

**UNIVERSITY OF NATAL**

**HOW DO TEACHERS AND LEARNERS IN ONE  
DURBAN PRIMARY SCHOOL UNDERSTAND AND  
COPE WITH BULLYING?**

**BY**

**THYANANTHY DONE**

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**THYANANTHY DONE**

**Submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements of the Degree of  
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**University of Natal**

**Durban**

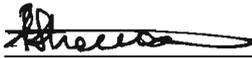
**Supervisor: Dr Relebohile Moletsane**

**Durban**

**2002**

## SUPERVISORS STATEMENT

This dissertation has been submitted with /~~without~~ my approval.



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Dr. Relebohile Moletsane

December 2002

## **Declaration of Originality**

I, Thyananthy Done declare that this dissertation entitled “How do teachers and learners in one Durban Primary School understand and cope with Bullying?” is my own work and that all sources I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.



**T. Done**

**Durban**

**December 2002**

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## **Abstract**

There are evidently high incidences of bullying among learners in schools. The problem is that victims and perpetrators, as well as teachers do not understand what constitutes bullying and are unable to take appropriate action when it occurs. Because of the poor understanding of bullying, incidences remain unreported, and if they are, teachers are unable to deal with them effectively.

This study aimed to examine the teacher's and learner's understanding of bullying and its prevalence in a Durban Primary School, and how they cope with bullying incidents. It investigated the different forms that are commonly found among the boys and girls. Because victims of bullying tend to be boys more than girls and the perpetrators boys, gender socialization theories (Connell, 1996; Fitzclarence 1995) were used to analyse the ways in which the boys and girls understand and cope with bullying. Particular attention was given to the experiences of the grade 7 learners.

The study utilised a descriptive survey design, in which qualitative methodologies were used to address the identified research questions. Data

was collected through observations, questionnaires, unstructured interviews and conversations.

The major findings confirmed that bullying is a problem at the Durban primary school. Firstly boys and girls experience different forms of bullying. Girls experience more indirect forms of bullying, whilst boys experience more direct forms. Secondly, bullying has affected some of the learners to an extent where they stay away from school. The learners are more comfortable speaking to their peers about bullying than their parents and teachers. However, the teachers seem to be largely unaware of the extent and consequences of bullying.

One of the major implications of this study is that policies that specifically address bullying in the school need to be developed to curb the problem. In addition, initiatives should be taken to raise the teachers, parents and learners awareness of the phenomenon of bullying and appropriate strategies developed and implemented to curb it.

## DEDICATION

*I dedicate this to my loving husband Thoshagen who has been a source of inspiration, continuous support and encouragement and without whom I would not have achieved as much,*

*And*

*My adorable sons, Yougan and Deslin for your love and patience and may all your goals and aspirations be fulfilled in the future.*

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## **Chapter One**

### **Introduction**

#### **Four o' clock Friday**

Four o'clock Friday. I'm home at last,

Time to forget the week that's past.

On Monday, in break they stole my ball

And threw it over the playground wall.

On Tuesday afternoon, in games

They threw mud at me and called me names.

On Wednesday, they trampled my books on the floor

So Miss kept me in because I swore.

On Thursday, they laughed after the test

Cause my marks were lower than the rest

Four o' clock Friday, at last I'm free

For two whole days they can't get at me.

**John Forster**

## 1.1 Introduction

No parent would want his or her child to experience what the child in the poem is experiencing. This child's experience of bullying is enough to shake any concerned parent. This study aimed to examine the learners' and teachers' experiences and understanding of bullying in one Durban primary school.

Bullying is one of the worst forms of violence amongst children. It can be physical, mental, verbal, racist, and emotional. or sexual. Bullying can be seen in playgrounds at schools and where children are together. According to (Behr, 2000) it has been the cause of many children leaving school and committing suicide. Many children suffer long years of unhappiness, because other children bully them. In addition bullying contributes to the development of antisocial behavioural pattern (Farrington 1993 cited by Debra et al.1997).

According to Olweus (1973, 1978, cited by Smith, 1999) and Rigby (1991 cited by Smith,1999) bullying is the experience of most of the children no matter how capable, popular and well adjusted they are. Most children either individually or in a group, become involved in carrying out some type of bullying at some time or the other.

The Collins Cobuild English dictionary (1998) defines bullying as treating someone in a very unpleasant way by using strength or power to hurt or frighten him or her. Olweus (1991 cited by Smith, 1999) on the other hand noted bullying as physical or verbal and also direct (face to face) or indirect, such as gossip or exclusion from a group. "Bullying can be calling people names, hitting people or making people do something they don't want to." (Glynis, 2000). The broad aim of this research was to examine learners' and teachers' experiences and understanding of bullying and how, one school in the Durban area is now dealing with the problem.

Much research has been conducted locally as well as internationally on the topic of bullying. Bullying is a problem that is experienced worldwide. On the local scene Squelch (2000) of the Rand University conducted a research on bullying, however not much is gender related. This looks at school violence and gives examples of procedures for teachers to follow for unwanted behaviours in school. The Human Rights Watch (2001) notes the multiple forms of violence that South African girls face at schools. It is frightening to note in this article the high rate of and extent of bullying that learners, especially girls face in South African schools.

According to Fraser et al (1996 as cited by Ohsako ,1994 in Smith 1999) who conducted a study in South Africa over several generations, children have suffered from racial discrimination and denial of democratic rights and violence. According to Ohsako (1994 in Smith, 1999) violence was an unavoidable daily event, as well as an indispensable and sometimes the only means to struggle and achieve a non-discriminatory and democratic society. Sadly, the rate of violence today in schools is still the same or even higher. The living conditions, poor school facilities, low income and segregation have also contributed to the high rate of violence among the children of South Africa (Ohsako, 1994 cited by Smith, 1999).

Sexual harassment is a form of gendered violence that often happens in the public arena (Stein, 1995).The antecedents of peer sexual harassment in school may be found in bullying (Stein, 1995). A study conducted by the Human Rights Watch (2001) showed that the apartheid regime has left a legacy of social and economic inequality. According to their study extremely high levels of violence persist throughout South African society, to which women and girls are not immune. They continue that women and girls are often more vulnerable particularly to various forms of gender based violence.

The Bill Of Rights in the 1996 Constitution lists a number of human rights that are protected and enforced by law. Bullying is a violation of several of these rights (Squelch, 2000). A child's right to human dignity is violated when the child is humiliated and embarrassed during bullying. A child's right to privacy is violated during bullying when his /her possessions are taken away or interfered with. A child has a right not to be tortured in any way, or treated in a cruel way. According to Squelch (2000) bullying is a complex problem and has been for a long time. Bullying not only affects the victim but also the bully.

Bullying in most schools is not recognised as a problem, therefore I chose this topic to bring about awareness in the primary school. I hope to achieve awareness not only in the school where the study is being conducted but also in the neighbouring schools.

The broad aim of this research was to investigate how the learners and teachers in one Durban primary school understand and cope with bullying. I am also interested in the different experiences that girls and boys encounter with bullying. The study aimed to develop strategies for coping with bullying in the primary school. Since many schools in the area have not acknowledged the problem of bullying the study aimed to contribute to a base from which to provide help and to devise empowering strategies to

schools in the area. This research aimed to examine the views and experiences of learners and educators and to also look at strategies they have adopted in order to cope. The study hopes to identify empowering strategies for teachers on how to cope with bullying. The research was conducted at a Durban primary school at which I am an educator. Although I am not directly involved with the grade 7 learners I have based my study on this grade since most bullying takes place in this grade.

Chapter one gives a brief introduction and background to the investigation. It also provides a basis for the succeeding chapters. Chapter two focuses on the literature review and theoretical framework of the study of bullying. Literature examining bullying in the South African schools as well as internationally will be reviewed. This chapter also explores the causes of bullying in the schools. Chapter three describes the research methodology. It focuses on the research methods used. The selection of participants, research techniques, questionnaires and the process of data collection will be discussed in this chapter. Chapter four focuses on the research findings. Chapter five has the intention of analysing and interpreting the data obtained from the questionnaire, interviews as well as observations. This chapter also identifies implications and recommendations for handling bullying in the primary school.

In order to provide a framework, an interpretive review of literature will be presented in the next chapter.

## **Chapter Two**

### **Literature review**

#### **2.1 Introduction**

The aim of the research was to investigate how the learners and teachers experience, understand and cope with bullying in one Durban primary school. I was also interested in the different experiences that girls and boys have of bullying. The research was aimed to develop strategies for learners and teachers to cope with bullying. The purpose of this chapter is to review literature related to bullying in schools, both locally and internationally.

#### **2.2. Understanding of bullying.**

Bullying is treating someone in a very unpleasant way by using strength or power to hurt or frighten them (Collins Co build English Dictionary 1998). Dan Olweus, (1991) an expert in the prevention of bullying, says that bullying includes; deliberate hostility and aggression towards the victim who is weaker and less powerful than the bully or bullies. According to Dan Olweus (ibid) bullying can be physical, verbal, emotional, racist or sexual. It can be direct (face to face) or indirect, such as gossip or exclusion. "Bullying can be calling people names, hitting or making people do something they don't want to do. Bullying is always cruel."(Glynis, 2000).

According to Salisbury and Jackson (1996) for many students, everyday life in schools, clubs and colleges is a violent experience. Along the corridor, at break, in the classroom and the toilets, are some of the places that can be threatening and scary. Salisbury and Jackson (1996) notes that threatening not only means physical hurt, but also refers to much more broad based definition of violence that would include various violent and controlling behaviour like being punched, kicked, shown up in front of friends, verbally abused, having your hair pulled, being sexually teased, mocked and psychologically intimidated.

According to Marano (1995) bullying involves a pattern of repeated aggressive behaviour with negative intent directed from one child to another where there is a power difference. The common form of bullying is when either a larger or dominating child or several children pick on an individual.

Bullying and its connections to sexual harassment in schools are of a critical nature. This link is one that educators need to make explicit and public by deliberately, discussing these subjects in age appropriate ways with children (Stein 1995). Stein (ibid) indicated that if educators and advocates pose and present the problem as 'bullying' to young children,

rather than immediately labelling it as ‘sexual harassment’, we can engage children and universalise the phenomenon as one that boys as well as girls will understand and accept as problematic.

According to Marano (1995) there are specific conditions that lead to bullying. Girls are also guilty of bullying, but they do it more subtly. Bullying according to Marano can get worse, as the child grows. The author elaborates:

“ No, it’s not just boys being boys. It takes a special breed of person to cause pain to others. But the one most hurt by bullying is the bully himself though that’s not at first obvious and the effects worsens over the life cycle. Yes, females can be bullies too. They just favour a different means of mean.” (Marano, 1995: 51). Not all have the capacity to cause pain to others or are involved in bullying.

### **2.3 Causes of bullying**

There are various reasons why learners resort to bullying. However, the most common ones will be discussed below:

#### **1) Personality characteristics**

Rigby (1993, cited by Smith 1999) found that those students who were identified as bullies were also found to be generally uncooperative in many areas of life; a characteristic they shared with students who were regularly

victimised. Another factor identified as associated with students being bullied more than others is extreme introversion (Slee and Rigby, 1993 cited in Smith, 1999).

## **2) Family factors**

Research done by Rigby (1993, cited by Smith 1999) showed that male bullies came more frequently than others from dysfunctional families in which there was relatively little sense of love, support or belonging. Girl victims as well as bullies came from similarly dysfunctional families. Bullies come from homes that are neglectful and hostile and use harsh punishment (Olweus, 1993). Parents may inadvertently support bullying by accepting it as just normal part of growing up and leaving children to solve their own problems.

## **3) School ethos**

Specific kinds of school environment, according to Rigby and Slee (1993, cited by Smith, 1999) may encourage bullying. Less admiration for bullies and more support for children who are victimised, addressing the principle strategies used in bullying can either encourage or discourage bullying in schools. According to (Rigby, 1995) much bullying takes place on the playground at school where there is little supervision by teachers.

#### **4) Peers**

According to Debra et al, (1997), peers generally form the audience for bullying they may be critical in starting and supporting it. The extent of the bullying also depends on the attention the bully and the victim receive. In comparison to girls, boys are more likely to be drawn into bullying episodes and become actively involved in bullying.

#### **2.4. Bullying Internationally.**

Dan Olweus (1991 cited by Smith, 1999) conducted a survey on bullying in Norway. He found boys to be more exposed to bullying than girls. The analyses of the questionnaire data confirmed that girls were more exposed to indirect and subtle forms of bullying than to bullying with open attacks. However the percentage of boys who were bullied indirectly was approximately the same as for girls. A large percentage of boys were exposed to direct bullying. According to the findings, boys carried out a large part of the bullying to which girls were subjected. More than 60% of the bullied girls were bullied by boys. 15% to 20% said that both boys and girls bullied them. The great majority of the boys (80%) were bullied chiefly by boys. He also found that bullying by physical means was more common among boys than girls. Girls often use subtle and indirect ways of harassment such as slander, spreading of rumours and manipulation of

friendship and relationships. However, harassment by non- physical means was the most common form of bullying also among boys.

Ken Rigby's (1994 cited by Smith, 1999) research on bullying in Australia found that bullying is widely regarded as a particularly unaccepted form of violence or aggression. Bullying according to Rigby (ibid) is oppression directed by more powerful persons or by a group of persons against individuals who cannot adequately defend themselves. According to this study 20.7% of boys and 15.7 % of girls reported being bullied at least once a week. The main gender difference is that girls are more likely to employ indirect methods of bullying, and the boys direct physical means. Girls are more likely to report being bullied by boys, whereas boys report being bullied almost exclusively by boys.

## **2.5. Bullying in South African schools**

Professor Joan Squelch of the Rand Afrikaans University headed South Africa's first comprehensive long overdue investigation into bullying. According to Squelch (2000) bullying occurs at all school, rich or poor, state and independent. Her findings suggest that a high percentage of children in South African schools are being bullied. Professor Squelch is certain a violent, abusive, crime ridden society, an authoritarian learning culture, poverty and racism are among the main catalysts.

According to the Human Rights Watch (2001) high levels of racially motivated violence among students in formally white, coloured, and Indian schools that are being integrated have been reported. The study done by the Human Rights Watch in 2001 revealed that 62% of the cases reported had a racial incident or racism in school including derogatory and racial name calling and various forms of racial harassment often resulting in physical altercation. In this study it was noted that the insecurity of the school environment presented a problem where children are exposed to gang violence, rape robbery and assault.

A recent story appearing in the Sunday paper (Schmidt, 2002) tells of a 13-year-old boy who was a class bully who threatened children and took their money for lunch. The same boy allegedly raped a different 9-year-old classmate each day in front of others in a weeklong orgy of violence. The alleged rapes at the primary school in Kagiso, west of Johannesburg came to light after some of the little girls told their parents and class teacher about their ordeals (Schmidt, 2002).

## **2.6. Impact of Bullying**

Bullying can have detrimental effects on the learner. Bullying can make learners feel lonely, unhappy and frightened (Batche and Knoff, 1994,

Olweus, 1993 cited in Banks, 1994). Bullying creates a hostile environment for learning to take place and is extremely harmful to the health, well-being and the academic progress of a substantial minority of students (Rigby, 1993 cited in Smith 1999). Chronic bullies seem to maintain their behaviours into adulthood, negatively influencing their ability to develop and maintain positive relationships (Oliver, Hoover, Hazler, 1994 cited in Banks, 1994). Being bullied leads to depression and low self-esteem, problems that they can carry into adulthood (Olweus, 1993 cited in Smith 1999).

## **2.7. Conceptual and theoretical framework**

Boys and girls encounter different experiences of bullying, therefore a framework relating to gender and power is used. The conceptual and theoretical frameworks that follow were chosen to assist with the research conducted.

Thokozani Xaba (1997) cites Simone De Beauvoir (1949) “One is not born, but becomes a woman ” (7). Xaba notes that this statement applies equally well to man. According to Xaba males and females are made into men and women through the roles they play in society. Xaba continues that “the real man” or “manhood” is used to encourage certain behaviour among boys and to discourage effeminacy. To properly play their roles in

society, males are discouraged to develop certain sentiments. Their roles according to Xaba require bravery, men have to wrestle and defeat fear while they are still very young. Masculinity is not something given to you; something you are born with, but something you gain, and you gain it by winning small battles with honour (Xaba, 1997). For boys to be rewarded with the status as men they start proving themselves from an early age, this is evident in the forms of bullying that is portrayed at schools. This understanding of masculinity will be of value in assessing the attitudes and feelings that the boys and girls have towards bullies and the victims and how/why bullying behaviour develops.

Almost from birth, boys and girls are taught what is expected of them in becoming male or female (Salisbury and Jackson 1996). Boys are tough and can cope with the world. Salisbury and Jackson note that there is an assumption of male entitlement and demonstration of male power is clearly related to how boys become bullies.

Salisbury and Jackson (1996) point out that boys recognise power all around them. They sense that schools are influenced by patriarchal expectations of a boy's first approach with its pressure to compete and succeed. They go on to say that boys notice the atmosphere of competition and success being actively shaped in the school hierarchy and feel that

same pressure on themselves. According to Salisbury and Jackson (1996) such attitudes together with men's interests get put before those of women. Caring and nurturing gets downgraded in an atmosphere of masculine power and authority. Young women almost daily encounter verbal and perhaps physical harassment in the playground (Gilbert, 1994). According to Gilbert (ibid) men know the power that comes from being male and the weakness that comes from being deemed non-male. This study attempted to establish some of the reasons that prompt boys in resorting to bullying.

According to Marano (1995) bullies come to believe that aggression is the best solution to conflicts. They also have a strong need to dominant and derive satisfaction from injuring others. Marano (1995) goes on to say that bullies lack what psychologists call pro social behaviour, they do not know how to relate to others.

Schools are responsible for the construction of masculinity. Boys are shaped as they interact with each other. If boys show emotions or sensitivity they are considered weak. Therefore boys at all cost try to avoid being different. Schools are institutions where gender is actively forged. Gender is not just reflected or expressed (Salisbury and Jackson, 1996), they are places where a certain type of 'top dog' masculinity is made, celebrated and confirmed daily acts of violence and bullying. This

literature gives the researcher some guide into the learner's feelings and emotions relating to bullying.

Salisbury and Jackson (1996) confirm that masculine violence and bullying are so much a taken for granted part of school life that they seem to be invisible to many teachers. Violence is an inevitable part of being a boy, "boys will be boys". Salisbury and Jackson both (ibid) maintain that violent and controlling behaviour is a major part of the social processes that forge masculinities within a male dominated society. Men are violent in order to become more masculine (Salisbury and Jackson,1996). Masculine violence is however linked to the under structures of male power and control in society. Bullying according to Salisbury and Jackson (ibid)is an integral part of making a manly identity for some boys and men. This literature will guide the researcher in justifying whether bullying is more prevalent amongst the boys or girls.

Fitzclarence (1995) maintain that schools are places where some boys find ways to express their masculinity by means of violence. In each case these acts are rehearsals for the next time that a conflict situation develops. Salisbury and Jackson (1996) is also of the belief that schools are places where boys are made. Bullying in schools is linked with fierce push and structuring of boys wanting to show their power and in doing so try to

develop their masculinity. Some boys believe that to become manly they need to use force and intimidation. For boy's instances of bullying are all around them, they experience it, collude with it and dish it out.

Schools are the place where masculinities are produced and reproduced. The sociologist Connell (1996) in his study of gender and power sees the emergence of a hegemonic form of masculinity as being particularly powerful in present day society. Connell notes that present day society ranks versions of femininity and masculinity in such a way that there is a global dominance of men over women. Bullies too have a strong need to dominate and derive satisfaction from injuring others.

The form of masculinity that is culturally dominant in a given setting is called hegemonic masculinity according to Connell (1996). Hegemony is the position of cultural authority and leadership. Certain cultures for example regard violence as the ultimate test for masculinity. In schools, peer groups, for instance others who cannot reproduce their performance admire a small number of highly influential boys. Hegemonic masculinity is visible in schools. It is an expression of the privilege boys have over girls. According to Connell (1996) power relations among learners are visible in the control over playground space for informal games. The gender and power framework will be used in the study to show the

different experiences that the boys and girls encounter with bullying and the ways in which the teachers intervene against bullying behaviours.

In the next chapter of this study, the research design, methodology and actual processes that were used to collect data from the school under study will be described.

## **Chapter Three**

### **Research Methodology**

#### **3.1 Introduction.**

This study examined understandings of bullying among learners and teachers in a Durban primary school. It also examined the ways in which the school copes with bullying. This chapter describes the methodology used to collect and analyse the data from the study. The research design, methodology, data collection and analysis methods are described.

#### **3.2 Research Design and Methodology**

The study utilised a descriptive survey design, in which qualitative methodologies were used to address the identified research questions. The questionnaire was clear and straightforward with simple instructions and clearly phrased open-ended questions which neither 'presumed' any viewpoint or, nor 'led' to any desired response (Bell, 1999). The interviews were largely informal, in that although lightly steered and prompted, the direction was provided by the interviewee (Bell, 1999).

##### **3.2.1 Gaining Access to the Research Site**

Prior to the research, permission was sought from the principal. He granted verbal permission for the free access to the grade 7 learners, provided that

the researcher's form class was not left unattended. A parent was approached to assist with the researchers class whilst the research was conducted.

### **3.2.2 Research Setting**

The school is a primary school, situated in Isipingo and serving learners from both wealthy as disadvantaged homes .The school is situated in an upper class historically 'Indian' area. The majority of the children from these homes go to ex- Model C schools, whilst the balance attend this school. There is an informal settlement nearby, and most of the children from this area attend the school.

The staff comprises a male principal, a female deputy principal, a male senior primary head of department, three female heads of department and five level one male teachers and twenty-five level one female teachers. The learner population is 1055, with 549 girls and 506 boys. The learners are made up of 70% black African learners and 30% of Indians. Each class comprises between 45 to 48 children. The reason for the school being chosen is that the researcher is an educator on the staff and it was that much easier to conduct the survey at this school considering the time constraints.

### **3.2.3 Research Population**

The grade seven learners were chosen to participate in the study. A total number of 100 learners participated in the study, with ages ranging from twelve to fifteen. There were 59 girls and 41 boys in the study. The reason for using these learners was, that they were the highest grade in the school and it in this group of learners that high incidences of bullying take place. These learners are the oldest in the school, thus making them the most respect and/or feared by other learners. They are larger in size as compared to the learners in the other grades. They are physically stronger and tend to pick on the learners that they can dominate. School prefects are usually from this grade. This gives learners in this grade a lot of control and power in the school. Another interesting factor about this age group is that they are reaching puberty, where they are neither children nor adults and the developmental problems at this transitional stage makes them vulnerable to mood swings and behaviour problems..

### **3.3 Data Collection Methods**

A variety of qualitative data collection methods were used in the study. This triangulation of methods was used to aid interpretation and enhance the credibility of the research study. Firstly, a questionnaire using both, open ended and closed questions were administered to the learners, to explore their understanding and experiences of bullying in the school and

how they deal with it. Secondly, an analysis of the school and classroom policies were undertaken to explore the ways in which the school viewed and dealt with bullying. The management team involved in discipline were interviewed to ascertain the school's policy on bullying. Thirdly a selected sample of teachers were interviewed regarding the strategies they used, or have heard of to curb incidents of bullying.

The methods used were as follows:

### **3.3.1 Questionnaires**

A semi-structured questionnaire was administered to 100 Grade 7 learners to elicit narrative information regarding their experiences of bullying in the school. The questionnaire also explored the learner's perceptions regarding the prevalence of bullying. The researcher also found it more appropriate to conduct the study using this method since she is not in direct contact with this grade and time would be of a constraint.

The questionnaire employed was taken from a booklet on bullying compiled by Joan Squelch (2000) of the Rand Afrikaans University. However, the questions were modified to suit the topic as well as the learners used in the study (See Appendix 1). The questionnaire was conducted and implemented as a group exercise. The questionnaire was chosen partly because it was much easier to use with the grade 7's and

partly because it allows the learners their own definition of bullying. The learners were promised and granted confidentiality.

100 questionnaires were given out and 100 were collected. This was possible since the researcher conducted the study herself and had direct control over the questionnaire.

### **3.3.2 Interviews**

The management team in charge of discipline in the school were interviewed using unstructured and informal interviews (See Appendix 2). The principal was interviewed since he is ultimately responsible and accountable for a safe learning environment. The deputy principal was interviewed because her range of duties includes discipline. The teachers on the discipline committee were also interviewed.

Specific teachers involved in formulating the discipline policy were also interviewed. The interviews were informal and unstructured. It was also very relaxed since the interviewer and interviewee had known each other personally thus mutual confidence between the interviewer and interviewee had been established.

### **3.3.3 Observations**

The researcher was at an advantage since she is an educator at the school where the study was being conducted. The researcher had access to the day to day running of the school as well as the routines, organisations and various personal issues at the school. By simply being an educator on the staff, much information, not otherwise easily accessed was made accessible. Whilst on duty during the lunch break or in the staff room, the conversations of the learners and educators gave a deeper insight to the bullying concept of the school. The observation of bullying by both boys and girls at school whilst on ground duty had initiated the study of bullying.

### **3.3.4 Document Analysis**

The following documents were analysed to understand the schools and classroom policies regarding bullying and discipline. These included the 'incident record book' and the school's code of conduct.

### **3.4 Data Analysis**

First the questionnaires were analysed and themes emerging from these were used to inform document analysis and interviews. Second, the informal and unstructured interviews with the selected teachers and management members were analysed and common theories identified from

these. Lastly, data from documents and observations were integrated into the emerging theories.

The next chapter presents findings from the data collected through the above methods.

## **Chapter Four**

### **Research findings.**

#### **4.1 Introduction**

The purpose of this research project was to investigate how the learners and teachers understand and cope with bullying in one Durban primary school. The different experiences that girls and boys encounter were also analysed. In this chapter the data obtained from the various methods of collection is presented. The intention of this chapter is to present the data that was collected during the informal, unstructured interviews of the school's management team members in charge of bullying as well as the learner's questionnaires.

#### **4.2 Perceptions of bullying among Grade 7 learners.**

As stated in the last chapter, a questionnaire was administered to a 100 grade 7 learners at the school. Of these 59 were girls and 41 were boys. Their responses are presented below.

##### **4.2.1 Perceptions of prevalence of bullying**

From the questionnaires (N =100), only 20 of the grade seven learners felt that bullying was a problem. This was confirmed in the interview with four

educators, comprising two from management (HOD'S) and two educators from the discipline committee. Examples of comments included:

“Bullying, well, that’s an old one, can you ever let a day go by without complaints from these learners, I’m really tired of these petty complaining.” Educator One.

“Bullying is that what you call it, to me it is just attention seeking. These learners complain for every simple thing.” Educator One.

While the educators acknowledged that bullying was an issue, one educator also dismissed it as insignificant or highly exaggerated by the learners who are victimised by it.

#### **4.2.2 Experiences of Bullying**

However, in response to the question “ Have you been bullied this year”, of the 100 respondents, 17 boys and 24 girls answered yes. The response shows that in all a total of 41 of the learners experienced bullying some time or the other during the course of the year, at school. This suggests that bullying is a problem at the school. These findings also show that both boys and girls experience bullying by individuals and groups. For example

On the international front Dan Olweus (1973, 1978 cited by Smith, 1999) conducted a nationwide survey in Norway on bullying. He concluded that the younger and weaker students were more exposed to bullying. Boys were more exposed to bullying than girls. Girls were more exposed to indirect and subtle forms of bullying. Boys bullied more than 80% of boys. On the other hand, in Australia Ken Rigby (1995) noted the main gender difference was that girls used more indirect methods, whilst the boys settled for more direct ways of bullying. Girls are likely to report being bullied by boys and girls, whilst boys report being exclusively bullied by boys. My study will also look at similar trends among learners in a Durban primary school.

## **1.2 Purpose and rationale for the study.**

Considering the above evidence, examining teacher and learner's understanding of bullying and its prevalence in school and how they cope with bullying incidents seems topical. Thus, this study investigated how learners and teachers in one Durban primary school understand, experience and cope with bullying. The study aimed to contribute to practical understanding of this problem and to identify effective strategies for teachers to deal with incidents of bullying in the school.

17 boys and 20 girls indicated that one person bullied them, whilst 11 boys and 6 girls indicated that a group bullied them.

In response to the question “ Have you seen anyone else being bullied at school this term ”, 30 boys and 29 girls said yes. The findings show that a fairly large number of learners, observed other learners being bullied at school. There was a remarkably small difference between the boys and girls when asked, “Was one child or a group of children doing the bullying ”,both the boys and girls reported that a higher percentage of group bullying was prevalent. However, a larger number of girls (19) indicated that they witnessed one child doing the bullying whilst a small number of boys (7) indicated that they witnessed individual bullying.

#### **4.2.3 Girls and boys as Perpetrators of Bullying**

19 of the 41 boys and 4 of the 59 girls in the study admitted to bullying other learners during the course of the term. Both boys and girls were bullied by the same and opposite sex. There were 29 boys who indicated that they were bullied by other boys as opposed to no boys being bullied by girls. Of the 59 girls in the study there were 11 girls that were bullied by girls and 24 that were bullied by boys.

#### **4.2.4 Forms of Bullying**

Firstly, the questionnaire asked respondents to identify the various forms of bullying as well as how frequent these take place. From the questionnaire responses, the following forms of bullying were identified as prevalent at the Durban primary school.

34 % of all the respondents, reported being called hurtful names by the same sex. Of these, 17 were girls and 17 were boys. It was interesting to note that an equal number of boys and girls reported to being called hurtful names by the same sex. However, when it came to being called hurtful names by the opposite sex, six out of 41 boys and 16 out of the 59 girls experienced being called hurtful names by the opposite sex.

Secondly, of the five respondents that indicated that they were touched by the opposite sex once or twice a week, four were boys and one was a girl. However two girls out of the 59 indicated that they were touched once or twice a week and made to feel uncomfortable by the opposite sex. None of the learners experienced being touched by the same sex and made to feel uncomfortable.

Thirdly, as in most of the research reviewed in this study, this school too showed that teasing was a form of bullying that was commonly found

amongst the girls. For example 19 out of the 59 girls and 10 out of the 41 boys experienced teasing once or twice a week, whilst seven boys and two of the girls indicated that they were kicked or hit once or twice a month. There were 12 girls and 6 of the boys that experienced having to hand over lunch or money. It was interesting to note that there were no boys but 28 of the 59 girls indicated that they were excluded from taking part in an activity.

#### **4.2.5 Impact of Bullying**

First in response to the question "If you have been bullied, how do you feel when you are bullied," of the 75 learners that responded to this question 19 (8 boys and 11 girls) of the learners were not bothered. 21 of the 75 who responded indicated that they felt sad, of which 16 were girls and 5 were boys. The response to be angry, sad and ashamed seems to be higher with the girls than the boys, with 9 girls and 4 boys responding this way.

In addition, in response to the question "How do you feel about yourself when you are bullied," the results show that 41 of the respondents do feel bad about themselves when they are being bullied. The results once again show that more girls (23) do feel bad about themselves than boys (19). A sizable minority of boys (four) did indicate that they feel worse about

themselves whilst a bigger number of girls (11) feel worse about themselves.

Second, in response to the question “ How do you feel about yourself when you bully others ”, of the 100 respondents, about nine boys and six girls felt good about bullying others, whilst it was surprising to note that the majority of the learners felt the same about themselves. Of the 63 that responded that they felt the same 27 were boys and 36 were girls. 15 learners indicated that they felt worse about themselves, of which 11 were girls and four were boys. Here again it shows that a larger number of girls than boys feel worse about themselves.

Third in response to the question “How has bullying affected you”, four girls and four boys seemed to be affected, to the extent that they stayed at home. A sizable minority of learners (six) became ill when bullied at school. Three boys and 10 girls of the 100 respondents reported having problems sleeping at night due to bullying. There were approximately 11 learners who were afraid of going to school, because of bullying. 11 suffer from headaches of which three were boys and eight were girls. Eight boys and eight girls of the 100 respondents, reported encountering stress when bullied at school. However 27 of the learners were not affected by bullying (13 boys and 14 girls).

In response to the question “How do you feel when you see other children being bullied”, of the 27 out of 100 learners that were angry, 15 were boys and 12 were girls. The girl learners, that is 37 out of the 59 showed signs of being more upset and ashamed of bullying, whilst 18 of the 41 boys indicated that they felt ashamed or upset. Eight out of the 100 learners indicated that it does not bother them to see other children being bullied, of which six were boys and two were girls. Although the learners did indicate that bullying did make them feel uncomfortable observations confirm that peers assume many roles in the bullying episode such as joining in, cheering, passively watching and occasionally intervening.

In response to the question “If you have been bullied, who tried to help you?” 42 of the 100 learners thought it was meaningful to talk to their friends about it. Of these learners that chose a friend, 30 were girls and 12 were boys. The survey revealed that 10 of the learners confirmed that they found help from teachers, 11 from their parents, two from another adult, six from their brother or sister and 21 of them indicated that no one tried to help them.

### **4.3 Perceptions of bullying among educators**

The unstructured interviews of the educators aimed to solicit understanding and experiences of bullying in the school under investigation. First, in response to the question “ Do you think bullying is a problem at our school”, three of the four educators interviewed thought that bullying was a problem whilst the other one thought it was highly exaggerated by the learners who were victimised. He said that:

“Most of these learners are petty, they complain for silly issues”

Respondent One, educator member of discipline committee.

He was the only male educator on this committee and felt that the girls should learn not to complain about petty issues since bullying occurs everywhere and everyone has disagreements. He was of the opinion that girls should learn not to be ‘tattle tales.’ Educator Two confirmed that it is not easy teaching the grade 7’s without having the lesson being disturbed often. Teasing each other, stealing pens and pencils, pulling the other learner’s chair, so that he or she falls, is but some of the forms that bullying takes.

“It is a curse to be on ground duty. That is where most of the bullying takes place.” Educator Two.

Educator Three was adamant that bullying was quite a problem during break. She had noticed the senior learners; both girls and boys snatch things away from the foundation phase learners. This made the younger learners sometimes cry and having to give away their money, sandwiches and their 'Pokemon tazzo's.'

Educator Four was in agreement with Educators Two and Three that there was a problem with bullying at school. On numerous occasions she heard learners picking on each other. The interviews with these educators confirm that bullying is prevalent in the school.

The reports in the incident book and the discussion with the principal also confirm that bullying does take place. According to the principal besides the routine bullying problems of teasing, hitting, pushing, swearing and gossiping, the senior learners are now resorting to threats and fights after school hours. Younger learners are being involved in these fights. Another interesting aspect that the principal had observed was that the younger learners are now requesting the help of their older sisters and brothers. The older siblings are threatening and bullying the younger learners.

In response to the question, "Is bullying more prevalent amongst the boys or girls," all educators confirmed that bullying is more prevalent among the

boys. According to the educators, boys exhibit higher rates both as offenders and victims. However, Educator Two laughed and commented, “don’t be fooled, girls too are bullies, only they exhibit bullying in a more cattish way.” The principal also confirmed that the incident book shows more records of boys being reprimanded for bullying than girls. According to the principal educators are not in the habit of reporting incidences of bullying by girls since they find it is insignificant.

When asked about the forms of bullying most prevalent in the school the educators responded as follows. According to Educator Two who is in charge of discipline of the girls stated that teasing, and calling names were the most common of all types of bullying. According to the principal, disputes between friends have been found to be one of the main reasons for the bullying behaviour of girls and are the most common features that distinguish the bullying behaviour of the girls from the boys. Educator Two agreed that, girls were in the practice of excluding a friend from a friendship group. Educator One confirmed that more boys are involved in ‘physical and verbal aggression’. Educator Three made mention that there was an incident where a grade seven boy and girl were involved in a fight during break, resulting in both of them getting hurt. She believed that girls too are involved in physical forms of bullying. This educator also observed that the bigger size boys were generally the bullies and the much smaller

built boys normally the victims. In addition boys laugh at other's appearance, academic and also sporting abilities. Educator Four observed that boys who do worse at school tend to be more aggressive towards the better learners.

#### **4.4 Strategies for coping with Bullying**

When asked what strategies the school introduced to manage bullying in school, the following were brought forth by the principal: There is no school policy regarding bullying in place. However, punishments regularly given to learners included the following:

##### **4.4.1 Letter of warning**

According to the principal and the educators on the discipline committee, the principal initially deals with learners committing minor offences. After a fair hearing a learner found guilty will receive a letter of warning. On the third warning the learner is given a letter asking their parent to come to school.

##### **4.4.2 Parent interview**

The parent is sent for by the principal .The learner together with the parent has a discussion regarding the problem at hand. The parent is made aware

of the learners' offence so that he or she can monitor their child's behaviour.

#### **4.4.3. Behaviour forms**

This is a form of control for more serious offences. At the end of each lesson the teacher concerned signs the form commenting on the learner's behaviour. At the end of the day the principal checks the form and if the learner is found misbehaving the principal sends for the learner.

#### **4.4.4 Detention**

This was introduced, but later dismissed since the learners have a long way to reach home, therefore they cannot stay in after school, as they will miss their transport.

#### **4.4.5 Suspension**

For offences warranting a warning or suspension, the learner after a fair hearing, will receive an unofficial warning and necessary counselling will be given to the learner. If the learner is considered of danger to the other learners then the schools governing will be consulted and in keeping with the S.A. Schools Act (1997) disciplinary measures will be taken against the learner. A decision whether to suspend the learner or not, depending on the severity of the case will be taken in cognisance with the S.A.Schools Act

(1997) which emphasises that any punishment must be lawful, fair and reasonable. The Schools Act places the responsibility for management of learner conduct directly onto the whole school community, which includes the, parents, learners and the governing body (Department of Education 1997).

#### **4.5 Observations of Bullying in the School**

By simply being an educator on the staff, at the school under investigation, much information, not otherwise easily accessed was made accessible.

Various forms of bullying were observed during the lunch break. The younger learners were often bullied at the tuck-shop line. The senior learners pushed and shoved these little children so that they could get what they want first. There were times that these little children did not buy what they required and had nothing to eat.

In addition, the boys bullied the girls for space on the field. They wanted to play their games and the girls were bullied into giving them space. The researcher observed that the boys hit, punched, pushed and kicked whilst the girls teased, called each other names, left others out of a conversation or game and gossip. Some of the common phrases heard during breaks were:

“ Wimp ....can't even kick a ball.”

“ Jerk.....get a life....”

Another common practice was the kicking of learners' lunch boxes out of their hands and also spitting by the boys on girls faces. The most common forms of bullying observed by the educators and learners were physical bullying, including hitting and kicking and emotional abuse, which included name calling, racial slurs and forcible expropriation property such as money, food and stationery. This confirmed the results that bullying was prevalent in the school.

#### **4.6 Summary of major findings.**

The major findings suggest that bullying is a problem at the school under study. Some of the major findings are as follows. Firstly boys and girls experience different forms of bullying. The girls experience more indirect forms of bullying whilst the boys experience more direct forms. More girls than boys in the research study experienced being called hurtful names by the opposite sex ,teased and being left out of taking part in an activity. The boys on the other hand experienced more physical bullying in the form of being kicked or hit by the same sex.

Secondly, it was interesting to note that few learners responded that they were not bothered by bullying. However, more girls than boys indicated

that they felt sad when they were bullied. Bullying had affected some of these learners to an extent where they stayed at home. A few of the learners became ill because of bullying at school. According to the study, learners even experience problems sleeping at night because of bullying. Another major finding was that more of the learners felt more comfortable speaking to their peers about being bullied, than to their parents and teachers.

Thirdly , an interesting finding was that the problem of bullying was not taken seriously by some of the teachers. Three of the teachers indicated that bullying was a problem at school, however it is more prevalent amongst boys than girls. Boys exhibit higher rates, both as offenders and victims. However the principal reprimands more boys than girls. The findings show that not many learners report bullying. One of the major findings was that no school policy regarding bullying was in place at the school.

In the next chapter the issues raised by the data presented in this chapter will be discussed and analysed, and implications for policy and practice drawn.

## Chapter Five

### Discussion and Implications

#### 5.1 Introduction

The aim of the research study was to examine the teachers' and learners understanding of bullying and its prevalence in a Durban Primary School, and how they cope with bullying incidents. This research investigated the understanding that boys and girls have about bullying and the forms that are commonly found among the boys and girls. The study also aimed to identify effective strategies for teachers to deal with incidents of bullying.

The researcher's personal and professional experiences indicated that bullying in school is widespread. Incidences of bullying among these learners make them unhappy and academically unproductive. It also interferes with the learning of other learners and undermines the school's culture of learning.

In the previous chapter, findings from a small –scale research study in a Durban school and what the school is doing about it were presented .The data was obtained from the school by a questionnaire administered to Grade 7 learners, interviews with the management members and through

observations. Through the presentation of the data various issues were highlighted and brought to the fore.

The intention of the study was to explore workable solutions to the problems of bullying and how to assist the teachers and learners to cope with bullying at the school. This chapter will take the following format. Firstly the understanding of bullying by the teachers and learners will be discussed. The various forms of bullying and the underlying causes will then be discussed. Management strategies and its procedures will follow. Finally the limitations of the study will be identified.

## **5.2 Summary of major findings.**

Firstly, there is evidently a high incidence of bullying among learners in the school. The problem is that victims and perpetrators as well as teachers do not understand what constitutes bullying and are therefore unable to take appropriate actions when it occurs.

Secondly, because of the poor understanding of bullying, incidents remain unreported, and if they are, teachers are unable to deal with them effectively.

Thirdly, the study identified common forms of bullying occurring in the school. These included physical bullying like, kicking, hitting, pushing etc, as well as non-physical forms like, being called hurtful names, being excluded from friendship groups, slander etc. Mostly girls experienced teasing and being excluded from an activity, whilst the boys experienced hitting and kicking.

Fourthly, not recognising bullying as a problem means that schools do not have policies to eliminate or reduce it. According to the results obtained in this study there was no school policy regarding bullying in place at the school. Acts of bullying, when reported were dealt with in an ad hoc manner.

Fifthly, in order to effectively cope with incidents of bullying in classrooms and playgrounds, teachers need to identify practical strategies they can use to deal with the problem. Some of the strategies identified in this study included the formulation of a school bullying policy, with all stakeholders involved, the creation of awareness among the learners, teachers and parents and the identification of ways to encourage learners to feel comfortable to report any forms of bullying.

Finally, different cultures construct masculinity differently. According to Connell (1996) some masculinity are more honoured than others. The form of masculinity that is culturally dominant in a given setting is called hegemonic masculinity (Connell, 1996). Hegemonic masculinity is highly visible in the grade seven. Many other learners of the school admire the bullies of the grade sevens.

### **5.3.Discussion.**

Firstly, Lind and Maxwell (1996, cited by Sullivan in Smith,1999) concluded that bullying is occurring in all schools. It is the experience of most of the children no matter how popular, capable and well adjusted they are. In addition, most children either individually or in a group, become involved in carrying out some type of bullying at some time. Bullying is part of the school climate, and not a response to the characteristics of the victim and the social area.

As is evident in the data analyses of the previous chapter, there was evidence of bullying in the school. However, seen from the children's perspective the teachers in the school seem to be largely unaware of the extent of the problem of bullying behaviour at school. It is evident that more learners tend to report incidences of bullying to their peers than to teachers or parents. This could account for the teachers not taking the

problem of bullying seriously enough and not being aware of the extent of the problem. Relatively few learners reported seeking help from their teachers. This could only suggest that they did not feel comfortable talking about their experiences of bullying to their teachers.

Many learners are afraid of reporting bullying incidences to the teachers, since they feel that the teachers may think of them as always complaining or as if they have a problem. As a result, the teacher looks at the victim as somebody that has a problem or is attention seeking. To avoid the embarrassment of being called a 'tale carrier' the victim of bullying remains silent.

These feelings of helplessness may eventually affect school attendance, the learner's health and patterns of sleep, which eventually affect their academic performance at school: As evident in the analyses many of the girls that are affected by bullying have problems sleeping at night, boys and girls experience stress, and are afraid to go to school because of bullying.

It is important for learners and teachers to distinguish between playfulness and bullying or cruelty. Children need to know the difference between 'tattling' (causing trouble) and reporting (seeking help) and it should be the

duty of the teacher to explain this to the learners in his /her curriculum planning. (<http://www.awesomelibrary.org./bullying.html> )

Secondly, data from the study as in others before, suggests that more boys than girls are victims as well as perpetrators of bullying. As the literature suggests, schools are places where boys construct their masculinity. Salisbury and Jackson (1996) asserts that bullying and violence are part of being a boy. This study confirmed that bullying is more prevalent among boys than girls.

According to Salisbury and Jackson (1996) some teachers turn a blind eye to masculine violence because they assume that the violence is an inevitable part of being a boy or man. The implication according to them is that being a boy involves a 'natural' expression or innate, aggressive drive or instinct that we are all stuck with for the rest of our lives. According to Salisbury and Jackson (1996) bullying in schools is linked with fierce push and structuring of boys wanting to show their power and in doing so try to develop their masculinity. This was evident in the research study at the Durban primary school. Unless the socialisation of boys is disrupted and boys are taught new ways of expressing themselves , acts of bullying will continue.

Squelch (2000) in her study discovered that bullying could take the form of abuse of power. This generally occurs where there is an imbalance in strength between the bully and the victim. Squelch (2000) found that the bully has more power and control over the victim and the victim has difficulty defending him or herself and is placed in a vulnerable position. This was also evident at the Durban school where the study was carried out. The weaker learners were generally the victims and the bigger and stronger ones were the bullies. Again, this should not be accepted as a given. Children have to be taught more acceptable ways of interacting with each other.

Thirdly according to Olweus (1991) girls are more exposed to indirect and subtle forms of bullying than to bullying with open attacks. Girls are often involved in bullying, such as slander, spreading of rumours, and manipulation of friendship and relationships. For example excluding a friend from the group, isolation and ostracising someone from peers and friends, is more common among girls. According to Squelch (2000) this is classified as psychological bullying. The learner's confidence, self esteem and dignity is affected. Although emotional bullying has been a common practice in the school it is the most difficult type of bullying to cope with or to prove. In the present study, boys also practiced some non -physical forms of bullying. For example, tormenting, hiding learner's books and

pens, ridicule and humiliation are most common amongst the boys and girls. The first step is for schools to take these indirect forms of bullying as seriously as the physical forms and to enforce policies and rules aimed at curbing them.

Fourthly, in the data analysis there was evidence of learners being touched in places that made them feel uncomfortable. Unwanted physical contact or abusive comments are a common practice at the school. Bullying can include sexual harassment (Squelch 2000) where it takes the form of sexual context and actions. It can be verbal sexual harassment or physical sexual harassment and also visual sexual harassment. According to the study conducted at the Durban primary school, more girls reported having been touched by the opposite sex. There were also incidences of boys making remarks about their bodies. Unfortunately sexual harassment is not dealt with directly in primary schools. However, it needs to be brought into the open and victims need to be encouraged to report it. In addition bullying needs to be treated as a punishable offence to discourage the perpetrator.

#### **5.4. Strategies for managing bullying.**

“Bullying is born within schools and teachers are the ones who must take the lead in stopping it.” (Randall,1996; ix ).The main aim is not to get rid of bullies but to stop bullying so that the culture of teaching and learning

can take place. From this study and the literature reviewed herein, the following strategies may help in the elimination of bullying and other forms of violence among learners.

Firstly, in order to address the situation, a policy aimed specifically at addressing bullying would have to be put in place. An effective school policy on bullying, addressing the meaning and forms of bullying and the punishment thereof needs to be established. According to Salisbury and Jackson (1996) the school bullying policy should be widely circulated to learners, parents, staff, governing body members and the local education authority. The document should clearly state the consequences of breaching of the rules. These should be taken seriously and automatic notification of bullying incidents to parents and governing body members should be made. This according to Salisbury and Jackson (ibid) could be a powerful deterrent for those inclined to aggressive, oppressive behaviour.

Secondly, in combating bullying at schools it is important to create public awareness of, and knowledge about, the problem of bullying and its impact on learners, both victims and perpetrators. Thus, initiatives should be taken to raise the teachers, parents and learners awareness of the phenomenon of bullying. The drawing up of the policy for bullying should include these stakeholders so that they are all aware of the different forms of bullying

and the appropriate strategies for combating them. Staff awareness of bullying should be increased so that children do not have to report as many incidences, because staff now see and intervene in bullying situations without having to be told (Eslea and Smith, 1998).

Thirdly, all stakeholders in education should take the problem of bullying seriously. In order to have a bully free school the teachers should listen to the complaint of the learner and not let it just pass, and keep records of all incidences, and let both the bully and victim know that they are doing so, in order for the learner to realise that bullying is being taken seriously.

Fourthly, teachers should not deal with bullies and victims separately. Rather, they should let both of them realise that they are taking the problem seriously. In addition, teachers should not force bullies to apologise.

According to Randall (1996) apologies made under duress are worthless as are confessions obtained by torture. All this does is to teach bullies that people who are bigger and stronger than they are can force them to do things that they do not want to do; they know they are being bullied.

Fifthly, rewards and praise should be awarded to learners who behave appropriately in order to reinforce positive behaviours. Lastly the school also needs to come up with strategies that would be accepted and adhered to by all stakeholders.

### **5.5 Limitations of the study**

This study used a case study, using a small sample (100 learners) and therefore cannot be generalised to all primary schools. However, some lessons can still be learned.

The study was also conducted over a short period of time and therefore, is not comprehensive. More extensive research is needed to explore in depth, the problem of bullying in primary schools so as to find solutions that would benefit a wider range of schools.

### **5.6 Conclusion**

Taking into account the findings it is evident that bullying is a problem in the school. An interesting finding was the difference in the types of bullying between boys and girls. The girls used more hidden and socially conforming forms of bullying, whereas the boys were more direct and physical. Although the survey showed a problem of bullying at the primary school no policy was in place and the strategies used will not get rid of bullying.

Every school must recognise the extent and impact that bullying has on the learners and start taking steps to stop it from happening. If bullying is ignored the learners will suffer ongoing harassment, which can cause lifelong damage to victims. It is only when schools recognise and acknowledge the problem of bullying that appropriate strategies can be identified and implemented. Only then can the culture of learning be returned to our schools.

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## Appendix 1

# QUESTIONNAIRE TO LEARNERS

### BULLYING SURVEY

#### What is bullying ?

“Bullying can be calling people names, hitting people or making people do something they don’t want to do. Bullying is always cruel.”

(Soul Buddyz 2000)

Bullying is the assertion of power through aggression. Its forms change with age: playground bullying, sexual harassment, gang attacks, date violence and child abuse

(Pepler and Craig, 1997).

Bullying can be physical or verbal. It can be direct (face to face ) or indirect , such as gossip or exclusion (Olweus, 1991).

## GENERAL INFORMATION

### 1. GENDER

Male	Female

### 2. AGE

12 Years	13 Years	14 Years	15 Years

### 3. RACE

White	Coloured	Black	Asian

### 4. DO YOU LIVE WITH

Both parents	Mother	Father
Grandparent	Aunt / Uncle	Other

### 5. DOES YOUR FATHER HAVE A JOB ?

YES	NO

### 6. HOW?

Clerk	Educator	Police
Laborer	Driver	Other

### 7. DOES YOUR MOTHER HAVE A JOB ?

YES	NO

8.HOW ?

Clerk	Educator	Machinist
Labourer	Cashier	Other

9. Is your father self-employed?

YES	NO

10. Is your mother self - employed?

YES	NO

## 11. Bullying Survey

This section asks you about your experiences of bullying. By bullying I mean, calling people names, hitting people, making people do something they don't want to, or excluding people from a group.

*Make a cross in the most appropriate block.*

1. Have you been bullied this year?	Yes		No	
2. How many times have you been bullied this year?	N			m
3. Were you bullied by one child or a group of children?	ev			or
4. Have you seen anyone else being bullied at school this term?	er			e
5. How many times have you seen another child being bullied?	One		Group	
6. Was one child or a group of children doing the bullying?	Yes		No	
7. Have you bullied anyone at school this term?	N			M
8. How many times have you bullied someone else?	ev			or
9. Were you on your own or with a group?	er			e
	One		Group	
	Yes		No	
	N			M
	ev			or
	er			e
	Own		Group	

**12. How often have you been bullied by being:**

	<b>Ever yday</b>	<b>1 or 2 times a week</b>	<b>1 or 2 times a month</b>	<b>N ev er</b>
12.1. Called hurtful names by the same sex.				
12.2. Called hurtful names by the opposite sex				
12.3. Touched by the opposite sex and felt uncomfortable.				
12.4. Touched by the same sex and felt uncomfortable.				
12.5. Given obscene and suggestive letters				
12.6. Remarked about your body.				
12.7. Teased in an unkind way.				
12.8. Kicked and hit.				
12.9. Pushed and shoved around				
12.10. Threatened with harm.				
12.11. Lied about in a spiteful way.				
12.12. Made to hand money, lunch or belongings.				
12.13. Excluded from taking part in activities.				

**Complete the following questions by circling the most appropriate numbers.**

**13. If you have been bullied, how do you feel when you are bullied?**

I am not bothered	1
I feel mostly angry	2
I feel mostly sad	3
I feel mostly ashamed	4

**14. How do you feel about yourself when you are bullied?**

I feel bad about myself	1
I feel the same about myself	2
I feel worse about myself	3

**15. How do you feel about yourself when you bully others?**

I feel good about myself	1
I feel the same about myself	2
I feel worse about myself	3

**16. How has bullying affected you?**

I stay at home	1
I get ill	2
I cannot sleep	3
I feel anxious	4
I am afraid to go to school	5
I get headaches	6
I feel stressed.	7
It has not affected me at all.	8

**17. How do feel when you see other children bullied?**

I feel angry	1
I feel ashamed	2
I feel upset	3
It does not bother me	4

**18. If you have been bullied, who has tried to help you?**

A friend	1
A teacher	2
My mother or father	3
Another adult	4
My brother or sister	5
No one	6

**(Appendix 2.)**

**Interview questions.**

**These were some of the leading questions.**

1. Do you think that bullying is a problem at our school?
2. From the incidences recorded, is bullying more prevalent among girls or boys.
3. What forms of bullying are girls involved in?
4. What forms of bullying are boys involved in?
5. What measures has the school taken to combat bullying.