internalizing problems of childhood and adolescence: Prospects, pitfalls, and progress in understanding the development of anxiety and depression. *Development and Psychopathology*, 443-466.

Appendix A:

Student Cyber bullying Survey

DIRECTIONS: Please read the definition of Cyber bullying in the box below and then honestly answer the following questions about your experiences with cyber bullying in and out of school in the last school year.

CYBER BULLYING *occurs when someone purposely tries to embarrass, hurt, threaten, or intimidate another person using modern technology, like the internet, e-mail, MySpace, Facebook, Instagram, WhatsApp, Twitter, Chat Rooms, Blogs, Instant Messenger, Cell Phones, etc.*

PLEASE PUT A CROSS NEXT TO THE CORRECT ANSWER FOR THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS:

| | | | | | |
|----|--------|----------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. | Grade: | <input type="checkbox"/> 7 | <input type="checkbox"/> 8 | <input type="checkbox"/> 9 | <input type="checkbox"/> |
|----|--------|----------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------|

| | | | | |
|----|---------|-------------------------------|---------------------------------|--------------------------|
| 2. | Gender: | <input type="checkbox"/> Male | <input type="checkbox"/> Female | <input type="checkbox"/> |
|----|---------|-------------------------------|---------------------------------|--------------------------|

| | | | | |
|----|--|------------------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------------|
| 3. | Do you have a computer with internet access at home? | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> |
|----|--|------------------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------------|

| | | | | |
|----|---------------------------|------------------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------------|
| 4. | Do you have a cell phone? | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> |
|----|---------------------------|------------------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------------|

| | | | | |
|----|--|------------------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------------|
| 5. | Do you text message or send photos on your cell phone? | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> |
|----|--|------------------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------------|

| | | | | |
|----|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 6. | How many times do you go on the internet to check your e-mail/ visit chat rooms/ Twitter/ Facebook/ Instagram/ WhatsApp/ Instant Messenger, etc.? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | Never | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | 1 to 3 times a month | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | Once a week | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | Every 2 nd day | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | Every day | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 7. | How many times do you use a cell phone to call, text-message your friends, or to take pictures? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

| | | | |
|---------------------------------|--|------------------|--|
| Blogs | | Facebook | |
| Chat Room | | Instagram | |
| Instant Messenger | | Twitter | |
| Any Other? (Specify) | | | |

| | | | |
|---|---|--|--|
| 12. | Who cyberbullied you? (Check ALL that apply) | | |
| One student from my school | | | |
| More than one student from my school | | | |
| One student NOT from my school | | | |
| More than one student NOT from my school | | | |
| An adult | | | |
| I don't know who it was | | | |
| Other (specify) | | | |

| | | | | | |
|------------|--|-------------|--|---------------|--|
| 13. | The person or people who cyberbullied me was/were: (check ALL that apply) | Male | | Female | |
|------------|--|-------------|--|---------------|--|

| | | | |
|--|--|--|--|
| 14. | Where were you cyberbullied? (Check ALL that apply) | | |
| In a classroom | | | |
| In the school library/ computer centre | | | |
| At school, but NOT in a classroom/ library/ computer centre | | | |
| At home | | | |
| Other (specify) | | | |

| | | | |
|--------------------------------------|--|--|---|
| 15. | How did you feel when you were cyberbullied? (Check ALL that apply) | | |
| I felt angry | | | I felt sad |
| I felt embarrassed | | | I felt afraid |
| I missed school because of it | | | I switched schools because of it |
| My grades went down | | | |
| Other (specify) | | | |

| | | | |
|---------------------------------|--|-------------------|--|
| E-mail | | Cell Phone | |
| Blogs | | Facebook | |
| Chat Room | | Instagram | |
| Instant Messenger | | Twitter | |
| Any Other? (Specify) | | | |

| | | | |
|------------|---|--|--|
| 21. | Who did you cyberbully? (Check ALL that apply) | | |
| | One student from my school | | |
| | More than one student from my school | | |
| | One person NOT from my school | | |
| | More than one person NOT from my school | | |
| | An adult | | |
| | Other (specify) | | |

| | | | | | |
|------------|---|-------------|--|---------------|--|
| 22. | The person or people who you cyberbullied was/were: (check ALL that apply) | Male | | Female | |
|------------|---|-------------|--|---------------|--|

| | | | |
|------------|--|--|--|
| 23. | Where did you cyberbully? (Check ALL that apply) | | |
| | In a classroom | | |
| | In the school library/ computer centre | | |
| | At school, but NOT in a classroom/ library/ computer centre | | |
| | At home | | |
| | Other (specify) | | |

| | | | |
|------------|--|--|--|
| 24. | Why did you cyber bully someone? (Check ALL that apply) | | |
| | I didn't know it was wrong at the time | | |
| | I wanted to fit in with my friends | | |
| | I wanted to get back at someone | | |
| | I didn't think it would harm anyone | | |

| | | |
|----------------------------------|--|--|
| I thought it was funny | | |
| I don't know why I did it | | |
| Other (specify) | | |

| | | | |
|-------------------------------------|---|-----------------------------------|--|
| 25. | How did the cyber bullying situation end? (Check ALL that apply) | | |
| A educator helped to stop it | | A parent helped to stop it | |
| A friend helped to stop it | | It stopped on its own | |
| It still has not stopped | | | |
| Other (specify) | | | |

XX

CYBER BULLYING AWARENESS

| | | | | | |
|--------------|---|------------|--|-----------|------------|
| 26. A | Do you know someone who has been cyberbullied? (Check one) | Yes | | No | |
| 26. B | If you answered YES to 26A, when someone you know was being cyberbullied, did you tell adults? | Yes | | No | N/A |

| | | | | | | | |
|--------------|---|------------|--|-----------|--|---------------------|--|
| 27. A | Do your educators, counsellors, principal, or vice principal know that cyber bullying occurs at your school? | Yes | | No | | I don't know | |
|--------------|---|------------|--|-----------|--|---------------------|--|

| | | | | | | |
|--------------|---|------------|--|-----------|--|---------------------|
| 27. B | If you answered YES to 27A: When adults in your school hear about a cyber bullying incident, do they try to stop it? | Yes | | No | | I don't know |
|--------------|---|------------|--|-----------|--|---------------------|

| | | | | | | | |
|--------------|--|------------|--|-----------|--|---------------------|--|
| 28. A | Do your parents know that cyber bullying occurs at your school? | Yes | | No | | I don't know | |
|--------------|--|------------|--|-----------|--|---------------------|--|

| | | | | | | | |
|--------------|--|------------|--|-----------|--|---------------------|--|
| 28. B | If you answered YES to 28A: When your parents hear about a cyber bullying incident, do they try to stop it? | Yes | | No | | I don't know | |
|--------------|--|------------|--|-----------|--|---------------------|--|

| | | | | | | | |
|------------|---|------------|--|-----------|--|---------------------|--|
| 29. | If you were being cyberbullied, would you tell your parents? | Yes | | No | | I don't know | |
|------------|---|------------|--|-----------|--|---------------------|--|

| | | | | | | | |
|------------|---|------------|--|-----------|--|---------------------|--|
| 30. | If you were being cyberbullied, would you tell your educators? | Yes | | No | | I don't know | |
|------------|---|------------|--|-----------|--|---------------------|--|

| | | | | | | | |
|------------|---|------------|--|-----------|--|---------------------|--|
| 31. | If you were being cyberbullied, would you tell your friends? | Yes | | No | | I don't know | |
|------------|---|------------|--|-----------|--|---------------------|--|

| | | | | | | | |
|------------|--|--|--|---|--|--|--|
| 32. | What programs does your school have to prevent cyber bullying? (Check ALL that apply) | | | | | | |
| | Anti-bullying policies | | | Assemblies about bullying/ cyber bullying | | | |
| | Student helpline | | | Class lessons about bullying/ cyber bullying | | | |
| | Staff takes bullying seriously | | | Strict computer and cell phone rules | | | |
| | Support Groups | | | Counselling | | | |
| | I don't know of any prevention programs at my school | | | | | | |
| | Other (specify) | | | | | | |

Appendix B:



HUMAN RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE (NON-MEDICAL)
R14/49 Liebenberg

CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE

PROTOCOL NUMBER H14/05/36

PROJECT TITLE

The prevalence of Cyberbullying in Gauteng private schools among Grade 7 to 9 Learners

INVESTIGATOR(S)

Ms A Liebenberg

SCHOOL/DEPARTMENT

Human and Community Development/Psychology

DATE CONSIDERED

23 May 2014

DECISION OF THE COMMITTEE

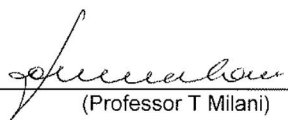
Approved Unconditionally

EXPIRY DATE

19/06/2016

DATE 20/06/2014

CHAIRPERSON


(Professor T Milani)

cc: Supervisor : Dr J Seabi

DECLARATION OF INVESTIGATOR(S)

To be completed in duplicate and **ONE COPY** returned to the Secretary at Room 10000, 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 to be contemplated from the research procedure as approved I/we undertake to resubmit the protocol to the Committee. **I agree to completion of a yearly progress report.**

Signature

____/____/____
Date

PLEASE QUOTE THE PROTOCOL NUMBER ON ALL ENQUIRIES

Appendix C:



Psychology Department
School of Human and Community Development
University of the Witwatersrand
Private Bag 3, WITS, 2050
Tel: (011)717 4500 Fax: (011) 717 4559



School Information Sheet

Dear Principal,

My name is Annelet Liebenberg, and I am conducting research for the purpose of obtaining my Masters degree in Educational Psychology at the University of the Witwatersrand. My area of focus is the prevalence of cyber bullying in private schools in Gauteng among Grade 7 to 9 learners.

Participation in this research will entail the Grade 7 to 9 classes answering a questionnaire relevant to cyber bullying. This will be done during school hours, take approximately 30 minutes to complete and will be administered by me. There are no direct risks or benefits to the learners or the school attached to participating in this study. Participation is voluntary, and no person will be advantaged or disadvantaged in any way for choosing to participate or not in this study. All the responses will be kept confidential and no information that could identify the child, the educator or the school will be included in the research report. The information will not be seen by anyone in this organisation at any time, and will only be processed by myself and my supervisor. The child may refuse to answer any questions they would prefer not to, and they may choose to withdraw from the study at any point. If the school would require, I will be available to present a talk to parents regarding guidelines on how to identify and deal with cyber bullying.

The above mentioned report, which will be written once the data has been analysed and processed, will be made available to the school and all interested parties. If you give permission for this research to be conducted at your school please fill in your details on the form below and return it to me. I will then contact you to discuss your participation. Alternatively I can be contacted telephonically at 082 853 3669 or via email at annelet@mweb.co.za. If you would further like to contact my supervisor regarding any questions you might have, you may contact Joseph Seabi on email Joseph.Seabi@wits.ac.za. Your consent for this study to be conducted at your school will be highly appreciated.

Kind Regards,

Annelet Liebenberg

I _____ (Principal at _____ School) hereby give Annelet Liebenberg permission to conduct her research, regarding the prevalence of cyber bullying in private schools in Gauteng among Grade 7 to 9 learners. I understand that the purpose of this research is for Annelet Liebenberg to obtain a Masters Degree at the University of the Witwatersrand.

I understand that:

- Participation in this study is voluntary.
- I can withdraw permission from this study at any time without negative consequence for this school.
- No information that may identify the school will be included in the research.
- The participants' responses will remain confidential.
- The learners may refuse to answer any questions that they would prefer not to

Signed _____

Date _____

School Stamp:

Appendix D:



Psychology Department
School of Human and Community Development
University of the Witwatersrand
Private Bag 3, WITS, 2050
Tel: (011)717 4500 Fax: (011) 717 4559



Legal Guardian/Parent Information Sheet

Dear Parent/ Legal Guardian,

My name is Annelet Liebenberg, and I am conducting research for the purpose of obtaining my Masters degree in Educational Psychology at the University of the Witwatersrand. My area of focus is the prevalence of cyber bullying in private schools in Gauteng among Grade 7 to 9 learners.

Participation in this research will entail your child answering a questionnaire relative to cyber bullying. This will be done during school hours. There are no direct risks or benefits to the learners or the school attached to participating in this study. Participation is voluntary, and no person will be advantaged or disadvantaged in any way for choosing to participate or not in the study. All of the learners' responses will be kept confidential and no information which could identify the child or the school will be included in the research report. The learner's answers will not be seen by anyone in this organisation at any time, and will only be processed by myself and my supervisor. The child may refuse to answer any questions they would prefer not to, and they may choose to withdraw from the study at any point. In the unlikely event that your child should react to questions in a negative manner I have been in contact with the school psychologists and you may contact them for any required intervention. The above mentioned report, which will be written once the data has been analysed and processed, will be made available to the school and all interested parties.

Your consent for your child to participate in this study will be highly appreciated. If you give your child permission to be included in this study please fill in your details on the form below and return it to the school office or directly to the class educator. I will then contact you through the school to arrange participation. Alternatively I can be contacted telephonically at 082 853 3669 or via email at annelet@mweb.co.za . If you would like to contact my supervisor regarding any questions you might have, you can contact Joseph Seabi on email Joseph.Seabi@wits.ac.za.

Kind Regards,

Annelet Liebenberg

CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH

I _____, agree to let my child take part in Annelet Liebenberg's study regarding the prevalence of cyber bullying in private schools in Gauteng among Grade 7 to 9 learners.

I hereby give consent for my child to complete the questionnaire for this study. I have read and understood the Information Sheet.

I understand that:

- Participation in this study is voluntary.
- That my child may refuse to answer any questions they would prefer not to.
- I may withdraw my child from this study at any time.
- No information that may identify my child will be included in the research report, and my child's responses will remain confidential.

Signed _____

Date _____

Appendix E:



Psychology Department
School of Human and Community Development
University of the Witwatersrand
Private Bag 3, WITS, 2050
Tel: (011)717 4500 Fax: (011) 717 4559



Learner Assent Form

My name is Annelet Liebenberg and I am doing a project for university. I would like your help.

I would like you to help me try to find out more about cyber bullying. The reason this research is being done is to gather information about this problem. At no time will the information you give to me be used against you, your school or your parents. It is completely confidential and your name will not be used in the project. There are no direct risks or benefits to you or the school attached to participating in this study. If you would like to take part, you will complete a questionnaire during school time which will take about 30 minutes to complete. I will then use your results in my research.

Your parents have agreed to allow you to participate, however, if you decide not to, that is okay too. You decide whether or not you would like to be in this study or not, and no-one will be upset if you decide not to take part, or even if you change your mind about doing it later on. If after having completed the questionnaire, you should feel distressed due to it evoking some uncomfortable feelings, counselling services will be made available to you either through the school, or through the Emthonjeni Centre at Wits.

You may ask questions at any time, and if you have any questions at a later stage, you may email me (Annelet) at annelet@mweb.co.za. Your participation will be highly appreciated.

Would you like to participate: (Tick the appropriate box)

Yes

No

Signing at the bottom of this form means that you agree to participate and have read and understood the Participant Information Sheet.

Thank you very much for your time.

Annelet Liebenberg

Signature of learner _____

Date _____

Appendix F:

Department of Psychology School of Humanities and Community Development



Student Declaration

Name: Annelet Liebenberg
 Student No: 697610
 Supervisor: Prof. Joseph Seabi
 Essay Topic: The Prevalence of Cyber bullying in Gauteng Private Schools among Grade 7 to 9 learners
 Word count: 22 234

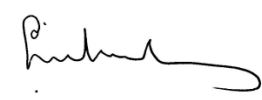
I, Annelet Liebenberg, hereby declare:

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

I confirm that the work submitted for assessment for the above course is my own unaided work except where I have explicitly indicated otherwise.

I have followed the required conventions in referencing the thoughts and ideas of others.

I understand that the University of the Witwatersrand may take disciplinary action against me if there is a belief that this is not my own work and/or that I have failed to acknowledge the source of the ideas or words in my writing.

Signature:  Date: 27 August 2015