

**Constructing an information base on teacher targeted
bullying towards policy formation**

by

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DECLARATION

I, the undersigned, sincerely declare that this thesis submitted in fulfilment of the degree: Philosophiae Doctor is original and entirely my own work with the support of my promotor. Sources used have been referenced and attributed. I also certify that this thesis has not previously been submitted at this or any other faculty or institution.

I hereby cede copyright of this thesis in favour of the University of the Free State.

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a large, stylized 'R' followed by a vertical line and a horizontal line, all enclosed within a large, irregular oval shape.

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20 February 2023

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SUMMARY

The primary objective of this study is to develop an information database on bullying of teachers, with the aim of formulating policies to safeguard them against workplace bullying within the South African context.

This study is underpinned by a theoretical framework comprising three prominent theorists, namely Habermas, Foucault, and Paulo Freire. The communicative action theory of Habermas was utilised to propose the use of language and dialogue between perpetrators of bullying and victims, in order to establish mutual understanding and consensus that could lessen or even eliminate bullying. Foucault's theory was used to gain insights into power and knowledge, and the productive nature of power. Foucault advocates for the positive use of power and knowledge and the substitution of undesirable notions and characteristics of the effectiveness of power. He advocates for enlightenment in using power for better social functioning between the superior social class (bullies) and the inferior social class (victims). Furthermore, the study draws on Paulo Freire's Theory of Pedagogy of the Oppressed, which is based on notions such as concern for humanisation and dehumanisation. Dehumanisation refers to the actions of the perpetrators (oppressors) of bullying, while humanisation is concerned with the recognition by bullies of their actions, and their liberation in becoming more fully human beings, hence achieving liberation.

The NRV Workplace Bullying Model that I developed from my Master's study, suggested an explanation of the phenomenon of victimisation in the workplace, elucidating the linearity and devastating consequences of victimisation, and its impacts on the well-being, productivity, and effectiveness of employees within the system. The theory sheds light on the role of government institutions and management as perpetrators of bullying, resulting in the exit of employees from the workplace. These theoretical underpinnings are imperative in framing and understanding bullying and teacher targeted bullying (TTB) within the South African context.

A comprehensive scholarly literature investigation on bullying and victimisation informed the study, in order to explain the complete nature of bullying and TTB, from how it manifests to

its devastating effects on victims. Past research on TTB and its impact on victims during the current COVID-19 pandemic was also examined.

To comprehend the primary purpose of this study, an interrogation of the legal framework on teacher protection in schools was undertaken. This involved examining what is advocated by the South African Constitution, the South African Schools Act, Teacher Unions, School Governing Bodies, School Management, and recent cases of teacher targeted bullying in South Africa, as well as the judgements handed down.

An exploratory sequential mixed methods approach was followed in this study. First, a qualitative interrogation of the South African legislative framework on teacher protection was conducted, in addition to a quantitative section that included gathering empirical quantitative data through questionnaires. An existing questionnaire from an earlier study was adapted for COVID-19 times and the data was collected from participants using the snowballing technique, with a digital link that was shared. This provided an overview of the perceptions and experiences of teachers regarding TTB. Additionally, four audio discussions were conducted to deepen the understanding of TTB and possible measures to prevent it.

The research findings have revealed numerous complexities related to the exposure of teachers to TTB in schools, including their experiences and perceptions, as well as recommendations from participants on how to combat TTB. In an interview with a departmental official confirmed my premise that there is no official TTB policy in place to protect teachers. These findings, linked with the theoretical and legal frameworks, this thesis provide a comprehensive information base that can be used by the Department of Education in the formation of policies aimed at addressing TTB in schools. In my final chapter, I provide a summary of the information base and propose elements for consideration in the formulation of such a policy.

Keywords: Democracy, dehumanisation, teacher targeted bullying, workplace victimisation, human rights, Information base, Policy formation.

ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

ABS	Adult Bully Syndrome
ANC	African National Congress
BPP	Bullying Prevention Programme
CPTD	Continuous Professional Teacher Development
DBE	Department of Basic Education
DOE	Department of Education
HOD	Head of Department
NAPTOSA	National Professional Teachers' Organisation of South Africa
NATU	National Teachers' Union
NEPA	National Education Policy Act
NRV	Non-Reactive Victimisation
PEU	Professional Educators' Union
SA	South Africa
SACE	South African Council for Educators
SADTU	South African Democratic Teachers' Union
SAOU	South African Teachers' Union
SASA	South African Schools Act
SGB	School Governing Body
SMT	School Management Team
TTB	Teacher targeted bullying

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GLOSSARY

The following key concepts will be defined:

Bully

A person who practises his/her power to terrify or hurt a feebler person (Hornby, 2010, p. 187).

Bullying

Goldsmid and Howie (2014) define bullying as the recurrent, deliberate, and prearranged act of hostility and violence towards a colleague or victim.

TTB

In this study, TTB is defined as the victimisation and targeting of educators by learners, as well as by colleagues, parents and other role-players within the work environment of teachers. Pervin and Turner (1998, p. 4) define TTB as “tenacious and forceful mistreatment of the teacher by swearing or mocking, meaningfully disregarding the teacher, making private remarks about the teacher, and damaging the teacher’s property”. Based on this definition, TTB refers to physically and verbally damaging actions of aggression, as well as less noticeable aggression, with the purpose of humiliating educators.

Emotional abuse

De Wet (2010a, p. 194) describes emotional abuse by learners as including actions such as disrupting classes, chatting with one another, back-chatting, ignoring, mocking, spreading rumours, and humiliating their teachers.

Physical abuse

According to the Medical Dictionary (2015, p. 87), physical abuse encompasses “any act resulting in a non-accidental physical injury, including not only intentional assault but also the results of unreasonable punishment”.

Violence

“Refers to the use of power to inflict injury or damage” (Hawkins, 1996, p. 499).

CHAPTER 1: ORIENTATION

1.1 Introduction

Global statistics suggest that victimisation in the workplace is a growing societal issue, affecting various fields of occupation (Ragusa & Groves, 2015). WPB, as defined by Jacobs and De Wet (2018), typically involves being bullied at work by a colleague or superior, and studies indicate that this poses serious problems within the South African educational system (Jacobs & De Wet, 2013). My own findings from my Master's study (Campher, 2016) confirmed earlier results by De Wet and Jacobs (2006) that cross-peer victimisation is an escalating educational problem in South Africa. Furthermore, Jacobs and Teise (2019) reported on how teachers feel bullied by departmental officials. Teachers are uniquely vulnerable, as they are not only bullied by colleagues or line managers, as is typical of WPB but also by learners and other role players. I therefore conceptualised TTB as all forms of bullying directed at teachers in their places of work or in work-related contexts. It should be noted that this broadens the conceptualisation presented by De Wet and Jacobs (2006), who only focused on learner-on-educator victimisation in their seminal publication on TTB. In this study, the term "teachers" refers to professional individuals who teach at a school, irrespective of their position or post level.

The consequences of workplace bullying are profound, affecting victims both directly and indirectly. Socially, bullied individuals tend to withdraw and isolate themselves, leading to absenteeism (Ingersoll, 2001). In serious cases, they may be unable to return to work at all (Worth & Squelch, 2015). TTB can have a direct impact on educators' health, as well as an indirect impact on their ability to perform their teaching duties and maintain their well-being within educational institutions (Jacobs & Teise, 2019; Woudstra et al., 2018). A study by Woudstra, Janse van Rensburg, and Visser (2018) found that TTB is associated with high levels of anxiety among teachers. Additionally, effective education cannot take place in an environment where teachers are subjected to TTB, as it undermines their role as role models, protectors, and authority figures (De Wet, 2010a). Conflict within educational institutions jeopardises the education of learners and the psychological well-being of teachers (Woudstra et al., 2018), with multi-faceted and deliberate actions that can cause physical and emotional

pain and destruction of property (Neser et al., 2004). The impacts of TTB are severe, with long-lasting consequences for victims, negatively affecting their human rights, including the right to a dignified life, private life, and personal security.

Prior to 1994, the apartheid ideology of the South African government legally enforced discrimination, inequality, and societal poverty, creating numerous challenges across all societal spheres in the country. The first democratic elections in 1994 marked a new period of transformation in South African history, with the ruling party committed to promoting impartial ethics, civil rights, and basic human rights for all citizens (Republic of South Africa, 1996a). The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa formalised the vision for the “new” South Africa, outlining its aims and objectives.

To heal the divisions of the past and establish a society based on democratic values, social justice and fundamental human rights; improve the quality of life of all citizens...; lay the foundations for a democratic and open society...; and build a united and democratic South Africa (Republic of South Africa, 1996: Preamble).

Ramaphosa (1998, p. 78), a prominent political figure and contributor to the laws of South Africa, including the current President, stated that laws in South Africa are intended to provide “the protection of basic (human) rights...and the exercising of control over all matters that affect the people’s lives”. Since 1994, a range of educational laws and policies have been promulgated and implemented to achieve the constitutional democratic societal aims and objectives within schools. These democratic policies and acts aim to transform the education system, emphasising freedom from discrimination based on race and gender, and focusing on non-discriminatory principles to build a nation based on respect and dignity (Department of Education, 1995). Diverse education laws and conduct procedures have been introduced post-apartheid, attempting to realise new sets of democratic ideals in the education sector, in order to transform the broader South African nation into an honest, just, and equalitarian society that is fundamentally centred on respect and dignity (Republic of South Africa, 1996a). Specific laws that comprise interaction, the right to be represented, taking ownership of one’s actions, and being honest, including participation by every role player, have been identified by both Matlosa (2005) and Smit and Oosthuizen (2011). At face value, South African teachers have substantial rights within legislation and strong protection within unions. However, it is

contended that the rights of those teachers who are subjected to TTB on a daily basis are not upheld, and thus they are not sufficiently protected. Although policies and acts would seem to include teachers and the protection of their human dignity and protection from discrimination, oppression and victimisation, the reality is that these policies are not implemented in practice. Jansen (2000, p. 41) warned that “the first ten years of policy-making in South Africa, hinged largely on the symbolism rather than the substance of change in education”. He further pointed out that there is a serious lack of logic in terms of changing practices on the ground. These sentiments still reflect the reality of the modern-day South African education system 23 years after the promulgation of new democratic policies, and they highlight the problem that there seems to be no political will to change the situation regarding the realities of teachers in schools.

Teachers who are targeted by bullying require protection beyond the criminal justice system. Seeking legal remedy can be a lengthy, cumbersome and costly process (Reyneke & Jacobs, 2018). Therefore, the focus should be on preventing and addressing TTB through policy, long before it reaches the point of requiring legal action. Despite the overwhelming statistics that demonstrate the prevalence of TTB in South African schools (Jacobs & De Wet, 2015), the Department of Basic Education (DBE) currently has no TTB policy. Pillay and Mestry (2006) argue that policies based on need should be informed by comprehensive information. This study aims to fill the research gap and provide an *analysis for policy* (Jacobs & De Wet, 2018; Taylor et al., 1997) by synthesising an information base from various data sources, which can be used to develop policies and practices to prevent and address TTB. This information base can be utilised by the DBE and teacher representative organisations to protect educators in the workplace and make an educational contribution towards bullying prevention policies and practices.

1.2 Rationale

The impetus for this research study emerged from a thorough literature review on bullying in all its forms and initial inquiries into the existence of protection policies and prevention programmes and practices for educators in the workplace by the DBE. The study was further motivated by personal experiences of teacher targeted bullying (TTB) and the lack of support from authorities.

During the data collection phase, an interview was conducted with an employee of the DBE Employee Wellness Programme, responsible for overseeing the general wellness of learners and teachers at schools. The employee stated that, to their knowledge, there was no TTB policy in place to safeguard teachers from workplace victimisation. They directed me to the Public Service Training and Education website, but the green paper referred only to Education and Training policies for public servants and did not include a TTB policy for protecting teachers against workplace victimisation. The verbatim response of the DBE employee is detailed in Chapter 6 of this study. Chapter 5 examines the Public Service Training and Education policies to investigate how the South African legislative framework protects TTB in terms of policy and procedural implementation.

The role of teachers is central to the pedagogical and scholarly functions of educational institutions and schools. Effective teaching and learning cannot take place without healthy, protected, and well-functioning teachers. Currently, there is no policy or act in place that is formulated and implemented by the DBE to address, reduce, and prevent TTB. Therefore, the focus of this study is to synthesise an information base on TTB that can inform policy development and protect South African teachers against any form of workplace bullying.

1.3 Problem statement and main research question

As per the mission and vision of South Africa's Education Ministry, a world-class education system must be built to address the future challenges of education in the country (DBE, 2021). However, recent studies indicate that the challenges of TTB are escalating at an alarming rate in schools across South Africa and other parts of the world, which is becoming an educational problem, contrary to what one would assume (D'Cruz et al., 2016; Fahie & Devine, 2014; Jacobs & De Wet, 2018; Jacobs & Teise, 2019; Klein & Bentolila, 2018).

The studies included in the literature review provide insight into the reality of bullying, TTB, and legislative policies concerning educator protection in the workplace. TTB has devastating effects on the emotional and psychological well-being of educators, leading to illness and inability to teach effectively through various methodologies in classrooms. This victimisation often results in teachers taking extended periods of sick leave, resigning from their profession or being medically boarded.

Bullying among learners also negatively affects their ability to focus on learning, as noted by Ansary, Elias, Green, and Greene (2015). It is evident from the literature review on educator protection policies in South Africa that a lack of TTB laws and their implementation in government structures leads to educators being uneducated and unprotected. Furthermore, existing policies and practices primarily focus on protecting learners rather than educators, as previously mentioned.

In light of these circumstances, it can be argued that the Department of Basic Education's lack of TTB policies and practices is failing to protect educators from bullying. This failure is leading to the marginalisation, oppression, and victimisation of educators, with severe consequences for the learners and education of the South African youth. Thus, this study aims to inform major stakeholders within education and bring attention to the TTB scourge.

Pillay (2006) notes that policies stem from specific needs in a sector, but before any action is taken towards policy, the needs have to be fully understood. He summarises the following steps in policymaking:

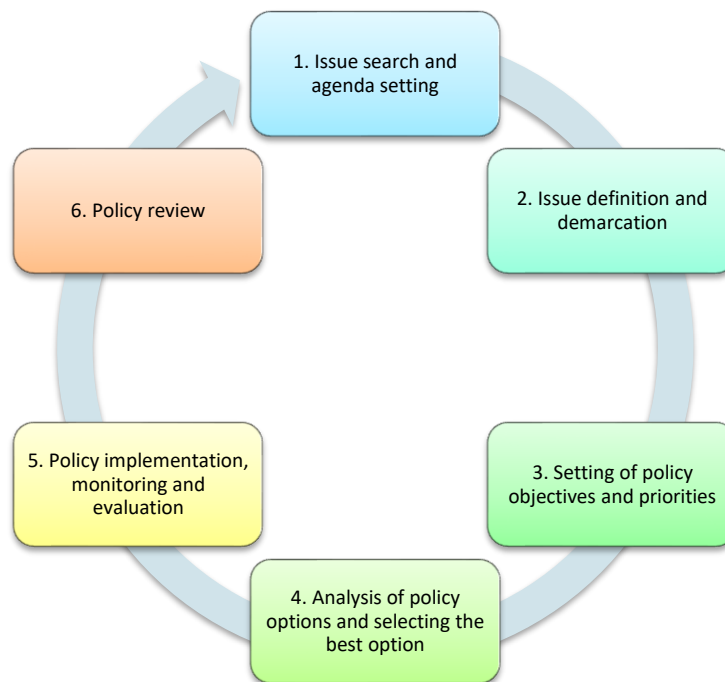


Figure 1-1: The policy process

The current study aims to contribute to the first and second steps of policy formation by conducting policy analysis. Codd (1988, p. 235) defines policy analysis as “a form of inquiry which provides either the informational base upon which policy is constructed, or the critical examination of existing policies”. Policy research plays a crucial role in providing policy-makers with information to help them formulate effective policies. This aligns with Taylor et al.’s (1997) concept of policy analysis. Furthermore, Hansson-Forman et al. (2021) emphasise the significance of considering strategic and political aspects at the beginning of the policy cycle, including the political will to address the issue of TTB, as well as how the problem is portrayed during the process.

Given the prevalence of TTB among teachers, the lack of action from policy-makers, and the need to establish an information base for policy formation, the following research question is proposed for this study:

What information can inform a policy to address and prevent teacher targeted bullying in order to protect teachers in the workplace?

The aim of this research study is to develop an information base on teacher targeted bullying with the purpose of formulating policies that protect educators from workplace bullying in the South African educational context.

1.4 Secondary research questions

To answer this main question, the study will synthesise information from theory and literature, and data sources, guided by the following secondary research questions:

- How does the South African legal framework inform a policy to prevent and address teacher targeted bullying?
- What are the experiences and views of teachers on teacher-targeted bullying?
- What information can be synthesised to form an information base towards a teacher targeted bullying prevention policy?

1.5 Research aim and objectives

The objective of this research is to collate relevant data and insights that can be used to develop a policy aimed at tackling and mitigating teacher targeted bullying, with the ultimate goal of safeguarding educators in their workplace.

Table 1-1: Objectives, methods, and chapters

Objective	Method	Chapter
To unpack the theoretical framework and related concepts which will assist in elucidating teacher targeted bullying.	Literature study	Chapter 2
To review the current body of knowledge regarding TTB.	Literature study	Chapter 3
To provide detail on the methodology used.		Chapter 4
To analyse the South African legal framework that guides policy-makers on how to address and prevent teacher protection.	Document analysis	Chapter 5
To analyse the general experiences and views of a sample of teachers regarding TTB.	Mixed methods	Chapter 6
To analyse, summarise, and draw conclusions towards synthesising an information base for a policy on teacher bullying.	Synthesis based on the above	Chapter 7

1.6 Research design

1.6.1 Research methodology

According to Bogdan and Biklen (2003), research methodology is the language used to refer to the general analysis associated with academic perspectives in a research study. Similarly, Harding (as cited in Bogdan & Biklen, 2003) describes methodology as the concept that links understanding to an academic structure that guides a thesis. Methodology comprises various layers that guide a researcher. "A paradigm is a basic set of principles by which actions are guided" (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005, p. 22). In addition, Guba and Lincoln (1994) define a paradigmatic concept as the fundamental philosophy and way of thinking that leads the person undertaking the empirical study to consider a specific research methodology, as well as the corresponding nature of being combined with the rational vital conducts. Models play a role in elucidating perceptions, which assist in the provision of the reasoning in a specific study, and require a person who undertakes an empirical study using specific techniques in information gathering, reflection, as well as understanding. Theories are paramount for the investigative model, given their effect on the empirical inquiry (Terre Blanche et al., 2006). Methods describe the way in which one approaches a study with the goal of finding positive outcomes and responses (Taylor & Bogdan, 1984).

In this study, a pragmatic approach was adopted in an attempt to find a regulatory solution to a real-life problem. Tashakkori and Teddlie (2003, p. 713) explain pragmatism as follows:

This is a deconstructive paradigm that debunks concepts such as "truth" and "reality" and focuses instead on "what works" as the truth regarding the research questions under investigation. Pragmatism rejects the either/or choices associated with the paradigm wars, advocates for the use of mixed methods in research, and acknowledges that the values of the researcher play a large role in interpretation of results.

I employed a pragmatic perspective in the study, which acknowledges the absence of absolute truth and the existence of multiple ways of knowing in social science research (Mertens, 2010; Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2003). This approach allowed for the use of different methods to construct the information base, including the use of quantitative data to gain an overview of the experiences of teachers who participated in the survey. I did not adopt a positivist stance,

nor did I aim to generalise the findings as absolute truth. Rather, the quantitative data was used to provide insight into the teachers' experiences with TTB.

I employed the interpretivist paradigm for the qualitative part of the study. Lichtman (2013) and McMillan and Schumacher (2010) describe the interpretivist model as one which aims to work with individuals, analysing insights and experiences to make sense of their situation and context (Bryman & Bell, 2015; Jansen, 2016; Lichtman, 2013). As TTB must be conceptualised within the natural context of schools, it is crucial to understand the lived experiences of the individuals affected by this phenomenon. Interpretivism challenges the notion of a completely objective position as the researchers' own knowledge and beliefs influence their perception of data, and bias may be expected (Bryman & Bell, 2015; Walliman, 2011). To prevent personal opinions and theories from dominating the interpretation of conclusions, it is necessary to communicate clearly and interpret the views and experiences of participants in an epistemically sound manner. Chapter 6 focuses on the participants' experiences with TTB in various schools. Critical scholars such as Habermas, Foucault, and Freire were used to explore the plight of victims.

1.6.2 Theoretical framework

The theoretical framework for this study is grounded in critical theory, which is a crucial societal epistemic that assumes that all people must be liberated. According to critical theory, any variation from liberation is considered a dominance and a breach in the struggle towards societal liberation, hence leading in the direction of criticising and altering societal structures (Habermas, 2006). This theory aims to eliminate human-inflicted anguish that is deeply constructed in different societal structures. In this regard, it is believed that bullying is a human-made suffering, and critical theory seeks to enhance the progress of individuals' way of life by freeing them from their enslavers (McLaren & Giarelli, 1995). Therefore, critical theory opposes the oppression, victimisation, and domination of educators and is aligned with the core elements of the theorists used in the theoretical framework of this study.

As previously mentioned, TTB is an outcome of bullying, a human-made suffering that occurs in the context of schools. TTB infringes on educators' freedom to function as emancipated human beings, which inhibits their work performance. The purpose of this study is to construct

an information base towards a TTB policy that can assist policy-makers in the DBE to improve on existing TTB policy or even create a new TTB policy and practice. This policy can help to liberate educators from TTB circumstances that enslave them at their schools.

The three critical theorists used in this study are Habermas and Foucault, as well as Paulo Freire's Humanising Pedagogy Theory. The following section will discuss why it is necessary to frame the study through the perspectives of these theorists, given the interconnectedness of their views on enlightenment, power, knowledge, communication, and emancipation. A detailed analysis of these theories will be presented in Chapter 2.

1.6.2.1 Foucault's Theory on relationship between power and knowledge

Foucault posits that power is the ability of one person to influence the actions of another. This type of interaction is ubiquitous across various spheres of society. In primitive civilisations, power was established through the reality of a supreme power that exerted control over people through aggression. Superiority is enforced by those in power onto the more vulnerable, including victims of TTB in this study. Foucault's primary objective is to replace harmful notions of superiority with beneficial ones and to use power for the betterment of society. In the case of TTB, power can be used positively to empower victims towards enlightenment, for example, through the implementation of an Anti-Bullying policy that sheds light on the reality and truth of TTB in the workplace.

Foucault contends that authority must be participatory rather than substantive, with individuals creating it. Rather than theorising superiority, individuals can take an active role in authoritarian interactions, whether as subjects of domination or as those who take a stance against victimisation. This can be achieved through the implementation of efficient laws to counteract victimisation and prevent TTB, thereby becoming the trigger for the reduction and prevention of TTB in the educational environment.

Foucault's theory seeks to establish trust in the fundamental values of honesty and worth. Honesty and worth are prerequisites for enlightenment. The objective of this study is to determine the information required to develop a policy to address and prevent TTB in order to protect teachers in the workplace.

1.6.2.2 Habermas Theory of Communicative Action

Jürgen Habermas' theoretical model, known as communicative action, focuses on the establishment of a reasonable procedure for achieving understanding among individuals, which can lead to a shared agreement without being imposed (Habermas, 1985). The theorist's Theoretical Debate regarding Modernism results in an interactive methodology towards modernism by utilising the concept of talkative wisdom. The communicative rationality process that Habermas advocates is paramount to this study as it provides a theoretical perspective for both perpetrators and victims of TTB in the realisation and formation of an information base towards a TTB policy. Habermas' talkative logic aligns with earlier ideas of symbols, resulting in a non-effective unification and cross-sectoral strength that encourages communication and diverse viewpoints, thereby overcoming personal perceptions that may favour an intelligent arrangement (Habermas, 1985; Habermas, 1987). While the theorist sees communication logic rationality threatened by modernity, he postulates that talkative logic – abandoning, uniting, and transferring power through agreement within confrontational dialogue – is a fundamental aspect of a person's interaction with others (Habermas, 1983). Habermas views this fundamental participation as essential to societal interactions, with dialogue having a direct impact on reaching an agreed consensus. Consensus and related discourse are essential components of the communication process, resulting in a dialogue between TTB perpetrators and victims, ultimately supporting an information base towards TTB policy formation.

1.6.2.3 Paulo Freire's Theory of the Pedagogy of the Oppressed

The central concern of Freire's theory is the state of society. This concern arises from the recognition of the degradation of humanity, which is not only a possibility but a historical reality (Macedo, 2005). Human degradation refers to the loss of human dignity and kindness, which has been taken away from individuals. In the context of this study, this degradation applies to the victims of TTB but also to those who perpetrate such acts, as their liberty to reach their full potential in humanity is deformed. Freire argues that to be subjected to human degradation is an ancient pursuit that ultimately leads to complete despair (Macedo, 2005). This aligns with the experiences shared by teachers who have been victims of TTB, as more often than not, the school management or principals who engage in bullying behaviour deny their actions, leading to ongoing bullying in schools.

1.6.3 Literature review

In order to provide context and examine the existing discourse on a global and South African level, a thorough literature review of recent information on TTB will be essential in this research study. The literature review will draw from a variety of sources to ensure a comprehensive representation of the topic (Creswell, 2008), and will seek to build on and expand past research on TTB. Analysis and critique of the literature review will also be conducted to identify any gaps or limitations in current understandings of TTB.

1.6.4 Research methods

With the study objectives in mind, an exploratory sequential mixed methods approach was employed in three phases (Ivankova et al., 2016). The first phase consisted of a document analysis to establish the legal framework that would inform a TTB policy. Next, quantitative data was gathered to provide an overview of the experiences of survey participants, followed by the collection and analysis of qualitative data from both the survey and interviews to gain a more in-depth understanding of teachers' experiences and perspectives.

Therefore, the research study followed the following approach:

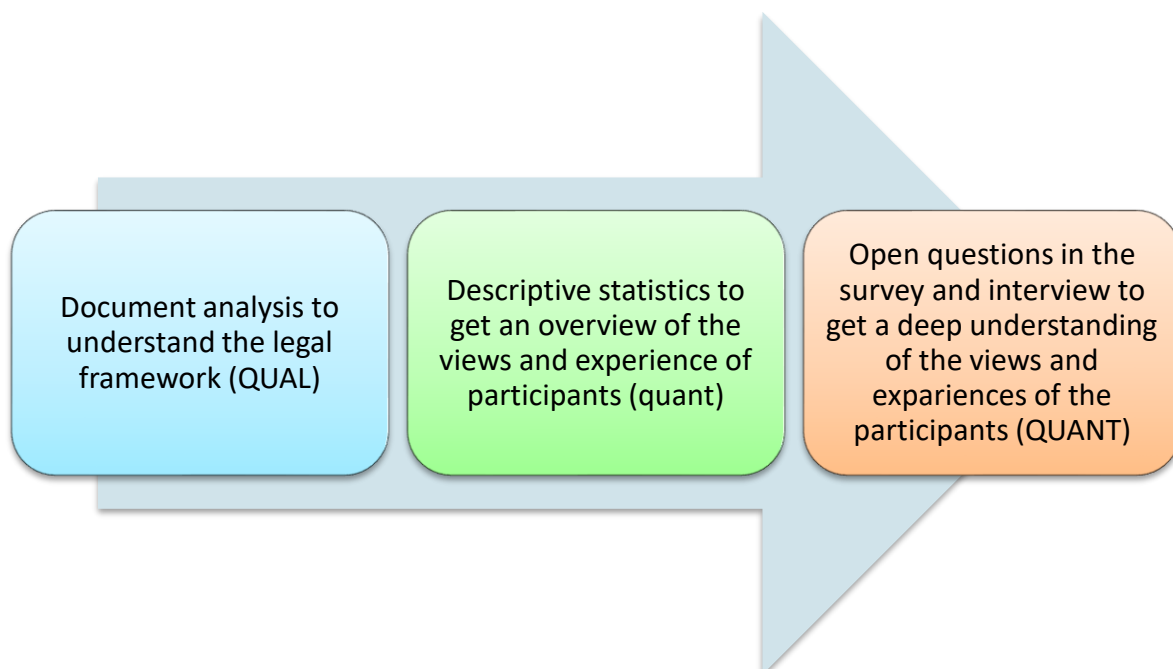


Figure 1-2: Research methods used

Upon establishing the theoretical framework for the study, informed by three theories, the NRV Model, and a comprehensive literature review, the South African legislative framework was analysed to align a TTB policy with current legislation. Subsequently, survey data supplemented with interview data was analysed to gain a deeper understanding of the views and experiences of teachers.

1.6.5 Data collection

The data collection process started with a document analysis, which involved reviewing key legislation, acts, legal and policy documents, and court cases and their judgements, as well as interrogating and interpreting the South African legislative framework relating to the protection of teachers in the workplace. This non-collaborative approach to data collection ensured non-biased information, free from subjective examination (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016), and provided a good source of textual data for a qualitative study (Creswell, 2008).

The next phase involved collecting empirical data using an online questionnaire that was adapted from an existing questionnaire (De Wet & Jacobs, 2013) to include the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. The questionnaire was used to collect quantitative and qualitative data on the views and experiences of teachers regarding TTB. The digitisation of the questionnaire and distribution via social media platforms such as WhatsApp messenger allowed for wider participation while avoiding social contact and minimising the risk of contracting the disease.

In addition to the questionnaire, four teachers who were victims of TTB and an official from the Eastern Cape DBE were interviewed to obtain a deep understanding of the experiences and views of teachers regarding TTB, and to get clarity on the measures in place to address TTB in schools. The purpose of these interviews was to obtain diverse views from different contexts and not to infer the findings beyond the sample.

Qualitative researchers collect data from various sources, such as text-based material, people, objects, electronic records, and audio-visual sources (Leedy & Ormrod, 2010; Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). By using a combination of data collection methods, this study sought to enhance the validity and reliability of the findings.

1.6.6 *Data analysis*

Guided by the views of Taylor, Rizvi, Lingard, and Henry (1997), the document analysis considered not only the directives and implications of current legislation, including case law and existing policies but also intertextualities, contradictions, and silences in the documents. This approach enabled a synthesis of legal issues that could inform a TTB policy.

Regarding the quantitative data, the scores of individual participants in terms of central tendencies (mean and percentages, as appropriate based on the nature of the data per construct), as well as considering the spread in terms of standard deviation, were aggregated. In terms of the qualitative data, the analysis followed trends in qualitative data by identifying emerging themes. Direct quotes were used to substantiate claims, and these were juxtaposed with available literature.

1.7 Integrity of the study

This section addresses the measures taken to ensure the integrity of the study. These measures include ethical considerations, the coherence and credibility of the research findings, and the validity of the research data, both internal and external.

1.7.1 *Ethical considerations*

Ethical considerations are critical in any research study, including empirical ones. According to Mertens (2010), ethical conduct is vital during the preparation and execution of research. Additionally, anthropological aspects, such as the participants, guarantors, fellow scientists, the community, and academic establishments and the discipline of science, should also be considered (Mertens, 2010; Strydom, 2011). The researcher must avoid endangering the participants of the study (Johnson & Christensen, 2012; Lichtman, 2013) and ensure that essential ethical procedures are in place to safeguard them from physical or emotional harm. The researcher must always ensure that what is right and fair is prioritised, guaranteeing that the researcher is doing the right thing (Johnson & Christensen, 2012; Lichtman, 2013). The study must be beneficial to the community and the scientific contribution (Mertens, 2010). It is also the researcher's obligation to conduct the study proficiently to avoid any wrongdoing during the investigation.

To maintain the ethical integrity of this study, I obtained ethical approval from the GHREC Ethical Clearance board by UFS, with Ethical Clearance number UFS-HSD2020/0062/0911. Additionally, I submitted my application to seek approval from the DBE. Participants will be informed of their right to retract from the study at any stage, and there will be no penalties for doing so. Clarity and sincerity are critical moral considerations which must be observed and valued during the study (Creswell, 2008; Mertens, 2010). To ensure integrity, the study's supervision and analysis of research findings will be conveyed to all participants through a truthful and reliable manner, as participants must have access to the research findings as fundamental privileges (Mertens, 2010; Strydom, 2011). It is also essential to emphasise that no individual or school participating in this study will be identified by name.

1.7.2 Reliability and validity

This section outlines the measures taken to ensure the internal and external validity, consistency, trustworthiness, and transferability of the research findings on TTB.

1.7.2.1 Validity and credibility

Validity refers to whether the research achieved its intended goals and whether it is considered trustworthy by others. This TTB study adopts a pragmatic approach to align with the research aims and objectives. Moreover, this study was conducted with appropriate phases to attain the desired outcomes. Internal validity concerns whether the research instruments and data generation methods (such as legal documents, questionnaires, and interviews) correctly measure what they claim to measure, and for qualitative data, whether claims align with the data collected. To enhance credibility, the complexity of qualitative research, such as attitudes, feelings, experiences, and perceptions, should be accounted for (Lichtman, 2013; Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). These complexities are discussed in more detail in Chapter 4.

1.7.2.2 Reliability or consistency

Reliability refers to the consistency, predictability, and dependability of the research methods used in a study. In quantitative studies, reliability is achieved when the same results are obtained upon repeated measurements in the same or comparable situations using appropriate instruments (Creswell, 2008; Leedy & Ormrod, 2010; Mertens, 2010; Terre

Blanche et al., 2006). To ensure reliability, researchers should use the correct instruments in their studies. For this TTB study, I used a questionnaire designed for a previous South African study, which was adapted for the COVID-19 situation. In qualitative studies, authors suggest that triangulation can enhance the reliability of research (Leedy & Ormrod, 2010). Kumar (2014) summarises the indicators of reliability in qualitative studies as reliability, transferability, trustworthiness, and validation. These are discussed below.

1.7.2.3 Transferability

The above statement pertains to the transferability of research findings, which is defined as the extent to which the results of a study can be applied to other settings or situations (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). Based on the aforementioned authors, it can be inferred that the mixed method research approach, as used in this TTB study, can be generalised to other contexts in society. The next section of the paper will focus on specifying the scientific boundaries of the study.

1.8 Demarcation of the study

1.8.1 *Scientific demarcation*

This academic work falls within the field of educational policy studies, which is a subfield of educational research (Ozga, 2000). Education policy research aims to produce knowledge that can improve educational practices and actions through rigorous and systematic analysis (Bassey, 2003; Pillay, 2006). The primary objective and methodology of this study is to construct an information base for legislative policies on teacher protection, using a critical theory paradigm and empirical research to develop research recommendations for an educator-targeted bullying policy.

Codd (1988) argues that research into educational practices is essential for evaluating their impact within educational institutions and the broader South African culture.

1.9 Layout of chapters

To effectively achieve the research purpose and goals of this study, the empirical study will proceed in the following manner:

Chapter 1: This chapter will outline the problem statement and rationale for the study, including research questions, purpose, and goals. The theoretical perspective, epistemic methodology, and thesis methodology, as well as research data collection and analysis, will be presented.

Chapter 2: This chapter will provide a theoretical framework based on critical theories by Habermas and Foucault, as well as Paulo Freire's Humanising Pedagogy Theory, to examine the complex nature of TTB and its manifestation in South Africa's education system.

Chapter 3: This chapter will present a literature review on TTB in all its forms, detailing its manifestation and substantiating the study's findings.

Chapter 4: This chapter will detail the methodology used, including the document analysis, survey, and interviews.

Chapter 5: This chapter will analyse the South African legal framework in handling TTB.

Chapter 6: This chapter will present the findings from the survey, revealing educators' experiences and observations of TTB.

Chapter 7: This chapter will draw conclusions and make recommendations based on the study's findings. It will also present an information base for constructing policies to prevent and address TTB.

1.10 Conclusion

The proposed study was introduced with an overview of its purpose and goals. The research's rationale, value, and objectives have been presented, and the literature review has been conducted on general bullying, TTB, and policies of educational organisations such as various unions, DBE, and the SA Constitution. The research's primary objective is to construct an information base for policy formulation that will safeguard educators from workplace bullying. The study employs the research paradigm of pragmatism and identifies theoretical perspectives and a mixed method research approach, with a preference for qualitative research, as appropriate methodologies to achieve the research objective. Various research aspects have been portrayed, such as the collection and assessment of statistics, the selection

of research participants, integrity of the study, moral contemplations, reliability and validity, consistency, and scientific demarcation, as well as the design of sections.

The study is backed up by scholarly literature on TTB, which suggests that there is a lack of empirical research on TTB policies and practices in SA, which could aid both the DBE and schools in protecting teachers, who are arguably the most valuable assets of our education system. In the document analysis, cornerstone legislation, Acts, and other legal and policy documents (e.g. South African Constitution, Constitution Bill of Rights, South African Schools Act), as well as court cases and judgements handed down to the perpetrators of TTB, were analysed. The research findings, based on sound methodologies, were then used to advance understanding of the realities of teachers.

The following section will discuss the theoretical framework, explaining the manifestation of TTB through three theoretical perspectives.

CHAPTER 2: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORKS AND PERSPECTIVES

2.1 Introduction

In the previous chapter, the need for a policy to prevent the bullying of teachers was explained. In this chapter, theories by three key theorists, Michel Foucault, Jürgen Habermas and Paulo Freire, will be focused on and discussed to frame the study and provide a clearer understanding of TTB towards policy formulation. Each of these theorists offers unique theoretical perspectives on the elements that contribute to the understanding of bullying as a human-made phenomenon. The interrelationship between these theories will also be presented schematically. Based on the initial literature study and insights gained in this study, a model, called the NRV Model, will be postulated and revisited at the end of the study.

Abend (2008) argues that theories are framed to clarify, forecast, and comprehend occurrences that challenge existing understanding within the limits of critical bounding norms. Furthermore, he suggests that a theoretical framework describes the theory that can explain why the research problem exists. Thus, the main focus of this study is to formulate an information base that will inform the formation of an anti-bullying policy to help victimised teachers through an anti-bullying policy that can be implemented by the DBE. The three theorists, along with the proposed NRV Model, form the theoretical framework that supports why the research problem of this study exists in reality.

2.2 Foucault and Habermas

Foucault and Habermas, who share the perspective of humanism, recognise that individuals can shape their own values to live meaningful and decent lives. Despite their distinct philosophical approaches to humanism, they agree that the presence of measures like democratic institutions and rights can determine and protect against contemporary threats such as bullying and victimisation (Ingram, 2005). Michel Foucault's approach prioritises power, consciousness, and improvement, and he promotes the idea that individuals who are attentive to social issues and take action towards independent social change can positively impact society.

Foucault's standards involve challenging the abuse of power by perpetrators or victims (Miller, 1993), which empowers a broad range of people in society through freedom (Foucault, 1984 in Miller, 1993). This principle can be extrapolated to advocate for Foucault's belief in enlightenment. However, Foucault's elucidation of unethical morality could be a threat to civil society rather than an empowering force. Foucault can be viewed as a modern-day quality ethicist who aims to liberate individuals' ability to make personal choices and shape their own lives. He stresses that shared agreement is not achieved through superior composed argument but rather through the instruction of different perspectives that bring about agreement. For Foucault, shared agreement is seen as a rearrangement resulting from the diffusion of power from the uppermost societal class to the lower class. Lower class punishment was changed to accommodate their understanding of the issue, and the communal arrangement was reorganised to include laws that broaden the spectrum of punishable offences, which is synonymous with humanism's idea of liberty within civilisation. Public executions were abolished as they went against humanistic morals of education of the inferior class. To ensure compassionate safety, offenders were made to work in community spaces to showcase improved behaviour and rational thinking patterns. Foucault advocates for Enlightenment by transforming the mind and turning individuals into figures of information, awareness, and thoughtfulness. According to Foucault, phenomenology, the philosophical study of experience and consciousness, helps individuals attain mindfulness and complete acceptance of righteousness and its significance, leading to enlightenment. Foucauldian power does not mean dominance, and his central aim is to substitute negative characteristics with productive ones, resulting in positive interactions, ultimate understanding, and enlightenment, producing reality and truth (Deacon, 1998).

The central objective of this study is to transform bullies through education into enlightened individuals who are aware of TTB. This is the reason why a policy on TTB is crucial to safeguard teachers against bullying. The importance of awareness lies in its ability to examine people's situations to establish better recognised responsibility. This promotes a better social order where power is dispersed from the uppermost societal class (perpetrators of TTB) to the lower class (victims of TTB) through a reorganised communal contract. Comparing the similarities between Humanistic theorists Michel Foucault and Jürgen Habermas will help internalise and understand the conceptual framework of this study.

Habermas can be viewed as a political theorist who is concerned with establishing a fairer commencement of social equality and human freedom. His fundamental pillar of action through communication advocates the use of words and sentences as a vital progression in which human beings can achieve their actions. Habermas believes that communicative reasonableness is being endangered by contemporary humanity, and he argues that the core of communicative reasonableness is the unrestricted, uniting, and collective agreement strength of challenging dialogue. Habermas considers this to be a fundamental emancipation to humanity (Habermas, 1983). According to him, this central experience is an integral aspect of human societal life. Communicative reasonableness is directly related to human societal life practices, and the notion of mutual understanding is ultimately an instrument for harmonising action.

According to Habermas (1990), argumentation requires the participation of all relevant parties, who engage in a collective search for truth without any external pressure, through dialogue aimed at improving the quality of arguments. Habermas argues that communicative rationality is the main driving force behind successful communication, resulting in better arguments that support his theory. Habermas believes that ethics in dialogue require five essential elements: the people involved in the conversation must be part of the discussion, with equal opportunity to question the validity of claims made against them; everyone involved must show empathy for the legitimacy of each other's statements; the power imbalances among participants must be diffused to avoid hindering agreement formation; and all participants should willingly clarify their objectives and intentions (Habermas, 1993).

The use of language entails an obligation to provide justifiable and well-articulated reasons for constructing shared understanding. Habermas (2010) highlights the importance of an honest dialogue, which is central to this study, as it holds the key to saving and protecting teachers who are targets of bullying. The outcome of such dialogue is determined by the participants involved and the nature of the discussion, which must align with what is deemed morally right and practical. This is evident in the research questionnaire used in this study. Furthermore, Habermas emphasises the significance of facts, appropriateness, and goodness. He asserts that proof should not be used as a means of control, rather, information and facts should aid in the liberation process (Weng, 2014).

Critical social theory is grounded in the belief that individuals should not be subjected to domination or lack of freedom. If such domination occurs, it should lead to an evaluation of societal change. Habermas (2010) and Foucault, Tormey, and Townshend (2006,) argue that the foundation of critical theory is not to cause humanitarian suffering, such as the prevalence of TTB, which constitutes a social injustice and runs counter to critical theory.

2.3 Paulo Freire

The choice of Paulo Freire's theory is motivated by its central focus on liberating humanity and opposing oppression. Freire (1970) rejected the notion of domination in all its forms and upheld respect for life and the liberation of the oppressed. He emphasised the significance of examining oppression and taking action against any form of racial discrimination, societal hierarchical imbalance, gender-based discrimination, cultural oppression, language infringement, and ethnic discrimination. Freire (1970) rejected the examination of the disintegration of various factors into a superior society.

Freire's vision for academia was to promote the recognition of open and democratic societies that do not suffer oppression, as opposed to colonialism and authoritarianism. His dedication to social freedom is not to be trapped in a circle of imprisonment. On the contrary, the more bullying is perpetuated, the more it becomes normalised, enabling the bully to continue to justify and engage in bullying behaviour. The bully deliberately confronts society and is oblivious to his or her inhibitions to communicate with others, making him or her a functioning member of society who can inflict harm on his or her victims and engage in TTB.

Freire (1970) argues that the oppressed and those who are victims of oppression, in their efforts to restore their humanity, strive towards true liberality. The oppressed understand the true nature of liberation and its necessity, and their liberation is achieved through praxis and the acknowledgement of the need to fight for it.

Freire posits that dehumanisation and oppression through humiliation are symbolic of the theft of humanity from the oppressed individuals (teachers) by the oppressors (bullies). This dehumanisation is a misrepresentation of the goal of emancipation and a hindrance to the normal functioning of the oppressed. Dehumanisation is not an isolated phenomenon, but a persistent problem that has been ongoing for years. To accept dehumanisation as a historical

destiny would lead to either pessimism or hopelessness. The struggle for humanisation, the liberation of effort, and the confirmation of individuals is only possible because dehumanisation is not a given purpose, but the result of an unjust command that incites violence in the bullies and dehumanises the oppressed (teachers).

To overcome oppression, the oppressors (bullies) must recognise the reasons behind their actions and alter their behaviour. This study aims to contribute to an information base that will inform the formation of a policy to prevent TTB by gaining epistemic knowledge. The perpetrators of TTB will become more informed individuals who understand the unfairness of their actions and may change their behaviour from oppressors to liberators by recognising the causes of their actions.

Paulo Freire (1968) asserts that the issue of unruly humanisation has been a persistent problem for humanity and has become a contemporary concern. The quest for humanisation, which refers to human freedom and liberation, leads to the recognition of dehumanisation, including oppression and bullying, which has been a prevalent reality for many generations.

When one recognises the devastating impact of dehumanisation, the perpetrators may engage in introspection and consider the feasibility of humanisation. Both humanisation and dehumanisation are long-standing stances, with humanisation being beneficial for humanity (teachers). Refuting this call confirms its existence and is evidence of an attempt to escape reality. Freire was outraged by the unfairness, mistreatment, domination, and aggression inflicted by bullies, as well as the consciousness and longing of the victims (teachers) for liberation and fair treatment, and their fight to heal from the inhumane treatment due to victimisation and bullying. According to Freire (1968), this situation highlights the reality that teachers are exposed to TTB in schools and their struggle for justice, support, and the restoration of their lost humanity.

Dehumanisation, according to Freire, refers to the theft of humanity, both from the victims and the perpetrators, and represents a misrepresentation of becoming fully human. The struggle for humanisation and the emancipation of work, the overcoming of estrangement, and the affirmation of individuals would be meaningless if dehumanisation (bullying) persists. Dehumanisation (bullying) is a tangible reality but is not a desired outcome, but rather the

result of an unjust command, due to the absence of protection policies, which incites acts of aggression in the oppressors (bullies), resulting in the dehumanisation of TTB victims (teachers) (Freire, 1968).

2.4 Interrelatedness (synergy) of the theories

The theories of Foucault and Habermas that the rights of teachers to democracy, human dignity, freedom, and humanism are violated and desecrated through oppression, victimisation, and domination (TTB) with severe consequences, are supported. Habermas' theory suggests that victimisation and oppression (TTB) are a human-made form of suffering. A strong correlation can be drawn between Foucault and Habermas, as both are primarily concerned with humanism or humanisation and emancipation through communicative dialogue, enlightenment, knowledge, and understanding, which, as previously stated, are linked to modern human and constitutional rights to freedom and freedom from oppression, victimisation, and bullying, including TTB. This is referred to by Freire as dehumanisation, and this critical interconnection is at the heart of Foucault, Habermas, and Freire's theories. It can be argued that these fundamental threads of humanisation, dehumanisation, and advocacy for liberation interconnect the theorists in a cyclical manner. This interrelatedness challenges TTB as a contemporary occupational suffering faced by teachers in schools.

The aforementioned humanisation and dehumanisation are the foundations of Foucault and Habermas' theories. It is posited that liberation and support for oppressed victims of bullying in the workplace (TTB) cannot be achieved without anti-bullying policies and programmes. This concept of liberation is also a cornerstone of Freire's theory. The schematic representation below illustrates the central interrelated characteristics of the three theorists.

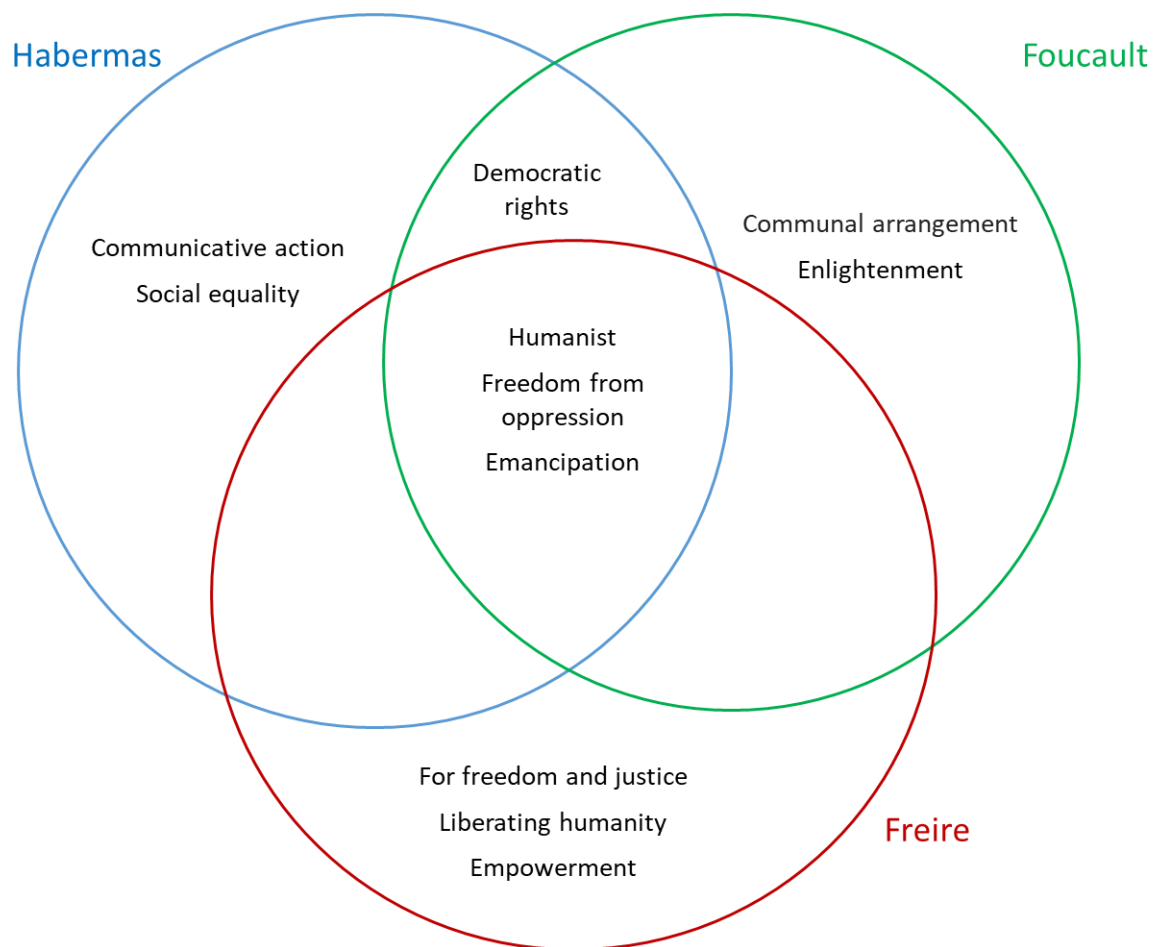


Figure 2-1: Schematic representation of interrelatedness of keywords related to the three theorists

2.5 Campher's Non-Reactive Victimization Model

(One system, three stages linear theory)

Workplace victimisation is a growing social problem that has been widely recognised and well-documented. Despite its increasing prevalence, there has been limited discourse surrounding this issue, particularly in the context of adult or workplace experiences. Ragusa and Groves (2015) acknowledge that workplace bullying is a growing social issue, as evidenced by global statistics, and note that no occupational field is immune to such victimisation.

A survey conducted across 34 countries found that reported rates of victimisation/bullying ranged from 34% to 79% and included verbal abuse, threats, humiliation, and bullying (Hodgins, Mac Curtain & Mannix-McHamara, 2014). Goldsmid and Howie (2014) further

define workplace victimisation as a persistent and extreme form of emotional abuse primarily communicated through verbal and non-verbal means.

These research statistics demonstrate the widespread nature of the problem (Misawa & Rowland, 2015). Therefore, it is imperative that society addresses workplace victimisation at all levels and not simply view it as a problem limited to schools. In order to prevent and rehabilitate victims of bullying, employee protection policies and programmes must be implemented by employers and governing bodies. Institutions such as schools, businesses, and organisations must take steps to identify and reduce victimisation in order to maintain the well-being and productivity of their personnel. Khan and Khan (2012) emphasise that workplace victimisation can negatively impact an organisation's overall performance, leading to a demotivated and anxious workforce that seeks to avoid work.

2.5.1 What harm does victimisation do?

The harm caused by workplace victimisation is difficult to measure; however, when considering the number of individuals affected, it results in a significant loss of productivity on a national scale. If it is estimated that a third of the workplace experiences victimisation at any given time, this equates to millions of employees worldwide suffering from undue stress. Such victimisation violates the fundamental rights of employees to dignity, freedom, and security. According to research conducted by the Association of Secondary Teachers, Ireland (2005), the most commonly reported emotional effects of workplace victimisation include anger, tearfulness, nervousness, stress, disturbed sleep, forgetfulness, low self-esteem, headaches, fatigue, and depression (Campher, 2016).

Given the impact on performance and productivity, companies and organisations cannot afford to ignore victimisation within their establishments. It is evident that workplace victimisation is a deliberate and harmful practice that has a negative impact on employees. If employers fail to take proactive measures, it leads to a linear and negative system, which can result in employees leaving the workplace or system.

Worth and Squelch (2015) state that workplace victimisation can cause the victim to be unable to return to work for an extended period, or in severe cases, not at all. The findings of Ingersoll

(2001) support these conclusions and indicate that workplace victimisation creates an unsafe environment, becoming the primary reason for employees to leave their workplace.

In today's competitive environment, employees face demanding and stressful responsibilities, making it challenging for them to carry out their duties effectively. Adding victimisation as an additional stressor is not only harmful to the employee but also to the organisation. This is especially true if there are no anti-victimisation policies and programmes in place. The trust in the employer decreases, which has a negative impact on the organisation's effective functioning.

At the centre of this linear system model is the understanding that the cause (non-reactive employer) and effect (victimised employee) are unidirectional and therefore viewed as linear. Schematically, my sensemaking at this stage is indicated below.

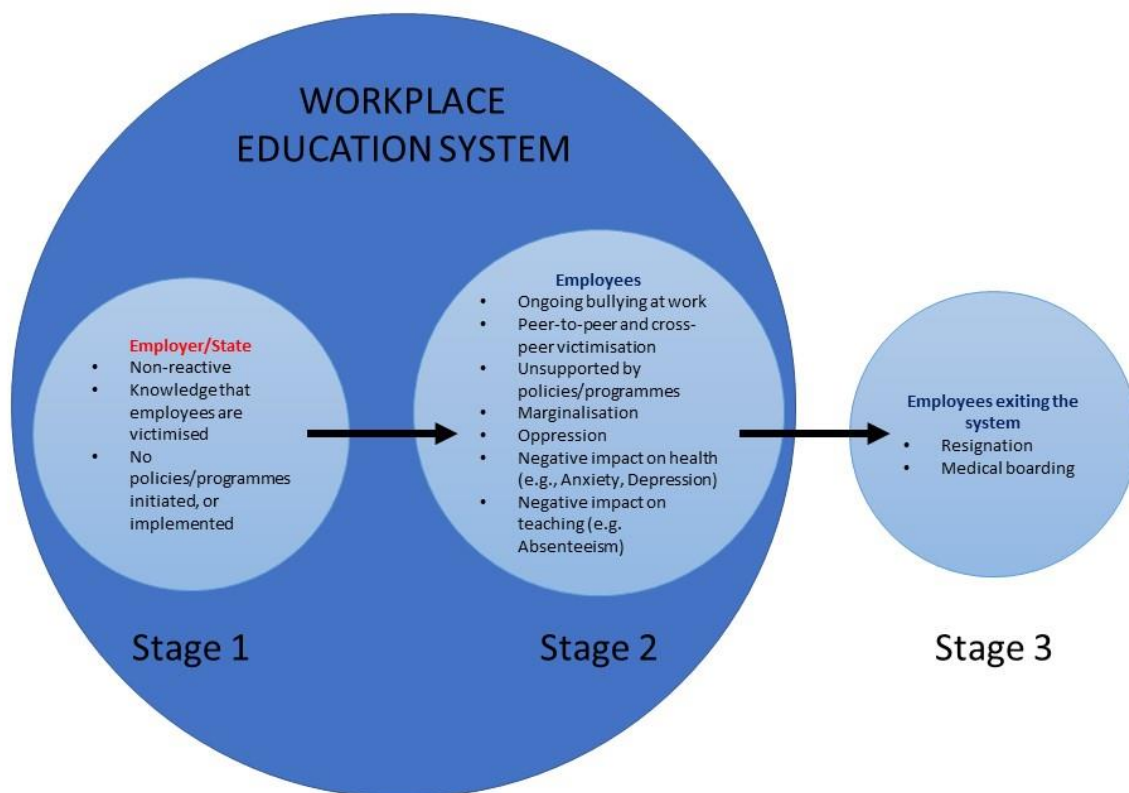


Figure 2-2: Campher's Non-Reactive Victimization Model

This model presents a nuanced understanding of the three stages of workplace victimisation in the system (Campher, 2016). Each stage is characterised by unique negative impacts and

consequences of victimisation on its victims. As noted earlier, this model depicts a progression in linear stages (unidirectional), as I have observed that employers often have a passive, non-reactive stance towards implementing necessary policies and programmes to protect their workforce from ongoing victimisation, even when alerted to the problem through employee feedback or reports.

This non-reactive stance by the employer leads to a lack of reciprocity and disunity between the stages, resulting in a linear system, as previously discussed. This leads to an exodus of employees from the workplace or system. However, if an employer in stage one were proactive, compassionate, and caring, and implemented necessary policies and anti-workplace victimisation programmes to protect and rehabilitate the workforce, the systems and stages would be interrelated, cyclical (non-linear), and positive. A non-linear system would result in less employee exodus, and ultimately lead to more efficient and productive employees and a better-functioning system.

2.5.2 *Discussion of the stages*

2.5.2.1 Stage 1

The employer or government is aware of the existence of workplace victimisation among its employees but chooses to adopt a passive approach to this issue. No policies or programmes aimed at preventing and rehabilitating victims of workplace victimisation are put in place. This lack of action exacerbates the problem.

2.5.2.2 Stage 2

Victimisation continues to occur, affecting employees at both inter-peer and cross-peer levels within the organisation. With no protective measures in place, employees experience a range of negative effects, including anger, anxiety, stress, headaches, fatigue, forgetfulness, disturbed sleep, low self-esteem, and depression. These physical and mental consequences of workplace victimisation frequently result in a significant portion of the workforce taking extended periods of sick leave.

2.5.2.3 Stage 3

At Stage 3, the employee who has been affected by workplace victimisation over a prolonged period is no longer actively contributing to the workforce, having taken extended periods of sick leave. Without the implementation of anti-victimisation policies and programmes by the employer or government, this employee either resigns or is medically discharged, and leaves the system or profession.

2.6 Conclusion

In this chapter, the views of three theorists, namely Michel Foucault, Jürgen Habermas, and Paulo Freire, were examined. These theorists' unique perspectives on the factors that contribute to the understanding of the development of bullying as a human-made phenomenon were discussed. The interrelationships between these theories and how they explain the reality of TTB and workplace victimisation in an individual's environment and behaviour were explored. A schematic representation was also provided to illustrate the theories. In addition to the three theorists, my Non-Reactive Victimisation Model was discussed and schematically represented.

Abend (2008) argues that theories, such as those discussed in this chapter, are formulated to make sense of, prevent, and challenge the acceptance of TTB in society. A theoretical framework, according to Abend (2008), is an entity that upholds a theory and serves as an outline that sheds light on the research problem of TTB.

In the following chapter, the trends in the current body of knowledge on TTB will be analysed.

CHAPTER 3: WORKPLACE VICTIMISATION AND TEACHER TARGETED BULLYING: A LITERATURE REVIEW

3.1 Introduction

In this study, a comprehensive literature review will be conducted to provide context to the current knowledge base on bullying, with a specific focus on TTB. The review will involve an examination and analysis of various credible and published sources on bullying and TTB, with the aim of advancing and supplementing our understanding of these phenomena. According to Creswell (2002), a body of knowledge encompasses not only the work being presented but also its references and origins. The literature review will examine previous studies on bullying and TTB from a global perspective, as well as within the South African context. The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on TTB will also be addressed.

The aim of this literature review is to shed light on the connections, gaps, and inconsistencies in existing literature on bullying and TTB. The focus will be on the examination of workplace bullying, its practices, and the harm it causes. By doing so, the study seeks to provide a more comprehensive understanding of these phenomena.

3.1.1 *Overview of bullying*

Bullying is a prevalent issue that affects not only school-aged children but also adults in various settings such as the workplace, homes, prisons, and other social environments. Despite its widespread occurrence, bullying as an adult experience has been under-researched (Swearer & Hymel, 2015). According to Bartlett and Bartlett (2011), bullying in the workplace involves premeditated actions aimed at causing harm and humiliation. Namie and Lutgen-Sandvik (2010) refer to workplace bullying as mobbing or mistreatment and estimate that it affects about half of working adults. Their research further revealed that in over 70% of cases where employees were subjected to workplace bullying, the management did not intervene, making the situation worse.

Fahie and Devine (2014) found that the education sector experiences a higher rate of victimisation than other work sectors. Their study showed that more than 46% of teachers

were persistently subjected to bullying by superiors in the workplace (Fox & Stallworth, 2010). De Wet (2010b) also reported that teachers are often targeted and victimised by both management and colleagues in the teaching profession. De Wet (2014) found that head teachers, who were in charge of the school, were often the primary perpetrators of bullying. This left their colleagues feeling emotionally powerless and insecure in their profession. In the same study, De Wet (2014) also noted that teachers who were bullied by their colleagues had difficulty fitting in socially at their school. Furthermore, De Wet (2014) found that supervisors openly targeted and demeaned teachers in front of their colleagues and students, in order to premeditatedly victimise them, causing them to fail in their jobs and casting a shadow of disrepute over them.

3.1.2 Causes of workplace bullying

The discourse on TTB places a significant emphasis on the protection of learners in legal terms, with less focus on teacher protection in the workplace. According to Tolentino (2016), TTB can result in teachers becoming victims of severe criticism and ridicule from workplace bullies, leading to a loss of self-esteem, doubts about their teaching abilities, and fear in their daily functioning and maintaining healthy working relationships with students and colleagues.

In a study conducted by Tolentino (2016) in the Philippines with 20 teachers as participants, the characterisation of workplace bullying was found to involve any hostile behaviour aimed at injuring another person with the intention of asserting superiority and creating an intimidating work environment that causes fear and tension, leaving the teacher in a vulnerable position. The author found that most teachers who were bullied by their principals or school management reported that the bullying began when they questioned the decisions or policies of their superiors. The mistreatment was meant to prove to the bullied teacher that the superiors were in control and their authority should not be questioned. This notion is reinforced by the notion that the bullies use their hostile behaviour to assert their power and control over other teachers, misusing their position of authority (Tolentino, 2016).

Workplace bullying arises from a combination of individual characteristics and company culture (D'Cruz et al., 2016). Lutgen-Sandvik and Tracy (2012) argue that workplace bullying persists where the company culture permits and even encourages it. Cleary et al. (2010)

observe that hierarchical organisational structures can lead to higher rates of victimisation. Lutgen-Sandvik and Tracy (2012) suggest that a holistic approach to addressing workplace bullying is more effective than focusing solely on individual perpetrators.

Blase, Blasé, and Du (2008) found that head teachers in schools may bully other teachers based on differences in personality traits, particularly gender-based differences. The authors also found that some principals may be unaware of the negative impact of their bullying, lack the skills to handle stressful situations, and be unable to effectively use their power as head of a school. Parsons (2005) found that senior personnel in schools may view highly respected junior teachers as a threat and bully them. Colleagues may also bully teachers who are well-liked by parents and other teachers (Parsons, 2005).

The consequences of TTB are far-reaching and can negatively impact a teacher's overall well-being. According to Blase and Blase (2006), TTB can result in low self-esteem, depression, physical health symptoms, and ineffective teaching practices. De Wet (2010b) found that TTB can lead to dissatisfaction among teachers and potentially cause them to leave the profession, which is supported by the NRV Model discussed in Chapter Two. The exposure to TTB can result in burnout, apathy, and avoidance of professional teaching activities (Blase et al., 2008) and can prevent teachers from preparing for lessons effectively (Jacobs & De Wet, 2015).

Cemaloğlu (2011) and Fahie and Devine (2014) both indicate that TTB is prevalent in the education sector and may lead to high rates of teacher attrition. A positive and functional school culture, along with competent and confident school leaders, is crucial in preventing TTB, according to Cemaloğlu (2011). However, many studies show that bullying is often prevalent in schools, creating a hostile and toxic environment.

Fahie and Devine (2014) confirm that TTB causes devastating physical and emotional trauma to teachers, manifesting as symptoms such as nausea, vomiting, weight loss, depression, anxiety, and even suicidal tendencies. The authors highlight that TTB also leads to economic and social consequences, including job loss and social isolation. TTB has a profound impact on effective teamwork and the educational culture as a whole.

Badenhorst (2011) found that children in the current age of social media, with its high level of communication and interaction, are exposing children and adults to drastic changes in communication patterns. Recent international research indicates that students engage in cyber bullying against teachers (Association of Teachers and Lecturers, 2007; Minor et al., 2013). A survey conducted by the Association of Teachers and Lecturers found that over 40% of educators were victims of cyber bullying through the receipt of disturbing emails, while nearly 38% were bullied through condescending text messages, and 15% received threatening communication. Furthermore, Kõiv (2015) discovered that educators were subjected to mistreatment through prejudice and racism.

Singh and Steyn (2013) found that teacher targeted bullying in the form of physical or cyber bullying can negatively impact the safety of teachers, educational instruction and learning outcomes, as well as the school culture. The victimisation of teachers through social media can have severe consequences for educators, including physical well-being, confidence, reputation, and professional development (National Association of Schoolmasters Union of Women Teachers, 2012). According to Cassidy et al. (2009), a school environment with a supportive, caring, and positive culture can be a productive cyberspace where the effective use of technology can result in a positive teaching and learning environment that promotes respectful communication.

Smith (2011) reported that teachers who experience cyberbullying feel emotionally traumatised to the point where they feel unsafe and want to leave the teaching profession. This notion is supported by the NRV Model, which posits that teacher targeted bullying in all its forms often leads to teachers exiting the workplace without proper support and rehabilitation. De Wet (2014) also found that teachers who experience bullying are often traumatised and vulnerable, and in many cases, they do not receive adequate support and rehabilitation from school management or colleagues. In some instances, they may refrain from disclosing the victimisation due to fear of negative exposure for their employer in the education sector. Bowling et al. (2010) also noted that workplace victimisation is exacerbated by differences in gender, cultural beliefs, and personal opinions.

Research by Blase and Blase (2006) and Einarsen et al. (2011) indicates that employers may engage in bullying behaviours towards their employees, such as verbal abuse, excessive

workload, unrealistic demands and deadlines, exclusion, and spreading false rumours with the intention of damaging their credibility. Einarsen (2000) and Einarsen and Raknes (1997) also highlight that in many cases, the primary perpetrator is the employer themselves. This aligns with the NRV Model, which posits that the employer's awareness of bullying within the workforce and failure to take action constitutes them as a bully.

Leadership styles within the workplace can have a significant impact on bullying and its victims. Vartia (1996) states that autocratic leadership styles can lead to bullying among subordinates. In contrast, transformational leaders foster a positive work environment and company culture that minimises workplace bullying (Appelbaum et al., 2012; Brown & Trevino, 2005). Luthans and Avolio (2003) identify authentic, self-aware, and transparent leadership styles as effective in reducing workplace bullying, as these leaders are true to themselves, communicate effectively, make decisions cooperatively, and value the expression of opinions among their employees. Zhu et al. (2004) suggest that authentic leaders tend to embrace communication, ethical behaviour, and information sharing, and have a high regard for the expression of opinions within their workforce, as advocated by Habermas' Theory of Communicative Action. However, recent literature has also revealed that educators may be victims of rudeness, retaliation, and provocation (Fox & Stallworth, 2010).

In 2014, a Workplace Bullying Survey conducted in the United States found that 27% of American adults admitted to experiencing bullying in the workplace, while one-third reported witnessing such incidents in their workplace. A survey across 34 countries reported bullying rates ranging from 34% to 79% of the workforce, as measured by verbal abuse, threats, humiliation, and bullying (Hodgins et al., 2014).

The primary objective of this study is to identify the information that can inform policy formation aimed at addressing and preventing TTB in the workplace. The study draws on the experiences and perceptions of TTB to achieve this goal. The negative impact of TTB on teachers' emotional and physiological well-being, school culture, and future in the educational system is significant and highlights the need for TTB policies and preventative measures.

Bullying in the school context takes the form of peer-on-peer and cross-peer victimisation, where school management bullies colleagues to maintain a perceived level of superiority. A

study in New Zealand by Ozkiloglu and Kartal (2012) found that over 25% of educators were subjected to bullying at school. De Wet and Jacobs (2006) conducted a research study on TTB in South African secondary schools, and their findings indicated that of the 544 educators who participated in the study, 79.7% had been exposed to TTB by learners.

The previously mentioned statistics indicate that bullying is a widespread issue and is not limited to schools but also occurs in prisons and other institutions. Hence, it can be argued that bullying needs to be addressed at all levels of society and not just considered a children's issue in schools.

Terry (1998) describes bullying as a manifestation of violence and aggression that is intrinsic to the psychological personality traits of the bully. He asserts that bullying is a predetermined and persistent behaviour that encompasses bodily and emotional hostile acts. One of the challenges with bullying is the lack of a universally accepted definition. Although there are many definitions, none has been widely agreed upon. However, most definitions have agreed identifying factors. Dan Olweus' definition (Olweus, 2005, p. 9) is widely accepted by scholars and defines bullying as "a student being bullied or victimised when he or she is repeatedly exposed to negative action on the part of one or more students over time". Olweus (2005, p. 9) further defines the concept of "negative action" as "an intentional infliction or attempt to inflict injury or discomfort upon another".

For bullying to be classified as such, ongoing victimisation is a key factor. An isolated incident, although undesirable, is not considered bullying. The aggressive act must be accompanied by the threat of future attacks. These two elements form the foundation of the definition of bullying (Goldsmid & Howie, 2014). The frequency of the offending behaviour necessary to identify it as bullying is still not agreed upon. Most researchers now use a combination of frequency and variety of behaviours to define bullying. Victims of bullying view the tormentor's behaviour as deliberate, hostile, and intended to cause pain and humiliation (Lutgen-Sandvik & Tracy, 2012).

It is widely accepted that there are several key elements that define bullying, whether in schools or the workplace. Without these elements, the behaviour in question may not be considered bullying.

Repetition: The behaviour of the bullying perpetrator must be ongoing in nature in order to be classified as bullying. While a single aggressive act may be undesirable, it is not considered bullying unless there is a threat of repetition. The cyclical pattern of aggressive behaviour, combined with the threat of further aggression, constitutes the profile of bullying, as the mental toll of the threat of future violence is a crucial aspect of bullying.

Victimisation distress: The repetition and threat of bullying creates distress for victims, both adults and children, which can range from minor irritation to extreme societal, emotional, and physiological distress (Goldsmid & Howie, 2014). Some definitions exclude this element due to its subjective nature, as the level of victimisation varies depending on the vulnerability of the individual.

Intention to harm: The bully must have the intention to harm the victim, which eliminates the possibility of accidental harm. Bullying is a deliberate act that is carried out with the full intent of causing harm. Determining intent is subjective and adds complexity to reaching a clear definition of bullying; however, frequent aggressive behaviour is unlikely to occur without intention.

Power inequity: This is a common element in all definitions of bullying. There is little dispute surrounding the use of power, as when the person in a position of power uses it inappropriately, it is considered bullying. This imbalance can take the form of hierarchical power, such as in a business, or can be physical, psychological, or economic. An example of this principle is seen in a study of incarcerated males in Ireland, where 22% reported that those who bullied them were not more powerful than they were (Goldsmid & Howie, 2014).

Provocation: Some argue that the victim is responsible for provoking the bully, leading to bullying behaviour. Research has shown that bullies believe they were provoked twice as much as the victims perceived themselves to have provoked the bullying behaviour (Goldsmid & Howie, 2014).

It has been established that individuals with a power advantage are more likely to engage in bullying behaviours towards those with less power. The relationship between victimisation and power imbalances can be complex and may not be immediately evident. The study by Goldsmid and Howie (2014) found that in the school setting, power imbalances did not

necessarily result in higher levels of victimisation. However, in the home environment, the perpetrators were found to have a power advantage over the victims.

In the workplace, bullying is characterised by persistent, harmful, and excessive psychological victimisation through spoken or non-verbal interactions (Khan & Khan, 2012). This definition applies to all forms of bullying, whether in educational institutions or the workplace. Einarsen (1999, p. 17) defines bullying as:

all those repeated actions and practices that are directed to one or more workers, which are unwanted by the victim, which may be done deliberately or unconsciously, but clearly cause humiliation, offence, and distress, and that may interfere with job performance and/or cause an unpleasant working environment

Victimisation is indiscriminate and affects individuals of all genders. While physical assault is not a requirement for bullying to be classified as such, it is primarily an abuse through spoken and non-verbal interaction (Lutgen-Sandvik & Tracy, 2012). Research in tertiary environments has indicated that the intention to cause harm and distress is present among bullies, with females appearing to be more susceptible to the negative effects of bullying than their male counterparts (Goldsmid & Howie, 2014). Bullying in tertiary institutions is a gender and racial issue, with the problem being first recognised in schools and later in the workplace and other institutions in the 1990s (Misawa & Rowland, 2015). Despite the prevalence of bullying in tertiary contexts, the lack of substantial scientific evidence and data related to the problem has resulted in a limited understanding of the characteristics and interpersonal functioning of bullies (Petrowski, 2015).

Bullying is a widespread issue in the workplace, affecting individuals across all occupations, including teachers and students in schools, employees in corporations, and government employees. The NRV Model suggests that government institutions may be deliberately victimising their employees, leading to devastating consequences for the victims of workplace bullying. Research indicates that bullying in the workplace has a significant gender bias, with women reporting higher levels of bullying than men (Goldsmid & Howie, 2014). This can be attributed to the power inequities within organisations, where women are often in inferior positions, making them more vulnerable to bullying. This relationship between power and bullying has been observed in the workplace but has not been reflected in research on power dynamics in the tertiary environment and at home.

The occurrence of bullying in the workplace is widespread, affecting individuals in all fields of occupation, including teachers, students, and employees of corporations and government departments. According to the NRV Model, government institutions are found to be premeditatedly victimising their employees, with devastating effects on the victims of workplace bullying. The research findings indicate a significant gender bias in bullying, with more women reporting having experienced bullying in the workplace than men. This reporting leads to the perception that the perpetrators of bullying hold a superior position of power in comparison to their victims, within the power pyramid. However, this perception is biased and not necessarily reflective of the true power dynamic. In the workplace, men reported being bullied more frequently by individuals in senior power positions to them, while most bullying incidents took place between two individuals of equal power. A gender difference was also observed in the levels of distress caused by victimisation, with women displaying greater distress than men when subjected to bullying (Goldsmid & Howie, 2014).

The theory of communicative action by Habermas emphasises the role of language in fostering humane and respectful dialogue, leading to a shared understanding and validation of actions. The absence of proper communication can lead to bullying in the workplace. This results in a tense, anxious and demotivated workforce, leading to employees seeking ways to avoid going to work. Workplace bullying is often carried out through verbal and non-verbal means, such as attitudes, avoiding eye contact, or refusing to shake hands. With the advancement of technology, bullying can now also occur through emails and social networking devices (Khan & Khan, 2012). This type of bullying can take the form of pressure to perform at desired levels. The consequences of workplace bullying can be fear, isolation, rejection, and a reluctance to open up for fear of further aggravating the bully. Other effects can include loss of appetite, depression, headaches, and even panic attacks. If left unchecked, these can lead to drug abuse, alcoholism, and a complete breakdown. Hence, workplace victimisation is detrimental and should not be allowed to occur in the workplace.

Bullying in the workplace can stem from a variety of sources. Cultural dynamics can contribute to a culture of bullying, particularly when individuals in positions of power elicit a subservient attitude from those beneath them. This can result in an abuse of power, as the superior individuals make unreasonable demands on subordinates, with the implicit threat of consequences if they do not comply. This aligns with Foucault's theory that the superior class

of society (in this case, high-placed employees and bullies) punishes the inferior class (subservient employees and victims). It is believed that the inferior class referred to by Foucault encompasses the perpetrators of workplace bullying.

3.1.3 How bullying is practised?

Cowan (2012) highlights in her paper that current research has largely neglected the most crucial aspect in bullying: the bully. She suggests that there is limited understanding of the functioning of the perpetrator of bullying and that there is uncertainty in comprehending the perpetrator's cognitive stance, as these perpetrators may not be aware that their actions are victimising (Cowan, 2012).

3.1.3.1 The profile of bullies

Additional research indicates that bullying traits are established between infancy and the early years of childhood and are further reinforced and integrated into a child's communication style. Children are shaped by their upbringing, and parents and caregivers continuously expose them to situations that mould their interpersonal interactions. Research has established a connection between corrective parenting methods, such as physical punishment and warnings, with the outcome that young individuals adopt similar practices to manipulate and control other children.

3.1.4 Lack personal awareness

Bullies often lack self-awareness and do not realise the impact of their behaviour on those around them. They believe that they are well-liked, when in reality, their popularity is a result of their insecurities and the fear they instil in others.

3.1.4.1 Low self-esteem

Bullies are not born but rather formed through their experiences and upbringing. A troubled childhood can result in low self-esteem, which can lead to aggressive behaviour as a means of coping and asserting dominance.

Bullies rationalise their aggressive behaviour and use it as a defence mechanism. They target vulnerable individuals to affirm their dominance and control over them.

3.1.4.2 Controlling behaviour

Bullies have a need to be in control and may exhibit controlling behaviour as a result of not having control over their own lives during childhood. They exert their authority and hostility over others as a means of survival.

3.1.5 *Bullying behaviour and rehabilitation*

The rehabilitation of individuals who engage in bullying behaviour is often difficult, as the tendencies and patterns of bullying are often established and progress over time (A Platform for Good, n.d.).

Petrowski (2015, p. 302) defines adult bullying as a set of psychological traits, supported by empirical research, which include verbal aggression, cruelty, coercion, tyranny, domination, manipulation, and emotional insecurity. The author refers to this as “Adult Bully Syndrome” (ABS) and characterises mature bullies as possessing egotistical temperaments, which are unacceptable in functioning individuals.

According to Raine (cited in Khan & Khan, 2012), genetics and childhood experiences can contribute to an individual becoming a bully in the workplace. These individuals engage in bullying to exercise social control, enhance their self-identity, and in some instances, to enforce their own sense of justice. This is in contrast to Paulo Freire’s theory, which prioritises justice as essential in creating equitable humanisation. The typical profile of bullies is individuals who refuse to take responsibility but are eager to accept positions of power and their benefits. They are often unable to recognise the harm they cause to others, and when confronted, they deny that they were bullying. They are compulsively engaged in bullying behaviour and find it challenging to break this pattern. They often feel inadequate as individuals and bully those they are envious of, those who are deemed more competent, better qualified, more intelligent, or successful.

3.1.5.1 Repetition

According to Lynch (2009), a single instance of harmful actions should not be considered as victimisation in the workplace, but if such actions are repeated, they can be classified as such. Rigby (2004) also acknowledges that victimisation can occur through a singular occurrence and can result in anxiety and fear of further victimisation for the recipient.

3.1.5.2 Manifestations of bullying

The manifestations of bullying can take the form of words, actions, or even a lack of interaction. Regardless of the method used, bullying is premeditated and results in the suffering of the victim. It is repetitive, and there is a threat that it will be repeated. In some cases, bullying may also be motivated by pressure to perform on the part of the senior, who then transfers that pressure downwards through verbal abuse, threats, or intimidation. This can result in the assignment of difficult tasks, exclusion from benefits, and ultimately, dismissal of the subordinate. The profile of the bully is based on insecurity and poor self-identity within a corporate environment.

Lutgen-Sandvik and Tracy (2012) argue that workplace victimisation can only persist when organisational cultures condone, allow, or encourage it. Even when organisations are aware of the detrimental effects of bullying on the corporation's success, their response may not be effective in changing the situation and may even make it worse for the victim (Lutgen-Sandvik & Tracy, 2012).

3.2 What harm does it do?

The harm caused by teacher targeted bullying is extensive and difficult to quantify. If a third of the teaching workforce is subjected to bullying at any given time, millions of individuals are being subjected to undue stress. This infringes upon their rights to dignity, liberty, and safety, as illuminated by the critical theory adopted as a research paradigm in this study. Bullying can result in biological problems, such as headaches, bed-wetting, digestive distress, and loss of appetite. It can also cause emotional complications, such as suicidal tendencies, depression, fear, and anxiety. These symptoms can negatively impact performance and result in a significant loss of productivity on a national scale. Companies and organisations cannot afford to ignore bullying within their systems. Workplace bullying severely impacts the physical and mental well-being of employees, with an estimated 20% of all employees being affected.

Bullying is a harmful practice that is intentionally inflicted through communication and can be seen in both schools and the workplace. The NRV Model suggests that the well-being of bullied employees is negatively impacted by workplace victimisation, leading to illness and ultimately exit from the workplace.

Jansen et al. (2012) define bullying as ongoing, premeditated, and planned acts of anger and harm towards others. This understanding of bullying highlights that victimisation is planned, intentional, and harmful acts committed by individuals or groups of perpetrators aimed at teachers, resulting in acts of intimidation, physical harm, spoken cruelty, ethnic and promiscuous sexual gestures, ongoing victimisation, and insulting actions.

The scholarly literature reviewed regarding victimisation highlights that teachers are being subjected to the following forms of TTB:

- 1) Mental victimisation aimed at not giving attention to teachers.
- 2) Verbal victimisation through humiliation and foul language.
- 3) Physical bullying through acts of intimidation.
- 4) Cyberbullying in the form of posting false rumours or messages about educators on social media.

3.2.1 Psychological bullying

Psychological or emotional bullying is a form of harm that can be inflicted on an individual by damaging their social standing, causing embarrassment, and resulting in emotional trauma. This type of bullying is often conducted behind the victim's back and is difficult to recognise.

The National Centre Against Bullying (n.d.) identifies the following as forms of social and emotional bullying:

- Dishonesty and spreading of rumours
- Degrading bodily actions such as aggression and humiliation
- Horrible jests causing discomfort and embarrassment
- Mimicking in a cruel manner
- Inspiring others to socially ignore another person
- Inflicting harm and humiliation on another person's social position and acceptance

3.2.2 *Spoken victimisation*

Spoken victimisation takes the form of derogatory name-calling, vulgar speech, ridicule, threats, prejudice against homosexual individuals, or other forms of prejudice. Although it may start innocently, spoken victimisation can rapidly escalate and cause harm to the victim, resulting in emotional damage (National Centre Against Bullying, n.d.).

3.2.3 *Bodily victimisation*

Bodily victimisation involves acts such as attacking, shaking, removing clothing, squeezing, shoving, or destroying belongings. This type of victimisation can result in both temporary and permanent harm (National Centre Against Bullying, n.d.).

3.2.4 *Cyberbullying*

Cyberbullying, also known as social media victimisation, refers to intentional and ongoing harm inflicted through the use of internet devices, mobile communication devices, digital hardware and software, instant messaging platforms (such as WhatsApp), and online social media platforms.

Cyberbullying can occur both universally and exclusively, known only to the victim and the perpetrator.

Cyber victimisation can take the form of:

- insulting and distressing messages, emails, comments, pictures, and videos
- intentionally excluding and ignoring others on the internet
- derogatory chatter and stories
- copying others' access information, also known as "hacking"

The COVID-19 pandemic led to many employees, including teachers, working from home and delivering lessons through social media platforms. This hybrid work and teaching environment has exposed teachers to cyberbullying and raises the challenge of maintaining their emotional and social well-being. To address this, socio-emotional education is a valuable tool for mitigating the negative impact of the social and health crisis and for promoting learning. This

requires tailored support and resources for this purpose (National Centre Against Bullying, n.d.; United Nations, n.d.).

A study by De Vos and Kirsten (2015) explored the various physiological, mental, and societal well-being implications of TTB. They found that TTB can result in mood or anxiety disorders (American Psychiatric Association, 2013). De Vos (2013) specifically studied the victimisation of educators in the workplace and its impact on their well-being, discovering that TTB can lead to a range of physiological well-being problems, including sleep disorders, relaxation disorders, fatigue, headaches, physical disorders, obesity, and gastrointestinal issues, as well as circulatory and heart problems such as high blood pressure and rapid heartbeats. The study found that some of the victims of TTB had to resort to taking prescription medication, being admitted to hospitals, or taking extended medical leave from work.

De Vos and Kirsten (2015) emphasised the significance of this issue, as TTB can lead to negative well-being among educators, causing them to leave the educational sector or compromise their teaching quality. This in turn can result in students lacking essential skills, leading to a greater number of under-qualified and unemployed adults, further exacerbating the already struggling South African economy.

De Lange (2008) found that 80% of South African government schools are ineffective and fail to produce skilled labour. The author also suggested that workplace bullying may be a contributing factor to this dysfunction. A research study conducted by De Wet and Jacobs (2013) revealed that over 90.8% of participants were subjected to bullying in the 12 months prior to the study, with 89.1% of bullied teachers experiencing at least two forms of victimisation. In the same study (De Wet & Jacobs, 2013), some respondents reported frequent feelings of unhappiness and crying, and described their experiences as a result of ongoing extended victimisation exposure as abnormal mental states.

Espelage et al. (2013) argued that a more significant acknowledgement of TTB by learners, educators, guardians, management, the Department of Basic Education, and the public is needed, along with a collective responsibility for its prevention and a global commitment to reducing and preventing TTB.

The presence of bullies in the home, school, and workplace is often linked to the concept of power dynamics, where individuals who are seen as having more power, bully those who are perceived as weaker. The home, school, and workplace are often the primary locations where bullying occurs, and bullies often operate within established power structures, either through formal hierarchal systems or informal power dynamics. For example, a father may have power over the mother and children and use this to bully them. Similarly, a teacher may have power over students, and a manager over staff, giving them the ability to bully their subordinates.

According to the theory of Paolo Freire, bullying is a result of the unfairness and aggression perpetuated by the perpetrators of victimisation (bullies), who are motivated by their perceived power. In schools, informal power sources outside of formal hierarchal structures can also contribute to bullying. For example, a student who is a talented athlete may perceive themselves as more powerful than a non-athlete and use this to bully others. This is an example of the balance of power theory in action, where power can be actual or perceived (Goldsmid & Howie, 2014).

In the workplace, bullying often stems from imbalances in power. Higher-level managers may bully their subordinates due to their hierarchical power over them, as described by Foucault's theory of superior class domination over the inferior class. Additionally, bullies may target individuals who are perceived as vulnerable, such as women, single mothers, people with disabilities, the elderly, and so on. The bullying will only cease when the power dynamic between the bully and the victim is equalised, which may involve the creation of alliances or hierarchical interventions.

It should be noted that in some cases, a person in a hierarchical power position may still be vulnerable to bullying by a subordinate if they do not perceive themselves as more powerful. Fear of consequences can cause a powerful individual to become weakened and susceptible to bullying. When power is equally balanced, bullying is less likely to occur, as alliances take over.

3.3 COVID-19 and teacher targeted bullying

In a study conducted in Australia, the impact of COVID-19 on students and teachers in the education sector was analysed. The study was based on a sample of 3,030 participants,

including 3rd and 4th-year students from 97 New South Wales government educational institutions (Gore et al., 2020). The study evaluated the health of both students and teachers through surveys and discussions with teachers, heads of institutions, and other relevant stakeholders. The findings of the study indicated that the COVID pandemic had a significant impact on the education sector, causing disruptions that negatively impacted the health and well-being of both students and teachers. The study revealed the following:

- A substantial decrease in teacher satisfaction with their work
- Adverse effects on teacher health
- Adverse effects on student health

3.4 Conclusion

In this chapter a scholarly overview of bullying was unpacked which included a section where the types of bullying were discussed. The phenomenon of victimisation in the workplace is a prevalent and growing global issue that occurs on a daily basis. It is both a societal and workplace problem that arises from the interaction of individuals with differing personalities and power dynamics. Schools, being workplaces in their own right, are not immune to bullying at all levels.

The focus of this study was to highlight the devastating effects of TTB on the victims. The impact of hybrid teaching during the COVID-19 pandemic on TTB was also explored. Teachers are compassionate, caring, trustworthy, and diligent individuals who play a critical role in shaping the future of society through education. Unfortunately, as this chapter has shown, teachers are often at the forefront of TTB.

TTB is a dehumanising injustice that infringes on human rights, dignity, and humanism. It is committed by bullies who deliberately act as oppressors with the intention of causing harm to teachers. The DBE and the South African economy are negatively impacted by TTB, through the cost of replacing victimised teachers who leave the profession or take extended absences due to victimisation. This leads to a substandard workforce that is not efficient and productive, and contributes to higher levels of poverty and crime, thereby further burdening the government financially.

The above highlights the far-reaching societal and economic impact of TTB on South Africa. The linear nature of TTB is negative and can only be diminished through government intervention in the form of a TTB policy that protects teachers in the workplace and ultimately has a positive impact on society and the economy.

CHAPTER 4: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

4.1 Introduction

The section that follows outlines the research approach employed in this study. It details the research methodology, paradigm framework, relevant discipline, and the theoretical frameworks (Foucault, Habermas, and Freire) utilised, as well as the generation of statistics, selection of participants, and the authenticity of the study. This includes ethical considerations, reliability, validity, and the methods used for capturing and analysing data. Furthermore, the chapter highlights the impact of efficacy and trustworthiness on both internal efficacy, which includes honesty, accuracy, and consistency, and external efficacy, which includes interchangeability.

4.2 The research approach

The research methodology adopted for this exploration draws from qualitative epistemology and is guided by a pragmatist paradigm. The study will examine the South African legislative framework to determine how a policy on TTB can be informed and aligned with existing legislation. The data collection will involve the use of a questionnaire and semi-structured interviews with participants, with the aim of providing valuable qualitative data to answer the main research questions.

In line with Merriam and Tisdell's (2016) classification, the qualitative research approach is centred on the researcher and participants actively engaging in co-creating reality. The study seeks to gain a deeper understanding of the complexities of TTB and its effects, causes, and devastating impacts on teachers, both within the school environment and during the peak of the COVID-19 pandemic when schools were closed. Through the questionnaire and interviews, I aimed to gain a more comprehensive understanding of the TTB phenomenon and its impact on teachers.

4.2.1 *The paradigmatic framework*

The interpretivist paradigm, as postulated by Merriam and Tisdell (2016), posits that there are multiple realities in life rather than just one solitary reality. These realities become the real-

life situations that individuals must deal with and interact within their workplace and societal environment.

Adopting an interpretivist framework, the researcher listens to the participants as they share their stories and provide meaning in line with their cultural, historical, and social backgrounds (Creswell, 2008). Merriam and Tisdell (2009) acknowledge the existence of subjectivity or “biases” but argue that these should not be ignored. Rather, the researcher must recognise them and monitor them during the data collection process. Open-ended questions are considered the most appropriate tool for data collection in interpretivism, as they result in the gaining of theory (Creswell, 2008). This paradigm was applied in this study by collecting data from participants through attentive listening and compassionate engagement as they shared their experiences, perceptions, and the effects of TTB both within their workplaces (schools) and during the COVID-19 pandemic.

4.2.2 The theoretical framework

The theoretical framework of this study was extensively discussed in Chapter 2. Three theorists were selected to guide this study: Habermas, Foucault, and Freire. Additionally, my own mode on workplace victimisation, referred to as the NRV Model, was included and will be discussed later in the study. These lenses are crucial in understanding the evolution and impact of TTB on its victims, through the lens of a grounded theoretical framework.

4.2.3 Data generation

In this study, I acted as the primary tool in the research process, in line with Clark’s (2008) assertion that the researcher in a qualitative study should always consider themselves as the research instrument. I collected information by examining the South African legislative framework on teacher protection in the workplace, administering questionnaires, and conducting interviews with teachers in secondary schools. The interviews were recorded using voice recordings, and transcripts were produced.

Merriam and Tisdell (2016) posit that the researcher in a qualitative study must possess the qualities of being approachable and adaptable. Qualitative research typically relies on data collection through interviews and questionnaires, and in this study, I used both methods. The

questionnaires were digitised and distributed through the WhatsApp social media platform. Interviews are a useful tool in research studies where a researcher seeks to understand behaviours that cannot be observed, or events that took place in the past that cannot be repeated (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016).

Because of the COVID-19 pandemic, face-to-face interviews were not possible, and instead, the researcher conducted telephone interviews in the form of person-to-person interviews (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016).

4.2.3.1 Selection of participants

The participants for this study were selected through the use of a snowballing technique (Cohen et al., 2007; Merriam, 2009). I made use of gatekeepers at different schools to share the link to the questionnaire with teachers known to them. This method resulted in 66 responses from teachers to the online survey. The demographics of the participants are detailed in the tables that follow.

Table 4-1: Categories of schools where the survey participants teach

Category of school	Number of participants
Secondary	35
Combined	5
Intermediate	2
FET	18
No response	6
	66

Table 4-2: Position of the survey participants

Position	Number of participants
Student teacher	2
Educator	44
HOD	14
DP	4
Principal	2
	66

Table 4-3: Age of survey participants

Age group	Number of participants
30 or younger	16
31-40	17
41-50	13
51-60	13
61 or older	7
	66

Table 4-4: Province that the survey participants reside in

Province	Number of participants
FS	5
GP	41
KZN	1
LP	0
MP	2
NW	0
NC	3
WC	0
No response	14
	66

Table 4-5: Number of learners in the schools where the survey participants teach

School size category	Number of participants
500 or less	12
501-1000	13
1001-1500	14
1501-2000	25
2000+	2
	66

Table 4-6: Category of schools of participants

Category of school	Number of participants
Primary	6
Secondary	35
Combined	5
Intermediate	2
FET	18
	66

In addition, four interviews were conducted with four secondary school teachers and an official from the Wellness Division of the provincial Basic Education Department in the Eastern Cape. Again, I obtained numbers from gatekeepers at schools, after which I invited them via WhatsApp to take part in my study. The interviews comprised three female secondary school teachers and one male secondary school educator, as well as one male official from the Wellness Division, who I was referred to after contacting the provincial Basic Education Department office in Nelson Mandela Bay.

4.2.4 *The integrity of the study*

The integrity of the study was of utmost importance. I made efforts to ensure that ethical considerations, reliability, and validity were met as critical and non-negotiable standards.

4.2.4.1 Ethical considerations

The researcher must take responsibility for safeguarding the participants and establishing trust during the study (Creswell, 2009). According to Hofstee (2011), the researcher must exercise caution when dealing with vulnerable participants and avoid causing any harm. Authors like Babbie (2013), Babbie, Mouton, Vorster, and Prozesky (2007), Cohen, Manion, and Morrison (2007), and Creswell (2009) all emphasise the importance of avoiding misleading or harming the participants and ensuring that the data collection does not harm the environment or disrupt the research location (Creswell, 2009; Hofstee, 2011).

A researcher has a duty to inform the participants about the aim of the study and what is expected of them (Hofstee, 2011). The privacy and confidentiality of the participants must always be maintained (Babbie, 2013; Babbie et al., 2007; Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2007;

Creswell, 2009), and prior to the commencement of the study, the researcher must inform the participants about the measures that will be taken to ensure their anonymity.

Informed consent, as outlined by Cohen et al. (2007), involves ensuring that individuals living in a democratic society like South Africa are informed about all aspects of the study. This highlights the researcher's responsibility to seek informed consent from each participant. Participants must also be notified of their right to withdraw from the study without penalty at any time they deem appropriate. This aspect was adhered to in the current study.

Litchman (2013) asserts that ethical values in research must be impartial and must foster a relationship of trust with the participants, secure informed consent, and protect their privacy, while also being confidential and anonymous. Creswell (2009) also highlights that ethical considerations include the safekeeping of data for a period of 5 to 10 years after analysis.

Hofstee (2011) also emphasises that the misrepresentation of data is unethical and must be avoided at all costs in a research study. Cohen et al. (2007) accentuate that the researcher must make all data findings available without alteration or modification, and that the data must not be made public in a way that could embarrass the participants. Hofstee (2011, pp. 211-215) in addition highlights the importance of avoiding plagiarism in research and adhering to appropriate referencing methods. All of the above guided me, and throughout this study, ethical principles were strictly adhered to and upheld.

Prior to commencing the data collection for this study, it was necessary to obtain ethical clearance from the GHREC Ethical Clearance Committee of the University of the Free State. The ethical clearance number obtained was UFS-HSD2020/0062/0911. Additionally, permission was sought and obtained from the DBE to conduct a study on TTB. Creswell (2009) indeed highlights the importance of obtaining permission from relevant establishments before communicating with the participants in the study. In order to ensure the anonymity of the participants, codes were assigned to their responses during the data analysis process.

It was crucial to inform the participants of the benefits of participating in this study, as their contributions would aid in the formation of an anti-bullying policy that could help reduce and

prevent TTB in schools in South Africa. This aspect was deemed an important ethical consideration in this study.

4.2.4.2 Reliability and validity

In this section, the steps taken to ensure the reliability, trustworthiness, and validity of the study will be explained.

a) Validity

Validity refers to the meaningfulness, accuracy, and credibility of research to draw meaningful and defensible conclusions (Leedy & Ormrod, 2010). The research instruments used in this study, such as questionnaires and interviews, contribute to the extent to which they measure what they were designed to measure and claim to measure (Leedy & Ormrod, 2010).

Promoting the credibility and validity of research findings in qualitative research can be achieved through triangulation, which involves using multiple theories, multiple data gathering instruments and methods, both qualitative and quantitative (Cohen et al., 2007; Creswell, 2009; Leedy & Ormrod, 2015; Merriam, 2009). In my study, triangulation was achieved through the use of the views of three theorists (Foucault, Habermas and Freire), multiple data sources (documents, laws, interview data and qualitative and quantitative survey data) to contribute to an information base on TTB.

b) Reliability

Ensuring reliability in research is crucial to the replicability of conclusions in other studies that use the same or similar methodologies (Ritchie & Lewis, 2003). To guarantee reliability, Merriam (2009) recommends the use of triangulation as a means of orienting the research. This approach involves using multiple forms of evidence, theories, and research methods (Babbie, 2013; Du Plooy, 2006; Kelly, 2007). The use of triangulation in research enables the researcher to draw from the strengths of multiple methodologies and leads to improved comprehension of the phenomena under investigation (Babbie, 2013; Kelly, 2007).

c) Transferability

Merriam (2009) defines transferability as the likelihood of relating the findings of one research project to comparable conditions. To promote transferability in qualitative research, a

thorough explanation of the phenomenon under study is required (Merriam, 2009). Cohen et al. (2007) argue that transferability in qualitative research will be supported by an in-depth explanation of the situation and unblemished facts, allowing other researchers to evaluate the applicability of the findings in their own conditions.

In this study, transferability was increased by providing a thorough explanation of the research findings, including allowing participants sufficient time to provide their experiences and perspectives on TTB in their own contextual settings. The analysis of the findings in line with the themes identified further enhances the reliability of the findings.

4.2.5 Data capturing and analysis

The main objective of a study is to analyse, interpret and deduce insights from data during the exploratory process. In this process, the researcher breaks down research data into manageable parts to identify patterns, outlines, and connections and then organises these outlines into themes (Mouton, 2015). Du Plooy (2006) concurs with Mouton's perspective, asserting that the analysis and interpretation of research data is a critical and indispensable aspect of research. He further stresses that this stage influences the hypotheses and recommendations, as well as determining the feasibility of implementing these recommendations. In this study, the aforementioned methodologies were adhered to in order to ensure the effectiveness, reliability, and feasibility of the research findings in constructing an information base on teacher targeted bullying towards policy formation.

4.2.5.1 Data capturing through interviews

In addition to the administration of questionnaires, I conducted interviews with teachers and an official from the DBE. Merriam (2009) defines interviews as a process where a researcher and participant engage in a conversation that is focused on questions relevant to the research study. Van Rensburg et al. (2013) categorise interviews as an uninterrupted interaction between the interviewer and interviewee. The term "face-to-face interviewing" is used by researchers such as Creswell (2009) and Leedy and Ormrod (2010) to describe this type of interaction. Ritchie and Lewis (2003) argue that an effective interviewer should act as a passive recipient of the knowledge provided by the participants, avoiding the demonstration of their own understanding.

4.2.5.2 Methodology of how the views of participants were recorded in the semi-structured interview process

The survey data was captured through the EvaSys survey software, and I was able to import it into Excel. This includes quantitative as well as qualitative data. For the interviews, I chose to conduct audio-recorded interviews through telephonic recordings due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The type of interview was selected based on the information required from the participants. The audio-recorded interviews provided me with an opportunity to gain insight into the data desired from the teachers participating in the study and to obtain a clear understanding of their experiences and perceptions as victims of TTB. I used a combination of questions, as recommended by Patton (2002) and cited in Merriam (2009), that covered aspects such as experiences, perceptions, and emotional and physical impacts of TTB. Open-ended questions were used to allow the participants to express their beliefs and opinions. Additionally, I employed a strategy of using exploratory questioning followed by more in-depth questioning in an effort to gain a comprehensive and detailed understanding of TTB from the participants.

4.2.5.3 Ethical principles during data capturing and analysis

In the study, strict adherence to ethical principles was observed in regard to ensuring the anonymity of the participants during data collection and analysis. This was achieved through the use of a numbering system rather than names or aliases. For example, the participant who participated in the questionnaire was identified as Participant #4, while the interviewed participants were numbered in order of their interview, such as Interviewee #2.

4.2.6 *Data analysis*

In this study, I chose to apply textual analysis as the research questions were designed to elicit responses in the form of words and narratives from participants about their experiences and perceptions of TTB in their own school context. Hofstee (2011) explains that data analysis in research involves transforming raw data into evidence and identifies two forms of analysis: statistical analysis and textual analysis. The researcher must inform the reader about the type of analysis used in the study.

In this study, both qualitative and quantitative elements were considered; therefore, both forms of analysis were applied. The quantitative data was aggregated, and I used familiar concepts such as percentages and averages (mean scores) to summarise the data and communicate the results (Mertens, 2010). Ritchie and Lewis (2003) emphasised the importance of identifying and documenting themes, categories, and concepts in the interpretation of qualitative data. I indeed grouped the information into categories and separated it into themes and sub-themes, thus enabling the identification of trends and patterns related to the questions posed in the questionnaire and interviews regarding TTB experiences and perceptions.

The aforementioned methodology used in the study allowed me to effectively answer the main inquiry of the study, which is: “What information can inform a policy to address and prevent teacher targeted bullying in order to protect teachers in the workplace?”

4.3 Conclusion

In this chapter, the epistemic approach adopted in the study was outlined. The research approach, paradigmatic framework, relevant discipline, and the theoretical frameworks of Foucault, Habermas and Freire used in the study were explained. The process of data generation, selection of participants, and the authenticity of the study, including ethical considerations, reliability, validity, and data capturing and analysis, were also discussed. Additionally, the impact of efficacy and dependability on inner efficacy, consistency, and external efficacy was explored.

CHAPTER 5: SOUTH AFRICAN LEGAL FRAMEWORK

5.1 Introduction

This chapter focuses on the legal framework that could inform policy formation in regard to TTB. The section provides a clear definition of bullying, including TTB, and how it is practised in school environments. The role of the South African Council for Educators (SACE) in protecting teachers is also discussed. The chapter then examines the South African Constitution, the South African Schools Act of 1996, the Labour Relations Act of 1995, the Employment Equity Act, the Protection from Harassment Act, and documents from unions to determine their relevance to TTB. The responsibilities and duties of the Education Departments, School Governing Bodies, School Leadership, and Teachers in reducing or preventing TTB are also explored. The chapter highlights recent cases of TTB in South Africa and the judgements rendered. The information presented in this chapter is linked and aligned with the views of theorists such as Paulo Freire, Habermas, and Foucault.

5.2 An analysis of the South African legal framework that informs a teacher targeted bullying policy

Bullying was first referred to as “being mobbed in the workplace” by psychologist Heinz Leymann in the 1980s (Einarsen et al., 2011). Leymann’s definition of victimisation refers to a persistent pattern of bullying in which the recipient is unable to defend themselves due to an imbalance of power in favour of the aggressor. The repetitive nature of bullying is described as repeated actions and behaviours aimed at an individual or group of individuals in the workplace, which are unjustified, intentional, and unwanted by the victim. These actions may be deliberate or unconsciously motivated with the intention of causing embarrassment and distress, negatively impacting work efficiency and contributing to a hostile work environment (Rothmann & Rothman, 2006).

In schools, hierarchical structures and authoritative dynamics create an environment in which TTB can occur (Lines, 2008). Empirical research on TTB has revealed that educators can be subjected to victimisation through various means, including peer-to-peer and cross-peer

victimisation, with the most common form being bullying by heads of schools (Blase et al., 2008; De Vos, 2013; De Wet, 2010b).

On April 16th, 2021, SACE launched handbooks for South African teachers to educate them on their rights and responsibilities, and provide guidance on how to handle various issues they may encounter in the workplace (South African Council for Educators, 2021). This is an effort to offer some protection to teachers against TTB.

The prevalence of anti-bullying campaigns in society is evident, and many educational institutions and workplaces have implemented preventative measures to protect teachers and students. However, there is a lack of clarity in terms of defined methodologies for addressing TTB victimisation. Educators play a crucial role in educational organisations and must be protected (Duncan, 2015; Williamson et al., 2007). Empirical evidence suggests that workplace victimisation has a negative impact on both educators and the educational institution itself (Tolentino, 2016).

While laws and policies exist, there is a lack of clear guidelines and procedures that are aligned with the South African (SA) legal structure for addressing TTB. The existing SA legal framework provides suggestions for policy development in the education sector at both the national and provincial levels. The words of Nelson Mandela (Mandela, 1990) are relevant, as he stated that “To deny people their human rights is to challenge their very humanity”.

5.3 Specific legislation that informs a future teacher targeted bullying policy

The specific legislation that informs the development of a future TTB policy is an important aspect to consider. Taylor et al. (1997) emphasise the significance of considering the intertextuality between different pieces of legislation and policies. Hence, this study focuses on the examination of specific provisions in the law that would inform the formation of a policy on TTB prevention.

5.3.1 The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa

The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (1996a) is the highest law in the country and must be adhered to by all legislation and policies (Joubert, 2015). The preamble of the Constitution states that it aspires to create a society based on democratic values, social justice, and fundamental human rights, with every citizen being protected equally by the law.

Section 9 of the Constitution (1996a) declares that all individuals are equal before the law and have the right to equal protection and benefit of the law, as well as the right to not be unfairly discriminated against directly or indirectly.

Section 10 of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (1996a) states that every individual has inherent dignity and the right to have their dignity respected and protected. Section 12 outlines the right of everyone to be free from all forms of violence, both public and private, and to not be treated or punished in a cruel, inhuman, or degrading manner.

Section 33 (1996a) of the Constitution affirms that every person should have access to administrative action that is lawful, reasonable, and procedurally fair, and also refers to access to the courts. While it is not possible to discuss every stipulation in the Constitution, it is evident that the aim of the Constitution is to ensure that people are able to lead a dignified life.

5.3.2 The South African Schools Act (Act 84 of 1996)

The South African Schools Act (SASA) (Republic of South Africa, 1996b) outlines the provisions for the uniform system of organisation, governance and funding of schools, as well as the amendment and repeal of certain laws related to schools. In its preamble, it states that the Act provides for matters connected to the aforementioned.

In relation to the construction of a policy on teacher targeted bullying, the following stipulations in the Act are of significance.

The School Governing Body (SGB) is assigned the responsibility of adopting a code of conduct for learners (section 20(1)(d)) and is also tasked with supporting the principal, educators, and other staff in their professional functions (section 20(1)(e)).

Furthermore, the Minister is responsible for determining the norms and standards for infrastructure, including the number of teachers and class size (section 5a(2)(2)(a)). This means that bullying due to overcrowding can be attributed to the Minister.

5.3.3 *The National Education Policy Act (Act 27 of 1996)*

The National Education Policy Act (NEPA) (Republic of South Africa, 1996c) assigns the responsibility of policy formulation to the Minister of Basic Education. Section 3 of the Act specifies that:

(1) The Minister shall determine national education policy in accordance with the provisions of the Constitution and this Act.

(4) Subject to the provisions of subsections (1) to (3), the Minister shall determine national policy for the planning, provision, financing, co-ordination, management, governance, programmes, monitoring, evaluation and well-being of the education system and, without derogating from the generality of this section

The National Education Policy Act (Act 27 of 1996) encompasses policy regarding the provision of education support services, such as health, welfare, career and vocational development, counselling and guidance for education institutions, which fall within the functional responsibility of the Department of Education. The responsibility for teacher wellness, therefore, lies with the Minister of Basic Education and their subordinates. The NEPA aligns itself with Constitutional Principles and, specifically, Section 4(j) states that the Act will work towards fostering a culture of respect for teaching and learning in education institutions.

5.3.4 *Protection from Harassment Act (Act 17 of 2011)*

The Protection from Harassment Act (Act 17 of 2011) provides for the issuance of protection orders against harassment. This implies that, according to this Act, teachers are able to obtain a protection order against harassment by learners, peers, or any other individual who engages in bullying behaviour towards them in the workplace. Harassment is defined in the section

that provides definitions as “directly or indirectly engaging in conduct that the respondent knows or ought to know causes harm or inspires the reasonable belief that harm may be caused to the complainant or a related person” (Republic of South Africa, 2011). The Act further outlines various ways that such harm can be caused. These stipulations can be used to enhance the definition of workplace bullying, as they specify certain actions that can be considered as harassment, including:

(a)(i) following. watching. pursuing or accosting of the complainant or a related person, or loitering outside of or near the building or place where the complainant or a related person resides, works, carries on business, studies or happens to be;

(ii) engaging in verbal, electronic or any other communication aimed at the complainant or a related person, by any means, whether or not conversation ensues; or

(iii) sending, delivering or causing the delivery of letters, telegrams, packages, facsimiles, electronic mail or other objects to the complainant or a related person or leaving them where they will be found by, given to or brought to the attention of, the complainant or a related person; or

(b) amounts to sexual harassment of the complainant or a related person;

The Act provides further detail on the procedure applicable to the issuance of protection orders against harassment. This Act has given greater weight to the lodging of a harassment claim. Bullying is commonly recognised as harassment; therefore, incidents of victimisation at the workplace must receive prompt and decisive attention. The Protection from Harassment Act states as follows (Republic of South Africa, 2011):

“SINCE the Bill of Rights in the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996, enshrines the rights of all people in the Republic of South Africa, including the right to equality, the right to privacy, the right to dignity, the right to freedom and security of the person, which incorporates the right to be free from all forms of violence from either public or private sources, and the rights of children to have their best interests considered to be of paramount importance;

AND IN ORDER to-

(a) afford victims of harassment an effective remedy against such behaviour; and

(b) introduce measures which seek to enable the relevant organs of state to give full effect to the provisions of this Act”.

5.3.5 Other legislation

Other legislation that could be relevant to the issue of teacher targeted bullying includes the *Basic Conditions of Employment Act (Act 75 of 1997)* and the *Employment of Educators Act (Act 76 of 1998)*. These acts may be relevant in cases of retirement or pressure to retire, as well as dismissals. Additionally, the *Occupational Health and Safety Act (Act 181 of 1993)* may be considered in terms of conditions of work, and the *Domestic Violence Act (Act 116 of 1998)* could be useful to clarify concepts.

5.3.6 Case law

An important source of legal guidance is case law, and two specific cases serve as illuminating examples of how the courts interpret violence and bullying against teachers.

5.3.6.1 *Le Roux and others v Dey (Freedom of Expression Institute and Restorative Justice Centre as Amici Curiae) 2011 (3) SA 274 (CC)*

In the case of *Le Roux and others v Dey (2011)*, the *Freedom of Expression Institute and Restorative Justice Centre served as Amici Curiae) 2011 (3) SA 274 (CC)*, a situation arose where learners from a well-known school in Pretoria created an offensive digital image featuring a teacher’s face and shared it both digitally and by putting a print-out of the image on the school’s notice board. The court ruled that the act constituted defamation and that the learners were fully aware of their actions and could not convince the court that they did not intend harm. Despite the lengthy proceedings, the ruling of defamation was upheld. According to Deacon et al. (2016, p. 97), the case highlights the following:

(L)earners may very often make jokes about their educators or staff members at schools and many times these educators just bear it ... But, there is also a line that may not be crossed by learners. Educators are equally entitled to the rights contained in the Bill of Rights and learners must respect these rights. The Constitution still values and protects our subjective feelings about our dignity

5.3.6.2 Jacobs v The Chairman of the Governing Body of Rhodes High School, The Principal and the MEC: Case no. 7953/2004

The case of *Jacobs v The Chairman of the Governing Body of Rhodes High School, The Principal and the MEC (Case no. 7953/2004)* highlights the legal duty of the school governing body, principal, and the Department of Education to protect the safety of teachers. In this case, Jacobs, a teacher, reprimanded a student for not writing a test. She also noticed a death certificate in the student's diary. After the student was taken to the head of department and then to the school principal, he returned to the teacher's class to retrieve his school bag. However, he then suddenly took an object from his bag and bludgeoned the teacher with a hammer. The court held that there was a legal duty to protect the teacher's safety and take reasonable steps to do so. Evidence of the student's prior misconduct provided evidence that the principal was aware of the student's pattern of behaviour (Deacon et al., 2016).

5.3.6.3 Other cases

In 2018, the Head of the DBE spoke on Cape Talk Radio regarding incidents of violence against teachers by learners. One particularly notable case was in Zeerust, North West province of South Africa, where a student killed a teacher after being reprimanded by the teacher the day prior (Daniel, 2018). The student was later arrested, found guilty, and sentenced to 10 years in prison (The Citizen, 2019). Another case was reported in Sedibeng, where a student threw a book at a teacher and the incident was recorded and went viral. The teacher did not respond and walked out of the classroom (Dlamini, 2018).

5.4 Discussion

The South African Bill of Rights (Republic of South Africa, 1996a, Chapter 2) affords teachers the right to work in an environment that values and respects them, thereby enabling them to effectively assist in the education and emancipation of learners in a safe and secure environment, free from fear, danger and injury. The theories of Paulo Freire advocate that people who possess critical thinking abilities can be trusted to take control of their lives and collectively transform their perspectives of the world and their relationship with it (Firdaus & Mariyat, 2017).

In theory, the rights of South African educators are protected by the Constitution, unions, and school governing bodies. However, this protection may be insufficient in practice. In the past, rule-breakers in schools were punished and dealt with internally. However, with the increasing prevalence of bullying, particularly in its more violent forms, how can teachers or society as a whole begin to address victimisation in educational institutions and beyond? Are there sufficient measures in place to address TTB?

5.4.1 *What Human Rights are currently protected by the Constitution and Legislation?*

The *Constitution of the Republic of South Africa* (Republic of South Africa, 1996a) outlines a range of rights applicable to all South Africans, including equality, dignity, freedom, personal safety, and the right to education. Section 28 of this Constitution is dedicated to the rights of children and ensures that these rights are respected and protected. Juvenile law is also in place to provide protection and safety for children of all ages. In cases of victimisation of juveniles in educational institutions, the *South African Schools Act* (Republic of South Africa, 1996b) requires that protocols be in place to protect them. However, there is currently no clear legislation in South Africa that specifically protects teachers from bullying by superiors, learners, or peers within the school setting.

The rights of individuals in the South African education system, including teachers, are governed by various laws and policies, such as the *National Education Policy Act* of 1996 and the *South African Schools Act* of 1996. The different versions of the school curriculum since Curriculum of 2005 mandate the teaching of human rights in schools. The concept of “human rights in education” and “human rights education” means that violations of human rights should not be tolerated in education and that the treatment of individuals in educational institutions should align with civil liberties.

Civil liberties were established to address violations of human rights and should embody the principles of human respect and ethical foundations. The rights of individuals, including teachers, are further protected by the *Convention on the Rights of the Child* (1989, 1996). Education in human and civil rights should foster a deep understanding of freedom from

influence and ensure that individuals' claims to education are not influenced (Smith, Singer, Hoel, & Cooper, 2003).

The South African Labour Law established a powerful body for jurisprudence when the *South African Labour Relations Act* came into effect in 1995. As a result, the majority of workers became employees who were cognizant of their rights against unjust termination and exposure to unethical work duties. Unfair labour practices are relatively straightforward to identify when unethical procedures carried out by the employer result in a worker being dismissed. However, there are no clear guidelines in place for determining workplace bullying.

The current labour-related legislation in South Africa, including the Work Dealings Law and the *Basic Conditions of Employment Act*, as well as the *Employment Equity Act*, do not specifically mention or define victimisation as a societal problem. However, the *Employment Equity Act*, Section 6(1) prohibits any form of unfair discrimination against an employee in any employment policy or practice on one or more grounds, such as race, gender, and age, among others. Section 6(2) further states that harassment of an employee is considered a form of unfair discrimination and is prohibited on any ground listed in subsection (1).

5.4.2 *The Education Departments*

The Education Departments are responsible for providing support to the school communities in their efforts to eradicate violence in schools. This support is offered in the form of trauma counselling, training programmes, preventative measures for bullying, and the implementation of additional security measures, as well as the involvement of law enforcement if necessary. Some of the steps that the Department has taken was to publish several regulations under the *South African Schools Act*, including the *Guidelines for Consideration of Governing Bodies in Adopting a Code of Conduct for Learners* (1998), notices with regard to drug testing, *Regulations to Prohibit Initiation Practices in Schools* (2002), and the *Regulations for Safety Measures at Public Schools* (2006).

5.4.3 *The South African Teachers Unions*

In South Africa, there are five main teacher unions, namely the National Professional Teachers' Organisation of South Africa (NAPTOSA), South African Democratic Teachers' Union (SADTU),

Professional Educators' Union (PEU), National Teachers' Union (NATU), and South African Teachers' Union (SAOU).

The primary function of these teacher unions is to ensure that learners receive quality education and that teachers are able to offer education of the highest standard. Additionally, the unions are expected to uphold and comprehend the freedom of speech and human rights of their members, as they serve as a symbol of excellence in teaching (Fredriksson, 2004). Through dialogue and negotiation, these educator labour organisations hold the ability to compel the DBE to fulfil both financial and educational obligations (Cowen & Strunk, 2015).

The teacher unions also have a responsibility to protect their members from victimisation. While they are intended to be supportive of teachers, it must be noted that they are politically motivated and may bully teachers who do not align with their policies. Some teachers have reported that they are unable to approach the unions due to the fact that the principal and the union may have a mutually beneficial relationship (De Vos, 2013).

5.4.4 School governing bodies

SGBs are a statutory body within schools that consists of mothers, fathers, guardians of scholars, teachers, and support staff who work together to enhance the overall functioning of the educational institution. The duties and responsibilities of SGBs are regulated by Section 20 of the South African Education Act 84, 1996.

The key responsibilities of SGBs include decision-making relating to admission policies, language policies, religious traditions, rules of conduct with clear punitive measures aligned with state laws, establishment of the SGB's structural framework, definition of the school's vision, decisions regarding daily school operations, management of the school's physical estate and facilities, employment and endorsement of educators, determination of the extracurricular syllabus, selection of subject offerings in line with the Department of Basic Education's regional syllabus laws, procurement of teaching resources and equipment.

The primary role of SGBs is to work closely with the school principal and ensure the school adheres to its Mission Statement, Constitution, and any legal obligations, while ensuring its growth and direction align with the desired educational outcomes. SGBs are there to protect

the interests of the school, its reputation, and ultimately, to represent the parents (Solidariteit, n.d.).

5.4.5 *School leadership*

South African educational institutions are managed and overseen by members of the School Management Teams (SMTs), consisting of heads of schools, assistant heads of schools, and departmental leaders.

The responsibilities of principals include supporting SGBs and being accountable to the DBE. They also have a dual role in this capacity.

The duties of heads of educational institutions encompass taking charge of instruction and education, defining the educational path for growth and advancement, ensuring excellence and accountability, enhancing growth for oneself and others, supervising the educational institution as an establishment, and working in conjunction with developing societies.

The appointment of heads of departments is governed by the Recruitment of Teachers Law 64 of 1998. This law stipulates that employment is contingent upon their methods and the requirements of specific educational institutions.

Unfortunately, it has been noted that school leaders, who hold significant power within their institutions, have been identified as major perpetrators of teacher targeted bullying. This is achieved through methods such as micromanagement, increasing workloads, or through the use of verbal abuse, attacking the teacher's character (De Vos & Kirsten, 2015). Additionally, colleagues may feel too afraid to step forward in defence of the targeted teacher (De Vos, 2013).

5.4.6 *Teachers*

All members of staff are responsible for contributing to the maintenance of a safe and secure school environment and for acting as positive role models. Teachers are expected to provide input in the creation of a School Safety Plan and to participate in training programmes. They are obligated to report any misbehaviour and adhere to, as well as enforce, the school's code

of conduct. Teachers must also work in collaboration with law enforcement and other protection and social agencies in promoting a non-violent environment for both themselves and the learners. Additionally, teachers should be cognizant of their rights and offer support to one another, particularly in instances of bullying. (Handbook for Teachers' Rights, Responsibilities and Safety Produced by LeadAfrika Consulting (Pty) Ltd South Africa, n.d.).

5.4.7 Silences and ambiguities

According to Taylor et al. (1997), a crucial aspect of policy analysis is to concentrate on the omissions and ambiguities. Jacobs and De Wet (2018, p. 54) contend that the definition of workplace bullying offered by Einarsen and colleagues over time (Einarsen & Raknes, 1997; Einarsen et al., 2003; Einarsen et al., 2011) (cf. 3.1.2) is indistinct with regard to aspects such as what constitutes negative or unwelcome behaviour, and what constitutes a "prolonged period of time". Without a clear delineation of the phenomenon in the policy, it may prove to be ineffectual.

5.4.8 How do the theorists' theories agree or disagree with the current measures in place?

Nelson Mandela once stated that "Action without vision is merely passing time, while vision without action is just daydreaming, but vision with action has the potential to change the world". This sentiment aligns with the beliefs of Freire, who emphasised the importance of a clear framework to guide educational practices. Without a concrete framework to protect the rights of teachers, policy statements are nothing more than empty words on paper.

The current state of the education sector requires a consideration of Foucault's Theory of Power, where those in positions of authority must take the lead and provide a clear path towards reconciliation. This can be achieved through Habermas's Theory of Rationalisation, specifically through communicative action. Communicative action refers to communication between at least two individuals that is well-ordered and conforms to accepted moral standards. Habermas's theory of dialogue participation differs from instrumental participation, which is characterised by a focus on winning and success in the workplace.

Instead, dialogue participation aims to achieve a mutually beneficial understanding through engaged dialogue (IGI Global, Jürgen Habermas and Maccarthy, 1984).

5.5 Conclusion

This section analysed the legislative framework in South Africa that protects teachers in their workplace (schools). The definition of bullying and teacher targeted bullying was provided for clarity and the stipulations in the law that inform protection of teachers were highlighted. The responsibilities and duties of the DBE, SGBs, school leadership, and teachers were highlighted in reducing and preventing teacher targeted bullying. Although no policy to prevent and address TTB currently exist, there are numerous acts, regulations and policies to draw from. Recent cases of teacher targeted bullying in South Africa and the judgements handed down were also highlighted. The content of this chapter was linked and aligned with theoretical frameworks of theorists such as Paulo Freire, Habermas, and Foucault.

In conclusion, it is evident that there are no existing laws in South Africa specifically aimed at preventing victimisation in the workplace. Although employment contracts and policies can offer some form of protection against harassment, these measures are insufficient in addressing the issue of teacher targeted bullying. If an employee feels that their workplace is not taking their claims of harassment seriously, they may seek the assistance of their union. However, even with the involvement of unions, there remains a lack of clear guidelines and reporting mechanisms on a national level for workplace bullying, particularly for teachers. Until such laws and guidelines, with appropriate consequences, are put in place, the incidents of teacher targeted bullying are likely to persist. To effectively address this issue, it is imperative that a comprehensive programme be developed that supports teachers and all those involved in education in South Africa, starting from the leaders and families.

CHAPTER 6: VIEWS OF TEACHERS

6.1 Introduction

In the previous chapter, I outlined the legal framework with which a TTB policy should be aligned. This section I discuss the data generated through the survey and the interviews in order to analyse the general experiences and views of a sample of teachers regarding TTB, as part of the information base that can be used to formulate a policy to address and reduce TTB in South African schools. I first discuss the findings from the quantitative data, after which I discuss the findings from the qualitative data.

6.2 Overview of quantitative findings

In order to get a descriptive overview of the experiences of teachers, the first part of my questionnaire took a quantitative approach. I made a number of statements to which the participants had to indicate the extent to which they relate to the statement. The purpose of this part was in no way to infer or generalise, and I never aimed to get a representative sample. To the contrary, I wanted to simply understand the subjective experiences of those who took part in the survey. The next section will expand on this, by providing qualitative detail about the experiences of the participants.

6.2.1 *Acts of bullying*

De Wet and Jacobs (2013) categorised TTB into four categories namely bullying that causes isolation, bullying that attach the professional status of the person, attack on person/character and direct negative behaviour. The table below provides an overview with regard to the responses of the participants in these categories. They were requested to indicate how often they experience the lister actions in the past 12 months, on the following scale:

- 1 I only experienced it once or twice
- 2 I experience this occasionally
- 3 I experience this frequently
- 4 I experience this constantly

If they indicated that they did not experience it all, the score was not included in the aggregation

6.2.1.1 Overview of experiences of participants over a 12-month period

Table 6-1 provides an overview of the experiences as reported by the participants

Table 6-1: Overview of experiences of participants over a 12-month period (n=66)

Category of bullying	Number of participants who indicated that they experience this		Mean score on the 4-point scale	Standard deviation
	Number	Percentage		
Causing isolation from work (12 items)	54	82%	1.96	0.93
Attack on professional status (15 items)	54	82%	2.15	0.92
Attack on person/character (11 items)	44	67%	1.76	0.78
Direct negative behaviour (7 items)	31	47%	1.77	0.81

The table above elucidates and quantifies the experiences of TTB in the 4 categories. The participants' data indicate that TTB mostly impacts negatively in causing isolation from work (82%) and an attack on their professional status (54=82%). The categories least reported on is direct negative behaviour (47%). In all four cases the mean score suggested that this type of behaviour, on average, occur occasionally. Further detail is provided in the section that follows

6.2.1.2 Detail with regard to the acts of bullying

The detail of the acts of bullying as experienced by the participants within each category, as summarised above are provided in the four tables that follow. The interpretation of the different scores are as follows. Firstly, the number and percentages indicate how many participants indicated that they do experience this kind of bullying, irrespective of the

frequency. Secondly, the mean score indicates how often those that did experience this action in the 12 months preceding the survey, and should be interpreted in line with the scale provided above. Thus, the average is rounded of (\approx) to the nearest figure on the scale.

For convenience the three highest numbers and highest mean score are shaded at various levels

Table 6-2: Actions causing isolation at work (n=66)

Action	Number	Percentage	Mean score	Standard deviation
Having your decisions and recommendations criticised and rejected	48	73%	2.333	1.419
Frequently interrupting you while speaking	42	64%	1.929	1.276
Not answering your request to meet and talk	40	61%	2.025	1.349
Behaving as if you are not seen or are not there in the school environment	38	58%	2.289	1.450
Silence/cold shoulder/hostility as a response to your questions or attempts at conversations	35	53%	2.171	1.403
Not giving you an opportunity to prove yourself	34	52%	2.529	1.419
Not responding to your messages and/or emails	33	50%	2.030	1.311
Not informing you about organised social meetings	29	44%	2.483	1.379
Withholding information, documents and material that are necessary for your work	28	42%	2.036	1.374
Being inspected by people in a lower position than you	26	39%	2.538	1.392
Taking work from you that is your responsibility and give it to someone in a lower position than you	20	30%	2.050	1.395
Pressuring you to resign	13	20%	2.769	1.481

The table above indicated that the action experiences by most of the participant, is having your decisions and recommendations criticised and rejected. While 73% of the participants,

indicated such, the frequency, indicated by the mean score of 2.333 (≈ 2) suggest that they experience it on average occasionally. Although only 13 participants indicated that they are pressured to resign, constituting only 20% of the participants, those that do experience it, the mean score (2.769 ≈ 3) suggest they experience it frequently. This is the highest mean score on the table above. The standard deviation is an indication of how wide the spread of the responses in the category was.

Table 6-3: Attack on professional status (n=66)

Action	Number	Percentage	Mean score	Standard deviation
Making you responsible for more work than you can manage	49	74%	2.898	1.295
Blaming you for things that are not your responsibility	42	64%	2.381	1.378
Constantly finding mistakes/errors in your work and the results of your work	40	61%	2.175	1.412
Negative reaction from others because you work "too hard"	40	61%	2.250	1.354
Overloading you with tasks that you are not trained to do and that is not part of your work description	39	59%	2.795	1.321
Making you feel as if you and your work are being inspected	38	58%	2.474	1.310
Constantly evaluating your performance	36	55%	2.417	1.339
Holding you alone responsible for the negative results of work carried out by others	35	53%	2.257	1.421
Considering the work you do to be worthless and unimportant	35	53%	2.343	1.392
Being ordered to do work below your level of competence	31	47%	2.355	1.380
Repeated being reminded of your blunders	31	47%	2.194	1.424
Questioning your professional competence for every job you do	30	45%	2.567	1.431
Being forced to do a job that will negatively affect your self-confidence	27	41%	2.037	1.160
Being deprived of responsibility or work tasks	26	39%	1.692	1.158

Exploitations at work, such as private errands	20	30%	2.350	1.424
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The table above shows the detail with regard to actions that attach the professional status of the participants. The action that was experienced by most of the participants, is making you responsible for more work than you can manage (49; 74%). This was also the action experiences most frequently by those who experience it (mean score of 2.898 \approx 3).

Table 6-4: Attack on person/character (n=66)

Action	Number	Percentage	Mean score	Standard deviation
Having untrue things said about you	40	61%	2.275	1.320
Talking about you in a degrading and dishonouring manner in front of others	38	58%	2.158	1.263
Questioning your integrity	34	52%	1.912	1.215
Insulting teasing	25	38%	1.880	1.130
Facing behaviour such as slamming their fists on the table	24	36%	1.500	0.885
Devaluation of your rights and opinion with reference to your age	23	35%	1.696	0.974
Making verbal threats to harm you	21	32%	1.952	1.161
Writing unfair reports about you	21	32%	1.810	1.123
Devaluation of your rights and opinion with reference to your gender	20	30%	1.800	1.152
Starting untrue rumours about your private life	18	27%	1.944	1.259
Suggesting that your mental health is not sound	11	17%	1.909	1.221

The table above indicates that the attacks on personal character experienced mostly by the participants were having untrue things said about themselves (40;61%). In addition, this was the action experienced the most frequently (mean score of 2.275 \approx 2). Almost equal to the fore stated action, the second most action experienced by the participants was talk about them in a degrading and dishonouring manner (38; 58%). These actions were the second most

experienced (mean score of 2.158 \approx 2). All the above actions were experiences by the participants at a level of “occasionally”, as rounded off it average on two (2).

Table 6-5: Direct negative behaviour (n=66)

Action	Number	Percentage	Mean score	Standard deviation
Ridiculing you	27	41%	1.778	1.121
Verbally abuse you (e.g., insults, slander)	21	32%	2.190	1.327
Knowingly leaving when you enter a worksite (e.g., staffroom, office, classroom)	17	26%	1.706	1.105
Preventing or forbidding colleagues from talking with you	12	18%	1.833	1.337
Having your personal possessions damaged	10	15%	1.100	0.316
Having physical violence used against you	5	8%	1.400	0.894
Unfair/unfounded written or verbal warnings	5	8%	2.800	1.095

The table above elucidates the details with regards to direct negative behaviour towards the participants. The action experienced the most was ridiculing them (27;41%). The frequency of the actions experienced (2.778 \approx 2), meaning “occasionally”.

Although only 21 participants indicated that they were verbally abused, for those who did experience it, the mean score is (2.190 \approx 2) which is the highest listed.

6.2.1.3 Comparison of frequency of experiences between female and male participants

The questionnaire asked participants to indicate the frequency with which all of the acts mentioned in the previous four tables were experienced.

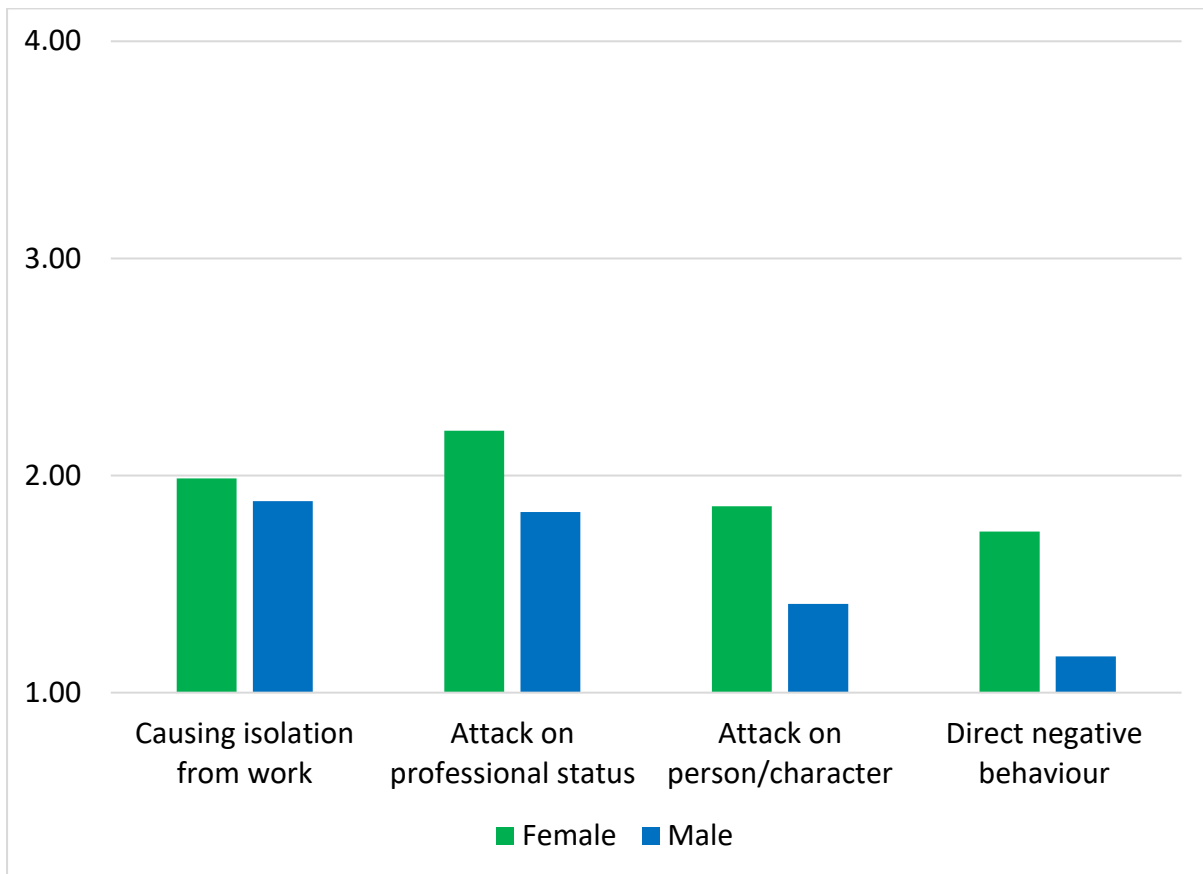


Figure 6-1: Comparing the frequency of bullying experienced by female and male participants

Although the intention of the study was not to infer beyond the group who responded to the questionnaire, when comparing the experiences of female participants to male participants, it is clear that the females who were bullied, experienced that more often. The differences in experiences between that of female participants and that of males, seems to be that females are notably more frequently exposed to direct negative behaviour compared to male participants.

6.2.2 *Who the bullies are*

The participants were asked to indicate who bullied them. 59 of the 66 responded to this section. They were allowed to mark all the applicable categories, and the responses are indicated below.

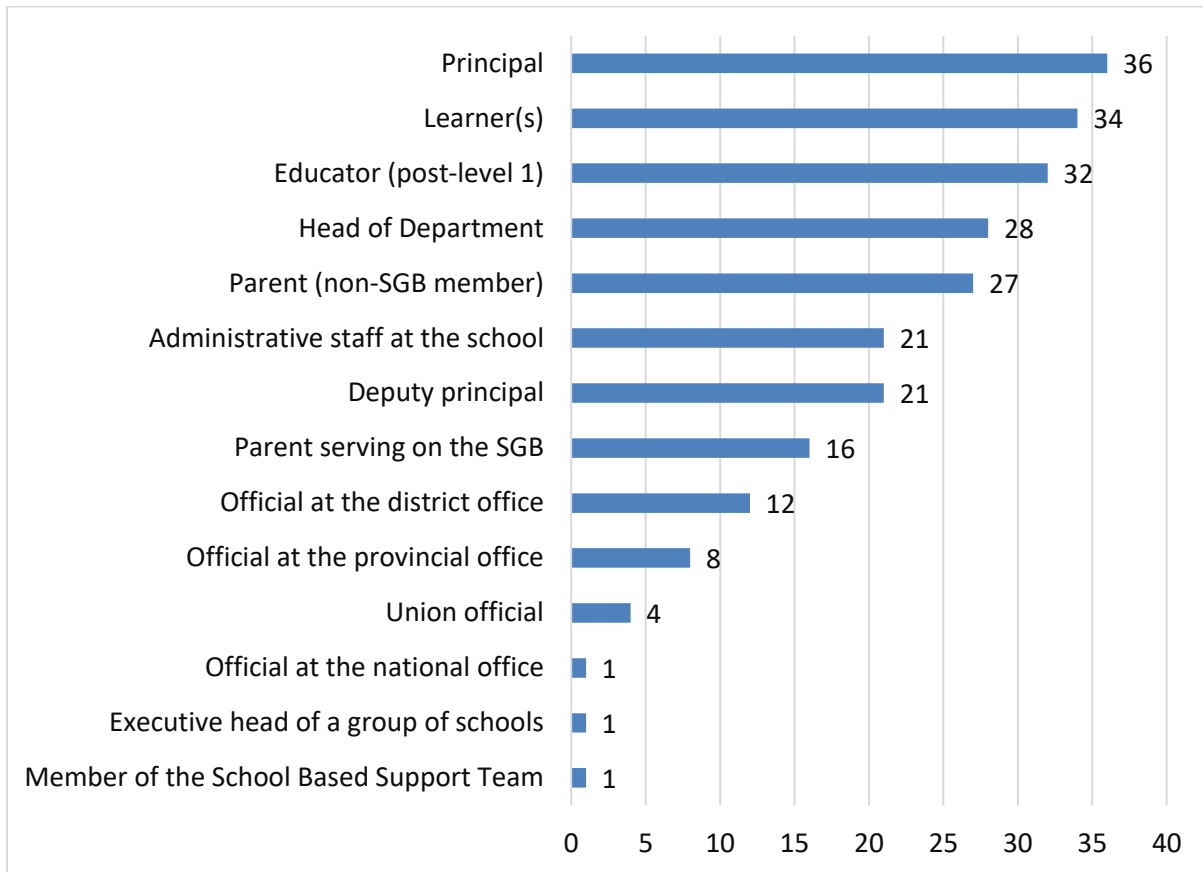


Figure 6-2: Perpetrators of TTB as reported by the participants (n=59)

The fore stated the data indicates that the participants reported that the principals (36 (61%)), learners (34 (58%)), post level-1 educators (32 (54%)) and their heads of departments (28 (47%)) are most often perpetrators of TTB. There seems also a moderate trend with regard to departmental official, be it at district level (12 (20%)), provincial level (8 (14%)) or national level (1 (2%))

6.2.3 *Effect of bullying on the teachers*

One section of the questionnaire focused specifically on the effect that the bullying had on the teachers, and the trends amongst the participants are displayed below. .

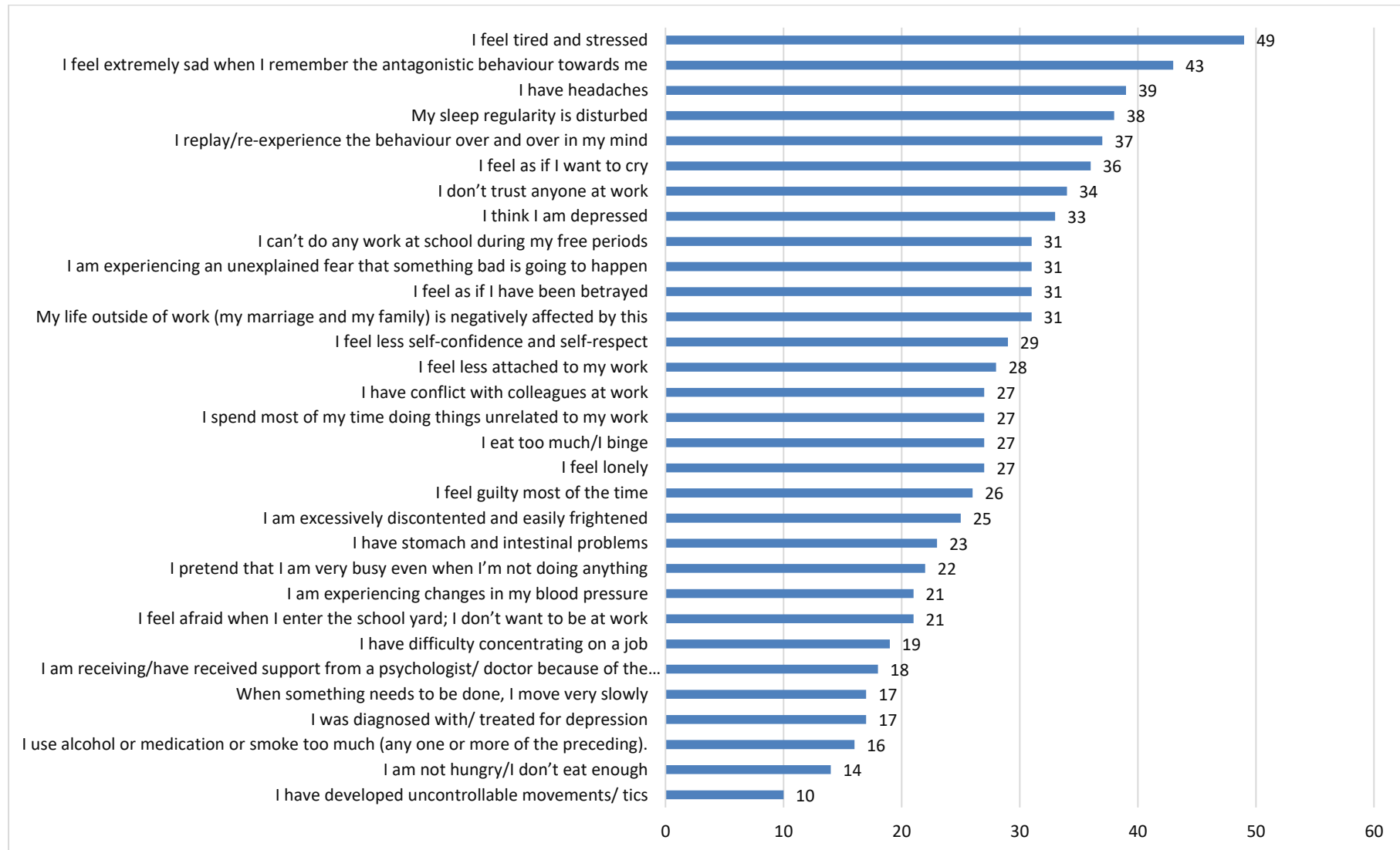


Figure 6-3: Victims' reaction to bullying behaviour (n=59)

The above figure shows the severe impact on the general well-being and functioning of teachers who took part in the study. Specifically, from the responses of the participants it seems if they feel tired and stressed, having feelings of sadness, having headaches and regularly disturbed sleep patterns.

The least effects TTB have on teachers are diagnosis and treatment for depression, the use of alcohol or medication or smoking, loss of appetite (not eating enough) and development of uncontrollable movements or tics.

This data sheds light on the devastating and severely negative effects TTB have on the overall well-being of teachers subjected to TTB.

To understand the detail of the unique experiences of the participants, the next section (6.3) provides the interpretation of the quantitative data generated through the survey and also some interviews.

6.3 Qualitative findings

In this section, the factors contributing to teacher targeted bullying were explored, including those related to the COVID-19 pandemic. The questionnaire allowed participants to reflect on their experiences of teachers, learners, and parents bullying at work, and also their own actions. The final section focused on teachers' suggestions for preventing bullying in the workplace.

The open-ended questions allowed the participants to share their experiences and perceptions anonymously, as they completed it online. In addition, three teachers who had experienced TTB in their schools were interviewed, as well as an official from the DBE's Personnel Wellness Department, whose role is to address problems encountered by teachers and learners in schools. The data from these interviews was integrated with the questionnaire data and analysed using theoretical frameworks and literature on workplace victimisation, bullying, and TTB, as outlined in Chapters 2 and 3. This analysis aimed to answer the secondary and primary research questions of the study.

6.3.1 Teacher targeted bullying during COVID times

Although I could not have foreseen how the circumstances would change during the course of the study, I attempted to solicit rich qualitative data from the participants how they perceived and experienced the ways the Covid 19 pandemic situation impacted on workplace bullying. The data collected from the participants regarding the occurrence of TTB during the COVID-19 pandemic shows a fluctuation, with some schools experiencing a decrease and others an increase. The data also highlights the types of TTB being practised and the identity of the perpetrators.

The qualitative data collected from the participants explains the reasons behind the decrease in bullying during the COVID-19 pandemic period and the preventative measures that schools had to implement.

6.3.1.1 Decrease in bullying during the COVID-19 pandemic period

The COVID-19 pandemic has had an impact on the frequency of TTB in schools. The majority of schools closed their doors to prevent the spread of the virus, which led to a shift towards online learning. The lack of physical interaction between teachers and learners, as well as between teachers themselves, was reported by participants in the research study to have resulted in a decrease in TTB.

The responses indicated that during the lockdown, teachers were relieved from a toxic work environment due to the fact that *“everyone was in their own space”* (#33) and *“time spent with colleagues at work was reduced”* (#6). Remote work resulted in a physical distance from the bully, which was perceived as a *“safe distance from the bullying”* (#57) and *“less interaction with the bully”* (#43). Furthermore, being away from work reduced the chances of confrontation and bullying, as indicated by the responses *“no more confrontation”* (#1) and *“there was definitely less bullying”* (#54).

The separation from the bullying had a positive impact on the research participants. One participant (#1) reported feeling *“more relaxed”*, while another (#11) proclaimed that *“COVID-19 saved my life...now that I look back, the break saved my life from a lot of heartache”*. The

lockdown not only provided a sense of safety for the teachers, but in some cases, it also led to an improvement in performance, as one participant (#54) stated.

I could work independently and do what I love most...teach! The pandemic for me was the best thing in my career. I became more focused and was constantly improving my teaching methodologies. I was training myself. I was also able to assist more learners on the online platform

The central role of teachers in the education sector cannot be overstated. Qualified and dedicated teachers are essential to ensuring effective teaching and learning outcomes. The participants in this study have demonstrated the capacity of teachers to embrace new technological innovations and use various social media platforms for teaching purposes. Furthermore, the lockdown period provided teachers with opportunities for both technological and personal growth, as evidenced by the positive changes reported by the participants (Yaseen & Joshi, 2021).

Despite this, it was found that in certain cases, the pandemic became a catalyst for bullying, as stated by Participant #59:

The Principal and his Management have constantly refused to take advice even when we ask him to comply with COVID Protocols. I feel that he is bullying me as this is threatening my health and life.

The results of the study align with Paulo Freire's theory of liberation, where the participants experienced positive emotions and practices while working from home during the COVID-19 pandemic. The non-confrontational environment allowed them to feel relaxed, and subsequently, they were liberated to improve their teaching methodologies.

The qualitative data in this section explains why there was an increase in bullying during the COVID-19 pandemic period and how it was practised.

6.3.1.2 Increase in teacher targeted bullying during the COVID-19 pandemic period

During the period of isolation, teaching was conducted through online platforms, as previously stated. Unfortunately, this resulted in an increase in cyber TTB from learners, parents,

colleagues, and the DBE, which had a severe negative impact on the physical and emotional well-being of the victim.

The escalation of bullying during the COVID-19 pandemic was a concern raised by the participants in this study. They reported that the situation had worsened, with participants such as #5 stating, *"It got worse with this pandemic"*. Participants noted increased meanness in their interactions with others, with Participant #14 stating, *"people [were] being more mean"* and Participant #29 confirming that there was an *"Increase in bullying"*. Some participants also reported that parents had become bullies, as stated by Participant #23.

Additionally, the participants experienced unreasonable work demands and a lack of empathy from some line managers, with Participant #36 stating, *"Other people's work load has become your problem as well. So, people are bullying others to do their job as well"* and Participant #23 reporting that district offices were becoming increasingly unrealistic in their demands. Participant #63 also noted that their principal was constantly conducting class visits and could not accept people being sick. The participants also reported being subjected to disrespect for their time and cyberbullying, with Participant #37 stating, *"They don't have to face you then when being mean. Then they think they can say what they want"*.

The stress and agitation caused by being bullied during this difficult period was reported by participants (#17). Participant #63 also revealed that some colleagues came to school even when they were sick because they were *"too scared of the bullying"*.

Interviewee (#i1) reported being bullied by learners, stating, *"Sometimes most of them will sort of make fun of it you know, sort of make fun of it and enjoy it"*. He went on to explain that he has noticed bullying happening in the workplace, saying, *"But I have noticed that it is something that is happening, I should say, maybe in the workplace, generally in the workplace"*.

The American Psychological Association's technical report on "Violence against Educators and School Personnel: Crisis during COVID" (2022, p. 27) highlights a decrease in teacher victimisation due to the absence of face-to-face classroom teaching during the COVID-19 pandemic; however, it also indicates a significant increase in educator violence in online

teaching platforms, particularly in the form of verbal TTB. This report also highlights an increase in verbal aggression experienced by school administration and by parents against educators.

These findings align with Paulo Freire's central theory, which focuses on the effects of dehumanisation and victimisation on psychological health, specifically in regard to fear, anxiety, stress, and agitation, particularly during the COVID-19 period. The qualitative data collected from the participants sheds light on who the perpetrators of bullying in schools are, among the educational role players.

a) *Increase in bullying by principals, HODs, and colleagues during the COVID-19 pandemic period*

With regard to the escalation of bullying by Principals and Heads of Departments (HODs) during the COVID-19 pandemic period, Participant #8 reported that *"management makes teachers feel they are at fault for not teaching properly" (#8)* and *"made responsible for collecting school fees" (#8)*. In particular, Participant #16 experienced the principal as a bully, stating that *"teachers feel scared to tell the principal of possible contact, because he sometimes gets very angry and blames teachers" (#16)*.

Participant #11, on the other hand, experienced bullying by the HOD, who *"always told me that my mental health was not well and that I was all over the place" (#11)*. Working from home and being free from the toxic bullying by the HOD, Participant #11 felt that *"COVID-19 saved my life. My HOD was extremely overwhelming, and now that I look back, the break saved my life from a lot of heartache" (#11)*.

The COVID-19 pandemic has posed a significant threat to the health and safety of individuals, and it is imperative for institutions, including schools, to adhere to the protocols outlined in the relevant legislative framework. However, it was reported that the Principal and management failed to comply with these protocols, as stated by Participant #59, who reported that *"The Principal and his Management have constantly refused to take advice even when we ask him to comply with COVID Protocols"* and *"I feel that he is bullying me as this is threatening my health and life"*. Participant #66 lamented about the principal bullying her as follows: *"With COVID being sick the principal made a remark its all in you head. You only get*

it because you don't believe in God". This type of bullying by a manager who holds a higher hierarchical position over staff has been confirmed in literature (3.2.4) and places the victim in a powerless position. Interviewee (#i2) also reported experiencing bullying from top management.

In an article entitled "Principals Bully Teachers at Schools: Causes, Examples, and Consequences" (Klein & Bentolila, 2018, p. 12), the authors conclude that there is a high likelihood of principals bullying teachers due to their perceived sense of control over them. The authors also note that this type of bullying is less likely to occur in schools where effective leadership practices are in place. The qualitative data gathered from the participants further highlights that even parents, as educational role players, can also be perpetrators of bullying.

b) Increase in bullying by parents on teachers during COVID-19

The COVID pandemic has resulted in an increase in the bullying of teachers by parents and guardians, as highlighted by the participants in this study. One participant noted that "*Parents turned into bullies*" (#23), potentially due to the financial and mental health strain caused by unemployment during the pandemic.

The findings of this study indicate a rise in bullying by parents during the COVID-19 pandemic. This is in line with the central tenets of Habermas, Foucault and Freire's theories, which emphasise the importance of humanisation and the protection of human dignity. The COVID-19 pandemic resulted in many companies and schools adopting remote working and hybrid methods of teaching, which has led to an increase in cyberbullying and a violation of the human dignity of teachers. The study provides insights into the perpetrators of cyberbullying and the ways in which it is practised.

c) Increase in teacher-targeted cyberbullying on teachers

The increase in teacher-targeted cyberbullying during the COVID-19 pandemic period was a significant issue that was documented by the study participants. The experiences of TTB that follow were recorded.

According to Participant #37, the increase in cyberbullying during the COVID-19 pandemic was experienced through cell phones. The participant noted that, "*less contact with people, but*

more time for people to contact you, even in your free time via cell phones” due to the fact that “they don’t have to face you then when being mean” (#37). The participant further stated that this has resulted in *“making working conditions very unpleasant” (#37).* This is consistent with literature which confirms that workplace bullying can make working conditions unpleasant and have a negative impact on the emotional well-being of the affected individuals (cf 3.4.2).

The participant explains that the reason for the increase in cyberbullying is that *“teachers will be very quick with their words and it will not be thought over” (#37).* The participant also suggests that the stress related to the COVID-19 pandemic and the shortened curriculum has contributed to the increase in cyberbullying (#37).

According to the participant, cyberbullying is experienced as *“non-physical, more verbal” (#38).* Literature supports this claim by highlighting that this form of bullying often manifests as perpetrators posting false rumours or messages about educators on social media (cf 3.2.4).

The study by Kamil Kopecký and Rene Szotkowski on the impact of cyberbullying and cyberaggression (Kopecký & Szotkowski, 2017) highlights the devastating effects of cyberbullying on teachers’ psychological and physical well-being. The researchers reported that cyberbullying manifests as verbal victimisation in the absence of physical interaction between learners, parents, and school management. The sustained nature of cyberbullying can lead to various long-term physical health problems, such as headaches, stomach disorders, sleep disorders, lack of concentration, and reduced immune systems, as well as emotional distress and a decreased ability to perform effectively in the workplace. In extreme cases, cyberbullying can result in attempted suicide or death by suicide.

The results of this qualitative data from the participants emphasise the importance of fair treatment of teachers and its effect on teacher targeted bullying. The NRV Model highlights that victims of workplace bullying are often emotionally scarred and unable to work effectively, which can ultimately lead to them leaving the system.

d) *Teacher targeted bullying and fair treatment of teachers during the COVID-19 pandemic period*

According to the data collected from the participants of the study, a decrease in fair treatment of teachers was reported by a majority of the participants. However, one participant reported a different experience, indicating an increase in fair treatment.

With regard to fair treatment during the COVID-19 pandemic, Participant #54 reported a decrease in fair treatment, stating, *“There was definitely less of it”*. In contrast, Participant #58 reported that *“We were fairly treated. We all affected [by the pandemic] and therefore we try to support each other”* and had a positive outlook on school inclusiveness. This response aligns with Habermas’ Theory of Communicative Action, which posits that social order in schools, including fair treatment, can be achieved through social cooperation.

The qualitative data also highlights how increased workloads during the COVID-19 pandemic period contributed to teacher targeted bullying.

e) *Increase in workload as a form of teacher targeted bullying during COVID-19*

The teachers, who already had a full curriculum to attend to, experienced bullying through the increase in workloads that were not part of their job description. This is evidenced by the statements of the participants in the study.

Participant #2 reported an increase in workload during the COVID-19 pandemic period, stating, *“Workload has increased”*. They further added that, *“some teachers have left to attend to family at home, teachers at school have had to fill those lessons” (#2)*.

Interviewee (#i2) expressed that the increase in workload was tantamount to bullying, as it was not within the scope of their professional duties. They stated, *“I feel like it is bullying to some extent. So ja, we do things that are not, were not supposed to do”*. They emphasised that teaching is their profession and the additional work is not part of their job description, stating, *“I believe I am supposed to stand in the class and teach and get feedback from my learners, mark and assess all the work and stuff. And this other work that I am doing, I don’t think I am supposed to be doing it, it is not part of my profession”*.

The participants reported taking on additional responsibilities during the COVID-19 pandemic, such as being responsible for collecting school fees, as described by Participant #8, who stated, *“Parents not paying school fees”*. Another participant, #52, reported that, *“Work has increased and so has responsibility”*.

Additionally, expectations and demands have increased, as indicated by Participant #51, further exacerbating the situation. Furthermore, Participant #27 reported that the increased administrative responsibilities related to COVID-19 regulations added to the pressure, stating, *“Too much admin regarding COVID regulations”*. The participant also expressed frustration with the fast pace of work expected, *“Everyone wants everything in a short time”*, leading to a *“Bottleneck of work therefore pressure too much”*.

The response of one participant highlights the burden of workload, with the comment, *“Everyone wants everything in a short time and too much admin regarding COVID regulations”* (#27). Additionally, bullying among teachers was also reported, as one participant stated, *“Other people’s workload has become your problem as well. So people are bullying others to do their job as well”* (#36). Furthermore, school management exacerbated the problem, as another participant reported, *“Management makes teachers feel they are at fault for not teaching properly”* (#8). The Department of Education also received criticism for lack of empathy during the COVID-19 period, with the comment, *“District offices are even more unrealistic in what they want”* (#23).

A participant’s response highlights the prevalence of bullying among teachers, as they noted that *“Other people’s workload has become your problem as well. So people are bullying others to do their job as well”* (#36). This is supported by literature which indicates that work overload is a common form of workplace bullying. (cf3.2.2)

The information provided by the participants contradicts the theory put forth by Habermas, which emphasises communication and dialogue as a means of resolving conflicts and finding a middle ground. However, the data suggests that there is a one-way flow of communication from the management, parents, and the Department of Basic Education, which places unrealistic workloads and expectations on teachers, leading to bullying. This one-sided and non-reciprocal communication aligns with the NRV.

Moreover, the data shows that TTB is perpetuated through a lack of communication regarding teaching tasks and withholding of COVID-19-related information, further exacerbating the issue.

f) *Lack of communication as a contributor to an increase in teacher targeted bullying during COVID-19*

According to the participants, clear and concise communication instructions were necessary for teaching via online platforms during the COVID-19 pandemic period; however, this was not always the case. One participant stated that *“People don’t communicate and tasks are not well formulated”* (#65). The management of the educational institution has a responsibility to effectively formulate educational-related tasks, particularly during the COVID-19 pandemic. Another participant expressed concern about the withholding of COVID-19 cases from educators, stating that *“Sometimes they withhold COVID-19 cases from educators”* (#18). It is crucial that school management does not withhold information regarding life-threatening COVID-19 protocols as mandated by the government, as this would be considered a form of bullying and a violation of the law.

The aforementioned fluctuations of teacher targeted bullying in all its forms are echoed by a technical report published by the American Psychological Association (McMahon et al., 2022), which found that teachers experienced similar forms of verbal bullying, including victimisation by students through social media platforms. However, the report also noted a decrease in physical bullying as a result of remote working during the COVID-19 pandemic. The report highlights the impact of frustration among parents towards teachers, leading to bullying. In a similar vein, this report highlights the reality of bullying among colleagues and school management during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The qualitative data collected from the participants in the following section sheds light on the negative impact that teacher targeted bullying has on its victims, affecting their psychological, physical, and social well-being.

TTB has on its victim's Psychological, Physical and Social functioning and we'll being.

g) *Teacher targeted bullying and less responsibility*

With regard to the reduction of responsibilities, the participant reported that *“Responsibilities were removed from me” (#44)*. This type of bullying may have a negative psychological impact on the educator, leading to feelings of inadequacy. The government has established certain COVID-19 protocols. The impact of non-compliance in schools and its effect on teachers will be discussed below.

6.3.2 *Teacher targeted bullying in general*

Although most of the incidences reported above was reported within the context of the pandemic, some of the respondents also reported some general occurrences of TTB.

Participants #54 shared her personal experience of her daughters being targeted by teachers:

My situation is slightly complicated. I have two daughters who are high achievers. Because of professional envy my daughters are victimised or bullied by their subject teachers. It is done very subtly, for example, they will be picked on in class if they performed badly in a test, being benched for an entire season of volleyball games. They are also mocked at, ridiculed and belittled by the teacher in front of their colleagues during teaching time. It is very difficult for me to intervene because the situation gets even worse and my daughters do not want me to get involved as it makes it worse for them. I had to stop myself on many occasions as these teacher and learner bullies I have to interact with on a daily basis and I have to teach.

Participant #13 also shared her experience as being bullied directly by learners as a result of instigation by a sport coach:

...bullying from learners and having them start rumours about you. Not a nice feeling. I am the u14a hockey coach and constantly find the first team girls making rude remarks about my coaching and the way I play, even though I am a good player. This behaviour is they learned through their coach, who does not like me because of my sexual orientation. So, he will constantly be talking about me to his team, so they [the learners] then pre-judge me based off of what he says. Nothing will be done about this because he is part of the hockey management team which is ruled by males. So, they will brush it off and either say that I am too sensitive, or

take things too personally but what they don't understand is that it is damaging my reputation.

Clearly, the effect of bullying goes far and wide and impact on family and leisure.

6.3.3 Teachers being bullies

According to the participants in the study, some teachers admitted to engaging in bullying behaviour, which had severe negative impacts on the victims. For example, Participant #30 stated that *they “might have said things in the heat of the moment”*, while Participant #58 reported that they *“have bullied one or more colleagues in their previous workplace”*. Participant #61 acknowledged that they too *“guessed”* that they have engaged in bullying behaviour, explaining that *“as young teachers, they would often make jokes about some of the older prim and proper colleagues”*.

In terms of gender, Participant #62 reported that *“most bullying is done by women during [their] experience as a teacher”*.

Participant #52 acknowledged engaging in bullying behaviour and attributed it to stress from upper management. The participant stated, *“Out of anger and perhaps stress from top management”*, and acknowledged, *“I realise that some of my actions in general could have been considered as bullying as I needed results to keep management happy”* (#52). However, the participant also noted, *“But fortunately not often, mostly I would take tasks on by myself to refrain from working with others”*, implying that they take steps to avoid bullying their colleagues.

According to existing literature, bullying is characterised by a repeated pattern of aggressive behaviour that includes the threat of future instances. However, as per a recent article in News 24 (Mamacos, 2021), it is challenging to differentiate between acceptable discipline and bullying, victimisation, and humiliation when it comes to educators and other staff members who may be perpetrators of such behaviour towards students. The identification, reporting, and resolution of bullying carried out by an educator or principal is a complex issue.

The analysis of the responses highlights that the pattern of aggressive behaviour, followed by threats and then repeated behaviour, is indicative of bullying among teachers. This is exacerbated by stress from management, resulting in a toxic workplace environment and contributing to teacher targeted bullying. The results align with the NRV Workplace Victimization Theory, which suggests that employees may engage in bullying behaviour and that management may contribute to a toxic workplace environment.

It is important to note that teachers play a central role in the educational experience and outcomes for their students, and their actions can have long-lasting impacts. The qualitative data highlights the vulnerability of teachers in the classroom and the need for awareness and prevention of bullying scenarios.

6.3.3.1 Teachers' actions could be perceived as bullying

The role of teachers in the teaching and learning experience is of great significance, and it is imperative that they maintain professional conduct at all times. With regard to the research question on actions that may be perceived as bullying, Participant #12 acknowledges that *"I was aware that some of my actions may have been perceived as bullying because of a high sensitivity to feedback due to insecurities"*. The participant also mentions a colleague who has a history of conflicts with other colleagues resulting from perceived criticism, and highlights the importance of accepting and learning from respectful and constructive feedback for professional development (#12). These remarks indicate that the participant's own actions may have been perceived as bullying, as well as those of the mentioned colleague. On the other hand, Participant #57 stated, *"To the best of my knowledge, I have been strict with parents, teachers or students, but I wouldn't classify it as bullying (in my opinion)"*.

It is widely accepted that teachers hold a position of authority and power in the classroom, and any behaviour that intimidates, endangers, or causes fear in students is deemed unacceptable. This is reflected in the findings of a study on teachers' perceptions of teacher bullying (Zerillo & Osterman, 2011), which concluded that any demonstration of such behaviour towards learners could be perceived as bullying.

In light of this, this study sought to gather qualitative data from the participants on their experiences and perceptions of bullying. The participants were asked to reflect on their own

behaviour, both as children and as parents, and to consider whether they have ever been perpetrators of bullying towards their teachers or their children's teachers.

6.3.3.2 Reflections on bullying behaviour during childhood

Participant #61 stated, *"As a learner, I definitely did bully some of the teachers that I thought were incompetent"*, and went on to recall a specific instance, *"I specifically remember a young teacher who started teaching when we were in matric. We would hide away when he entered the classroom, pretend not to hear him, etc. We even stole his sandwiches. We thought it was very funny, but realise now that we were horrible"*.

Participant #7 admitted that they resorted to bullying learners in order to enforce discipline in the classroom, stating, *"After running out of ideas, I have been forced to use bullying to discipline learners"*.

The study of teacher targeted bullying in literature highlights that younger teachers are more likely to be targeted by students as bullies compared to older, experienced teachers. In addition, it has been reported that teachers who struggle to enforce discipline in their classrooms may resort to bullying their students.

The experience of being bullied by a teacher is considered to be one of the most frightening for a child. The following section of the study focuses on the participants' qualitative data on their experiences of being bullied by teachers, as well as how the bullying occurred.

6.3.4 Being bullied by a teacher growing up

Children and adolescents are extremely vulnerable to the methods and relating impacts bullying by teachers have on their feelings and development as human beings. Teachers and schools are Educators and Educational institutions that are there to nurture and protect them.

According to the one participant, they experienced bullying from a teacher during their primary school years. The participant reported, *"I was bullied by my teacher when I was at primary school"* (#39) and went on to describe how the teacher would physically abuse them for no apparent reason. *"She would beat me up for nothing just because she saw me when she passed by my house"* (#39).

It is evident that children and young people are particularly susceptible to the negative impacts of bullying by teachers. Teachers and schools are meant to provide education and offer a safe and nurturing environment for students. The experiences reported by this participant highlight the need for greater awareness and efforts to prevent teacher targeted bullying.

The study conducted by Ronksley-Pavia, Grootenboer, and Pendergast (2019) investigated the effects of bullying by teachers on learners. Participants reported being subjected to aggressive behaviours from teachers that negatively impacted their sense of security and support in school. This violation of learners' freedom aligns with the political theory of Habermas, who seeks to promote fairness and freedom in democracy.

The research questions were aimed at gathering rich qualitative data from teachers to determine what steps can be taken to prevent the bullying of educators in schools. This section provides valuable qualitative information from teachers that can be used as a foundation for policy formation to protect against TTB in educational institutions.

6.3.5 The severe negative psychosocial, physical, and social impact of teacher targeted bullying on teachers in schools

The negative impact of TTB on the psychological and physical well-being of teachers is well-documented in the existing research. This is supported by the experiences of the participants in the current study.

The data in this section provides evidence of the severe nature of TTB and its devastating effects on teachers' lives and functioning. The qualitative data highlights the anxiety and emotional distress that TTB can cause.

6.3.5.1 Stress and feelings of inadequacy due to teacher targeted bullying

It is evident from the participants' responses that the stress caused by bullying during the COVID-19 pandemic period has had a significant impact on the emotional health of teachers. As Participant #19 stated, *"A lot of stress on hard-working teachers which cause them to feel*

inadequate". This sentiment was echoed by Interviewee #1, who stated, *"So, it puts you under stress in many ways, emotionally and also financially"*.

Interviewee #2 confirmed that she was also under a great deal of stress and added that, *"It is draining, it is really tough, it makes one bitter, but then you realise you are not getting a way out, so you have to deal with this, and the other things there are expectations for good results, and you really don't know how to make it, you have... it is hard, it is difficult, it is painful"*. This indicates that the stress caused by bullying can lead to feelings of inadequacy and a lack of confidence in one's ability to perform.

Moreover, the interviewee added, *"And you hardly ever get time for yourself, even for your interpersonal interests in life"*. This highlights the devastating impact that TTB can have on not just the emotional health of teachers but also on their personal lives and well-being.

The impact of bullying on the emotional well-being of teachers is evident in the participants' responses. Participant #39 expressed fear and concerns about the impact of bullying on their health and life, stating, *"I was scared"* and *"I feel that he is bullying me as this is threatening my health and life"* (#59). Interviewee (#i3) reported feelings of anger, helplessness, and inadequacy, saying *"I get very angry, it is frustrating, it is, but at the same time I feel there is nothing I can do, so I am sort of in a corner, and yeah it just makes me feel, it just makes me feel like I am not worth anything you know"*.

The emotional impact of bullying was also apparent in Participant #52, who reported feelings of self-doubt, saying, *"But you always wonder if it will be good enough"*. These responses highlight the profound emotional toll that teacher targeted bullying can have on educators.

The negative impact of TTB on the emotional well-being of teachers has been extensively researched and documented. As highlighted in the article "Consequences of Bullying Behaviour" (National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine, 2016), the victims of bullying often experience a range of negative emotions, including self-doubt, anxiety, feelings of non-acceptance, isolation, anger, depression, and withdrawal from others.

This is supported by the qualitative data collected from the participants in this study, which further underscores the severe emotional impact of TTB on teachers. The participants

reported feelings of fear, frustration, anger, and inadequacy, as well as a constant sense of self-doubt and anxiety about the next bullying incident.

Additionally, the literature on the subject (cf. 3.2.4) affirms that TTB has a profound and detrimental effect on the emotional well-being of teachers. The physical consequences of TTB on the victims will be discussed and elucidated in the following sections.

6.3.5.2 The physical life-threatening nature of teacher targeted bullying

The responses of the participants indicate that during the COVID-19 pandemic, teachers were subjected to bullying that put their lives at risk. One participant with comorbidity reported that they were denied leave and forced to work despite the risk to their health, stating, *“As a person with comorbidity, I was denied leave. I had to go to work even though I was putting my life at risk”* (#39). Another participant reported that the school principal and management failed to comply with COVID-19 protocols, stating, *“The Principal and his Management have constantly refused to take advice even when we asked him to comply with COVID Protocols”* (#59). This behaviour demonstrates a disregard for the safety and well-being of the teachers, which exacerbates the already challenging situation posed by the pandemic.

The National protocol during the COVID-19 pandemic stipulates that individuals with comorbidities have the right to work from home for their health and safety. However, as stated by Participants #39 and #59, the school management disregarded this protocol and denied teachers the right to work from home, putting their health and lives at risk. This constitutes bullying and violates the principles of human rights advocated by theorists such as Habermas, Foucault, and Freire.

According to an article on the consequences of bullying behaviour (National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine, 2016), the immediate physical consequences of TTB include high blood pressure, heart palpitations, insomnia, gastrointestinal problems, headaches, dizziness, and other biological changes. This is particularly concerning during a life-threatening pandemic, where teachers with pre-existing health conditions are more vulnerable to contracting the virus.

The section that follows examines the psychological impact of TTB and its effect on the social functioning of teachers.

6.3.5.3 Social impact of teacher targeted bullying on teachers having no more friends

The shift to remote teaching during the COVID-19 pandemic resulted in a lack of physical interaction between teachers, which had a significant impact on their social and emotional well-being. As stated by Participant #44, *“No more friends”*. This may be a result of the mandatory isolation measures and the fact that teachers were required to work from home. If colleagues intentionally isolate the participant, this can be considered psychological bullying, which can lead to long-lasting emotional damage. The following section delves into the reasons why teachers may choose to leave the profession due to TTB.

6.3.5.4 COVID-19 protocol issues and its emotional impact on teachers

The government established strict COVID-19 protocols with the aim of preserving the health and safety of individuals, thus saving lives during the COVID-19 pandemic. Participants involved in this research study encountered violations of these protocols.

With regard to COVID-19 protocol concerns, Participant #16 reported that teachers were afraid to inform the principal about potential COVID-19 contacts, stating that *“teachers feel scared for telling the principal of possible contact”* due to the principal’s tendency to become *“very angry and blame teachers for being irresponsible”* (#16). The data from the participants in this study reveals that the principal is engaging in bullying behaviour and that his staff is intimidated by him.

The authors of the report by the American Psychological Association on violence against teachers and other staff members during the COVID-19 pandemic (McMahon et al., 2022) express their concerns about the overall devastating impact of the pandemic on the emotional and physical well-being of all individuals involved in the school environment. The COVID-19 pandemic has intensified the workload of teachers and heightened their anxiety and fear of the unknown. The bullying and dehumanisation of staff members by the school management goes against the central theoretical paradigms advocated by Habermas, Foucault, and Paulo Freire, which emphasise communication and humanisation.

6.3.5.5 Teachers resigning from the teaching profession due to teacher targeted bullying

The phenomenon of teachers resigning from the teaching profession as a result of TTB is well-documented in the literature. One participant stated that resigning was preferable to being subjected to bullying and the associated pressure at school, stating, *“I resigned and could stay at home, without all the pressure of school” (#64)*. A report published on Sky News (2019) highlights the issue of teachers leaving the profession in the United Kingdom due to the devastating physical and psychological effects of TTB. The report underscores the extent to which TTB can drive educators from schools and the teaching profession permanently.

The analysis of the response from Participant #64 in regard to resignation highlights that teacher targeted bullying and victimisation by school management has driven teachers to resign from the education system. This is in line with the NRV Model, which states that in the third system, an individual who has been subjected to ongoing bullying in the workplace may choose to resign.

The intentional removal of duties and responsibilities from teachers can have a detrimental impact on their well-being, as teachers have a humanitarian nature. The consequences of such actions are further discussed in the following section.

In an attempt to gather qualitative data on the topic, I posed a reflection question to the participants, asking them to consider their experiences with bullying their colleagues. I aimed to gather insights into the participants' experiences with bullying in the teaching profession.

6.3.6 Preventing teacher targeted bullying

The satisfaction of teachers with the current TTB prevention policies and procedures in schools is described in this section through qualitative data.

The study investigated the views of teachers regarding TTB prevention policies and procedures in schools. One participant responded to the research question regarding their satisfaction with current TTB prevention measures. Although limited, the qualitative data from the participant suggests that they are content with the anti-bullying measures currently in place to prevent TTB. However, the small sample size implies that further research with a larger

participant pool may be needed to accurately determine the level of satisfaction among teachers with TTB prevention policies and procedures in schools.

6.3.6.1 Teachers satisfied with anti-bullying measures

Participant #22 expressed satisfaction with the measures in place for preventing TTB in their school, stating, *"I am satisfied with the measures put in place"*.

In a research study by Bauman and Hurley (2005), teachers' attitudes and beliefs on bullying were investigated. Results showed that while some teachers expressed satisfaction with current bullying prevention strategies and measures, only 20% of teachers participating in the study reported satisfaction with anti-bullying strategies implemented during recess periods. This low percentage suggests that teachers who are satisfied with anti-bullying measures are in the minority.

Furthermore, the data shows that there are still teachers who are unaware of TTB policies and prevention procedures. This ignorance is seen as having negative implications for the aforementioned issues and is discussed and explored in detail.

6.3.6.2 Participants' ignorance of anti-bullying prevention suggestions

The attitude of teachers who are not aware of the damaging effects of TTB and remain indifferent to suggestions for TTB prevention is unacceptable. This is an indication of ignorance on the matter.

With regard to the question of what can be done to prevent teachers from being bullied in their workplace, Participant #3 stated simply, *"I don't know"*, suggesting a lack of awareness and knowledge on the subject.

Participant #45 does not hold a positive outlook on the measures that can be taken to prevent teacher targeted bullying in the workplace. They stated, *"Not much can be done as teachers are predominantly in a lose-lose situation"* and described the situation as being *"between a rock and a hard place regarding the topic"*. This negative view suggests a lack of appropriate policy and procedure in place to address TTB at the participant's school.

An official from the Department of Basic Education's Employee Wellness Programme, who was interviewed (Interviewee #4), stated that they are not aware of any specific policy or programme aimed at protecting teachers from bullying. The official explained that their department is responsible for the general and overall wellness of teachers and offers consultations to teachers with problems, referring them to a psychologist if necessary. The official stated, *"No, not really. Not directly for bullying of teachers. My department looks after the general wellness of employees. We offer consultation with them and refer them, for example, to a psychologist"*.

In a study by Cunningham et al. (2015), "What Limits the Effectiveness of Antibullying Programmes?", a thematic analysis of teacher perspectives revealed that several factors, such as limited programme training time, lack of implementation, slow response to bullying incidents, failure of principals to support teachers when they are bullied, and lack of parental cooperation, all contribute to ignorance, inaction, and silence in the prevention of TTB, with severe impacts on teachers' physical and emotional well-being.

This notion of inaction and silence from authorities is at odds with the views of Habermas, who emphasises the importance of dialogue and participation, emphasising the need for dialogue between the government (i.e. the Department of Basic Education) and its employees and for action and policy to prevent TTB in the workplace.

This section of the study also sheds light on the issue of TTB in the form of excessive workloads for teachers, with data indicating that school management can be perpetrators of TTB by intentionally overloading teachers with additional responsibilities beyond their teaching duties.

6.3.6.3 Lighten admin workload for educators as a preventative measure for teacher targeted bullying

Teachers are considered to be crucial components of the educational system, as they play a vital role in the learning and development of students. As such, it is imperative that teachers are not burdened with additional responsibilities that could negatively impact their physical and emotional well-being, as this could exacerbate the occurrence of TTB.

Regarding reducing the administrative workload for teachers, one participant expressed their concern that *“Management needs to be aware of the increased workload of educators through the blended education platform of face-to-face and online” (#57)*. This statement highlights the reality that management may be contributing to TTB by overloading teachers with administrative tasks.

The same interviewee (#i1) expressed their frustration with the additional workload imposed by management, stating that they are given deadlines that are often unreasonable and that they are threatened if they are not met. The interviewee added, *“All right, basically what did happen to me is that there are deadlines that you are given which I feel that sometimes they are, they not short and sometimes technology does get in the way, there are certain trends, they are threatening you”(#i1)*. The same interviewee expressed their concern that the management often fails to understand the level of pressure they place on teachers, stating, *“They underestimate the kind of pressure that they sometimes put on us”*.

Interviewee (#i2) stated that her workload has not been reduced, and instead has increased, as she is currently experiencing bullying. According to her, the bullying is perpetuated by top management in her school. She reported, *“I am currently under bullying and of course in the past probably something that has been going on for quite some time in one school where I am. So, the management, top management actually is the one that is doing this because I have as a teacher been given more than I can take. You know, the class starts from 08:00 o’clock to 04:00 o’clock, I move from class to class with no free period and no time to prepare for the lesson”*. This observation aligns with literature (cf 3.2.4), which suggests that bullies operate within power principles and hierarchical systems, such as those found in school management.

Interviewee (#i3) suggests that the approach of management should be altered from instructing teachers to complete additional work within unreasonable time frames to asking if they are capable of doing so. This, according to the interviewee, would result in a reduction in workload. The interviewee stated, *“I believe that the approach must change. Rather than telling someone, ‘I want this done by 2:00 PM,’ it would be more appropriate to ask, ‘When can you finish this?’ or ‘Could you please try to finish it by the end of the week at least?’ It is unreasonable to give a two-hour deadline at 10:00 AM while I have students in my class, forcing me to leave them to complete the task at hand”*.

According to Participant #58's response, the Department of Education (DOE) is identified as a perpetrator of teacher targeted bullying through the excessive amount of unnecessary administrative tasks assigned to teachers, stating, *"Teachers are currently being overloaded by lots of unnecessary admin from the DOE"*. This observation aligns with the findings of my NRV Model, which highlights that government institutions can also engage in bullying practices against their workforce.

This participant described the impact of excessive administrative workload on their personal time. According to them, *"This takes time to complete, with a full day of teaching. Even breaks are used to assist learners with help. Therefore, we have to complete administrative tasks during our personal hours after a full day of teaching at school"* (#58). This response highlights the participant's dedication to teaching, as they prioritise it over administrative tasks during school hours.

Kleyn and Bentolila (2018) conducted a study on "Principals Bullying Teachers at Schools: Causes, Examples, and Consequences". They found that the imposition of additional duties on teachers is a contributing factor to bullying by managers and colleagues. It is also established that teachers play a crucial role in the classroom, and the imposition of extra responsibilities by management interferes with their primary task of teaching. This further leads to a negative impact on the physical and emotional well-being of teachers, which in turn negatively affects teaching and learning outcomes within the education system.

The study highlights the prevalence of TTB and identifies management and the DBE as the perpetrators. This contradicts Paulo Freire's central theoretical construct of humanisation and aligns with the NRV Model, which posits that management and government intentionally victimise their employees.

The following section of the study focuses on the importance of educating teachers and management on TTB through regular prevention workshops to raise awareness of this issue.

6.3.7 Teacher targeted bullying workshops and policy implementation

The qualitative data collected in this section is crucial in constructing the information base necessary for policy formation aimed at creating awareness and educating teachers and

management on the issue of TTB. The discussion on TTB prevention is presented below based on this qualitative data.

6.3.7.1 Training for school management and teachers through workshops on bullying awareness and education

It is widely held that education is a critical component of human emancipation and functionality. To this end, it is imperative that efforts are made to prevent TTB in schools. One such effort could be the implementation of TTB awareness workshops as part of continuous professional teacher development (CPTD) programmes. These workshops aim to educate both school management and teachers on the issue of TTB, promoting a better understanding of its causes and consequences, as well as strategies for preventing it. This is in line with Nelson Mandela's belief that education holds the key to unlocking human potential.

Participant #13 has expressed a view that teachers are being treated unfairly in their workplace, with the remark, *"They treat them like children!"* This implies that the management and the principal are not treating teachers with the respect and professionalism they deserve, and are instead treating them as if they are children. This highlights the need for improved relationships and communication between teachers and their superiors in the workplace.

The preceding findings are demonstrated by the following statements from participants: *"Awareness at schools but the problem is the principal is a bully himself" (#18)*, *"Headmasters must get trained and be more aware of what it means to bully" (#13)*, and *"Training for principals, deputy principals, and HOD's is necessary, as the organisational culture, in my opinion, has a significant impact on the prevalence of colleague-on-colleague bullying" (#18)*. These responses highlight the importance of educating school leaders on the issue of bullying and the role they play in creating a positive organisational culture.

The participants in the study overwhelmingly emphasised the importance of educating teachers as a strategy for preventing teacher targeted bullying. One participant suggested a *"Workshop on bullying awareness" (#34)*, while another emphasised the need for frequent workshops to refresh knowledge and prevent bullying, stating, *"More frequent workshops to refresh" (#7)*. Another participant emphasised the importance of educating individuals on the

definition of bullying and its consequences, stating, *“I think people need to be educated on what bullying is and the consequences of it..”*. (#41). These responses highlight the importance of education in preventing teacher targeted bullying.

This participant echoes the previously stated sentiment, stating, *“All teachers should be sent on a course about this. Sometimes they don’t even realise that they’re bullying someone”* (#63).

The following participants suggest that a holistic, inclusive approach to preventing TTB within educational institutions should be implemented, including the involvement of teacher unions. One participant states that *“Unions should educate their members on their rights at school”* (#47), while another suggests that *“An anti-bullying policy at school and an educational programme on the identification process of bullying and victimisation will be beneficial”* (#48). A third participant supports the notion of anti-bullying workshops as a whole-school approach, stating that *“Regular advocacy sessions on anti-bullying for educators, the union, management, and the SGB should be held”* (#63). This participant also recommends providing each educator with a copy of the anti-bullying policy and access to counselling services (#63).

In a study published by Bradshaw, Waasdorp, O’Brennan, and Gulemelova (2013) on “Teachers and Education Support Professionals Perspectives on Bullying and Prevention: Findings from a National Education Association Study”, it was found that teachers expressed the need for education and training on bullying prevention strategies to reduce bullying in schools.

The implementation of a whole-school approach involving all stakeholders, including the Department of Basic Education, teacher unions, and the community, can lead to the development and enforcement of an anti-bullying policy, which would be beneficial for victims of TTB. This approach aligns with Habermas’s Theory of Communicative Action, which emphasises the importance of dialogue in resolving complex social issues.

The qualitative data collected from the participants in this study, in regard to recommendations on TTB prevention, is crucial to the study. The participants emphasised the

need for TTB policies and procedures to be in place at the district and national levels, easily accessible, strictly enforced, and for teachers to be educated by professionals on TTB.

6.3.7.2 Standardised teacher targeted bullying prevention procedures/policy from the Department of Basic Education from local to national level must be in place

It is deemed crucial that the DBE establish uniform and standardised procedures and policies regarding the prevention of TTB. This will eliminate any substandard policies and ensure a national uniform stance against TTB prevention.

The participants of the study expressed a general agreement on the importance of standardising anti-bullying policies at both the local and national level. One participant stated, *“By having the necessary policies in place”* (#66), while another stated, *“District level and national level policies against bullying”* (#27). Additionally, Participant #2 called for *“easier access to procedures to follow when bullied”*.

According to Participant #10, there is a need for improvement in the teaching system regarding anti-bullying policies. It is suggested that these policies must be implemented by professional individuals in order for teachers to comprehend them effectively. The participant states, *“Professionalise teaching and let us get people who understand policies”*.

Participant #23 wants to *“Have a strict policy in place and follow it strictly”* (#23). This statement implies that current policies may be unclear and not being implemented effectively.

The following participant expresses their concern that teachers are powerless against disruptive and ill-disciplined learners, saying, *“Teachers hands are cut off against disruptive and ill-disciplined learners”* (#10). They believe that the education department can play a role in addressing this issue by reviewing disciplinary procedures (#10) in order to protect teachers from bullying.

Participant #42 highlights the importance of implementing and enforcing anti-bullying policies and emphasises the need for authorities to listen to complaints rather than ignoring them: *“Enforcing policies in place”* and *“Not laughing off someone’s complains but listening”* (#42).

Participant #56 stresses the importance of having an anti-bullying policy in place, along with educational programmes to identify bullying and its effects, for their personal benefit: *“An anti-bullying policy at school and an educational programme on the identification process of bullying and victimisation will be beneficial for me personally”* (#56). This data highlights the pressing need for standardised anti-bullying policies to be implemented locally and nationally in the education system.

In the study conducted by Bradshaw et al. (2013, p. 280-293) entitled “Teachers and Education Support Professionals Perspectives on Bullying and Prevention: Findings from a National Education Association Study”, the importance of developing and implementing anti-bullying policies and programmes at both national and district levels is emphasised. The study found that there is a need for a safe support system for victims of TTB both at the national and school level. The data further suggests that collaborative, institution-wide programmes can be effective in preventing bullying and victimisation.

6.3.8 Teacher targeted bullying support and mentorship for teachers in schools

The DBE and schools must establish a secure support and reporting system for TTB. It is imperative that this system be incorporated into their constitution and consistently monitored and upheld with no exceptions. As previously noted, there is a need for a safe support system for TTB victims. The following qualitative data highlights the actions that teachers, schools, and the DBE can take to create such a system.

6.3.8.1 The Department of Basic Education and school management must ensure that a safe support system is in place for the reporting of bullies

In an interview with a representative from the Teacher Wellness department of the DBE, it was confirmed that there is currently no report and support system in place for teachers who are victims of TTB. If requests for TTB support are received, they are referred to the respective schools to handle the complaints and support requests. The DBE refers TTB incidents to psychologists and social workers rather than handling the matter directly. This lack of support

and guidance from the DBE could be considered a form of victimisation in itself, making the DBE a perpetrator of TTB.

While individual schools may have their own anti-bullying policies and programmes, the absence of a centralised support system for reporting and addressing incidents of bullying puts both teachers and students at risk of being victimised.

6.3.8.2 Safe support system in place for reporting of bullies

The participants in the study stressed the importance of creating a safe support system for reporting instances of bullying. Participant #11 stated that *“Teachers need to know to speak up”*, and this sentiment was echoed by Participant #54, who mentioned that *“Sometimes it just helps to talk about what has transpired”* (#54). To make communication more accessible for teachers, participants suggested the need for *“Support from the principal and feeling free to complain and not feeling scared to say something”* (#15), *“Suggestion boxes, visits by officials to hear unanimously told experiences by educators”* (#53), and for the DBE to establish *“an office where teachers can report bullying”* (#17).

Interviewee (#i1) strongly believes in terms of bullying that *“there has to be a way in which this issue is brought to light and I just don’t know how but there is a way that I think, I strongly believe that there is a way in which this should be brought to the attention of the responsible authority”*.

Participant #11 highlights the significance of trust in the reporting process of bullying. They state that in order for teachers to report bullying incidents, they must trust the person they are speaking to. The participant also mentions that at their school, there is a social worker available for teachers to make appointments with, thereby indicating the presence of a trusted individual for teachers to seek support from.

Participants argue that addressing accountability for bullying is imperative. One participant (#38) states that *“there must be a place where bullies can be reported and held responsible”*, while another participant (#59) echoes this sentiment by saying, *“there should be processes in place to make people, especially those in positions of authority, accountable if an incident was carried out with malicious intent”*.

Participant #11 highlights the importance of consequences for bullying, stating that *“Parents and children need to be informed of the consequences that will be in place if they bully teachers”*, and that *“teachers need to know that they will be held liable if they are found guilty of bullying”* (#11).

Regarding the safe support system, Participant #54 stated, *“Having direct access to assistance and assured confidentiality, rather than an expectation (rule) that issues need to be addressed at the school level before one is ‘allowed’ to seek outside assistance”*. The same participant added, *“There should be a neutral person who is not part of the school structure who can facilitate discussions between the necessary people”*. Additionally, Participant #40 emphasised the importance of *“on-site HR and counselling”* (#40).

Regarding the support for teachers against parent bullying, Participant #8 holds a strong view that *“Parents are forever being racist and react negatively towards teachers”* (#8). This implies that teachers are being bullied by parents, and no other participants mentioned any other supportive policies being in place at the schools and at the district level to support and protect teachers.

The following qualitative data highlights the belief held by participants that teacher unions hold the responsibility of protecting teachers against TTB. The participants suggest that this can be achieved through various means, such as educating teachers on their rights, conducting advocacy sessions on TTB, providing teachers with anti-bullying policies, and offering counselling services at schools.

6.3.8.3 Teacher unions must educate and support teaching staff against victimisation

The role of teacher unions in the protection, support, and education of their members against TTB in schools is critical. While they advocate for various issues, they do not specifically address TTB, leaving victims of TTB to rely on the schools for assistance, which often lack the capability to effectively deal with the issue.

On the topic of teacher unions supporting education staff, Participant #47 stated that *“Unions should educate their members on their rights at school”*. However, Participant #30 holds a

contrasting view, believing that teacher unions themselves are perpetrators of bullying, stating, *“Protect them from attacks of Unions”*.

Participant #63 proposes a comprehensive approach to anti-bullying prevention and counselling for teachers, which involves regular advocacy sessions for all stakeholders, including educators, unions, management, and the SGB. They also recommend providing educators with a copy of the anti-bullying policy and access to counselling services. The participant’s statement reads, *“By having regular Advocacy Sessions on anti-bullying for both Educators, Union, Management and the SGB. Providing each educator with a copy of Anti-Bullying Policy and providing educators with Counselling Services”*.

The South African Organisation of University-based Teachers (SAOU) and the National Professional Teachers’ Organisation of South Africa (NAPTOSA) are the two largest teacher unions in South Africa. According to the SAOU (2023), they are committed to providing their teachers with unparalleled professional development and support, along with quality services and value. Similarly, NAPTOSA (2022) states that they are advancing professionalism in the sector and are guided by the respect for fundamental human rights and non-discrimination.

However, as evidenced in Chapter 5, the authors believe that these teacher unions fall short in providing education, protection, and support for teachers against TTB. Participants’ qualitative data highlights that schools and their management, including principals, must provide young teachers with mentorship and support to help them with TTB incidents.

6.3.8.4 Teacher targeted bullying mentorship for teachers from school management

Participant data reveals that school management and principals play a crucial role in preventing TTB by providing young teachers with mentorship and support. This guidance helps to safeguard teachers against TTB.

It became evident from the responses regarding mentorship that both teachers and management should be more involved in supporting junior teachers, who often face bullying from learners. One participant stated, *“Get more involved with junior teachers, they are bullied a lot by learners and give them mentors to help them”* (#50). Another participant emphasised

the importance of support from the principal and a safe environment for teachers to speak up, saying, *“Support from the principal and feeling free to complain and not feeling scared to say something” (#15)*.

The results of a Master’s research study conducted by Chatty (2020) at the University of Pretoria on the management of learner-to-teacher relationships in public secondary schools highlighted the crucial role of school management in preventing TTB. The study found that mentorship and support structures were either ineffective, insufficient, or non-existent in South African schools, leading to an increase in TTB and devastating effects on teachers as victims.

The comments from participants indicated a lack of support from school principals, with some teachers perceiving or experiencing the principal as a bully. The data from participants emphasised the need for the DBE to monitor the actions of principals and hold them accountable for their behaviour. The DBE is responsible for overseeing education in South African schools, including curriculum development.

6.3.9 Department of Basic Education ombudsman to monitor and investigate principals’ actions, leadership, and the consequences taken against teacher targeted bullying perpetrators

The qualitative data obtained from the participants highlights the need for accountability of the school leadership, particularly the Principals, in relation to their actions concerning fair treatment of teachers and TTB. This is a crucial aspect that should be taken into consideration in the formation of policies aimed at preventing TTB in schools.

6.3.9.1 Department of Basic Education ombudsman should monitor and investigate principals’ actions

The responsibility of the DBE is to monitor the actions and leadership styles of Principals in order to prevent TTB in schools. This is in line with the qualitative data obtained from the participants in the study, which highlights the importance of holding Principals accountable for their actions related to fair treatment of teachers and TTB prevention.

Participant #14 highlights the issue of school principals having too much power and using it to bully teachers. They state that *“Principals have too much power in making teachers feel as if they are watched with a magnifying glass, that questions the integrity, ability and professionalism of the teacher”*. They further explain that *“They criticise your work ethic and turns around doing exactly the same thing. They do not treat all teachers fairly and equally”* (14). This participant highlights the need for officials from the DBE to investigate complaints against such authoritative figures in schools.

This participant concurs with the idea that some principals can be bullies themselves, stating, *“There is awareness at schools, but the problem is that the principal is a bully himself”* (#18).

Interviewee (#i2) agrees with the need for an ombudsman for principals and states, *“I guess the department should monitor exactly what is going on in private schools, as the principal is holistically responsible for the functioning of a school”*. The interviewee goes on to highlight the prevalence of abuse in private schools, saying, *“There is a lot of abuse that happens in private schools. So, the department must check that the teachers’ workload is within recommended guidelines, just as they would for a government school teacher. They must also ensure that the working conditions are favourable”*.

According to Participant #37, *“Principal must take responsibility”*, and Participant #59 states, *“There should be processes in place to make people, especially those in positions of authority, accountable if an incident was done maliciously”*. Additionally, Participant #60 asserts that *“The power of principals should be investigated”*.

Participant #13 suggests that *“Headmasters must get trained and be more aware what does it mean to bully”*.

The study by Klein and Bentolila (2018, p. 14) on “Principals bully Teachers at schools: Causes, examples, and consequences” highlights the issue of Principals who abuse their power and engage in bullying behaviour towards teachers in order to assert control and dominance. The article also mentions that some Principals may not be aware of the emotional impact their actions may have on teachers, and that this can lead to misinterpretations and misunderstandings.

It is therefore crucial for the Department of Basic Education's ombudsman to monitor and investigate the actions and leadership styles of Principals to ensure fair treatment of teachers and prevent teacher targeted bullying. This is in line with the need for the DBE to act as an ombudsman and investigate cases of bullying, take action against perpetrators, and provide training for Principals and leaders on leadership skills.

The participants' qualitative data highlights the importance of training Principals and leaders on leadership skills to create a harmonious work environment in schools. This will result in a more knowledgeable leadership, who can provide better support for teachers who are being bullied in the workplace.

6.3.10 Principals must lead by example to ensure a harmonious work environment

The importance of a principal's leadership style in fostering a supportive and harmonious work environment for teachers, thereby preventing TTB, cannot be overstated. The principal must embody qualities such as compassion, nurturing, humanism, understanding, fairness, and accommodation, and serve as a model for these behaviours.

Participant #15 emphasises the importance of support from the principal and the freedom to voice concerns without fear, stating, *"Support from the principal and feeling free to complain and not feeling scared to say something" (#15)*. Participant #16 further highlights the significance of leadership, stating that *"Management needs to be leaders who set the tone for good behaviour & staff will follow"*.

As suggested by Participant #13, *"Headmasters must get trained and be more aware of what constitutes bullying" (#13)*. This participant further suggests that the Department of Education should be involved in this training, specifically with regard to disciplinary procedures and their review, stating, *"The Education department can review disciplinary procedures" (#13)*.

Further to this, the participant argues that *"Training for principals, deputy principals, and HODs is crucial, as the organisational culture, in their opinion, has a significant impact on the prevalence of colleague-on-colleague bullying" (#33)*.

Participant #37 holds the firm belief that *“Principal must take responsibility” (#37)*. This viewpoint is shared and can be put into practice by principals who should *“Get more involved with junior teachers they are bullied a lot by learners and give them mentors to help them” (#50)*.

Klein and Bentolila (2018) identified two principal leadership styles that promote a harmonious work environment, thereby reducing the likelihood of TTB in schools. The transformative leadership style is characterised by a principal who invests time and effort in both teaching and educating the staff, and works collaboratively with teachers to maintain high work standards. This establishes a high level of trust in the principal and results in low levels of workplace victimisation. Similarly, authentic leadership, characterised by a principal who is genuine, honest, and values transparency, ethical conduct, and collaborative information sharing, also leads to a harmonious work environment and low levels of workplace victimisation.

These leadership styles are seen as key to preventing TTB in schools. Participants in the study also expressed their alignment with the importance of leadership by example through a cyclical interaction and communication between management and employees. This aligns with Habermas’s theory of communication as a fundamental aspect of a just and humanistic society.

The qualitative data also revealed that participants believe that the appointment of individuals who are not qualified for certain positions in schools can lead to a disharmonious workplace culture and, ultimately, bullying.

6.3.11 Appoint qualified people in correct roles to prevent the workplace conflict

Adding to the participants’ voice on the issue of qualified people occupying the correct roles in schools, the participant laments, *“People are appointed in positions they don’t deserve and are not qualified to work with other people” (#65)* and further points out that *“References are not legit and the history of people isn’t questioned before they are appointed” (#65)*. The aforementioned problem that the participant highlights is crucial, as people should be

interviewed for certain roles to establish their qualifications before being appointed, as is the norm in any other organisation.

This participant noted that individuals are appointed to positions with *“Poor people skills” (#65)* and that appointments are made as a result of *“favours to friends” (#65)*.

It is my contention that the appointment of individuals with the appropriate qualifications and interpersonal skills to positions within schools may contribute to the reduction of workplace victimisation and thus result in the creation of a harmonious work environment that is conducive to preventing TTB.

According to the qualitative data collected from participants, it is evident that they hold a strong belief that all individuals involved in the school environment should be educated on the consequences of TTB. This includes teachers and those in positions of authority. The participants suggest that implementing a strict TTB policy and enforcing its measures could help achieve this goal.

6.3.12 Consequences to be taken against perpetrators of bullying.

It is important to ensure that those who engage in bullying behaviours in schools are held accountable for their actions. All stakeholders within the school should have a clear understanding of the consequences for such behaviours, and these should be clearly outlined in the school’s constitution.

It was evident from the responses that action should be taken against individuals who engage in bullying. As Participant #5 stated, *“There should be action taken against those who bully other teachers”*. They also emphasised that *“Parents and children need to be informed of the consequences that will be in place if they bully teachers” (#11)*.

The following participant recommends that *“Teachers need to know you will be held liable if you found guilty of bullying” (#11)*. Participant #46 feels that *“Stricter punishment for learners bullying teachers and that teachers bullying other teachers should not just be brushed to the side” (#46)* and that *“That person needs to be called in and addressed, no matter how high up in the hierarchy of the school they are” (#46)*. Participant # 59 suggests that *“Also there should*

be processes in place to make people (especially people in positions of authority) accountable if an incident was done maliciously” (#59).

Participant #23 suggested that a strict policy should be in place and strictly followed, while Participant #9 concurred, advocating for stricter measures to be implemented.

According to Participant #11, *“The education department can review disciplinary procedures”*.

The author, Sherie Gordon, in her article “How to Discipline Bullies at School” (September 2020), provides guidelines for addressing the issue of bullying and TTB in schools. She emphasises the importance of having a clear policy in place for disciplining perpetrators of bullying and that corrective actions should be taken to prevent further victimisation. The policy and related guidelines must be consistently enforced to ensure their effectiveness. The author outlines a sequence for preventing bullying, starting with immediate action, followed by an investigation of the incident, confrontation of the perpetrator(s), informing relevant parties such as parents, Principals, teacher unions, and the Department of Basic Education, taking action against the perpetrator(s), and monitoring to prevent future incidents. The author emphasises the importance of having clear policies in place and consistently enforcing consequences for perpetrators of bullying, in order to increase victimisation prevention in schools.

It is argued in this regard that the consequences of bullying must be rigorously upheld at both the school and district levels. Failure to implement anti-bullying policies and enforce them, as well as failure to hold perpetrators of teacher targeted bullying accountable for their actions, contradicts the central theoretical constructs of humanism, democratic rights and freedoms, and justice, as espoused in this study.

6.4 Conclusion

In this chapter, the factors contributing to teacher targeted bullying were analysed. These factors included the impact of COVID-19, the reflection of participants as learners or parents, and their experiences with bullying teachers in the past. The chapter also examined potential measures to prevent the bullying of teachers in the workplace.

In this chapter, semi-structured and open-ended questions were employed to gather information from participants on their experiences and perceptions of TTB. Three teachers who had experienced TTB and an official from the Personnel Wellness Department of the DBE were interviewed. The data collected was integrated with the questionnaire data and analysed using the theoretical frameworks and literature on workplace victimisation, as well as my own NTV Model. The responses from the participants helped to answer the second secondary research question namely, *what are the experiences and views of teachers on TTB?*

CHAPTER 7: CONCLUSION

7.1 Introduction

Chapter two, three, five and six provides a comprehensive information base on which a policy to prevent TTB can be built. In this chapter, I first provide an overview of the main focuses of each chapter in the study. The main findings from the different chapters are then summarised, after which I first provided an adaption of my NRV model and then provide some considerations for inclusion in the proposed policy.

7.2 Overview of the study

Chapter 1 presented the background of the study and the problem of TTB in the workplace, specifically in schools. The research questions, aim, and objectives were identified and explained. The paradigmatic viewpoint and research strategy for conducting the study were also outlined.

In Chapter 2, the theoretical framework of the study was presented. Three theorists were considered with regard to humanisation, liberation, and dialogue, namely Habermas and Foucault's critical theories and Paulo Freire's Humanising Pedagogy Theory. These theorists were selected to comprehend the multi-faceted nature of TTB and how it occurs in South Africa's education sector. Additionally, the relevance of their unique theoretical perspectives was explained in terms of how they contribute to an understanding of the evolving aspects of bullying as a human occurrence. The interrelation of these theories in terms of TTB was also interpreted. Furthermore, my initial thinking, based on observations from my Master's study and scrutiny of the environment in preparation for the PhD, was presented through the postulation of my NRV Model.

Chapter 3 presented a scholarly literature review on TTB in all its forms. I discussed an overview of bullying, causes of workplace bullying, how bullying was practised, profiles of bullies, manifestation of bullies, the harm that bullying causes, the types of bullying, the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on bullying and TTB. The literature review was used to link the study with the current body of knowledge and to inform the data collection process, leading to the findings of the study regarding TTB.

Chapter 4 presented the study methods used, focusing on the approach taken in both document analysis and survey. The research procedure was explained, including the exploratory method, paradigmatic framework, relevant discipline, theoretical frameworks used (Foucault, Habermas, and Freire), data generation, selection of participants, and the reliability of the study. Ethical considerations, trustworthiness, validity, data capturing, and exploration were also discussed.

In Chapter 5, a scholarly analysis of the South African legal structure with regard to teacher protection against TTB was conducted. I explained how SACE promotes the protection of teachers. An examination of relevant legislation, including the *South African Constitution* (1996), the *National Education Policy Act* (1996), the *South Africa Schools Act* (1996), and the *Protection from Harassment Act* (2010). I also consulted the websites of teacher unions, such as NAPTOSA, SADTU, PEU, NATU, and SAOU, to understand their stance on the protection of teachers' democratic rights. The responsibilities and duties of the education departments, school governing bodies, school management, and teachers were also analysed. Finally, recent cases of TTB in South Africa and the associated judgements handed down by the criminal justice system were presented.

Chapter 6 presented the results of the survey and provided valuable insight into teachers' perceptions and experiences of TTB. The data collection took place during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic, presenting challenges in obtaining a sufficient sample size. This chapter primarily focused on exploring the causal factors of TTB through data generated by participants. The data included factors related to COVID-19 and how teachers coped with both teaching and TTB during the pandemic, the participant's role as a learner or parent, whether they had ever bullied a teacher, and what could be done to prevent bullying of teachers in the workplace. The data was obtained from interviews with teachers as well as an official from the DBE's Personnel Wellness Department.

In Chapter 7, I now synthesise the information and findings from each chapter to inform the construction of a policy to address and prevent TTB. The chapter also includes a reflection on the value of the study, its limitations, and recommendations for further exploration of TTB.

7.3 Information that should inform a policy to address and prevent teacher targeted bullying

The findings from this study that could inform the development of policies aimed at addressing and preventing TTB come from Chapters 2, 3, 5, and 6. The scholarly literature review in Chapter 3 highlights the growing global concern regarding victimisation in the workplace, which manifests as TTB in schools. TTB dehumanises teachers, violating their human rights and dignity, as discussed in Chapter 2 using the perspectives of three theorists, Habermas, Foucault and Freire. Abend (2008) highlights that the conceptual basis for exploring TTB lies in the arrangement supporting the philosophy of empirical examination. TTB has serious physical and mental consequences for teachers, leading to extended absences from work, decreased effectiveness in teaching and learning, and negative impacts on learners' education and the overall healthcare and other essential services in South Africa. The COVID-19 pandemic has added to the heightened levels of TTB, as discussed in the literature review of Chapter 3.

The findings from Chapter 5, which discussed the South African legal structure regarding teacher protection in schools against TTB, and Chapter 6, which presented the results of the survey on teacher perceptions and experiences of TTB, indicate that the key issue surrounding TTB in schools is the absence of policies and procedures from the main stakeholders in education in South Africa, such as the DBE, teacher unions, and SGBs, to provide protection and intervention for TTB victims. This lack of action is believed to perpetuate TTB even further.

The DBE must implement laws, policies, and clear procedures with consequences for all perpetrators of TTB, including school management and principals. This is a recommendation made by the participants of the study. All relevant stakeholders must be educated on the fact that TTB, as discussed in Chapter 5, is illegal, unconstitutional, and violates the human rights and dignity of teachers. The *South African Constitution* provides everyone, including teachers, with equal protection under the law (RSA, 1996a: cf:5). This aligns with the philosophical framework of the study and it is crucial for the DBE to intervene and educate these stakeholders.

In this study, it is recommended that the DBE should take a comprehensive approach in reducing and preventing TTB in schools by providing full support to community education. This includes educating parents on the significance of educating their children about TTB. To achieve a holistic reduction in TTB, it is imperative that teachers and parents participate in ongoing TTB anti-bullying workshops. This will help to liberate oppression through dialogue, as advocated by the three theorists discussed in the study.

The participants in this study recommend that, in addition to the previously mentioned policies and procedures, severe consequences for TTB perpetrators must be emphasised. This includes both learners and colleagues. It is suggested that these policies and procedures must be rigorously enforced, and perpetrators must be held accountable for their actions. It is believed that the accountability aspect of the policies and procedures must be clearly communicated to major stakeholders within the educational institution. This, in turn, might serve as a deterrent in reducing and preventing TTB. Just as governments across the globe publish, enforce, and educate citizens about punishment for lawbreakers, the same principle must be applied to TTB in schools. This awareness of the consequences of TTB will protect teachers in schools and, as discussed in Chapter 3, will prevent the devastating physical and emotional consequences of TTB. This awareness element within a policy will ensure the safety and well-being of teachers, positively impacting instruction and education procedures within educational institutions and society as a whole.

In this study, it is recommended that the DBE, teachers, school management, principals, SGB members, teacher unions, and learners be educated on the legal framework for teacher protection. This education will contribute to the reduction and prevention of TTB. Based on the data collected from the participants, it is imperative that continuous professional teacher development, such as workshops on bullying awareness, be implemented as a prevention strategy. These workshops should be frequent and not just once-off events, to align with the Habermasian theory that advocates dialogue participation as a crucial aspect in achieving a just and humane society.

The participants in this study recommend the implementation of a holistic educational approach towards anti-bullying, which involves contributions from all relevant stakeholders. This approach includes the regular holding of advocacy sessions on anti-bullying for educators,

teacher unions, school management, and the SGB. Additionally, it is suggested that educators be provided with booklets on anti-bullying strategies, as well as access to counselling services, to support their well-being.

According to the participants of this study, the DBE should act as an ombudsman and monitor schools to prevent TTB. Frequent monitoring of school principals, who are ultimately responsible for the efficient operation of the school, is suggested as a measure of quality control. This measure should be applied to all government, independent, and private schools in order to ensure that working conditions are conducive.

The participants in the study suggest that the mentoring of teachers as a supportive policy and procedure in schools is an important preventative measure against TTB. A mentorship programme should be implemented in schools, where the management acts as mentors for junior teachers who are new to the teaching environment. This will provide a preventative measure against TTB and should be established as a policy in schools. This measure will encourage dialogue and communication between teachers and management, as advocated by Habermas and the NRV Model. Communication is cyclic in nature, and not linear or negative, and will therefore contribute to the reduction and prevention of TTB in schools.

The DBE must establish and enforce anti-bullying policies on a local and national level. This is recommended by the participants of the study, who further suggest that the DBE should ensure that these standardised policies and procedures are easily accessible to teachers and school management. The standardisation and implementation of these policies will educate teachers and promote dialogue and communication, which is crucial according to the central pillar of dialogue participation advocated by the theorist Habermas. This will also serve to liberate and enlighten teachers, in line with the theories of Foucault, Habermas, and Freire.

The DBE must strive to improve the anti-bullying policies in the teaching system, as suggested by the participants of the study. To achieve this, it is recommended that experts in the field of teacher targeted bullying be involved in the implementation of these policies, to ensure that teachers have a better understanding of them.

7.4 Revised NRV Model

Based on the insights gained in the study, I revisited the NRV Model that I started working on during my Master's studies (cf. 2.5), as such:

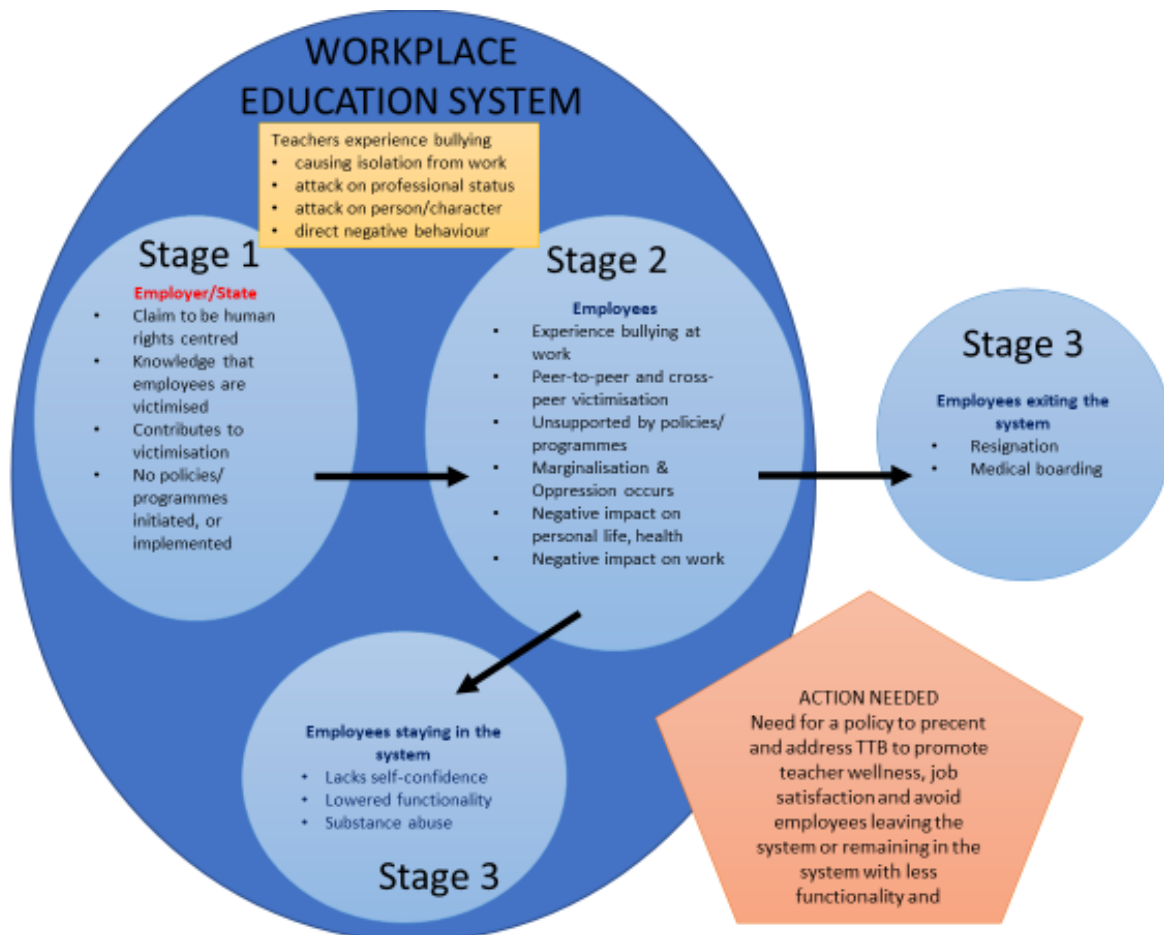


Figure 7-1: Revised NRV Model

Based on the insights gain, I make certain recommendations to be included in a policy. I acknowledge that no policy can be formulated based on a single study only. My contribution is simply made towards such a policy.

7.5 Considerations for a policy to prevent teacher targeted bullying

Based on the finding in my study, I recommend that the DBE formulates a policy to address and prevent teacher targeted bullying based on the information base contained in this thesis..

It is not appropriate to include too much detail in a policy, yet it must include enough to cover all the aspects.

COMPONENT	SUGGESTION FOR INCLUSION
Scope of application	This policy applies to all public and independent schools. as well as to the provincial and national education departments and structures
Definitions	<p>"assault" means the unlawful and intentional-</p> <p>(a) application of force, directly or indirectly, to another person, or</p> <p>(b) threatening another with immediate personal violence in circumstances which lead the threatened person to believe that the other intends or has the power to carry out the threat; (Department of Education, 2002)</p> <p>"crimen injuria" means the unlawful and intentional violation of the dignity or privacy of another, in circumstances where such violation is not of a trifling nature; (Department of Education, 2002)</p> <p>"degradation" means any behaviour towards humiliating another, causing loss of respect or standing in the school community; (Department of Education, 2002)</p> <p>"emotional, verbal and psychological abuse" means a pattern of degrading or humiliating conduct towards a person, including:</p> <p>(a) repeated insults, ridicule or name calling;</p> <p>(b) repeated threats to cause emotional pain; or</p> <p>(c) the repeated exhibition of obsessive possessiveness or jealousy, which is such as to constitute a serious invasion of the person's</p>

	<p>privacy, liberty, integrity or security;" (Republic of South Africa, 1998)</p> <p>"harassment" means behaviour which is hostile or offensive to a reasonable person and which unreasonably interferes with an individual's work, academic performance or social life and any behaviour that creates an undermining of the integrity or dignity of an individual. Such behaviour can make a reasonable person feel uncomfortable, unsafe, frightened, embarrassed, and may be physical, verbal or non-verbal. The common link is that the behaviour would be unwanted by any reasonable person and could not be justified through a personal or family relationship; (Department of Education, 2002)</p> <p>"humiliation" means any word or act which causes another to lose self- respect or the respect of others; (Department of Education, 2002)</p> <p>"intimidation" means any act by a person with the intent to compel or induce a particular person to do or to abstain from doing any act or to assume or to abandon a particular standpoint by means of-</p> <p>(a) assault, injury or causing damage to that person or any other person; or</p> <p>(b) threats to kill, assault, injure or cause damage to that person or any other person. (Department of Education, 2002)</p> <p>"teacher targeted bullying" is workplace bullying of teachers, and by learners, colleagues, departmental</p>
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	<p>officials, union members or any other person linked to the school (cf. 1.1)</p> <p>“workplace bullying” Bullying at work means harassing, offending, socially excluding someone, or negatively affecting someone’s work. In order for the label bullying (or mobbing) to be applied to a particular activity, interaction or process it has to occur repeatedly and regularly (e.g. weekly) and over a period of time (e.g. about six months). Bullying is an escalating process in the course of which the person confronted ends up in an inferior position and becomes the target of systematic negative social acts. A conflict cannot be called bullying if the incident is an isolated event or if two parties of approximately equal ‘strength’ are in conflict (Einarsen, Hoel, Zapf, & Cooper, 2003a, p. 15).</p>
The purpose of the policy	The purpose of this policy is to provide a framework to all provincial departments of education, and governing bodies of public schools, school management teams and teachers to prevent, monitor and address teacher targeted bullying to ensure teachers are protected from any form of victimisation while at work (cf. 3.4).
Objectives	This teacher targeted bullying policy aims to improve the protection of teachers against teacher targeted bullying in schools and school related events in South Africa (cf. 3.1.2).
Underpinning principles, values and philosophies of the Policy	The underpinning principles of this policy is to ensure a safe working environment for teachers, as per the South African Bill of Rights (Republic of South Africa,

	<p>1996a, Chapter 2), which offers them to be valued as professionals, be treated with respect and protected from any form of teacher targeted bullying (cf. 3.2).</p> <p>Protection teachers against all from of bullying at work, aims to address workplace wellness of teachers and advance quality teaching and learning outcomes by teachers (cf. 5.2)</p> <p>The policy provides a framework for action and implementation to protect the rights of teachers (cf. 3.1.2; 5.2).</p>
<p>Strategies</p>	<p>The strategies to ensure the formation of a teacher targeted bullying Policy must include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • teacher targeted bullying laws, policies and clear procedures should include consequences for all perpetrators, including school management and principals (cf. 6.3.12) • teacher targeted bullying education for all educational stakeholders by the DBE and Teacher Unions, including parents, by academic experts in the field of teacher targeted bullying (cf. 6.3.7) • teacher targeted bullying workshops for all stakeholders be implemented by the DBE on an ongoing basis, ensuring dialogue and enlightenment as part of C.P.T.D (cf. 6.3.7) • DBE and School Management must ensure that a safe support system must be in place for the reporting of bullies (cf. 6.3.9) • The DBE must institute control measures to monitor management and principal actions

	<p>regarding the efficient functioning of schools plus hold them accountable for their actions in all types of schools, e.g Government, Private and Independent. (cf. 6.3.9)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teacher Unions must educate and support staff against victimization (cf. 6.3.8.3) • Mentoring by school management of young and new teachers as a support policy to prevent teacher targeted bullying (cf. 6.3.8.4) • Standardization of teacher targeted bullying policies from Government Level to district levels (cf. 6.3.1.2)
<p>Specific actions to be taken</p>	<p>Specific actions need to be taken to bring the policy to realisation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Operational planning by the DBE and schools is where the process includes scheduling events on an ongoing basis to educate all the role players regarding teacher targeted bullying as part of C.P.T.D (cf. 6.3.7). • Teacher targeted bullying policy and procedures must be implemented and followed daily in a strict non-negotiable, no-tolerance format by schools. • Implemented teacher targeted bullying policy and daily procedures must be frequently monitored by the DBE (cf. 6.7.1) • The DBE must appoint new staff or use existing personnel to be an ombudsman to monitor the actions of principals and management to hold them accountable for their ethical actions within

	<p>the functioning of a school. The Ombudsman must also monitor the teacher targeted bullying Policy and procedures at schools. (cf. 6.7.1)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The DBE and schools must appoint qualified counsellors to counsel and assist teachers as victims of teacher targeted bullying (cf. 6.3.8.1, 6.3.8.2)• As part of the orientation of new and young teachers, schools must allocate senior teachers that have been workshopped and educated on teacher targeted bullying to mentor junior teachers to reduce and prevent teacher targeted bullying (cf. 6.3.8.4).• The DBE must ensure that a standardized teacher targeted bullying policy be rolled out to all provinces and district levels to ensure that a uniform teacher targeted bullying Policy be workshopped to all teachers and educational stakeholders in South Africa (cf. 6.3.8.2)• Corrective action must be taken against the perpetrators of bullying (cf. 6.3.12) .• Teacher Unions must educate and support teachers against teacher targeted bullying (cf. 6.3.6; 6.3.7; 6.3.8.3)• The DBE must contract professional academic experts in the field of teacher targeted bullying to conduct workshops and forums across South Africa (cf. 6.3.7.1)
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<p>Desired outcomes of specific actions</p>	<p>The desired outcomes of this Policy are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • teacher targeted bullying educated scholars, teachers, parents, school management, principals and teacher unions (cf. 6.3.7) • teacher targeted bullying reduction and prevention in schools across South Africa. • teacher targeted bullying policy monitoring by the DBE across South Africa. (cf. 6.3.9.1) • Teacher Unions must educate and support teachers against teacher targeted bullying (cf. 6.3.8.3).
<p>Performance Indicators</p>	<p>This Policy success may be measured against:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. An increase in the rollout of teacher targeted bullying Educational Workshops for all role-players in the schools as part of C.P.T.D (cf. 6.3.7). 2. A decrease in the number of teacher targeted bullying incidents as a result of the implementation of this teacher targeted bullying Policy utilizing frequent monitoring from the DBE (cf. 6.3.9) 3. Increase in the physical, psychological and social well-being of teachers due to a decrease in teacher targeted bullying (cf. 3.2, 3.2.1, 3.2.2, 3.2.3, 3.2.4)
<p>Management plans for daily implementation and monitoring of teacher targeted bullying Policy and Procedures</p>	<p>The DBE must implement a detailed management plan with dates, times and locations where teacher targeted bullying Policy workshops will be held.</p> <p>The DBE must manage and monitor that teacher targeted bullying Policy and procedures are</p>

	<p>implemented daily by principals and school management (cf. 6.3.9.1)</p> <p>School Management Teams and Principals must ensure the implementation and management of teacher targeted bullying Policies and procedures at schools daily in conjunction with mentoring young teachers as support in the prevention of teacher targeted bullying (cf. 6.3.8.4).</p>
A Review Programme	<p>Review of the teacher targeted bullying Policy should be done bi-annually. The review process should include an examination of the performance indicators with schools, including all the educational role players, as mentioned in this policy. This can take place through consultations, discussions, questionnaires and forums.</p>

7.6 Reflection

This study achieved its primary objective of addressing the key question in this study: What information is needed to inform a policy aimed at addressing and preventing teacher targeted bullying in order to protect teachers in the workplace? (cf. 1.4). All sections of the study successfully answered all relevant sub-questions. The main research aim of this study was to determine the information required to inform a policy aimed at addressing and preventing teacher targeted bullying in the workplace in an empirical manner (cf. 1.5). The study highlights the prevalence of TTB in various workplaces and specifically the complexities faced by teachers in schools, who are subjected to bullying by learners, peers, parents, DBE and the lack of support from government and teacher unions, SGB and parents, as outlined in Chapter 5. The data reveals that TTB has a devastating impact on the emotional and biological health of teachers, which negatively affects their ability to teach effectively, hence further exacerbating the problem. Chapter 2 refers to the theoretical framework in the study and how all three theorists' interrelated perspectives shed light on the oppression, victimisation, and

dehumanisation that teachers face as a result of TTB in schools. Furthermore, my own NRV Model (One system and three stages model) adds to this understanding. The empirical data gathered from questionnaires, a legislative framework analysis on teacher protectionism (cf. 5) and interviews provide evidence of the inhumane nature of TTB. While caution must be exercised when generalising the findings, they may be applicable to similar school contexts in other provinces within South Africa and beyond. The study revealed that participants contributed more detailed data as individual participants in the questionnaire compared to the interviews.

7.6.1 Value of the study

I believe that the findings of this study will contribute to the formation of a policy aimed at addressing and preventing teacher targeted bullying in the workplace in the South African context. It is hoped that the data presented in this study will be utilised by the Department of Basic Education, schools, teacher unions, communities, and other stakeholders within the education sector to implement preventative measures, such as anti-bullying workshops, to educate teachers on the issue of TTB. The practical recommendations outlined in this study aim to benefit learners, teachers, education practitioners, and the community by reducing and preventing TTB in schools. The Department of Basic Education, being the governing body in charge of education in South Africa, is urged to take the recommendations of this study seriously and implement them to protect teachers, who are an invaluable asset in the teaching and learning process. Such protection will have a positive impact on learners, leading to the production of highly educated individuals for the workforce and higher education, thereby benefiting South Africa as a whole.

7.6.2 Limitations of the study

It is suggested that the low participation rate in this study may have impacted its validity, as participants who are victims of bullying may be less likely to participate in a study of this nature. This could result in a form of sample bias, as the participants may not accurately represent the population of teachers who are affected by teacher targeted bullying (Agervold, 2007, p. 170).

Additionally, the COVID-19 pandemic may have played a role in the low participation rate. The DBE was forced to make changes to the curriculum, but a large amount of content and administrative responsibilities placed on teachers limited their time to participate in the study, which constitutes a limitation in and of itself.

Furthermore, the results of this study support the notion that ongoing bullying has a negative impact on teachers, both emotionally and physically. This type of bullying, as described by Agervold (2007, p. 170), can take the form of concealing information, assigning duties with unrealistic targets and deadlines, and assigning responsibilities beyond the educators' capabilities. Agervold (2007) believes that being subjected to such assignments on a daily basis constitutes a form of TTB and could have contributed to the low participation rate from participants in this study.

It must be noted that the findings of this study cannot be considered universal due to the limited number of participants in the study and therefore cannot be seen as a representation of the entire education sector in South Africa. Nevertheless, the insights gained from this study are still valuable, as they shed light on the issue of teacher targeted bullying and can inform and educate other educators who did not participate in the study.

7.6.3 Suggestions for further research

It is argued that further investigation is necessary to fully understand the phenomenon of TTB in South African schools. The study conducted for this study has highlighted the need for a more in-depth examination of TTB in the workplace, incorporating both humanistic, systemic, and epistemological perspectives. To achieve a comprehensive understanding of TTB, it is suggested that future studies be conducted on a larger scale, involving educational institutions from all provinces in South Africa. This would enable the determination of the widespread impact of TTB on teachers, as well as the gathering of preventative data aimed at reducing TTB. Ongoing research is crucial in order to continually shed light on TTB, as it is considered a persistent and pressing societal issue, similar to a pandemic. The findings of this study reveal that the Department of Basic Education has no official policy or document in place to protect teachers against TTB, making further research on the subject all the more important.

7.7 Conclusion

The phenomenon of TTB is entrenched in the difficulties that teachers face in South African schools. A thorough understanding of TTB is essential for addressing it effectively. This study aimed to provide a scholarly explanation of TTB, examine the current legislative framework in place to protect teachers, and provide a theoretical framework for understanding the construct of TTB. Having a comprehensive understanding of TTB is crucial in addressing its root cause rather than just its symptoms. The primary focus of this study was to construct an information base on TTB to inform the development of policies aimed at addressing the issue. It can be argued that this study has successfully achieved this objective.

The complexity of TTB in South African secondary educational institutions was clearly highlighted in this study. The study found that TTB is being experienced by teachers from a range of sources, including learners, parents, educational institution administrators, principals, and the DBE. Furthermore, the study revealed that there are limited TTB protection mechanisms in place within schools, teacher unions, and the DBE, as indicated by both the legislative framework for protecting teachers in the workplace and the data collected from participants. Additionally, the study revealed that there is no official policy or procedure in place to protect teachers against TTB in schools.

The forestated TTB experiences by teachers in the South African educational context by all the role players is the deliberate misuse of power as elucidated by the theorists of this study. This misuse of power inflicted by the stronger person or person in a position of power onto the teacher as the victim infringes on the basic human rights, freedom from oppression and emancipation. This stand in stark contrast to the interrelatedness as advocated by the theorists Habermas, Foucault and Freire.

The deliberate and intentional use of power by peers and cross peers to perpetrate TTB in the educational workplace system as depicted in my NRV workplace victimization model infringes on the human rights of Teachers in schools. This use of power results in TTB in the form of attacks on teachers, their professional status and character resulting in devastating negative effects on their physical and mental health and personal life. Additionally it severely impacts negatively on teaching and learning outcomes in educational institutions in South Africa.

I am convinced that the South African government and the DBE lack deliberate awareness of the widespread problem of TTB. This lack of awareness and commitment to establish a TTB policy to protect teachers in schools enables TTB to persist and cause serious harm to teachers, students, and society as a whole.

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ADDENDA

Addendum A: Ethics Statement

**GENERAL/HUMAN RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE (GHREC)**

10-Dec-2020

Dear Mr Roelf Campher

Application Approved

Research Project Title:

Constructing an information base on teacher-targeted bullying towards policy formation

Ethical Clearance number:

UFS-HSD2020/0062/0911

We are pleased to inform you that your application for ethical clearance has been approved. Your ethical clearance is valid for twelve (12) months from the date of issue. We request that any changes that may take place during the course of your study/research project be submitted to the ethics office to ensure ethical transparency. Furthermore, you are requested to submit the final report of your study/research project to the ethics office. Should you require more time to complete this research, please apply for an extension. Thank you for submitting your proposal for ethical clearance; we wish you the best of luck and success with your research.

Yours sincerely

Dr Adri Du Plessis**Chairperson: General/Human Research Ethics Committee**

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Adri Du Plessis'.

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Addendum B: TurnItIn report

ORIGINALITY REPORT			
9%	8%	2%	3%
SIMILARITY INDEX	INTERNET SOURCES	PUBLICATIONS	STUDENT PAPERS
PRIMARY SOURCES			
1	scholar.ufs.ac.za Internet Source		4%
2	vital.seals.ac.za:8080 Internet Source		<1%
3	hdl.handle.net Internet Source		<1%
4	Submitted to Syracuse University Student Paper		<1%
5	www.labourguide.co.za Internet Source		<1%
6	"Special Topics and Particular Occupations, Professions and Sectors", Springer Science and Business Media LLC, 2021 Publication		<1%
7	repository.up.ac.za Internet Source		<1%
8	Zerillo, C., and K. F. Osterman. "Teacher perceptions of teacher bullying", Improving Schools, 2011. Publication		<1%

Addendum C: Permission from Department of Education, Eastern Cape



CORPORATE PLANNING MONITORING POLICY AND RESEARCH COORDINATION
Steve Vukile Tshwete Complex • Zone 6 • Zwelitsha • Eastern Cape
Private Bag X0032 • Bisho • 5605 • REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA
Tel: +27 (0)40 608 4537/4773 • Fax: +27 (0)86 742 4942 • Website: www.ecdoe.gov.za

Enquiries: B Pamla Email: babelwa.pamla@ecdoe.gov.za Date: 07 December 2020

Mr. Roelof Campher
140 Brooks Hill
Humewood
Port Elizabeth
6001

Dear Mr. R Campher

PERMISSION TO UNDERTAKE DOCTORATE STUDY: AN INFORMATION BASE TOWARDS A POLICY TO PREVENT AND ADDRESS TEACHER-TARGETED BULLYING.

1. Your application to conduct the above mentioned research involving 200 educators under the jurisdiction of Nelson Mandela Metro of the Eastern Cape Department of Education (ECDoE) is hereby approved based on the following conditions:
 - a. there will be no financial implications for the Department;
 - b. institutions and respondents must not be identifiable in any way from the results of the investigation;
 - c. no minors will participate;
 - d. it is not going to interrupt educators' time and task;
 - e. the research may not be conducted during official contact time;
 - f. no physical contact with educators and learners, only virtual means of communication should be used and that should be arranged and agreed upon in writing with the Principal and the affected teacher/s;



- g. you present a copy of the written approval letter of the Eastern Cape Department of Education (ECDoE) to the Cluster and District Directors before any research is undertaken at any institutions within that particular district;
 - h. you will make all the arrangements concerning your research;
 - i. should you wish to extend the period of research after approval has been granted, an application to do this must be directed to Chief Director: Corporate Strategy Management;
 - j. you present the Department with a copy of your final paper/report/dissertation/thesis free of charge in hard copy and electronic format. This must be accompanied by a separate synopsis (maximum 2 – 3 typed pages) of the most important findings and recommendations if it does not already contain a synopsis;
 - k. you present the findings to the Research Committee and/or Senior Management of the Department when and/or where necessary;
 - l. you are requested to provide the above to the Chief Director: Corporate Strategy Management upon completion of your research;
 - m. you comply with all the requirements as completed in the Terms and Conditions to conduct Research in the ECDoE document duly completed by you;
 - n. you comply with your ethical undertaking (commitment form);
 - o. You submit on a six-monthly basis, from the date of permission of the research, concise reports to the Chief Director: Corporate Strategy Management.
2. The Department reserves a right to withdraw the permission should there be non-compliance to the approval letter and contract signed in the Terms and Conditions to conduct Research in the ECDoE and/or legal requirements to do so.
 3. The Department will publish the completed Research on its website.
 4. The Department wishes you well in your undertaking. You can contact the Mrs. B Pamla on the numbers indicated in the letterhead or email babalwa.pamla@ecdoe.gov.za should you need any assistance.




T MASOERU

CHIEF DIRECTOR: CORPORATE STRATEGY MANAGEMENT

FOR SUPERINTENDENT-GENERAL: EDUCATION

Addendum D: Questionnaire

EvaSys		Electric Paper
University of the Free State PhD Studies	Rudy Campher Workplace bullying in the teaching profession	

Mark as shown: Please use a ball-point pen or a thin felt tip. This form will be processed automatically.

Correction: Please follow the examples shown on the left hand side to help optimize the reading results.

Dear Colleague

I am busy with research on workplace bullying in the teaching profession. Workplace bullying can be defined as repeated negative actions and practices, directed against one or more workers that manifest in a variety of ways. It negatively affect both the individual as well as the organisation (cf. De Wet & Jacobs, 2018). Although international research has shown that it is a serious problem, limited research has been done on the topic in South Africa. My research aims to fill this gap.

I have received approval from the UFS to conduct the research, under supervision of my promotor, Prof Lynette Jacobs. The GENERAL/HUMAN RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE of the University of the Free State, has granted clearance for this study to be conducted (UFS-HSD2020/0062/0911)

Be assured that participation in this survey is anonymous. You will not be required to submit your name or the name of your school. During the process of responding to this digital questionnaire, you will be able to navigate backwards and forwards until you are satisfied with your responses. However once you click on "submit", and then click a second time to "confirm", your responses will be captured in the data set without any unique identifiers.

Should you require any further information, you are welcome to contact me at rudicampher@gmail.com.

1. Demographic information

Please indicate the category in which you fall for each item

- 1.1 Category of your school:
- | | | |
|--|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Primary (Gr. R/1 to Gr. 7) | <input type="checkbox"/> Secondary (Gr. 8 to Gr. 12) | <input type="checkbox"/> Combined (Gr. 1 to Gr. 12) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Intermediate (Gr. 1 to Gr. 9) | <input type="checkbox"/> FET/Senior Secondary (Gr. 10 to Gr. 12) | <input type="checkbox"/> Other |

1.2 If you responded "other" in 1.1, please provide details

1.3 Which of the following best describe the location of your school? (More than one can be marked)

- | | | |
|--------------------------------|-------------------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Urban | <input type="checkbox"/> Peri-urban | <input type="checkbox"/> Rural area |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Town | <input type="checkbox"/> Township | <input type="checkbox"/> Informal settlement |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Farm | <input type="checkbox"/> Other | |

1.4 If you responded "other" in 1.3, please provide details

1.5 Current learner enrolment at your school

<input type="checkbox"/> 500 or less	<input type="checkbox"/> 501 - 1000	<input type="checkbox"/> 1001-1500
--------------------------------------	-------------------------------------	------------------------------------

1.6 Your current post-level

<input type="checkbox"/> 1501-2000	<input type="checkbox"/> More than 2000	
<input type="checkbox"/> Educator (Post level 1)	<input type="checkbox"/> Head of Department	<input type="checkbox"/> Deputy principal
<input type="checkbox"/> Principal	<input type="checkbox"/> Other	

1.7 If you responded "other" in 1.6, please provide details

1.8 Which grades do you teach?

1. Demographic information

Please indicate the category in which you fall for each item [Continue]

- 1.9 Your present age 30 years or younger 31-40 years 41-50
 51-60 61 or older

1.10 What is your gender?

2. How often have you experienced each of the following behaviours towards you in your work environment (school) during the preceding 12 months?

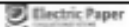
Use the following scale

- 1= only experienced this once or twice
 2= experience this occasionally
 3= experience this frequently
 4= experience this constantly

If you have not experienced this in the past 12 months please tick "Never"

2.1 Not answering your request to meet and talk	Only once or twice	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Constantly	<input type="checkbox"/> Never
2.2 Taking work from you that is your responsibility and give it to someone in a lower position than you	Only once or twice	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Constantly	<input type="checkbox"/> Never
2.3 Not giving you an opportunity to prove yourself	Only once or twice	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Constantly	<input type="checkbox"/> Never
2.4 Not informing you about organised social meetings	Only once or twice	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Constantly	<input type="checkbox"/> Never
2.5 Behaving as if you are not seen or are not there in the school environment	Only once or twice	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Constantly	<input type="checkbox"/> Never
2.6 Having your decisions and recommendations criticised and rejected	Only once or twice	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Constantly	<input type="checkbox"/> Never
2.7 Being inspected by people in a lower position than you	Only once or twice	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Constantly	<input type="checkbox"/> Never
2.8 Frequently interrupting you while speaking	Only once or twice	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Constantly	<input type="checkbox"/> Never
2.9 Pressuring you to resign	Only once or twice	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Constantly	<input type="checkbox"/> Never
2.10 Not responding to your messages and/or emails	Only once or twice	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Constantly	<input type="checkbox"/> Never
2.11 Silence/cold shoulder/hostility as a response to your questions or attempts at conversations	Only once or twice	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Constantly	<input type="checkbox"/> Never
2.12 Withholding information, documents and material that are necessary for your work	Only once or twice	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Constantly	<input type="checkbox"/> Never
2.13 Constantly finding mistakes/errors in your work and the results of your work	Only once or twice	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Constantly	<input type="checkbox"/> Never
2.14 Making you responsible for more work than you can manage	Only once or twice	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Constantly	<input type="checkbox"/> Never
2.15 Holding you alone responsible for the negative results of work carried out by others	Only once or twice	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Constantly	<input type="checkbox"/> Never
2.16 Blaming you for things that are not your responsibility	Only once or twice	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Constantly	<input type="checkbox"/> Never
2.17 Questioning your professional competence for every job you do	Only once or twice	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Constantly	<input type="checkbox"/> Never
2.18 Considering the work you do to be worthless and unimportant	Only once or twice	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Constantly	<input type="checkbox"/> Never

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2. How often have you experienced each of the following behaviours towards you in your work environment (school) during the preceding 12 months?						
Use the following scale						
1= only experienced this once or twice						
2= experience this occasionally						
3= experience this frequently						
4= experience this constantly						
If you have not experienced this in the past 12 months please tick "Never" ^o [Continue]						
2.19	Constantly evaluating your performance	Only once or twice	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Constantly <input type="checkbox"/> Never
2.20	Making you feel as if you and your work are being inspected	Only once or twice	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Constantly <input type="checkbox"/> Never
2.21	Being forced to do a job that will negatively affect your self-confidence	Only once or twice	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Constantly <input type="checkbox"/> Never
2.22	Being ordered to do work below your level of competence	Only once or twice	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Constantly <input type="checkbox"/> Never
2.23	Being deprived of responsibility or work tasks	Only once or twice	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Constantly <input type="checkbox"/> Never
2.24	Repeated being reminded of your blunders	Only once or twice	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Constantly <input type="checkbox"/> Never
2.25	Exploitations at work, such as private errands	Only once or twice	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Constantly <input type="checkbox"/> Never
2.26	Negative reaction from others because you work "too hard"	Only once or twice	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Constantly <input type="checkbox"/> Never
2.27	Overloading you with tasks that you are not trained to do and that is not part of your work description	Only once or twice	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Constantly <input type="checkbox"/> Never
2.28	Facing behaviour such as slamming their fists on the table	Only once or twice	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Constantly <input type="checkbox"/> Never
2.29	Having untrue things said about you	Only once or twice	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Constantly <input type="checkbox"/> Never
2.30	Making verbal threats to harm you	Only once or twice	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Constantly <input type="checkbox"/> Never
2.31	Talking about you in a degrading and dishonouring manner in front of others	Only once or twice	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Constantly <input type="checkbox"/> Never
2.32	Starting untrue rumours about your private life	Only once or twice	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Constantly <input type="checkbox"/> Never
2.33	Suggesting that your mental health is not sound	Only once or twice	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Constantly <input type="checkbox"/> Never
2.34	Questioning your integrity	Only once or twice	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Constantly <input type="checkbox"/> Never
2.35	Writing unfair reports about you	Only once or twice	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Constantly <input type="checkbox"/> Never
2.36	Insulting teasing	Only once or twice	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Constantly <input type="checkbox"/> Never
2.37	Devaluation of your rights and opinion with reference to your gender	Only once or twice	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Constantly <input type="checkbox"/> Never
2.38	Devaluation of your rights and opinion with reference to your age	Only once or twice	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Constantly <input type="checkbox"/> Never
2.39	Having physical violence used against you	Only once or twice	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Constantly <input type="checkbox"/> Never
2.40	Having your personal possessions damaged	Only once or twice	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Constantly <input type="checkbox"/> Never
2.41	Knowingly leaving when you enter a worksite (e.g. staffroom, office, classroom)	Only once or twice	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Constantly <input type="checkbox"/> Never
2.42	Preventing or forbidding colleagues from talking with you	Only once or twice	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Constantly <input type="checkbox"/> Never

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2. How often have you experienced each of the following behaviours towards you in your work environment (school) during the preceding 12 months?

Use the following scale

- 1=| only experienced this once or twice
 2=| experience this occasionally
 3=| experience this frequently
 4=| experience this constantly

If you have not experienced this in the past 12 months please tick "Never"^{***} [Continue]

2.43 Verbally abuse you (e.g. insults, slander) Only once or Constantly Never
twice

2.44 Ridiculing you Only once or Constantly Never
twice

2.45 If you were exposed to other types of workplace bullying, please provide detail here

3. Who was for the most part responsible for most/all of the aforementioned negative behaviour towards you? Use the scale 1=Seldom 2=From time to time 3=Often 4=Constantly.

If you were never exposed to bullying by the listed category, please mark "Never"

3.1 Principal Seldom Constantly Never

3.2 Deputy principal Seldom Constantly Never

3.3 Head of Department Seldom Constantly Never

3.4 Educator (post-level 1) Seldom Constantly Never

3.5 Learner(s) Seldom Constantly Never

3.6 Administrative staff at the school Seldom Constantly Never

3.7 Parent (non-SGB member) Seldom Constantly Never

3.8 Parent serving on the SGB Seldom Constantly Never

3.9 Union official Seldom Constantly Never

3.10 Official at the district office Seldom Constantly Never

3.11 Official at the provincial office Seldom Constantly Never

3.12 If you were exposed to bullying behaviour at work, by somebody not listed here, please provide details

4. Indicate the extent to which you used each the following in reaction to the negative behaviour towards you.

Use the following scale

- 1=| do this/think about this once
 2=| do this/think about this occasionally
 3=| do this/think about this most of the time
 4=| do this/think about this all of the time

Or if not applicable: Never=| did/do not think about it

4.1 I feel extremely sad when I remember the antagonistic behaviour towards me Only once All the time Never

4.2 I replay/re-experience the behaviour over and over in my mind Only once All the time Never

4.3 I feel afraid when I enter the school yard; I don't want to be at work Only once All the time Never

4.4 I feel lonely Only once All the time Never

4.5 I don't trust anyone at work Only once All the time Never

4.6 I feel less self-confidence and self-respect Only once All the time Never

4. Indicate the extent to which you used each the following in reaction to the negative behaviour towards you.

Use the following scale

1= I do this/think about this once

2= I do this/think about this occasionally

3= I do this/think about this most of the time

4= I do this/think about this all of the time

Or if not applicable: Never=I did/do not think about it [Continue]

4.7	My life outside of work (my marriage and my family) is negatively affected by this	Only once	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	All the time	<input type="checkbox"/>	Never
4.8	I feel guilty most of the time	Only once	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	All the time	<input type="checkbox"/>	Never
4.9	I feel as if I want to cry	Only once	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	All the time	<input type="checkbox"/>	Never
4.10	I feel as if I have been betrayed	Only once	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	All the time	<input type="checkbox"/>	Never
4.11	I am experiencing an unexplained fear that something bad is going to happen	Only once	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	All the time	<input type="checkbox"/>	Never
4.12	I am receiving/have received support from a psychologist/ doctor because of the behaviour I was exposed to	Only once	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	All the time	<input type="checkbox"/>	Never
4.13	I feel tired and stressed	Only once	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	All the time	<input type="checkbox"/>	Never
4.14	I am excessively discontented and easily frightened	Only once	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	All the time	<input type="checkbox"/>	Never
4.15	I think I am depressed	Only once	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	All the time	<input type="checkbox"/>	Never
4.16	I was diagnosed with/ treated for depression	Only once	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	All the time	<input type="checkbox"/>	Never
4.17	My sleep regularity is disturbed	Only once	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	All the time	<input type="checkbox"/>	Never
4.18	I have developed uncontrollable movements/ tics	Only once	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	All the time	<input type="checkbox"/>	Never
4.19	I am experiencing changes in my blood pressure	Only once	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	All the time	<input type="checkbox"/>	Never
4.20	I have stomach and intestinal problems	Only once	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	All the time	<input type="checkbox"/>	Never
4.21	I use alcohol or medication or smoke too much (any one or more of the preceding).	Only once	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	All the time	<input type="checkbox"/>	Never
4.22	I eat too much/ I binge	Only once	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	All the time	<input type="checkbox"/>	Never
4.23	I am not hungry/ I don't eat enough	Only once	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	All the time	<input type="checkbox"/>	Never
4.24	I have headaches	Only once	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	All the time	<input type="checkbox"/>	Never
4.25	I spend most of my time doing things unrelated to my work	Only once	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	All the time	<input type="checkbox"/>	Never
4.26	I feel less attached to my work	Only once	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	All the time	<input type="checkbox"/>	Never
4.27	I pretend that I am very busy even when I'm not doing anything	Only once	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	All the time	<input type="checkbox"/>	Never
4.28	When something needs to be done, I move very slowly	Only once	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	All the time	<input type="checkbox"/>	Never
4.29	I have conflict with colleagues at work	Only once	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	All the time	<input type="checkbox"/>	Never
4.30	I have difficulty concentrating on a job	Only once	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	All the time	<input type="checkbox"/>	Never
4.31	I can't do any work at school during my free periods	Only once	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	All the time	<input type="checkbox"/>	Never

5. The following questions require narrative response. Please feel free to respond in as much, or little, detail as you feel comfortable.

5.1 In view of the current Covid-19 pandemic, in your experience in which ways did the situation caused by the pandemic impact workplace bullying?

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5. The following questions require narrative response. Please feel free to respond in as much, or little, detail as you feel comfortable. [Continue]

- 5.2 Reflecting on the time since you started out as a teacher, and considering the questions that you have just responded to, have you ever bullied one or more of your colleagues? If so, please share your experiences.

- 5.3 Reflecting on your own behaviour as a learner, or as a parent, and considering the questions that you have just responded to, have you ever bullied one or more of your teachers/your children's teachers? If so, please share your experiences.

6. The last section focus specifically on preventative measures

- 6.1 Focusing on legislation and policy, to what extent do you feel protected against workplace bullying at your school? Not at all All the time
- 6.2 Focusing on the organisational culture at your school, to what extent do you feel protected against workplace bullying at your school? Not at all All the time
- 6.3 To what extent do you consider yourself knowledgeable about legal aspects related to workplace bullying? Not at all Extremely knowledgeable
- 6.4 To what extent are you familiar with procedures to follow when bullied at work? Not at all Extremely familiar
- 6.5 Which of the following documents/processes are in place on your side?
- | | | |
|--|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> School anti-bullying policy (not focusing on teacher targeted bullying) | <input type="checkbox"/> School anti-bullying policy (including a focus on teacher targeted bullying) | <input type="checkbox"/> A procedure in place to report workplace bullying to your district office |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Counselling services at your school | <input type="checkbox"/> Counselling services at the district office | <input type="checkbox"/> Other |

- 6.6 If you responded "Other" in 6.5, please provide detail

- 6.7 In your view, what more can be done to prevent educators from being bullied in their workplace (school)?

Please note the following:

- Should you be in need of support as a result of confronting your experiences through engaging with the questionnaire, please contact me at rudicampher@gmail.com. I have a professional counsellor on standby who will be able to provide you with support.
- Once you are satisfied that the responses provide a true reflection of your experiences, you can submit, and then click on the confirmation link.
- Should you want to engage with me on related matters, do not hesitate to contact me at the email address above.

Thank you for taking the time to respond to this questionnaire. I really do appreciate it.

Addendum E: Additional interview questions

Research questions asked to the participants of the interviews:

1. Regarding TTB in your school have you in the past or are you currently experiencing bullying and by whom?
2. How does this bullying make you feel?
3. In your view what can be done to prevent TTB in schools?

Research question asked to the DBE personnel wellness official interview

1. Have the DBE got an anti-bullying rehabilitation programme in place for bullied teachers?
2. Have the DBE got a TTB policy in place for teachers?

Addendum F: Letter from the language editor

LET'S EDIT

EDITING CERTIFICATE

20 February 2023

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

DECLARATION: Editing of Thesis

I hereby declare that the Doctor of Philosophy in Education Policy Studies thesis of **Roelof Petrus Campher** entitled "**CONSTRUCTING AN INFORMATION BASE ON TEACHER-TARGETED BULLYING TOWARDS POLICY FORMATION**" has been edited (excluding editing of references). It is the responsibility of the student to address any comments from the editor or supervisor. The editor shall not be responsible for any subsequent additions or deletions made by the student in their document. Additionally, it is the final responsibility of the student to make sure of the correctness of the thesis.



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