



**BULLYING IN PHYSICAL AND CYBER SPACES: EXPERIENCES OF YOUNG  
ADULT SURVIVORS IN THE DIGITAL AGE.**

**By**

**Suhana Jacobs**

**204518428**

**Submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy at  
the School of Education, University of KwaZulu-Natal, Pietermaritzburg, South Africa.**

**Supervisor: Professor Vaughn M. John**

**31 January 2023**

## DECLARATION

I, **Suhana Jacobs (204518428)** declare that:

- (i) The research reported in this dissertation, except where otherwise indicated, is my original work.
- (ii) This dissertation has not been submitted for any degree or examination at any other university.
- (iii) This dissertation does not contain other persons' data, pictures, graphs or other information, unless specifically acknowledged as being sourced from other persons.
- (iv) This dissertation does not contain other persons' writing, unless specifically acknowledged as being sourced from other researchers. Where other written sources have been quoted, then:
  - a) their words have been re-written but the general information attributed to them has been referenced;
  - b) where their exact words have been used, their writing has been placed inside quotation marks, and referenced.
- (v) Where I have reproduced a publication of which I am an author, co-author or editor, I have indicated in detail which part of the publication was actually written by myself alone and have fully referenced such publications.
- (vi) This dissertation does not contain text, graphics or tables copied and pasted from the Internet, unless specifically acknowledged, and the source being detailed in the dissertation and in the References sections.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

A black rectangular box redacting the signature of the author.

## **SUPERVISOR'S DECLARATION**

As the candidate's supervisor, I agree to the submission of this dissertation.

**Supervisor:** Prof. V.M. John



**Signed:** \_\_\_\_\_

30 January 2023

## **Dedication**

I dedicate this thesis to my beloved parents. To my late father, in completing this thesis, I wish to honour you and the opportunities you provided for me which have led me here. I want to thank you for the lifelong and unconditional love and support you gave me and your unwavering pride. To my mother, I wish to thank you for your unfailing support, especially in the everyday routines of living, without which I could not have reached this point so happy and well-nourished.



## Acknowledgements

My doctoral journey has required a significant amount of work from me – both intellectual and emotional – and I am indebted to so many people who have sustained me and inspired great hope and faith in the fundamental generosity and goodness of people while I have been immersed in accounts of cruelty. I salute you all.

Firstly, this thesis would not have been possible without my supervisor, Professor Vaughn John, whose initial interest and continued faith brought it through to the end. It has been a privilege to work with him and I am grateful for all his guidance, insights, and encouragements. The Love to Live organisation also played an invaluable role in helping recruit participants and navigate the ethical considerations of the study. I owe a deep thanks to all the participants in my study who contributed significantly to my study as co-researchers in the action research process. I am particularly thankful to the survivor participants whose courage inspired me to persevere and create change. Their stories live on as an essential component of the educational resource.

All my family have been important during this journey but, in particular, to have my husband, Riquadeu Jacobs, by my side has been essential. He has been soundboard, practical advisor, and late-night counsellor and this thesis owes its completion, in part, to the many hours of patience he has given me.

I must also acknowledge my three young adult children – Qelsee, Urav, and Tiag. They have allowed me the space to work while being constant sources of unconditional love, patience, and understanding. Their belief in me has been invaluable.

My sister, Aradhana, has been a very important source of love and strength to me. She has brought me back into the real world when I have been stuck in circles of thinking. Her conversations have kept me up to date with all the family news and what has been going on in the world outside of my study.

## Table of Contents

DECLARATION .....	i
SUPERVISOR’S DECLARATION .....	ii
Dedication .....	iii
Acknowledgements .....	iv
List of Acronyms and Abbreviations .....	xi
List of Tables .....	xii
List of Diagrams .....	xiii
List of Excerpts .....	xiv
Abstract .....	xv
CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION .....	1
1.1 Introduction .....	1
1.2 Rationale for the study .....	2
1.3 The purpose of the study .....	5
1.4 Key research questions .....	5
1.5 Research Design / Approach to Study .....	6
1.7 Structure of the thesis .....	8
1.8 Conclusion .....	11
CHAPTER TWO: PHYSICAL AND CYBER BULLYING .....	12
2.1 Introduction .....	12
2.2 Definitions of bullying .....	12
2.3 Characteristics – Nature of physical and cyber bullying .....	13
2.3.1 Characteristics of physical bullying .....	14
2.3.2 Characteristics of cyber bullying .....	14
2.3.3 Relationship between cyber and traditional bullying .....	17
2.3.4 Conceptualising bullying practices .....	19

2.3.5 Global debates in cyber bullying research.....	21
2.3.6 Violence and bullying in schools.....	22
2.4 Tools for bullying.....	31
2.5 The impact of social media on violence and bullying.....	32
2.6 Social media and social change.....	33
2.7 Anti-cyber bullying education programmes in South Africa .....	35
2.8 South African Legislative and Policy Framework .....	38
2.9 Conclusion.....	38
CHAPTER THREE: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK – FREIRE, EVANS, AND GIROUX .....	40
3.1 Introduction .....	40
3.2 Freire’s key concepts.....	40
3.3 Evans and Giroux’s key concepts .....	55
3.4 Relevance of Freire and Evans and Giroux’s theories to this study.....	64
3.5 Conclusion.....	66
CHAPTER FOUR: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY .....	68
4.1 Introduction .....	68
4.2 Framing paradigm .....	68
4.3 Qualitative methodology .....	70
4.4. Action research.....	70
4.5 The nature of the research problem, aims, and objectives .....	75
4.6 Research design.....	76
4.7 Action research process.....	78
4.8 Overview of the action research plan and procedure .....	82
4.9 My journey through the action research process.....	85
4.10 Sample and sampling procedure .....	88
4.11 Data generation .....	94

4.12 Data analysis .....	100
4.13 Trustworthiness .....	102
4.14 Researcher positionality and reflexivity.....	104
4.15 Ethical considerations .....	105
4.16 Conclusion.....	106
CHAPTER FIVE: PHASE ONE – INTERVIEWS WITH YOUNG ADULT SURVIVORS .....	107
5.1 Introduction .....	107
5.2 Survivors experiences of physical and cyber bullying.....	107
5.3 The impact of bullying in different spaces.....	114
5.4 Multiple ways to bully.....	118
5.5 Increased unfair treatment.....	122
5.6 Power dynamics .....	124
5.7 Spectacular bullying.....	130
5.8 Consequences for self-image .....	134
5.9 Inadequate school responses .....	135
5.10 The nature of physical and cyber bullying in survivors’ stories .....	138
5.11 A new conceptualisation of the phenomenon of extended bullying .....	138
5.12 Four dimensions of extension .....	139
5.13 Preparation for Phase two .....	141
5.14 Conclusion.....	142
CHAPTER SIX: PHASE TWO – YOUTH COLLABORATIVE WORKSHOP.....	143
6.1 Introduction .....	143
6.2 Section one: Data generation activities .....	144
6.3 Activity one: <i>Extending conversations</i> .....	146
6.4 Preparation for the <i>Extending conversations</i> activity .....	146
6.5 Themes emerging from the plenary session.....	150

6.6 Facilitator planning for Activity two and Activity three.....	155
6.7 Preparation for Activity two and Activity three.....	158
6.8 Plenary discussion of themes .....	164
6.9 Section two: Preparation for post-workshop analysis .....	171
6.10 Section three.....	182
6.11 Facilitator reflections on Phase two design.....	186
6.12 Section four: Planning for Phase three.....	188
6.13 Conclusion.....	189
CHAPTER SEVEN: PHASE THREE – TEACHER COLLABORATIVE WORKSHOP ..	191
7.1 Introduction .....	191
7. 2 Section one: Shaping the teacher workshop.....	191
7.3 Section two: Findings from teacher workshop.....	192
7.4 The long-term actions.....	200
7.5 Section three: Facilitator reflections on teacher workshop .....	208
7.6 Conclusion.....	209
CHAPTER EIGHT: PHASE FOUR – TEACHERS PILOTING THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCE.....	210
8.1 Introduction .....	210
8.2 The educational resource preparation and design .....	210
8.3 Teacher perspectives on learner-resource interactions.....	212
8.4 Teacher perspectives on the educational resource .....	219
8.5 Teachers addressing social problems .....	226
8.6 Overall contributions from Phase four .....	229
8.7 The significance of the educational resource .....	230
8.8 Future directions.....	231
8.9 Reflections on the action research process.....	237
8.10 Conclusion.....	243

CHAPTER NINE: THEORISING EXTENDED BULLYING .....	245
9.1 Introduction .....	245
9.2 Section one: Theorisation process.....	246
9.3 Interlocking effect of extensions .....	253
9.4 The extended bullying model.....	254
9.5 Experience thresholds .....	258
9.6 Different psycho-social experiences of extended bullying .....	260
9.7 Section two: Theorising extended bullying via the lens of Freire, Evans, and Giroux	268
9.8 The changing logic of violence and potential for further violence .....	275
9.9 Conclusion.....	281
CHAPTER TEN: CONCLUSION.....	283
10.1 Introduction .....	283
10.2 Summary of key findings, theorisation, and original contributions.....	284
10.3 How I have answered my key research questions.....	287
10.4 Reflections on methodology.....	287
10.5 Reflections on the theoretical framework .....	290
10.6 Recommendations .....	291
10.7 Conclusion.....	296
References.....	297
APPENDICES .....	324
Appendix A: Letter of permission to conduct research from the Department of Education .	324
Appendix B: Letter of permission to conduct research from Love to Live .....	325
Appendix C: Demographics of survivor participants in Phase one .....	326
Appendix D: Survivor informed consent for Phase one .....	327
Appendix E: Demographics of young adult participants in Phase two .....	330
Appendix F: Young adult informed consent for Phase two.....	332
Appendix G: Teacher informed consent for Phase three .....	335

Appendix H: Demographics of school learner participants in Phase four.....	337
Appendix I: Parents of learners informed consent for Phase four .....	339
Appendix J: An overview of data generation practices .....	343
Appendix K: Sources of data .....	345
Appendix L: Interview schedule interviews with survivors in Phase one .....	347
Appendix M: Counselling services.....	352
Appendix N: Ethical clearance and ethical re-certification .....	353
Appendix O: Facilitation plans for each activity in Phase two – Youth collaborative workshop.....	355
Appendix P: Online news articles used in Phase two .....	361
Appendix Q: Survivor case profiles.....	363
Appendix R: Education resource .....	376
Appendix S: Collaborative writing .....	404
Appendix T: Facilitation plan for Phase three – Teacher collaborative workshop.....	406
Appendix U: Facilitation plan for piloting the resource in Phase four .....	410
Appendix V: Teacher feedback card for use in Phase four .....	412
Appendix W: Turnitin Report.....	417

## **List of Acronyms and Abbreviations**

APEVAC (African Partnership to End Violence Against Children)

CJCP (Centre for Justice and Crime Prevention)

DBE (Department of Basic Education)

EU (European Union)

HBSC (Health Behaviour in School-aged Children)

ICT (Information and Communication Technology)

IM (Iterative Move)

KZN (KwaZulu Natal)

NPO (Non-Profit Organisation)

SACE (South African Council for Education)

SNS (Social Network Site)

TSP (Transformative Scenarios Process)

UN (United Nations)

UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation)

UNICEF (United Nations Children's Fund)

WHO (World Health Organisation)



## List of Tables

Table 1: Sample and sampling procedure .....	89
Table 2: Data analysis methods .....	101
Table 3: Techniques learners use to facilitate bullying .....	121
Table 4: Three data generation activities .....	145
Table 5: Choice and description of educational videos .....	148
Table 6: Bøjer's (2018) TSP approach adapted .....	156
Table 7: First level scenario analysis and outcomes .....	175
Table 8: Second-level scenario analysis and outcomes: .....	179
Table 9: Key features of the resource .....	194
Table 10: Illustrative example of resource package .....	198
Table 11: Advancing the resource agenda .....	232

## List of Diagrams

Diagram 1: Four-step cyclical process.....	79
Diagram 2: Integration of two organisational schemes for step-by-step process of action research (Mertler, 2008, p. 31).....	80
Diagram 3: Four-step linear process (adapted).....	80
Diagram 4: Iterative framework for Phase two analysis. (Srivastava & Hopwood, 2009, adapted).....	172
Diagram 5: Key features of the resource .....	194
Diagram 6: The action research phases .....	237
Diagram 7: Bøjer's, Circles of impact diagram (2018, p.13) .....	238
Diagram 8: Bøjer's (2018) circles of impact diagram adapted for my study. ....	240
Diagram 9: Interlocking effect of extensions.....	254
Diagram 10: The extended bullying model .....	255
Diagram 11: Durability of experience .....	258
Diagram 12: The threshold design.....	260

## List of Excerpts

Excerpt 1: Scenario—type design within case profile .....	159
Excerpt 2: Complex-type scenario .....	161
Excerpt 3 from a case profile .....	173
Excerpt 4: Survivor storyboard .....	212
Excerpt 5: Example of worksheet activity: “Piecing” it together .....	215
Excerpt 6: Lesson description and accompanying activity .....	217
Excerpt 7: Lesson link .....	225

## **Abstract**

Bullying has become a serious problem for young people all over the world. Using action research within the critical paradigm, this qualitative study examines the experiences of young adult survivors of both physical and cyber bullying. Against a backdrop of rapid technological advances in social media communication and the blurring of physical and virtual bullying contexts, survivors provide poignant insights into how they grapple with the psycho-social impacts of their experiences. These impacts include pain, poor self-image, fear, loneliness, and feelings of dehumanisation. The study reveals that filmed incidents of physical bullying posted on social media tethers the physical realm to cyber space creating shifts and extensions along the dimensions of content, space, time, and participants. One of the unique contributions of this study is a discussion on the interlocking nature of the four dimensions of extension which gives rise to the concept of extended bullying. The exploration of these multiple extensions provides insights into a particular and complex form of bullying across physical and cyber spaces and how to develop educational interventions in response. The research design, supported by the theoretical insights of Paulo Freire, Bradley Evans, and Henry Giroux, provides a framework for knowledge production through partnerships that involved reflection, sustained dialogue, and creative action with survivors, youth and teachers. While revealing how pervasive and damaging extended bullying is, the study also exposes how psycho-social impacts are only fully recognised and understood when the phenomenon of bullying is viewed through the prism of multidimensional extensions. The study emphasises the need to balance rigorous scholarship with the promotion of democratic social change.

## CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Introduction

The fourth industrial revolution represents a “fundamental change in the way we live, work and relate to one another” ushering in “extraordinary technology advances” that are “merging the physical, digital and biological worlds in ways that create both huge promise and potential peril” (World Economic Forum, n.d.).

The digital age has given rise to major disruptions in how we relate to and communicate with each other. For those with access, nearly every facet of our lives is digitally connected. We connect with people seamlessly through rapid advances in social media platforms that permeate the very fabric of our social world, forcing us to question “what it means to be human” (Schwab, 2017, p. vii). In as much as we question what it means to be human, in digital times, we also must explore how technology has shaped processes of dehumanisation (World Economic Forum, n.d.). Examining bullying in the digital age allows us to pose and respond to such important questions.

For a 15-year-old girl from Thohoyandou, a small town in the northeast of South Africa, the fourth industrial revolution contributed to her suicide. In April 2021, Mas reported in *The Observer* that Lufuno Mavhunga killed herself a day after a series of videos were posted online showing a classmate assaulting her as her fellow learners stood by watching, laughing, and cheering-on the aggressor. As the literature confirms, cyber bullying is growing at an alarming rate. This is the age of digital violence and young people, like Lufuno, are the most vulnerable as social media technology is increasingly weaponised.

Lufuno’s story is just one of the many widely covered cases of violence in South African schools. Bullying, in both traditional and cyber forms, is becoming a significant form of school violence. Against the backdrop of technological advances and the increasing prevalence of recordings of school violence available for consumption on global media, and

especially social media, we are encouraged to think carefully about the changing logic of violence in present day society, in particular, those aspects that enable the normalisation of violence (Giroux & Evans, 2015). The prevalence, as well as the severity of the consequences, of cyber bullying necessitates an investigation into why young people create, circulate, and forward embarrassing content of their fellow learners – content that deliberately violates, humiliates, and injures.

Loseke (2017, p. 22) asks: “How do people not suffering understand the experiences of those who do?” The explosion of disturbing videos posted on social media of assaults and harassment amongst school learners, aptly described by Burchell (2015, p. 37) as “...one just as figuratively violent and unexpected”, provoked my academic interest in the phenomenon of school violence and its somewhat unexplored relationship to the virtual schoolyard within the context of cyber bullying that led to this study.

This chapter introduces the study by looking at its genesis and rationale. It provides a brief overview of the background on bullying relevant to the study and sets out the purpose of the study – to examine the nature and experiences of, and responses to physical and cyber bullying in the digital age, while developing and proposing mitigating measures in the form of an educational resource. The chapter also states the key research questions, research design – paying attention to the framing of the study, its qualitative approach, and action research underpinnings – and the data generation and analysis processes. The structure of the whole thesis is outlined as well.

## **1.2 Rationale for the study**

The evolving nature of bullying has prompted the need to question our understanding of such social problems and how we, as a society, respond to these problems. Interestingly, both Loseke (2017) and Olweus (2012) propose that developing a greater interest in and focus on cyber bullying has the potential to illuminate, not only the phenomenon of cyber bullying, but what occurs in traditional bullying within the school context as well. The past decade has

seen seismic shifts in the nature of bullying with increases in online manifestations commensurate to the technological advances that have allowed social media to grow and penetrate everyday life to an alarming level of intimacy. In the wake of this phenomenon, the physical and social boundaries of the schoolyard have been redefined so that it now encapsulates both physical and cyber dimensions. The proliferation of social media technology suggests that the implications for cyber bullying will become of increasing concern to a society in the digital age.

Large numbers of young people continue to participate in violent incidents, which are located both in school and outside school (Moschos, 2016) and permeate all aspects of life. Despite having one of the most progressive constitutions in the world, South Africa remains a “violent society” with a culture of aggression being replicated in the schooling system (Burton, 2008; Harber & Muthukrishna, 2000). While many schools comply with official policies and protocols, physical and sexual abuse, gang-related activities, and bullying remain common forms of violence in schools (Baruth & Mokoena, 2016). Considerable research supports what Burton (2008) argues, that, fundamentally, South African schools contribute to the occurrence of violence in society because they reflect the violent environment in which they are embedded. The broader environment in South Africa is characterised by violence that has both structural and cultural dimensions.

In South Africa, technology continues to play a significant role in young peoples’ lives. More and more young people have become Information and Communication Technology (ICT) users, are connected to the internet, and have cell phones (Kritzinger, 2017). Furthermore, the advent of social media has raised critical issues relating to safety, privacy, and abuse due to the growing forms of harm that arise from its use. This not only provokes social responsibility, but is also a call to action for warrantable research, creating an imperative for researchers to start connecting the dots between the physical and virtual realms. We are now presented with novel tools to ask the questions to gain new knowledge and insights into young peoples’ experiences of physical and cyber bullying.

Cyber bullying, originating from an act of violence perpetrated against a learner in an extended school environment, tethers the physical domain to virtual space creating ever-widening ripples of impact that continue to expose significant research voids. One such void is investigation into the inter-connectedness of young peoples' experiences of both the physical and cyber dimensions of bullying and school violence. Thus, my research attempts to straddle the physical-cyber divide to address this gap in the literature on bullying and school violence. By integrating the data retrieved from online spaces into physical spaces and vice versa, my research will contribute significantly to the existing literature by introducing new understandings that emerge from an integrative perspective on school violence.

Seeking to open up the field of literature on survivors' experiences, I am inspired by one of the leading scholars in cyber bullying research, Menesini (2012). She reflects that "working within the virtual domain can be a promising approach to address both face-to-face and cyber bullying, especially if the intervention is school-based and takes into consideration both social environments" (p. 550). My study aims to explore the deeper realities of young adult survivors as they reflect on their experiences of bullying in school and its extension into cyber space. At the same time, I intend to use the information gathered from my research to develop and pilot possible solutions and interventions as encouraged by action research advocates Kaye and Harris (2017). This aspect of my study is inspired by my sense of social responsibility as a researcher and the fact that, while the regular media reports on school violence and how video clips of such incidences are posted on social media cause momentary outrage, they rarely lead to the sustained action necessary to address school violence in the forms of both physical and cyber bullying.

It is important to note that this study consciously highlights how oppression intersects with bullying by showing the workings of power within class, race, and gender. This is an important aspect in South Africa as school violence is a painful reflection of our violently fractured past. An intersectional approach is well supported by leading voices in the field who encourage the undertaking of more studies that allow selected participants to share their stories and their responses to the impact of the phenomena on their lives. This approach differs substantially from existing research which generally only highlights the nature and



extent of cyber bullying but fails to capture the nuances of one's lived experiences (Hinduja & Patchin, 2012; Vanden Abeele, Van Cleemput, & Vandebosch, 2017).

The digital age provides a powerful platform to address critically, in a more nuanced way, some of the more dominant violence discourses that surround young people and education. While the research agenda for studies involving young people and violence is mainly steered by educational officials, policy makers, and practitioners generally, the digital age brings with it a considerable wealth of new experiences, information, meaning, and a new set of questions which calls for a more interdisciplinary approach. It is within the above-mentioned background that this study seeks to examine the nature and experiences of, as well as the responses to, physical and cyber bullying and develop mitigation measures which could be put into place. This study has been conducted in Pietermaritzburg, KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa.

### **1.3 The purpose of the study**

The purpose of the study was to explore bullying in both physical and cyber space through a focus on the experiences of young adult survivors within the digital age. The main objectives of the study were to examine the experiences and nature of physical and cyber bullying amongst the survivors, youth, and teachers, as well as their responses to the phenomenon. The study sought to document and understand such experiences and to develop an educational intervention in response. Such an intervention focussed on teacher-learner engagements and involved developing and piloting an educational resource.

### **1.4 Key research questions**

This action research study seeks to respond to the following key research questions:

1. What are young adult survivors' experiences of bullying in physical and cyber spaces?
2. How do young adult survivors respond to bullying in physical and cyber spaces?
3. What is the nature of bullying in physical and cyber spaces?
4.
  - a. What new tools, skills, and knowledge can be developed to promote self-efficacy and mitigate the challenges (experiences) of bullying in physical and cyber spaces?
  - b. What can we learn from teachers piloting these tools and resources with their learners?

### **1.5 Research Design / Approach to Study**

Given the extent and social impact of physical and cyber bullying, there is an urgent need for research that informs the development of educational interventions. In designing the research structure and considering methodological approaches I sought an approach that provides a platform for the voice and agency of the survivors of physical and cyber bullying. Thus, this study was conceptualised within the critical paradigm using a qualitative research approach that allowed access to insights from survivors, youth, and teachers. Accordingly, my methodological framework was 'action-research' and drew on the theoretical insights and educational commitments of Paulo Freire and contemporary theorists Bradley Evans and Henry Giroux. Such an approach facilitated a robust engagement with critical pedagogy and violence in the digital age. Action research provided a framework to ensure the centrality of the young adult survivors within the overall research design, objectives, and outcomes. In so doing, this approach created legitimate, trusted platforms to generate and help analyse the study's rich data.

Action research is a call-to-action for warrantable research, as recommended by Stringer (2014) who observes that "if there are answers to these proliferating social problems, it is likely that centralised policies will need to be complemented by the creative action of those closest to their sources" (p. 2). Young adult survivors and their peers, as well as teachers, are the closest sources for data and action related to bullying. Thus, this particular action

research, which began with survivors, extended participation to other youth and teachers to widen participation in critical research and action. The study encompassed a multi-layered, multi-method process with a range of participant groups within an action research design.

The development of an action research plan in this study involved four phases: exploring survivor experiences via interviews; engaging with youth on custom-developed educational activities and tools in a workshop; engaging collaboratively with teachers on the educational activities and tools in a workshop; and, finally, teachers engaging young learners for the purposes of piloting and evaluating the developed educational resource. The action research process generated rich data on the nature and experiences of, and responses to bullying and explored mitigating measures in four phases. The process also offered opportunities for me, as the researcher, to examine my epistemological and ontological positioning and to engage in ongoing learning, development, and activism.

As action research connects theory and practice in concrete ways, not only does it serve as a powerful tool for understanding physical and cyber forms of bullying theoretically, but it also provides important practical strategies to respond to these. With praxis serving as a catalyst for negotiating new meaning, survivors, youth, and teachers were given the space to articulate the experiences and perspectives that directly affect their lives. Rather than a normalisation of bullying, social action became a goal with young people and teachers who were inspired to champion transformation for the wider community. The linking of critical pedagogy to the theorising of experiences created a new space for interaction and delivered rich insights that can shape curriculum development and policy to address the growing levels of physical and cyber bullying.

Given the sensitive nature of the study and the need to mitigate against the risk of possible re-traumatisation, the study navigated a myriad of ethical and design considerations. These ethical challenges evoked robust discussion and stimulated the development of creative research tools as ethics-in-practice issues emerged and were addressed during the various phases of the study. Ethical compliance was adhered to and is set out in Chapter four.

## **1.7 Structure of the thesis**

### **Chapter One**

The first chapter of this thesis gives a brief background to and rationale for the study. It also states the purpose of the study – to unearth the experiences and nature of, and responses to bullying in physical and cyber space while offering mitigation measures for the phenomenon. Finally, this chapter sets out the key research questions, the research design, ethical considerations, and the structure of the thesis.

### **Chapter Two**

Chapter two focuses on the literature which informs the study. It provides the definition of bullying, as well as its characteristics and challenges. In addition, this chapter examines the relationship between cyber and physical bullying and conceptualises bullying practices at both global and local levels, in particular in schools.

### **Chapter Three**

Chapter three presents the theoretical framework of the study. Freire, Evans, and Giroux are the main scholars whose concepts were useful to the study. Freire's concepts, such as freedom and oppression, education, maintaining and overthrowing oppression, praxis, dialogue and conscientisation, are considered. Evans and Giroux are two other scholars whose work is drawn on to support the theory of Paulo Freire. Much attention is given to Evans and Giroux's conceptualisation of intolerable violence, spectacle of violence, and disposability in the age of the spectacle. Such concepts have relevance to the study and were thus employed as part of the theoretical framework of the study.

### **Chapter Four**

Chapter four sets out the research methodology. It demonstrates the critical paradigm and qualitative methodology that frame the study. The chapter also illustrates the action research design involving four phases. In addition, Chapter four describes sampling procedures, which involved purposive and snowball sampling. The chapter also discusses how data was generated and analysed and the ethical and quality issues of this study. Ethical compliance was adhered to and is set out in Chapter four.

## **Chapter Five**

This chapter engages directly with young adult survivors' personal experiences of physical and cyber bullying. This first phase of data generation and action involved individual interviews with survivors. The chapter begins with a synopsis of each survivor and their experiences of bullying. Several themes and sub-themes emerge that unpack their stories. The themes supported a move towards further data generation and helped inform the design of educational activities and tools for Phase two. The chapter also introduces an original conceptualisation of extended bullying, which includes four dimensions of extension as well as an operational definition of extended bullying.

## **Chapter Six**

This chapter describes the second phase of data generation during which a collaborative workshop was carried out with youth. The chapter discusses the development of educational activities and tools, namely online news articles, educational videos, survivor case profiles and complex-type scenarios. This approach opened up possibilities for the development of an educational resource that could serve as a practical intervention for addressing extended bullying in schools. The chapter also discusses post-plenary activities focusing on the role of theory and the facilitator's reflections on Phase two.

## **Chapter Seven**

Chapter seven focuses on the third phase of data generation which took the form of a collaborative teacher workshop influenced by the strong recommendations put forward by

youth participants in Phase two. The purpose of this workshop was to create further opportunities for teachers to recognise their own positionality in relation to the triggers and rich insights that were identified in Phase two. A key intention behind engaging teachers was to facilitate their input into the interrogation of the educational activities and tools used in Phase two and to further the development of the educational resource.

## **Chapter Eight**

This chapter describes Phase four of the study with particular focus on teachers piloting the educational resource with learners. The key features identified by teachers in Phase three contributed to the development of the educational resource. Three resource packages, each comprising one unique extended bullying theme, namely, *Exploring extended bullying*, *Understanding feelings* and *Responding to extended bullying*, were designed for teachers to use with learners during the implementation/piloting session. Each package encompassed its own lesson plan, objectives and a range of worksheet activities. The evaluation of the educational resource involved a teacher feedback meeting paying attention to teacher perspectives on learner-resource interaction and new directions for the resource beyond the classroom.

## **Chapter Nine**

Chapter nine focuses on the conceptualisation and theorisation of extended bullying as a contribution to the body of knowledge on bullying. The chapter covers the conceptualisation process which involved the identification of four dimensions, namely, content extension, spatial extension, participant extension, and temporal extension. The chapter also presents an extended bullying model, theorisations of psycho-social experiences, and theorisations of extended bullying via the lens of Freire, Evans, and Giroux.

## **Chapter Ten**

Chapter ten concludes the study. It presents a summary of key findings and theorisation, how the researcher answered key research questions, and reflections on the methodology. The

chapter also gives the recommendations of the study and describes the original contribution of the thesis.

## **1.8 Conclusion**

This chapter introduced the study and presented its background and purpose, to examine the experiences, responses, and nature of physical and cyber bullying in the digital age. A critical paradigm within the qualitative methodology, in which action research was prioritised, was seen as most relevant to the study. The chapter also set out the rationale of the study and its approach and action research design, in which a critical paradigm within the qualitative methodology was highlighted. Finally, this chapter detailed the structure of the ten chapters of this thesis. The next chapter will focus on the literature which informed the study, paying particular attention to physical and cyber bullying in South Africa.

## **CHAPTER TWO: PHYSICAL AND CYBER BULLYING**

### **2.1 Introduction**

The previous chapter introduced the study by giving the background and the rationale of the study, the research problem, objectives, and the research methodology. This chapter discusses literature that focuses on bullying, particularly physical and cyber bullying. It provides insights into the definitions of bullying and the characteristics of both physical and cyber bullying while exploring the relationship between the two types of bullying. This chapter also provides a contextualisation of bullying and its complexities, the incidence of violence and bullying in South African schools, the tools which have been used to bully, the impact of social media, and the measures that have been put in place to mitigate physical and cyber bullying in schools.

### **2.2 Definitions of bullying**

Bullying is a globally recognised issue, particularly in schools. Besag (1989) defines bullying as “the repeated attack which could be physical, psychological, social and verbal by those in a position of power” (p. 4). Richardson and Hiu (2018), who undertook to design a global indicator on bullying for school-going learners, argue that bullying is a complex form of violence that can take on various manifestations and occurs to different levels all over the world. Both Brendtro (2001) and Percy-Smith and Matthews (2001) argue that bullying can include non-physical acts like being teased, sworn at, being the subject of gossip and labelling, or the target of scorn and derision. Usually, such bullying is targeted at those who are powerless to stop the violent behaviour. Their powerlessness is one of the main factors which causes distress to the survivors of bullying.

Drawing on an extensive range of sources, Richardson and Hiu (2018) report that, according to the global indicator on bullying for school-going learners, South Asia, and West and Central Africa experience the highest levels of bullying while the Commonwealth of



Independent States experiences the lowest levels. Richardson and Hiu (2018) also report that bullying among young people was most common in poorer countries and observe that while both males and females are affected by bullying, generally, survivors of bullying tend to be younger and male.

A news report appeared on United Nations (UN) news in October 2018 which reveals that close to 130 million young people globally are exposed to bullying (United Nations, 2018). The fourth goal of the UN 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda (2015) highlights the need to free young people from all forms of violence, including bullying and cyber bullying (United Nations General Assembly, 2015). It is clear that bullying and cyber bullying are areas of growing concern, both in terms of consequences for society and young peoples' rights. Another recent news report published in 2020 reveals that in 40 developing countries, 42% of boys and 37% of girls are exposed to bullying (World Health Organisation, 2020).

According to Burton (2016, p. 125) Southern Africa has “little reliable, representative and recent data on the extent of bullying or its relationship with other forms of violence or related harms”. Such a lack of data has serious implications for anyone wanting to explore both the nature and extent of, as well as the relationship between bullying in physical spaces and forms of cyber bullying. Using surveys from 2013, Richardson and Hiu (2018) claim that South Africa is high risk, with a bullying prevalence rate of 61.67%. According to them, school learners at the average age of 12 represent the highest at-risk population. Based on these findings, it is clear that research on bullying in South Africa, particularly in relation to the myriad new types of cyber bullying currently emerging, is essential. Against this backdrop, research needs to provide an understanding of the nature of bullying, both physical and cyber bullying, as well as the hybrid forms of these two main categories, as a first step towards combatting the high prevalence rate of bullying in South Africa.

### **2.3 Characteristics – Nature of physical and cyber bullying**

This section focuses on physical and cyber bullying, paying attention to the characteristics of bullying, its types, and definitions.

### **2.3.1 Characteristics of physical bullying**

Physical bullying is manifested through hitting, punching, kicking, and destroying property (Jacobs, 2014). In addition to physical assaults, this category of bullying includes behaviour such as taunting, name-calling, dirty gestures, and threats (Olweus, 1991, 1993). Repetition, intentionality, and an imbalance of power are the three main characteristics that define aggressive forms of behaviour, such as bullying (Menesini & Salmivalli, 2017). Furthermore, Olweus (1991) claims that in order for a behaviour to be defined as bullying, a dynamic interaction must exist between the aggressor and the person being bullied. Menesini and Salmivalli (2017) explain that this dynamic interaction involves an inverse relationship of power between the bully and survivor – as the bully’s power increases, the survivor’s power decreases. Survivors’ struggles to defend themselves, respond to, or otherwise cope with the problem cause their decrease in power in relation to their bullies.

### **2.3.2 Characteristics of cyber bullying**

Thornberg and Jungert (2013) provide insight into the unique characteristics of cyber bullying. These include “facial expressions, body language and tone of voice” (p. 475) which are specific to the awareness of the presence of a recording device and the fact that footage of the incident will be posted and shared on social media. It is pertinent to note that the advancement of technology and the growth of social media through Information Communication Technologies (ICTs) introduce new possibilities for bullying by both expanding the types of bullying that take place and increasing the complexity of bullying practices. Cyber bullying is the deliberate use of technology to “repeatedly bully, harass, hassle and threaten peers” (Goodno, 2011, p. 641). Burton and Mutongwizo (2009) list text messages, picture/video clips, emails, and internet gaming as some of the platforms on which cyber bullying takes place. In contrast to physical bullying, using ICTs to bully allows the

rapid spread of the incident and harassment to an unlimited audience across time and space (Nixon, 2014).

Smith, Mahdavi, Carvalho, Fisher, Russell, and Tippett (2008, p. 376) suggest a definition of cyber bullying, based on Olweus's 1993 definition, that describes cyber bullying as "[a]n aggressive, intentional act carried out by a group or individual, using electronic forms of contact, repeatedly and over time against a [survivor] who cannot easily defend him or herself". Livingstone, Stoilova, and Kelly (2016) and Shivakumar et al. (2017) suggest that there are new types of cyber bullying and ongoing risks as a result of evolving technological devices and mobile telephony. Such a continuous spawning of new social media platforms gives rise to the need to rethink and develop alternative definitions of bullying, especially when encountering new types of cyber bullying (Schott & Søndergaard, 2014). It is important to note, however, that characteristics of physical bullying are still applicable to cyber bullying as this type of bullying involves recordings of physical bullying in cyber space. The publicity of these recordings on social media and in the news add to the survivor's distress and can contribute towards the impact of cyber bullying (Pieschl, Kuhlmann, & Porsch, 2015).

Burton (2016), Hinduja and Patchin (2015), Livingstone and Smith (2014), and Pieschl et al. (2015) confirm that there is an overlap between the definitions of physical bullying and cyber bullying which poses challenges for the operationalising of cyber bullying in empirical research. While such challenges are noted, Hinduja and Patchin (2015, p. 11) argue for a broader definition of cyber bullying which highlights that cyber bullying involves "willful and repeated harm inflicted through the use of computers, cell phones, and other electronic devices". In addition, Hinduja and Patchin (2015) acknowledge that some types of harassing behaviours, in addition to electronic text, include the posting of images or videos which shame and embarrass the individual being bullied. Livingstone et al. (2016), however, argue that the definition of cyber bullying remains unstable. New cyber bullying types are possible through digital technologies because they allow the sharing of recordings of the bullying incident with a wide audience, inflicting more harm by multiplying the number of people who have access to, and thus become observers of, such bullying incidents. Hence, a critical understanding of the extension of bullying into cyber space, through filmed incidents of bullying, as well as a conceptualisation of cyber bullying are crucial, and should be presented

in a manner that informs stakeholders such as schools, legislators, and policy makers (Hinduja & Patchin, 2015). This will fill a gap left by the limited amount of systematic research available on the effects of cyber bullying, as opposed to physical bullying.

### **2.3.2.1 Challenges in cyber bullying research**

As a result of the limited research on cyber bullying, cyber and physical bullying are often assumed to be the same (Grigg, 2010; Sticca, 2013). In addition, Marwick and Boyd (2014) argue that the variations in the interpretations of and meanings given to bullying have prevented consensus on a standardised definition of cyber bullying – there is disagreement on which actions count as bullying behaviour. Consequently, there are complexities in the measurement of the incidence and prevalence of cyber bullying. It does seem to be clear, however, that cyber bullying re-enforces bullying in physical spaces. This calls for a more informed understanding of the current challenges in cyber bullying research and strengthens the argument that filmed incidents of physical bullying, a key focus of my study, are in fact unique forms of cyber bullying.

Burton and Leoschut (2013) report that the types and expressions of bullying that occur online are usually not recognised as violence, especially by policy makers, violence prevention practitioners, and even young people. While this adds to the complexity of investigating bullying in physical and cyber spaces, further complications arise owing to the terms or expressions young people use to describe online experiences. This was revealed in an ethnographic study conducted by Marwick and Boyd (2014) who probed young peoples' use of social media in the United States between 2006 and 2011 and found that the term “drama” was generally used by young people to describe their online experiences.

Paying attention to terminology is important considering how the term “drama” tends to trivialise the incident and its impact. Terminology offers an insight into the meaning young people attach to online experiences of bullying, which, in effect, differs from the insights and understandings of adults. This is evident in an earlier study by Boulton, Trueman, and

Flemington (2002) who found significant differences in attitudes between young people and adults in respect to what constitutes bullying. Considering such challenges in cyber bullying research, it is evident that there is a need to seek appropriate definitions for physical and cyber bullying, and to revise these as new forms and hybrid manifestations emerge.

### **2.3.2.2 Seeking appropriate definitions**

Despite definitional challenges, debates, and critical gaps, the literature on cyber bullying provides sound insights for my study. It is apparent that the complexity of the bullying practices under investigation call for a definitional framework to support a more nuanced conceptualisation of the study's focus on filmed incidents of bullying. Despite research in cyber bullying over the past 10 years, there remains a lack of consensus on a definition of the concept and no agreement on the need for a more refined definition (Kowalski & Limber, 2007; Patchin & Hinduja, 2006; Spears, Keeley, Bates, & Katz, 2014). There are also no resolutions to the debates in the literature concerning the conceptualisation and/or operationalisation in research of filmed bullying practices.

Sticca (2013) suggests that cyber and traditional bullying are two faces of the same coin. This does not seem to constitute an empirical definition, however. Research on cyber bullying has typically not distinguished between bullying in physical and cyber spaces in a systematic fashion, nor have studies succeeded in demonstrating an interactive relationship between them. In addition, there is little agreement on the precise characteristics of bullying in physical and cyber space, and the effects of traditional bullying on cyber bullying (how bullying in physical spaces contributes to cyber bullying) or vice-versa. All of these gaps add to the challenge of acquiring an appropriate definition to conceptualise this study's phenomenon.

### **2.3.3 Relationship between cyber and traditional bullying**

Livingstone and Smith (2014) describe a high degree of complex combinations existing between traditional and cyber bullying victimisation and perpetration. On the other hand, Menesini (2012) points out that there may be good reason to treat the two forms of bullying as separate phenomena. Separating them out to treat them as distinct bullying practices also presents a challenge, however.

As will be shown in subsequent chapters, physical and cyber spaces as contexts of bullying are inextricably linked. Cyber space is conceived not as separate, but rather as an extension of the physical environment with respect to the bullying practices under study. In addition, it will become evident that the bullying practices under scrutiny operate on the principle of a relationship between physical and cyber bullying. The relationship is activated when the bullying act is extended from physical space into cyber space, through the filming in physical space and the sharing of such films via social media in cyber space. This then requires a conceptualisation that acknowledges the interconnectedness and overlap of bullying practices and spaces.

The relationship between physical and cyber bullying is also evident in how it takes place. In South Africa, Burton (2016) argues that some studies do in fact report a strong correlation between the two forms of bullying. In one study, Twyman, Saylor, Taylor, and Comeaux (2010) report a large overlap between offline and online violence. Their study indicates that almost two thirds of cyberbullies also engage in traditional bullying offline. In addition, there has been a strong correlation between victimisation online and victimisation offline. Of equal concern are the experiences of bullying online and offline separately and the relationship between the two forms of violence. This is due to the occurrence of anti-social or aggressive behaviour in both environments. Burton (2016) deepens the argument, claiming that “the divide between online and offline is no longer binary” (p. 125) and there is a high level of “social interconnectedness” (p. 134) extending from online spaces to offline spaces. Furthermore, Livingstone and Bulger (2014) report that, although there is a blurring of online and offline spaces, it is evident that any experience of cyber bullying has an online dimension.

In contrast, Baldry, Farrington, and Sorrentino (2016) argue that evidence suggests that, in countries like Turkey, France, and Thailand, cyber bullying and traditional bullying each operate separately with their own distinct set of characteristics, traditional bullying has a weaker relationship to cyber bullying than in other countries, and cyber bullying is more common than traditional bullying. These scholars' argument is based on the claim that peer aggression and peer victimisation may be evolving and finding new means of online expression.

An understanding of the relationship between traditional and cyber forms of bullying sheds new light on other prevailing debates in the literature. It has been suggested that the virtual environment generally operates as an extension of the school environment creating an expanded platform on which bullying can occur. Through the observation, 'liking', and sharing of filmed incidents of physical bullying, numerous anonymous online personas take part in the online perpetration of the bullying incident. Based on Marwick and Boyd's (2014, p. 115) description of how "technology complicates our metaphors of space and place", it can be argued that the extension of physical bullying into cyber space creates complicated forms of interaction and communication across spaces of activity. It is evident that the relationship created by the sharing of spaces to carry out or facilitate bullying presents notable challenges to empirical research. One such challenge is the reluctance to perceive the virtual environment as an extension of the school environment as many researchers insist on their separation for research purposes. The Centre for Justice and Crime Prevention (CJCP) published a report by Burton and Leoschut (2013) which supports the claim that cyber space should be considered an extension of physical space, in terms of both school and home environments, when investigating bullying. Burton and Leoschut (2013) explain that bullying and other potential sources of harm exist across these spaces. Thus, there is an undeniable relationship between physical and cyber space in bullying.

#### **2.3.4 Conceptualising bullying practices**

A conceptual understanding of specific types of bullying practices can lead to a deeper understanding of bullying experiences and how to intervene. To arrive at such a conceptual

understanding through an investigation, generally, a working definition is required for research purposes. Two terms – “filmed incidents of physical bullying” and “bullying in physical and cyber space” – are used as a guide when attempting to conceptualise the phenomenon for this study.

Vanden Abeele et al. (2017) argue that the most widely accepted account of cyber bullying concerns picture and video-clip bullying. The practice of intentionally recording and distributing images and videos in cyber space is identified as video-clip bullying. This is a specific type of cyber bullying characterised by accessibility to a larger audience and a disregard for time and place (Vanden Abeele et al., 2017). Such a conceptualisation of video-clip bullying as cyber bullying is applicable to and contributes towards the development of an important framework for this study. It aids in the preparation of the design and development of interventions which formed an integral component of this study.

Video-clip bullying is usually made possible in schools through the widespread use of cell phones with an intention of taking and using hurtful pictures or videos of learners or teachers. Pieschl et al. (2015) and Smith et al. (2008) argue that this type of bullying has a greater negative impact than physical and other types of cyber bullying. Statistics from Flemish high school learners show that amongst 1,787 students, one in four (24.6%) used their cell phones to take a picture or make a video to ridicule a peer (Vanden Abeele et al., 2017). This ridiculing is worsened by the distribution of pictures or videos on the internet.

In a study to determine the perceived severity of bullying, Law, Shapka, Hymel, Olsen, and Waterhouse (2012) found that picture and video-based cyber bullying incidents have more severe impacts than text-based ones. Slonje and Smith (2008) and Smith et al. (2008) also found that video-clip bullying is a top-scorer for distress compared to other types of cyber bullying, largely due to the nature of the content and the speed and ease with which it reaches larger audiences without any control or limit to its spread and the damage caused.



For the last 40 years, research has focused on traditional bullying (Menesini & Salmivalli, 2017). In recent times, however, cyber bullying has emerged as a significant new field of research. Within this study, literature on harnessing technology to understand both the various bullying practices that occur online and offline and those that blur and blend the two environments, is also critical. In order to home in on relevant literature, the notion of cyber bullying is narrowed down to “filmed incidents of physical bullying”. Such a conceptualisation of cyber bullying encompasses three developing criteria: a specific bullying practice; a balanced and deep connection between traditional and cyber bullying forms; and isolation of bullying types to narrow the focus to physical acts of bullying and their cyber dimensions. What is also critical in this study is to understand violence in schools with a special focus on school bullying in the digital age.

### **2.3.5 Global debates in cyber bullying research**

A major challenge to formulating this study is the multitude of ways in which cyber bullying can present itself, creating controversial debates on definitions and how cyber bullying research should be approached and conducted (Bauman, 2013; Hinduja & Patchin, 2015; Slonje & Smith, 2008). Some scholars recognise a lack of consensus on the definition of cyber bullying, while others confirm a clear overlap of definitions for the different forms of bullying (Kowalski, Giumetti, Schroeder, & Lattanner, 2014; Olweus, 2013). Such an overlap has implications for empirical research on cyber bullying (Burton, 2016; Hinduja & Patchin, 2015; Livingstone & Smith, 2014; Pieschl et al., 2015). The difficulty of definition is further compounded by the absence of a globally accepted definition of violence (Pells, Portela, & Revollo, 2016). The lack of clear definitions has implications for accurate data generation.

Approaches to the measurement, estimates of the incidence, and determination of the prevalence of cyber bullying vary largely due to problems with and challenges related to the definition of cyber bullying. Research by Spears et al. (2014, p. 1) on youth exposure in Australia maintains that a disparity in prevalence rates will persist based on “how cyber bullying is defined, how the question is asked and who responds to the question”. Smith (2019) reflects that issues and debates over cyber bullying measurement and definition will

persist because the evolving nature of technology will further complicate efforts to secure consensus on definitions. While these challenges and complexities are noted, some studies have tracked and highlighted the incidence of cyber bullying over time.

With the exception of United States, United Kingdom, and Belgium, rates in cross-sectional studies conducted by Hinduja and Patchin (2012) found no significant increase or decrease in cyber bullying over a decade. Consistent with their findings and after reviewing other cross-sectional and longitudinal research studies, the scholars conclude that cyber bullying is not uncommon but nor is it an epidemic. Correspondingly, Olweus (2012, p. 520) declares cyber bullying to be an “overrated phenomenon”. Additionally, according to Livingstone et al. (2016) it is not clear that cyber bullying is increasing commensurate to the steady rise in young peoples’ access to and use of mobile and online technology. The scholars argue that there remains little evidence to indicate an overall rise in cyber bullying around the world. Yet, there is rampant violence and bullying, including cyber dimensions, that is witnessed in schools globally.

### **2.3.6 Violence and bullying in schools**

While there exists little evidence to indicate an overall rise in cyber bullying around the world, it remains true that at least 1.6 billion young people are affected by some form of violence every year (Hillis, Mercy, Amobi, & Kress, 2016). According to Moschos (2016), large numbers of young people are both survivors and perpetrators of violence, within and outside of the school environment. A considerable amount of data has been generated by several international agencies working in this field. The studies provide insights into scholarship dealing with the protection of young people against all forms of violence.

Literature has described how bullying practices extend from the physical to cyber spaces (and vice versa); how traditional bullying and cyber bullying co-act; and how the peer network of participation, through extension and interaction, operates in both spaces. As Beran and Li (2007) note, through the filming of incidents and their posting online, bullying moves

between the school grounds, where it is witnessed by learners, and cyber space, where it is observed by learners, acquaintances, and strangers all over the world. It is important to note that, with the availability of technology such as cell phones, bullying can involve many learners at school, at home, and at almost any time and place where technology is accessible. This further demonstrates how ICTs operate at the intersection of people, technology, and practice in everyday life (Marwick & Boyd, 2014).

The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) embarked on a #ENDviolence campaign in 2018 focused on young peoples' experiences of violence in and around schools (UNICEF, 2018). According to UNICEF (2018), at least two out of three young people showed concerns about violence in and around their schools. The campaign led to the drafting of a youth manifesto by nearly 100 young people from around the world which contained ideas on how young people, together with parents, teachers, and governments, can contribute to making schools safer (UNICEF, 2019). The manifesto, focussing on the protection of young people experiencing violence and support for those engaging in violent behaviour, was presented at the 2019 Education World Forum (UNICEF, 2019). A key principle underscoring the manifesto, "Protection for all students", highlights the possibilities of change within schools through the collaborative engagement of learners, parents, and members of the broader society (UNICEF, 2019).

Efforts to reduce bullying in schools seem to be working in some countries as Chester et al. (2015) noted decreasing trends in bullying victimisation in at least a third of the 33 participating countries based on the data generated by the World Health Organisation's (WHO) international report on Health Behaviour in School-aged Children (HBSC) for the years 2001 to 2010, although a limited number of countries reflected an upward trend in bullying victimisation. In addition, the European Union (EU) Kids Online comparative findings on cyber bullying in 2010 and 2014 across seven European countries reported a small increase in the experiences of cyber bullying from 8% to 12% in nine to 16 year olds (EU Kids Online Net Children Go Mobile, 2014). A comparable study by Kids On-Line in Brazil, involving nine to 17 year olds, reported an increase in cyber bullying, especially amongst girls, from 9% in 2012 to 15% in 2014 (Martinhão, 2016). Livingstone et al. (2016) observed in a five-year study that South Korea showed decreased rates in cyber bullying in

spite of the country's very high internet usage and the fact that cyber bullying is more frequent in South Korea than Europe. In South Africa, on the other hand, the prevalence of cyber bullying experiences in young people is much higher – there was a 46.8% incidence rate of cyber aggression recorded in this population in 2009 (Burton & Mutongwizo, 2009). Five years later, a 2014 study found that of the 4245 learners included, 34% experienced bullying with 15.2% of these being survivors of cyber bullying (Tustin, Zulu, & Basson, 2014). The markedly lower levels of cyber bullying in European, American, and Asian countries could be the result of higher levels of reporting which deter cyber bullying. Additionally, it may indicate the existence of adequate measures to raise public awareness of risks, as well as active policies and safety initiatives to address the issue which are not yet in place in South Africa.

I argue that one of the most pressing problems emerging in school violence is the practice of filming incidents of physical bullying, perpetrated by school learners, and posting the videos online in cyber space. As the literature review reveals, this particular form of bullying has not received serious scholarly attention. My study sought to conduct a more nuanced analysis of this type of bullying practice as a form of violence. While there remain fundamental gaps in understanding the relationship between the two manifestations of bullying (physical and cyber bullying) the question of how this is experienced and why young people are participating in it remains largely unexplored. This investigation provides the first extensive examination of young adult survivors' subjective experiences of this kind of bullying.

Further research is required to explore fully the complexity of the bullying practice. The prevalence of filmed incidents of bullying in the digital age raises questions about why and how young people are engaging in school bullying. Insights gained from this exploration will help to address some of the complex and deeply rooted problems young people face. This research will also help to find newer types of research designs to mitigate risks, address challenges, and seek ways to protect and safeguard young people against the harmful impacts of bullying, both in physical and online spaces.

### **2.3.6.1 Violence and bullying in the South African context**

Understanding school violence, specifically within the South African context, is fundamental to addressing the phenomenon of posting filmed incidents of physical bullying online. Literature on school violence in South Africa is comprehensive and the issue receives considerable attention. While South Africa's National Action Plan (2019) recognises that "the country emerged from three and a half centuries of racial oppression, perpetrated by successive White, colonial and apartheid governments" (South African Government, 2019, p. 5), its democratic transition in the 1990s was fairly peaceful. However, despite being recognised as having one of the most progressive constitutions in the world, the country still experiences structural drivers of violence. Such drivers include poverty as it shapes the contexts within which young people interact and where bullying and other violence takes place (Pells et al., 2016). In addition to poverty as a driving force for bullying, there seem to be other connections between socio-economic status and victimisation. Many people in South Africa still lack basic services such as water, sanitation, electricity, and shelter (Kgatle, 2020). There are also problems in areas of employment, education, governance, health and energy.

A study carried out in the province of KwaZulu-Natal (KZN) by Sikhakhane, Muthukrishna, and Martin (2018) in which bullying was the central focus, noted that bullying may be a precursor to more serious forms of violence. Investigating the prevalence of violence in schools, in a stratified, cross-sectional study of 16 schools in the uMgungundlovu District of KZN, Khuzwayo, Taylor and Connolly (2016) found that in a sample of 1,741 secondary school learners, 420 (23.9%) learners had experienced bullying; 379 (21.7%) had been absent from school because they felt unsafe; 468 (15.4 %) had been involved in physical fights; and at least 41 learners (2.4%) carried some type of weapon to school. In an earlier, comparable study carried out in the Eastern Cape province, Ncontsa and Shumba (2013) found that school violence impacted negatively on teaching and learning, despite schools' compliance with official policies and codes of conduct. A large proportion of the sample of 80 learners in Ncontsa and Shumba's study, 67 (83.8%) learners across four schools, identified bullying as a serious form of school violence.

Recognising the need to understand and address the alarming levels of school violence in South Africa, a variety of studies conducted by the CJCP have found that schools are embedded in a broader violent environment; that there are structural and cultural dimensions to violence; and that violence in society is reflected in schools such that schools become an environment for the further perpetuation of violence in South Africa. According to previous research conducted by Burton (2008), at least 1.8 million school learners between Grade 3 and Grade 12 (15.3%) experience some form of violence in school or just outside the school gates. The results reveal that 12.8% of learners receive threats of violence; 5.8% are survivors of assault; and 2.3% experience sexual violence in some form. Furthermore, school learners are victimised at a rate of 160 learners per 1,000 within the South African context. Studies by Ngidi (2018) and Muribwathoho (2015) suggest that physical, sexual, drug and alcohol abuse, and gang-related activities are pervasive forms of violence in schools.

Taken together, important insights from Bhana (2015), Bhana and Mayeza, (2016), Dube and Hlalele (2018), John (2020). Cox and John (2016), and Zuze, Reddy, Juan, Hannan, Visser, and Winnaar (2016) reveal that schools mirror the extreme levels of violence that young people are exposed to in their communities. Hence, it seems likely that the witnessing of violence at a community or school level leads to the perpetration of bullying. These environments also expose many young people to substance abuse, another catalyst of violence. Hence, there is a need for a safe and effective school framework which addresses violence in schools, as noted by Meyer and Chetty (2017). Such a framework, however, needs to acknowledge the fact that it is not only learners from disadvantaged schools that require assistance as bullying is not always necessarily linked to low socio-economic status.

The findings highlighted above broadly support the work of several studies that link societal violence, crime, and poverty with school violence. While there is an undeniable presence of violence and bullying in schools, it is pertinent to note that such violence and bullying is made widely known through social media.

#### **2.3.6.2 Social media and cyber bullying in South African schools**

A number of scholars have considered the effects of social media and its role in inciting school violence. Steinfield, Ellison, Lampe, and Vitak (2012, p. 2) define social network sites (SNSs) as websites that create “a network of connections of people with whom they wish to share access to profile information, news, status updates, comments or other forms of content”. Many SNSs have rapidly gained popularity as sources of data for interdisciplinary scholarship in fields like psychology, law, media studies, and public health (Boyd & Ellison, 2007). Despite their communication value, SNSs are also associated with various forms of online anti-social behaviour such as hurtful comments about others, stalking, inappropriate content, and privacy invasion (Steinfield et al., 2012). Bennett-Johnson (2004) argues that, while there are various complex reasons for the different forms of violence amongst young people, new technology, specifically social media, plays a significant role in instigating violence. Notwithstanding social media’s capacity to expand and strengthen communication (Berger, 2015; Menesini, Calussi, & Nocentini, 2012) and its profound effects on humans, several studies have revealed that social media equally presents a myriad “pitfalls” (Costello, Hawdon, & Cross, 2017, p. 16).

Within the South African context, Burton and Leoschut (2013) maintain that a steady increase in online violence has been observed, indicating that cyber bullying in schools is a cause for concern. Although estimates of online bullying remain significantly lower than offline bullying, it is argued that young peoples’ increasing use of ICTs to cause harm to their peers necessitates an exploration of the extent of online school violence. Burton and Leoschut (2013) further argue that, although cyber bullying is not considered as important as other forms of violence, such as sexual, physical, and structural violence, experienced by young people, and any investigation of the extent of cyber bullying presents challenges owing to limited reliable, representative, and current data, research on cyber bullying as a form of violence is necessary in the South African context. Du Preez and Prinsloo (2017) have raised their growing concern about the limited research conducted on the nature and extent of cyber bullying in South Africa. Juan, Zuze, Hannan, Govender, and Reddy (2018) advise that policy goals, in terms of directing resources and formulating interventions to decrease the incidence of bullying, can only be achieved by understanding the extent and nature of the problem in South Africa. These scholars suggest that besides the need to understand the extent and nature of cyber bullying, one of the bigger challenges for researchers pertains to the disparity in socio-economic contexts in which schools operate. This supports earlier

comments regarding the impact of socio-economic status on the manifestations of structural violence and bullying.

Within the South African context, linguistic and cultural differences translate, to some extent, into differing terms used by parents, teachers, and learners to describe cyber bullying. Perhaps this inconsistency in terms explains the difficulties encountered when identifying and distinguishing among the many forms of bullying that exist and the consequent lower reported incidence rates, as noted by Postigo, González, Montoya, and Ordóñez (2013). In addition, teacher beliefs, as highlighted by Menesini and Salmivalli (2017), can also result in limited action which hinders the reporting of incidents on one hand and increases the prevalence and frequency of bullying behaviour in schools on the other. In many cases, teachers tend to underestimate the levels of bullying in their schools (Espelage & Swearer, 2003). This points to the need to educate teachers, parents, and learners about bullying and the measures that are needed to reduce its occurrence in schools. This action research study contributes to such education through the development of educational resources for schools.

Navarro, Yubero, and Larrañaga (2016) warn that cognisance must be given to the fact that collecting information on school violence, traditional and cyber forms of bullying included, is intrinsically difficult for a range of reasons. Firstly, young people rarely report the true nature of their experiences; secondly, fear, stigma, or concern over societal acceptance prevent young people from speaking out; and, thirdly, channels for gathering and reporting information may be poor or absent. This means that the incidence of bullying in schools is likely to be far greater than the statistics show and there is an urgent need to examine the phenomenon and effects of bullying in both physical and cyber space by focusing, in particular, on incidents of bullying in the school environment that are filmed and deliberately posted online as this type of bullying practice forms a large proportion of cyber bullying incidents.

As far as school bullying is concerned, the expanded schoolyard has provided a means for traditional school-based violence to be amplified via popular SNSs. Golder, Wilkinson, and Huberman (2007) observe that young people spend large amounts of time on SNSs and, as



these SNSs are powerful societal communication platforms, this phenomenon is associated with an increase in cyber bullying and harassment. The prominence and visibility of incidents of physical bullying – filmed, posted, and observed in cyber space – characterise a dimension of bullying made uniquely possible by the digital age. Consequently, studying cyber space can offer rich insights and an expanded understanding of school bullying as it creates room for the examination of bullying in the digital age and brings school violence into focus. Using the digital age to frame bullying can highlight the power of digital technology to:

- Facilitate the filming, posting, and sharing of a negative lived experience;
- Facilitate an extension of a lived experience into cyber space;
- Make prominent and visible a negative lived experience;
- Share large amounts of information of a negative lived experience;
- Reinforce and/or prolong a negative lived experience; and
- Pose risks, threats, and challenges for young people in cyber and physical spaces.

Such insights on cyber bullying within the South African school context helped to unearth the understandings held by survivors, youth, and teachers of physical and cyber bullying, survivors' experiences of and responses to bullying, and challenges to mitigation efforts within the school context.

#### **2.3.6.3 Troubling victimisation experiences**

As discussed earlier, many South African schools face challenges, such as poor infrastructure, poor resources, and safety concerns, which have created room for victimisation (Burton & Leoschut, 2013). There is multiple and varied victimisation of learners (Baldry et al., 2016; Blaya, Audrin, & Skrzypiec, 2022) and, as argued by Wilcox (as cited in Lusinga & Kyobe, 2017), victimisation remains a complex phenomenon with a multitude of influences. This means that an individual can experience multiple forms of victimisation simultaneously. Finkelhor, Ormrod, Turner, and Holt (2009) use the term poly-victim to refer to an individual in such cases. Evidence in the South African context shows that poly-victimisation often leads to aggressive and anti-social behaviour, as noted by Holt, Finkelhor, and Kantor (2007). Certain environmental factors, which include specific family and household configurations;

high levels of exposure to violence in the home; disorganisation in the community; harsh and inconsistent parenting styles; a lack of adequate parental supervision and monitoring; parental illness or hospitalisation resulting in prolonged periods of parental absence; parental substance abuse; and child disability, contribute to the incidence of poly-victimisation (Artz et al., 2016).

Leoschut and Kafaar (2017) contribute to the evolving understanding of school violence by adding that the interpersonal violence as experienced by young people, the recognition of which is increasing, includes other forms of victimisation. Work by Cole, Maxwell, and Chipaca (2014), Finkelhor et al. (2009), and Simmons, Wijma, and Swahnberg (2015) suggests that there exists an interconnectedness between types of victimisation – one type of victimisation often perpetuates other forms of victimisation, experience, and vulnerability that take place across different contexts. Shivakumar et al. (2017) explains that there are still limits to the evidence base from which to identify overlaps in the experience of different forms of violence globally. Victimisation cannot be considered a once-off negative experience as it is continuously reinforced by subsequent experiences of violence which continue well after the initial experience (Finkelhor et al., 2009; Widom, Czaja, & Dutton, 2008). There is little doubt about the severity of young peoples' multiple victimisation experiences and the extent of young peoples' negative emotional responses to cyber bullying (Ashktorab & Vitak, 2016). Since earlier research points to a need to listen carefully to survivors' lived experiences of bullying, so that such experiences are captured and can inform the measures necessary to respond to bullying, this study centred around survivors' accounts of their experiences.

This study ensured that multiple victimisation experiences were explored, paying specific attention to effects on young peoples' physical and mental health. Forms of depression, anxiety, substance abuse, and suicidal behaviour caused by cyber bullying and physical bullying were considered. The evidence presented thus far confirms the need to interrogate how young people experience and respond to bullying behaviour. The evidence demonstrates the need for better strategies for its mitigation and prevention. This study's engagement with survivors, young people, and teachers who directly encounter bullying, not only offers

insights into the negative emotional impact of bullying practices, but also supports the development of an appropriate intervention to address bullying incidents in schools.

## **2.4 Tools for bullying**

Cell phones are a dominant tool for bullying. High occurrence of cyber bullying through cell phones has been reported in the literature. Kyobe, Oosterwyk, and Kabiawu (2016) conceptualise this as “mobile bullying”, while Shivakumar et al. (2017) describe mobile telephony as another virtual environment in which violence occurs. There is relatively limited literature on mobile bullying in South Africa, despite the escalation of cyber bullying incidents committed via cell phones. Some reports have shown that mobile bullying is increasing at alarming rates (Kyobe, Mimbi, Nembandona, & Mtshazi, 2018). This is an issue that has emerged as a concern in schools and communities across South Africa, as noted by Byrne, Kardefelt-Winther, Livingstone, and Stoilova (2016) in their report on the findings of a study carried out by Global Kids Online which also indicated that 84.2% of young people use their cell phones to access the internet.

Studies involving mobile bullying take note of key factors influencing mobile bullying (Oosterwyk & Kyobe, 2013) and cell phone victimisation in South African high schools (Lusinga & Kyobe, 2017). Czerniewicz (as cited in Kyobe et al., 2018) has noted a rapid increase in cell phone usage in rural areas in spite of extremely high levels of poverty, school dropout rates, and youth unemployment. In order to understand the nature of bullying and experiences of bullying, it was critical in this study to understand the tools which young people use to bully others as well. In addition, it is evident that South Africa is currently experiencing a boom in internet access through cell phones. Figures from Digital 2021, show that South Africa recorded 38.19 million internet users, reported 100.6 million mobile connections, and 25 million social media users in January 2021 (Kemp, 2021). Between 2020 and 2021, the country reported an increase of 3 million (+14%) social media users (Kemp, 2021). This means that many learners have access to cell phones and the internet which creates room for cyber bullying that can lead to physical bullying as well.

It is evident that school learners are part of a technologically-driven society and technology is becoming cheaper, faster, and more easily accessible to the vast majority of South Africans (Kritzinger, 2017). While there is evidence to suggest that cell phones can enhance teaching and learning (Ahmad, 2020; Latif & Widiaty, 2021), and can therefore play a legitimate role in the classroom, they can also play a big role in influencing bullying. Despite some schools' efforts to ban the use of cell phones during school hours, it is evident that the incidence of cyber bullying has not been reduced (Agatston, Kowalski, & Limber, 2012; Cassidy, Brown, & Jackson, 2011, 2012; Grigg, 2010). Therefore, there is a need to deal with the issue, focusing on learner protection, reputation, and online privacy. In this regard, schools can reinforce and promote the idea of citizenship and give learners the skills to deal with anger, frustration, and conflict without resorting to violence (Burton, 2008).

## **2.5 The impact of social media on violence and bullying**

It is apparent that social media has given people new tools to see and be seen. These tools have the potential to be used both positively and negatively. Social media has been used to incite violence and at the same time to reduce violence and conscientise people to ways to reduce or prevent bullying. This dual potential of social media formed a critical component of this study. It was, therefore, important to identify and understand the specific threats, risks, and challenges that social media poses and the opportunities it provides for greater insight into violence prevention and intervention.

It is clear that social media and other digital technologies do not come without risks, such as the fomenting, perpetuation, and promotion of violence (Alava, Frau-Meigs, & Hassan, 2017; Amit, Barua, & Kafy, 2021; Irwin-Rogers & Pinkney, 2017; Logan, 2021). In Africa, several studies have revealed the growing impact of social media as a catalyst for hate speech, intolerance, and violence in political spaces (Cain, 2020; Chenzi, 2021; Wasserman, 2016). The use of social media to spread propaganda, hate speech, and ethnic mobilisation was also witnessed in Kenya's electoral and political violence, both in the 2007 and 2013 elections (Mutahi & Kimari, 2017). In South Africa, social media played a role in the violent looting and arson – politically motivated economic sabotage – that took place in KZN and Gauteng

provinces in July 2021 (Allen, 2021). A report posted on the website of the Centre for Analytics and Behavioural Change and written by Liebenberg (2021) identified a myriad of hashtags, among other strategies, that were used to incite unrest and violence. Thus, it is clear that social media can have a deeply negative impact on society.

This means that there is a need to understand, explain, and portray the different ways in which social media is used to facilitate and incite violence, especially bullying in schools. It is also necessary to explore how social media supports violent acts by keeping them present online through the constantly available recordings of physical bullying on social media. One of this study's principal objectives was to elicit the details of authentic experiences from those most affected by the problem: survivors and teachers who deal with bullying. Given the integration of social media in the daily lives of young people, the in-depth analysis of survivors' experiences of bullying in this study offered a unique opportunity for insights into the role of social media in the experiences of survivors. This thesis sets out to determine and explain the role of social media and its contribution to inciting violence and vice-versa.

## **2.6 Social media and social change**

Binenwa (2020), Dyson (2017), Fajimbola (2017), and Mutahi and Kimari (2017), argue that social media platforms also have a positive contribution to make in society as they can facilitate peacebuilding initiatives, social movements, activism, and social change through collective action. Indeed, according to Wasserman (2016, p. vi), respective SNSs, like Twitter, Facebook, and WhatsApp, have become “crucial spaces for the expression of dissent, the mobilization of activists and conduits to influence mainstream media agendas”. Furthermore, Banda, Mudhai, and Tettey (2009, p. 2) maintain that Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) have the potential “to provide multimedia platforms that allow for greater democratic participation, inclusion, and expression”, while Bilali and Staub (2017) report on the efficacy of mass media campaigns, driven by ICTs, in addressing and promoting intergroup reconciliation in conflict and post-conflict countries in Central Africa. In addition, Mutsvairo (2016, n/p) provides critical insights into ICTs, claiming that, with their capabilities, social media platforms can steer “online-based civil action across

Africa”. Considering mobile innovation thriving in Africa and the steady rise of SNSs, ICTs remain powerful platforms used by pro-democracy activists in Africa to negotiate and encourage political and social changes.

Within the South African context, Bosch (2016) illustrates how Twitter, a popular SNS, has influenced South African youth within the social and political spheres engaging in forms of digital activism. The #FeesMustFall campaign in South Africa, which began in October 2015, is an example of how “social movements are the sources of social change” (Castells, 2015, p. 12). Hemmi and Crowther (2013, p. 6) point out that one of the important capabilities of SNSs is their potential to create a culture of democracy by drawing “critical and self-conscious people” to engage and act on civil society issues. Keightley (2012, p. 1) adds that “we rarely passively consume media content; we actively contribute to its constitution”. Furthermore, Castells (2015) claims that researchers, activists, and action researchers are given the opportunity to investigate and participate in real time by homing in on the practices that shape present-day societies across the globe. Thus, it is evident that SNSs play a pivotal role in drawing members of society, including researchers, into the role of active participants in the digital age, thereby contributing to social change.

Mpofu (2011) and Mutsvairo (2016), on the power of social media in Africa, argue that it can contribute towards a deeper understanding of its role in aspects of school violence and its expression in cyber bullying within the South African context. In the same way that young peoples’ exposure to violence, whether through their own displays of bullying or their exposure to incitement, has a profound impact on them, studies have shown that social media can also be used to educate those who bully to help them understand the effects of bullying on others. In addition, social media can help survivors to overcome their experiences by connecting them to a supportive online community. As noted earlier, social media has been used to influence people to change and reduce the number of bullying cases.

Thus, the positive potential of ICTs and SNSs can also be used to reduce or end violence and bullying in schools and other spaces. Social media can be used as a mitigation measure in different spaces. Within my study, the available public sphere of activism was used to

understand the nature of physical and cyber bullying, survivors' experiences, and measures that have been put in place to minimise bullying. It is important to remain aware, however, of social media's potential for harm when considering its possibilities for mitigation and positive change. Indeed, all the scholars mentioned above, while arguing for the positive impact of social media that supports progress in Africa, do not fail to recognise its equal potential to catalyse conflict and violence.

## **2.7 Anti-cyber bullying education programmes in South Africa**

In 2022, United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) declared an International Day Against Violence and Bullying at School Including Cyber Bullying on the first Thursday of November. This is a day to recognise “that school-related violence in all its forms is an infringement of children and adolescents’ rights to education and to health and well-being” (UNESCO, 2022). The declaration of this day intends to encourage all international and regional organisations, as well as individuals, to recognise this day and promote positive action in line with its goals. This is a much-needed call to action as, according to Cioppa, O'Neil, and Craig (2015) and Nocentini, Zambuto, and Menesini (2015), there are very few interventions specifically targeting cyber bullying behaviours, and even fewer rigorous evaluations of these interventions.

Research results suggest that young people are often reluctant to report cyber bullying because they fear that it will result in the restriction of their access to communication technology (Tokunaga, 2010). Thus, safer and more convenient reporting strategies need to be found that also ensure appropriate action is taken based on reports. Such strategies need to find innovative ways to include adults as well as young people. Strategies could make use of infographics, online games, applications, or software that target young people to educate them about cyber bullying. As noted by Cioppa et al. (2015) and Nocentini et al. (2015) above, these intervention initiatives lack rigorous effectiveness tests.

Despite the exponential growth in the mobile and internet market, there is no evidence of comprehensive or effective anti-bullying and cyber bullying interventions within the violence prevention and child safety policy initiatives in the Southern African region (Burton & Leoschut, 2013). According to the UN Violence Against Children in Africa report (African Partnership to End Violence Against Children (APEVAC), 2016), there still remains minimal formal, systematic support for young people who have negative online experiences, and knowledge of resources available to young people is limited. In addition to that, Tomlinson, Dawes, and Fisher (2012) state that violence prevention programmes within South Africa are also limited. Czerniewicz (as cited in Kritzinger, 2017, p. 3) attributes this to the “huge diversity in religion, culture, language, economic dispensation, knowledge access and technology, as well as the absence of centralised e-learning policies and resources”. Such challenges are due to lack of knowledge, awareness, and strict measures in place to criminalise those who commit bullying. As such, there is a need for cyber awareness in the school curriculum.

Muribwathoho (2015) observes that, while the Life Orientation programme in South African schools is aimed at nurturing learners in preparation for more successful living, learning comes with a range of inadequacies which has made it ineffective in the face of rapid technological shifts and social communication mediums. In addition, the Life Orientation programme seems to have failed to enable learners to be critical thinkers or make informed choices in the digital age. Van der Merwe (2012, p. 261) cautions that “media education, digital literacy, and the digital citizenship curriculum must be in line with what is current and projected in the media now and in the future”. It is within this context that this study ensures that teachers explore the links between the educational resource developed and Life Orientation programme.

It is clear that the various factors that contribute to violence in schools will persist unless attempts are made to adopt a more integrated approach to address the true nature of interpersonal violence. It is evident, however, that violence is shifting into other extended (online) contexts (Leoschut & Kafaar, 2017; Menesini & Salmivalli, 2017; Singh & Steyn, 2014). There is a plea for researchers to pay more attention to young peoples’ experiences of



violence in an attempt to develop more appropriate and effective measures to mitigate bullying in schools and other spheres.

Within the South African context, there is no legislation dealing specifically with cyber bullying or ICT security in the educational environment (Kabiawu & Kyobe, 2015; Kritzinger, 2017; Walaza, Looock, & Kritzinger, 2014). Hills (2017) observes that a lack of specific legislation or policy to regulate cyber bullying at school level means that existing legal frameworks are used. For example, the Protection from Harassment Act 71 of 2011 and the Protection of Personal Information Act (POPIA) in South Africa brought into law in April 2013 serve to grant protection orders and relief to survivors of bullying and the use of people's personal information. Laas and Boezaart (2014), however, caution that a more critical analysis on the rights of survivors and offenders is required when applying the Acts to forms of bullying that take place in schools and involve minors. Government has a crucial role to play to protect school learners against potential cyber dangers, threats, and exploitation (Farrell, 2013). Hence, the national Department of Basic Education (DBE) in South Africa should develop cyber safety and cyber use policies and programmes specifically for schools. Kritzinger (2017) supports this idea, adding that the government should address cyber safety and cyber use for school learners in national legislation.

While there has been a growing concern about South Africa's lack of active involvement in dealing with bullying, Kganyago (2012, as cited in Sonhera, Kritzinger, & Looock, 2015) observes that the South African government has prepared a number of Acts regarding cyber threats. In 2012, a National Cyber Security policy framework was approved by the minister of state security to account for the evolution of cyber-technology in law. Badenhorst (2011), however, points out that, since the policy framework is not administered by one piece of legislation under one department, it is diffuse and somewhat ineffective. In 2010, as an initiative for cyber-safety among young people, the DBE did develop guidelines on electronic safety in schools. Moreover, despite weaknesses in the National Cyber Security policy framework, the CJCP, in conjunction with the DBE (2013), produced the Cyber Threat Incident Handling Procedure for South African Schools, with a specific focus on bullying (Sonhera et al., 2015). As Smit (2015) contends, however, efforts to curb bullying are

inevitably hindered by the inability of research and legislation to keep up with the pace at which modern technology develops.

## **2.8 South African Legislative and Policy Framework**

In South Africa, school safety interventions fall under the ambit of the DBE. Kreifels and Warton (2019) list some of the key policies developed by the department. These include the National School Safety Framework, the Safety in Education Partnership Protocol between the department and the South African Police Services, and the Regulations for Safety Measures at Public Schools. The state has currently addressed the growing prevalence of cyber bullying with the promulgation of the Cybercrimes Act 19 of 2020 which, in the case of children, will be read in conjunction with the Child Justice Act 75 of 2008 (Kreifels & Warton, 2019).

## **2.9 Conclusion**

This literature review has demonstrated that there are different definitions and types of bullying. This study involved two specific types of bullying: physical and cyber bullying. Although there does seem to be some consensus on the definition of physical bullying, a definition of cyber bullying has not yet been agreed upon as it is more complicated and nuanced than physical bullying. Many scholars disagree on what counts as cyber bullying. Despite this difficulty in definition, several characteristics of both types of bullying have been discussed and a relationship is seen to exist between them. In other words, physical bullying can easily turn into cyber bullying and vice-versa. The chapter has also noted that South Africa is faced with several challenges regarding violence and bullying in schools, especially with an increase in the use of cell phones in a digital age. This increase has had an impact within the social space and movements for social change. While positive action has resulted from social media campaigns, the negative impacts of social media are harmful, especially as seen in the case of cyber bullying. Despite the South African government producing policies and measures to ensure a reduction of bullying at schools, the need for strict measures to mitigate bullying remains critical. Moreover, policies and interventions focussing specifically

on cyber bullying and cyber safety are, for the most part, lacking. The next chapter focuses on the theoretical framework which guides the study.

## **CHAPTER THREE: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK – FREIRE, EVANS, AND GIROUX**

### **3.1 Introduction**

This study investigated the practices of physical bullying in schools and their extension into cyber space. The overall theoretical framework of this study integrates the work of Paulo Freire's *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, as well as other writings by Freire, with the scholarship of Bradley Evans and Henry Giroux to aid an understanding of power within the context of cyber bullying. The contributions of Evans and Giroux, whose works have increasingly resonated with and built upon Freirean critical pedagogy while incorporating theorising on violence in the digital age, are used as a broader and contemporary theoretical frame in digital/technological settings.

A finer understanding of physical bullying and its extension into cyber space is enabled by mapping out the relevant thoughts and key concepts of Freire, Evans, and Giroux. The use of these scholars incorporates theoretical positions that illuminate and address the intricacies of power relations, oppression, and violence at play within bullying incidents. Their work is also a useful frame through which to understand varying interpretations of the meaning of bullying experiences. Freire, Evans, and Giroux encourage a deepened appreciation of critical pedagogy as a vibrant tradition amongst scholars seeking social change. This study was shaped largely by an interest in the question of power and the nexus between physical bullying in the school environment and cyber space. Its intention was to offer potential solutions to bullying within the digital age and approaches to narrow the gap between online and lived realities. Within this chapter, after presenting the key concepts of Freire, Evans, and Giroux, I will demonstrate how such concepts were applied in the study, and their relevance.

### **3.2 Freire's key concepts**

Freire was a Brazilian theorist whose experience as a teacher informed his work in the field of education studies. He was born in 1921 and grew up in poverty in the northeast of Brazil

during the Great Depression. After studying law, Freire began teaching Portuguese in secondary schools. His wife, Elza Oliveira, a primary school teacher herself, played an important role in encouraging Freire's theoretical work. While in political exile, Freire wrote *Education as the Practice of Freedom* (1967) and *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (1968). These books were based on the literacy programmes he developed for poor people in Brazil which were successfully implemented and led to a rise in literacy in Brazil. These programmes were the cause of his exile as the military government that came to power after Brazil's 1964 coup d'état found them too subversive. It is important to be aware of Freire's background as most of his concepts were influenced by his experiences. Freire himself recognises the importance of his experiences and observations, both as a teacher within Brazil and a political exile, to the *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* in its preface. This study selects some of Freire's key concepts to explore bullying.

### **3.2.1 Freedom and oppression**

In the foreword to the Continuum 30th anniversary edition of *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, Shaull explains that, to Freire, freedom specifically refers to "the means by which men and women deal critically and creatively with reality and discover how to participate in the transformation of their world." (Freire, 1970/1993, p. 34). Freire himself explains, (1970/1993, p. 79) "Liberation is a praxis: the action and reflection of men upon their world in order to transform it." Thus, within Freire's framework, freedom is the practice of changing the world through critical self-awareness and creative engagement with reality. Freedom is the primary goal of human existence as it is "the indispensable condition for the quest for human completion" (Freire, 1970/1993, p. 47). In other words, Freire contends that the search for meaning and purpose in life is only possible through the practice of freedom.

Oppression then, according to Freire (1970/1993), is the prevention of a person's practice of freedom. Oppressors achieve this by imposing conditions on and limitations to the realities and actions of the people they oppress. This results in dehumanisation since freedom is a basic condition for existence as a human being. Oppressors claim ownership over humanity through the denial of freedom as they regard humanity as "a thing" or "property" that not only can be owned, but to which they have the exclusive ownership rights (Freire, 1970/1993, p. 59). The internalisation of this situation by the oppressed results in their indoctrination and

causes a “fear of freedom” (Freire, 1970/1993, p. 36). This fear is characterised by a reluctance to subvert the status quo for fear of punishment by the oppressors in power, leading to the misidentification of the status quo and prescription of conditions as freedom (Freire, 1970/1993). The “fear of freedom” paralyses the oppressed and prevents them from practicing freedom.

Within this study, bullying was seen as a form of oppression which limits the freedom of those being bullied. The study used Freire’s concept of freedom to help survivors and youth to understand how to address the dehumanising experiences of bullying. In addition, the concept of oppression was used to help survivors to understand the oppression of bullying, how it denies freedom, and how survivors are treated as objects during bullying incidents.

To humanise the oppressed, teachers and political leaders need to create the basic conditions for the practice of freedom by the oppressed. Such conditions facilitate critical awareness, self-affirmation, and creative engagement with and transformation of the world. Freire (1970/1993) warns, however, that teachers and political leaders who assume a position of authority when attempting to overthrow oppression, rather than facilitating an expression and understanding of freedom by the oppressed themselves, become oppressors in turn. Freire argues that because humanity requires the self-initiated quest for freedom, dehumanisation can only be ended by allowing oppressed people to seek liberation on their own. This is also the only way to end dehumanisation of oppressors as, by relying on the oppressed to keep them in power, they restrict their own practice of freedom to dehumanise themselves. According to Freire (1970/1993, p. 56), “As the oppressors dehumanize others and violate their rights, they themselves also become dehumanized.” Freire (1970/1993) is ultimately concerned with the struggle to recover humanity, move away from the dehumanisation of both the oppressed and oppressor, and seek permanent liberation.

This study used such concepts to allow those who experience bullying to realise their capacity to liberate themselves and ensure that they create a better world, while giving those who bully the opportunity to break the cycle of dehumanisation. It is unsurprising that Freire’s philosophy of humanisation has wide appeal in a range of fields, including sociology, women’s studies, theology, peace studies, and other contemporary disciplines. In Anderson’s

doctoral thesis, “Humanisation in the Digital Age: A Critique of Technophilia in Education” (2018), he points out that cyber bullying specifically takes place because social media accentuates “the dehumanising potential of online interactions” and the “normalisation of dehumanising interactions” (Anderson, 2018, p. 101). In this way, Anderson indicates how the dehumanisation of people by social media, because they are behind a screen, enables bullying. Violence is a crucial aspect of bullying which this study highlights. Evans and Giroux (2015b) speak about an “intolerable” violence. According to Freire (1970/1993), the role of violence, as it is wielded by oppressors, is to restrict the humanity of the oppressed by using aggressive force to curtail their freedom.

Freire’s concepts of freedom and oppression were critical to this study as they were used to understand the nature of bullying based on survivors’ experiences. Just as oppression is understood as oppressors’ prevention of the practice of freedom by those who are oppressed through the restriction of the world by unfair conditions on existence, this study sought to understand the perspectives of those who are being bullied and what prevents them from achieving freedom. Based on Freire’s claim that dehumanisation is a natural result of oppression, the study explored how the experiences of survivors of bullying lead to dehumanisation. In addition, Freire’s concept of oppression was used to acquire, first-hand, insights into the experiences of those who were bullied, what led to the incidents, and how the experiences made them feel. The concept of oppression was also used to gather information about survivors’ own views on school violence and its prevalence. Hence, the concept of oppression was mainly used in Phase one of the study to understand survivors’ experiences and responses, and the nature of bullying in the context of oppression and violence. Considering that Freire calls for human beings to address dehumanisation by striving for personal and social freedom, this study also sought mitigation measures to help the achievement of personal and social freedom for those being bullied.

Freire maintains that it is through the realisation of human and social potential that the oppressed can transform into fully human subjects. Young people are likely to embrace the digital future – in part by explicitly advocating and demonstrating their social experiences to the world on social media. As a result, technology assumes an anchored and fundamental

position in society. It is this technological innovation that, although enabling violence such as in the case of cyber bullying, affords young people an opportunity to become true subjects, ones who obtain and engage in critical human agency. They become the historical protagonists who have the potential to break a vicious cycle of dehumanisation through bullying and social oppression in order to humanise the world and reduce bullying tendencies. In line with Freire's call for a society without oppression, especially in his book *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (1970/1993), one in which everyone's voice is heard and valued equally, the study sought to ensure that those who have experienced bullying have an opportunity to have their voices heard by creating space for the bullied to organise themselves to fight for their freedom and the end of oppression.

### **3.2.2 Education**

In *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (1970/1993), Freire identifies the potential of education both to free and to oppress. Education can be used to facilitate oppression in the service of oppressors or to initiate subversive action by fostering a critical awareness in the oppressed that allows them to understand oppression and change society. According to Freire, such a "pedagogy of the oppressed" should push oppressed people to participate directly in its development to prompt their understanding of oppression. Such participation would lead to a practice of freedom as it would allow the oppressed an opportunity to gain critical understanding and transform their world by challenging oppression. Freire argues that oppressors cannot develop or implement this kind of pedagogy. In terms of this study, this means that attention was paid to those who have been bullied rather than those who have bullied. The concept of a "pedagogy of the oppressed" was used in this study to understand how survivors responded to bullying at school, the support they may have received, and any possibilities for change brought about by support systems. The concept of education within the "pedagogy of the oppressed" was used in the Phase two collaborative workshop to understand youths' perspectives on bullying, to establish whether their views are comparable to those shared by survivors, to broaden an understanding of bullying, and to offer recommendations to address the issue.



Freire (1970/1993) argues that, while it is possible for the people in power to effect large scale changes in education models, the implementation of a smaller scale “pedagogy of the oppressed” is more effective and practical for the oppressed in their efforts to fight for freedom. Freire (1970/1993, p. 72) calls the first model, which is the traditional pedagogy of modern education, “the ‘banking’ concept of education”. This approach to education reinforces oppression. The second model of education is a liberating pedagogy that Freire (1970/1993, p. 40) calls “‘problem-posing’ education”.

The “banking” model creates a hierarchy within the classroom that mirrors the power structure of an oppressive society. The teacher is in a position of power as the authoritative possessor of knowledge. The teacher dictates this knowledge to learners, who are positioned as inferior and knowledgeless. Thus, they are required to accept the knowledge from their teachers without critical interrogation. This model of education enforces the assumption that the teacher is always correct and, thus, there is no room for critical engagement with learners.

In the “problem-posing” model, on the other hand, teachers and learners are positioned as equals and engage in a collaborative pursuit of knowledge. This creates a room for both teachers and learners to decide topics and participate in problem solving. The teacher does not hold a dictatorship over the classroom, rather, everyone is both a teacher and a learner simultaneously and has valuable contributions to make towards the education process. In this context, Freire (1970/1993) calls for a society without oppression, based on equality in social and power structures and the value of everyone’s voice. Political leaders interested in the overthrow of oppression must, therefore, engage with oppressed people as equals in a collaborative fight for freedom to dismantle imbalanced power structures and instate a society in which everyone can practise freedom.

My study used the “problem-posing” model in Phase one, during the collaborative workshops with youth in Phase two, and with teachers in Phase three. This education model was also used in Phase four as part of the piloting of the teacher resource. In the interviews with survivors of bullying in Phase one, the model was used to create a safe environment based on

equality between the interview and interviewee which encourages the sharing of personal experiences. The model was applied to youth, teachers, and learners to involve them in discussions which are problem-solving in a manner that increases confidence and knowledge to pave the way for honest discussions about and interrogation of the bullying problem. The problem-posing model was used in Phase three with teachers, who were encouraged to offer recommendations, and in Phase four during which the education resource was subjected to constructive critique by the teachers. Hence, Freire's concepts were used to enable the survivors of bullying, youths, and teachers to share their experiences and contribute to an understanding of the nature of bullying, responses to it, and possible mitigation measures.

### **3.2.3 Maintaining and overthrowing oppression**

To Freire (1970/1993), education is an important tool for individual growth and enacting social change. According to Freire, although education is the vehicle through which oppression can be overthrown and freedom achieved, it equally has the potential to maintain oppressive social structures within a society. He argues that, through systems of oppression, oppressors maintain their power by obstructing radical social change using anti-dialogical methods such as "Divide and Rule". In this method, oppressors instigate internal conflict among oppressed people to prevent the organisation of any united action for social change. This suggests that, if oppressed people feel isolated, they are likely not to fight for their liberation or change. Freire argues that, in the event that the oppressed begin to demand freedom, the oppressor can appease the people by creating superficial changes that hide the continued maintenance of their oppressive power. The fight for freedom, however, is not without its pitfalls. Revolutionary leaders often re-enact oppressive systems in the attempt to overthrow an oppressor. These leaders may resort to manipulation or domination to garner support from the oppressed. In this case, radical social change cannot be achieved as real social change only occurs through the empowerment of people to practise their own freedom. Within this study, Freire's concept of maintaining and overthrowing oppression was relevant as it enriched the insights that were gained into experiences of bullying, the nature of bullying, and how survivors responded to bullying. Furthermore, the concept of maintaining and overthrowing oppression was used in the collaborative workshops and piloting of the

resource where youth, teachers, and learners were exposed to problem-solving solutions aimed at mitigation measures for bullying.

### 3.2.4 Dialectics

*Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (1970/1993), is heavily influenced by the ideas of Karl Marx and Freidrich Engels. In particular, Freire uses their concept of dialectics. This concept also owes its existence to Hegel, as Freire acknowledges in a footnote. The concept of dialectics indicates a relationship in which a thesis (an idea, statement, or object) exists by virtue of its antithesis (an opposing idea, statement, or object). A synthesising idea, statement, or object that resolves the contradiction set up by the relationship is produced through the interaction of the two theses. In *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (1970/1993), Freire uses the concept of dialects to describe the relationship between the oppressed and their oppressor. According to him, the oppressed “exist in dialectical relationship to the oppressor, as his antithesis... without them the oppressor could not exist” (Freire, 1970/1993, p. 49). In other words, oppressors are dependent on the oppressed for their existence. Dialectics are relevant to all manner of existence in the world and, it is only through dialectical thinking, that the oppressed can come to understand their situation. According to Freire, however, mere apprehension of the dialectical nature of their situation is not sufficient for their liberation from oppression, “[t]he oppressed can overcome the contradiction in which they are caught only when this perception enlists them in the struggle to free themselves” (Freire, 1970/1993, p. 49). Freire argues that existence is dialectical in nature – composed of relationships of dialectical opposition. For example, he says (1970/1993, p. 103), “I consider the fundamental theme of our epoch to be that of domination—which implies its opposite, the theme of liberation, as the objective to be achieved.” In this case, social change is the synthesis that reconciles the contradiction between the maintenance of oppression and its overthrow.

The concept of dialectics was used in the study to help survivors gain insight into their experience of being dominated by bullies and to gauge whether their responses to bullying promoted liberation. The concept of dialectics was also used in the second phase of the study in which both youth and I reflected on the experiences of those who were bullied in terms of a dialectical relationship between bully and survivor. Together, we examined whether the

youth shared the same views as the survivors and how they felt about watching or witnessing bullying incidents. In addition, this study used such concepts to allow those who had experienced physical and cyber bullying, youth, and teachers to engage in reflection and dialogue and to plan actions involving either sharing their experiences or finding ways to mitigate bullying. Creating room for people to talk about bullying is an important opportunity for individual growth and social change. In accordance with the liberatory potential of a dialectical outlook, conversations with survivors hold the potential to identify conflicting elements, for example, bullied and bully, and domination as opposed to liberation. Such elements were critical to this study.

### **3.2.5 Praxis**

Freire (1970/1993, p. 51) defines his concept of praxis as “reflection and action upon the world in order to transform it.” Thus, praxis refers to the concrete work humans undertake in their search for freedom, understanding, and change. Praxis is the method through which oppressed people can reconcile the contradiction in their situation by fostering their own critical awareness and practise of freedom. In fact, Freire (1970/1993, p. 79) argues that “[l]iberation is a praxis”. Freire (1970/1993, pp. 65-66) further emphasises the importance for oppressed people to recognise and assert their existence as human within the history they are creating. It is only in this way that the oppressed can successfully engage in the process of praxis in their quest for freedom as human subjects: “At all stages of their liberation, the oppressed must see themselves as women and men engaged in the ontological and historical vocation of becoming more fully human.” This process facilitates knowledge enhancement as well as the potential to bring about freedom from oppression.

Freire (1970/1993, p.87) also argues that “[w]hen a word is deprived of its dimension of action, reflection automatically suffers as well”. By this, Freire suggests that a word’s power lies in its ability to act – to denounce and liberate. Through mechanisms of oppression, however, a word can be robbed of this power to act.. Furthermore, denunciation is impossible without commitment to transformation which requires action. Freire highlights that every human being is capable of looking at and acting on the world critically irrespective of the

“culture of silence” (Freire, 1970/1993, p. 30) they may display. He maintains that “[h]uman beings are not built in silence, but in word, in work, in action-reflection”. (Freire 1970/1993, p. 88). In other words, it is the nature of human beings to be involved in the critical process of simultaneous action and reflection that transform the world. This process is what Freire calls praxis.

The concept of praxis had relevance to this study within the context of the second and third phases as they required reflection on the findings from Phase one involving interviews with survivors. The process of reflection was complemented by action in the recommendations offered during these phases on how to change the world for those being bullied and those who bully. Changing the conditions of survivors, who might have lived in a “culture of silence”, is critical but first requires us to understand their experiences, responses, and the exact nature of the bullying they underwent.

The adoption of praxis or the action-reflection component of this study sought to promote joint and mutual learning through the creation of partnerships, collaboration, and sustained dialogue. Freire’s methodology is encouraging for cyber bullying research as it reveals how, in the digital age, when approached critically, action and reflection synthesise to shape us ethically and inform intervention strategies for addressing this phenomenon. It is also pertinent to note that new meaning and direction are critical in striving towards change. Bullying in physical and cyber space is at the forefront of intractable social problems, particularly so within the context of school violence. With praxis serving as a catalyst for negotiating new meaning, young people may be better able to articulate their experiences and perspectives of daily realities. Hence, this study was designed to create a culture of inquiry that moves beyond information delivery to incorporate the generation of knowledge, the action to develop and pilot possible interventions, and contribute to social change. This aspect of the design was based on Freire’s praxis which functioned to encourage a deeper understanding of and meaningful response to the dehumanising forces that surround and impact young peoples’ lives, in and out of school, as well as in cyber space.

### 3.2.6 Conscientisation

Conscientisation is the result of the critical awareness developed when individuals embark on a course of action against the oppressive elements of reality, namely, the social, political, and economic structures that place conditions on existence. Conscientisation involves the shift from attitudes of powerlessness to attitudes of powerfulness on the part of individuals and groups and is necessary for social change. It is a state of critical consciousness. In *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (1970/1993), Freire reinforces that his theories are based on real-world observations of “concrete situations” (Freire, 1970/1993, p. 37), from his time working as a teacher in Brazil and in exile. He notes that many of his learners feared conscientisation as they believed it to be dangerous, “destructive”, or “anarchic” (Freire, 1970/1993, p. 35). Freire (1970/1993, p. 46) refers to this as “a fear of freedom”, which is internalised by many oppressed people and is based on the fear of the risks involved in challenging oppression and a reluctance to disturb one’s sense of normality and stability despite experiencing oppression every day. People are often unaware of this fear and, even if they are conscious of it, do not usually admit to its existence. Oppressed people become aware of and/or admit their condition of oppression and their fear to challenge it through conscientisation. Freire does report, however, that some of his learners were more perceptible to conscientisation and gained a critical awareness more easily. Freire maintains that conscientisation enables oppressed people to change from “naïve” to “critical” (Freire, 1970/1993, p. 35) and reclaim their humanity in transforming their world.

Conscientisation was also relevant to this study: “a fear of freedom” is linked to the fear of speaking about past bullying experiences within physical and cyber space. Survivors were given a chance to move from “naïve” to “critical” through their input into the educational resource that was used in the collaborative workshops and its piloting.

The application to this study of Freire’s pedagogy, through the processes of reflexivity and critique, aimed to provide a means for young people to become more conscious of the forces that control and mould their lives and acquire new understandings and solutions. This research process, which included carefully crafted activities and workshops, was deliberately structured to create multiple opportunities for conscientisation. This was based on the

conviction that valuable insights are likely when participants have the opportunity to reflect, debate, and critically assess the ideas and perspectives that emerge from activities and discussions. This study aimed to encourage young adults to reflect on their experiences and offered them a space to challenge, debate, and evaluate their concerns.

### **3.2.7 Dialogue**

The concept of dialogue builds on praxis. Freire (1970/1993, p. 88) defines dialogue as “the encounter between men, mediated by the world, in order to name the world.” This naming is based on the word and its power to denounce oppression and produce social change through praxis. Dialogue is an interaction among people in which there is no domination or oppression at play, and everyone is in an equal position of power. According to Freire, these basic ethics must characterise education and political change. In other words these processes must be “dialogic”, in order to oppose the “anti-dialogic” nature of oppression and attain freedom. Through dialogue, people “achieve significance as human beings” (Freire 1970/1993, p. 88). This means that they are able to practise freedom because they are involved in critical reflection, to understand their world, and action, in the form of dialogue, to transform it. Dialogue is an act of courage in which one confronts the reality of the world unafraid.

For Freire, a radical is someone who does not consider “himself or herself the proprietor of history or of all people, or the liberator of the oppressed; but he or she does commit himself or herself, within history, to fight at their side (Freire, 1970/1993, p. 39). Thus, the radical is “committed to human liberation” (Freire, 1970/1993, p. 39) and opposes oppression through dialogue and praxis in the fight for freedom without claiming to have power over history and those that are oppressed within it. Hence, through a “pedagogy of the oppressed” based on “problem-posing” education, such radicals inspire praxis in oppressed people and fight with them to overthrow oppression. All this involves a dialogue and can be achieved using a wide range of methods such as pictures, audio interviews, texts, and other media which facilitate reflection and dialogue. In this study, Freire’s concept of dialogue was important during the collaborative workshop with youth. The use of a wide range of methods to stimulate dialogue

was intended to create an opportunity for the youth to discuss and offer recommendations on bullying in a problem-solving manner. In this way, they acted as radicals engaged in praxis for social change.

This study, in a collaboration between a range of participants for the co-construction of knowledge through authentic dialogic interactions, drew on Freire's concept of dialogue. This was intended to explore many of the silent and dehumanising aspects of survivor experiences. Through this engagement, it was hoped that participants could mobilise themselves in a project of emancipation and engage in a "humanising dialogue" in the collaborative workshops that took place with youth in Phase two and with teachers in Phase three.

### **3.2.8 Some criticism of Freire's theory**

Notwithstanding the usefulness of Freire's theoretical concepts, there are some weaknesses which have drawn criticism. For example, Knudson and Elias (as cited in Ohliger, 1995) claim that Freire's definition of oppression is too vague and redundant, targeting only the poor as the oppressed, and overlooking the oppression (like the bullying depicted in this study) that operates at all levels of society. Freirean scholars Kahn and Kellner (2007) and Roberts (2015) offer suggestions to sidestep some of these weaknesses, encouraging researchers to pay attention to the specific contextualisation of the theory to present-day needs. Weiler (2003) appeals for the Freirean legacy to be re-read, adopting a more open and plural approach, especially within the disciplines of post-modernism and feminism. This study paid attention to bullying types across class strata.

Furthermore, Gottlieb and La Belle (1990) criticise Freire's theory of conscientisation, claiming that the theory's weakness is evident in the many consciousness-raising programmes, coupled with skill transmission programmes, that have not brought about the desired social changes. Further, Zachariah (as cited in Ohliger, 1985, n/p, para 22) states that the absence of any concrete measures for conscientisation prevents people from improving their standard of living and instead "they acquiesce in their oppression because they have no other choice".



Moreover, in relation to dialogue, Freire provides contradictory positions, leaving the reader wondering if dialogue is “essential communication [that] must underlie any cooperation” (Freire, 1970/1993, p. 168) or whether “[d]ialogue between the former oppressors and the oppressed... [is] not possible before the revolution” (Freire 1970/1993, p. 139) – Freire’s position seems to indicate that there is a stalemate in which no revolution can ever be successful because, the dialogue that is essential for revolution to occur cannot occur before the revolution has already occurred. Another criticism of *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (1970/1993) is that it analyses oppression in terms of class which leads to a narrow definition of oppression that does not acknowledge critical issues in the South African context such as racism and gender-based violence. As this study shows, bullying, which is a form of oppression and violence, does not necessarily happen based on class but incorporates race, gender, socio-economic situation, and other conditions. Other forms of oppression also limit freedom and dehumanise those who experience bullying in physical and cyber space. Considering the above criticisms of some of Freire’s theories, there is a need to look at some post-Freirean scholars.

### **3.2.9 Post-Freirean theorists in the digital age**

In recent years, critical theorists such as Henry Giroux, Bradley Evans, Douglas Kellner, and Peter McLaren, who have all collaborated extensively, have emerged as leading proponents of Paulo Freire’s critical pedagogy. They maintain an impassioned commitment to the reading, critique, and general momentum of Paulo Freire’s work in the digital age. The work of these theorists is important because it addresses many of the difficult social issues of the contemporary era, including the impact of technology in the digital age. These scholars have a pivotal role to play in the emergence of a myriad new concepts and important ideas for the purposes of this study and in the ongoing expansion and deepening of the narratives around violence in contemporary society in general, and in schools in particular where violence and bullying in physical and cyber space are widespread and unmitigated.

McLaren (1997, n/p) stresses the importance of engagement with and a vigorous reading of Freire “in the context of his entire corpus of works”, particularly those pertaining to globalisation and post-Fordist economic and neoliberal educational policies. In this ongoing engagement, McLaren encourages the re-invention of Freire’s work, especially as it relates to contemporary debates around information technologies in which there exists the possibility of building new modes of revolutionary struggle. McLaren rightfully calls for the resurrection of Freirean pedagogy because it maps out a powerful strategy for the oppressed, non-oppressed, and future generations to draw on for the purposes of rebuilding a democracy for a better quality of life.

In the essay “Paulo Freire and Ivan Illich: Technology, politics and the reconstruction of education”, Kahn and Kellner (2007, p. 431) argue that:

[A] critical pedagogy of technology can be reconstructed that is capable of speaking to today’s needs and this critical pedagogy itself can be reconstructive of the current terrain in education as it works to overcome inequalities through the appropriate use of technology and the establishment of critical consciousness on the issues surrounding technology and society.

Kellner (1998, 2001) explains that some studies reveal how mainstream media promotes inequalities, injustices, and discrimination on the basis of gender, race, and class and those “media representations help construct our images and understanding of the world” (Kellner, 1998, p. 104). Kellner is committed to the central role that education and media pedagogy must play in creating a more positive awareness and understanding of the modern world in the digital age, one that encourages students and citizens to extend more productive and progressive responses to technological and social changes. Becoming more sensitised to these injustices, Kellner maintains, will aid in strengthening democracy, making way for progressive social change, and moving towards a more just society.

According to Giroux (2010, p. 715), a founding theorist of critical pedagogy, critical pedagogy is “an educational movement, guided by passion and principle, to help students develop consciousness of freedom, recognize authoritarian tendencies, and connect

knowledge to power and the ability to take constructive action”. In other words, critical pedagogy is the modern equivalent of Freire’s “pedagogy of the oppressed” as it emphasises the same goals and promotes recognition of oppression and action towards liberation. Over a number of years, Giroux has been consistent in building and tightening the relationship between critical pedagogy, cultural studies, and radical democracy (2001) and in making pedagogy a defining principle central to addressing youth culture with regard to media and popular culture (1996). In the same critical spirit, Giroux has, in recent times, focused on visual displays of violence and argues that the emergence of “mass and image-based media have become a new and powerful pedagogical force” (Giroux, 2016, p. 19).

In a video lecture entitled “Where is the Outrage? Critical pedagogy in dark times”, (MacPherson Institute, 2015), Giroux is persistent in highlighting the need for teachers and social theorists to recognise other forms of public pedagogy such as that of mainstream media and digital screen cultures. He argues that schools are not the only places in which learning and education take place; they also take place in online spaces. This fact is acknowledged by this study’s application of Freire’s concept of education in the *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (1970/1993) to online experiences. What is important for Giroux, is that when people see injustices, an agenda involving political and civic agency is triggered. According to Giroux, extending critical pedagogy into public pedagogy further influences “critical thinking, thoughtfulness, dialogue, but also opportunities to mobilise instances of moral outrage, social responsibility and collective action” (MacPherson Institute, 2015). The various contributions of these scholars influenced this study’s approach to the use of multimedia for the purposes of education during the workshops and the piloting of the educational resource. This study was also open to recommendations on mitigating bullying and better ways of using the resource as a way to address bullying in schools involving the use of ICTs.

### **3.3 Evans and Giroux’s key concepts**

Bradley Evans is a political philosopher, critical theorist, and thinker on violence. Post-Freirean scholars, Evans and Giroux argue that Freire retains “strong influences in the field of education and other areas of practice that require thinking about the possibility of an ethics of

difference that resists violence” (Evans & Giroux, 2015a, p. 9). Evans and Giroux specialise in interrogating violence in the digital age, arguing that “[i]n our mediatized age, we are all bearing witness [to acts of violence] in one-way or another” (Evans & Giroux, 2015b, p. 208). Evans and Giroux’s work functioned as an important resource for this study as it complements Freire’s concepts in *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (1970/1993).

Central to Evans’s work in particular, is his commitment to ensuring that the study of violence continues to be “an open field of critical enquiry” (Evans, 2017, p. 8). Inspired by the work of Walter Benjamin, an influential critical theorist of the early twentieth century, Evans and Lennard (2018) reiterate the challenge identified by Benjamin (1921) as one in which “our task remains to develop a critique of violence that is relevant to our times” (Evans & Lennard, 2018, p. 2). Evans offers a reminder of the usefulness of critical pedagogy when studying contemporary violence and the connection between violence and education. Due to their contention that “there can be no twentieth-century solutions to twenty-first century problems” (Evans & Giroux, 2015a, p. xv), Evans and Giroux (2015a) call for “a new radical imagination and emancipatory politics” and “liberating alternatives” (p. xv). In this way, they call for a new approach to the problem of violence in society – one that embraces an ethics of equality and freedom. Evans argues that the connections between different forms of violence and education must be meaningful. His view is that making meaningful connections demands a range of critical and pedagogical interventions which this study used in Phases two, three, and four, to understand the connection between education and violence in survivors’ experiences, their responses, and the recommendations given during the collaborative workshops and after piloting the resource.

Evans (2019) argues that violence, in its novel and contemporary forms, needs to be confronted with newer vocabulary and a different vision. Evans’s view (2019, p. 4) is that “violence should be intolerable in all forms or ‘modalities’”. In other words, no matter how violence manifests, it should be rejected outright as unacceptable. Evans (2019) deepens his discussion to argue that intolerable violence is not only about an individual’s capacity to tolerate different forms or representations of violence but also imbued human emotion. He maintains that there is a need to concern ourselves with interrogating how intolerable images

of violence, which reach us through various media, have been manipulated to encourage the tolerance of violence in general and have led to the emergence of other forms of violence.

### **3.3.1 Intolerable violence**

In attempting to answer the question about how we interrogate violence in the 21st century, Evans argues that the changing logic of violence in present day society comes with regarding violence as normal, possibly due to the “silence cultures” to which Freire refers. Human beings are immersed in a relentless stream of real and virtual violence which has made intolerable violence tolerated. This high tolerance level means that we require “spectacular violence” to be perpetrated against survivors in order to jolt us out of complacency. Moreover, the media only reflects the humanity and struggles of oppressed populations once there has been “spectacular violence” enacted on their bodies. Human beings have the capacity to find empathy and solidarity, but sometimes only after having witnessed or seen survivors of violence.

Such an observation was used in this study to examine youth experiences of violence during the collaborative workshop, assess whether their experiences were similar to those of survivors, and explore how they felt when watching or witnessing physical bullying incidents. Evans argues that violence is an infringement on human lives, impacting upon an individual’s dignity, selfhood, and belief systems. He, therefore, calls for the use of powerful pedagogical tools that foster critical teaching and learning to mitigate violence in schools. This study developed and used pedagogical tools during the teacher collaborative workshop and the piloting of the resource to encourage critical thinking among youth and learners. This not only allows for a re-thinking of violence, but also for a shaping of its agenda so that various manifestations of violence, which technology renders inescapable, are considered.

Evans (2019) argues that, while some forms of violence can be rationalised, there are some forms that surpass the “tolerance threshold” (p. 4), the maximum level of a given experience that a person can endure. One can assume that he is referring to his ongoing work on the

September 9/11 attack which, according to Evans, was “nothing exceptional” in comparison to the “far more intimate and individualising forms” (Evans, 2019, p. 4) of violence and suffering that exist, such as: Black men attacked and killed by white police; attacks on ordinary citizens; military operations in Afghanistan and Iraq; “sacrificial terrorist violence” (Evans, 2019, p.10); and young children (asylum seekers) washed up on the shores of the Mediterranean. According to Evans, although the September 9/11 terrorism attack is still detestable or “rightly viewed as desperate acts of alarming brutality” (Evans & Giroux, 2015a, p. 1), dealing with the psychological impact of exploding towers depicted in video-clips and repeated television footage is, in some ways, easier than dealing with other forms of daily violence inflicted on individuals and communities. Hence, Evans speaks of intolerable violence as that which occurs every day in front of individuals in their communities. He believes this violence can be challenged through critical teaching that takes into account newer forms and examples of violence.

In this study, the concept of intolerable violence helped towards the achievement of a deeper examination of the survivors’ experiences of and responses to bullying through an understanding of bullying as a form of intolerable violence. Bullying is characterised by intimate and individualised suffering which, arguably, surpasses Evans’s tolerance threshold and can, thus, be classified as “intolerable violence”. Evans’s concepts of intolerable violence and bearing witness were also helpful to developing an understanding of youths’ responses to bullying and their recommendations for mitigation strategies.

Giroux's (2016) contention, that “spectacular” violence functions as an important pedagogical tool, creating a space for pedagogical interaction, had important implications for this study in that physical bullying in cyber space – as a spectacle – acts as a pedagogical tool that influences “an act of intervention” (p. 24). Using Evans and Giroux (2015a, 2015b), this research aimed to create a more socially just world by encouraging an awareness of human agency, and, by empowering participants to become actively and more democratically engaged in the possibilities for social change. The “spectacle of violence” served as a central concept and lens for deeper interrogation of bullying in cyber space.

### 3.3.2 Spectacle of violence

In relation to Evans and Giroux's concept of "intolerable violence", Sontag (2004) argues that the problem of violence is in its association with representation. For example, in her book *Regarding the Torture of Others* (2004), she makes reference to the defenders of the Bush Administration who maintained that the US president was appalled by the photographs of tortured Iraqi prisoners, "...as if the fault or horror lay in the images, not in what they depict" (p. 129) or what they reveal to have occurred. While Evans (2017) reiterates that contemporary societies are constantly flooded with images and representations of violence, Sontag deepens the discussion by interrogating what the images depict; the fact that the images were taken in the first place; the contemptuous manner in which perpetrators behave; and the collective participation and justification by perpetrators. To this end, she asks: What it is about the nature of these images that "makes some actions representative and others not"? (Sontag, 2004, p. 130). These questions were also relevant to this study. Evans rightly recognises thinkers such as Sontag, Debord, Deleuze, and Kellner, among others, for their contribution towards extending knowledge in the area, providing critical theoretical insights, and raising crucial questions on the concept and practice of the spectacle of violence in the contemporary moment.

Although long, the following quotation from Evans and Giroux (2015a, p. 32) is important for this study and needs to be cited in full:

The spectacle of violence represents more than the public enactment and witnessing of human violation. It points to a highly mediated regime of suffering and misery, which brings together the discursive and the aesthetic such that the performative nature of the imagery functions in a politically contrived way. In the process of occluding and depoliticizing complex narratives of any given situation, it assaults our senses in order to hide things in plain sight. The spectacle works by turning human suffering into a spectacle, framing and editing the realities of violence, and in doing so renders some lives meaningful while dismissing others as disposable. It operates through a hidden structure of politics that colonizes the imagination, denies critical engagement, and pre-emptively represses alternative narratives. The spectacle

harvests and sells our attention, while denying us the ability for properly engaged political reflection. It engages agency as a pedagogical practice in order to destroy its capacity for self-determination, autonomy, and self-reflection. It works precisely at the level of subjectivity by manipulating our desires such that we become cultured to consume and enjoy productions of violence, becoming entertained by the ways in which it is packaged, which divorce domination and suffering from ethical considerations, historical understanding and political contextualization. The spectacle immerses us, encouraging us to experience violence as pleasure such that we become positively invested in its occurrence, while attempting to render us incapable of either challenging the actual atrocities being perpetrated by the same system or steering our collective future in a different direction.

Evans and Giroux's (2015a) definition of the spectacle of violence is evident in the above quotation. For them, the spectacle of violence is the framing of human suffering as an aesthetic and performative event to be witnessed for entertainment. This entails the dehumanising of survivors, often politically motivated, who are viewed as disposable. In this way, critical reflection and ethical engagement with the violence that is being presented is restricted. The spectacle of violence was used in this study to understand survivors' experiences of bullying, their opinions on what was posted on social media platforms, and how they responded to such bullying. Understanding bullying as spectacle was critical to the study as examples of bullying as spectacle were used in the Phase two collaborative workshop with youth to understand their perspectives and to establish whether they shared similar sentiments with survivors. It was interesting to note whether the participants themselves view bullying as a spectacle. Such concepts were applied to the study, through the use of various educational tools of communication, such as the use of online news articles and educational videos, to help youth express how they feel about bullying and offer their recommendations in a problem-solving manner.

The spectacle of violence seems to have ushered in a steady stream of images that merge violence, terror, and suffering. Giroux (2016, p. 18) argues that alongside these spectacular events, a pre-requisite "pedagogy of fear" is created. Evans and Giroux (2015a) suggest that



ubiquitous spectacles of violence often lead to a failure to identify with any clear ethical, civic, or social qualities of those positioned at lower levels in the social order which leads to their continued suffering. Furthermore, the spectacles disguise how some political processes promote social abandonment and further human destruction, and how human connectivity through technology will “encourage citizens to actively participate in their own inescapable oppression” (Evans & Giroux, 2015a, p. 1).

### **3.3.3 Disposability in the age of spectacle**

It is pertinent to note that Evans and Giroux (2015a) were influenced by the writings of Holocaust Survivor Primo Levi, whose concept of disposability stems from his own personal endurance of the horrors and cruelty of Auschwitz. Levi (1976) argues that the majority is capable of horrendous things. Individual people are sometimes seen as disposable when expended as a means to further a cause. This implies that we now live in a different time, one in which we have the option to learn from the past about the human potential for destruction and devastation. Levi (1976) argues atrocities happen in the world because of the extreme fragility of human relationships in the face of human beings’ tendencies towards violence, domination, and othering. He believes that the only strategies to counter these tendencies are to be found in education and an ethic of human responsibility. Evans and Giroux (2015a) argue that people have not just become desensitised to violence, but rather, that they are being taught to desire it. This research, however, condemns violence and seeks to work against its perceived desirability. In their political examination of spectacle in the present day, these scholars curate what is seen and unseen; what is represented and what is not, including whose lives matter and whose do not. The scholars offer an incisive analysis of neoliberalism’s ills, including the drone strikes and Black lives taken, hidden behind the façade of liberation and equality, to reveal how violence is normalised. Survivors are rendered disposable, and the spectacle becomes commodified as entertainment – in a manner very similar to the way in which filmed bullying in cyber space is received.

According to Evans (2019, p. 68), “as we remember the atrocities of the 20th century, we must not change the way we think about violence”. In a similar way to Levi’s concept of

disposability stemming from his personal experience of violence, Franz Fanon (1952) brings in another dimension of positive and negative violence through his lived experiences of violence. Fanon's approach is guided by his colonial experience. He argues that colonial rule is maintained through racialised violence and repression. Violence dehumanises the colonised person to the extent that it makes him or her an animal. Such a perception of colonial subjects normalised the use of violence against them. In response, a collective catharsis is required, a channel or outlet for releasing all forms of aggression (Fanon, 1952, p. 145). Fanon argues that violence becomes an intervening event that allows people to remove the feelings imposed or internalised by the colonial power. The only way to restore self-esteem and control is through violence. Hence, Fanon argues that violence frees people from an inferiority complex, despair, and inaction, making a person fearless and restoring self-belief. Fanon's discussion of the restoration of self-belief and confidence was critical to this study which attempted to create a space for dialogue aimed, to some extent, at (non-violent) catharsis. The study also used Fanon's ideas to understand survivors' responses to bullying – with their own violence or with a 'culture of silence'.

Evans and Giroux (2015a) suggest that it is not only digital communication that encourages humans to be more "image conscious" (p. xiii), but also our overemphasising of the importance of the visual gaze in screen culture that "offers new spaces [i.e. digital images and graphics] for thinking dangerously [i.e. expressing violent thoughts and desires]" (p. xiii) and the normalisation of violence. The emphasis on the visual may also explain, to some extent, how visually recorded incidents of physical bullying become a spectacle for entertainment online. Evans suggests that by paying attention to and reflecting on the atrocities of the 20th century, we may be better equipped to deepen our understanding of the subtler forms of violence. Evans and Giroux's (2015a) critique of violence is based on Freire in their supposition that "mass violence today must be understood by comprehending the ways in which systematic cruelty is transformed into questions of individual pathology" (Evans & Giroux, 2015a, p. 4). In other words, the cause of violence is attributed to the pathology of individual people in order to hide the political infrastructure that entrenches power imbalances in society which, according to Freire (1970/1993), reproduce violence and oppression. Evans and Giroux (2015a, p. 57) state that "nowhere is the severity of the consequences of this new era under neoliberalism more apparent than in the disposability of

younger populations”.

Evans and Giroux (2015a) make a critical contribution to the understanding of the politics of disposability in the context of neoliberal societies, that is equally applicable to the South African context, when they describe the spectacle of violence and its normalisation in the context of daily life. In addition, Evans and Giroux (2015a, p. 70) argue that the level to which violence has become integrated into the functioning of society means that “even as its underlying political and economic structures are shown to be interwoven with the social fabric of neoliberal societies, the painful memories it evokes disappear quickly among the barrage of spectacles of violence and advertisements addressing us not as ethical beings but as customers seeking new commodities, instant pleasure, and ever more shocking thrills”. In this quotation, again, Evans and Giroux draw attention to the features of neoliberal society, in this case consumerism, which hide the structural violence in society and restrict ethical human engagement. In this study, the concept of normalisation as it relates to bullying featured prominently. The study engaged survivors, youths, and teachers to understand if the survivors’ experiences of and responses to bullying contributed to the normalisation of bullying as a form of violence as spectacle in everyday life. The study also drew on the work of Evans and Giroux to examine how the violence inherent in social and political structures affect mitigation strategies to address bullying, especially in schools.

In echoing the concerns of young adult South Africans, Kelly, Campbell, and Howie (2018, n/p) refer to the contention by Evans and Giroux that violence remains instrumental to the ordering of “social, cultural, economic and political practices in communities, regions and nations” under neoliberal administrations throughout the world. The nature and design of communication technologies that enable the production of these spectacles can pave the way to the forced disposal of the survivor. Evans and Giroux (2015a) expose the multiple roles of disposability and, in effect, provide impetus to understand its connection to bullying experiences. This study used the concept of disposability in understanding how the nature and experiences of, and responses to bullying made survivors feel. Collaborative workshops and piloting of the resource took place within the context of understanding disposability in an age of spectacular bullying.

What Evans makes clear, and is of relevance to filmed incidents of physical bullying in cyber space, is that the spectacle is by no means a “random act” (Evans, 2019, p. 42). Its violence is, instead, a process. This study used this concept to understand stories shared by survivors and how they may also reveal the extent to which the experience of violence is a process, particularly when offline-online dynamics which perpetuate violence are considered. Despite the obfuscating properties of spectacle, viewing violence as a process can produce opportunities for survivors to seek deeper meaning and more understanding; to explore and understand the justification of violence; and to be in a position to make rational choices. Evans (2019) recommends that this be addressed in an educative matter, characteristic of collective resistance, which gives voice to those most affected and helps to translate abstract relations to the world into action. Such recommendations were applied in Phases two, three, and four in order to offer recommendations and mitigation measures.

### **3.4 Relevance of Freire and Evans and Giroux’s theories to this study**

Freire’s concepts in the *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (1970/1993) and Evans and Giroux’s (2015a, 2015b) concepts of intolerable violence, spectacle of violence, and disposability were highly relevant to this study which focused on bullying in physical and cyber spaces.

Bullying is an act of violence and form of oppression which dehumanises people and causes suffering, in a similar way to the society-wide forms of violence and oppression that Freire writes about. Furthermore, since bullying is a form of violence, Evans and Giroux’s concepts are highly useful to understanding it. Through the application of Freire, Evans, and Giroux, profound insights into physical bullying and its extension into cyber space can be gained. Moreover, these scholars’ works offer practical concepts through which to examine bullying, both traditionally in physical space, and, especially through the contributions of Evans and Giroux, in the context of the digitised world in which bullying extends into cyber space.

Other post-Freirean scholars also pay attention to the potential of critical pedagogy as a lens through which to develop a better understanding of the impact of bullying (Meyer, 2008). This approach contributes to the development of new tools to respond to bullying. Meyer

(2008) argues that the application of a critical anti-oppressive pedagogy to educational and teacher programmes can promote the transformation of oppressive discourses in schools. Meyer (2008) further makes the point that critical pedagogy contributes to a better understanding of the root causes of certain behaviours; it can also challenge the ongoing reproduction of bullying through mechanisms that limit these behaviours in schools and assist in creating safer school environments.

The studies described above bore relevance to the aims and objectives of this study which sought to broaden the scope of critical pedagogy that is employed in understanding the nature and experiences of and responses to bullying. This was revealed through a research design which illustrated how increasing participation and creating partnerships through collaboration can make meaningful advances towards the practice of critical pedagogy. This study was also designed to engage with young adults, to help facilitate their deeper understanding of and an appreciation for the society in which they live, and their role in shaping it. This is important because young people may not acknowledge their own role in the bullying process or the skills, knowledge, and tools they need to cope as survivors and to reject or avoid harmful behaviours.

This study embraced Freire's (1970/1993) and Giroux's (2010) endorsement of the use of a wide range of data generation methods: pictures, interviews, texts, and other media to facilitate reflection and dialogue. Giroux (2010) also argues for the dynamic interplay of audio, visual, and print materials in critical pedagogy to support reflections on society and its history that may lead to better insights into and understandings of lived reality and the current moment in relation to the past.

According to Evans (2017), people witness a host of spectacles as representations of violence. Evans explains how we might deal with the contemporary spectacles of violence we are forced to witness. For instance, he suggests that looking beyond the spectacle can reveal the reality of violence in all its forms. He warns against voyeurism when he argues that "it is through the spectacle of violence that we begin to uncover the abilities to strip life of any

political, ethical, and human claim” (Evans & Giroux, 2015a, p. 7). He also argues that being witness to various spectacles constitutes a political function. It was vitally important that this study addressed Evans’s points and raised questions around physical bullying in cyber space such as: How might this phenomenon move beyond the spectacle? How does it relate to a broader historical narrative? How might this phenomenon, as a form of spectacularised violence, be addressed in an educative manner?

Relevant to this study, with regard to the spectacle of violence, Evans and Giroux (2015a) also open up new thinking about the nature of the images produced in the media – images which must be acknowledged as constituting victimisation and trauma that continues to reverberate far beyond the initial incident or “the original act of violation” (Evans & Giroux, 2015a, p. 42). This can be considered as a defining characteristic of filmed physical bullying in cyber space. What Evans and Giroux (2015a) point to, and which aptly captures the experiences of the survivors in this study, is the fact that the violence continues after the act – both in physical and cyber space. In addition, it continues in the imagination of the survivors: it haunts them, often to a level of despair, and the survivor usually accepts, conforms, and consents to the violence as a punishment. And so, “the cycle continues ... This unending process offers no way out of the dialectical tragedy” (Evans & Giroux, 2015a, p. 43). Another strategy in developing a critique of violence for this study was to isolate and interrogate a specific form of bullying in order to achieve a more nuanced understanding of the nature and experiences of bullying. While all forms and representations of violence are patently intolerable, this study sought to emphasise the fact that all forms and representations of bullying, in physical and cyber space, should be regarded as intolerable.

### **3.5 Conclusion**

This chapter has presented an in-depth theoretical framework for addressing and responding to physical bullying and its extension into cyber space. The first part of the chapter identified key Freirean concepts relevant to this study. These include freedom and oppression, education, maintaining and overthrowing oppression, dialogue, and other supporting concepts. Complementary to Freire, are arguments by Evans and Giroux who borrow and

develop Freire's concepts and speak further about intolerable violence and how it can develop into spectacular violence. The chapter also indicated how such concepts were applied in the study in such a way that the nature and experiences of, as well as responses to, bullying were examined. The concepts of these scholars were also critical to recommendations for the mitigation of physical and cyber bullying. The next chapter discusses the research design and methodology of this study.

## **CHAPTER FOUR: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

### **4.1 Introduction**

The previous chapter discussed the theoretical framework based on the concepts from Freire, Evans, and Giroux relevant to this study. This chapter discusses the critical paradigm and the qualitative methodology, which uses action research, used in this study. The chapter also discusses the origins and processes of action research, its trends in education, how the procedure of this study was carried out, and the challenges encountered. The chapter demonstrates the cyclical process used involving four phases: interviews with survivors, a collaborative workshop with youth, a collaborative workshop with teachers, and the piloting of the resource. The chapter covers the whole research process and indicates where each phase fed into chapters five, six, seven, and eight respectively. Within the cyclical process of the four phases, a linear process comprised of four-stage processes – plan, act, reflect, and develop – was incorporated into each phase as well. This chapter also details the sample and sampling procedure, the data generation processes, which involved interviews and collaborative workshops, and the data analysis methods used. Lastly, the chapter pays attention to research quality, my positionality and reflexivity, and the ethical considerations involved in the study.

### **4.2 Framing paradigm**

I chose to conceptualise this study within the critical paradigm. In research, a paradigm is a set of basic assumptions about reality that define the ethics, epistemology, ontology, and methodology of a study as noted by Guba and Lincoln (1994). Together, these basic assumptions form the worldview to which the study is committed. The critical paradigm acknowledges the social and political influences on lived experiences and, hence, bases its worldview on the basic belief that reality is determined by social structures. The critical paradigm is concerned with social justice issues and the associated political, social, and economic issues. It questions “the political nature of [the process of social justice], maintaining that some relationships in the world are more powerful than others ...” (Henning,



Van Rensberg, & Smit, 2005, p. 23). Within the critical paradigm, the target for intervention, therefore, is the social infrastructure that props up unjust power structures in society. Thus, knowledge generated from this research can contribute to changing the current understandings of, responses to, and mitigation measures for physical and cyber bullying as it is understood as an unjust social structure that maintains hierarchies of power.

Pertinent goals noted, when working in the critical paradigm, include fostering critical consciousness, the dismantling of oppressive ideologies and social inequalities, and acknowledging that the domain of politics cannot be ignored. Working within this paradigm was beneficial for this study as it afforded researchers the opportunity to question and address social issues and offered opportunities for the voiceless and those in less powerful positions to question and respond to social issues such as bullying. A strength of this paradigm is that it seeks to advance participants' knowledge and skills that pertain to their conditions and experiences and, in so doing, enact practices that seek social justice. The paradigm's emancipatory worldview, therefore, has the potential to lead towards social transformation (Kivunja & Kuyini, 2017). The critical paradigm enables knowledge production through partnerships of reflection, sustained dialogue, and creative action. It is clear, from the discussion of the critical paradigm, that it is congruent with the worldview and many of the goals that underlie Freire's work. Thus, his concepts, as well as those of post-Freirean scholars like McLaren, Evans, and Giroux, could be deployed with theoretical fidelity in this study. Moreover, this means that the theoretical framework aligned well with the framing paradigm of the study.

Influenced by the critical paradigm, I embarked on a creative endeavour which incorporated multiple spaces to listen to individual and collective experiences about bullying, the needs of those bullied, and the recommendations of participants. This included listening to those directly affected by bullying. Hence, a critical analysis of participants' situations with a view to transforming their realities in an emancipatory way was critical. Using a multi-phase action-reflection process, the study sought to make meaningful connections and interrogate the multiple ways in which filmed incidents of physical bullying manifest. It also built towards the development of an educational resource that fosters critical teaching and learning in response to the specific character of bullying under study.

### **4.3 Qualitative methodology**

A qualitative approach was chosen as part of my research design to achieve the overall aims of the study. One of the main reasons for this decision was that the qualitative approach is best suited to the generation of rich descriptive data. This was the aim of the research as the study sought in-depth narratives of the personal experiences of survivors of physical and cyber bullying practices, as well as multiple perspectives from the participation of youth and teachers. A major factor in opting for a qualitative research approach was its ability to foster greater understanding of the complex social issues, particularly those that are “latent, underlying or non-obvious issues ...” (Miles, Huberman, & Saldana, 2013, p. 11). The lived experiences of survivors and the rich, multiple perspectives provided by the youth and teacher participants made this approach appropriate as the participants were given the opportunity to situate meanings in the processes and structures of their lives and in the social world around them. The qualitative approach was suitable for this study because of its pursuit of a critical and in-depth understanding of bullying within physical and cyber spaces, the need to include participants’ experiences and responses to bullying, and the desire to develop mitigation measures. By probing deeply into the ‘why’ and ‘how’ of an issue, an understanding of an individual’s lived experience and the nature of and response to bullying, as well as the development of mitigation measures in the form of an educational resource, was enabled. Thus, as qualitative research asks questions aimed at generating theory, rather than validating a theory, and this research attempts to broaden understandings of and contribute to theorisation around physical and cyber bullying and the relationship between them, I chose a qualitative research design.

### **4.4. Action research**

An action research approach was found appropriate for this study. Bassey (1999) identifies three categories of empirical research, namely, theoretical research, which involves an inquiry to understand a phenomenon; evaluative research, where the inquiry is set out to understand and evaluate, and thirdly, action research, which is carried out to examine,

evaluate, and change or add to an understanding of a phenomenon as well as to foster transformative action in society. With its set of collaborative knowledge development and multi-dimensional strategies of design and engagement in conducting social research, action research has the reputation of simultaneously satisfying rigorous scientific requirements and promoting democratic social change (Greenwood & Levin, 2006). For Creswell (2003), this is how projects, encapsulating a “knowledge claim” (p. 6), are established with a set of assumptions that govern the content and manner of learning that will transpire during the enquiry. The broader philosophical position of action research methodology recognises that collaboration and a commitment to change are essential for the well-being of others (McNiff, 2014). Burns (2015, p. 187) sets out to provide a nuanced understanding of what action research is, stating that:

Action research is the superordinate term for a set of approaches to research which, at the same time, systematically investigate a given social situation and promote democratic change and collaborative participation.

Other scholars, such as Dick (2009), define action research in terms of its two components: action and research. Action research methodology involves these dual aims: to act on the world to effect change in a community, organisation, or programme; and to produce knowledge that contributes to existing research by generating new understandings in the world. Beaulieu (2013, p. 33) provides a common definition that can be used: “action research is about improving the quality of human life, acquiring knowledge to become better practitioners, and developing strategies to address problems”. Cohen, Manion, and Morrison (2011) add that action research is a powerful tool that, through reflection and collaboration with participants, can address practical issues and bring about social transformation.

Beaulieu (2013), however, emphasises that the often-neglected key goals of action research, such as theory building, hypothesis testing, and generalization of findings, essential in scientific research need to be prioritised. Other scholarship debates and misunderstandings around action research identified by Beaulieu (2013) include views that action research is not scholarly; that action research is concerned with teacher professional development rather than

knowledge production; and that action research is not grounded in quantitative research. Yet Beaulieu (2013, p. 30) argues that action research is not only grounded in “contextualised truth seeking” but is also “perspective seeking”. Other proponents of action research such as Herr and Anderson (2005, p.54) distinguish action research as a “sound and appropriate research methodology”.

Given that different kinds of social research problems require specific approaches (Creswell, 2003), action research encompasses a unique set of approaches, namely, participatory action research, critical action research, action learning, participant inquiry, practitioner inquiry, and cooperative inquiry (Burns, 2015); technical action research, appreciative inquiry and collaborative autobiography (Glickman, Gordon, & Ross-Gordon, 2014); ethnographic action research, network action research, and anticipatory action research (Hearn, Tacchi, Foth, & Lennie, 2009); and activist research (Hunter, Emerald, & Martin, 2013). These multiple approaches have diverse histories, operating principles, phases, and techniques, as well as a unique set of values that differentiate them (Glickman et al., 2014). Ultimately, all these approaches have the same main goal: to engage stakeholders and capture their voices in order to initiate the research procedure with the intention to improve their quality of life (Beaulieu, 2013).

#### **4.4.1 Action research origins and processes**

Historically, socio-political topics and values have been at the forefront of action research, as seen in seminal work on race relations by Lewin in 1946. Teacher’s College researcher from Columbia University Stephen Corey, also wrote about action research in 1953 when trying to improve school practice. Later, Joyce (1991) recognised action research as a process that fosters a problem-solving ethos. Action research, the term coined by German social psychologist Kurt Lewin in 1946 (1952), was used over a number of years while conducting participatory community experiments concerning conflict and crises in post-world-war America. Lewin (1946) outlines three essential characteristics of action research: its participatory nature, democratic impulse, and contribution to social science and social

change. Lewin (1946) devised a process of spiral steps for action research in which each step encompasses an iterative cycle of planning, action, and evaluation of the result of the action.

Through the evolution of action research, O'Brien (2001) specifies three different models: the first model, created by Stephen Kemmis in 1982, involves four simple cyclical steps: plan, action, observe, and reflect; the second model, developed in 1983 by Gerald Susman, comprises five phases, each of which encompass the following steps: diagnose, action plan, take action, evaluate, and specify learning; and the third model, introduced by Eric, Trist, and Emery in 1959, encapsulates collaborative work, comprising pre-and post-conference session groups, and a presentation plenary at the end of each session. This third model, called The Search Conference, is discussed by O'Brien (2001) drawing on his own examination of action research processes over sixty years. Perhaps the most dramatic illustration of the use of broad research phases in action research is a model identified by Zuber Skerritt (1990). This model was created by Kemmis in 1982 and comprises at least thirty iterations through the cycle of planning, action, observation, and reflection (Kemmis & McTaggart, 1988). Burns (2015, p. 189) describes the spirals as "interwoven, fluid and repeated throughout the investigation". He contends that, at any point during these cycles, unintended variations and reiterations can occur. Essentially research, action and education are intertwined and emerge as the single process (Herr and Anderson, 2014).

Another distinguishing characteristic of action research, as reported by Beaulieu (2013), is its ongoing process of iterative cycles or phases, each of which build on the previous phase and inform the next. This is very different to traditional research designs and methodologies. Dick (2009) helps to unravel another model of action research – Stringer's three-part 'look-think-act' cycle in which learning is achieved by virtue of the initial planning cycle and evaluation cycle. Burns (2015, p. 188) states that action research, unlike other well-established traditional research approaches, makes use of broad research phases, each of which possess "... dynamic movement, flexibility, interchangeability and reiteration".

#### **4.4.2 Action research trends in education**

Educational action research is practiced broadly. Dick (2009) provides an extensive list of the different fields in which action research takes place. These include rural and regional development, community planning, systems-based and organisational applications, and the field of information and communication technology.

Notwithstanding the overall benefits and contributions of research to the development of knowledge in academia and society, within the field of education, action research continues to enjoy widespread success. Between 2008 and 2010, Dick (2011) conducted a broad review of relevant action research literature and found action research to be developing steadily. In the first of his extensive two-yearly series of reviews and coverage of action research literature, covering the years 2004 and 2005, Dick (2006, p. 441) comments that “educational action research is the busiest area”. In his fourth series, Dick (2011) found that action research is vibrant and growing in the field of community-based participatory research where participation and social justice themes are prominent features.

Beaulieu (2013) reported a notable increase and interest in action research in doctoral dissertations. From an examination of English-written dissertations between 2001 and 2012 from a ProQuest database search, Beaulieu (2013) found that at least 2% of the dissertations include the phrase “action research” in the title and/or the abstract and 2.4% of the dissertations actually engage with action research. Action research was used in this study to examine the nature and experience of and responses to bullying, as well as propose, develop, and evaluate a mitigation measure in the form of an educational resource.

#### **4.4.3 Challenges in action research**

Notwithstanding the emergence of multiple derivatives, perspectives, and specialisations, action research is often met with many challenges. Despite the continued interest and growth in action research as a scholarly practice, Beaulieu (2013, p.33) notes that questions such as “what is it and how to define it?” result in confusion and controversy. Other challenges include securing privacy of participants, gaining informed consent, and the freedom to

participate in the study. Furthermore, it is, however, difficult to separate action from research and to ensure the application of both. There are also delays involved in completing action research due to unforeseen challenges and lack of repeatability and rigour (Feyisa, Feyisa, Moreda, & Hailu, 2022).

#### **4.5 The nature of the research problem, aims, and objectives**

Isidiho (2009) states that research demands a clear and unambiguous statement of the goal, in other words, what the research intends to accomplish. The overall aim of this study was to explore the experiences of young adult survivors as they reflect on their experiences of physical bullying in school and its extension into cyber space and their responses to it. Another major goal of this study was to design an effective intervention strategy to reduce/mitigate bullying.

The following research objectives served to focus the investigation:

1. To generate thick descriptions of young adult survivors' experiences of bullying in physical and cyber space;
2. To develop insight into how young adults and teachers respond to bullying in physical and cyber space;
3. To understand the nature and experiences of bullying in physical and cyber space;
4. To identify needs, strengthen practices, and develop and pilot resources that promote self-efficacy and mitigate experiences of bullying in physical and cyber space.

The research objectives were achieved by expanding the participation to a cohort of community members. The selection comprised of survivors, the key informants on physical and cyber bullying, as well as youth and teacher participants who directly or indirectly encountered or witnessed the phenomenon. Working with multiple information sources (Dick, 1993) resulted in both myself and participants playing an active role in tasks and activities. This allowed for critical analysis of our own situations, with potential for

transforming and improving, in an educative manner, the lives of learners and teachers and society (Carr & Kemmis, 2003).

I concur with Dick, Stringer, and Huxham's (2009, p. 7) conception that "... it makes sense that theory is part of action and therefore of action research". The theoretical framework provided the necessary conceptual grounding required for my study. Against this backdrop, the increased recognition for new meanings and actions became important components for positive social change.

Within this body of research, and for the purposes of my study, I developed four key research questions which covered both the exploratory and the action side of the study. These are:

1. What are young adult survivors' experiences of bullying in physical and cyber space?
2. How do young adult survivors respond to bullying in physical and cyber space?
3. What is the nature of bullying in physical and cyber space?
4.
  - a. What new tools, skills, and knowledge can be developed to promote self-efficacy and mitigate the challenges (experiences) of bullying in physical and cyber space?
  - b. What can we learn from teachers piloting these tools and resources with their learners?

This study sought the involvement of survivors, youth, and teachers residing within the city of Pietermaritzburg, KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa and surrounding towns in an action research project. I obtained permission to conduct the study from the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education (see Appendix A).

#### **4.6 Research design**



Evans-Winters and Esposito (2010), proponents of critical action research, maintain that “the issues of power, privilege and difference have to be central to educational research”. My research design was intended to give greater visibility to the wide range of survivors’ experiences and emotional responses to bullying in physical and cyber space. I chose to use action research with the emphasis on critical action research as a basis for my study because of the important social issues, such as oppression and the dehumanisation of young people, that need to be addressed.

Although my study carried strong features of participatory action research, both involving the facets of action research processes and combining an inquiry directed towards social change, my role as action researcher in the project aimed to manage and sustain collaborative control of the research process (Grundy, 1994). Practices were improved based on the quality of the outcomes of each action research process. Increasing collaboration ensured that, at a personal level, I was not a detached observer but rather actively involved in solving some of the practical concerns of the participants.

The action research design, based on Freire’s values of equality and co-learning, allowed me to level the power differences between myself, as the researcher, and the participants. Although there is the potential for the researcher-participant relationship to be unbalanced with the researcher possessing more power and control, I positioned myself as a co-learner and emphasised the critical role and value of the participants’ contributions to the study to prevent this as far as possible. The participatory and collaborative nature of action research also helped to establish partnerships based on equality between myself and the participants. At all stages, I encouraged reflections and criticisms from participants. This was especially true in Phase three when I positioned the teacher participants as the experts to evaluate my study and the educational resource that I was developing.

Positioning myself as a critical investigator, I concur with Carr and Kemmis (2003, p.156), in their discussion on critical education science, that the researcher is pointed towards an educational re-construction that is “participatory and collaborative; envisages a form of educational research which is conducted by those involved in education themselves”. Rather

than the explanatory or understanding-based outcomes that are characteristic of positivist and interpretivist views respectively, by engaging in action research methodology, I sought to enhance and transform educational practices.

Gaining insight into the experiences and responses of survivors and the nature of physical and cyber bullying informed the intervention strategy that was integral to this study. This was achieved through the involvement of survivors, the key informants in this study, and collaboration between youth and teacher participants and me.

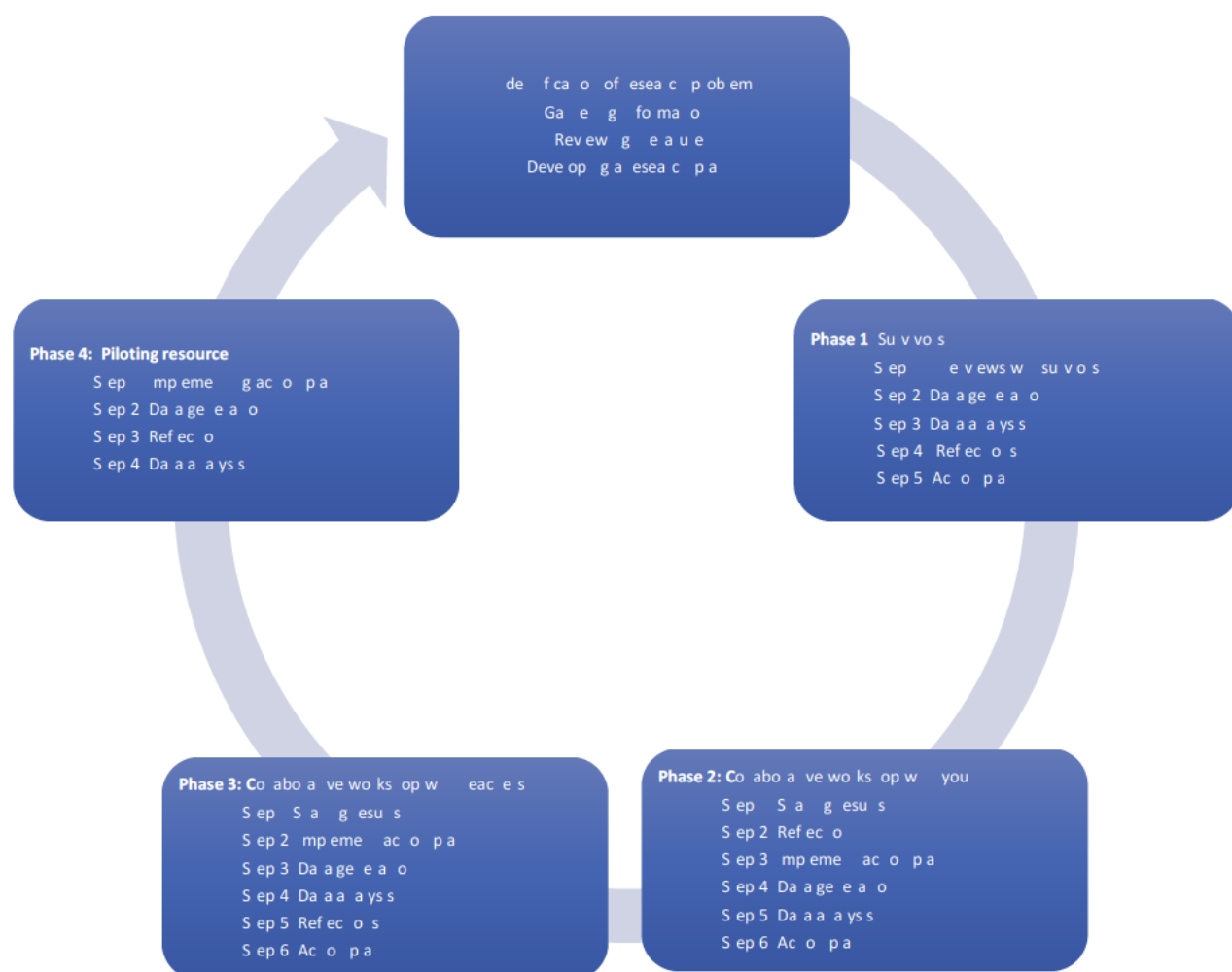
Three key elements for action research to prevail, according to Carr and Kemmis (2003), were mirrored in my research design. Firstly, the research design encompassed a project involving strategic action that sought improvement. Secondly, the project was subject to a cyclical process of planning, acting, developing, and reflecting and ensured that the inter-related activities were approached and implemented in a systematic self-critical way. Thirdly, collaborative control was sustained, even when participation gradually widened to include others who are affected by bullying. Thus, the action research process was set up to become a systematic intervention to ensure that the research shifted beyond describing, analysing, and theorising data to creating and working within partnerships to reconstruct and transform social structures (Somekh, 2006). The action research process is discussed below.

#### **4.7 Action research process**

As a process, action research can adopt a research design model to suit the nature of the problem under investigation. While there are multiple variations to models, they share the basic steps of data generation, analysis, and action-taking that shape all action research designs. These steps are, however, flexible and can be skipped or rearranged as they generally serve as guidelines in an action research project (Mertler, 2008). Within my study, I adopted Mertler's (2008, 2017) cyclical and linear processes with additions. My adoption of these two processes implied a macro and a micro process. The first step of my action research study incorporated a macro four-step cyclical process which involved interviews with

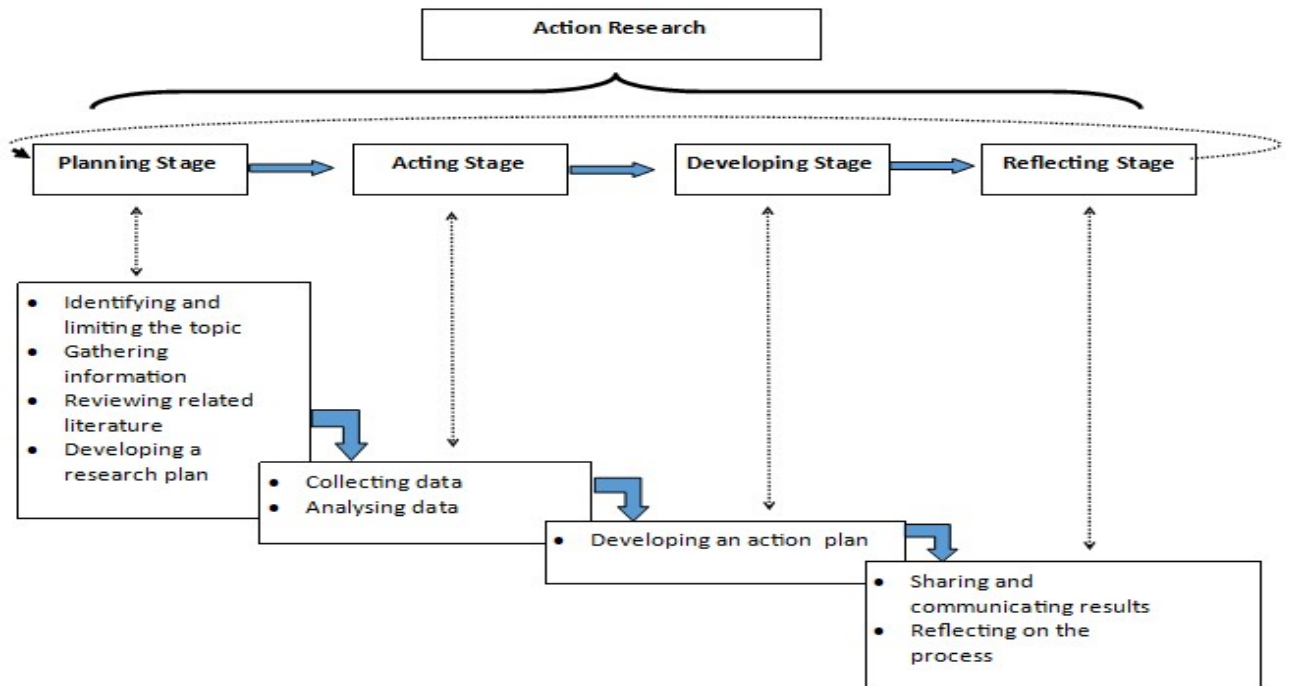
survivors, workshops with youth and teachers, and piloting the resource. This process is demonstrated in Diagram one below:

**Diagram 1: Four-step cyclical process**



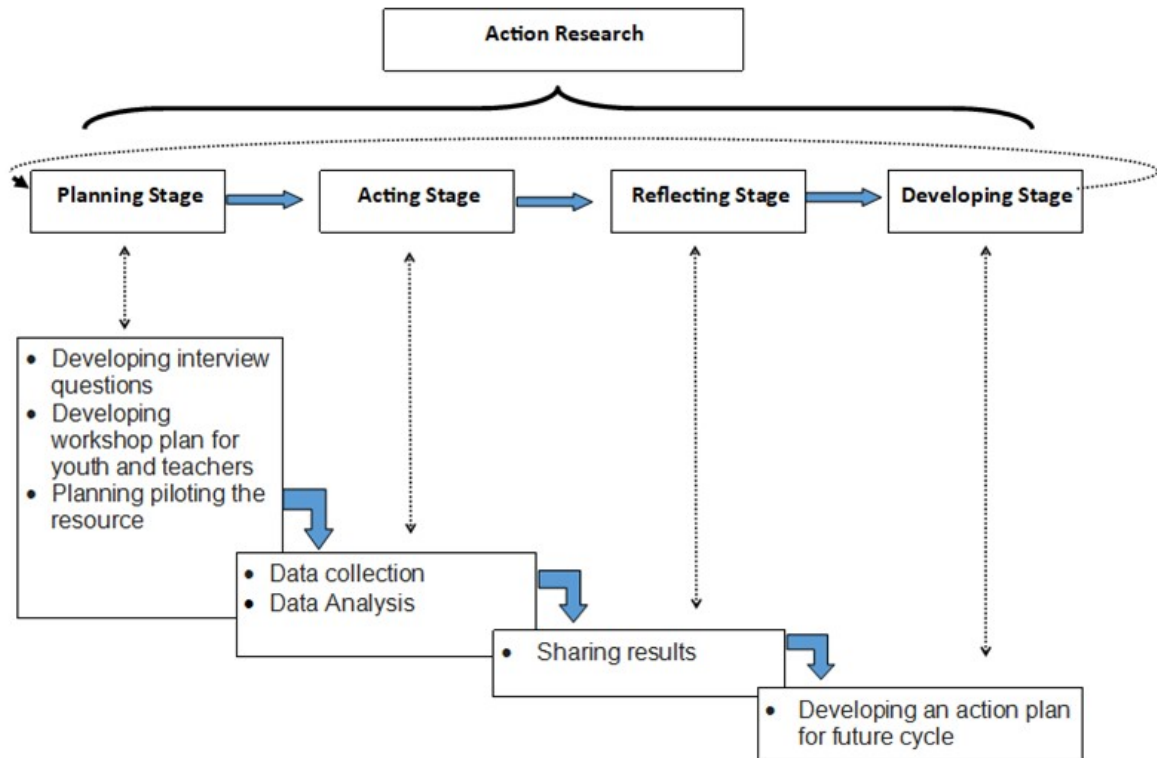
Using a linear process, Mertler (2008) integrates the two organisational schemes of the action research process showing the shared relationship between schemes, how they influence the ongoing cyclical process of action research, how the steps inform actions and vice versa, and how the linear process can be used to help summarise the action research process. Mertler's (2008) linear four stage process of action research involves a planning, acting, developing, and reflecting stage. I adopted this four-stage process, for the microstructure of each of my macro phases, with an adjustment – I interchanged the order of stages three and four so that the stage in which the resource was developed followed the reflection stage. Below is Mertler's (2008) linear process in Diagram two.

**Diagram 2: Integration of two organisational schemes for step-by-step process of action research (Mertler, 2008, p. 31)**



In conducting action research, I found the cyclical process of the model appealing because the steps of data generation, analysis, and taking action on the area of concern offered the opportunity to address the problem under investigation at a higher level and provided a more holistic understanding of the problem to work towards improvement. I adjusted and used the linear process (Mertler, 2008) as a guide to summarise the steps that informed the action research process adopted for this study as demonstrated in Diagram three below.

**Diagram 3: Four-step linear process (adapted)**



Each phase in the linear stage is within the first four-step cyclical process. Each of my macro phases involved my adopted and edited linear process comprising (1) planning for the action research, (2) acting on the plan, (3) reflecting on the process, and (4) developing an action plan for future cycles.

The action research process in this study encompassed four phases of data generation and analysis in order to reach its objectives. These research phases included individual interviews with survivors in Phase one, a collaborative workshop with youth in Phase two, and a collaborative workshop with teachers in Phase three. Each phase had its focus on strategy that opened up possibilities for the development of an educational resource to be used as an intervention. Phase four comprised the piloting of the educational resource as an effective intervention strategy. Each phase consisted of several steps, as demonstrated in Diagram one. The most common steps used in all four phases were generating data; analysing and interpreting data; developing an action plan; and sharing and communicating findings. This action research process is characteristic of a multi-phase action/reflection process. The

research design created spaces for knowledge production through partnerships of reflection, sustained dialogue, and creative action. Having used the cyclical process, shown in Diagram one, as the overall, macro process, I used the linear process, as illustrated in Diagram three above, which feeds into the cyclical process shown in Diagram one, to structure each phase in the cyclical process on a micro level. These four actions: plan, act, reflect, and develop and the selected steps that were taken to shape the action research process, which fed into the action research plan and procedure, are summarised below.

#### **4.8 Overview of the action research plan and procedure**

My action research plan and procedure encompassed the cyclical stage process with four phases as demonstrated in Diagram one. Each of the four phases incorporated the four micro stages as demonstrated in the linear process in Diagram three.

##### **4.8.1 Phase one**

**Purpose:** To obtain thick descriptions from survivors of their experiences of physical and cyber bullying and to record their responses in terms of how they dealt with their experiences.

**Step 1:** Data generation: Semi-structured interviews were conducted with each survivor.

**Step 2:** Data analysis: Analysis for Phase one was completed. I became more rigorous in my inquiry and reflected on emerging themes, critical issues, and challenges. Areas of importance and areas in need of development were identified.

**Step 3:** Reflections: Recommendations were captured and reflected upon.

**Step 4:** Action planning: Areas in need of development were identified with one of the main outcomes geared towards finding ways of developing an intervention by designing a set of educational tools as a response to physical and cyber bullying.

**Step 5:** Sharing and communicating results: My aim was to find innovative and creative ways of sharing information from Phase one and to use its findings to inform the development of an educational resource as an intervention.

#### **4.8.2 Phase two**

**Purpose:** To conduct a collaborative workshop with youth participants.

**Step 1:** Sharing and communicating results: A power-point presentation with key findings from Phase one was presented at the workshop.

**Step 2:** Reflection: Participants were invited to reflect on findings in Step one.

**Step 3:** Implementation of action plan: Participants were introduced to a set of educational activities developed at the end of Phase one. These encompassed three main data generation practices, namely *Extending conversations*, *Scenario presentations*, and *Collaborative writing* activities. The activities were geared towards finding ways of developing an intervention as a response to physical and cyber bullying.

**Step 4:** Data generation: Data was generated through participant engagement with the educational tools. Participants worked collaboratively sharing and communicating their ideas in their designated groups. Data was generated from the activities and from two plenary sessions. The data obtained and recommendations suggested informed the design of the educational resource.

**Step 5:** Data analysis: The data generated from the activities and discussions held at the plenary sessions was analysed. Major themes were identified, and participant recommendations were considered. The outcomes from the analysis fostered possible solutions and intervention strategies for physical and cyber bullying.

**Step 6:** Action Plan: Through a process of reflection and based on the recommendation made in step five for teacher involvement, a second collaborative workshop involving teachers was set up. The second recommendation from youth, for teachers to engage with the educational activities, was acted upon.

### 4.8.3 Phase three

**Purpose:** A second workshop with teachers was planned as part of Phase three. The intention behind engaging teachers was to determine and confirm the key features for the final educational resource.

**Step 1:** Sharing and communicating results: The rich findings and collective recommendations from youth participants in Phase two were presented to teachers. Teachers were allowed time to engage with the educational activities that were developed for Phase two.

**Step 2:** Implementation of action plan: A key intention behind engaging teachers was to facilitate their input into an interrogation of the educational activities developed for Phase two. Teacher engagement with these, furthered the final development of them as a potential educational resource.

**Step 3:** Data generation: Data was generated from the three data generating practices and the scheduled plenary session.

**Step 4:** Data Analysis: Recommendations were considered These supported the development and finalisation of an educational resource to be used by teachers in the classroom.

**Step 5:** Action plan: During reflection in Step four, the plan of action was for teachers to pilot the resource with learners in Phase four.

### 4.8.4 Phase four

**Purpose:** For the teachers to pilot the educational resource with learners.

**Step 1:** Implementation of the action plan: Teachers that participated in the workshop in the third phase were involved in the pilot resource implementation.

**Step 2:** Data generation: Data was generated from teachers' experiences piloting the resource and presented at a teacher feedback meeting. Secondary data was obtained from teacher



feedback cards. This teacher feedback meeting was also used to brainstorm ideas around converting the resource into a digital version.

**Step 3:** Sharing and communicating results: Teachers reported on the effectiveness of the resource, shared their concerns, discussed areas in need of development or change, and identified limitations.

**Step 4:** Data analysis: All recommendations were considered. Necessary adjustments to strengthen, improve, and finalise the resource were made.

**Step 5:** Reflections: Recommendations from teachers for the design of a digital resource were considered after completion of the research project to form part of on-going work.

#### **4.9 My journey through the action research process**

Establishing an action research plan was initially chaotic, given the complexity of addressing physical and cyber bullying from my position as a concerned digital citizen. This was further complicated by my long leave of absence from both the academic and teaching fields.

Despite the vision I held, to contribute towards mitigating bullying at school level, I had no clear plan in mind. I began seeking ways to advance my concerns via an academic inquiry.

My research plan evolved over time. The initial learning was informal and conducted online. During this period, I sourced a series of online news reports on bullying at schools, viewed filmed incidents of physical bullying, and created a folder of traditional newspaper cuttings of incidents in schools that occurred in and around my city. I initiated informal conversations, wanting to understand how ordinary citizens perceived the issue and whether they shared my concerns.

I learnt about a range of methodological approaches as I proceeded with my academic inquiry, through supervision meetings, student cohort meetings, and formal literature. I realised that my early responses during informal learning contained many think-act-reflect moments. This became the foundation upon which to establish a plan using action research to

guide my inquiry. This approach helped me to refine my research focus and provided a suitable “working context” from which I could position myself as a pedagogical leader. It also offered a methodology which honoured the notion of “personal value position” (McNiff, Lomax, & Whitehead, 2001, p. 36). All of these key features were important in defining the many emerging roles and positions I was to adopt throughout the action research plan.

The progression of the action research plan was developmental. Firstly, I wanted to understand how bullying played out in young peoples’ lives in both physical and cyber spaces, as well as the implications thereof. The rich data generated from interviews with survivors in Phase one produced an important set of themes. It also provided an in-depth understanding of the impact and the damaging consequences suffered by survivors. In addition, it shed light on the main features of bullying in physical and cyber space, such as, the emotional impact, the way events unfold, the role of bystanders and provocateurs, and the responses from parents, teachers, and the community.

After some reflection, a critical component of praxis, I proceeded to plan Phase two. I was curious to examine the knowledge about and views on physical bullying at schools and its extensions into cyber space held by young adults – both as digital citizens and former school learners. Phase two involved inviting a group of young adults to come together in a collaborative workshop-mode to deepen the interrogation of physical and cyber bullying. It became my intention to start shaping a process of partnership-building among survivors, young adults, and myself. The insights generated in Phase one prompted me to reflect on my informal learning period and to access the materials collected during that time to start creating creative and exciting ways for young adults, with myself as co-learner, to interrogate bullying. This process encouraged genuine engagement with the material as I sought to put together an authentic educational resource suitable for my study – one that participants would find interesting, stimulating, and relevant.

Using the action plan to map out and execute my pre-conceived role of action researcher as a co-learner, pedagogical leader, and change agent had the effect of supporting and strengthening the engagement and led to the development and design of an educational

resource. The resource encompassed a range of educational tools designed to intensify participation in the interrogation of physical and cyber bullying. Survivors' dehumanising experiences featured strongly as I sought ways to build their experiences into the respective activities and translate those experiences into humanising conversations among participants. The receptiveness of participants towards the survivor experiences helped to facilitate this shift.

Significant progress was made in Phase two. The action research plan showed its ability to facilitate the sharing, strengthening, and building of knowledge to deepen an understanding of bullying in schools and appropriate responses and interventions. A fundamental feature holding the action research plan together was survivor voice, an inherent feature of the educational resource. Survivor voice captured the nuanced and complex dynamics of bullying in physical and cyber space, thereby serving to educate participants on the issues, but also to motivate them to take the issue further and to explore the idea of involving new "persons of interest" such as teachers and school learners who, according to the young adults, were at the frontlines of bullying.

Prompted by my reflections on the rich triggers and insights developed in Phase two, I carefully considered the request made by young adults to involve teachers and reviewed what the action research plan had thus far accomplished. I also took the opportunity to confront the challenges, tensions, and anxiety I initially felt about my lengthy absence as an active teacher at school level. Negotiating my positionality, in this phase, I resolved that it remained vital that the voices of survivors and young adults be plainly heard in the plan, design, and reporting of research conducted in Phase one and Phase two. The educational resource documented thick descriptions of survivor experiences as well as the work conducted by the young adults and I made the decision to use the resource to open up the work done to the scrutiny of teachers in Phase three.

In engaging with the participant teachers in Phase three, I presented detailed accounts of and insights arising from the study thus far. Keeping teachers fully informed of my intentions, experiences, and knowledge helped to secure high levels of receptiveness to the study.

Furthermore, I created opportunities for the teacher participants to judge my action plan critically, specifically, the extent to which I had enriched their understanding of physical bullying and its extension into cyber space and advanced the study's agenda. This was also an opportunity to receive any suggestions for improving aspects of the resource from the teachers.

An in-depth review of the outcomes of the teacher participation revealed that teacher contributions succeeded in offering new knowledge and suggestions for the resource as an intervention that might address bullying in schools. During reflection on the feedback from the teachers, I came to comprehend the concerns and challenges teachers confront and gained a deeper understanding of the reasons behind their failed attempts to address, respond to, or educate learners about bullying in physical and cyber spaces. Focusing on Phase two and Phase three, each of which documented the challenges and difficulties of young adults and teachers respectively, I was able to gain more insight which I used to determine the kind of educational resource that might best address bullying in schools. The rich suggestions from teachers set the foundation for the development of the educational resource as a teacher resource – one that can be implemented by teachers in the classroom, as a viable intervention strategy. The planning of Phase four naturally arose from this development as there was a need to pilot the educational resource as a teacher resource to engage with learners in the classroom.

#### **4.10 Sample and sampling procedure**

According to Cavana, Delahaye, and Sekeran (2001), a population refers to the entire group of entities under study. A total of five young adult survivors who were above 18 years old, 16 youth between the ages of 18 and 26 years, and 12 teachers residing in Pietermaritzburg, KwaZulu-Natal, and surrounding towns participated in the study.

Accessing research participants involved a process of strategic planning. Administrative efforts were made to obtain informed permission to conduct the research from appropriate

gatekeepers. I share a close professional relationship with a well-established local youth support Non-Profit Organisation (NPO) called Love to Live. The NPO operates in the greater Pietermaritzburg district and has a strong association with schools. Its membership is made up largely of school learners, out-of-school youth, teachers, and parents. My own involvement as a volunteer within the organisation exposed me to many parents, learners, youth, and teachers. During these interactions, some of which included anti-bullying awareness campaigns, it was clear that there was a significant pool of potential participants who had first-hand insights into the phenomenon under study. The members of the organisation had knowledge of the nature and purpose of my study. Working within the organisation's ethical framework, I requested permission to conduct research with the organisation's youth and teacher members. I received a letter from the organisation granting me permission (Appendix B). Different sampling and recruitment strategies for each of the Phases described above are presented in Table one below.

**Table 1: Sample and sampling procedure**

Action Research Phase	Selection of Participants	Sampling Procedure	Recruitment Strategy
<b>Phase 1</b>	Survivors as initial key informants	Purposive sampling	Approached known youth via an NGO, who have first-hand insights into the phenomenon.
	Survivors as additional key informants	Snowball sampling	Initial key informants' acquaintances or on-line social networks directed me to contacting additional informants.
<b>Phase 2</b>	Youth participants	Purposive sampling	Approached youth division via NGO, who have first-hand insights into the phenomenon.  Request and approval from one survivor participant, to be



sampling method, I identified a specific number of individuals who had relevant knowledge and experience of and interest in bullying, the phenomenon under investigation in the study. This purposive sampling process continued until the desired sample size was reached (Goel & Salganik, 2010).

#### **4.10.3 Recruitment of key informants: Purposive sampling**

Two recruitment processes were used to achieve the desired key informant sample. The first recruitment process was through the help of the youth organisation. Contact with three informants was made through the organisation. Each informant was informed briefly by the organisation of the research study and my intention to conduct interviews based on their experiences. I received feedback from the organisation within a month of my request that contact with the informants had been made. I was granted permission by the informants, via the organisation, to make the necessary contact at any time after receiving notification.

The organisation was, with the permission of the survivors, allowed to give me their cell phone numbers so contact could be made. I made initial, formal contact with the informants telephonically to introduce myself and the study briefly, create rapport, and thank them for their willingness to participate in the study. The process of gaining access to the informants and scheduling and confirming dates for the interview session took at least four weeks.

#### **4.10.4 Recruitment of additional informants: Snowball sampling**

While the initial informants were purposefully selected according to the needs of the study, the sampling process was gradually adjusted to increase the sample size. Through snowball sampling, additional informants were recruited through nomination by the initial informants of other potential primary data sources via chain referral (Nieuwenhuis, 2010). Cohen et al. (2011, p. 158) succinctly summarise snowball sampling in which “researchers identify a small number of individuals who have the characteristics in which they are interested. These people are then used as informants to identify or put researchers in touch with others who

qualify for inclusion, and these, in turn, identify yet others.” Each informant was notified of my intention to include additional informants. They were briefed on the criteria for recommending and directing me to contact new key informants. Two of the informants indicated that they were aware of two individuals who had similar experiences and that they had a relatively close association with them. They volunteered to contact the individuals on my behalf. Two additional informants agreed to be interviewed after contact was made.

A total of five informants participated in Phase one. Using South African population category classifications, two survivors self-identified as Indian, one as White, one as Coloured, and one as Black. Demographics, Appendix C, show that most of the survivors were male (4) compared to one female survivor. The composition of the sample depended on access, recruitment, willingness, and availability of survivors to participate in the study. All the survivors signed informed consent before the interviews (Appendix D).

Hammersley and Atkinson, (1983, as cited in McGarry, 2016) recommend that informants should fit specific qualities to ensure the right participants for a study are selected. The selection criteria for the informants included:

1. a cross section of participants across race, gender, home-language, and socio-economic status
2. the participant must be an out of school, young adult over 18 years;
3. the participant must be residing in KwaZulu-Natal.
4. the participant recommended must have experienced bullying in a physical space and cyber space;
5. participants must have attended a private, government, or former model C designated school

#### **4.10.5 Recruitment of youth participants: purposive sampling**

Sixteen (16) youth participants were recruited for Phase two of the study. Demographics of these participants are attached in Appendix E. Sixteen (16) was the desired sample size for



the workshop. The age range of the sample was between 18 and 29. The average age was 23 years. There were more Indian (5) and Black (5) participants compared to Coloured (3) and White (3). The sample population comprised nine (9) females and seven (7) males.

Recruitment was done with the assistance and support of the Love to Live organisation which has a large youth membership. I contacted all 16 participants telephonically, prior to the workshop, to introduce myself and the study briefly, create rapport, and make the participants aware that I have acknowledged their interest and willingness to participate in the workshop. All youth participants indicated that they were available for the workshop at the scheduled date. One survivor volunteered participation and was recruited into the sample. All youth participants signed informed consent before the workshop (Appendix F).

The selection criteria for young adult participants included:

1. a cross section of youth participants across race, gender, home-language, and socio-economic status
2. The participant must be an out of school, young adult 18 years and older;
3. The participant must be residing in KwaZulu-Natal;
4. Participant must be a youth member affiliated to of Love to Live Organisation

#### **4.10.6 Recruitment of Teachers: Purposive sampling**

Twelve (12) teachers were invited through the Love to Live organization to participate in the study. An overview of the study, my intentions for a collaborative teacher workshop, and informed consent was sought at a face-to-face meeting with selected teacher participants at their regular meetings held at the organisation. This also included setting a tentative date to conduct the Phase three workshop. All teacher participants signed informed consent (Appendix G) before the workshop. The selection criteria for teachers included:

1. A cross section of teacher participants from different races and genders
2. The participant must be residing in KwaZulu-Natal

3. Participant must be a member of the Love to Live Organisation

#### **4.10.7 Recruitment of learners: Purposive sampling**

Sixteen (16) school learners were invited through the organisation to participate in the piloting of the educational resource. Demographics of this sample can be found in Appendix H. The overview of the study, my intention to hold a workshop, and informed consent was sought at a face-to-face meeting with parents at their regular meetings held at the organisation. The meeting also included setting a tentative date to conduct the Phase four workshop. Parents of learner participants signed informed consent (Appendix I) before the workshop. The selection criteria for learners included:

1. A cross section of learner participants from different races, genders, home-languages and socio-economic statuses;
2. The participant must be a high school learner not older than 18 years
3. The participant must be residing in KwaZulu-Natal;
4. Participant must be a member of Love to Live Organisation

#### **4.11 Data generation**

The study employed qualitative methods of data generation which were informed by the critical paradigm. This paradigm promotes collaborative, participatory, and dialogic processes of data generation. I generated data using several methods. Data generation refers to the process through which information relevant to the topic under investigation is obtained and recorded for future analysis, decision-making, planning actions, and passing on information to others (Neuman, 2000). I used data generating practices which included interviews and collaborative dialogical workshops. The data generation practices for the workshops comprised *Extending conversations*, *Scenario presentations*, and *Collaborative writing* activities, three plenary sessions, a teacher feedback meeting, and teacher feedback cards for the evaluation of the educational resource. An overview of the data generation practices is in Appendix J. A period of at least eight to ten months was needed to gather,

reflect, and analyse the data after each phase as well as to plan for the next phase. The sources of data that the study used to answer the research questions can be found in Appendix K.

#### **4.11.1 Semi-structured interviews**

The first data generating practice for this study was interviews. Fox and Bayat (2008) describe interviews as semi-formal conversations with individuals or groups guided by interviewers based on a set of pre-determined questions referred to as an interview schedule. I conducted one-on-one semi-structured interviews with survivors to get an in-depth understanding of the nature and experiences of and responses to bullying, as well as their proposals for mitigation measures.

Five interviews were conducted between August and September 2019. Two informants were not readily available as both resided in cities outside Pietermaritzburg. This was the city of Durban (90 km away from Pietermaritzburg) and the city of Ladysmith (165 km away from Pietermaritzburg) respectively. I travelled to Durban to conduct the interview at a public space, in a quiet coffee shop in Durban's local mall. The informant from Ladysmith later opted to travel to Pietermaritzburg for the interview session during a visit to relatives. Three interviews were conducted in the Education Building at the University of Kwazulu-Natal. All interviews were conducted dependent on the participants' schedules. Five such interviews were completed at the end of September 2019.

I developed an interview schedule (Appendix L) following a semi-structured format for the interviews according to the research purposes and objectives. The open-ended questions allowed survivors to speak for themselves while allowing me to enter into a conversation to gather information and understand their lived experience, how they interpreted their experiences, and their responses to bullying. Additionally, survivors' in-depth perspectives ensured that they shared their views, the effects of their experiences, and how these experiences impacted their daily lives.

The length of the interview sessions ranged from 40 minutes to an hour. All interviews were conducted in English. With permission, all interviews were audio-recorded in order to capture the survivors' responses. Cohen et al. (2011) emphasise that non-verbal communication should be attended to. A note pad was used in conjunction with the audio recording to ensure the non-verbal aspects, such as facial expression or mood, during the discussion were captured. Taking notes ensured that I asked additional questions when elaboration of information was needed.

Though this data generating practice had many benefits, especially for informing the process of developing and investigating the effectiveness of an intervention, it was not without limitations. The proposed sample for Phase one was initially eight survivors. It was difficult accessing three additional participants. In total, five survivors participated in Phase one. Despite witnessing the many filmed incidents of physical bullying on social media or reading about incidents in the local newspapers occurring in local schools, it remained difficult to access or recruit survivors. Survivors may have been available, but ethical constraints prevented me from accessing and/or contacting them.

I dealt with these challenges through engagement with youth and teachers who shared a critical understanding of what was happening around bullying. The critical paradigm adopted in the study also helped me to be critical and interpret the constructed meaning of the survivors' lived experiences of bullying. In addition, the paradigm aided in balancing the provided information by all research participants. The collaborative workshops, explained below, helped me verify claims made by the survivors. Chapter five reports on the key findings which emerged from the analysis of the interviews. This chapter also reveals how the stories shared by survivors inspired the development of educational activities for further data generation and for the development of the final educational resource.

#### **4.11.2 Youth collaborative workshop**

Planning for Phase two started in October 2019 once the interview transcripts from Phase one had gone through the analysis and reflection process. The outcomes from Phase One made it possible to enter into a partnership with youth on a collective platform and to deepen an understanding of feelings, thoughts, attitudes, and views held around the phenomenon. The educational activities I developed, based on the interview data from Phase one, reflected the views, experiences, and feelings of the survivors and opened up possibilities for the development of an appropriate educational intervention to mitigate bullying in physical and cyber space.

Phase two was conducted using three data generating activities, namely, *Extending conversations*, *Scenario presentations*, and *Collaborative writing*, and was supported by two plenary discussion sessions. The two plenary sessions were to ensure that youth got the opportunity to uncover additional data that could be lost in data generated individually (De Vos, Strydom, Fouche, & Delpont, 2005). The activities not only prompted youth to have dialogic interactions and discussions among themselves about the research topic, but also encouraged them, during the plenary sessions, to share new insights and verify existing results from Phase one. The rich insights that emerged from the collaborative engagement moved the study beyond Phase two, towards the development of an educational resource for teachers to use in the classroom to mitigate experiences of bullying in physical and cyber space. The richer, detailed process of Phase two and its findings are presented in Chapter six.

#### **4.11.2.1 Challenges/Limitations of Phase 2 Workshop**

At least five of the youth participants were not readily available for the workshop. This caused a slight delay to the initial date set for the workshop as they were college/university students away from the city. The workshop was scheduled for November 2019 but took place on the 6th of December 2019 to accommodate returning students to participate in the workshop.

The duration of the workshop was planned to be a half-day. Each activity took longer than its time allocation, however, resulting in the third activity being rushed and requiring alternate means of data generation, post workshop.

Scheduled electricity/power outages for two hours during an important part of the first activity, which involved watching videos through power point, added a delay to the workshop schedule before a contingency plan was put into place. I shared the video links and participants watched the videos using their cell phones.

Some of the participants showed their interest and willingness to participate in other areas or phases of the research process. However, these participants were mostly students that were away at college and would not be available for participation.

#### **4.11.3 Teacher collaborative workshop in Phase 3**

Phase three involved a collaborative workshop with teachers. The decision to conduct the workshop was influenced by the strong recommendations put forward by the youth in Phase two. My hope in including teachers as participants was, firstly, to allow for a presentation of new and different insights into the nature and experiences of and responses to bullying in physical and cyber space. Secondly, I wanted to create further opportunities for teachers to recognise their own positionality in relation to the recommendations that were identified in the analysis process in Phase two. Another key intention behind engaging teachers in this way was to facilitate their input into an interrogation of the educational activities developed for Phase two. I hoped to use teachers' input for the educational resource's final development as a potential resource for schools to use to mitigate bullying in physical and cyber space. While the initial invitation was intended to a larger group of teachers, participant numbers were scaled back in keeping with the university's prevailing regulations/protocol in response to the coronavirus pandemic. The workshop took place on 29th of October 2020.

#### **4.11.4 Piloting the resource**

The final phase of the action research process, Phase four, comprised the implementation and evaluation of the educational resource developed in previous phases. Phase four was conducted in the form of a half-day workshop, involving a group of teachers and learners. At least three teachers who participated in Phase three volunteered their assistance in piloting the resource with learners in Phase four. Sixteen (16) learners from seven (7) schools, all DOE-approved and affiliated with the Love to Live organisation, attended the workshop. Learner demographics are given in Appendix H. The learners were purposefully chosen to reflect a diverse representation across race, age, gender, and socio-economic background. Despite attempts to include White learners in the sample, the parents of such learners were concerned and chose not to allow participation. Love to Live assisted me to obtain informed consent (Appendix I) from learners' parents/guardians for their participation. Phase four took place in a local community hall on the 8th of May 2021.

While the initial invitation was intended for a larger group of learners and teachers, participant numbers were ultimately scaled back in keeping with the university's prevailing regulations/protocol in response to the coronavirus pandemic.

#### **4.11.5 Reporting techniques of ongoing data generation**

According to Riel (2010), action research involves discrete experimentation in each of the cycles in which action is taken with the aim of studying the resultant change. Feedback on this process generally involves a report detailed by cycle or a report on all the cycles in summary format. A guidepost of techniques for data analysis (Riel, 2010) set out below, was integrated to support and promote action research data analyses:

1. Cycle research questions: questions were asked to support reflection;
2. Evidence used to evaluate the action was informed through youth and teacher collaborative workshops for feedback and feed forward;

3. Evaluation was informed by the reflections of participants at the end of each workshop and at the end of Phase four during the evaluation of the resource;
4. Reflection: generating extensive data from different sources, such as my field notes and journal, helped support reflection at varying phases, including looking back at my own actions. Notes were made of any additions or changes to my actions I would make if I had to repeat the process. Surprises from the generated data were also recorded.

Data analysis for each phase of my study was presented in a summative reporting format to the participants in the next phase.

#### **4.12 Data analysis**

Neuman (1997) describes the process of data analysis in a qualitative study as the organisation of textual and descriptive data into categories for interpretation in order to identify patterns and relationships. Elo and Kyngäs (2008) define qualitative data analysis as a process of making sense and meaning out of textual data. It is a process that prepares data – through the systematic searching for, and arranging and organising of data – for breaking and synthesising into manageable units in an attempt to increase the researcher’s understanding in a way in which it is possible to share research findings with others (Creswell, 2009).

Thematic analysis was applied to the qualitative data (responses from the interviews and collaborative workshops) in this research. Braun and Clarke (2006, p. 79) claim that “[t]hematic analysis is a method for identifying, analysing and reporting patterns (themes) within data. It minimally organizes and describes your data set in (rich) detail.” The scholars argue that thematic analysis is a particularly useful method for researchers working with data generated from a large range of perspectives as it allows the organisation of a large amount of textual information into manageable units through the identification of themes. The themes give insights into similarities, differences, patterns, and relationships in the data.

Furthermore, the themes are generated from within the data itself, and thus, unexpected insights can arise organically allowing for the development of rich and unique understandings (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Regarding large data sets, King (2004) maintains that thematic analysis can be used to summarise key features. The audio-recorded interviews and plenary



discussion sessions were transcribed prior to conducting analysis. Once the data was transcribed, thematic analysis was conducted. Words, patterns, and themes were coded and then separated into different categories and examined.

My action research study also followed an on-going process of reflection and analysis after data was generated at the end of each phase. I envisaged a time frame of at least eight to ten months would be needed to gather and analyse the data and plan for the next phase. This period was given to allow adequate time for data analysis, as well as reflection and meaning-making from the analysis (Mills, 2003). This time was also needed to summarise the findings so that they could be presented in the next phase. The action research process involved the cyclical process of data generation, data analysis and reflection, planning actions, and the generation of additional data throughout the research project (Miles et al., 2013). I intended to interpret the data generated at the different phases supported by the data sets outlined below.

**Table 2: Data analysis methods**

Data set	On-Going Analysis	Implementation
<b>Observation</b>	Use of observation grid	Participant observation during all phases was recorded.
<b>Field notes</b>	Textual activity supported by observation grid	I took field notes during observation at all phases.
<b>Logs of meetings</b>	To incorporate planning and reflecting sessions, feedback and feed forward.	Introductions; planning and reflecting together with respective participants.

<b>Reflexive Diary</b>	To reflect on all stages of the research process.	Recording of all important dates of sessions and meetings; notes on incidences that impacted positively or negatively on the contact sessions were considered.
------------------------	---	--

#### 4.13 Trustworthiness

Using the standards of Guba and Lincoln (1994), the action research design was constructed to be robust and trustworthy based on the four recognised pillars of credibility, dependability, transferability, and confirmability.

They study design included collaborative, multi-dimensional strategies for engagement based on the process of “theory and practice, thinking and doing, reflecting and performing” (Eikeland, 2006, p. 222) while simultaneously maintaining a dynamic learning relationship with the selected participants and processes.

The validity of the study was established based on Whitehead and McNiff's (2006) three methods: “showing the authenticity of the evidence base, explaining the standards of judgement used, and demonstrating the reasonableness of the claim”. Credibility was promoted and trustworthiness was established through my choice of triangulation processes incorporated into the action research study.

To increase trustworthiness and credibility, the cycles of action, reflection, and interaction by means of collaborative and reflective tasks and activities, working in teams with respective participants, were ongoing. In addition, reporting and presenting findings from previous engagement with participants to participants in following phases allowed the constant

monitoring and appraising of the resource design during the different phases. These strategies also deepened understandings, helped with constructive critique, and validated interpretations. This ensured prolonged engagement with participants which increased the trustworthiness of the study because it allowed the identification and verification of reappearing patterns and the continuous checking of perspectives (Guba & Lincoln, 1994).

The four phases of the action research process reinforced the overall trustworthiness framework. Member-checking was applied (Stringer, 2008). Survivors were invited to read through the transcripts of their interviews. Participants noted what they saw as the pertinent points that surfaced from the interviews and were able to recognise immediately descriptions and confirm that descriptions and interpretations were accurate (Sandelowski, 1986). In Phase two, youth also engaged in dialogue with the survivor stories generated in Phase one and provided a level of confirmation and extension of these experiences. In Phase three, key findings from Phases one and two were shared with teachers. I then invited teacher participants in Phase three to pilot the resource in Phase four as a credibility strategy. This allowed me to spend sufficient time with teachers to emphasise recurrence and to identify reappearing patterns (Leininger, 1994). This approach ensured intense participation of all participants at the different phases of the action research process over an extended period of time. Kielhofner (1982) supports this approach as it is key to enhancing research findings.

Melrose (2001) and Stringer (2008) maintain that sufficient rigour is continually developed when the study critically proceeds through several cycles. Cycles, which are key in action research, inform the nature and design of later cycles as more is learnt in each subsequent cycle. Using this process in my study increased the credibility and confirmability of the findings. Reports on outcomes and recommendations from all events carried out were presented to the supervisor for review, to get feedback, and confirm progress. All interviews and workshops were audio-recorded and transcripts shared with my supervisor.

At a qualitative level, the design of the study provided rich, thick narratives. Perspectives from the various participants were subject to robust self and cross reflection. The emerging themes and perspectives were validated through further member checking. Throughout the

process, the study was subject to peer scrutiny through cohort programmes and guidance from my supervisor.

#### **4.14 Researcher positionality and reflexivity**

The awareness of a researcher's own positionality is critical in qualitative research, especially action research, and can be detrimental to the study if not recognised. Reflexivity is an important strategy used in qualitative research in general, and in action research in particular, to take researcher positionality into account and ensure quality control (Berger, 2015). I felt a deep sense of concern and sensitivity towards survivor experiences of bullying, as well as accountability in being a witness and bystander as a digital citizen. Through this research, I honoured my urgent need to challenge the status quo, to make a difference to the lives of school learners, and, in a way, to be faithful to their voices. Kaye and Harris (2017, p. 9) maintain that "action researchers are insider researchers who see themselves as part of the context they are investigating".

Engaging with the literature on school violence in the South African context as well as with the more formal methodologies, such as action research, prompted me to think about and acknowledge my background, as recommended by Vanner (2015) who argues that opinions, values and beliefs inevitably follow the researcher through the research process. This led me to think more critically about the underlying factors that contribute to the phenomenon in question. Positioning myself as an action researcher also prompted me to interact with some complex situations and to venture into more uncertain and unfamiliar contexts, ones that I embraced with determination. My choice of methodological approach, the choice of participants, and my collision with ethical anxieties and barriers in wanting to do research on violence with young people simultaneously carved this new path. Such a path removed me from a familiar comfort zone and set me on a quest to address the issues of social justice through action, research, and more action. This quest bolstered me from within and forced me to question and challenge the existing insights I have on my identity and the multiple roles and positions that we take on, broadly, in society. My research approach created multiple spaces and positions to practice and promote my research goals. I anticipated, as outlined by

Berger (2015), joint and shared experiences with the participants; the movement of insider and outsider researcher positions as the study unfolded; and my personal encounters with unfamiliarity and inexperience with what was being studied.

#### **4.15 Ethical considerations**

The study's ethical considerations in the four phases included voluntary participation. None of the participants were coerced or manipulated into participation; they took part only if they were willing and comfortable to do so. Another ethical consideration involved permission for the use of audio-recording. To ensure that no important information was lost, the interviews, discussions from the plenary sessions, and teacher feedback meeting were audio-recorded and the recordings, along with the transcripts, were kept at a safe place at the university, accessible only to myself and my supervisor. Before the start of every interview and preceding workshops, the participants were sensitised about the interviews and discussions being recorded. Moreover, informed consent was received through the signing of an informed consent letter, including privacy, confidentiality, anonymity, and protection from harm. The participants were briefed and made fully aware of the research procedures before the start of each interview session and workshop. The procedures included a full description of the purpose, the duration, benefits, and limitations of the study. Consequently, provision for counselling was made available should a survivor or any participant require this service before, during, or after the interviewing contact session or workshops. Counselling services are well established within the Love to Live organisation and these were made available to the survivors and other participants as required at no cost to myself or the participants. A letter from a psychiatrist confirming the availability of these services can be found in Appendix M. None of the participants requested counselling services.

I was also aware that the nature of the research could trigger painful memories and cause discomfort. It was decided at the outset that, if this occurred at any stage, the interview session would be stopped and the participant allowed time to decide whether to continue with the session or opt for expert counselling. This aspect of the research also meant that the

following up and monitoring of the situation to ensure that participants were coping was necessary.

In relation to Phase two, a separate briefing with one participating survivor took place two weeks before the day of the workshop. The survivor was briefed on my plan for Phase two, the nature of the workshop, the general composition and profile of youth participants, and the use of survivor profiles as case studies in the education activities. The survivor was also briefed on anonymity, counselling services, and voluntary participation. The survivor was not coerced or manipulated into participating. The survivor did not request counselling before, during, or after the workshop. Data generation was conducted according to the guidelines of the Ethics Committee of the Faculty of Education of University of Kwazulu-Natal. The ethical clearance and ethical re-certification can be found in Appendix N.

#### **4.16 Conclusion**

This chapter demonstrated that the study was framed within the critical paradigm and used the qualitative methodology of action research. Survivors, youth, and teachers were selected to participate in the study contributing towards descriptions and discussions regarding the nature and experiences of, as well as responses to physical and cyber bullying. In addition, an educational resource emerged through the process of the study as a mitigation measure. This education resource was refined in an on-going process of development and evaluation. The chapter also discussed the sampling methods used in the study. Purposive and snowball sampling were used to recruit research participants. Finally, the chapter described the data generation, analysis, and ethical considerations involved in this study. The next four chapters deal with the four phases of the action research. The following chapter presents the findings that emerged from the interviews with young adult survivors in Phase one.

## **CHAPTER FIVE: PHASE ONE – INTERVIEWS WITH YOUNG ADULT SURVIVORS**

### **5.1 Introduction**

Phase one of this action research study, as outlined in Chapter four, comprised of in-depth individual interviews with survivors of bullying. In the interviews, survivors discussed the following: their accounts of and responses to their bullying experiences; the use of digital technologies, social network sites (SNSs) as such, to facilitate and sustain bullying in physical and cyber spaces; and the limited support received from schools. Additionally, survivors were able to share their views on the effects of their experiences and how these experiences impacted their daily lives.

The survivors' stories were poignant and often disturbing, revealing many moments of despair and hopelessness whilst at the same time illuminating their resilience and perseverance in attempting to deal with and overcome the harm they endured. Taken together, the survivors' rich and, in many cases, similar accounts enabled rigorous examination of the meaning that these survivors attached to the bullying they experienced.

This phase involved interviews with five survivors and the data was analysed using thematic analysis. The following section reports on the key themes which emerged from an analysis of the interviews conducted with the survivors in Phase one of the action research process. Before I present the findings, a synopsis of each survivor and their experiences of bullying is presented.

### **5.2 Survivors experiences of physical and cyber bullying**

**Priya: “I cried a lot, but no-one cares really”**

19-year-old Priya doesn't fit the mold of a typical teenage girl, nor does she want to. She enjoys wearing her hair short and holds down two jobs, waitressing and fixing cars which is her life passion. Unfortunately, being different was something that didn't go down well when she was in school. Girls would often make fun of her and when she cut her hair short the ridiculing and harassment escalated.

I cried a lot, but no-one cares really. – Priya

Priya had two videos taken of her. The first was recorded by a learner sitting behind Priya in a classroom and shows the back of Priya's head. The clip was circulated on social media. The clip went around for days, during which time, Priya's fellow learners pointed and laughed at her during breaks, in the school hallway between lessons, and even as she walked home.

In the second video, as the bell rings for break and Priya walks into the restroom, she is followed by a group of girls. While one of the girls' records on her cell phone, the other girls shove, slap, and pull Priya's hair until eventually a teacher hears the commotion and intervenes. After the video was shared, the entire school knew what had happened and switched on their screens to watch.

This is how it is. They all knew about it but no-one did anything to step in and stop it. The same happens when there is a fight outside school. They all hurry to record and then watch it like it is a show. Its more for entertainment and it all starts and ends with social media. – Priya

The humiliation and pain for Priya deepened as the video clip made its rounds on social media. Apart from constantly reliving the experience every time she went onto social media, the onward clicks, 'likes', and comments were equally abusive and painful to her. Fellow learners and random strangers called her ugly, told her that she looks more like a boy than a girl, and passed harsh judgments rather than calling out the perpetrators.



Priya, who was generally a sociable, vivacious young woman, eventually retreated into herself – her personality changed, and she steered away from having any friends. Who could she trust when even her friends betrayed her and didn't stand up for her?

I was very frustrated and very hurt. I cried a lot and questioned why this happened to me. I am honestly a very nice person and didn't deserve any of it. No-one cared really. There was no solution whatsoever. – Priya

**Byron: “How do people ‘like’ something like this?”**

Byron's friends pleaded with him not to leave the school gates, but he knew he had to face the gang of boys who were waiting for him at some point. The teachers never got involved.

It wasn't their job or perhaps they themselves were afraid. – Byron

Like many other boys at his school, Byron carried a knife in his pocket, for protection.

Nothing out of the ordinary as boys have to protect themselves. – Byron

The moment he walked out of the school gate, the cameras started rolling. The gang of boys pounced and moments later Byron stumbled back into the school. He made it to the principal's office before collapsing. He was in a coma for several weeks and when he eventually regained consciousness, he had no recollection of what had happened to him until his mother told him and then showed him the video of the brutal attack. Byron didn't remember much of the incident.

Just when I got stabbed, I didn't feel anything. – Byron

Not only was he stunned by the brutality of what had happened but by the fact the video had gone viral on social media and had attracted nearly 250 000 views and hundreds of 'likes'. For seven years after the incident, Byron repeatedly returned to the internet site to keep track of the video. He hoped that one day the platform would remove the clip.

How do people 'like' something like this? – Byron

**Siya: "Nothing good comes from social media"**

An innocuous comment was all that was needed to trigger the aggression. Siya had been continuously bullied, especially after school and on the taxi, back home. The boys were looking for any excuse to get him that day. It all happened in a blur outside the school – there was a knife and then there was blood, lots of it everywhere. One boy even recorded the incident on a cell phone!

They just record, laugh, everything is always a big joke. It's exciting to have fun after school so what happened to me must have been fun for them. – Siya

The entire attack had been planned and details for it shared on social media ensuring that everyone turned up to watch. Siya felt bitterly betrayed because his own friends came to watch and one of them even recorded the incident. Videos of the bloody attack were all over social media, with some viewers even presuming that Siya was the instigator and troublemaker.

Nothing good ever comes from social media. – Siya

**Jason: “Humiliating edited clip caused the most pain”**

It all started with social media. Jason enjoyed going to gym and posting pictures on Instagram of his workouts. This was not unusual for a digital age teenager, but some of the boys at his school became jealous of him and his posts.

At first, they targeted him on social media posting mocking offensive comments. The harassment escalated to face to face verbal altercations which intensified as time went on until news circulated on a WhatsApp group that there was going to be a fight after school.

It was all planned. – Jason

Lots of learners pitched up outside school waiting eagerly to record the fight. Not only were the boys lying in wait, one of them had brought their father to help. The father struck Jason in the face with his car key, drawing blood, before the other boys joined in. The entire incident was posted online.

Jason returned to school the next day and was greeted with jeers, pointed fingers, and lots of laughter. He was humiliated the entire day and decided he could not go back, at least not for a while. So, he stayed at home for three days, switching off his cell phone as well.

When he returned to school, the teasing and harassment resumed, even worse than it had been previously. Jason could not understand why until one of his friends showed him a second video that was circulating. Someone had edited the video adding music and lyrics for dramatic effect and to increase Jason’s humiliation.

Humiliating edited clip caused the most pain. – Jason

Jason opted to open criminal charges against the perpetrators. This brought some relief as the video was removed from social media and the perpetrators agreed to pay the medical bills from the assault. The situation at school did not improve, however, as all his friends abandoned him for fear of being ridiculed or harassed themselves. Jason felt betrayed and let down by those who should have stood up for him, something he claims he would have done for anyone else.

Perplexingly, the school suspended both Jason and the perpetrators and seemed disinterested in taking any action to support Jason or address bullying in general. After finishing school, Jason decided he needed to get away from Pietermaritzburg and relocated to a new town as an escape.

**Teejay: “I tried to run away but it still follows me and haunts my life”**

In 2017 Teejay was a 16-year-old learner in grade ten. He sometimes stuttered when he spoke and was often ridiculed and mocked by some of his classmates. This did not deter him from standing up for himself. The teachers were used to the bickering and even when tensions ran high, they did not pay much attention, opting to turn a deaf ear rather than intervene.

On one occasion, however, the teasing and verbal altercations escalated further than usual. Teejay could feel a palpable tension in the air as he prepared to leave school. The bell rang and everyone filed out including the group of boys that often taunted and bullied Teejay. Outside the gate groups of learners had gathered.

It was as though everyone was expecting something to happen. – Teejay

Suddenly he was surrounded by the group of boys. They started pushing him around before assaulting him with punches and kicks. He did not realise it at the time, but some of the boys had their cell phones out and were recording the attack on him.

When he got home, and switched on his cell phone, he was shocked to find the video clip rapidly circulating on various WhatsApp chat groups. His mom bundled him into the car and rushed back to school to confront management about the incident and ensure they took immediate steps to have the clip removed from social media. Sadly, very little was done, and the incident haunted him for the rest of his schooling career.

When he returned to school after the incident, the teasing, and taunting continued. His family made the decision to relocate him to a different school. However, the tentacles of social media have a far reach – the video of the incident rapidly extended beyond the existing WhatsApp groups and was shared with learners at Teejay's new school.

Matters took a turn for a worse and Teejay faced a fresh onslaught of bullying, harassment, and teasing at his new school. This had a devastating impact on his life. He became reclusive and did not go out in public for nearly two months, missing many weeks of school. He felt that everyone was attacking him.

My entire world was caving in. – Teejay

Eventually, it became too much, and Teejay fled Pietermaritzburg to live in another city to complete his tertiary studies.

I tried to run away but it still follows me and haunts my life. – Teejay

Five years after the incident, at the time of the interview, Teejay was still suffering the impacts of his experiences at school. Occasionally, when he socialises with friends and family, he has the distinct sense that the video clip is still out there, following him wherever he goes.

I still hear hushed tones wherever I go. – Teejay

### **5.3 The impact of bullying in different spaces**

An exploration of survivors' experiences revealed that each survivor experienced bullying in multiple spaces: inside the school, outside school, within communities, in social settings, and on various SNSs. In the case of each survivor, the transfer of the initial physical act to cyber space had the effect of exacerbating their bullying experience. The survivors were confronted with situations where physical altercations in the school environment were deliberately instigated, video-recorded, and posted onto social media in order to prolong the bullying experience.

Teejay's statement – "I received so many threats after the incident ... all over school, the shopping mall, actually wherever I went, even at socials..." – highlights the myriad physical settings in which such bullying can occur. Teejay was able to reflect upon and assess his experience in different settings by observing that it is easier to manage or control physical bullying than cyber bullying because, with cyber bullying, "... Once it's out in cyber space, everyone attacks you. Having your incident posted on social media is bullying on a much grander scale."

Teejay's comments were substantiated further when he explained that moving from one school to another in order to escape the bullying did not work. He said most of the learners at the new school already knew about the original bullying incident at his former school as a result of it being posted on social media. According to Teejay, this "... straight away created a lot of negativity and hostility towards me and I became the regular topic of conversation amongst the learners everywhere due to this video clip". Besides giving a fulsome reflection on his experience, his comments illuminate the lasting impact of his experience over time.

Teejay's experience reveals the powerful reach, both in space, time, and audience, of his bullying experience and the inadequacy of a different environment, his new school, to provide peace and safety. Quite literally, there is no escape. As Teejay remarks: "... This guy from the old school, was very much plotting with his friends in my new school to sort of get stuck into me and put me in my place, from behind social media".

Priya's account of being bullied in various physical settings and then in cyber space, again highlights the relentlessness of the bullying experience:

I was constantly made fun off because of my 'tomboy' haircut. The girls would laugh, tease me and take photographs of me, whether at tea-breaks or when they sat behind me in the classroom. Without realising, it was posted instantly on their social media pages. Others would see it the same time on their phones ... it was exhausting being teased and laughed at the entire day, sometimes without knowing why. When I would go home and switch on my mobile, I would see the pictures and read the horrible comments. Then only did I understand. They took away my self-esteem.

Priya's testimony highlights the fact that the classroom, which one would expect to be a relatively safe place, is a likely arena for both traditional and cyber types of bullying. Referring to a physical fight in which she was involved in the school toilets that was filmed and posted on social media, she emphasised that the video clip "was just another place from all the other places like the classroom, the corridors and the school hall". She was emphatic in

saying that she felt her bullying experiences were relentless and “shadowed” her everywhere she went.

Priya noted that when she became a young adult and witnessed many other learner-related incidents of physical bullying posted on social media, memories of her experience were triggered. Reflecting on her experience, she said that she understood what a survivor had to endure merely in physical settings, even before the extension of the incident into cyber space. In contrast to Teejay, who felt he could better handle the bullying in physical settings, Priya felt that the bullying in physical settings was: “just as bad, if not worse ... people need to understand that watching videos of learner fights is nothing new because learners fight every day, everywhere!”

Jason’s account focused largely on the effects – humiliation and embarrassment – he suffered, as a result of a video of him posted online. Like Teejay, he said that while he was able to defend himself in physical settings, he had no control over content posted via social media nor its lingering negative psychological impacts.

I used Instagram as a good place to post my fitness profile, creating a positive image for myself. Social media turned it into my worst nightmare in a blink of an eye. It is people who do this to deliberately degrade and take all your confidence away. While I can get over the fights that took place outside school on the many occasions, I can’t get over my experience in cyber space.

Interestingly, two other survivors, Byron and Siya, both of whom were stabbed just outside their respective schools, said that video recordings of the incidents posted on social media were “just a consequence” of the incidents. Siya was subjected to physical bullying in several places at school and in the taxi going home in the afternoons before the stabbing incident occurred and was posted on social media. Byron said: “If you didn’t see the video, it doesn’t mean the violence is not happening in all the other places.” Byron’s bullying experiences, in fact, took place mostly in a community setting, where he resided.



I had to face what was going to happen to me outside after school. If they were not going to get me here, they would find me in the community ... these fights carry on in the community between the gang members and the taxi drivers ... but they chose to come and wait for me outside my school to find and finish me off.

Byron and Siya did not experience any further bullying in physical settings after their respective stabbing incidents, yet cyber space offered a constant reminder of it. While Siya maintained that it saddened him that one of his fellow learners, someone he thought of as a friend in fact, had recorded and posted the incident, he was more worried about having no privacy or closure in cyber space. Besides the video being posted, there were many online news articles about the incident, most of which included a photograph of him in his bloodied school shirt. “I really didn’t expect this ... as much as I want to put this horrific incident behind me, cyber space will not let me forget this experience. It haunts me every day because I know I’m out there!”.

Byron suggested that he felt psychologically trapped by the representations of him that persisted in cyber space:

I can’t believe after seven years; it has not been taken down. It’s like an action movie. I have seen how many views it receives and how people shared the video. This is not how I wanted to be famous. So, it’s very difficult to move on because the Internet still has this power over me, and I feel helpless because I still feel bullied by the Internet ... which makes it hard to forget my experience.

The role and function of “spaces” in elucidating bullying experiences generated an additional theme: multiple ways to bully. This theme is discussed below.

## 5.4 Multiple ways to bully

Interviews with the survivors revealed that having their incidents posted online served to facilitate the continuation of bullying – in physical and cyber settings – in multiple ways beyond the original act. In the realm of cyber bullying, a variety of techniques were implemented to achieve this continuation. Table three, which can be found under the sub-theme: decisive techniques for bullying, highlights the different techniques used.

In addition to the frequently utilised technique of filming and posting an incident of physical bullying online, there is also the option to “frame and shame” the survivor by sending out screenshots of specific moments in the recording. Moreover, fake accounts can be set up to facilitate bullying by anonymously sharing, ‘liking’, and commenting on video-clips and stills. Other techniques involve the starting of false rumours; teasing; gossip; threats and warnings; blackmail; and derogatory comments. All of these can be facilitated by technology and social media, which have the potential to exacerbate and prolong experiences.

Priya recalled her experience of the multiple techniques used to initiate various types of cyber bullying as follows:

The girls are really good at creating group chats to gossip. Kids take pictures of other kids and threaten to post it if they don’t get what they want. Also, taking screenshots of conversations and using it to blackmail is common.

Teejay indicated that other techniques included the spreading of rumours or on-going verbal altercations beyond the initial act perpetrated.

This is how social media controls you. Once framed, like me, you are subjected to lies and humiliation ... actually for other kids to learn a lesson ... they become frightened

and [do] not interfere, they keep quiet. Your friends stop being friends, there's silence. This adds to the misery of being lonely ... a one-man battle and dealing with social media.

The other survivors interviewed also provided further examples. Survivors were frequently ridiculed, mocked, threatened, or intimidated over an extended period of time. Teejay and Jason experienced extreme ongoing bullying after their incidents were posted on social media, both in physical and in cyber settings.

In the process of enumerating the multiple ways in which bullying occurs, it became clear that technology plays a facilitative role in bullying spatially, that is, in various physical and cyber settings. The techniques used reveal a two-way process that facilitates bullying. Bullying in physical space leads to bullying in cyber space which, in turn, fuels further bullying in physical space resulting in more online bullying and so on. Communicated through the narratives of the survivors, the use of technology to facilitate bullying in spatial terms generated two sub-themes: (1) The use of technology – a bi-directional tool and (2) adopting decisive techniques to facilitate bullying. Both sub-themes illuminate how the techniques used constitute a two-way process to bully.

#### **5.4.1 Technology and bullying**

The bullying experiences perpetrated beyond the initial act, as communicated through the narratives of Priya, Teejay and Jason, show how technology was used to facilitate bullying spatially, giving the bullying act a bi-directional aspect. Their experiences were also a reflection of how the various techniques used can result in attacks from both a close proximity and a distance.

In Priya's experiences, cell phones were commonly used to spread rumours online. The distribution of screenshots of cell phone text exchanges in order to incriminate, blackmail, or

initiate bullying in the physical space was a regular occurrence. Priya highlighted the frequency with which cell phones were used to take and post photographs online as key to further instigating bullying in physical settings. In this way, incidents on cell phones influenced incidents in physical space and vice versa in a bi-directional process of propagation.

Teejay related how another rumour about him suddenly “cropped up” on WhatsApp while he was still having to deal with the fallout from the original video circulating on WhatsApp. Teejay felt that spreading rumours through social media was highly impactful for his bullies and added to the complexity of negative effects he was already experiencing in physical settings. It was aimed at “... making my life miserable at my new school”. Teejay added that he was aware of “a bag-of-tricks” (techniques) used in conjunction with technology to facilitate bullying. Like Priya, he said that the cropping and sharing of incriminating portions of text messages was common. Teejay said, in his experience, the screenshots – without the context of the full conversation – were circulated “to get things stirred up’.

The use of technology to facilitate bullying revealed some of the real challenges encountered by the survivors. In Jason’s case, where a video of his original incident was used to intensify bullying, the perpetrators used technology to exacerbate and prolong his humiliation, harassment, and bullying in physical settings. They also then manipulated the video clip by adding lyrics and sound effects so that a revised version of the video was re-posted – to renewed interest – and drew more negative attention to Jason.

I hoped that by the third day, returning to school after the video was posted, things would settle and be forgotten ... I was shocked that everyone just laughed at me throughout the day ... worse than the first. Some of the boys made me watch this newly edited video clip even though I removed myself from social media to get away from the drama.

The above accounts from survivors highlight the ways in which technology is used in order to trigger and deepen bullying spatially, that is, in cyber space as well as in physical settings. These accounts also illustrate the bi-directionality that characterises the interconnectedness of physical and cyber bullying: incidents of physical bullying instigated cyber bullying which, in turn, prompted further physical bullying and so on.

#### 5.4.2 Decisive techniques for bullying

The survivors communicated a wide range of complex negative experiences which evidenced the use of technology to facilitate bullying. Generated from the data and voices of the survivors in the above-mentioned themes, Table three highlights the more common techniques learners use.

**Table 3: Techniques learners use to facilitate bullying**

Types of traditional bullying  Physical settings	Types of cyber bullying  Cyber settings
Coercing fellow learners to participate in the bullying process	Using screenshots of conversations to incite and advance bullying
Provoking fellow learners as spectators or bystanders to become participants in the bullying process	Using social media to provide details of meetings for physical fights
Introducing new aggressors and new survivors to the bullying process to advance traditional and/or cyber types of bullying	Filming and posting embarrassing videos or images online
Encouraging the continuation of bullying from physical locations to cyber locations or vice versa	Making derogatory comments, threats, and warnings

Spreading rumours and gossip	Replaying the video of the incident
Excluding and isolating	Advancing bullying through: views, shares, likes
Ongoing verbal altercations	Setting up fake accounts to frame, blackmail, shame, and embarrass
Ongoing physical bullying	Creating group chats to gossip
Ridiculing, teasing, mocking, taunting	Technologically manipulating/modifying and editing original videos/images
Ongoing threats, warnings, and intimidation	Ongoing online altercations

These techniques call attention to how existing traditional or cyber types of bullying are used to facilitate bullying beyond the initial act perpetrated. The nature of these techniques also points to the individual and/or collective participation of fellow learners to facilitate bullying. In addition, table three makes the bi-directionality of physical and cyber bullying clear. It can be seen that the techniques in physical space both fuel and are fueled by cyber techniques and vice versa. In other words, the ongoing instigation of bullying flows both in the direction from physical space to cyber space and in the opposite direction from cyber space to physical space. It is through this two-way process that bullying is perpetuated over time and space.

Table three also shows how the combined effect of techniques used serve to contribute to the exacerbation of the experiences on the part of survivors. This perspective generated a new theme: increased unfair treatment. This theme is discussed below.

### **5.5 Increased unfair treatment**

Survivors' experiences illuminated the various components of victimisation which specifically produce the transfer of the initial physical act from physical into cyber space. The comments outlined below reveal a higher-level awareness and understanding of how filmed and shared incidents produce increased victimisation for survivors both in physical and cyber space. This again, points to the bi-directionality of the interconnectedness between physical and cyber bullying.

Priya said that once her video clip was posted it began to circulate, becoming available to more viewers beyond her physical environment. During this time, she became anxious as learners from other schools began to take notice of the footage and also started to comment. Priya noted that, as a result, more opportunities were created to support and initiate further victimisation from among a wider and unknown group of people. Priya felt that those viewing, sharing, and commenting on her video were aggravating the situation and were participating in the bullying incident by engaging in those actions. This view was shared by the other survivors.

The transfer of the physical act into cyber space brings an inevitable expansion in audience and potential for further victimisation. Teejay noted an attendant loss of control over both the content of the footage and its impact, saying “a video being posted and shared is very hard to control or manage once it goes viral” and can give rise to further victimisation – as it did for him:

Once the video is out there and gaining in popularity, by way of ‘likes’ and shares, you can be certain others are ready to target you as well. It happened to me numerous times with many different people.

Jason explained how social media, specifically the WhatsApp status feature, also intensified victimisation in the physical settings.

Using WhatsApp status was the easiest way to start the bullying. You just put up on the status your intention to fight ... so immediately lots of others read and know. This became the perfect time for others to dare you, to start mocking, teasing and encourage a fight. It’s everywhere now ... it’s hard to stop it.

In addition, Jason highlighted the way in which the circulation of his video not only increased victimisation but also progressed to and had consequences for his family members.

Everybody sees the video. Who's really not on social media? A few adults approached me saying they were sorry for what happened but other random people just started threatening me, telling me to leave things alone ... then they heard I went to the police station. They said I should drop the charges or my family could get hurt as well.

The survivors' interpretation of their victimisation, according to their testimonies reveals multiple emotional responses including that of feeling entrapped and experiencing "inescapable violence" according to Teejay.

The circulation of video clips, via SNSs and other social media apps, had the effect of intensifying victimisation, spreading the reach to vast and unknown audiences, introducing new survivors (family members) and heightening the scale and impact of all incidents of bullying especially when such content "goes viral". Often, modification or the recreation of content, through the addition of music, visual effects, or commentary, and its re-posting increased the humiliation and embarrassment, creating new opportunities for bullying and extending control over the survivor.

This theme further illustrates how the bi-directionality of physical and cyber bullying leads to an extension and increase of victimisation over time and space.

## **5.6 Power dynamics**

In the language of all survivors, there was an awareness of the existence of a power hierarchy and a power struggle between perpetrators and survivors. A frequent outcome of this



awareness was fear and/or mistrust. Survivors used words like “macho guys”, “superior human beings”, “the demagogues”, “the matrices”, “popular members”, “big shots” and “top dogs” in their narratives to describe this hierarchy and their own position of relative powerlessness within it.

All the survivors suffered fear and anxiety as a result of the bullying, which in many ways reinforced their oppression. Fear was manifested in part in an inability to trust overtures of friendship from fellow learners. Survivors spoke about suspecting people of having ulterior motives or of setting them up for further bullying. In many instances, the survivors spoke of their unwillingness to attend social gatherings, which limited their outings to public places, out of fear of possible victimisation.

The circulation of content to vast audiences reinforced the spread of fear. For instance, Jason described the way in which parents of “fearful children” are required to take active steps to protect their offspring from potential harm once they leave the school premises.

There’s a lot of parents that leave work to pick up their children after school to make sure their children are safe ... they are aware of the dangers and what goes on ... once you leave those school gates, you’re on your own.

The ways in which power is maintained is discussed as two sub-themes below:

### **5.6.1 Technology as an agent of power**

Through their narratives, the survivors communicated a wide range of complex negative experiences and exposed the role of technology in the enforcement of power and maintenance of oppression. Technology became the impetus for new constructions of the bullying process

and experience thereof. Moreover, the narratives revealed the ubiquitous nature of power dynamics in both physical and cyber space.

Technology was evident as an effective tool both to control and maintain bullying in cyber space and to sustain it, in various ways, in physical spaces as well. In both cases, the result was the maintenance and advancement of the oppression, as experienced by the survivors.

Priya's testimony, for instance, exposed the many ways in which technology was manipulated to achieve her oppression.

They used to degrade me on Facebook and I had to just keep quiet about it. I was very depressed getting publicly humiliated ... it destroys you because you are silenced while they are disregarding you to other people. They do it to show others that they are the top dogs! Whether you feel weak or strong or if you feel you [are] going to win or lose the fight, once it's posted out there, it is happening. Everyone is just waiting to see ...

In addition, Teejay revealed how the video of him served a dual purpose, functioning as a powerful source of control over him as well as a mechanism to sustain and exacerbate this control. This control persisted despite his moving from one school to another.

The video clip and the rumours thereafter created such a hostile environment. They wanted me to know my place coming into the new school. The popular kids taunted me repeatedly. They proceeded to give me their names in a very macho kind of way ... saw themselves as superior human beings, threatening my life having known nothing about me. I was forced to play into their games and perform those unwanted monkey dances for them ... while they yelled and laughed at me.

Teejay also shed light on the steps taken by perpetrators to evade punishment for their actions deliberately through their choice of technological platform. He stated:

Everyone in school gets a little apprehensive about releasing videos on platforms like Instagram or Facebook. In a school like mine, the school's image is very important. This frightens the learners ... they don't want to get caught out posting hurtful information. So, rather the video is released and spread by WhatsApp. It's harder to trace the source.

Jason also described the torment he experienced as the video of his original incident was edited and re-posted on social media, thereby intensifying the experience of bullying. This was another dimension of the effective use and manipulation of technology to harness power. Jason's comments showed that he could perceive the capacity of the second video-clip to advance, strengthen, and control his bullying experiences.

For Byron, technology ensured that he was not allowed to forget about his bullying incident. He experienced this as oppressive, controlling, and an unwanted part of his identity.

This is part of my history. I only knew what happened to me when I woke up from a coma after four weeks. When I walked the streets, everyone knew about the incident because they watched it on YouTube. You can't beat social media. It even waited for me to wake up and show me what happened to me ... the Internet is cruel ... it forces me to see my pain and reality every day.

For Byron, the video clip, still on the internet six years after the event, continues to be a constant reminder of his experience and continues to define his identity to some extent. He now views it as a part of his life. For him, its persistence in cyber space is "cruel and unjustified".

Jason showed an awareness of the way in which people used technology to oppress him openly and deliberately.

He felt proud he had struck me and yet he's a grown man, me a school learner ... it's for popularity ... the untouchables ... the big- shots! Even those who post the video, do it for clout on social media. They want fame at any cost ... it held me in a position of weakness.

He stated emphatically that many of his feelings of oppression originated from the fact of people “receiving and sending” the video to others. He expressed disbelief that people were “so keen to share this embarrassing video of me”. While he was dismayed at both people and technology, he felt that people were ultimately responsible for his oppression because they were at liberty to use technology to “wreak havoc” on others and thus oppress.

The above experiences shared by the survivors emphasise the role of technology in sustaining oppression. It was evident that, as a result, the survivors endured suffering at many different levels. Time, speed, the duration of the experience, the nature of bullying experiences, and the role technology played, were all considered as important contributing factors to survivors' experiences of oppression and suffering.

### **5.6.2 Provoking and facilitating oppression**

The survivors were consistently troubled by the complicity of others (mainly fellow learners) in inciting and encouraging the bullying practices, whether in physical or cyber space. Correspondingly, survivors' fear of the increased victimisation alluded to the role of provocateurs and facilitators to sustain bullying experiences.

For instance, Teejay recalled that when new perpetrators instructed him to carry out his “monkey dance” around the other learners, “the main instigators would just stand nicely in front ... just looking, smiling and watching these incidents happen ... [incidents] that they caused”.

Priya told of similar experiences in terms of peer provocation when she described how she received threatening text messages indicating that she was going to be “caught” outside school the following day. She added:

They would stalk me the whole day, through the hallway, corridors and restrooms, intimidating me. I get so frustrated and just swear at them. The whole thing becomes my fault for my speaking out against what they were doing ... it got me suspended.

It became evident throughout the narratives of the survivors, that in many of their bullying experiences, some of their fellow learners were instrumental and sometimes central to the bullying. This often happened through a series of planned and well-thought-out actions. For example, Jason stated: “I never knew him [referring to another learner] until he commented on my Instagram post ... chirping me on social media”.

And again:

... He used to stalk me after school ... drive past with his car to intimidate me. In school, they just appeared, give me those looks like it’s going to happen again, then walk away ...

For Priya, the events were deliberate, organized, and involved multiple provocateurs:

At school the problem is worse than before ... there's always a buzz about what is going to happen. Everything is planned and discussed by communicating on their cell phones. Messages just start spreading ... tensions run high.

The survivors' narratives suggested that some learners, and even adults, associated themselves with the learners to encourage the mistreatment or bullying. Thus, it is clear that bullying was supported through a broad social web that produced many provocateurs and facilitators to reinforce the power of bullies over the survivors.

### **5.7 Spectacular bullying**

For all the survivors, the recording and posting onto social media of their physical bullying experiences caused deep distress, sadness, and feelings of humiliation. These feelings were evident in the changes in tone and long pauses during the interviews. A core source of their distress was the fact that the video seemed to function for others as entertainment. As Priya relayed:

It's more about entertainment than concern and worry. Everyone rushes to the usual meeting site after school where the fights happen. They don't stop to question why it's taking place ... everyone just crowds around like it's fun.

Jason shared a similar observation:

The learners are so excited ... it's entertaining for them, that's why most kids take out their phones and video ... no one separates ... you are in a ring and the fight starts.

Siya indicated that physical bullying was an established and common occurrence in his school. For example:

Everyone makes a circle. This blocks parents and teachers from getting through to separate the fight. By the time they do, the fight is over. Planning such fights also starts from social media where threats and details for meeting places for the fights take place.

These perspectives illuminate the collective participation of fellow learners in the bullying experience. For the perpetrator, an entertained engaged audience can serve to condone or endorse the act of bullying and at the same time raises the risk of future victimisation and the continuance of bullying for the survivor. The bullying incidents thus seem to become spectacles for others which function to entertain the crowd. Most observers engage with bullying incidents as spectacles for their enjoyment rather than expressions of violence and cruelty. Thus, their engagement encourages perpetrators and supports the continuance of the bullying rather than helping survivors and preventing further incidents. The posting online of videos of the bullying incidents reinforced the interpretation of bullying as spectacles for consumption by further encouraging observation of the incident for entertainment.

Understanding the role of spectacle in bullying illuminates many insights into survivor experiences: firstly, bullying, in either physical or cyber space, is a representation of violence; secondly, cyber space plays a significant role in exposing the act of physical bullying; thirdly, bullying incidents generate a massified experience in which a single individual is bullied, but online, the audience and its participation is limitless; and, lastly, the visual presentation of the bullying act intensifies the bullying for survivors.

The multiple perspectives shared by the survivors expose key concerns about the act of posting physical bullying on social media. In particular, survivors were concerned about how the visuals would be interpreted by others and the impact their exposure to a wide audience would have on their own identity and self-image.

These concerns introduced two further sub-themes: (1) the proficiency of the visual representation and (2) the bullying spectacle as a normalised experience. These sub-themes are discussed below.

### **5.7.1 Visual representation**

Teejay emphasised how important visual representations depicting acts of physical bullying in the form of videos and photographs were when it came to supporting claims made about what happened, although they often did not work in favour of the survivor. Accordingly, Priya said that video clips of physical bullying ought to be seen as detrimental because, rather than being used as evidence to convict perpetrators, they create a cesspool of negativity and, in many cases, lead to further incidents of bullying. Priya added that "... posting photographs is quite common, but posting videos of fights creates a lot of hype with the learners".

Jason viewed the second edited video-clip as his most humiliating experience as he said: "... I could only think of how people watched the video and laughed at me". It was evident from his response that manipulation of the visuals to cause further humiliation was possible. Jason's comments also supported the notion that the general motivation behind recording physical fights and posting them online was for the sole purpose of causing "the victim to re-experience the incident".

Byron commented as follows about his experience: "When I watched myself in the video, I thought I was in an action movie". He was shocked to find that when he did a Google search to find the video clip, it appeared "on top of the list" and was clearly receiving a great deal of online attention.

In each case, the comments of the survivors reflect that the transfer of the original bullying experience into cyber space through visual representation functioned to increase the pain and



humiliation they were already suffering and to encourage more conflict, either in the physical or cyber space, or both spaces simultaneously.

### **5.7.2 Normalised experience**

In many respects, survivors suggested that their bullying incidents garnered significant mainstream support and were normalised as experiences, especially by their peers. Commonalities emanating from the stories of survivors corroborate this claim.

For instance, Priya said “... mine were never quiet ones ... everyone knew about it, was excited, and waited for a fight to happen”. Teejay described the bullying as “nothing unusual ... I saw on social media, that people were talking about it through group chats” and said, “... they are numb to it now ... they know the drill”. Jason noted that “... no one separates [the participants in] the fights”. He said the participation of peers as audience was common. “... I didn’t expect an audience to be standing there as I am walking home ... but they are, standing with their phones ... it’s like an arena and you’re in a ring. It’s pretty normal so I wasn’t shocked!”

All the survivors listed concepts of incitement, entertainment, audience participation, the circulation (viewing, sharing, and commenting on content) as significant and common features of the bullying as a spectacle. These were actions that encompassed and accompanied the process of the physical bullying act and its transfer into cyber space. The survivors all showed an overwhelming awareness of an actively engaged audience and of the process of their bullying incident emerging as a spectacle.

The notion of the bullying incident as spectacle explains, in part, the normalisation of the bullying practice. As a spectacle, bullying became a normalised experience in school environments – spectacles that were part of day-to-day school life. Such normalisation precludes any deeper, substantive, or meaningful reflection which might lead to intervention

or help to mitigate survivors' experiences. Regarding bullying as a normalised experience and as a spectacle forms a critical component of bullying in physical and cyber space. I return to this concept of the spectacle in Chapter nine.

## **5.8 Consequences for self-image**

The survivors all showed an understanding of the negative impact their respective experiences had on their self-image, which was largely facilitated by social media. They pointed to a bi-directional loop between the bullying carried out in physical and cyber space in which the portrayal of survivors in the physical bullying act was transferred to a specific image of them on social media which further reinforced the same image of them in physical space. This loop compounded the negative image of them in both physical and cyber space. The survivors were particularly disheartened because they felt that the image of them portrayed through social media was not an accurate reflection of who they were or how they understood themselves.

This was strongly reflected in Siya's concern about footage and photographs that appeared on the internet of him in his bloodied school shirt.

... With the video being spread and photographs and news articles of me [my concern] was what people are going to say and think of me ... I would rather be called any sort of name for the rest of my life than to have this sort of image on the internet.

Teejay also expressed strong views about the image of him used on social media and said:

The video showing me throwing punches around ... it's not who I am ... but even in self-defense, you are going to be resented, nonetheless. People, friends, family all hear of it and I hated the image it was creating of me.

As a result of their experiences, some of the survivors expressed awareness of the potentially negative and destructive nature of social media. Jason mentioned that his experiences in cyber space “magnified the darker side of social media used to destroy a person”. Many of the survivors claimed that social media also had a negative impact when it came to self-image. Teejay for instance, said:

Even though so many people witnessed and knew of my experience ... social media showed me a really cruel side ... the same witnesses were clueless how social media was persecuting me.

The inability to exercise control over one’s self-image, due to negative and/or destructive social media representations, was acutely felt by the survivors, with consequences for their relationships with themselves and others in physical spaces as well.

Siya felt that having an image on the internet of himself with his bloodied school shirt portrayed him as someone who enjoyed fighting, was disruptive at school, and was a troublemaker. He said that anyone that comes across his image on the internet will not know the background story or what led up to the incident. “I am not happy this is out there. It paints a bad picture for my school because this is not the school’s first incident. It is ongoing”.

## **5.9 Inadequate school responses**

As the survivors detailed their experiences, the lack of appropriate responses from schools in handling and managing the experiences of survivors or the actual bullying incident itself became apparent.

Teejay, for instance, highlighted his teacher's awareness of the potential for the physical fight which eventually took place as the minor altercations and exchange of threats that led up to the fight took place in the classroom in the presence of the teacher. According to Teejay,

... the teacher just sort of ignored the whole thing, yet he could have made sure that the perpetrator was escorted back to the boarding establishment with a prefect as the exam session just ended.

Teejay said he became overwhelmed when he got home and, as he reflected on the build-up to the fight after having himself watched the video, he decided to go back to school immediately to provide his version of what took place.

I went back to school that same day to hand in my statement to the head of discipline. The teachers were nowhere to be seen, even the one who was aware that a fight [had been] likely to take place. The video of the incident was already circulating rapidly, going viral.

Teejay said that the school never responded to the incident.

I was not allowed to even give my side of the story. Actually, I was not really listened to ... no punishment got dealt out ... no suspension, no detention ... I transferred to another school feeling utterly disappointed and heart broken.

When questioned about the general role of teachers dealing with his experience, Teejay said:

Yes, of course, teachers play a very big role. They sort of have the biggest influences on this sort of thing. It may not be part of their job per se to manage social media and cyber bullying but it has become part of the everyday life of their learners.

Similarly, Jason felt that his concern about the school's lack of management of his experience was well-founded. He argued that he and his family were surprised that the school refused to report the matter to the police since the incident involved an attack by a parent on a learner. Jason became despondent as he said that "... the school said they will not get involved because the incident took place outside the school property".

Byron presented a broader understanding of school violence, relating it to drugs, gangs and persons who promote and instigate violence. He explained that some gang members, who have no relation to the school, cause fights outside the school with some learners. He claimed that this is a common occurrence in many schools because many learners are drug-users and are associated with drug peddlers.

It may not be the responsibility of teachers to get involved in dangerous situations like drugs and gangs but learners are doing drugs. Teachers shouldn't deny or ignore something important. They need to seriously listen to their learners and allow them to report instances or suspicions of fights between learners and peddlers ... because others are aware of what's happening ...

In many instances, the survivors offered plausible suggestions for how schools and their teachers could better respond to bullying incidents.

Priya's comments suggested she felt let down by the school system. She said: "The school was very much treating me like a suspect ... it was just horrible" and "I felt robbed of a conversation, of saying the full story".

All the survivors continued through the rest of their schooling without having their matters constructively resolved or obtaining any sense of closure or justice.

### **5.10 The nature of physical and cyber bullying in survivors' stories**

Listening to the testimonies of the survivors, I realised that a click of a button is all it takes to change someone's life dramatically. In the instant that the video clip or image is uploaded to social media, it takes on an entirely new life.

It may start with a physical action, or any of the combination of methods or techniques that fall under the broad definition of what constitutes traditional bullying, but for many of the survivors the uploading and sharing of the content on social media resulted in sustained injury. Every new view, comment, and share had a multiplier effect on the pain, suffering, and humiliation experienced.

My study aimed, in part, to deepen empathy for the survivors' experiences and to develop a nuanced understanding of the nature of the multiple dimensions of extension that give rise to what I call extended bullying in this study. While I unpack this conceptualisation of extended bullying fully in chapter nine, I provide a brief introduction to this concept here as it emerged from Phase one data analysis and reflections.

### **5.11 A new conceptualisation of the phenomenon of extended bullying**

The conceptualisation of the phenomenon of extended bullying is derived from the findings of the research in Phase one. My initial interest, that gave rise to this study, was based on the increasing rate of bullying content finding its way to social media and the various news media reports on this.

Although there is growing research on “cyber bullying” there is a scarcity of scholarly attention on understanding the nuances involved in the form of bullying described by survivors in Phase one. More importantly, a review of the literature revealed very little emotional texture in definitions. The closest definition to the phenomenon emerging in Phase one is called “picture/video-clip bullying” (Vanden Abeele et al., 2017, p. 70). These definitions tend to be too restrictive in terms of accounting for the understandings emerging from Phase one of the action research process.

Phase one provided the first in depth examination of young adult survivors lived and subjective experiences. Listening to their stories, I got to understand how their feelings of pain, humiliation, and suffering changed as the extensions from traditional bullying unfolded in the digital realm. This provided deeper insights into their personal experiences and the concepts that needed to be explored in seeking stronger research outcomes and more nuanced conceptualisation of the phenomenon which could inform impactful interventions.

A conceptualisation, according to Davis, Reich, and James (2014), is essential for the success of any cyber bullying research that encompasses a school-based intervention. The conceptualisation of extended bullying creates the pedagogical space for the design of an appropriate intervention, which formed an integral component of this study.

### **5.12 Four dimensions of extension**

From Phase one, it became apparent very early in the study that there are four important dimensions along which bullying is extended. Furthermore, the interlocking of these dimensions exacerbates the impact of the bullying and extends the suffering of those targeted. I call this “extended bullying”, a term that acknowledges the multi-faceted nature of the phenomenon, the different ways (dimensions) in which it is extended, and the growing negative consequences of such expansion.

An operational definition that I offer of extended bullying at this phase of the action research study is:

*Extended bullying* occurs when an incident of traditional bullying occurring in a physical space is video recorded, distributed via social media, and given a presence in cyber space. The unfolding of this phenomenon may see it move between physical and cyber spaces as it extends along spatial, content, participant, and temporal dimensions while aggravating psychosocial impacts such as pain, fear, loneliness, poor self-image, and feelings of dehumanisation for those affected.

Each dimension of extended bullying is named and briefly described below:

- Spatial dimension: refers to the ways in which the initial incident, which occurs in a physical space, spreads or extends to cyber space. This also captures the movement between these spaces as the bullying spectacle unfolds.
- Content dimension: refers to the production, subsequent sharing of the content, and all further modifications of content thereafter.
- Participant dimension: refers not only to the initial perpetrators but everyone who views, reacts, and modifies the content on social media as well. This extension of participants creates the risk for survivors of new aggressors. The extension of participants also captures the many people, like family and friends, around the survivor who are likewise drawn into a circle of suffering. Bystanders may likewise be considered part of this extension of participants.
- Temporal dimension: refers to the ways in which the original bullying expands in time due to its cyber character. This extension is about the new longevity of the bullying content on social media.

It became clear from the stories of survivors that each of these dimensions of extension do not exist in isolation but are continually interlocking with each other, creating complex psycho-social impacts that include poor self-image and identity, fear, loneliness, pain, and feelings of dehumanisation.



I have briefly set out the dimensions and aspects of experiences of extended bullying above in order to use the term extended bullying in the remainder of this thesis. However, a fuller discussion and theorisation of extended bullying as an original contribution of this study, are provided in Chapter nine.

### **5.13 Preparation for Phase two**

As expected in action research, the interview data precipitated a range of further questions. As outlined by Riel (2019), it is beneficial for an action researcher to ask questions to maintain a “deep sustained inquiry” when engaging with the data. In addition, following Ahmed's (2018) guidelines on action research data analysis, I asked the following questions to help inform my design of Phase two:

- a) What was surprising about the data?
- b) Which important issues most clearly informed the data?
- c) Is the data generating new and interesting questions, perspectives, ideas, or concepts?
- d) Is the data supporting a move towards additional data generation and/or the need to take action?

During this time a series of more focused questions unfolded which helped inform and frame the design of Phase two. The questions were as follows:

- a) Are there ways of generating actions or solutions in partnership with survivors?
- b) With whom do I want to share survivor experiences?
- c) Who is likely to deepen, expand, and share information on the experiences of survivors?
- d) What would be the best way to convey this extended bullying experience, and/or develop lessons from it?

- e) Does the data illuminate the potential for developing an intervention?

In assessing learning and teaching materials that would best help to deepen an understanding of extended bullying and generate responses to it, I used Braun and Clarke's (2016) thematic analysis which is supportive of promoting a “giving voice approach” (p. 7) that reflects reality and allows for “ongoing reflexive dialogue” (p. 9). These characteristics became key features in the planning of Phase two. In the development of learning and teaching materials, I considered the following:

- a) The lived experiences of survivors;
- b) the need for better ways of responding to, addressing, and teaching about extended bullying in contemporary times;
- c) the need for learning and teaching materials and activities that encompass survivor voice, reflect lived reality, and support dialogic engagement; and
- d) the need for the development of an intervention to mitigate extended bullying experiences.

## **5.14 Conclusion**

This chapter drew attention to the experiences of survivors of bullying in both physical and cyber space. It was noted that there are multiple ways to bully, and that technology supports the power dynamics at play in bullying practices to facilitate oppression. Several themes and sub-themes emerged from the stories shared in Phase one leading to the conceptualisation of the phenomenon of extended bullying. While Phase one of the action research design was exploratory, interviewing survivors about their lived experiences became the foundation from which the next phase of the research design grew. The stories shared by the survivors were compelling and demonstrated that their experiences bore significance and required attention. The next chapter focuses on the youth collaborative workshop in Phase two.

## **CHAPTER SIX: PHASE TWO – YOUTH COLLABORATIVE WORKSHOP**

### **6.1 Introduction**

The phenomenon of extended bullying was identified and briefly conceptualised in Phase one. While Phase one was exploratory, the outcomes and conceptualisation of extended bullying incorporated the four features of action research, namely: plan; act; observe; and reflect (McNiff, 2013), which helped me design appropriate data generation activities for Phase two. Adopting this approach opened possibilities for the development of an educational resource that could serve as a practical intervention for addressing extended bullying among high school learners. The planning of three different data generation activities for Phase two directly supported the possibility for developing such an intervention. Phase two of this action research study involved a workshop with young adults to explore further the experiences shared by survivors in Phase one and to give young people an opportunity to suggest ways in which we can respond to extended bullying.

Given the reluctance of the survivors to participate in a collaborative workshop, I drew on the insights gleaned from my interviews with them to develop educational activities built from the experiences they shared in Phase one. This decision was influenced, in part, by Aldridge's (2014) work which motivates for research approaches that are collaborative and democratic in their praxis using diverse methods found in participatory and participatory action research that can be adapted to enable the centralisation of survivors' voices in the design and objectives of the research.

I considered deeply my role and positionality as a researcher. I scrutinised and probed survivor stories and started to select data from the transcripts that showed common themes and patterns, as well as data that was intriguing and unexpected. These included reflections of helplessness and despair but also self-awareness, growth, and hope. I felt inspired to share the data and to ascertain whether others were familiar with the phenomenon and as affected by it as I was. I looked for ways to render the data impactful while still preserving the integrity of the survivors' stories. It is here that I entered into a partnership with the stories and, with

renewed momentum, carved out a path, seeking ways to use the data for the purpose of social change.

The planning of Phase two was outlined in Chapter four. This chapter now discusses the collaborative workshop targeting youth participants as the main participants engaged in reflections and action in Phase two. Section one discusses the learning and teaching materials, referred to as educational activities, that I developed for the workshop. These were structured as three separate data generation activities, namely *Extending conversations*, *Scenario presentations*, and *Collaborative writing*. The preparation, procedure, and key findings identified from the plenary sessions following each activity are presented below.

Section two highlights the post-workshop data analysis and procedures followed to accommodate the multiple and different perspectives generated from the three activities. The process supported the integration of the data generated. The rich insight and triggers that emerged in this workshop represented a shift beyond Phase two, towards the development of an educational intervention in Phase three.

Section three focuses on the role of theory in shaping and informing the three workshop activities of Phase two. The chapter concludes with my overall reflections on Phase two, a synopsis of the planning for Phase three, and my intentions for advancing the theorisation of extended bullying.

## **6.2 Section one: Data generation activities**

The educational activities developed for the workshop were structured as three separate data generation activities as already mentioned, namely: *Extending conversations*, *Scenario presentations*, and *Collaborative writing*. The three data generation activities are outlined in Table four, which also mentions the educational tools I developed and the format each

activity took. Each activity comprised of a facilitation plan and preparation (see Appendix O).

**Table 4: Three data generation activities**

<b>Data generation activity</b>	<b>Educational tools</b>	<b>Format</b>
1. <i>Extending conversations</i>	Selection of online media elements comprising online news articles and educational videos	a) Gallery walk b) Educational video presentations
2. <i>Scenario presentations</i>	Survivor case profiles	Excerpts of survivor experiences (within scenario)
3. <i>Collaborative writing</i>	Complex-type scenarios	Worksheet activity

The following questions guided observations during the implementation of the educational tools across all three activities:

- Are conversations amongst participants similar or different across the three activities?
- How does exposure to survivors' personal stories shape understandings of educational experiences in terms of extended bullying and school violence broadly?
- Are the participants developing ways to respond better to extended bullying?
- Are participants seeing themselves as significant contributors to the research process?

### **6.3 Activity one: *Extending conversations***

My intention, in the first workshop activity, was to extract pertinent online media elements, such as news articles and educational videos, to support enquiry into extended bullying in a manner that brought the elements back into the physical domain for interpretation and analysis. Referring to this process as “integrating design research”, Sanoff (2016, p. xi) argues that the movement between online and physical spaces in research can be considered a new approach for constructive dialogue, a concept developed in Lewin's (1946) philosophy of action research. The media elements were presented to the participants in the workshop in the form of a gallery walk.

During this activity, I observed whether participants, as social media users in the world outside of school, were familiar with the media elements and how exposure to these elements influenced their interpretations and understandings of extended bullying. The choice of media elements for the activity ensured that “relevant and up-to-date information” (Sanoff, 2016, p. xii), containing thick descriptions of extended bullying and school violence broadly, was readily available to participants. These media elements were used in an integrative, “information-gathering” (Sanoff, 2016, p. vii) way and were purposefully selected to create a critical space for participants to explore and engage with some of the broader realities and experiences of extended bullying. With one of the main objectives of this study being the design of an educational resource, it was important to ascertain whether an activity of this nature would be effective as part of the resource and should be included in its design. It was equally essential that the activity, as the first to happen in the workshop, was able to resolve any tension or anxiety on the part of participants, while simultaneously building confidence and stimulating participation and dialogue amongst them.

### **6.4 Preparation for the *Extending conversations* activity**

The media elements I selected were of two types, namely, online news articles and educational video presentations.

### **6.4.1 Online news articles**

An online search on school violence in KwaZulu-Natal directed me to a wide range of online news articles. At least 15 articles were selected. The articles selected comprised reports on incidents of physical bullying occurring in schools at a provincial level (where participants resided) and at national level. Included in the collection of articles were general articles on school violence, cyber bullying, and some incidents of extended bullying that appeared on social media platforms. A compilation of the online news articles is available in Appendix P.

#### **6.4.1.1 Procedure for this activity**

- The selected news articles were organised in the form of an informal ‘gallery walk’ for participants.
- All articles were enlarged to A3 size, mounted on boards, randomly grouped, and strategically pinned up at different spaces of the workshop venue before the arrival of the participants. This arrangement ensured participants could readily browse or read through the various articles.
- Participants were encouraged to move voluntarily through the range of selected articles, jotting down their own thoughts in notebooks I supplied and/or writing comments in the spaces provided next to the articles.
- Participants had the opportunity, while reading the articles, to engage, discuss, and have conversations with other participants about the articles, but could also simply reflect on the articles quietly if they preferred.

### **6.4.2 Educational video presentations**

In addition to the online news articles, three videos were selected as part of the media elements presented in this activity. Working within the study’s ethical framework, it was not my intention to show the participants video-clips depicting acts of violent physical bullying

even though they were accessible on the internet. Thus, none of the videos chosen show explicit violence. A brief description of each video, including my own reflections from my journal on my choice of videos is outlined in Table five. The links to access the videos are in the workshop facilitation plan (Appendix O). Like the online news articles, I was confident that the educational videos offered adequate information to inspire further discussions on extended bullying and school violence more broadly.

**Table 5: Choice and description of educational videos**

<b>Facilitator journal:</b>		
<b>Some notes on my choice of videos</b>	<b>Video title:</b>	<b>Purpose:</b>
<b>I wanted to understand whether participants regarded extended bullying as a serious social problem. I felt it was necessary to bring to their attention that research on bullying was not simply of academic interest. Here was an opportunity for participants to consider what position they could take personally and collectively in mitigating extended bullying.</b>	“Raise your voice and not your phone” campaign	The video illustrates the growing concern over school violence, particularly physical bullying in schools, and the tendency for learners to capture footage of it and upload it online.
<b>I thought of choosing a video that would evoke or elicit an</b>	“It’s time for the STOP School Violence Act”	This video was chosen to give participants an



<p><b>emotional response from the participants, as well as informing them about bullying as a lived reality. As young adults and potential role players, they might be encouraged to think about what it would mean for them to take a more informed position to inspire action.</b></p>		<p>opportunity to assess the prolonged negative effects and consequences of extended bullying.</p>
<p><b>I was keen to highlight the fact that participants were unlikely to be totally spared the impact of bullying in their own lives and to highlight school violence as a national concern. I hoped this video would give participants an opportunity to observe the involvement and responses from a number of key role players.</b></p>	<p>“Two pupils have been killed in another wave of school violence in KwaZulu-Natal”</p>	<p>As a local television news report on an incidence of school violence, this footage was aimed at encouraging participants to recognise the reality and seriousness of incidents that occur in and around schools and in local communities.</p>

#### 6.4.2.1 Procedure for this activity

- Three (3) selected videos were downloaded and shown to the participants as a power point presentation.
- Participants watched the educational videos together once they had completed the gallery walk.

#### **6.4.2.2 Plenary session: Discussion of the “Extending conversations” activity**

Once the gallery walk and video presentations were concluded, participants were requested to return to their seats for a plenary discussion about what they found interesting, intriguing, worrying, or surprising based on their engagement with the media elements. During this time, they could share any specific notes they had made. Participants shared viewpoints and experiences as well as uncertainties and questions.

### **6.5 Themes emerging from the plenary session**

I identified five key themes from the plenary session discussions: school violence as a societal issue; the normalisation of violence; the influence of school climate; the visual representations of violence; and extended bullying as an exacerbated form of bullying. Each of these are now discussed and illustrated by drawing on the participants’ voices.

#### **6.5.1 School violence as a societal issue**

Participants identified bullying as a “societal issue”. They related school violence to a widespread use of drugs and alcohol among learners, the carrying of weapons to school, and gang-related activities. Some of the participants argued that while many young people, such as themselves, were equipped to articulate concerns and generally conduct themselves in a reasonable, non-violent way, this was not the case for all young people. One participant said:

If for instance you grow up in a gang environment, that’s the skills you know to solve these kinds of problems in schools. Even from homes ... [where there is] like domestic violence, or children watching action movies, [they] believe that this behaviour can be practiced in real life.

Participants agreed that in most cases of school-related violence, the phenomenon was not necessarily only a school problem. As one said: "... It is a societal problem because of learners outside exposure in their community or at home ... this trickles down into schools".

Many of the news articles on display were reminiscent of their own, frequent experiences as learners. As one participant noted:

While I was reading some of the news articles, it felt like I was back at school. We had similar incidents with gangs, drugs, learners' backgrounds, violence in the community and how it spread to schools.

#### **6.5.2 Normalisation of violence**

Participants suggested that violence and extended bullying had become "normalised" in schools and communities, and that social media appeared to be key in exposing it, but also facilitating it:

These youngsters [are] exposed to this violence [which] becomes normalised. It's common in their communities. They view it on social media and learn to carry out this behaviour. This is acceptable for many kids. When schools or the law address these incidents, the consequences are inconsistent and confusing.

One participant noted that some of the incidents viewed online and covered in the local newspapers involved family members fighting on behalf of the learners. Familial involvement sometimes had the effect of perpetuating violence:

[I]t confirms our discussions on [how]family and community behave in solving problems. Incidents involving learners are made worse when other people are involved. We see this commonly on social media.

Another participant referred to the development of a “group mentality” which is evident on social media:

This bullying operates on a specific group mentality that becomes infectious. It spreads from school to school, community to community and class to class. A lot of reports here, result in injury, hospitalization, and even death. This is exactly how we see it on social media.

Another participant emphasised the dangers of social media in conditioning violent behaviour:

If we want to behave violently, then that is how we integrate in society. There are a lot of tools, like social media, that’s used reactively [rather] than proactively. Social media conditions behaviour ... but if you learn this behaviour, you can unlearn it.

### **6.5.3 Influence of school climate**

In addition to a distinction between private and public schools, many issues around the school environment or school climate came under discussion.

While teachers can play a pivotal role in managing and reinforcing positive behaviour and attitudes amongst learners, participants felt that many teachers were unaware of issues affecting learners. One participant said that teachers chose not to “know their learners: who

they are and what they stand for”. Although learners spend a large amount of time at school, teachers’ interaction with learners was often limited. Many participants felt that this was a lost opportunity, considering the critical role teachers can play in learner well-being and as role models. As one participant said, “Some learners will do anything just to be accepted by their teachers. After all, that’s who they spend most of their time with”. Participants also said that teachers who nurtured learners and paid attention to their needs could promote a better, more positive school environment.

In acknowledgement of the impact of the school environment on learner behaviour, one participant said: “When a school is happy, it[transfers] down to the students. After all, a negative environment is going to manifest in negative ways”.

The suggestion that the school bears some responsibility for the negative behaviour of its learners, both inside and outside the school, was made explicitly by a participant in reference to the death of a learner as a result of violence at a city school:

Everyone felt sad about this incident. The irony of this was this initiation ritual the school has once a year. I couldn’t believe that some schools allow this behaviour which leads to such serious incidents ... including teachers’ cars being vandalised. What happens in school influences behaviour in and outside the school.

On a more positive front, social media was useful, not only as a means of venting, but also as a means to expose injustice. For example, some participants noted that school learners today are increasingly using social media to express their experiences of being bullied rather than remaining silent in order to protect their school’s reputation. This was perceived by participants as a positive development. “... A different calibre of kids is coming out and talking about their negative school experiences on social media. This is what we need!”

Even after they had left school, SNSs ensured that participants were kept abreast of bullying incidents. As one participant stated: “Nowadays, even if we [are] out of school, we still have social media to learn about bullied kids and bullying incidents are on social media”.

#### **6.5.4 Visual representations and social media use**

Several participants noted the tendency of filmed physical bullying incidents to “go viral” and garner a wider audience. For example, one participant noted: “People enjoy the show ... the video is quickly shared resulting in a large number of individuals viewing the incident.”

They also mentioned that the rapid changes in mobile technology had made dissemination of such content far easier. In addition, they observed that, as learners tend to compete for attention on social media platforms, they post constantly, causing the frequent and rapid dissemination of a large amount of content.

Look at what children have access to in this age! We had the Nokia N9 ... No Facebook, no camera, no video-recording. With technology, children have grown ... constantly needing their social media page to be booming ... even if they are sharing something hurtful, they enjoy the negative attention.

One participant noted that social media receives a lot of bad press from school authorities because many users post negative content to seek attention, but, in itself, social media could be a positive phenomenon.

It’s how you use social media [that matters]. I love what social media allows me to create. Yet, schools always emphasise that social media is bad. Learners exploit these platforms for selfish purposes, [and] the negative stuff, deliberately, for popularity.

Another participant argued that that people were “also getting all kinds of hurt and harm on social media ... Social media seems to be building on more bad than good, especially when it involves teens and cyber bullying.”

### **6.5.5 Exacerbated bullying**

One participant described extended bullying as “an aggravated form of bullying and cyber bullying amongst school learners”. Another suggested that, in some cases, the purpose of extended bullying seemed to be to increase the violence quotient when things “are not violent enough”. In other words, the recording of physical fights over minor altercations was a way to ensure that the punishment of the survivor and the triumph of the perpetrator could not only be extended or prolonged but also intensified through further violence. It appeared for some participants that learners involved in extended bullying could not easily ignore “intentional provocation or intentional threats” and so the violence was perpetuated.

## **6.6 Facilitator planning for Activity two and Activity three**

The idea to use scenarios as a possible participatory engagement and data generation method was based on Bøjer (2018) and emerged during my reflections on Phase one. Scenario engagement had strong resonance with this study’s action research methodology and design. It facilitated the study’s transformative agenda and was in keeping with one of the study’s major research outcomes: the development of a resource intervention that could mitigate the experiences of extended bullying. The use of scenarios also fulfilled one of Aldridge's (2014) key objectives in researching vulnerable groups:

... [M]eaningfulness for these groups allow[s] insight into their ‘inner worlds’. The methods used must then be faithful, not simply in interpreting and representing experience but in illustrating it and testifying to it (Aldridge, 2014, p. 117).

Thus Bøjer's (2018) outlook on the application of scenarios became a core motivation for incorporating scenarios in the workshop. As Bøjer (2018, p. 2) notes:

Scenarios are stories of possible futures. Human beings have always used stories to talk about things that are difficult, complex, or even taboo, to encourage a change in thinking, illuminate pathways, and inspire right action.

According to Bøjer (2018), scenarios have gained momentum more recently as a popular tool to use in the field of social change and are shown to make important contributions to conflict transformation. This study had similar features of social change and bullying as conflict. Bøjer (2018) points to the value and use of the Transformative Scenarios Process (TSP) as a viable approach to select from among the wide range of scenario approaches available.

Even though the TSP approach was not used explicitly in this study, some of its important aspects were explored to provide insight where relevant. For example, Table six below, taken from Bøjer (2018), helps to distinguish differences between adaptive and transformative scenarios. The table is modified to include a third column to reflect this study's approach and consider both how it compares to other scenario approaches and leans on the TSP approach.

**Table 6: Bøjer's (2018) TSP approach adapted**

ADAPTIVE SCENARIOS	TRANSFORMATIVE SCENARIOS	THIS STUDY'S APPROACH
-----------------------	-----------------------------	--------------------------



<b>Intention</b>	To understand what could happen, to more easily adapt to it and succeed	To understand what could happen to more easily influence it and bring about a better future	To understand what could happen and how the outcomes may influence an opportunity to bring about positive change for the future
<b>Participants</b>	A team of experts	A diverse team of actors from across the whole system	Individuals who have directly experienced the phenomenon and a diversity of teams from across the whole system for engagement, feedback and feedforward
<b>Process</b>	A rigorous process	A structured process and an enabling container for dialogue and co-creation.	A structured process that values rigour through the creation of collaborative spaces, encouraging critical reflection, dialogue and co-creation
<b>Results</b>	New understanding and more robust strategies	Shifts in understanding and strategy, and in relationships,	Both new and shifts in understanding that promote strategy development;

		language and intentions.	relationship formation, intentions and piloting of strategies in the form of resource interventions
--	--	--------------------------	---

While Bøjer (2018) emphasises that adaptive and transformative scenarios are not mutually exclusive, the contents of Table four served as an important guide for this study. For instance, Bøjer's (2018) table gave direction into how scenarios can be operationalised and used to visualise a preferred future; it allowed me to focus more precisely on what I wanted to achieve in this study through scenario implementation and responses; it supported researcher confidence and motivation in pursuit of relevant and more focused information; and it re-affirmed the value of scenarios as a viable data generation method. With this study's research design and process bearing similar characteristics to TSP, I was encouraged to run and pilot the TSP parallel to the study's design as action research makes provision for such flexibility. An interesting task, after viewing the outcomes of this study's process, was to note the effects, impact, and implications of TSP.

The scenarios presented to participants in Activities two and three included excerpts of survivor experiences shared in Phase one which highlighted their challenges and options for taking action. By including these scenarios, I hoped to ensure the authenticity and real-world validity of the activity to enhance its potential for meaning-making in the world.

## 6.7 Preparation for Activity two and Activity three

Each activity comprised a facilitation plan (Appendix O). Each survivor transcript from Phase one was re-read to identify survivor statements and experiences that could present

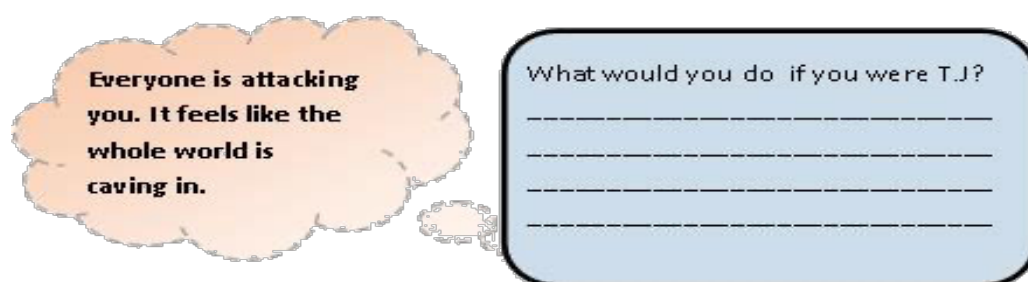
themselves as a scenario. At this point, I also had to think about how I could best design and present information to accommodate learning about extended bullying in an engaging way.

For Activity two, I produced educational tools comprising four unique survivor case profiles. Each case profile encompassed a scenario-type design and engagement prompt. I named the activity *Scenario presentations*. The design used an approach that framed and characterised survivor experiences. I attached the existing pseudonym I created in Phase One for each survivor case profile. With all four case profiles taking on a similar format, each case profile exposed a variety of extended bullying experiences and responses among the survivors. I was optimistic that the case profile design held a strong potential for doing different kinds of work, both for the present and future.

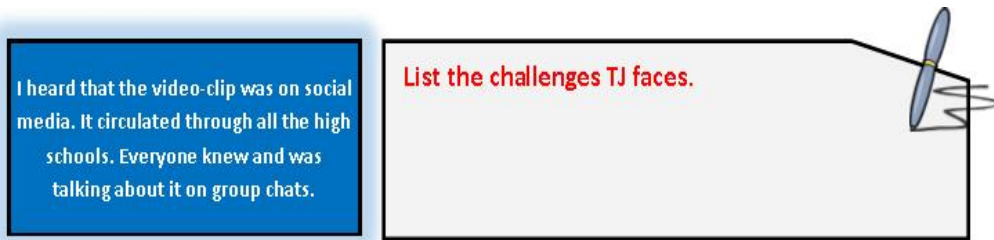
Examples of the scenario-type design are presented below as Excerpt one. These have been extracted from respective case profiles. The excerpt shows the three different voices, namely, the researcher prompt; an extract of survivor story (within the scenario), and space for participants to respond to the scenario. The four full case profiles are in Appendix Q.

### Excerpt 1: Scenario—type design within case profile

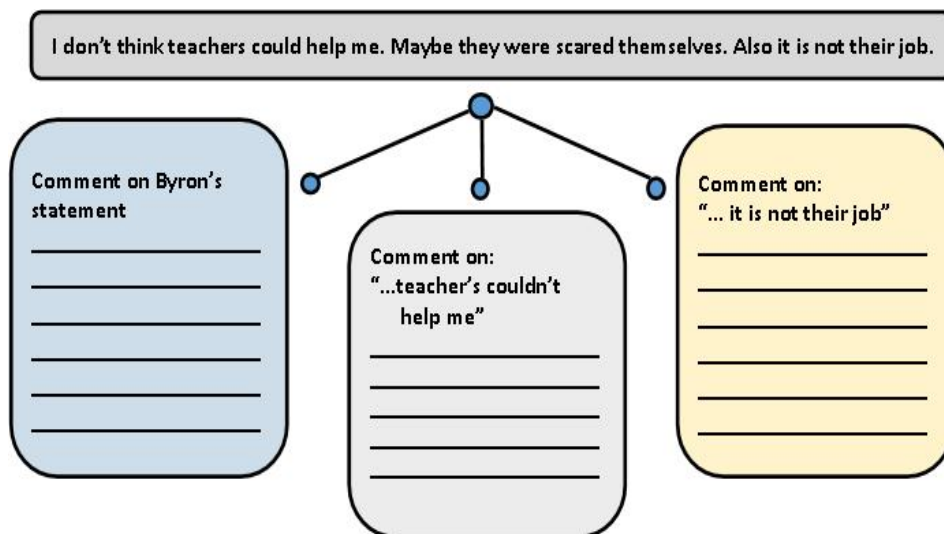
#### Example 1



#### Example 2

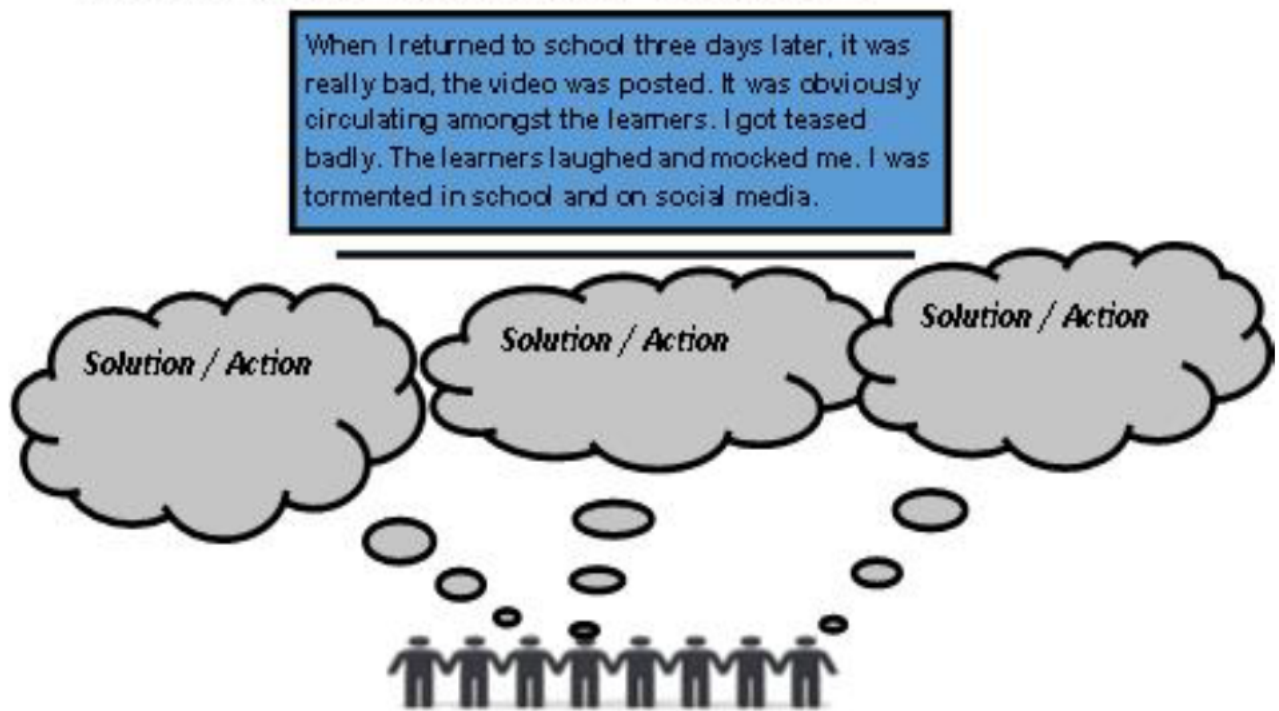


### Example 3



### Example 4

### Can you think of solutions or actions to help Jason?



In Activity three, I wanted to engage participants in shorter but more in-depth problem-posing discussions. I produced eight complex-type scenarios to present to the participants and named the activity *Collaborative writing*. Learning was to be achieved through breaking down the complex scenarios by reading; discussing; planning; and writing.

Two examples of complex-type scenarios are presented in Excerpt two. The complete complex-type scenarios can be found in Appendix R as part of the education resource.

#### **Excerpt 2: Complex-type scenario**

##### **Example 1**

During your tea-break at school, you notice a group of learners laughing and cheering while looking at their cell phones. You then realise that a fight between two learners is about to take place but you feel helpless to intervene. You make a decision to set up a

meeting the next day with the headmaster to discuss the incident after witnessing what really went on, on social media that same evening.

a) How do you address the issue with the headmaster?

b) Discuss, and set out a plan of action the headmaster and you took to address the matter?

## Example 2

You and your friend are walking home together after school. She shows you a video of a fight she recorded between two girls in her class that morning. She mentions that she will be sharing the video on social media later that afternoon.

a) How do you respond to your friend?

b) What is your next course of action?

I now outline the procedures I adopted for the implementation of Activity two followed by procedures for Activity three.

### **6.7.1 Procedure for activity two: *Scenario presentations***

Participants were put into four groups, with at least four participants per group, and were introduced to the second activity. Each group received one case profile encompassing a scenario and engagement prompt. During this time, the groups engaged with their allocated case profile in a collaborative manner. The activity was geared towards sharing ideas to find possible solutions; making decisions; providing alternatives; and offering suggestions for each scenario. The duration of this activity was 60 minutes. Once the task was completed, the groups were encouraged to hand over their completed case profiles to another group of their

choice for peer review. The purpose of peer review is explained in the sub-heading 6.6.3 after the procedure for Activity three is discussed. This process was to continue until all groups had the opportunity to read, make additions, and/or critique the other written activities.

### **6.7.2 Procedure for Activity three: *Collaborative writing***

Following the peer review, the groups broke away and participants were paired off for Activity three – *Collaborative writing* (see Appendix S). Each pair was allocated two complex-type scenarios. This activity required participants to reflect on how they might handle the scenarios and come up with a strategy or plan of action in response. Participants were allowed at least 30 minutes to plan, share ideas, offer suggestions, and make decisions about their allocated scenarios. Once the task was completed, participants were encouraged to hand over their completed tasks to another pair for peer review.

### **6.7.3 Format and purpose of peer review**

At the end of each activity participants were encouraged to engage in a common task involving peer-review and piecing together their multiple contributions following the recommendations of Storch (2005) and Storch and Wigglesworth (2006). The peer reviews served as the iteration session which gave all groups an opportunity to browse through each other's completed case profiles and complex-type scenarios. During the iterative process, each group could interact with and discuss some of the work done by other groups. They were also invited to write, comment, or make an addition that they felt was important to any scenario response.

### **6.7.4 Format and purpose of plenary session**

The process of iteration was intended to bring into effect the widening and deepening of conversations in preparation for the plenary session. The purpose of the plenary session was

to pursue a deeper and more critical interrogation of the findings from the case profiles and complex-type scenarios. The session also served as a means of deepening collaborative efforts and solidarity amongst participants in their attempts at addressing issues surrounding extended bullying.

## **6.8 Plenary discussion of themes**

I identified six key themes from the plenary discussion with participants: the relationship between bullying in physical and cyber space; school and stakeholder responses to extended bullying; social context of bullying; perceptions of extended bullying in public and private schools; beyond the act of physical bullying; and survivor resilience and participant empathy. Each of these are now discussed and illustrated by the participants' voices.

### **6.8.1 The relationship between bullying in physical and cyber space**

Based on participation in Activity three, the participants began to see a strong relationship between bullying in the physical space and in cyber space and showed some interest in broadening the research to other incidents of extended bullying. They emphasised that the experiences of all the survivors were escalated through social media. Participants were able to discuss aspects of survivors' experiences across the two spaces. They observed that the survivors' experiences, in both spaces, were ongoing, and sympathised with the survivors' trauma.

Evidence of empathy is evident in a comment made by one of the participants:

It is now evident how these survivors suffered. I imagined myself as a survivor and I would not want to feel this way. How does one go back to school to face all your fellow learners who just laughed at me the previous day? How would I see myself humiliated on social media? This behaviour is unlawful, dangerous and shouldn't continue.



Another empathic participant noted the lack of available solutions:

This is embarrassing [for the survivor]. It is worrying that there are no clear-cut solutions. The survivors were helpless in their situations. It's not a nice place to be in. Every turn they take they are ridiculed. I can understand why they isolate themselves.

### **6.8.2 School and stakeholder responses to extended bullying**

With reference to Activity three, participants questioned the lack of intervention by schools and teachers in extended bullying and argued for greater collaboration on the issue by schools. They felt such collaborations should include school management, governing bodies, parent bodies, and community bodies, such as community police and ward councilors.

Participants found it difficult to understand why schools were not taking a harder line to help learners or take an institutional stand:

... [I]f you listen to these survivors' experiences, the learners and teachers knew about the situation. If we were teachers and knew that a fight was brewing, what would be the commonsense thing to do?

And again:

We think schools need to do more. We need to find ways to prevent this behaviour. Schools should use this as an opportunity to stand out more, to show that they defend their learners and work with communities to make schools bully-free zones.

One participant, referring to Activity one, argued that many of the online news articles about this phenomenon seemed to reveal a lack of genuine concern or action from government officials. There is no procedure to follow to deal with the issue, and no sense of accountability:

There doesn't appear to be any uniform law. None of the online news reports made us feel satisfied that justice will be served. These articles made us feel alarmed and helpless. There is no clarity in actions to be taken, except suspension. Are there any specialised procedures to follow? We get the sense that no one really knows what to do.

### **6.8.3 Social context of bullying**

One participant, referring to the case profile in Activity two in which Byron was attacked outside his school by a gang, noted how porous the boundaries between schools and communities are:

If it's not going to take place outside school, then it's going to take place in his community ... 'They will find me', he says. Again, we [are] seeing the role of gang fights ... Schools are hotspots for these incidents. It's showing learners' involvement in fights with out-of-school learners. We get to see this evidence on social media.

This led to a discussion of the role of socio-economic background in school violence and bullying and whether, through social media, all learners now had a new and easier way to communicate power or hate.

More than half the participants felt that incidents of school violence were generally related to learners' socio-economic circumstances. It seemed that gang-related activities, drugs, and alcohol-related problems had infiltrated the schools, especially in poorer communities, complicating the problem of extended bullying. Other participants argued that many of the cases, for example that of Teejay who was in a private school where fees were substantially higher, had little to do with socio-economic status, drugs, alcohol consumption, or gangs:

One would never expect Teejay to experience this coming from a private school. We hear of arguments in private schools ... but not videos of fights going viral. When he transferred to another prominent [non-private] school after his incident, the bullying and cyber bullying continued. Clearly, learners in his new school knew of him and witnessed the incident already.

Emphasising the porous border between schools and communities, the group suggested, in reference to Jason's case, that out-of-school problems amongst learners come to infiltrate the schools. According to one participant:

Learners bring their outside problems to school. Learners are confined in school from 8am to 3pm and there's tension. There is no escape. There's plotting and planning. We open our WhatsApp messages in class and read the plan. It spreads like wildfire ... There's excitement. ... like an event is going to unfold.

Even though some incidents may be totally unrelated to school matters, they are likely to have consequences at school. One participant said:

This makes the situation complicated because it becomes a school problem ... it happens in the confinement of school. We find that schools are automatically seen as 'bad' and this angers the school staff because they are given a bad image.

While participants were sympathetic towards schools and teachers who had to face the brunt of the incidents, they argued that the school needed to have rules and guidelines to deal with it.

#### **6.8.4 Extended bullying in public and private schools**

Participants gave a considered account of Teejay's experiences, noting that he never completely recovered from them. They felt the remaining three survivors, all of whom attended public schools, appeared more resilient than Teejay. Participants noted that learners attending private schools behaved no differently to learners in public schools in the way that extended bullying was perpetrated. All schools – whether private, public, or former Model-C – were also equally guilty of being weak or “chaotic” in their response.

While participants regarded the survivors as resilient, they despaired at the lack of recourse available to them. They were highly supportive of Jason's success in pursuing a legal investigation. The participants argued that law enforcement needs to be explored further as recourse for survivors in the absence of school-based interventions.

... The conditions that expose learners to violent forms of behaviour are ignored by schools. They should reach out to the community police station. Schools must focus on these existing strengths ... Information is increased and perpetrators become fearful ...

#### **6.8.5 Beyond the act of physical bullying**

Referring to Jason's case, participants highlighted the way in which social media exacerbates bullying incidents in a deliberate and purposeful way. One participant from the group said:

We cannot take for granted that once an incident is shared and viewed on social media that's the end ... It's the beginning for the survivor because it is posted for a purpose ... Then why post it? It took a long time before Jason managed to carry on with his life.

Besides the relentless bullying in school over a period of time, it appeared, according to the group, that the perpetrators in some cases deliberately instigated incidents for the purpose of posting them on social media:

It doesn't appear that the perpetrators are in any way sorry or regretful for their actions. If anything, the perpetrators' only intention it seems is to humiliate Jason in cyber space at all costs.

Likewise, they noted the tendency to create conflict in cyber space, which may then lead to physical conflict:

It appears that people find it easier to pick a fight with someone they don't like by using social media. It's definitely an easier, coward's approach.

With reference to comments from the case profiles, some participants noted that often learners feel the only way to solve a problem is to engage in a physical fight. One participant explained it thus:

They [survivors] had to confront their fate and the only way to do this [was] through a physical fight.

And another:

Violence seems to be the only answer. Violence is a glorified fulfilment. We need to reform. Schools are hotspots. While some confrontations may be carried out online, school is where the situation gets out of control ... It's hard for schools to actually control. These behaviours are entrenched.

In trying to make meaning of Jason's experience in particular, and offer solutions or ways to defuse similar situations, participants suggested that young people need to become more vigilant about what they post on social media and be aware of how people respond to their posts. One participant, for example, suggested that Jason should have regarded the first negative comment he received on Instagram as a "red flag".

In response to negative comments, the participants suggested that learners should either ignore the comments, report them, block the user, or remove themselves temporarily from the platform.

#### **6.8.6 Survivor resilience and participant empathy**

Participants were able to recall details about the survivors' experiences, indicating degrees of empathy and identification with survivors. They could relate to the anguish created by the way in which they were being (mis)represented in social media posts. One participant noted that this anguish was exacerbated by a lack of empathy from teachers and peers:

No wonder emotional suffering continued for each survivor, well after the incident and into their young adult lives. The survivors were traumatised by their experience ...sympathy from teachers and peers was lacking.

The three activities generated rich data from the participants that revealed the significant impact of extended bullying. The outcomes supported the need for further action, especially the development of an educational resource that could serve as a practical intervention for addressing extended bullying.

## **6.9 Section two: Preparation for post-workshop analysis**

Analysing the complex data generated by participants' engagement with the four case profiles in Activity two was a key challenge. I sought some guidance from my supervisor regarding an approach to the analysis of the data collected and was encouraged to make critical observations of the case profiles by re-visiting the excerpts of survivor experiences and participant responses. In particular, I needed to narrow the focus on my role as the case profile designer, and to reflect and question my intentions for using researcher prompts.

My supervisor encouraged me to read Srivastava and Hopwood (2009). They developed a versatile iterative framework for data analysis that is adaptable across various qualitative studies. Srivastava's (2007) iterative framework was formulated to broker the challenges and tensions in analysing and reporting complex qualitative data. Srivastava and Hopwood's (2009) case study, carried out in Lucknow District, Uttar Pradesh, focused on low-fee private schooling. The study was described as having three interacting analytical levels: the individual, the organisational, and the institutional. The framework was based on three questions (Srivastava & Hopwood, 2009, p. 78) which came into operation as the scholars engaged with data analysis:

**Q1: What are the data telling me?** (Explicitly engaging with theoretical, subjective, ontological, epistemological, and field understandings)

**Q2: What is it I want to know?** (According to research objectives, questions, and theoretical points of interest)

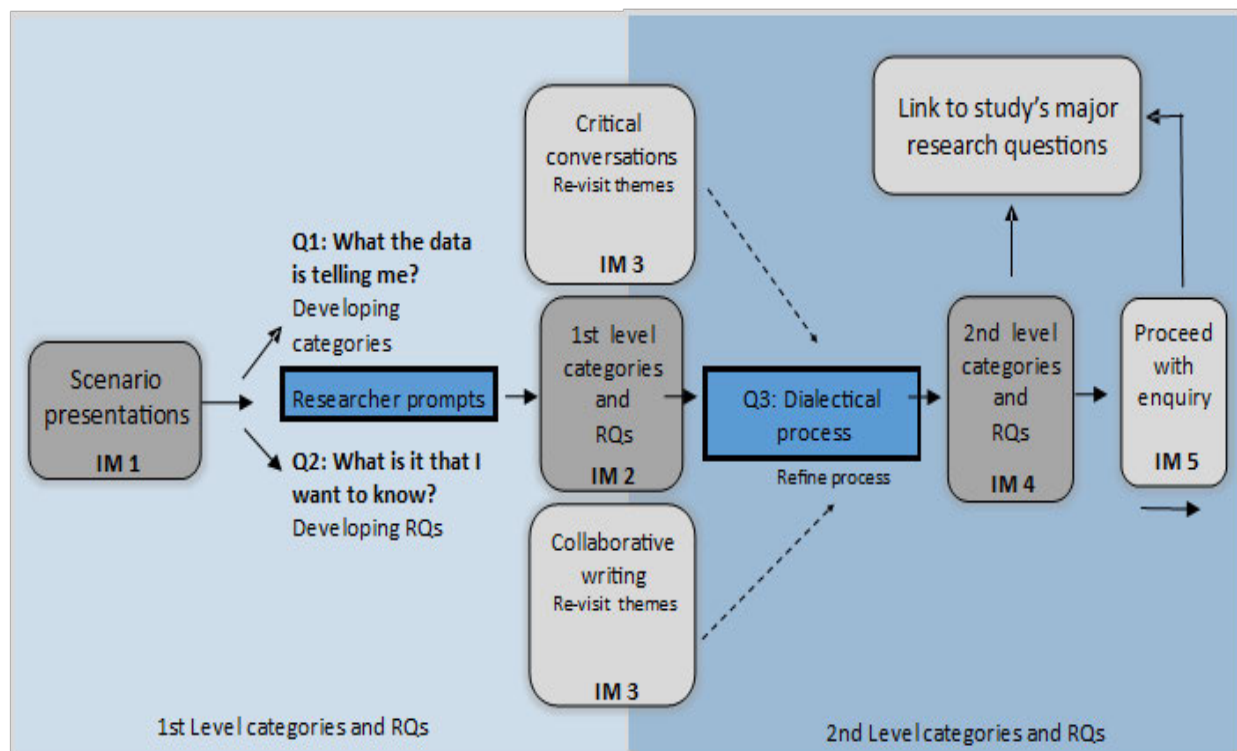
**Q3: What is the dialectical relationship between what the data are telling me and what I want to know?** (Refining the focus and linking back to research questions)

### 6.9.1 The post-workshop analysis and procedure

Based on my own data generation processes, I perceived the value of the work of Srivastava and Hopwood (2009). Thus, the iterative framework was adapted and applied and played an implicit and critical role in the Phase two analytical process.

Below is a diagrammatical representation of the post-workshop data analysis and procedure, illustrating each iterative move (IM), which adopted two levels of analyses. Both levels are discussed below.

**Diagram 4: Iterative framework for Phase two analysis. (Srivastava & Hopwood, 2009, adapted).**



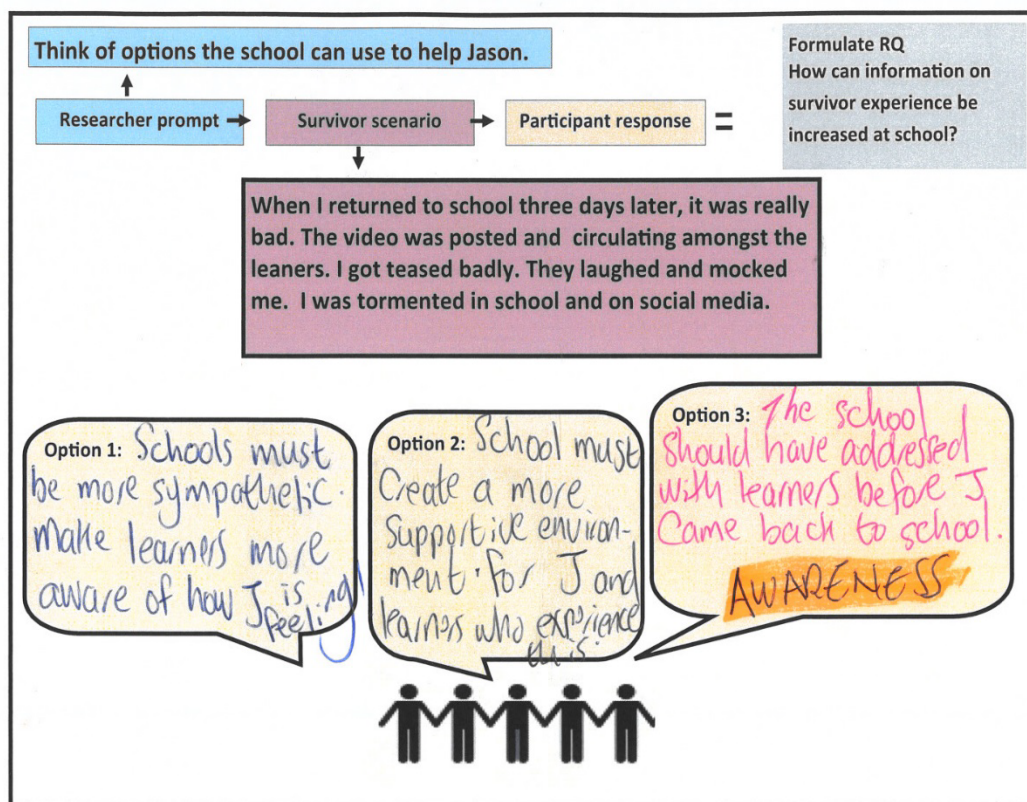


### **6.9.2 First-level Scenario presentation analysis and outcomes by engaging with Q1 and Q2**

Each case profile provided substantial information on the experiences of survivors that allowed participants to work through and figure out solutions and alternative courses of action for survivors. My task in the Scenario presentation analysis was to make critical observations across the four case profiles as I re-read excerpts of survivor stories (within scenario), researcher prompts, and participant responses.

An understanding of the excerpt is presented below (Excerpt 3), extracted from one case profile. The excerpt shows the three different voices, the researcher prompt, extract of survivor story (within scenario), and participant response to the scenario.

#### **Excerpt 3 from a case profile**



During the course of this exercise, I began to scrutinise the researcher prompts across the case profiles and noted how the use of the prompts generated dialogue, participant responses, and subsequent questions. Other examples of researcher prompts in the case profiles, such as: “Make a choice”; “What are the alternatives?”; “Decision-time!”; “Find a solution for now; find a solution for the future”; and “What is your plan of action?”, were scrutinised. I found that the researcher prompts served three essential roles. Firstly, they helped to identify and support the emergence of the categories in Table four below. Secondly, the nature of the researcher prompts fostered participant engagement with the survivor experience (within scenario). Lastly, the prompts acted as a guide towards the information I was seeking, and assisted in the interpretation of the data. These constant engagements and reflective processes were resonant of Srivastava and Hopwood’s (2009) conception of iteration as follows:

... [P]atterns, themes and categories do not emerge on their own. They are driven by what the inquirer wants to know and how the inquirer interprets what the data are

telling her or him according to subscribed theoretical frameworks, subjective perspectives, ontological and epistemological positions, and intuitive field understandings.

The table below illustrates the six categories, guided by Q1: What are the data telling me?, that arose from the researcher prompts. Once the categories were established, I developed a set of research questions under each category guided by Q2: What is it that I want to know? I refer to this process as ‘first-level scenario analysis and outcomes’. The questions developed were part of the data generated from Phase two and formed sub-questions under the four main research questions. These questions guided the process of data interpretation and analysis as well as prompting further iterative moves, for example in Table eight, that were part of the research design of the study and aided in refining data interpretation and analysis at this stage of the study.

**Table 7: First level scenario analysis and outcomes**

Survivors Category	Schools Category	Curriculum Category	Community Category	School Programmes Category	Social media
<b>How can the information on survivor experiences be increased?</b>	What are schools’ critical needs when dealing with extended bullying?	How can we extend and sustain conversations with learners on social issues generally and on extended	What specific roles can communities adopt to mitigate extended bullying?	How do we go about adopting a more integrated approach? ie. schools, parents, community?	How do we respond to extended bullying as we see it on social media?

		bullying specifically?			
<b>How can there be an on-going focus on sharing ideas about experiences?</b>	Are schools equipped to implement a plan of action to mitigate extended bullying?	What are some of the more ethical ways of thinking about extended bullying experiences?	What existing policies are out there and how have these policies worked to help mitigate extended bullying?	Can programmes be developed to initiate behaviour change?	Do the visuals of school violence influence and/or impact the viewers' perceptions?
<b>What are some of the ways that justice and fairness can be sought for survivors?</b>	What encouragement can schools give to their learners to mitigate extended bullying?	How can critical awareness best be adopted and learnt amongst learners?	What local role can communities play to help create better and positive changes?	What can be included in programmes to encourage this behaviour change?	In what ways, can social media be used to turn negative, hurtful behaviour into learning that will result in young people being better informed about these experiences?
	What are schools presently doing to address these	What pedagogies can be employed to improve listening, responding,	How do we create more sustained relationships with community leaders, local leaders,	How do we strategise to encourage police, law-makers, activists, religious leaders, and NGOs to	What can be taught to learners at school level to bring awareness, knowledge,

	real issues and concerns?	and engaging with social problems?	activists, experts, police, and NGO's?	become concerned and involved in school social problems?	and skills to addressing this form of cyber bullying?
	Do schools see incidents of extended bullying on social media as important?	How do we better connect to create a deeper understanding of extended bullying?	What should a protocol to address local leadership look like?	How do we ensure that programmes developed will promote sustainable change to ensure future generation learners do not experience the same?	What should learner digital citizenship look like?
	How would schools like to see themselves connect with community and community leadership for support?	What are some of the activities, tasks or projects that can be considered for teaching and learning extended bullying?	Do community outreach and partnerships give impetus to redress issues relating to extended bullying?	Are there ways to access funds to develop school-community programmess?	What are some of the main ways digital citizenship can be taught in schools?
	How can schools manage	Will learning about extended	What skills, knowledge, and techniques	How do we recognise/identify individuals who	How do we change the

	extended bullying without the escalation of more violence?	bullying help if it's on a digital platform?	should be adopted to start and sustain conversations on extended bullying?	can inspire change and address and support these experiences?	social media scene?
	How would schools like to see their learners respond to incidents of extended bullying?	How should learning about extended bullying be carried out digitally?	How would community leadership like to see schools connect with them to address and respond to social issues/problems?	Are there existing resources that can be used or adapted to mitigate experiences?	How do we shift from hate and degrading human beings to love, compassion, and understanding?
	How can schools adopt a more holistic approach to addressing extended bullying?	In what way can a wider public interest be encouraged?	What approaches can be adopted to ensure healthier, safer schools and communities?		

### 6.9.3 Second level scenario analysis and outcomes by engaging with Q3

The categories and research questions arising out of Q1 and Q2 prompted me to return to Q3: What is the dialectical relationship between Q1 and Q2? Based on this phase's three interacting analytical levels, I re-visited the key themes that emerged from *Extending conversations* in Activity one. At this stage, I included three new categories, extended



bullying as a societal issue; extended bullying as a visual representation of violence; and resource interventions for extended bullying, which were formulated from this iterative engagement. The three new categories are included with the existing categories formulated and are reflected in Table eight below.

The iterative engagement led me to take a closer look at the categories and research questions formulated in Table seven above. The research questions were reviewed for refinement and consolidation and merged into more specific and focused research question for each respective category (see Table eight below). This final process became the “dialectical relationship” that Srivastava and Hopwood (2009, p. 78) identified between Q1: What the data was telling me and Q2: What I wanted to know (Table eight). This process allowed me to complete both the first and second level scenario analysis process and outcomes and to link back to the study’s major research questions and ideas to proceed with inquiry.

Table eight presents the refined, second-level questions, formulated from the dialectical relationship between Q1 and Q2. The table also includes notes from my journal.

**Table 8: Second-level scenario analysis and outcomes:**

<b>Category</b>	<b>Second-level (refined) research questions</b>	<b>Facilitator journal notes:</b>
<b>Survivors category</b>	What options are there for survivors to mitigate their extended bullying (EB) experiences in a structured and meaningful way?	Manage survivors EB concerns  Advocate for deeper understanding of EB  Share knowledge and skills to deal with and respond to EB

		Nurture survivor resilience and build empathy
<b>School category</b>	How can schools network and seek common ground to address and respond effectively to EB?	<p>Assess schools' vulnerabilities</p> <p>Schools inspiring change</p> <p>Schools creating partnerships</p>
<b>Curriculum category</b>	What are the best ways to integrate EB into the school curriculum?	<p>Cyber-safety awareness</p> <p>Extra-curricular activities</p> <p>Schools' existing strengths</p>
<b>Community category</b>	How do we prepare community members, as role players, to seek justice or fairness in response to EB?	<p>Identify community responsibilities</p> <p>Identify stakeholders</p> <p>Raise community awareness</p> <p>Community members' key roles</p> <p>Sustain community partnerships</p>
<b>School programmes category</b>	What kinds of programmes can be developed to mitigate EB?	<p>Review existing programmes</p> <p>Implementing programmes</p> <p>Accessing funds</p>
<b>Social media influences on school climate category</b>	In what ways, can schools work towards promoting better digital citizenship?	<p>Promote positive school culture and climate</p> <p>Teachers' role in promoting a positive school climate</p> <p>Technology use</p> <p>Online peer relationships</p> <p>Media-rich resources</p>



<b>EB – a societal issue</b>	In what ways, does society facilitate EB?	EB is widespread Societal impact and responses to EB EB is normalised in society Society normalises EB
<b>Visual representations of EB and its implications</b>	How can the visuals help to change meanings, attitudes, and responses to EB?	Encourage critical thinking Build and share knowledge and skills Solution-finding activities Expose injustices Social media exposes EB
<b>Intervention category</b>	How do we develop interventions that work to mitigate EB?	Review existing policies Review existing evidence-based interventions Monitor interventions Develop new interventions

The above table synthesises all the data gathered from the three activities to present the overall findings of Phase two. A diagrammatical representation of the iterative moves (IM), shown in Diagram four above, supported a collaborative data analysis process (Cornish, Gillespie, & Zittoun, 2013). It also accommodated the multiple and different perspectives generated from the three activities. Engagement with the iterative moves allowed the integration and synthesis of the data gathered and enhanced the focus of inquiry.

The second-level research questions formulated through this dialectical process emerged as major research findings in Phase two. These findings, poised as rich insights and triggers, functioned to play a significant role in advancing the agenda of the study. They represented a

shift beyond Phase two “... and how to proceed” (Srivastava & Hopwood, 2009, p. 80) towards a comprehensive resource intervention.

The next section focuses on the role of theory in shaping and informing the Phase two activities followed by my overall reflections on the Phase two design and a synopsis of the planning for Phase three.

## **6.10 Section three**

### **6.10.1 The role of theory in shaping the *Extending conversations* activity**

*Extending conversations* was the first of the three workshop activities. This activity was based on Freire’s belief that human beings are capable of looking at the world critically irrespective of the “culture of silence” (Freire, 1970/1993, p. 30). Freire maintains that “[h]uman beings are not built in silence, but in word, in work, in action-reflection” (Freire, 1970/1993, p. 88). Likewise, Shaull, in his forward to *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (1970/1993) believes that, with the provision and utilisation of the right tools to foster critical thinking and learning, people gradually discover how to participate in “transform[ing their] world” (Freire, 1970/1993, p. 32).

Guided by Freire, who places significant educational importance on the immediate investigation of problems as they are encountered or observed, I chose the online news articles and videos as tools for this activity to be part of a learning process amongst the participants for understanding extended bullying. One participant said:

... [W]e didn’t recognise it as extended bullying maybe just cyber bullying because we see it on social media ... we understand the term better now and when we witness this again we know better what to call it and be comfortable discussing it.

An emphasis on openness and engagement created opportunities for reflection with participants and with the world. It not only promoted the bringing together of Freire's elements of philosophy, politics, and pedagogy (Roberts, 2015), but also exposed the distinct power systems that contribute to these experiences of extended bullying. These include technological, historical, socio-political, and material forces. These forces at play became visible during the plenary discussion and the key themes identified from that session suggest the need for more complex understandings.

The activity also facilitated a move away from an emotionless enquiry (Evans, 2017; Evans & Giroux, 2015a) by playing a crucial role in capturing the personal experiences of many of the participants and creating a space for them to share those experiences and associated emotions. Following Evans's (2017) call to seek out 21st century solutions and to reflect upon and question whether responses and solutions are in-keeping with contemporary times, the news articles and videos actively encouraged a modern approach to thinking about extended bullying, its possible solutions, and intervention strategies.

#### **6.10.2 The role of theory in shaping the *Scenario presentations* activity**

The case profiles created for the *Scenario presentations* activity anchored survivors' lived experiences. By engaging and working to understand survivors' experiences (within scenario), participants could share their understandings of what extended bullying meant to them and to the survivors. The participants constructively engaged with each other while making meaning of the scenarios and used the researcher prompts as a guide to try to forge solutions.

The concept of 'knowing' for Freire (1970/1993) is both social and practical and involves a wide and collaborative process of humanisation, contrary to an isolated, individualistic, and abstract way of learning and knowing (Roberts, 2017). The scenario activity had a strong

focus on the concept of ‘knowing’ where a complex awareness relating to survivor experiences was created through collaboration.

One participant said that she felt anxious and ill-equipped to find necessary solutions to the scenarios. Another reflected upon the complexity of the issues under consideration, noting as follows:

I found this activity hard. There were no easy answers. I feel that we tend to underestimate these experiences and when we read or hear or watch these incidents on social media, we tend to believe that there are easy answers, but I am certainly wrong.

The case profiles were not designed with the intention of producing any right or wrong answers and participants provided diverse perspectives and demonstrated increasing confidence in reporting back on their experiences of the task. They spoke honestly and openly about their challenges, including their general lack of knowledge in finding meaningful solutions. The plenary discussion revealed that, even though participants became sufficiently familiar with extended bullying in the first activity, they did not feel adequately equipped to come up with solutions in the case profiles. It became clear that the activity would need to be presented on a platform with teachers.

Participants’ comments revealed that they were, as hoped, reflecting critically on the issues and developing a nuanced understanding of extended bullying. These were among the desired outcomes of the workshop and illustrated the value of the participatory action research design. As one participant explained:

You only understand the seriousness of bullying when you are placed in a situation to find solutions, then it’s not easy anymore ... this task teaches you that it may not be so when put into practice. It is necessary to look for different but less complicated ways of reporting this form of bullying.

Evans and Lennard (2018) and Evans and Giroux (2015a) both show the importance of in-depth scrutiny and an active listening to the personal stories and experiences of others. My thesis places emphasis on finding new and alternative ways of reporting, responding to, and dealing with different extended bullying experiences. I tried to ensure that the case profiles accommodated this approach, as well as took into account the impact that extended bullying experiences have on survivors' dignity and self-hood.

The case profiles functioned to foreground survivor experiences and created opportunities to give a platform to the voices of those most affected. An emphasis on interaction in the design created an opportunity for participants "to come face to face with some of the more intolerable forms of violence" so as to reveal "some of the more, raw realities of intimate suffering" (Evans & Lennard, 2018, p. 4). The intention was to depict the survivors' experiences, not as isolated or random acts, but as part of a broader spectrum of violence and suffering. Thus, the case profile design sought to create opportunities for reflection with others and with the world. It was intended that such reflective engagement would give rise to a deeper understanding of survivors' experiences which, in turn, would set the course towards a wider process of humanisation, and allow participants to recognise their role as potential agents of social change.

### **6.10.3 The role of theory in shaping the *Collaborative writing* activity**

The complex-type scenarios that were designed for the *Collaborative writing* activity helped participants to focus on longer-term solutions and at the same time to demonstrate their roles as decision-makers and possible strategy developers. When compared with Activity two, Activity three gave participants some independent control of the exercise. Here they could concentrate on how to sharpen their efforts on knowledge enhancement by finding knowledge and developing solutions.

Freire (1970/1993) argues that all human beings are capable of looking at the world critically. Through this activity, I hoped to demonstrate Freire's notion that: "[h]uman beings are not built in silence, but in word, in work, in action and reflection" (Freire, 1970/1993, p. 88). I hoped that, if participants were to engage deeply with complex-type scenarios, they would be encouraged to develop, not simply a deeper understanding of the issues, but a greater commitment to change and transformation of reality.

As Freire (1970/1993, p. 87) notes, "When a word is deprived of its dimension of action, reflection automatically suffers as well; and the word is changed into idle chatter, into verbalism, into an alienated and alienating 'blah'." Given the space to challenge, debate, and evaluate the complex-type scenarios, participants had the opportunity to construct an agreed upon framework that could help learners in schools to deal with extended bullying. Even though participants expressed some level of difficulty in executing this activity and were facing time constraints, they demonstrated concerted efforts to obtain new understandings and solutions. With its emphasis on reflection and dialogue, the activity had resonance with Freire's conception of praxis. The interrogation of the complex-type scenarios offered the possibility of new and different paths towards a form of recourse informed by individual rights, social justice, and citizenship (Evans & Lennard, 2018).

### **6.11 Facilitator reflections on Phase two design**

The three data generation activities in Phase two directly supported the development of a resource that could serve as a practical educational intervention geared towards addressing extended bullying. The workshop gave me a way to meet the participants on common ground, to encourage their participation and contributions, and to facilitate their accreditation as stakeholders in the resource design.

The participants agreed that by exploring the phenomenon through the activities, they were able to extend their thinking and to re-consider survivors' experiences, and the effects and implications of such experiences. As one participant said during the plenary:

Our group admitted that we don't pay attention to these experiences. We never gave these incidents any thought ... yet it is a serious issue. We thought these incidents get resolved and that our views were irrelevant. This shouldn't be the case!

Participants agreed that their contributions still needed another layer of interrogation in the process of developing an effective strategy for the resource intervention. The participants highlighted the fact that there were no "quick-fix" answers to some of the problems outlined.

All of them agreed that teachers play an integral role and teachers, as "custodians" of learners, need to be more deeply involved in addressing the problem of extended bullying. The participants observed that the case profiles would make for interesting teaching/learning material for learners to work with in schools. One participant speaking for the group said:

... [W]e learnt a lot from the activities here today, especially the case profiles. We think that the news articles and videos are exciting ways to learn about bullying. Our group thought that learners will be keen to learn in this way and [this] should be shared with them.

Towards the end of the plenary, participants were able to articulate their discussions more confidently and direct them explicitly towards defending the broader importance of the issue and the need to address questions such as: What forms of action should be taken?

On the issue of how to involve others in initiatives to mitigate school learners' experiences, participants endorsed the use of scenario activities like the ones in which they themselves had engaged:

Actually, we felt that similar scenario activities like these will work well if kids take part in the case profiles like we did. This is how we learn. I can tell that every high school kid will know and share something about this kind of bullying.

Participants argued for the inclusion of school learners in the design of a resource because, as avid social media users, they would make a valuable contribution. Thus, they recommended that both teachers and learners (as ‘persons of interest’) be involved in contributing to finding solutions to inform the resource intervention. While young adults had valuable perspectives on the issue, it became apparent that they were not the only participant group that could usefully be involved in developing a strategy for an intervention.

Participants showed an investment in the process through their suggestion that both teachers and learners, as “persons of interest”, join the conversations to formulate further strategies and plans to inform the development of a teacher resource. This set off planning for Phase three.

#### **6.12 Section four: Planning for Phase three**

The rich insights and triggers that were generated from Phase two contained multiple voices, including survivors (scenario excerpts), the researcher as facilitator (researcher prompts), and youth participants (co-researchers). I was privileged to have the benefit of youth contributions in Phase two. As an extension of survivor voices, they constituted an integral part of the research design.

Phase two led to and had its focus on strategy, with one of its main outcomes being the development of a teacher resource intervention in the form of an aesthetically appealing and challenging educational resource targeting high school learners.

It became clear, as suggested by the participants, that the combined voices and efforts of survivors, youth participants, and the facilitator would need to be presented on a platform



shared with teachers (“persons of interest”). To further the development of the resource, there was an understanding that involving teachers would:

- Enrich understanding;
- Share expertise;
- Tap into the knowledge teachers have of extended bullying;
- Establish teachers’ understanding of their experiences and perspectives of the phenomenon;
- Strengthen and increase the effectiveness of the potential resource.

Revisiting the educational activities developed for Phase two and working with the rich insights and triggers represented a shift beyond Phase two and offered a means “to proceed” (Srivastava & Hopwood, 2009, p. 80) towards a comprehensive resource intervention, as embodied in Kahn and Kellner's (2007, p. 77) idea of actors becoming “unstuck” and moving forward, “collaboratively and creatively, with energy and momentum to deal with their situations”. Thus, Phase three was inspired.

## **6.13 Conclusion**

Strong parallels were evident between Phase one and Phase two outcomes. A key outcome in the research in Phase one was the emergence and conceptualisation of the phenomenon of extended bullying. Another critical outcome from the key themes generated in Phase one was an understanding of the nature and dimensions of extended bullying. I will advance this theorisation of extended bullying in Chapter nine through the lenses of Freire, Evans, and Giroux. The planning and design of Phase two activities, constructed from the lived experiences that survivors shared in Phase one, uncovered and highlighted many of the silent and dehumanising aspects of survivor experiences.

Based on the insights from Phase two, it became clear that, when given the opportunity and the right conditions, young people can mobilise themselves in a project of emancipation and

engage in a humanising dialogue. I observed that, through partnerships, the activities facilitated knowledge enhancement and the piloting of interventions as a means of breaking away from the cycle of dehumanisation that characterises bullying.

In addition to theorising the four dimensions and psycho-social impacts of extended bullying outlined in Phase one, the themes developed in Phase two provided the basis to frame extended bullying as a broader problem of school and community violence in the digital age. The next chapter focuses on Phase three of the action research process and describes the collaborative workshop held with teachers, as suggested by youth in Phase two.

## **CHAPTER SEVEN: PHASE THREE – TEACHER COLLABORATIVE WORKSHOP**

### **7.1 Introduction**

The planning of Phase three was outlined in Chapter four. Phase three involved a collaborative workshop with teachers. The decision to conduct the workshop was influenced by the strong recommendations put forward by the young adults in Phase two. My hope in including teachers as participants was, firstly, to allow for the presentation of previous findings to teachers and generation of new and different insights into, and experiences of, extended bullying, from the perspective of teachers. Secondly, I wanted to create further opportunities for teachers to recognise their own positionality in relation to the triggers that were identified in the analysis process in Phase two. Another key intention behind engaging teachers in this way was to facilitate their input into an interrogation of the potential for the educational activities developed for Phase two to be used as the basis of a resource for schools and young people in dealing with extended bullying.

This chapter comprises three sections. Section one outlines the objectives which guided the workshop. Each activity comprised a facilitation plan and the enacted methodology, details of which are found in Appendix T. Section two discusses the findings from the plenary sessions of the teacher workshop, giving a description, as well as insight into the key features, of the resource. This is followed by an illustrative example of the education resource package that was developed. Section three concludes with my reflections on the teacher workshop.

### **7.2 Section one: Shaping the teacher workshop**

The following set of objectives guided the teacher workshop:

- to engage with teachers about the rich insights and triggers gained from Phase two;

- to inform/report back to teachers about young adult interactions with the educational activities and key findings thereof;
- to consider the activities developed as a unique intervention or toolkit to support learners' deeper understanding of and response to extended bullying experiences;
- to partner with teachers to support the strengthening of, or offer further suggestions for, the activities;
- to give teachers an opportunity to offer suggestions on how best to develop the activities into a potential teacher resource for use with their learners; and
- to allow teachers to share other innovative or interactive teaching/learning strategies which could contribute to the development of the resource.

Critical to the process of engaging the teachers, with a view to further developing and strengthening the Phase two activities, were the following trigger questions:

- Can the activities be used and how?
- Is there value in this approach?
- What still needs to be developed?

When posed to the teachers, the above questions produced rich, in-depth information and suggestions. Their responses at this phase of the action research started to reveal the value of the study's design in the sense that other levels of action and reflection became apparent. The next section delves into specific findings from the teacher workshop.

### **7.3 Section two: Findings from teacher workshop**

The teacher workshop generated deep insights and rich suggestions. The volume of data generated, and the continuing shifts in discussion during the plenary sessions, resulted in the creation of two categories of data, short-term and long-term actions or recommendations.

In terms of the first category, short-term actions or recommendations, teachers commented on the potential of the resource once finalised. The key message from teachers was that the activities were likely to be beneficial and that they offered sufficient adaptive flexibility to enable teachers to use them effectively in various classroom settings.

The category of long-term actions was created to capture some of the new insights teachers offered concerning the triggers developed in Phase two. These included comments that reflected a more nuanced and complex awareness about extended bullying. The formation of this latter category, in fact, mapped the levels of action and reflection promoted by the action research design. The two categories are discussed in more detail below:

### **7.3.1 The short-term actions: Framing the resource design**

The teachers' discussion focused on the brainstorming of ideas around the activities developed for Phase two. The interactions with and discussions about the existing activities led to the development of a framework. This process further contributed to the finalisation of the resource's key features. The framework accounted for:

- the nature and design of the resource;
- the resource content;
- illuminating extended bullying experiences as experienced by survivors;
- teaching and learning style;
- identifying key areas for learner enrichment through creative activities; and
- ways to promote and share the resource.

The diagram below highlights the key features of the resource developed through teacher discussions.

**Diagram 5: Key features of the resource**



Table nine below outlines the resource’s key features and presents a brief description of the potential of the resource as identified in the teacher discussions. The table also includes notes from my journal.

**Table 9: Key features of the resource**

Key features	Teacher ideas and motivation	Facilitator journal
		Shaping the intervention
<b>Nature and design</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Teachers recommended the development of a resource package on extended bullying building on the activities used in Phase two.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I can draw from Phase one key themes and use as my guide.</li> <li>I can review Phase two activities for resource potential and</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There were requests for a hardcopy of the resource to use in the classroom to be available in addition to a digital version.</li> <li>• Teachers placed emphasis on interactive digital materials for learners to engage with away from the classroom.</li> </ul>	draw on creative ideas for activities.
<b>Resource content</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The design should mirror case profiles and reflect survivor experiences.</li> <li>• Lesson plans should be formulated in such a way to mirror same and deepen understanding.</li> <li>• Creative/interactive enrichment activities should be included to support lesson plans reflecting survivor experiences and Phase two activities.</li> <li>• Significant aspects of experiences that deal with the extension should be incorporated.</li> <li>• Content must encourage and promote stronger responses.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I can extrapolate lesson plan ideas and design from findings in Phases one and two.</li> <li>• Map and design creative learner activities which reflect Phase two activities.</li> <li>• Extend/modify/adjust enrichment activities from activities carried out by young adults for learners.</li> <li>• Design content that is flexible for use outside school; in other words, content should be user-friendly and adaptable.</li> <li>• Ensure lessons and activities promote</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Content should promote good digital citizenship among learners.</li> <li>• The design should be interrogated beyond the classroom.</li> </ul>	good digital citizenship.
<b>Form of bullying</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Resource package and contents should focus specifically on extended bullying.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Map lesson plans and enrichment activities that expose and deepen understanding of experiences of physical bullying.</li> <li>• The ‘extension’ into cyber space must be emphasised.</li> <li>• Knowledge and skills that deepen learner understanding of the extension and strengthen their response to extended bullying should be built.</li> </ul>
<b>Teaching/learning style</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interactive style</li> <li>• Group/teamwork</li> <li>• Collaboration</li> <li>• Emphasis on problem-solving/ posing approach</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I can build/draw from Freire’s authentic praxis.</li> <li>• Promote critical thinking and critical thinking skills through activities.</li> <li>• Teaching and learning promoted through Evans’s thinking and</li> </ul>



		<p>responding to violence in the 21st century.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Make allowance for sufficient teacher and learner reflection.</li> </ul>
<b>Enrichment activities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Build on existing activities in Phase two.</li> <li>• Include worksheets and enrichment exercises.</li> <li>• Activities should include: games, puzzles, scenarios, small projects, role-play.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Build, create and generate creative enrichment activities from existing material in Phase two.</li> <li>• Develop activities that promote Freirean praxis and integrate Evans contemporary ways of responding to violence.</li> <li>• Activities must be inclusive of teacher/learner reflection.</li> </ul>
<b>Promoting and sharing the resource</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Find other ways to promote resource package.</li> <li>• Introduce the resource package to parents, youth groups, NGOs, and teacher colleges.</li> <li>• Consider incorporating the resource package into the curriculum.</li> <li>• Offer it as a teacher module.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Focus on a flexible resource</li> <li>• Parent-friendly</li> <li>• Peer-to-peer friendly</li> <li>• Include NGOs, youth organisations, student-teacher colleges</li> <li>• School programme/initiative potential</li> <li>• Consult with DOE</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Partner with Department of Education (DOE) to share it further.</li> </ul>	
--	---	--

Table nine identifies the key features that helped to produce the educational resource. During this process, however, new insights were identified which enriched the research process and its outcomes, promoting greater reflection and suggesting new courses of action.

Interaction with the educational activities developed for Phase two enabled conscientisation and action from teachers. Their nuanced insights and specific actions underpinned the design and development of the educational resource as a teacher resource in Phase three. As Table nine reveals, the teaching / learning style and ideas for enrichment activities underpinned a praxis to intervene in extended bullying. Emphasis on the importance of critical pedagogy and its value in seeking ways to address violence in the digital age was maintained as inspired by Freire's authentic praxis, as well as Evans's ways of thinking and responding to violence in the 21st century. A fuller discussion on the theorisation and development of a pedagogy and praxis for extended bullying is dealt with in Chapter nine.

### **7.3.2 Illustrative example of the resource package**

Table ten below outlines the possible contents of the resource package. As it stands here, the package comprises a set of three lesson plans supplemented by a comprehensive set of activity worksheets. A fuller description of the lesson plans and examples of worksheets included in the resource are found in Phase four – the piloting of the resource with teachers and learners.

#### **Table 10: Illustrative example of resource package**

	Lesson plan 1	Lesson plan 2	Lesson plan 3
Topic	Exploring extended bullying	Understanding extended bullying feelings	Responding to extended bullying
Objectives	<p>To know and understand what extended bullying is.</p> <p>To provide a definition of extended bullying.</p> <p>To describe and demonstrate an understanding of extended bullying.</p>	<p>To gain a deeper understanding and connect with the feelings associated with extended bullying.</p> <p>To identify better and evaluate the different feelings associated with extended bullying.</p> <p>To respond respectfully to extended bullying in an online space and school setting.</p>	<p>To understand the various responses extended bullying receives.</p> <p>To evaluate and/or assess the appropriateness of responses that extended bullying receives.</p> <p>To identify and evaluate different responses used to communicate issues surrounding extended bullying.</p> <p>To understand roles in participating in and communicating appropriate responses to issues surrounding extended bullying.</p>
Activity worksheets	My extended bullying experience: the storyline.	<p>Piecing it together</p> <p>What others are saying.</p>	<p>Extended bullying making headlines!</p> <p>Getting serious!</p>

	Learning about extended bullying: the storyboard.	Feelings matter ... let's connect.	Stop and think!
	Let's reflect and analyse!	A tough lesson with T.J.	Help! Additional responses required
	Extended bullying: it doesn't happen by accident.		Analyse this! Let's chat.

The insights concerning the challenges teachers experienced when it came to dealing with and responding to issues of extended bullying and school violence in general were incorporated into the long-term category and are now discussed below.

## 7.4 The long-term actions

This category was motivated by a need to reflect in more detail on the unique experiences of teachers and the challenges they face in regard to extended bullying. The insights of teachers supplemented the insights/triggers shared by young adult participants in Phase two, allowing for a deeper reflection and the opening up of new possibilities for action. The insights emerged as a critical component in a deeper understanding of schools' approaches, responses to, and mitigation of extended bullying. By facilitating engagement among teachers, learners, and youth, the study aimed to encourage a more critical stance among participants, empowering them to identify and mitigate extended bullying in the future.

### 7.4.1 Report on findings in long-term actions

The workshop generated good advice and practical suggestions from teachers. The plenary sessions of the workshop created a space for teachers to reflect in a more focused way and to identify new and innovative potential solutions. Teachers made the following five recommendations for further activities/actions in developing the resource in the long term. These are outlined below:

#### **7.4.1.1 School code of conduct**

Teachers felt it was urgent that schools review and revise their codes of conduct in order to introduce or incorporate procedures to deal with extended bullying.

Teachers identified the following challenges with regard to their school's official approach to bullying:

- The school's code of conduct on extended bullying is either non-existent, unclear, or unrevised.
- Where it does exist, the school's code of conduct on bullying contains no measures beyond identifying and/or reporting bullying, cyber bullying, or issues of extended bullying experiences.

Challenges facing teachers were reflected in the following comment from a teacher participant and the subsequent discussion:

We teach and interact with really great kids. This makes teaching a pleasure. However, we struggle to keep control and manage the learners who display major behavioral problems. They are a law unto themselves and at most times schools are faced with utter chaos especially when they use their mobile phones to create this chaos.

Teachers indicated more generally that they were aware of a range of behavioral problems amongst learners in their respective schools. While they recognised learner problems, responses to handling, managing, or mitigating the problems relating to extended bullying were limited. Teachers argued that, in most cases, schools were not adequately equipped, or did not have the necessary knowledge, resources, procedures, or time to produce firm resolutions to address the issue. One participant said that the escalation of physical bullying and its manifestation on social media was evidence of the limited measures schools had at their disposal to protect their learners.

The participants agreed that many schools in the city have the same struggles and have critical needs when addressing and responding to extended bullying. In most cases teachers were unaware of social dynamics among learners in school or in cyber space. In addition, teachers were unfamiliar with the varied ways in which learners incite incidents of physical bullying at school via cell phones.

Teachers felt that dealing with this complex and unique form of cyber bullying demanded extraordinary regulations. They called first for a review of the rules and the provision of better-informed rules. Teachers argued that, subsequent to this, there was a need for a clear policy on cell phone usage at school. In particular, they felt there was a need to craft rules to govern learners who use their devices to cause harm to fellow learners and bring the school into disrepute on online platforms, as well as in traditional/local newspapers. Thirdly, teachers recommended that a simplified code of conduct be implemented at primary school level in order to raise awareness of the issue among learners in the lower grades. While many teachers agreed that extended bullying occurs predominantly in high schools, the implementation of a code of conduct at primary level would better prepare young learners for high school. Teachers stated that this should form part of and be maintained through a code of conduct that was standardised across schools and was continually reviewed and reinforced among learners, teachers, and parents.

#### **7.4.1.2 External support**

Teachers identified the following challenges to implementing a code of conduct to address extended bullying:

- Limited school finances to support or sustain structures that alleviate bullying;
- Lack of teacher commitment within school disciplinary committees;
- Inability on the part of schools to afford specialised, non-academic liaison/disciplinary officers; and
- Unsustained partnerships with external parties.

These challenges were reflected in the following teacher perspective and subsequent discussion:

Our school has adopted a more formal approach to deal with learner problems. We have a non-academic ‘learner-discipline affairs officer’ employed at our school. He engages with everything outside the curriculum ... We partner with a psychologist, a social worker and he deals with the legal ramifications of learner violent behaviour and those that appear on social media. It basically focuses on the identification of serious learner misconduct in school or on social media and disciplinary hearings. These hearings adopt a restorative justice approach.

While the majority of the participants supported and praised the school’s progressive approach to dealing with issues of school violence reflected in the above comment from a participant teacher, they argued that this approach was too idealistic. Most schools did not have the funds to make provision for, nor sustain, a non-academic unit to deal with issues related to school violence. A request was made for more schools to adopt a common approach to the issue of teachers dealing with various other extended and critical forms of school violence in a South African context.

The dialogue amongst the participants focused, at one point, on the need for and value of a non-academic unit in detecting and reducing incidents of extended bullying. They expressed their concerns regarding the lack of support, protection, or follow-up that usually attended extended bullying experiences. Teachers argued that, in most extended bullying incidents, survivors were left exposed and even more so after incidents were posted on social media. Some teachers commented strongly on the impact that extended bullying had on survivors, highlighting the trauma and humiliation they experienced at school and its consequences for their future livelihoods. Teachers were concerned that there was an insufficient understanding on the part of learners about the negative impact of extended bullying. As a result, there was limited outreach to support survivors. Peers tend to withdraw and ignore what they witness, leaving survivors to deal with the experience alone. Withdrawal and isolation often became the only means to protect oneself. Teachers also suggested that limited follow-up of incidents could lead to an escalation of a problem. Teachers discussed the benefits of a network, involving parents, youth, and community stakeholders, to provide support for learners from outside the classroom. In many instances, teachers said that such partnerships existed temporarily, but were not sustained and generally dissolved very quickly.

#### **7.4.1.3 Teacher development**

Teachers identified a lack of professional development to help them to deal with extended bullying. This lack manifested in:

- Inadequate knowledge and skills in dealing with and responding to learner extended bullying experiences; and
- Limited teacher training programmes/workshops to increase teacher skills, knowledge and responses to extended bullying.

These points were reflected in the following comment by one of the teacher participants and the discussion it prompted:



We struggle when dealing with a wide range of learners' social issues, including the issues they have on social media and its consequences in the classroom and in the school. Learners have a very different mindset now, because of their involvement with social media. Most times we don't respond to learners who are cyber bullied unless learners come forward and speak openly about their experiences ... With this form of cyber bullying, there are opportunities for more engagement as I'm beginning to see the importance of teacher involvement to help deal with this form of cyber bullying occurring in our schools.

Teachers said that appropriate teacher training, skills, and knowledge programmes were needed to support teachers in dealing with issues relating to extended bullying. They welcomed the idea of a "Teach-a-teacher how to deal with learners' social issues" programme.

Teachers stressed the importance of addressing extended bullying and expressed the need for teacher development programmes to be implemented at a micro level, that is, at school level. They suggested that this study's engagement with youth in Phase two, and their own interactions in Phase three, confirmed the need for a professional module aimed at helping teachers to deal with extended bullying in the digital age.

With a focus on cyber bullying experiences, technological skills, online interpersonal relationships, and critical thinking in an online space, such a module would equip teachers to manage bullying and, also, to promote stronger digital citizenship skills amongst learners.

Teachers acknowledged the value of the resource package design, highlighting its strong focus on concrete, real-life experiences. They noted that the content emphasised the need for solutions to the real-life social issues that learners face.

Teachers called for appropriate programmes for student teachers and suggested that a resource package/module be created specifically for this category of teacher.

#### **7.4.1.4 Resource package and school curriculum**

Teachers raised concerns about how they would find the time to incorporate a programme on extended bullying into their already busy teaching schedules. They identified the following specific challenges:

- an already over packed curriculum
- a prescribed/fixed curriculum
- teacher time constraints

These concerns were reflected in the following comment:

Implementing a toolkit of this nature into the curriculum is easier said than done. Where in the curriculum would it fit? Most schools will find this logistically impossible ... time constraints, reshuffling teachers, life orientation possibly phasing out ... this looks bleak!

Teachers presented some of the real challenges schools faced in trying to incorporate new material into their school day. Teachers sought ways to support the implementation of the resource package and suggested options such as curriculum re-contextualisation. They also identified the need for the DOE to adopt a paradigm shift, one that legitimises, disseminates, and promotes a more controlled/regulated implementation of the resource package.

#### **7.4.1.5 Enriching in-school teacher development**

Teachers expressed concerns about limitations such as:

- Limited knowledge of learners' extended bullying experiences; and
- Limited cyber bullying interventions/resources that focus on specific extended bullying experiences.

The following teacher perspective, and the discussion that ensued, illustrates their concerns:

School violence is worsening day by day. Learners are losing their lives. We are directly involved, even as witnesses on social media. We see it happening every day, whether in our school or [we] hear about it from the school next door ... Its worrying that we haven't grasped the mechanisms, necessary skills, and knowledge to deal with learner issues ... It's not a new matter we are dealing with ... sometimes we get all the warning signs but we never think learners will carry out these actions.

Allocating time for teacher participants to engage and interact with the existing materials encouraged them to share interesting insights and suggestions to promote in-school teacher development with the resource package. Teachers said that engaging with the activities would likely encourage a shifting of teacher mindsets and a change of attitudes among teachers and learners. The activities created a deeper awareness and highlighted the importance of the issue for teachers and were likely to have a similar impact on learners. One of the main reasons for this was that the contents of the materials were empathy-laden, related to real-life experiences, and had the potential to create nurturing partnerships among learners and between teachers and learners. Furthermore, teachers noted that complex experiences were broken down, and that concrete examples spoke directly to what was happening in schools. There was also a strong emphasis on experiences when extended into cyber space, making it easier for learners to relate, grasp, and deepen their knowledge and understanding.

The discussions around the materials indicated that they were well-received by the teachers, as they had been by the youth group. Like the youth, teachers started to engage in conversations that spoke to the value of good digital citizenship; dealing and responding with learners' real-life experiences in the digital age; the special need for positive technological skills and responsible cell phone use; the possibility of an e-Safety contract between schools, learners, and parents; and the adoption of a similar resource package at primary school level. As a means to take the issue forward, teachers suggested approaching representative bodies such as school governing bodies, teacher unions, the South African Council for Education (SACE), and the Department of Basic Education to support the implementation of the resource package.

### **7.5 Section three: Facilitator reflections on teacher workshop**

The teacher collaborative workshop enriched the action research process, pedagogical practice, and community/partnership engagement. Besides meeting the workshop objectives, I was interested in exploring what teachers did with their learners to respond to and/or mitigate extended bullying experiences. The design of the activities afforded opportunities for teachers to voice their shared concerns and illuminate the many challenges and difficulties they encountered. This resulted in rich and illuminating discussions. The workshop invited teachers to be part of a process of dynamic engagement and position themselves as active and interactive participants.

Besides many of the workshop objectives being met, teachers spoke earnestly and in an inspiring way about their concerns, difficulties, and challenges, stressing the need for change in learner behaviour and attitude in matters relating to extended bullying. At this time, teachers took cognisance of and addressed their own roles, approaches, and attitudes in understanding and responding to learners' experiences. This was particularly resonant given the fact that the involvement of teachers in addressing the issue of extended bullying had been strongly recommended by the survivors and youth participants.

During the plenary sessions teachers began to adopt a more critical stance/position in the discussions. Participants acknowledged the oppressive and dehumanising behaviours that exist in schools, online, and in their communities. Pertinent to their discussions, was the importance of social justice beyond the classroom and in communities.

The discussions helped to determine and confirm the key features of the final resource as outlined in Diagram five and Table nine respectively. It also helped to fine-tune preparations for teachers to pilot the resource with a group of learners in Phase four. This preparation encouraged further reflection on the process of developing a resource for extended bullying. In hindsight, the synergistic functioning of the phases served to determine whether the nature of the resource brought forth and exposed the praxis on which it was built. The process also allowed for fresh insights into each of the phases, enriching the end result, and helping to create coherence. The fact that teachers made several recommendations for further actions and reflections showed the value of action research and its collaborative and ongoing nature.

## **7.6 Conclusion**

This chapter described Phase three of the study giving details on teachers' responses to and insights on the educational activities developed for Phase two. Teachers gave useful recommendations and contributed significantly to the finalisation of the educational resource. The next chapter deals with the final phase, namely, Phase four of the action research process, which involved the piloting of the resource package.

## **CHAPTER EIGHT: PHASE FOUR – TEACHERS PILOTING THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCE**

### **8.1 Introduction**

The previous chapter focused on the third phase of the study which comprised the teacher collaborative workshop. My role in further actions and reflections from the key outcomes in Phase three led to the finalisation of the development of the educational resource. This chapter discusses Phase four of the study in which the educational resource was piloted by teachers with learners. Piloting the educational resource involved an implementation session and an evaluation session. Three teachers from Phase three volunteered their assistance in piloting the educational resource. Planning for Phase four involved the design and development of the educational resource, preparations for teachers to pilot the resource, and learner preparation.

### **8.2 The educational resource preparation and design**

Illustrative examples of the educational resource, shaped by the key features identified by teachers in Phase three, were set out in Table nine. Further reflections on the key features led to the finalisation of the design and development of an educational resource as an intervention strategy to address extended bullying.

The educational resource comprises three individual packages that were compiled for teachers to use during the implementation session with learners. Each package comprises three separate extended bullying themes, namely, Exploring extended bullying; Understanding feelings; and Responding to extended bullying. Each theme encompasses one lesson plan, which includes, a set of objectives, worksheet activities, and ideas for teachers to develop further enrichment activities with learners. I named the enrichment activities ‘lesson links’. The complete educational resource encompassing the three packages is available in

Appendix S. Excerpts of the worksheets to support discussions on key findings are found below. The facilitation plan for piloting the resource is in Appendix U.

### **8.2.1 Preparation for piloting the educational resource**

The packages were introduced to teachers before the arrival of learner participants. Each teacher chose one package which they would use with their allocated learner-participant group. Teachers were briefed on their role as facilitators and implementers of the package and were encouraged to familiarise themselves with the package's accompanying lesson plan, lesson objectives, and worksheet activities. They were also encouraged to view and discuss other teacher packages during this time. The teachers then received, and were briefed on, the teacher feedback card that needed to be completed at the end of the implementation session.

### **8.2.2 Preparation for learners**

Learners participated in a lesson on extended bullying offered by the teachers based on the educational resource package. All learner participants were placed into one of three groups comprising five members per group. One group consisted of six members. Each group proceeded to their respective workstation accompanied by a teacher-facilitator. In this way, the lessons developed for the education resource packages were trialed. No data was collected directly from learners. Only the schoolteachers provided data on the lessons during this phase.

### **8.2.3 Teacher feedback meeting**

The evaluation session, in the form of a teacher feedback meeting, was scheduled to take place after the implementation session. Teachers were required to complete the feedback cards they had been provided with and hand them in along with the three educational resource packages prior to the feedback meeting. The completed feedback cards were used to

support further evaluation of the resource. An example of a blank teacher feedback card can be found in Appendix V. The meeting focused on teachers' perspectives and experiences during the piloting of the resource. The session served to explore the usefulness of the resource, take note of any possible revisions or improvements to the resource, consider teachers' challenges or concerns, listen to teachers' responses from learner interactions with the activities, and capture any opportunity gaps to advance the resource's agenda after the study. In addition to the teacher meeting, the teacher feedback cards provided important data for the evaluation of the resource. The teachers offered valuable insights and gave a good account of their experiences in piloting the resource. The outcomes derived from the teacher feedback meeting are discussed under the following sub-headings below.

### **8.3 Teacher perspectives on learner-resource interactions**

The learners were receptive to the survivor experiences as they engaged with the storyboards, which functioned as the introduction and foundation of each package. An example of a one survivor storyboard taken from the package is presented in excerpt four below. Learner responsiveness was evident throughout the activities because the storyboard design encapsulated a relatable approach with which learners could identify. A high level of authenticity and relatability was achieved by honoring survivor experiences in the sense that their lived experiences were incorporated into the activities.

#### **Excerpt 4: Survivor storyboard**



# LEARNING ABOUT EXTENDED BULLYING

Read carefully through the storyboards and have a discussion in your group about their experiences. Follow Byron & Siya's storyboard on the next page.



So you already know that the girls at school gave me a tough time. They teased and laughed at me. I tried to hide away or avoid them but they would just appear. They followed me on the school grounds, the corridors and the rest rooms.

**PRIYA'S STORY**

Besides this, some of the girls would just use their cell phones and take pics of me and share with others during school. They confronted me in the rest room and started punching and pulling my hair whilst another recorded the altercation.

When I got home from school, I switched on my cell phone and saw the pics of my hair and the altercation on Facebook. Then I realised why everyone was laughing at me during the day. I was devastated!

**Don't stand by!  
Let's stand up!**

The storyboards quickly instilled a deep sense of interest and curiosity amongst the learners, who started to approach the activities with enthusiasm. Their sense of identification with the activities was evident in the following comment from teachers:

Learners didn't understand the concept of extended bullying at first. As they read and discussed the storyboards, they began to make meaningful connections of how this is called extended bullying. We saw more of this as they progressed with the activities. It was evident they were familiar with this as something they experience in their everyday lives.

This was confirmed by another teacher as follows:

My group was familiar with the term bullying but they became curious and excited to learn about extended bullying and started to use the term more. What sparked their interest was the social media aspect of extended bullying and how they responded to it in the activities. They maintained their interest because it was a topic that interested them.

The idea of storyboards was designed to introduce learners to four survivors who experienced extended bullying. The aim of each survivor's story was to prompt informal and lively conversations about the survivors' real-life experiences amongst the learners so that they would begin to think and talk about the story shared by each survivor meaningfully.

One teacher pointed out that she and her group did not quite grasp the concept of extended bullying. Learning and understanding started to unfold as they began to discuss each survivor storyboard. The teacher admitted that:

Extended bullying was not clear amongst ourselves. At first, we couldn't engage in conversations around the problem until we started to read each survivor storyboard and discuss the experiences of the survivors.

The above finding suggests that teachers and learners used Freire's "problem-posing" model to understand what extended bullying meant. Equal relationships between teachers and their learners in trying to make meaning of extended bullying meant everyone played the role of teacher and learner at the same time.

The creative design of the activities allowed for flexibility and its intention was to expose the root issues associated with extended bullying. My choice of themes and corresponding activities was intended to reflect the strong relationship between physical bullying and its extension into cyber space. This approach created a swift interest which deepened into a critical awareness and understanding of extended bullying. It also prompted teachers and

learners to share their own personal insights into and knowledge of school-related incidents, as well as their experiences as witnesses to online altercations.

The above perspectives from teachers were supported by the data generated by the feedback cards. In particular, it was noted that the teachers held a strong view on the design of the worksheets. All the teachers agreed that “very often” the worksheets stimulated learners’ interest. Worksheets held learners’ attention and encouraged their engagement. A central focus of the worksheets was to promote learning through personal interest in and concern for a real problem. The worksheets supported learners in discovering, investigating, and processing the value of and potential for a deeper understanding of extended bullying. An example of a worksheet activity “Piecing it together”, taken from the package, promoted such learning and is presented in Excerpt five below.

**Excerpt 5: Example of worksheet activity: “Piecing” it together**



Image copyright: © Artur Kutsyki | Dreamstime.com 2000-2023

Each group receives 1 image

Study your image

Provide a short description of your image

Describe the character in your image

Do you get a sense of time from your image?

Does your image cause you to react emotionally?

Does your image have any objects?



**Allow each group to bring the images together to make a single picture.**

- 1) Has the picture provided enough information?
- 2) Do you see this as an example of extended bullying?
- 3) What story does this picture tell?
- 4) What have you learnt about from going through each image about the characters?
- 5) Are there any changes that you would make to the picture?
- 6) How would you change the role of each character?
- 7) Does the picture cause you to react emotionally?

Through their engagement with the activities, learners had the opportunity to demonstrate different ways of thinking about a problem. The activities prompted learners to give attention particularly to their thoughts, feelings, or views on extended bullying. It challenged them to apply their knowledge to address a problem they might not otherwise have given much thought. This was possible as the activities stimulated some personal reflection on their own experiences as well as the experiences of others and allowed the learners to have conversations and confront important issues surrounding extended bullying. The teachers agreed that: “The variety of activities challenged the groups to share and apply their own knowledge. The groups were involved in different ways of thinking about and approaching a problem ...”

Including the activities in the lesson plans meant that participants were actively interpreting and addressing problems in a more critical manner, as highlighted by feedback from the teachers. During the feedback meeting, teachers participated in a shared discussion on their observations around learners’ interaction in their groups. The teachers agreed that:

The learners were using critical thinking skills which assisted a great deal. Critical thinking and problem-solving came out strongly ... especially when they had to analyse the problems or situations in the scenarios and from there apply their knowledge.


Once again, these views shared by teachers were reflected on the feedback cards which revealed that the activities “very often” supported the development of 21st century learning skills. The participatory nature of the activities encouraged a thoughtful learning process. Teacher participants pointed out that, in particular, the lesson description and accompanying activity ‘A tough lesson with Teejay’, revealed how the educational resource package activities aimed to enhance the development of 21st century learning skills.

#### **Excerpt 6: Lesson description and accompanying activity**

<b>Worksheet</b>	<b>Description of activity</b>
<b>8</b>	Have learners work in groups.
<b>A tough lesson with</b>	Provide each group with worksheet 8.
<b>TJ!</b>	Encourage learners to consider TJ’s feelings and relate these feelings to the image on the worksheet. Learners may also refer back to the introductory worksheets 1; 2a and 2b to connect further with T.J’s feelings.
<b>(discussion, writing &amp; dialogue)</b>	Learners can then read through the questions, have a discussion in relation to the image and proceed to respond to the set of questions provided.
	Learners can read through the two scenarios provided. Encourage learners to engage in discussions on feelings and then to proceed to address issues related to extended bullying.

**A TOUGH LESSON WITH TJ** 8

Study the image below: I experienced something similar to learner C ..  
Share your thoughts below.



*Conversation starter...*

1. How does this picture make you feel?
2. Do you think learner C is going to be harmed further. How ?
3. Share your views on learner B & D actions. Are these acceptable?
4. Would you consider the actions of learners B & D a form of cyber bullying?
5. Why is this an important issue to discuss with learners, teachers & parents?
6. Do you find learners A & E's actions acceptable. Consider the different ways learners A & E can respond to learners B & D and then to learner B.

Image copyright: © VectorStock Media, sabelskaya, 2023

Learners started to express actively their concerns and showed commitment to addressing and trying to solve problems in their respective groups. Furthermore, learning was evident from their pursuit of a greater understanding of extended bullying experiences as generative conversations were evident in the respective groups. These conversations highlighted their involvement in trying to make meaning, “agreeing to disagree” according to one teacher, and build on their shared understandings of extended bullying experiences.

The development of 21st century skills, including critical thinking, collaborative learning, problem-solving, and dialogue, was reflected on the feedback card as teachers recorded that learners were “very often” involved and participated in learning. The feedback cards offered evidence of learners thinking about what and how they were learning. The feedback cards revealed that learners’ attempts at making decisions about an activity involved asking questions, thinking, developing answers, and contributing and exchanging ideas to promote understanding and learning.

One teacher also highlighted the engagement and “maturity” shown by the learners in their discussion:

The activities got them thinking, curious and more engaged. They started to see how they could turn things around to break that cycle ... they were very vocal about this ... what was rewarding about this observation was that learners were having mature conversations rather than trying to find the right answer.

The above responses to extended bullying were also observed by a second teacher who argued that learners “spoke honestly without feeling judged”. This statement suggests that problem-solving through dialogue created room for learners to share understandings of, feelings toward, and responses to extended bullying. The three lessons within the educational resource demonstrated the need for situations where critical dialogue is necessary without judgement and devaluation or ridicule. Hence, Freire’s commitment that education maintain critical dialogue and overthrow oppression was important to the study.

#### **8.4 Teacher perspectives on the educational resource**

In the final part of the feedback session, teacher discussions centered on the benefits of the resource and its viability as a teacher aid. The discussions also captured some of the challenges teachers face when having to address real problems concerning learners and how they need to be taught. The benefits of the resource, from the perspective of the teachers, namely, increased awareness, triggering emotions, and resource potential, are discussed below. Thereafter, the (difficulties) challenges teachers face in addressing social problems that concern learners are considered.

##### **8.6.1 Increased awareness**

Teachers' comments on the different ways in which learners were learning reflected the participatory nature and design of the resource and the range of activities it encapsulated. It became evident that the resource design was appropriate and relevant for its target audience or users. As the teacher feedback meeting progressed, the focus turned to the benefits and viability of the resource in terms of how it influenced and shaped learning about extended bullying. The following comment from a teacher highlights the success of the resource in prompting learner self-reflection:

Clearly many of the activities supported self-reflection or a greater awareness as I observed with my group. One learner gave thoughtful consideration and openly questioned his role and the role of his peers whether at school or on social media in the extended bullying process.

The other teachers agreed that learners were not only actively engaged in defining the problems afflicting their schools but were also developing a deeper awareness of their complicity in extended bullying. One teacher said:

One learner mentioned: 'We are actually part of this bullying'. This was really profound more because the learner supported his statement by saying: "We are all responsible for this ... we see the fights ... we see our friends video-recording these fights but we don't realise this while it is actually happening in front of us ... we don't do anything but we naturally jump into an incident ...'

A second teacher shared a similar revelation among her group:

I was also surprised when one learner said that she feels like a bully herself because '... we all laugh, tease or witness and share this on Facebook ... we are supporting extended bullying by doing this. Therefore, we are supporting the bully more than the person that actually needs our support'.



This opened up further discussions on various responses emerging from learners in the groups. Teachers said that some learners expressed concern about their inability to challenge the phenomenon:

One learner said: “But I don’t think I can break this cycle because then I look like the odd one out ...”

Another learner said: ‘If I make a comment like “it’s gone viral ... let’s go check it out” ... then I feel like I’m supporting the bully and that it’s okay the incident took place ...’

One teacher related concerns from a learner about the dangers of becoming a target of bullying if one challenges it:

... [A] learner mentioned that if she said to her peers ‘This is such a horrible thing’ ... she felt that this will go around and she herself will be bullied or become the next target. It seems like learners do have this awareness about the effects of their involvement but this session allowed for a greater awareness of the effects and feelings of those victims subjected to extended bullying ... so engaging in this was really good.

### **8.6.2 Triggering emotions**

Teachers tended to agree that the contents of the activities triggered significant conversations based on personal experiences and engendered empathic responses. Many of the conversations highlighted the emotional impact of extended bullying. One teacher participant spoke about the way in which the activity united learners at an emotional level:

What we noticed from the learners was collective empathy. We guess this was so because they participated in a shared understanding of the concept of extended bullying. Understanding the topic united them even though some learners did not know one another ... they understood and challenged each other's views ... the activities allowed for learners to speak about their own personal feelings.

The worksheet activities helped learners gain a deeper understanding of the negative feelings associated with extended bullying. Reporting on the feelings of compassion and concern learners displayed towards survivors' experiences, one teacher reported:

It reminded me of when we watch videos of physical bullying and see learners teasing or laughing at the one being bullied, yet, seeing them here in a different, constructive learning space, they actually begin to understand and in fact show compassion.

The identification of the learners with the subject boosted their confidence and encouraged them to offer honest responses. As one teacher noted:

The learners didn't feel intimidated. We mustn't underestimate that kids aren't verbal. They expressed how they felt. Reading and discussing the storyboards gave them the confidence to speak honestly about how they feel without being judged.

The learners themselves recognised the value of the experience. This was reflected in a learner's comments, as reported by a teacher:

I wish we were at school, sitting around a table having these same discussions about bullying ... even sitting with the bully. We can sit and talk about these feelings and

experiences more openly. We can use these feelings to talk to others about it, like we are doing here.

Teachers observed that the activities exposed many commonalities amongst learner participants regardless of their grade:

... sometimes it is good to have these discussions across the grades. We can also have workshops with learners that we don't necessarily know because there is an openness and a sense of honesty to say and feel and not be judged.

A strong sense of empathy among learners was evident, as the reported comments of the following learner show:

We are learning a lot here about extended bullying. It is a terrible experience to encounter. I think the other groups feel the same ... I also don't think that punishment should happen in isolation ... it should be like a holistic approach to resolutions.

The above statements suggest that understanding survivors' feelings on extended bullying created a space for learners to share their own experiences and feelings. This suggested the need to reflect on extended bullying in the context of those being oppressed. Freire's concept of maintaining and overthrowing oppression was relevant to understanding that those who are bullied need compassion and empathy. Instead of using violent ways of overthrowing oppression or extended bullying, through engaging with the learners, the need for dialogue was noted. Freire defined dialogue as the interaction between people who critically think about the world together. Thus, the need to think and reflect on extended bullying was critical.

As one teacher pointed out, although learners initially felt intimidated by those who bully others, some learners were not intimidated but instead, confident to deal with bullying within their space. Hence, elements of dialogue were also essential.

### **8.6.3 Resource potential**

There was consensus amongst teachers that the resource served as a valuable initiative that both encompassed a school-wide approach, and incorporated features to support community outreach initiatives. As one teacher said:

This is a suitable topic to be carried out throughout the school and across various grades. The resource is flexible and can extend into other learning areas.

Implementing it with our groups revealed that all learners will be able to grasp what's going on.

Commenting on the accessibility and flexibility of the resource, another teacher said:

Initially, I was a bit anxious thinking I may not know what to do. Once I focused on my lesson plan, I realised that this resource doesn't need a specialised teacher to carry out these tasks. The resource lends itself to any teacher just picking it up to use during their class registration time, or in their English or Life Orientation class, even during Physical Education.

One teacher said that he would welcome a "ready-made" resource such as this which could be applied in a variety of school settings, but also beyond schools:

If I could feel it was okay to just ‘grab a ready-made resource’ it is easier to run with it. It took me no longer than five minutes to grasp the content of the lesson plan and the follow-through worksheets. The way it was planned, sequenced, and packaged, made it easy for anybody – teacher, specialist, or non-specialist – to pick this up, even for those learners sitting in detention or at a reflective session or even if he/she is a bully. There is this meaningful resource available to actually work with – then this would be an excellent resource. In other words, this resource has the potential to move beyond the classroom as well.

Teachers discussed that the ‘lesson links’ component (Excerpt seven) at the end of each lesson plan served as a useful guide for teachers to extend and develop their own enrichment activities with learners on extended bullying. They felt that the ‘lesson links’ component encompassing a variety of project-ideas to address extended bullying encouraged wider school and community involvement and participation.

#### **Excerpt 7: Lesson link**

LESSON LINKS
<p><b>Teachers may also consider the following activities:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Write a blog post to express understandings of the negative feelings associated with extended bullying.</i></li> <li>• <i>Create an awareness leaflet, poster, or webpage on feelings associated with extended bullying.</i></li> <li>• <i>Plan an awareness campaign for extended bullying as an important issue to care about.</i></li> </ul>

LESSON LINKS
<p><b>Teachers may also consider the following activities:</b></p>

- *Plan a community event by creating an event poster or flyer informing the community of the school taking action to address extended bullying.*
- *Design and use a tracking calendar to track incidents of extended bullying occurring in and around surrounding schools.*
- *Write an article highlighting how the school addresses and responds to extended bullying.*

There was evidence from the discussions that teachers were reimagining the resource potential. As one teacher said:

The resource can be differentiated somewhat. It can be used for primary school learners too. This shouldn't be excluded. The resource is adaptable ... especially for those teachers who seriously question what their learners need to know and how willingly teachers prepare. The resource accommodates this ... to use in a concrete or abstract way. It's suited for that teacher's class, grade, or learning area.

It was clear from the feedback cards that teachers "very often" believed that the resource focused on and investigated what was a complex issue. There was also consensus that it generated interest and curiosity, presented the issue in a clear, concise way, and held a sense of challenge and purpose. Teachers attested to the fact that the resource provided a unique educational foundation due to its in-depth inquiry into extended bullying.

### **8.5 Teachers addressing social problems**

The action research plan initially proposed a digital format for the resource. Concerns regarding a digital version rather than a hard copy version were relatively widespread amongst teachers. One teacher articulated the concerns as follows:

South African learners are not typically privileged. We just don't have the digital infrastructure at schools or in the learners' homes. Learners' socio-economic challenges mean that not everyone will have the resource to access digitally, nor will they have the data to continue with it online. Realistically, we teachers, are at the centre of teaching and learning experiences and we ought to design learning material. Learners are not ready for plain digital. The resource presented in this format is a good example of how real issues concerning learners need to be taught.

Another teacher recognised the benefits of a digital version, but suggested there is a place for both versions:

We are already plagued with a number of challenges at our schools. I think there is a place for both versions. Digitally, the resource should be accessible to learners at home to create that extension from school to the home. While a digital version won't reach every home, the resource should then include other aspects like games, puzzles, crossword puzzles or quizzes for example.

Another teacher pointed to the potential loss of teaching and learning value in a digital format:

We might lose the essence and purposes of the resource if the resource is fully digital. The resource addresses how important social issues need to be taught. The activities were interactive, creating a really good teaching/learning experience. We learnt from each other. This workshop showed that learners took back more with them from learning this way. The resource will lose its value if learning has to be engaged with digitally.

She added:

For instance, we teachers, were also learning. When you have someone interacting with the learners, if they are uncertain about an aspect, they can speak and get assistance, like we were doing here. With digital – and not that it's a complete disadvantage – but it will take longer to achieve learning and understanding.

In response to the above view, teachers were in agreement that the traditional hard-copy resource also functioned to encompass a whole-school approach. Positioning and engaging with the resource in this manner created opportunities for collective involvement, participation, and learning.

The resource provided a foundation upon which teachers could work towards a strategy, or project, adapted specifically for their school. This was expressed in the following comment:

The hard-copy resource identifies the issue; promotes different learning styles does this across the three packages. This works better than a digital version because it keeps the interest and curiosity of teachers and learners in the classroom. The 'lesson link' invites the collective participation of teachers and learners to develop strategies to create bigger projects together. A hard-copy format will achieve this.

Affirming this potential, another teacher said:

Imagine if we had a collection of these strategies and recorded the ideas of learners from working with this resource at school. Schools can then use this as an opportunity to build on learner-behavioral change programmes, for example, tailored for their school. Schools can contribute to building the resource in this way.



Teachers agreed that schools generally have limited strategies to deal with extended bullying and traditional remedial actions, such as suspension, often have unhelpful consequences. This was expressed by one teacher as follows:

Schools don't possess or have the time to teach learners about extended bullying. In our school, there's no actual consequences for the perpetrator or available programmes to support learners' understanding, or the imparting of skills and knowledge for addressing these experiences. Suspension is the usual norm ... Nothing else happens. Except, learners celebrate their suspension, seeing this action as a bonus or incentive rather than punishment ...

## **8.6 Overall contributions from Phase four**

As a whole, Phase four facilitated a unique and valuable inquiry into the participatory nature and design of the resource and the activities each package encapsulated. In essence, the inquiry provided an opportunity for:

- Envisioning a wider teacher-learner strategy encompassing the development of a resource for mitigating extended bullying;
- Capturing and illuminating the pedagogical nuances embedded in the resource;
- Recording the pedagogical influence of the resource in relation to knowledge about extended bullying using the data obtained from the feedback cards;
- Revealing the important experiences and understandings of learners and teachers, which were mentioned during the collective teacher meeting after the workshop, that enriched the evaluation process and produced relevant themes;
- Articulating gaps in and potential directions for extended bullying research arising from teachers' direct acknowledgement of extended bullying as they observed learner participants' interaction with and responses to the activities;
- Reaffirming the value of the study's theoretical and methodological approaches as participants engaged with the resource.

## 8.7 The significance of the educational resource

Engagement with teachers provided some evidence in support of the educational resource as a well-conceived intervention targeting extended bullying. Firstly, piloting the resource illuminated what happens when teacher participants are positioned as implementers and evaluators of the resource. Secondly, the first-person accounts emerging from teachers' experiences piloting the resource provided important insights that influenced the viability of the resource as an intervention strategy and offered a space to reflect on the future potential of the resource, as well as advance its agenda. Lastly, the outcomes reinforced and reflected the invaluable contributions made in the previous phases.

The engagement with the resource offered concrete connections between theory and practice with respect to teaching and learning. The teachers' comments on the different ways in which learners were learning reflected the participatory nature of the resource and the range of activities it encapsulated. I have already discussed in detail the role of theory in shaping and informing Phase two activities. The three main data generation activities, namely, *Extending conversations*, *Scenario presentations*, and *Collaborative writing* created opportunities for reflective engagement and the comments from youth participants revealed that they were reflecting critically on issues and developing a nuanced understanding of extended bullying. Freire (1970/1993) argued that all human beings are capable of looking at the world critically. The three aforementioned data generation activities directly supported the development of the resource geared towards addressing extended bullying.

In addition, the connections between theory and practice added value to the research process as the study not only advanced theory development, but also contributed meaningfully towards teachers' personal and professional growth. The engagement also provided learners with an opportunity to demonstrate different ways of thinking about a problem. They were challenged to address a problem to which they might not otherwise have given much thought. Their participation encouraged some personal reflection on their own lives as well as the lives

of others. The activities encouraged learners to have conversations about important issues and the challenges they confront when dealing with extended bullying.

Drawing on Freire, Evans, and Giroux's educational commitments, philosophical positions, and pedagogy, facilitated a robust engagement and succeeded in making concrete connections between theory and practice with respect to teaching and learning about extended bullying. This also expanded the process of shaping and promoting a pedagogy for the extended bullying intervention and prioritised the development of a praxis to intervene in extended bullying through action research.

## **8.8 Future directions**

The teacher feedback meeting illuminated factors which contributed to addressing some of the challenges through the opening and creation of "opportunity gaps" concerning the future direction of the resource and advancing the agenda of the study. This prompted me to reflect on the potential challenges identified by teachers in Phase three, in particular, those challenges placed in the long-term actions. I also reviewed the second-level research questions generated in Phase two with youth participants to assess whether or not the resource, after evaluation, had succeeded in identifying and addressing the potential challenges identified earlier. In other words, I explored whether the different phases of the study meaningfully aided the development of the resource and involved different key stakeholder groups over different phases. I also considered whether the different phases had identified new opportunity gaps in which to build and strengthen the resource in the future. This development of the educational resource over several phases of action research will now be finalised outside of this doctoral study.

Box one below reiterates the challenges identified in Phase two by young adults while box two summarises the challenges identified by teachers in Phase three.

Box 1: Challenges identified in Phase two	Box 2: Challenges identified in Phase 3
<p><b>Challenges identified in 2<sup>nd</sup> level outcomes</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Schools don't address EB in a structured or meaningful way.</li> <li>• The curriculum does not focus on teaching about EB.</li> <li>• Limited community involvement.</li> <li>• No effective programmes to mitigate extended bullying.</li> <li>• Limited programmes that inform good digital citizenship.</li> <li>• Limited interventions available to change meanings, attitudes, and responses to EB in schools or online spaces.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Challenges identified in long-term actions</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No meaningful ways to mitigate EB.</li> <li>• Schools are inconsistent in seeking ways to respond EB.</li> <li>• Teaching about EB cannot be integrated into the school curriculum.</li> <li>• Limited preparedness of community to seek justice/fairness to respond to EB.</li> <li>• Limited programmes focused on mitigating EB.</li> <li>• Schools find it difficult to promote good digital citizenship.</li> <li>• Society facilitates EB.</li> <li>• Limited ways to help change meanings, attitudes, and responses to EB.</li> <li>• Limited skills and knowledge to develop interventions to mitigate EB.</li> </ul>

The table below details how, as per its agenda, the educational resource functioned to address and close many of the potential gaps and challenges that the action research plan needed to address. The table also presents reflections from my journal that contributed to the study's ongoing work of building, strengthening, and improving the resource.

**Table 11: Advancing the resource agenda**

<i>Identification of gaps</i>	<i>How the resource addresses the gaps and potential future developments for the resource</i>
	The viability of the resource as an ongoing project as teachers engage deeply with and reflect on an important social problem /issue compiled in the resource package.

<b>Resource identified a social problem/issue</b>	<i>Note from journal: As proposed in the action research design, the themes and outcomes generated from the respective phases envision ongoing projects on extended bullying and an opportunity to evoke insight and give rise to addressing other social problems/issues.</i>
<b>Activities achieved a range of learning outcomes</b>	Extending the development of lesson plans and accompanying activities give teachers and learners the opportunity to explore, understand, and learn about extended bullying through interacting with the resource.
	<i>Note from journal: The activities were impactful and led to significant learning outcomes. A range of lesson plans and other creative and innovative activities can be developed from reviewing a host of themes generated from outcomes in all the phases. Revisit the four phases to extrapolate ideas to incorporate as themes.</i>
<b>Supported involvement and participation - teachers recognised their own contribution to the final development of the resource</b>	Continued use of the combination of rich, traditional and online media-type elements.
	<i>Note from journal: The choice of materials selected for the activities contributed to enhancing interactions among learners. Learners recognise and identify with media elements. A host of online media elements can be adopted in innovative ways to enrich learning about extended bullying: newspaper articles, television news reports, screenshot conversations. The availability and convenient access to online visual media can support this process.</i>
<b>Promotes a trans-disciplinary approach</b>	The resource supports flexibility and adaptability and extends learning across grades and learning areas.
	<i>Note from journal: The resource supports integration and can be tailored to suit different grades and different learning areas like, LO, English, Physical Education, Drama, and Art. This process can extend or transition to an online space.</i>
	A digital version of the resource is viable and feasible.

<b>Digital resource</b>	<i>Note from journal: The resource can accommodate a digital version. It can support independent learning by including a range of enrichment-type activities: quizzes, word searches, projects. Ideas can arise from the lesson-link component of the lesson plan. Convenient access to online media can be used to enrich this process, distributing a range of activities in a short space of time.</i>
<b>Supported a collective outreach</b>	<p>Highlighted learning potential beyond the classroom.</p> <p><i>Note from journal: The resource can reach audiences beyond the classroom. It encompasses community-outreach capabilities to include parents, NGO's, religious organisations, youth groups, and community police forums. It can enrich and strengthen civic education participation. The resource affirms notions of work that is important and worth doing. A digital version can aid the process of connecting the resource to the communities in which learners live.</i></p>
<b>Supported active learner participation and involvement</b>	<p>As the design successfully implemented active learning methods into the resource, teachers could connect with and explore the main focus areas of pedagogy built within the package.</p> <p><i>Note from journal: Active learning methods enhanced learner engagement and interaction with their peers and with their teacher. Develop meaningful learning methods for specific and/or across subject disciplines and to encourage teacher and learner collaboration of ideas that contribute innovation and creativity. Examples: school debates, role-play, essay writing, and poster competitions.</i></p>
<b>Identified ways to promote new learning experiences</b>	<p>Promotes learning through real-life scenarios and lived experiences.</p> <p><i>Note from journal: Develop more introductory worksheets that support learning and discussing authentic stories to immediately create a shared positive, empathetic, and supportive learning environment. This process is enriched by teachers drawing on learner knowledge and experiences they bring into the classroom.</i></p>

<b>Invited new experiences and perspectives</b>	<p>Furthering the design and development of introductory worksheets from a variety of extended bullying themes.</p> <p><i>Note from journal: Learners recognise and identify with real-life experiences which support meaningful learning. It promotes learning from past experiences and can build skills and understandings. This process can be used to efficiently frame the phenomenon in creative ways to allow and push forward participants' thinking of the phenomenon.</i></p>
<b>Accommodated new and different perspectives, experiences, and viewpoints</b>	<p>Build on and expand learners' prior knowledge</p> <p><i>Note from journal: Discussing relatable authentic stories in introductory worksheets, can build on learners' prior knowledge and experiences - as online witnesses, bystanders, or as informed citizens. Encourages learner engagement and effectively promotes the educational content on extended bullying.</i></p>
<b>Authenticity</b>	<p>Supported learning through interest and curiosity in real-life experiences. Choice of themes encompassing real-life experiences succeeded in promoting an in-depth understanding of extended bullying.</p> <p><i>Note from journal: The introductory worksheets (storyboards), and the resource as a whole, were carefully designed to authenticate survivors' lived experiences. This enlivened the resource by positioning survivors as the resource's leading characters and experts in extended bullying experiences. This move enriched the learning process affording learners a chance to identify, relate to, and have deeper conversations about the experiences. This innovative style of designing and introducing different themes can be accommodated when expanding the resource.</i></p>
<b>Lesson-link component</b>	<p>Offered alternate ideas and approaches to expand the learning about extended bullying. The lesson-link component can accommodate a variety of creative and innovative ways to approach extended bullying in physical and online spaces.</p>



	<i><b>Note from journal:</b> The lesson plans were well-designed and their format made it easy to navigate effectively through the activities. The 'lesson-links' component in the lesson plans frames and informs ideas and options to facilitate learning. It can serve as a teacher-guide to extend creativity and innovation. Like enrichment activities, it can invite aesthetic experiences, instilling enjoyment and satisfaction in learners' quest for deeper understandings. As a guide, the lesson-links point to accessing relevant, online material on social issues schools and communities face. It supports the usefulness and benefits of media to encourage different ways to approach learning.</i>
<b>Encompasses a whole-school approach</b>	The resource can broker ways for teachers to initiate their own learning and thinking about whole-school involvement.
	<i><b>Note from journal:</b> The resource is accessible and can serve as a springboard to develop or adapt an approach to suit those interested in teaching extended bullying. Teachers can become involved in a rigorous, ongoing assessment and evaluation of the resource and extend imagination and creativity after the completion of learning activities. In this way, the resource supports teachers' personal and professional growth.</i>
<b>Provides the notion of improving the school's social climate</b>	Recognising the resource as an incentive to aid in school improvement initiatives to mitigate extended bullying.
	<i><b>Note from journal:</b> It can encompass a collective and professional learning community, supporting schools wishing to mitigate extended bullying</i>

The teacher feedback meeting functioned to assess the strengths and weaknesses of the educational resource and to develop further my knowledge around extended bullying from the perspectives of the teachers. It achieved this by carefully outlining the considerations for utilising the resource as a teacher aid and its potential in helping to mitigate extended bullying. It also functioned to provide insight into any potential future directions for the resource. In addition, the feedback meeting allowed the recognition of some of the effective teaching and learning practices necessary to achieve positive learning outcomes using the educational resource. Moreover, the meeting helped to foreground and consolidate the



emerging knowledge. This knowledge could form part of a broader educational framework to mitigate extended bullying among high school learners.

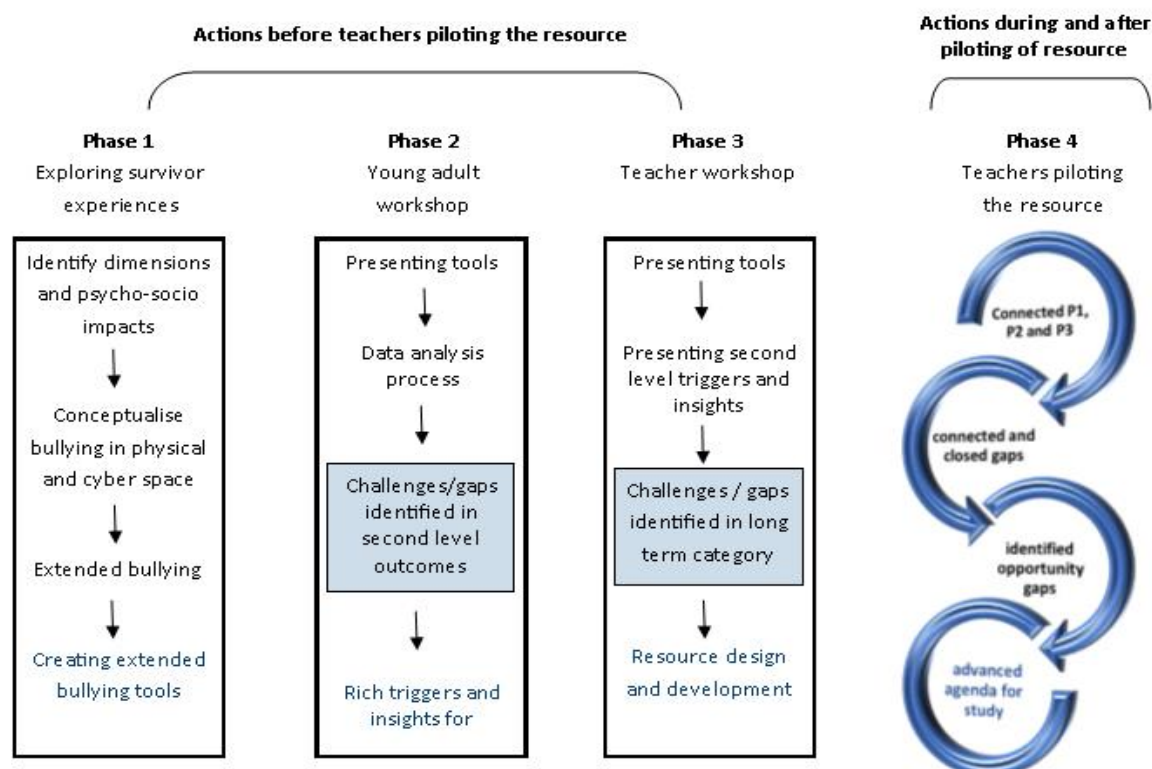
Overall, the phases of the action research plan were connected through multiple cyclical relationships and highlighted the strong links between action and reflection. This process, together with the implementation and evaluation of the developed resource, reaffirmed the efficacy of action and reflection in shaping action plans and any future projects the study might promote. As proposed in the action research design, the themes and outcomes generated from the respective phases envision ongoing projects on extended bullying and opportunities to evoke insight into and address social problems/issues that concern teachers and learners.

## **8.9 Reflections on the action research process**

According to Haynes (2012, p. 2) “reflexivity goes beyond simple reflection of the research process and outcomes, to incorporate multiple layers and levels of reflection within the research”. Table 11 above shows my own self-reflexivity as an action researcher.

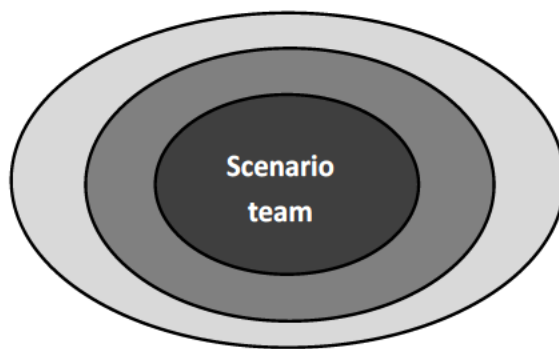
Below is a diagram that illustrates the journey of the action research process, encapsulating the four phases and the processes involved in developing and honing the educational resource as a worthy intervention. The conceptualisation and the identification of dimensions of the phenomenon of extended bullying is derived from the understandings emerging from the exploratory research done in Phase one with survivors.

### **Diagram 6: The action research phases**



My reflections on the action research plan saw a return to the approach adopted in Phase two, specifically, Bøjer's (2018) Transformative Scenario Process (TSP) (Table six) which played a central role in the design of the activities for the Phase two workshop and mediated the participation of teachers in Phase three – all of which eventually led to the development of the educational resource. Bøjer (2018) formulated a circles of impact diagram to illustrate the implications of TSP. The same concept was applied to establish the implications of the resource developed in this study, and to consider its value and effectiveness as it evolved through the respective phases.

**Diagram 7: Bøjer's, Circles of impact diagram (2018, p.13)**



Bojer's diagram (2018) illustrates a multi-stakeholder or scenario team (the stakeholder groups involved in the action research process) positioned at its core to demonstrate ownership, commitment, and the opportunity to act on the scenarios based on deep involvement and learning through the process. The wider circles involve people with whom the team has direct contact, while the widest circle involves people who connect with the scenario material without necessarily meeting team members.

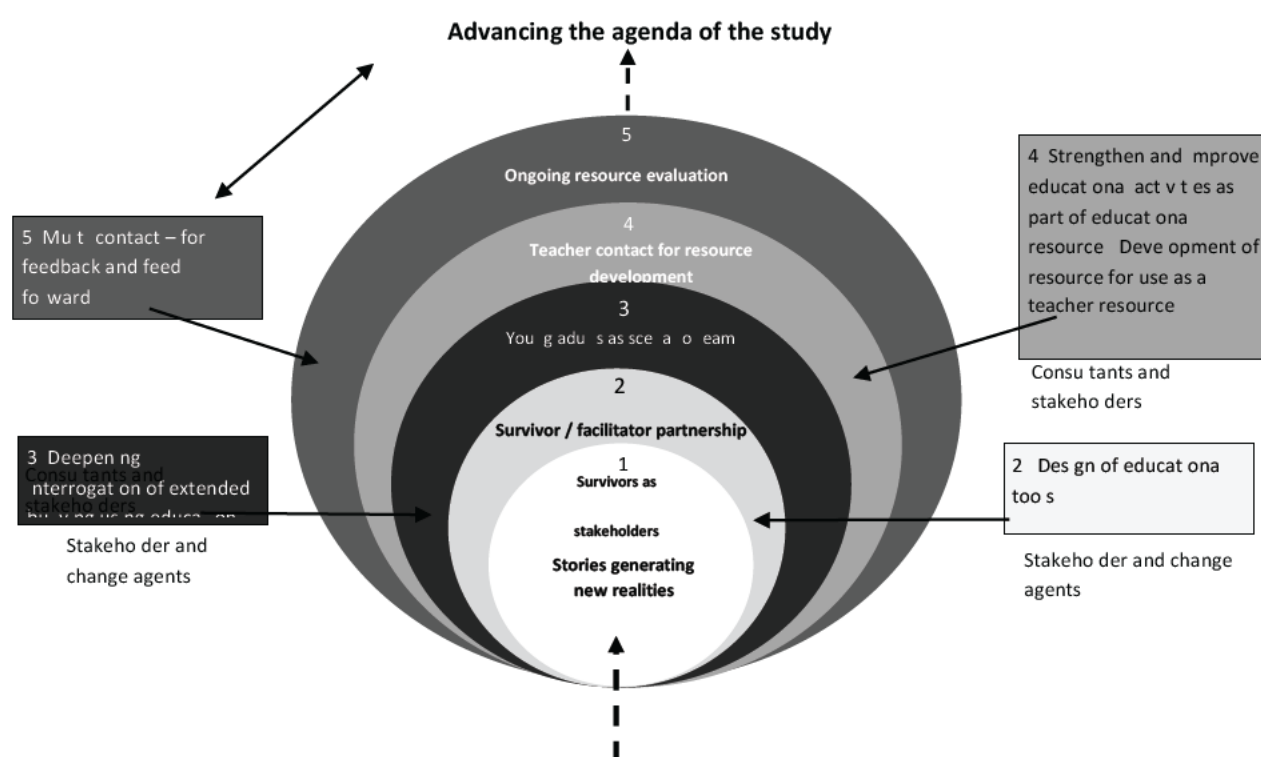
Positioning the young adult participants as the scenario team in Phase two provided an understanding of how they influenced and supported further actions in the subsequent phases. The educational activities in the resource, such as survivor case profiles and complex-type scenarios, made up the scenario material in this study. This material encapsulated the scenarios, honoured the survivors' voices, foregrounded their lived realities, and created a space for both me and the young adults, as co-learners, to contribute our knowledge, share perspectives, build meaning, and offer solutions to the problems and challenges posed in the scenarios. It also gave me a way to meet the young adults on neutral ground, to encourage their participation and contributions, and to facilitate their accreditation as stakeholders in a potential intervention strategy for extended bullying.

This move positioned the young adults as change agents who inspired action from within the specific concentric circles of the TSP. It also highlighted how and where scenarios can work; their potential influence on change agents, and their potential to inspire action and envisage a preferred future. There were, importantly for the scenario outcomes, rich triggers and suggestions which resonated into other spaces to promote engagement and transformation, while simultaneously acknowledging the fact that "there is no easy or straightforward or guaranteed way to transform complex social systems ... TSP generates tangible and visible change in the world via subtle, invisible and nonlinear changes within and among us" (Kahane, 2012, p. 79).

Bøjer's circles of impact diagram served as a useful lens for a unified view of the multiple positionalities I adopted as the facilitator. It also illuminated the effectiveness of respective participant roles in the different phases. I adapted the diagram to highlight the multiple trajectories of participation; the positioning of participants; their roles as change agents; and areas of potential action.

In an attempt to make the circles of impact diagram more applicable to this study, I modified the circles of impact in Diagram eight while still retaining the core principles of the diagram.

**Diagram 8: Bøjer's (2018) circles of impact diagram adapted for my study.**



I considered it important to position survivors at the core of the circle, as a major strength of the research design was the preservation of their authenticity which, in hindsight, bound the phases together. Survivors, therefore, emerged as the central figures in the research design and “telling their stories” created the first circle. The second circle involved the forming of a facilitator-survivor partnership which took place during the interviews and the process of analysing, reflecting, and planning with the intention of carrying their voices into Phase two.

This space created an opportunity to demonstrate my role as pedagogical leader in the designing of appropriate educational activities. The third circle represented the young adults, as the scenario team, and me as co-researchers. The two outer-most circles represented my links to other potential participants, as consultants, and those identified by young adult participants as “persons of interest”. The educational resource, together with the rich triggers and insights from Phase four, were presented in the outer-most circles. The teachers in Phase three and the teachers and learner participants in Phase four held positions in the outer-most circles. This allowed them to come into contact with the educational resource – and, for the purpose of feedback, offer new triggers and rich suggestions – without ever meeting the scenario team.

### **8.9.1 Ontological learning and reflection**

The action research process adopted a methodical, practical approach which created the potential for dynamic and relevant learning in order to provoke resolutions. Involving critical reflection and emancipatory intent, each phase, with its actions per cycle/stage, informed the others both independently and collectively. Both the activities and objectives were consistent in revealing how participants simultaneously interacted with and influenced each other. The outcomes at the end of each phase proved useful in a number of ways. First, they created an opportunity for the formation of partnerships. Second, they supported a critical interpretation of extended bullying. Third, there was evidence of a widening of empathy and compassion in participants towards survivor experiences.

Ontology, as a theory of being, influenced how participants perceived themselves in relation to learning about extended bullying. This encapsulated participants’ understandings of themselves, their roles, and the positions they held in dealing with and responding to extended bullying, including an enhanced digital awareness to extended bullying and its impacts. This was evident in the resource implementation and evaluation phase. All this learning represented a significant worldview shift for both participants and me.

In many instances, participants demonstrated competence and the will to pursue some of their ideas about dealing with extended bullying. I wanted to capitalise on that momentum and create a space and opportunity for them to develop a critical thinking-action framework which they could apply across a range of contexts and issues; in other words, to support themselves as active and engaged citizens. The collaboration ensured that multiple voices were heard and constructive learning took place. Participants were learning from each other; learning from other group responses; I was learning from the participants; and participants were engaging with and learning about extended bullying.

The participants' engagement in the respective phases supported extended learning. By adopting the role of co-researcher, all the participants and I added value to the research process and one another. Contributions of participants in the respective phases demonstrated participants' different ways of thinking about a problem. They were challenged to apply their knowledge to address a problem to which they might not otherwise have given much thought. This encouraged personal reflection on their own lives as well as the lives of others. The activities encouraged participants to engage in conversations about important societal problems and challenges. The outcomes of the phases revealed that participants were actively interpreting and addressing problems in a more critical manner.

The planned workshops revealed that participants were receptive and responsive to the activities and survivor experiences. Similar to participant responsiveness, my own responsiveness to survivor experiences stemmed from the power of the data generated in Phase one which addressed one of the study's main research questions: What are survivors' experiences of bullying in physical and cyber space? My responsiveness facilitated a move from outsider status, as a witness to the physical bullying on social media platforms, to a sympathetic and compassionate change agent invested in survivors' lived experiences. This responsiveness, in part, informed a plan of action which was achieved largely because the stories and experiences of the survivors were 'heard' and 'felt', and resonated in the subsequent phases. I was confident that responsiveness – both mine and that of the other participants – constituted a major and positive contribution to the design of the educational resource and its eventual development for use by teachers in the classroom. This responsiveness set the foundation for all engagement with the data. Thus, it is evident that the

different approaches adopted for the phases fulfilled Dick's (1993, p. 12) notion of action as a process that “values responsiveness over replicability, because otherwise it is very difficult to achieve action as part of the research ... The demands for responsiveness and flexibility require creativity if the study is to be effective”.

### **8.9.2 Epistemological reflections**

An ontological stance on my part influenced the epistemology of the study. Thus, the epistemological view that survivors, identified as informants in this study, were best suited to share knowledge and offer first-hand accounts of their experiences guided the action research process and design. It also strengthened collaborations and identified gaps which culminated towards a progressive development of an intervention, namely, the creation of a resource, intended to respond to extended bullying.

Stringer (2014, p. xv) notes the contributions of “the varied worldviews and life experiences of the people with whom they work”. Epistemologically speaking, Stringer ‘s thoughts align with the views I adopted for the action research process and design, including participant selection and the planning and design of activities. I was guided by the importance of the experiences of survivors and their understandings of the world. Furthermore, Stringer (2014, p. xviii) observes that “it is the ordinary people who give me the most satisfaction (to grow in skill and power)”. This held true for my observations throughout the phases. The sincerity of participants’ contributions, commitment, and engagement in the respective workshops was reassuring and encouraging. It revealed the development of both an individual and collective consciousness as the participants showed signs of concern over public values and were encouraged to engage in a critical educational space.

### **8.10 Conclusion**

This chapter described Phase four of the study during which the educational resource was piloted. Phase four included teachers’ preparation for implementing the resource, their

lessons with learner participants, and a concluding teacher feedback meeting. The data generated during this phase revealed teachers' perspectives on learner-resource interactions. In particular, teachers noted the potential of the resource to generate collective empathy in learners and foster a sense of social responsibility through the acknowledgment of their complicity in extended bullying. Most importantly, this chapter on the final phase of the action research presented the development of an educational resource, which is one of the original contributions of this study. The next chapter focuses on the conceptualisation and theorisation of extended bullying, which is another original contribution of this thesis.



## **CHAPTER NINE: THEORISING EXTENDED BULLYING**

### **9.1 Introduction**

One of the key outcomes of Phase one was the emergence of the new conceptualisation of the phenomenon of extended bullying. This phenomenon is typically encountered when bullying in the physical realm extends into cyberspace. The data in Phase one enabled me to identify four dimensions of extension, namely: content extension, spatial extension, participant extension, and temporal extension. These dimensions, extracted from the survivors' experiences, show that the scale of impact of bullying is significantly broader, including additional consequences, when bullying extends from the physical into the cyber realm.

On this basis, I was able to conceptualise the phenomenon of extended bullying as a unique form of bullying that is not fully accounted for in the present literature. My choice of the name "extended bullying" acknowledges the four dimensions of extension of bullying involved in the phenomenon. The impact of extended bullying is significant because the extension into cyber space means that the original act of bullying continues to live on, long after the initial act, reaching new spaces and people. The conceptualisation of extended bullying, arising from Phase one of this action research study, is one of the original contributions to knowledge made by this study.

Theorisation in this chapter comprises two sections. In Section one, I discuss the theorisation process, including the nomenclature used and the conceptualisation of extended bullying within the framework of the four dimensions. Thereafter, I examine the psycho-social impacts of this phenomenon. This provides nuanced accounts of the extension of suffering experienced by the survivors.

One of the unique contributions of this study is a discussion on the interlocking nature of the four dimensions, and how this gives rise to the concept of extended bullying. I provide a

visual illustration of the extended bullying model which facilitates interpretation of the phenomenon of extended bullying and how it intensifies psycho-social impacts.

The rich data extracted from the survivors in this study reveals the significant impact these extensions have on their experiences, and, hence, indicates the need for further research on extended bullying and its often-unacknowledged effects.

The impact of these extended experiences pushes the boundaries of survivor thresholds, testing the limits of pain and suffering. I have interpreted the issue of thresholds diagrammatically. The design I used (Diagram 12) in Section one draws on Evans and Giroux's concept of a "tolerance threshold", explained in Chapter three and examined in more detail in Section two of this chapter, in order to identify and develop a specific spectacle modality (Evans & Giroux, 2015b) for extended bullying.

Finally, in Section one, I return to the interlocking dimensions and the resultant threshold extensions. Supporting evidence from the survivors' own experiences shows how the combined effect of the extensions serves to exacerbate impact on survivors and contribute to various psycho-social impacts of bullying, namely, extensions of pain, poor self-image and identity, fear, and loneliness – all of which bear evidence to the suffering and feelings of dehumanisation experienced by survivors of extended bullying.

In Section two, I explore extended bullying through the lenses of Freire, Evans, and Giroux's concepts which were discussed in detail in Chapter three. This provides the basis to frame extended bullying as a broader problem of school and community violence in the digital age.

## **9.2 Section one: Theorisation process**

I developed the concept of extended bullying through two theorisation processes. The first involves the theorisation of the four dimensions, looking at how each of these aspects contributes to the experiences of survivors and establishing the basis for the second process of theorisation of the psycho-social impact of bullying, namely, pain, poor self-image and identity, fear, loneliness, and feelings of dehumanisation. It is important to note that the four dimensions are inextricably interlocked. They do not and cannot exist in isolation from each other.

From my study, it is evident that the cyber realm functions to provide an expanded geography beyond physical borders in the context of extended bullying. This geography is accessible to a vast and varying audience, not limited by space or time, that does not only consume data but can participate in the continual shaping of the original content into new content that is virtual, and even perpetual, in terms of its longevity.

The concept of extended bullying challenges us to redefine the very definition of what content is, who participates in its production, its physical and virtual location, and its duration.

As mentioned, my analysis of Phase one data allowed me inductively to identify four dimensions of extension that occur in what I have called extended bullying. I now discuss these dimensions.

### **9.2.1 Dimension 1: Content extension**

Extended bullying challenges our understanding of the concept of content. Traditionally, content is edited and transformed with clearly delineated changes and adaptations. This is not the case with content in the context of extended bullying. Although it commences with the original, singular act of taking a photograph or recording a video and audio, the moment content is shared digitally, it takes on a life of its own. I call this “content extension”.

With each click of the ‘share’ or ‘like’ button on the various social media platforms, the content itself is being continually and rapidly edited. The exponential speed of content ‘going viral’ is aided by all four dimensions. This will become apparent in the discussions of each dimension. Content is not passively consumed, audiences actively engage with the content through the processes of ‘likes’, ‘shares’ and ‘comments’, which include written reactions, debates, and the use of emoticons. Over time, this creates a ‘cyber display’.

Several key findings in Phase one allude to the dominant role of cyber display in aiding extended bullying. Teejay’s comments: “...once it’s [the cyber display] out in cyber space, everyone attacks you ... having your incident posted on social media is bullying on a much grander scale”, reiterate the heightened impact of content extension. He went on to say, “A video posted and shared is very hard to control ... gaining in popularity, by ways of views, likes and shares ....”

Jason’s case demonstrates the increased dangers he faced and harm he suffered from having his original video manipulated, through the addition of lyrics and sound effects in an edited version of the video, by the perpetrators and their supporters. Jason’s experience not only illustrates the capacity of content to spread to new places but highlights the audiences’ ability to edit content. The revised version of the “newly developed video clip” (Jason) deepened the impact of Jason’s original experiences and drew more negative attention. This was, in Jason’s words, “worse than the first video”.

Physical bullying alone cannot be transferred, but in combination with its cyber form, it precipitates greater exposure of the bullying act, allowing it to spread to new spaces. This creates an extension of bullying in spatial terms. The spatial extension, discussed in further detail below, acknowledges that physical and cyber spaces, as contexts for bullying, are inextricably linked. By spreading to new spaces, the bullying act creates conditions for increased harm to the survivors.

As is expected, digital content spreading into new spaces not only results in greater accessibility to content but also creates additional risks as the content rapidly evolves. Consequently, for the survivor, the extension is sustained on an increasingly ‘grander scale’ as the number of ‘likes’ and comments increase and as more viewers have tools and technology available that allow for additional forms of humiliation, including the editing of the original content. In this way, content extension is supported by spatial extension demonstrating the interlocking nature of their relationship.

### **9.2.2 Dimension 2: Spatial extension**

Physical acts of bullying traditionally start and end in the physical realm. With the advent of digital media, the extension of bullying into cyber space has expanded the spatial environment. Although the physical act of bullying cannot be transferred, the environment has expanded to include audiences not confined by physical geography. The physical act can now be witnessed by audiences beyond ‘the school grounds’, including the entire extended school community, the social community, and beyond. Indeed, the expansion of space allows for viral content to reach audiences nationally and globally. Not only is this expansion of space invasive as the survivor has little to no control over the extent to which others, people ranging from the original bullies to strangers across the globe that are part of the cyber audience of the content, participate in their intimate daily experience, it is also pervasive in that, as digital citizens, traces of their experiences will continually inhabit their lives, both online and offline.

Teejay’s remark that he had “received so many threats after the incident ... all over school, the shopping mall, socials, actually wherever [he] went”, illuminates critical operations of spatial extension. Similarly, Priya remembered how her bullying incident “shadowed” her everywhere she went, “from the classroom, the corridors, the school hall and even when [she] went home”. Teejay’s and Priya’s “never-ending” experiences show the impact of the exposure of bullying in new spaces and provide some insight into how the extension of bullying in spatial terms can reverberate beyond the initial act perpetrated.

### 9.2.3 Dimension 3: Participant extension

In traditional, physical bullying, the identity of participants is apparent. Not so with extended bullying. Typically, in a traditional sense, participants are present and identifiable. They cajole, encourage, and cheer on the perpetrator/s. In the case of extended bullying, however, perpetrators co-ordinate the production, transfer, and sharing of content into cyber space where participants increase in number exponentially in the virtual realm. The extension of the space in which bullying occurs, therefore, leads to an increase in the number of participants in extended bullying. Thus, the spatial dimension of extended bullying feeds into participant extension. The mere act of consuming content inadvertently makes spectators participants as each view is tallied. Total views become an inseparable component of attracting new audiences who are drawn to the content due to rankings used by social media algorithms. I call this phenomenon “participant extension”. The survivors singled out this extension as having had a particularly devastating impact.

“This is how social media controls you”, said Teejay, explaining that even though he moved schools for “peace and safety”, he was confronted by new participants, who responded with negativity and even hostility towards him, simply because the initial incident was “out there” and was continually attracting new participants. Byron underscored the concept of participant extension, explaining that those who view and share content are complicit in facilitating the continuation of bullying as they encourage further bullying.

Perhaps the most chilling example of how technology enables participant extension is Jason’s experience of having the original video of his bullying incident modified by new participants to cause more humiliation for him. He had hoped that by switching off his cell phone after the original video of his assault was shared on social media, “things would have settled and be forgotten”. However, when he returned to school three days later, he was shocked to find the second, modified video, doing the rounds, this time dramatised with the addition of lyrics and sound effects. “Everyone just laughed at me throughout the day ... [it was] worse than the first video”, he said.

Digital and social media allows seemingly unrelated parties to make connections through the sharing of content, both passively and actively: passively, because the technology continually creates new linkages; and, actively, when people deliberately use the technology to make new connections to share content.

Participant extension, however, not only refers to the perpetrators, it also describes the transference of the original bullying experiences to new, secondary survivors. In Jason's case, people who, using features of the technology, expressed outrage and empathy for him were themselves subjected to abuse. Some individuals who became actively involved and even offered to support Jason in his criminal case against the perpetrators were harassed, intimidated, and threatened online either to "drop the charges ... leave things alone ..." or to risk Jason's family and friends getting hurt. Thus, the manipulation of Jason's video not only brought the inevitable addition of new aggressors but also new survivors.

The stories of survivors, such as Teejay and Jason, indicate that participant extension is a significant enabler of extended bullying. Both Teejay and Jason suggested that the increasing number of participants due to the presence of their videos in cyber space, particularly intensified their suffering. Social media technology provides the tools for audiences to become participants, either passively or actively. In its most extreme form, new participants can modify content, with even more disastrous consequences for the survivors. Moreover, extended bullying can also transfer to new survivors.

These insights explain the potency of extension. The use of technology and participant extension facilitates the continuation of bullying. In Table one in Chapter five – Phase one – I outline the various techniques and courses of action participants use in physical and cyber spaces to perpetrate extended bullying by facilitating the continued presence and evolving nature of the original bullying act.

In the next sub-section, I theorise the temporal dimension of extended bullying.

#### 9.2.4 Dimension 4: Temporal extension

In traditional bullying, the physical act has a specific duration, which prescribes the involvement of both the perpetrator and his or her supporters. Although the emotional trauma is enduring, the actual act is contained to a specific period of time. Due to social media technology, however, virtual content becomes perpetual to a certain level – the bullying act often extends over time and continues to be perpetrated even many years after the initial recording and sharing online of the video in some cases. Teejay described the temporal dimension of extended bullying specifically when he referred to “my *never-ending* experiences” (emphasis added).

An extreme demonstration of the temporal dimension is illustrated by the case of Bryon who woke up from a four-week coma after being assaulted. He could not recall what had happened to him until his mother showed him a video of the incident that was circulating on YouTube. “... It even waited for me to wake up and show me what happened to me”, he said. The video had “gone viral” and had reached the top rankings in Google’s search algorithms, leaving Byron in shock and in disbelief. The bullying extended over four weeks and beyond, continuing to haunt Byron for many years after the video was recorded and posted online.

In the digital age, the ability of content to achieve such powerful reach in terms of space and audience indicates how the dimensions’ fuel extension over shortened and extended time frames. For Byron, having the video “still on the internet” alludes to an extended time frame.

Similarly, when Jason returned to school three days after his incident, he said: “... [S]ome boys made me watch the new video” – again illustrating how pervasive digital social media content and its impact on survivors over time can become.



Of his own video, which remained on the internet for six years after the event, Byron said: “... [T]his is part of my history”, a comment that supports the temporal theorisation that illustrates: (1) the influence of time on extension; (2) how time is influenced by extensions; (3) that extensions can function with or without time constraints; (4) that time aids extended bullying; and (5) that time is relative to the continuation of bullying.

Temporal extension also contributes to the non-linear, sometimes chaotic, spread of content when it ‘goes viral’. It becomes uncontained and reaches unpredictable audiences. Viral content is indicative of a heightened level of content accessibility, hastened by time, over space and participants. The nature of content, enabled by speed (time) and accessibility (participants), attracts an extensive audience.

The urgency for Teejay to return to school to hand in a statement of the incident was an outcome of how the video, within an hour of being filmed, was “... already circulating rapidly, going viral”. Teejay’s comment that “[a] video posted and shared is very hard to control ... gaining in popularity, by ways of views, likes and shares ...” underscores the temporal nature of such content as its spread accelerates exponentially and can be sustained for as long as the content exists on the platform.

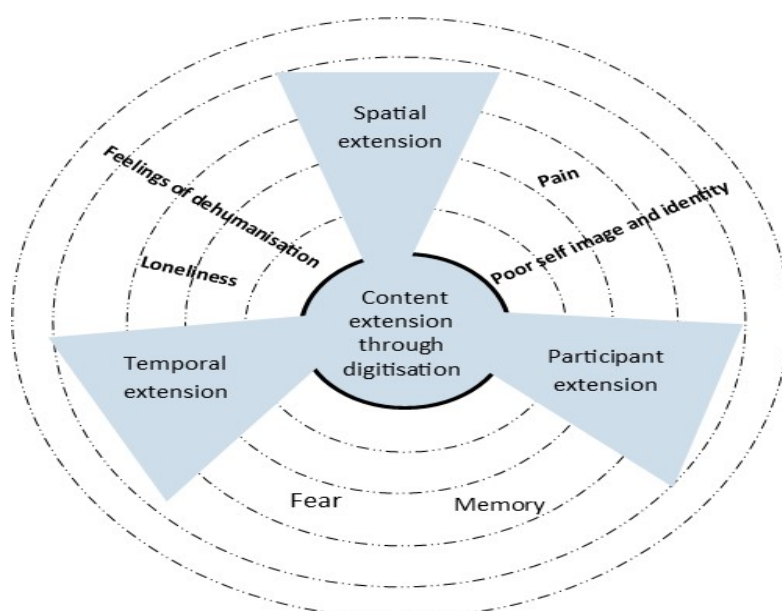
The data shows how the four dimensions and their respective extensions facilitate the spread of content over space, time, and participants. Within this framework, the extension provides an understanding of how content, spatial, participant, and temporal extensions do not operate individually but combine and interlock to aid extended bullying.

### **9.3 Interlocking effect of extensions**

Survivors of extended bullying endure increased experiences of pain, fear, loneliness, poor self-image, and feelings of dehumanisation when incidents of traditional physical bullying are video recorded and shared on social media. I have indicated, in the above discussion, how the

four extensions interlock to propel extended bullying. This interconnectedness of the extensions, with digitised content being central and propelling the other dimensions, is illustrated in Diagram nine by the concentric circles radiating from the common centre. It is through the nature and speed of content digitisation that survivors experience exacerbated psycho-social impacts across the extensions of time, space, and participants. Moreover, as Diagram nine illustrates, some of the intensely personal experiences of survivors are due to the interlocking of the dimensions in extended bullying. As a spectrum of suffering, there are endless nuanced emotions and responses that further research will continue to uncover.

**Diagram 9: Interlocking effect of extensions**

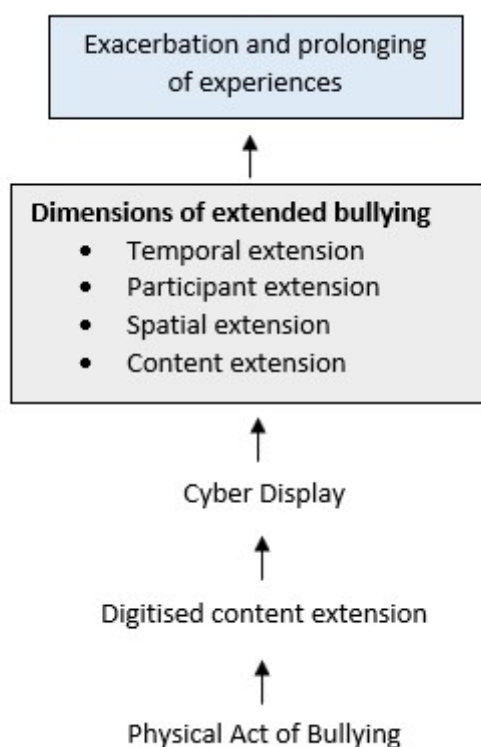


The notions of speed, going viral, and bullying being propelled are conveyed by the metaphor of a fan. As the fan spins faster, the dimensions become both more powerful and more blurred/enmeshed due to the interlocking of the dimensions, particularly for the survivor grappling to cope with extended bullying.

#### **9.4 The extended bullying model**

Theorising the four dimensions resulted in the development of an extended bullying model, structured from the bottom up, which is illustrated by the diagram below.

**Diagram 10: The extended bullying model**



The model has a bottom-up structure, commencing with the physical act of bullying which is common to both traditional and extended bullying. The content is captured and shared digitally on social media, enabling four dimensions of extension which collectively create the phenomenon of extended bullying that has severe and prolonged impacts on survivors. As illustrated in the previous section, however, extended bullying is not merely the additive combination of the four extensions. The interlocking of the four extensions is a crucial aspect of the conceptualisation of extended bullying and compounds its impacts on survivors' well-being.

#### **9.4.1 Broadening perspectives on the nature of digital content**

Whilst survivors' stories contain elements of all four dimensions, in their comments they tend to highlight content as the central dimension of extended bullying. For example, Siya was shocked to see "footage and pictures of [him] appearing on the internet with [his] bloodied school shirt". Byron said watching himself on the internet was a surreal experience, like being "in an action movie". Images of Teejay specifically 'fighting back' led to the footage of his incident gaining in popularity on the internet, whilst Priya noted growing anxiety that was linked to how rapidly the images began to circulate.

These comments reveal the crucial role content plays in extended bullying and point to essential elements that characterise this dimension. Initially, content is dependent on the nature of the act as a subjective 'lived experience'. Thereafter, the collective presence and participation of peers supporting the act and the perpetrator sustain the existence and evolution of and interaction with the content. It is this content extension that contributes to the rapid spread of the cyber display that enables further extension.

The nature of content is further examined in Section two, supporting deductive theorisation through the lens of Freire, Evans, and Giroux.

#### **9.4.2 Broadening perspectives on multidimensional interactions and extensions**

Survivors' testimonies demonstrate that the dimensions of extension do not operate individually but are interlocked to create extended bullying collectively.

After watching his incident on YouTube, Byron noted "... how many views it [the video] receives and how people shared the video ...". Jason also expressed disbelief that people "receiving and sending" to others were "so keen to share this embarrassing video of me". These examples illustrate how content and participant extensions influence each other to facilitate the spread of content to new places (spatial extension).

The multidimensional nature of the extension also explains how audiences become participants who support extended bullying, taking the lived experience of the survivor and magnifying its impact. Firstly, this is achieved through the physical presence of participants who record, produce, and share the content. Thereafter, subsequent audiences, some of whom erroneously consider themselves passive, become active participants through the dimensions of extension, sustaining the occurrence of bullying through time and space.

The theorising process reveals how, in many instances, the four dimensions are co-reliant on each other to achieve extension. Once content is uploaded and shared digitally, its spatial location expands exponentially as anyone with a connected device can share the content to multiple new cyber locations and audiences. These audiences either actively or passively become participants merely by consuming this content. Every view is recorded and added to the growing tally of views which, in itself, becomes an impetus for further audience interest and increased rankings on social media platforms. In the extended bullying model, time becomes a culpable extension that is equally unrestrained. The content continues being shared and shaped by participants, passed from audience to audience across time zones, its speed accelerating according to the whims of social media users.

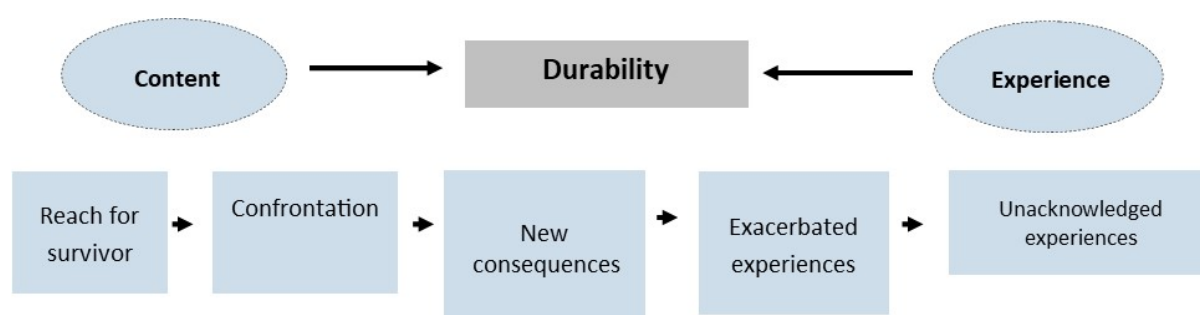
The dimensions of extension matter to the survivor in terms of their relative positioning to the content at any given point in space and time. An easier way of understanding this is to reflect on some of the experiences that underpin the theory of extension. In Teejay's case, for instance, after the initial physical assault, he suffered further humiliation as the video clip made its rounds. Due to his position in terms of time and space – as a learner living and attending school in the area – Teejay inhabited a particular positioning relative to the content and its portrayal of him. This eventually prompted him to flee, by transferring to another school in a different area, in the hopes of escaping his relative positioning to the content, his spatial location, and the particular period of time in his life.

The phenomenon of dimensions of extension resulted in Teejay arriving at his new spatial location (his new school) at a different point in time (as he transitioned from one grade to another), only to find himself confronted by content that had been continually shaped by

participants through sharing the video clip and embellishing it with comments, discussions, and emoticons. As Teejay said: “Everyone attacks you”. The extension of the dimensions resulted in the extension of impact. Teejay was bullied and humiliated again at his new school.

As the theory of extension develops, it becomes apparent that for the survivor this ultimately results in a certain durability of the experience. Durability refers to the capacity of the content in extended bullying to withstand the tests of time and space. This is largely unexplored by existing literature. It is clear, however, that all the dimensions become relevant, relative to their position to each other, to create the extension and contribute to the durability of the experience, as Diagram 11 below illustrates.

**Diagram 11: Durability of experience**



The durability of impact created by extended bullying reveals some entirely unexpected consequences, such as the continuing risk of further incidents and humiliation, at any intersection of space, time, and content in the survivor’s life.

## 9.5 Experience thresholds

The preliminary theorisation of the dimensions has been explained in systematic detail and contextualised to substantiate the extended bullying model and demonstrate its structural

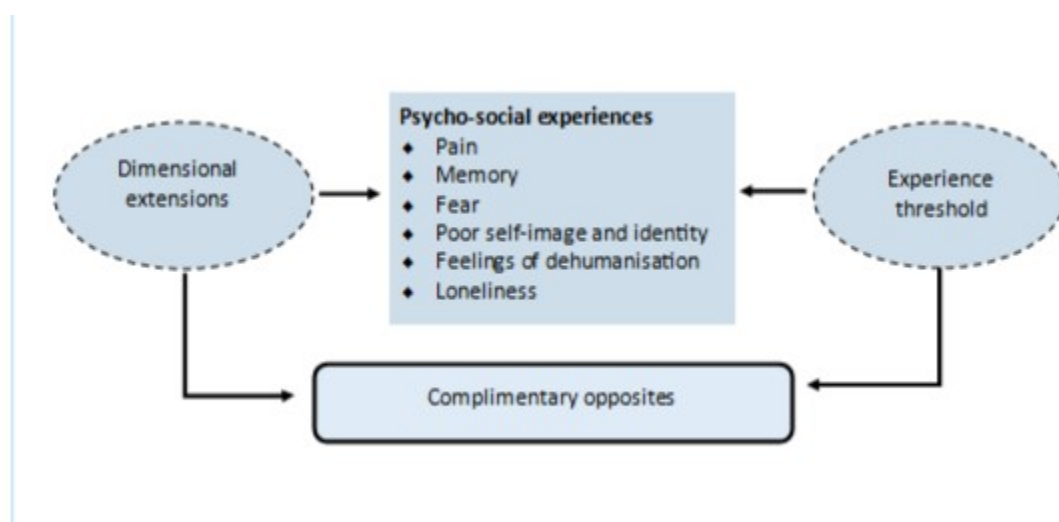
integrity. I now turn my attention to experience thresholds, drawing on Evans's concept of "tolerance threshold" (Evans, 2019, p. 4) to understand how extended experiences push the boundaries of survivor thresholds. This discussion brings a deductive component to my inductive theorising of extended bullying. In Chapter three, I indicated that by referring to "tolerance threshold" in the context of violence, Evans (2019) acknowledges the existence of a maximum level of experience a person can tolerate or endure. I have interpreted this idea of threshold to help identify and develop the concept of experience threshold in the theorisation of extended bullying in order to draw attention to survivors' psycho-social experiences: the impact the extension has on pain, memory, identity and self-image, and as the source of feelings of dehumanisation, fear and loneliness. Experience threshold refers to the maximum level of pain and suffering that can be endured by survivors.

Ultimately, this study on the structure of the dimensions of extension must be underpinned by an understanding of the human experience. Hinduja and Patchin (2012, p. 539) urge researchers to engage to a greater extent with online experiences and how they are dealt with so as to address their observation that research of this nature generally "fails to capture the nuances of ... lived experiences". Individually, survivors share intimate insight into their unique suffering that reveals their experience thresholds. Examining these thresholds allows an understanding of extended bullying in terms of human experience as called for by Hinduja and Patchin (2012). Looking at the totality of these experiences provides a substantiation of the devastating nature of extended bullying. It is this aspect of human experience that has the potential to be overlooked yet provides the greatest possibility of creating a coherent and authentic understanding of extended bullying.

Diagram 12 illustrates my design of the experience threshold which is centered on survivors' personal experiences shaped by the dimensions of extension. The diagram introduces a unique concept of "complimentary opposites" which points to survivor responses and reactions to extended bullying to include both the suffering experienced and those responses that can mitigate suffering as a negative impact. Both the extensions of extended bullying and the level to which the experience can be endured contribute to the intensification of psycho-social experiences. It has already been demonstrated how the interlocking of the dimensions exacerbate psycho-social impacts. The addition of the concept of experience thresholds

indicates that the level to which survivors can tolerate or endure their experiences also influences these impacts. In other words, if their experiences exceed their thresholds, the impacts are worsened. On the other hand, however, if their experiences fall within their thresholds, survivors may be protected, to a certain extent, from the psycho-social impacts. This links to the concept of resilience which may be a fruitful area of further inquiry although not specifically addressed here.

**Diagram 12: The threshold design**



While there is increased recognition of the interplay among dimensions, the threshold design reflects multi-directional points of attention for further theorisation of the psycho-social extension of experiences. The threshold design is underpinned by the existential account of experience which includes negative responses but can also provide opportunities for mitigation of the negative impacts of extended bullying. Finding ways to mitigate the negative impacts of extended bullying is expanded on in Section two via Evans's (2019, p. 4) concept of "tolerance threshold".

## 9.6 Different psycho-social experiences of extended bullying



The concept of experience thresholds demonstrates how extended experiences violate survivors' overall well-being, dignity, and position in the world by pushing them past their levels of endurance. Evidence from the survivors' own experiences shows the capacity of digitised content to activate the combined effect of extensions which serve to generate and contribute to exacerbated impact on survivors.

Content extension, aiding extended bullying, reveals the multiple ways that harm may be in excess of the experience threshold. Equally concerning is the consistency in survivors' respective revelations: Byron felt "trapped"; Siya was "not happy out there"; Jason had feelings of "distress and sadness"; and Priya felt her experiences were "shadowing" her to the extent that she "cannot let it go!"

The dimensions of extension exercise power over the survivors and place them in a "position of weakness", causing them to feel helpless. Teejay's comment: "This is how social media controls you" is an expression of how content extension, through digitisation, exerts a controlling effect on survivors, placing them in a position of relative powerlessness. Notably, Byron found it very difficult to "move on".

Given the interlocking nature of extensions, there are different psycho-social experiences – including extensions of pain, memory, poor self-image and identity, fear, loneliness – all of which bear evidence to the suffering and feelings of dehumanisation experienced by survivors of extended bullying.

I now move on to theorise those aspects of psycho-social experiences.

### **9.6.1 The extension of pain**

Byron said that the cyber display of him being bullied "forces me to see my pain every day". As such, the pain caused by the original act of bullying was amplified and continued through its re-enactment in cyber form. For Priya, the appearance of cyber displays served as a "daily

reminder” of the lived experience. Teejay’s frequent references to being “bullied by the internet” or comments such as “the internet is cruel” highlight the endurance of digital content and its sustained negative impact.

Cyber displays seen by a wide audience – “after all, everyone sees the video” as mentioned by Jason – deepen the torment and trauma of survivors like Teejay who was “constantly hearing” about his ordeal across space, time, and through multiple participants.

The pain suffered by survivors opens the door to an assessment of the dynamics and prerequisites necessary for content production in the physical space and positions cyber display as a potential platform for delivering prolonged human suffering. It is the source of continued psycho-social trauma and can extend perpetually (infinite extension) unless there are meaningful interventions to respond to this growing phenomenon.

### **9.6.2The extension of memory**

Survivors’ accounts testify to the humiliation and embarrassment they suffered as a result of extension. Jason’s inability to “get over it [the bullying incident] being in cyber space”, shows how the effects of the incident continue in the lives of survivors and can extend forever – an infinite extension. In this way, content extension, through digitisation, extends memory of the incident while interlocked extensions control content to ensure that the survivors are “... not allowed to forget”. Moreover, extension supports the prevailing concerns of Livingstone et al. (2016, p. 115) about how a bullying incident via digital technologies “is easily and widely shared, multiplying the harm ...”.

The lingering negative effects due to the extension of memory were revealed by Byron when he said “technology will not allow me to forget”. In addition, Priya said that she felt her experiences were “shadowing” her to the extent that she “cannot let it go!”. These comments further reveal the extension of memory in extended bullying as the incidents follow,

“shadow”, and “haunt” survivors in their memories. The extensions of memory and trauma were also illustrated by the concern survivors showed when bearing witness to many other learner-related incidents of bullying on social media, which triggered memories of their own experiences.

### **9.6.3 The extension of fear**

Extended bullying also results in an extension of fear derived from sustained/repetitive anxiety over the impacts of extension. The fact that Siya faced a “constant reminder in cyber space” of his experience was an indication of the extension of fear, which can often result in survivors’ withdrawing from society, becoming reluctant to socialise, and generally taking ameliorative measures to limit further victimisation and confrontation.

The fear of further victimisation alludes to the role of provocateurs in exacerbating impact. The reality of fear is evident in Priya’s comments that “tensions [ran] high” after she received threatening text messages indicating that she was going to be “caught” outside school. She also experienced fear and intimidation when “they would stalk [her] the whole day”. Jason shared similar accounts of how he was stalked after school: “... [T]hey just appear and give me those looks...”.

### **9.6.4 Extensions of poor self-image and identity**

... [A]s much as I want to put this horrific incident behind me, cyber space will not let me forget this experience. It haunts me every day because I know I’m out there!

Comments such as this not only indicate the extension of extended bullying in memory (already discussed), but also depict the haunting spectre of having a form of oneself existing independently in a separate dimension – in cyber space. I have termed this haunting spectre an “extended identity”. Survivors’ extended identities exist in the world and are accessible to

everyone with digital access, from close family to strangers overseas. Survivors cannot change the way in which their extended identity represents and positions them, nor can they control who has access to this identity. This causes them severe distress, as is evident in the accounts of their experiences survivors gave during Phase one in this study.

Understandably, the extension of identity has a direct effect on issues of identity and self-image. Survivors are objectified through cyber displays which they often see as false representations of themselves. This results in a poor self-image. As Jason said, the modification and re-posting of a video of him being bullied reinforced identity extensions to the extent that he could not “lose the identity of being the bullied one”.

The durability of the experience created the belief for Byron that his new identity became “...part of [his] life” or his “history”. Siya expressed his unhappiness about an image of himself with a bloodied school shirt on the internet. He felt it depicted him as someone who enjoyed fighting, was disruptive in school, or was a troublemaker. For him, the internet “paints a bad picture of me ... this is not how I see myself” and left him feeling unhappy and despondent.

An extended identity and the effects on self-image reflect some of the less visible impacts of extended bullying. An extended identity and/or extended self-image highlights concerns about self-image and reputation, for example: “...What [are] people ... going to say and think of me?” and “I would rather be called any sort of name for the rest of my life than to have this sort of image on the internet,” said Siya.

Teejay’s comment that the video “showing me throwing punches around is not who I am” reveals how the lack of context is a construct of interlocking dimensions and extensions and creates severe identity and self-image challenges for survivors. The effects also spill over to those closest to them, such as friends and family. “People, friends and family all hear of it and I hated the image it was creating of me,” said Teejay.

### 9.6.5 Feelings of dehumanisation

Extensions of psycho-social impacts fuel the feelings of dehumanisation experienced by survivors. The survivors' feelings of dehumanisation are produced by their treatment as objects or things in extended bullying that requires the collective participation across dimensions of a community of audiences and participants in physical and cyber reality: "The same chirping continues online" – as one survivor put it. Examining Hinduja and Patchin's (2015, p. 11) concerns over the use of electronic media to post images or videos confirms how cyber displays can serve to "shame and embarrass" the individual being bullied. Comments from survivors such as Priya, who described it as "exhausting" to be "teased the whole day ... constantly made fun off and laughed at", reveal how peers condone the act of bullying and, accordingly, reinforce the dehumanisation of survivors.

The digital extension of the original bullying act across dimensions exacerbates existing feelings of dehumanisation and the sense that "cyber space is cruel" due to the snowballing of support for the perpetrator rather than empathy for the survivor. After watching the video clip in which he featured, Jason remarked he was less shocked by the physical behaviour of his peers than by their contribution to cyber space comments and emoticons. The mainstream support for the perpetrators of this type of violence suggests a growing desensitisation of audiences to often inhumane and cruel cyber displays.

The complicity of peers as active participants compounds the distress felt by the survivors. When Siya said: "Everyone makes a circle. It's like an arena and you're in a ring", he was effectively endorsing the suggestion by Livingstone et al. (2016) that high levels of aggression observed via images and videos increase the possibility for further cruelty and humiliation towards the survivor.

The concept of violence as a spectacle (Evans & Giroux, 2015a), as discussed in Chapter three, helps to understand the dehumanisation of survivors. Evans and Giroux (2015a)

variously refer to this concept as “spectacular violence” and “the spectacle of violence”. It refers to the enjoyment of human suffering as an aesthetic and performative event for entertainment. This means that the survivors are robbed of their humanity as they are no longer humans with whom to empathise but objects to be violated as a form of entertainment. Caught up in the spectacle of violence, young people, argue Marwick and Boyd (2014, p. 1188) are “resistant to seeing their actions as bullying behaviour”. As the survivors are positioned as disposable and not human, young people do not recognise that these are people who can, and in fact are, experiencing bullying.

Siya said it saddened him that his friend would record and post his incident, while Jason recalled that spectators would “even count to three for the fight to start”. Extension thus amplifies the humiliation. It “destroys you [as a person]”, as Priya said. This illustrates how extended bullying takes away (“destroys”) survivors’ sense of their humanity. They are subjected to a violation of their human dignity that leaves them with intense feelings of dehumanisation.

These experiences reveal the existence of power dynamics that occur both physically and digitally to produce feelings of dehumanisation. Peers become provocateurs and facilitators of oppression. Teejay was forced to perform a “monkey dance by the main instigators while others stood around and laughed”. This shows how power hierarchies contribute to the inhumane treatment of survivors that leaves them with feelings of dehumanisation.

Terminology used by survivors describes the people at the apex of these hierarchies as “big shots”, “instigators”; “top dogs” and “superior human beings”. These terms support the notion of power being used to dehumanise the other and render them helpless and without any support, as in the following comment from Priya: “Whether you feel weak or lose the fight ... everyone just waits to see ...”

Essentially, extension creates a hostile environment for the survivor and places her or him in a position of relative weakness in which s/he loses a sense of being human, as Teejay explains:

The video clip created such a hostile environment. They wanted me to know my place. The popular kids taunted me repeatedly in a very macho way ... as superior human beings, threatening my life ... I was forced into their cruel games while they yelled and laughed at me.

#### **9.6.6 The extension of loneliness**

In the face of the cyber display and resultant humiliation, many survivors respond by retreating physically and virtually away from social interactions and the cyber societies they generally occupy. This exacerbates the loneliness that accompanies extended bullying.

Reflecting his physical isolation and sense of having to cope alone, Teejay noted: “This adds to the misery of being lonely ... it’s a one-man battle in dealing with social media”. Isolation and loneliness come not only from self-retreat but also abandonment as peers opt to support the perpetrator instead of showing empathy for and offering support to the survivor. Even “friends stop being friends, there’s silence” Teejay said.

The reasons for this peer response can vary, ranging from the allure of the display to spectators’ fears that showing empathy towards the survivor may increase their own vulnerability to attack in the shifting power dynamics. The premise that extended bullying is “actually for other kids to learn a lesson”, supports the notion, argued by Teejay, that some young people “become frightened and [do] not interfere ... they keep quiet”. Fear instilled in peers increases the loneliness felt by survivors. Significantly, Priya’s feelings of being “trapped” and having “no escape” also contributed to her loneliness.

The inductive theorisation above illuminates the more concerning and often unacknowledged experiences associated with extended bullying. In the next section, I explore extended bullying through the lens of Freire, Evans, and Giroux's concepts, as explained in Chapter three, in order to frame extended bullying as a broader problem of school and community violence in the digital age.

## **9.7 Section two: Theorising extended bullying via the lens of Freire, Evans, and Giroux**

The theorised dimensions in the first section provide a sufficiently rich basis upon which to approach deductive theorisation in this second section to enhance the philosophical interpretations of the extended bullying phenomenon. These dimensions also provide an opportunity to cross-examine some of the key findings generated from engagement with youth participants in Phase two.

The key concepts from Freire's work, integrated with the concepts developed in the scholarship of Evans and Giroux, enable deductive theorisation in this second section. Freire's philosophy speaks directly to the dehumanising effects of extended bullying when he warns that "[m]ore and more, the oppressors are using science and technology as unquestionably powerful instruments for their purpose: the maintenance of the oppressive order through manipulation and repression." (Freire, 1970, p. 60).

Deductive theorisation draws largely on the concept of spectacle as developed by theorist Guy Debord (1967, as cited in Evans & Giroux, 2015a, p. 23) who said that spectacle is a "new form of social control" which functions as a mechanism of power rather than a superficial collection of images. It is, Debord says, "a social relation between people that is mediated by images" (Evans & Giroux, 2015a, p. 46). Contemporary theorists Evans (2017) and Evans and Giroux (2015a, 2015b) expand on the concept of spectacle, arguing that the manifestation of spectacle in the world is not random but political, and provokes a political response. After explaining the concept of spectacle, I will show how extended bullying involves the creation of spectacle wherein violent images are curated as a mechanism of



power, negatively affecting social relations among young people and dehumanising all involved.

Evans's (2019) and Evans and Giroux's (2015a) discussions about spectacle challenge us to think about and engage differently with violence. The concept of spectacle interrelates broadly with the conceptual themes of disposability, intolerable violence, representation, and voyeurism in Chapter three and serves to connect with and refine a philosophical understanding of the relationship between violence and dehumanisation. As mentioned in the previous section, the spectacle of violence refers to the enjoyment of human suffering as an aesthetic and performative event for entertainment. The political undertones of this are, however, insidious. The spectacle is not simply frivolous entertainment but a mechanism through which to rob survivors of their humanity and position them as disposable political subjects by subjecting them to intolerable violence. Thus, extended bullying can be conceived of as a spectacle of violence because of the ways the phenomenon connects to issues of power, danger, and pain. Seen in this way, the concept of spectacle facilitates the development of a critical intervention to address extended bullying as a broader problem of school and societal violence.

Deductive theorisation establishes a philosophical foundation for extended bullying in the digital age. Of fundamental importance is the role of technology in the exercise of power and oppression and the impetus it creates for further violence as is evident from the dimensions of extension and psycho-social impacts discussed earlier in this chapter. The technological advances in social communication, which make extended bullying possible, require us to adapt our approach to addressing school violence. This study opens up a view on spectacle in the lived reality of daily violence in the lives of young adults. Extended bullying is framed as a contemporary form of violence in the digital age. Accordingly, I make the following propositions:

- Extended bullying is a new form of school violence marked by the use of technology which allows it to be classified and explored conceptually as a spectacle.
- The nature of extended bullying is intimate and individualised.

- Extended bullying is a contemporary form of violence.
- Extended bullying can be viewed via the broader themes of humanity, violence, and the sacred. The concept of the sacred is discussed in Proposition four below.
- Extended bullying as a lived reality emerges from a historical past that connects old and new forms of violence.

### **9.7.1 Proposition 1: Extended bullying is a new form of school violence marked by technology, enabling it to be classified and explored as spectacle**

My research shows that the integration of social media in the lives of young people blurs the distinction between physical and virtual spaces. Given how cyber displays of bullying facilitate and characterise extended bullying, Evans (2019), Evans and Giroux (2015a), and Sassen (2012) have found new ways of locating extended bullying as spectacle in the context of school violence. As shown in the previous section, content extension through digitisation reveals how digital technologies cause human pain and suffering. Indeed, Freire forewarns that oppressors use science and technology as “powerful instruments” (Freire, 1970/1993, p. 60) to sustain oppression. Through his political examination of past and present-day spectacle, Evans, both alone and in his work with Giroux, echoes Freire’s warning and progresses to curate what is seen and unseen, what is presented and what is not – including those lives that matter and those that do not.

Evans’s own assessment of spectacle allows for an examination of extended bullying as another form of present-day spectacle, just like the 2005 London bombings, the 2013 Boston marathon bombings, and the terrorist attack in 9/11. Extended bullying as spectacle, verified via the cyber display, brings into view a visual demonstration and experience: that which is seen. However, the extension can also conceal experiences that remain unseen and unexplored yet translate into a wide range of complex negative experiences.

Correspondingly, extensions over space, time, and participants document the role of technology, which speaks to issues of danger, the functioning of power, and the maintenance of oppression. Thus, a distinction is made between lives that matter and those that do not (lives that are disposable).

Claims by Evans and Giroux (2015a, 2015b) and Evans and Lennard (2018) about real and virtual violence provide understandings of how a lived experience transforms and fuses with a ubiquitous screen culture to create spectacle. Within the spatial dimension, acts of physical bullying traditionally start and end in the physical realm. The cyber display, however, serves to create a spectacle of violence that extends to the digital realm. The cyber display functions as a representation of violence because it reveals to us what has occurred. The representation in spatial terms is invasive as the survivor has little or no choice in the extent to which the cyber display penetrates their personal life and it becomes pervasive in that traces of that experience will continually cohabit their lives.

Evans's focus on spectacle shows how the cyber display touts the lives (the spectacle) of those who do not matter. As we are reminded by Freire (1970/ 1993, p. 60), we begin to see the oppressed "as objects, as 'things' [that] have no purpose except those their oppressors prescribe for them". Many of the survivors' stories of extended bullying show how they become objects of ongoing violence and dehumanisation in the eyes of bullies and others who extend the bullying.

### **9.7.2 Proposition 2: The nature of extended bullying is intimate and individualised**

Ultimately, the extensions discussed in the previous section are underpinned by an understanding of the human experience. Reflecting on their political examinations of what they call spectacles of violence – the 2005 London bombings; the 2013 Boston marathon bombings; and the 9/11 US terrorism attacks – Evans and Giroux (2015a) argue that, increasingly, digital citizens consume content as spectacle rather than appreciating the individualised lives and experiences that are impacted. Similarly, the extended bullying spectacle also immerses us in what Evans and Lennard (2018, p. 7) refer to as "real and virtual violence", where the lives and pain of those impacted become secondary to the spectacle or display.

The survivor accounts of their experiences reinforce the characteristics of extended bullying as follows:

- It is distinctive as a real and cyber display of a lived experience.
- It elicits with ease the perpetration of multiple types of bullying for sustained experiences.
- It yields experiences that are subjective.
- It precipitates forced witnessing in physical and cyber spaces.
- It depicts and frames a daily lived reality.
- It gives accounts of a daily form of violence.

This study's significance hinges upon the broader promise of a more insightful understanding of the complex nature of extended bullying as a contemporary and daily form of real and virtual violence inflicted on individuals and communities. Such an understanding better enables us to intervene for mitigation purposes, which was a key purpose of this study.

### **9.7.3 Proposition 3: Extended bullying is acknowledged as contemporary violence**

Use of the lens of spectacle opens the door to a relevant critique of extended bullying as spectacle, and a positive intervention. Connecting extended bullying to the “intimate realities of violence” (Evans & Lennard 2018, p. 4) reinforces the many ways in which Evans's (2019), and Evans and Giroux's (2015a) assessments of spectacle contribute to the richer, philosophical layering of extended bullying. For instance, the digital setting of extended bullying causes the content to function as a spectacle representing the intimate human experience as entertainment on a multimedia platform. This is distinct from those spectacles in which “...humans were often removed from representations of the crimes” (Evans & Lennard 2018 p. 4).

The concept of intolerable violence, as discussed in Chapter three, describes those images or representations imbued with experiences that violate an individual's overall well-being, dignity, and position in the world (Evans, 2017; Evans & Giroux, 2015b). Making connections to spectacles depicting a lived human experience, the scholars encourage us to identify and respond to other daily forms of intolerable violence (Evans & Giroux, 2015b).

Evans and Giroux's (2015a, p. 4) critical interrogation of "tolerance threshold" is applied to understand how individuals and communities respond to violence and how much pain and suffering they are able to endure. The concept of a tolerance threshold, demonstrates how the interlocking extensions exacerbate the experiences of pain, suffering, and humiliation that survivors endure. The experience threshold is underpinned by an understanding of an intimate human experience which supports the argument that extended bullying should be regarded as an intolerable form of contemporary violence. Experience thresholds, as mentioned in section one, can, however, produce a protective function in some cases.

In perceiving extended bullying as an intolerable form of violence (Evans & Giroux, 2015a), it is possible to draw greater attention to survivors' psycho-social experiences: the impact of extensions of pain, memory, identity, and self-image, and feelings of dehumanisation, fear, and loneliness. The approach aligns with sentiments by Evans and Lennard (2018, p. 4) concerning "... the raw realities of intimate suffering which affect us on an all too human level".

Examining extended bullying is an opportunity to re-think the nature of violence and our responses to it. Connecting extended bullying to a form of intimate human experience also allows the consideration of the dynamics of power and oppression at work in the present moment, both in terms of daily personal lives and broader society.

Locating extended bullying as part of a broader problem of school violence enables us, firstly, to situate extended bullying in the broader context of societal violence; secondly, to connect new and old forms of violence; thirdly, to engage in purposeful historical reflection;

and, lastly, to address a contemporary form of violence in the digital age. We need to understand the workings of violence and the weaponisation of technology to gain meaningful insights that will shape violence prevention and intervention in the world today.

#### **9.7.4 Proposition 4: Extended bullying can be viewed through broader themes of humanity, violence, and the sacred**

The “suffering body” (Evans, 2021, p. 13) situates the extended bullying problem in the broader and more challenging contexts of community and societal violence in the digital age. The “suffering body” is a term used by Evans to highlight the intolerability of the violence inflicted upon individuals. The impetus for this inquiry, including the structural, social, and political implications of extended bullying, is underpinned by one of Evans’s (2021, p. 14) guiding research questions: “Why has the victim appeared so central to this drama?”

Evans’s research into the relationship between humanity and violence captures theological perspectives and historical reflections. His critique of humanity and violence is central to highlighting “the suffering body of the victim” (Evans, 2021, p. 13). Evans’s work shows how “sacred motifs” serve to sustain violence. For instance, “Christianity needed the body of Christ ... the Nation needed a body of a hero ... Humanity needed the suffering body of the victim” (Evans, 2021, p. 13).

Extended bullying as spectacle places the survivor as central to the drama. However, the pain, suffering, and humiliation they endure are not immediately apparent to the audience engaging in and consuming the content as a form of entertainment. One of the youth participants profoundly noted a sense of “glorified entertainment” by those engrossed in the spectacle. Extended bullying as spectacle raises concerns about the everyday violence inflicted upon individuals and communities. In a sense, “the suffering body” of the survivor is central to the performative drama that takes place in the videos of physical bullying, however, this body is positioned as disposable, rather than “sacred” through the political mechanisms of oppression and power.

### **9.7.5 Proposition 5: Recognition that extended bullying as a lived reality emerges from a historical past that connects old and new forms of violence**

Locating extended bullying in the context of school violence and the broader context of societal violence provides some perspective on how deeply rooted violence is in our poverty-ridden and deeply inequitable post-colonial, post-apartheid South Africa.

Evans and Giroux (2015a, p.32) speak of a “highly mediated regime of pain and suffering” in their conceptualisation of spectacle. This highly mediated regime links relational and temporal violence to the voice of Franz Fanon. Notwithstanding the dehumanising effects of colonialism and the struggle for decolonisation, in a re-evaluation of Fanon’s lived experiences of colonialism, it is possible to connect Fanon from the historical past to the present moment. While Fanon’s lived reality enunciated a conceptual crisis of humanity, which Evans (GCAS Media, 2021, 29:53-29:58) refers to as “the continued and deeply embedded structures of racism”, it was also an “expression of violence ... those that are far more subtle, non-spectacular, yet painful and dehumanizing” (Yancy, as cited in Evans & Lennard, 2018, p. 38).

The pain and suffering connect Fanon to the continuum of humanity, violence, and the sacred. At the end of *Black Skin, White Masks*, the words, “My final prayer: O my body, make me always a man who questions” (Fanon, 2012, p. 231), speak of pain and suffering. Fanon’s portrayal of himself as “violated” reveals an understanding of how colonialism as violence was portrayed as just and rightful. In colonialism, the black body was “violated” – through this it was presented as disposable and non-human. In extended bullying, the survivor’s body is violated in a similar mechanism of dehumanisation. Thus, historical oppression and violence are re-enacted in the present day.

### **9.8 The changing logic of violence and potential for further violence**

In an interview with Lennard in 2015, Evans is concerned about how the ubiquitous nature of spectacle succeeds in being a “defining organisational principle for contemporary societies” (Evans & Lennard, 2018, p. 17) and a provocation for further violence to come. Freire encourages us to consider how we may recognise the “tensions, conflicts, poetry and politics” for meaningful engagement about (non)-violence (Evans & Giroux, 2015a, p. 9).

From a critical review of the conceptual themes – spectacle, intolerable violence, representation and disposability – and in interaction with the propositions, there are certain identifiable prerequisites for extended bullying within broader community and societal structures. These prerequisites have definitive historical links. The impact of technology in contemporary, violent times is significant, not just as a means of disseminating harmful content in the form of spectacle but also in shaping society’s response. Outrage is replaced with acceptance and normalisation, something Evans and Giroux (2015a, p. 7) refer to as the “changing logic of violence”.

This changing logic of violence in the digital age is premised on the following contextual prerequisites:

### **9.8.1 Prerequisite 1: A failure of empathy**

Evans and Giroux (2015a) speak of the “changing logic of violence” in the 21st century and how technology has provided an unrelenting stream of virtual imagery that normalises violence through its presentation as spectacle. This results in the failure of basic human empathy in observers of the spectacle. One of the participants in this study said extended bullying made it easier for their fellow learners to “pick a fight”. This is the changing logic of violence. Instead of empathy, the cyber display provokes further aggression. As another participant said, “bullying teaches us to be violent”. It encourages dehumanising rather than humanising responses and actions, ultimately resulting in the normalisation of such violence and, by inference, extended bullying. Any attempts at being fully human are denied because



“the violence of the oppressors prevents the oppressed from being fully human” (Freire, 1970/1993, p. 56).

Such acceptance or normalisation, according to the youth participants, serves as a warning of further violence to come because “violence is the only means to solve a problem”, in the words of one of the youth participants. While the appearance of the extended bullying spectacle triggers momentary outrage or sadness, Evans contends that this era is characterised by a “technologized language about violence where often we find violence justified because it is somehow technologically efficient ... there is nothing excessive about it” (GCAS Media, 2021, 10:31).

### **9.8.2 Prerequisite 2: Spectacles expose the role of technology in the functioning of power and maintenance of oppression**

The advent of digital media has expanded the social environment which is no longer limited to in-person interactions in physical space. The survivors’ testimonies expose the role of technology as an important factor in the functioning of power and maintenance of oppression. My study communicated a wide range of complex negative experiences and suffering endured by the survivors as a result of the extension of the social environment, and hence bullying behaviour, into cyber space. Through the process of highlighting the multiple ways in which bullying takes place beyond the initial physical act, technology became the impetus for new versions of extended bullying. For example, cell phones have become a tool to aid extended bullying through the filming of incidents of physical bullying.

Survivors observed that participant extension was a particularly devastating dimension of the violence they experienced – the fact that peers coordinated the production and transfer (sharing) of digitised content to new participants. Social media technology has provided the tools for audiences to become participants, either passively or actively. In its most extreme form, participants’ use of technology to modify content comes with even more disastrous consequences for the survivors.

Digital content's spread to new spaces not only results in greater accessibility to content but creates additional risks as the content rapidly evolves. Consequently, for the survivor, the extension is sustained on an increasingly "grander scale" as the number of 'likes' and comments increase and as more viewers have the tools and technology available to inflict additional forms of humiliation.

### **9.8.3 Prerequisite 3: Media spectacles connect the historical to the contemporary**

Evans and Lennard (2018, p. 1) explain how "every age has contingent problems that often reveal the worst of the human condition" and in the 21st century, technology seems to perform this role as it is ubiquitous in the experience of new forms of violence.

Simon Critchley, in an interview with Evans in 2016 regarding the ubiquity of media spectacles in liberal societies, said that human beings are locked in a "repetitive pattern from which it is very hard to escape", adding that there is a "history of violence from which we emerge" (Critchley, as cited in Evans & Lennard, 2018, p. 28). The historical continuity of violence creates an understanding of how the extended bullying spectacle connects new and old forms of violence. Supporting evidence from youth participants reinforces the connection between new and old forms of violence when physical acts of bullying are video-recorded and deliberately posted on social media with the intention to cause further humiliation and conflict in the perpetration of extended bullying.

### **9.8.4 Prerequisite 4: Exposure to the lived effects of structural violence**

Bernstein (2017, as cited in Evans & Lennard, 2018, p. 21) states that "violence is not an abstract concept for those subjected to it but a lived reality that has a concrete history". The daily exposure of young people to structural violence in their lives contributes to their expression of violence through the perpetration of extended bullying. In addressing extended

bullying, therefore, there is a need to move beyond spectacle to identify and connect to the continuity of lived structures of violence in our own histories. For Evans (2019, p. 62):

Violence always appears to us as timeless and timely – historically set and fully in keeping with the contemporary (dis)order of things ... to have better perfected its appearance, [it] has relied on the stripping away of any diagnosis of deeply structured forms of everyday violence whose effects are often hidden in plain sight.

Situating extended bullying in the broader context of community and societal violence exposes other nuanced forms of “humiliation and suffering” (Bernstein, 2017, as cited in Evans & Lennard, 2018, p. 125). Recognising and interrogating extended bullying as a part of violence in broader society encourages an examination of everyday instances of violence, particularly those forms of violence “hidden from plain sight”, that influence bullies to re-enact the violence with which they are familiar through the perpetration of extended bullying. Youth participants in Phase two of this study succeeded in moving beyond spectacle when they perceived acts of violence in school to be “societal issues”. One participant spoke of the “porous boundaries” which exist between schools and communities and how extended bullying results in the extension of experience. Evans (GCAS Media, 2021, 32:34) suggests that the spectacle “presents the history and the lived experience of the human condition” and that “looking beyond the spectacle can reveal the reality of violence in all its forms” (Evans & Giroux, 2015, p. 21).

#### **9.8.5 Prerequisite 5: The normalisation of violence**

Evans and Giroux (2015a, p. 3) recognise that young people continue to be the “under-theorized object for power and violence”. Evans posits that in the digital age, such violence is not necessarily presented as violence, resulting in the desensitisation of audiences that consume and enjoy violent spectacles as forms of entertainment.

Testimony by the survivors reinforces Evans's suggestions regarding such normalisation. Priya tells us "People enjoyed the show ... the video was quickly shared. It's more about entertainment than concern and worry". Jason reported: "They just crowd around like it's fun."

#### **9.8.6 Prerequisite 6: Promotion of dehumanisation and disposability**

Disposability in extended bullying is best understood as part of the process of the normalisation of violence. Across the extensions, it deprives survivors of their human rights to dignity, privacy, self-identity, and esteem, resulting in psycho-social impacts that include feelings of pain and suffering that are often under-acknowledged.

Teejay conveyed a sense of the dimensions of extensions when he spoke of having to perform a "monkey dance" while others stood and watched and he was forced to "see his pain everyday". Extended bullying as a "framing and editing [of] the realities of violence" (Evans & Giroux, 2015a, p. 32) emerges as a deeply significant prerequisite not only for the normalisation of violence or as a precursor for future violence but for the ways in which young people are rendered disposable. In all instances recounted by the survivors, those viewing the spectacle considered it "entertainment ... for any number of audiences to enjoy the show and enjoy harmful content at any time".

These perspectives contribute to understanding how the extended bullying spectacle "harvests and sells our attention" (Evans & Giroux, 2015a, p. 32). Audiences, peers as such, not only succumb to desensitisation, but they learn to desire harmful content. This explains how aiding extended bullying is carried out with such ease.

The spectacle is commodified as entertainment through dehumanisation. Fundamentally, the lenses provided hold up the ways young people are alienated, discarded, considered excess, and rendered disposable. In doing so, any political examination is denied or "... there is no

clear escape except to continue to show allegiance to those predatory formations that put us there in the first place” (Evans & Giroux, 2015a, p. 23).

Evans and Giroux (2015a) suggest that ubiquitous spectacles of violence often lead to a failure to identify any clear ethical, civic, or social awareness about how those positioned at lower levels in the social order will continue to suffer. These people and their feelings are entirely disposable.

## **9.9 Conclusion**

The work of Freire, Evans, and Giroux is relevant to understanding extended bullying as a problem of school violence in the digital age. Prominent and visible digital-visual information – theorised in Section one as cyber displays – is now a common feature of content shared on social media platforms. Cyber displays inundate young peoples’ lives with visual images, often of hatred, violence, and destruction (Evans & Giroux, 2015a). These operate as tools of domination and oppression on account of the multiple and enduring experiences suffered by survivors.

In an interview conducted in 2016, Mirzoeff discusses how images of violence in “media and social media spaces” and in Hannah Arendt’s “space of appearance” illuminate how the mixing of spaces creates a “public square” in political theory out of which a field is opened for political debate (Mirzoeff, as cited in Evans & Lennard, 2018, p. 107). According to Mirzoeff (as cited in Evans & Lennard, 2018, p. 94), “[w]ho can and cannot appear in this space and on what terms is both a properly political question and key to understanding the importance of the visible in globalized societies”. Space, pervasive violence, and politics mark the juncture at which to address important issues pertaining to the political functioning of violence, political urgency, and the political stakes (Evans & Giroux, 2015a) in the contemporary period. Fundamentally, how might we, in the age of human disposability, listen and respond to those who are forced to live in conditions of ongoing vulnerability?

Deductive theorisation via the lens of Freire, Evans, and Giroux frames extended bullying as a broader problem of school and community violence in the digital age. All of these scholars provide a theoretical framework for exploring extended bullying: to understand and interrogate the multiple ways in which violence appears and to deepen an understanding of the complex nature of extended bullying. Moreover, using Evans and Giroux's (2015a) engagement with the spectacle of violence allows theory to be transformed into action in teaching and learning. This is an essential goal of both Freire's "pedagogy of the oppressed" and action research. The work of these theorists, furthermore, helps to foreground the value of critical pedagogy when studying violence and its connection to education. Critical pedagogy also creates forums for broader, sustained discussions and a pedagogical space for the design of appropriate interventions to address extended bullying in schools.

## **CHAPTER TEN: CONCLUSION**

### **10.1 Introduction**

In this digital age, a click of a button is all it takes to change someone's life forever. The lives of young people are substantially entwined with digital media technology, with access to such media and devices growing rapidly. This rise in connectivity and access to social media platforms has raised critical issues relating to safety, privacy, and abuse. For a long time, school violence was primarily located in the physical realm. However, technology has blurred the boundaries of physical space with the introduction of cyber space. As shown in the review of literature, one of the areas requiring urgent scholarship and intervention within the broader context of school violence, is that of the filming of incidents of physical bullying and posting such recordings on social media.

Located within the critical paradigm, this qualitative study examined the experiences of young adult survivors who endured both physical and cyber bullying. Within the action research design of the study, survivors provided poignant accounts of the psycho-social impacts of pain, poor self-image, fear, loneliness, and feelings of dehumanisation arising from their experiences of being bullied. This data informed and shaped the development of an educational resource as an intervention strategy. A new conceptualisation and theorisation of the phenomenon of extended bullying was developed from the accounts of survivors in Phase one of this action research study. From both inductive and deductive theorisation, the conceptualisation of extended bullying was discussed in four dimensions with accompanying psycho-social extensions. The study found that the impact of these extended experiences stretches bullying boundaries and impacts, while simultaneously raising survivor experience thresholds and testing the limits of human pain, suffering, and resilience.

Extended bullying was also examined through the lenses of Paulo Freire, Bradley Evans, and Henry Giroux. Evans and Giroux's concepts of spectacle of violence, intolerable violence, and disposability provided the basis to frame extended bullying as a broader problem of school and community violence.

In this chapter I will summarise the key findings and original contributions, discuss how the study addressed the key research questions, reflect on the methodology employed, and, finally, make recommendations for relevant theory, practice, and policy.

## **10.2 Summary of key findings, theorisation, and original contributions**

The study revealed that filmed incidents of physical bullying posted on social media tethers the physical and cyber realms creating extensions in the dimensions of content, space, time, and participants. One of the unique contributions of this study is a discussion on the interlocking nature of the four dimensions and how this gives rise to the concept of extended bullying.

The study found that within the four dimensions of extended bullying, content extension starts from the moment content is shared digitally, thereafter forming a life of its own. The exponential speed of content going viral is aided by all four dimensions of extension as content does not remain dormant. It is actively consumed by participants over time and space. Audiences engage with the content through the process of ‘likes’, ‘shares’, and ‘comments’ which include written reactions, debates, and the use of emoticons to create a ‘cyber display’. With each click of the ‘share’ and ‘like’ button on the various social media platforms, the content itself is being continually and rapidly edited and extended.

The second dimension, the spatial extension, accounts for how physical acts of bullying, which typically start and end in the physical realm, move beyond such boundaries. With the advent of digital media, bullying enters cyber space creating an expanded spatial environment.

The third dimension of extended bullying is participant extension. The study noted that in traditional physical bullying the participants are clearly apparent. Participants are the known



bullies who harass, assault, and ridicule the survivors. However, in the case of extended bullying, identifying perpetrators is less easy as they become anonymous as the technology provides a veil of secrecy and obscurity, enabling passive viewers and bystanders to become active participants through the affordance of technology to share, comment, and edit the content.

The fourth dimension of extended bullying is the temporal extension. The disruption caused by social media has created a perpetual realm where the past, present, and the future coexist. Extended bullying thus becomes ever omnipresent and inescapable.

The exploration of these four dimensions of extension provided insights that helped bring into focus the complexities of extended bullying and motivated for wider reaching educational interventions. The action research design provided a framework for knowledge production through partnerships of reflection, sustained dialogue, and creative action.

The study noted that survivors experienced bullying in multiple spaces, such as inside the school, outside school, within communities, in social settings, and on various social media platforms. Physical altercations in the school environment were deliberately instigated, video-recorded, and posted onto social media in order to prolong the bullying experience. Such bullying also extended into community settings. The creation of fake and anonymous accounts, enabled by the capabilities of technology and social media, was rampant and exacerbated and intensified victimisation, and amplified existing and new power dynamics.

Survivors of extended bullying felt they were powerless against those that possessed the power to oppress them. This resulted in significant social adaptations including the avoidance of socialising or attending public events. Dehumanisation was a key emergent theme with survivors often finding themselves actors or pawns in a 'spectacle' in which they were used for entertainment at the expense of their psycho-socio well-being and human dignity.

The study noted a concerning lack of appropriate interventions by schools in handling and managing experiences of survivors of extended bullying. Many survivors had their issues unresolved, and others did not get closure or justice. In many instances, school-related violence was not viewed as a school problem but rather as community and household problems. To the extent that there are high levels of household and community violence in South Africa, this outlook is understandable. However, this does not exonerate school structures from their failure to fulfil their basic responsibility of providing a safe environment for children to learn. The acceptance and normalisation of violence fosters a growing culture of violence.

While one gets a sense of deliberate detachment when it comes to school structures dealing with the challenge of extended bullying, survivors showed incredible resilience. They have endured much pain and dehumanisation but have survived and, through participation in this study, have taken a step towards action to confront the status quo and contribute to solutions. Correspondingly, youth, teacher, and learner participants showed empathy towards survivors' accounts of extended bullying. The collaborative workshops highlighted the need for an appropriate and responsive educational resource to support and empower school structures to develop empathetic, meaningful interventions that not only address the root cause of bullying but are survivor-centric too.

The following definition of extended bullying arose from the study:

Extended bullying occurs when an incident of traditional bullying occurring in a physical space is video recorded, distributed via social media, and given a presence in cyber space. The unfolding of this phenomenon may see it move between physical and cyber spaces as it extends along spatial, content, participant, and temporal dimensions while aggravating psychosocial impacts, such as pain, fear, loneliness, poor self-image, and feelings of dehumanisation, for those affected.

### **10.3 How I have answered my key research questions**

This study was based on the following key research questions:

1. What are young adult survivors' experiences of bullying in physical and cyber spaces?
2. How do young adult survivors respond to bullying in physical and cyber spaces?
3. What is the nature of bullying in physical and cyber spaces?
4.
  - a. What new tools, skills, and knowledge can be developed to promote self-efficacy and mitigate the challenges (experiences) of bullying in physical and cyber spaces?
  - b. What can we learn from teachers piloting these tools and resources with their learners?

Responses to the key research questions emerged in chapters five to eight through the semi-structured interviews with survivors and collaborative workshops with youth and teachers who witnessed and/or encountered physical and cyber bullying. The data generation activities included interviews, collaborative workshops, and the piloting of the educational resource. Plenary discussions were conducted in Phase two with youth and in Phase three with teachers. The plenary sessions allowed for the deepening of reflection and engagement with the research questions through interrogating the role of theory when grappling with academic enquiry. The piloting of the resource, derived directly from the action research process contained in Chapters five to seven, was influenced by the key findings and recommendations from participants. This ensured that extended bullying was explored, feelings were understood, and nuanced responses to extended bullying were developed.

### **10.4 Reflections on methodology**

Having set out to study the relationship between physical and cyber bullying amidst indications that levels of online bullying amongst school learners are increasing at an alarming rate due to the advancement of social media technology, my action research plan evolved rapidly as I embarked on an initial overview of the problem, primarily through the gathering of newspaper articles that reported specific cases.

As a former teacher, I extended this initial research to include conversations with colleagues at various schools around Pietermaritzburg, connecting the dots between the various press reports and first-hand informal insights into the problem, shaping the ‘think-act-reflect’ process. These steps provided the basis for refining the action research plan and a suitable “working context” from which I could position myself as a pedagogical leader. Action research offered the methodology which honoured my “personal value position” (McNiff et al., 1997, p. 36). These key features were important in defining the many emerging roles and positions I was to adopt throughout the action research process.

Considerable thought was given to designing an engaging action research plan that would allow me to follow the inspiration of Freire where “[h]umankind emerge from their submersion and acquire the ability to intervene in reality as it is unveiled” (Freire, 1970/1993, p. 109). The praxis process sought to move beyond an attempt to unveil and deepen an understanding of extended bullying. It sought to create spaces that activated a local community of participants with shared concerns and interests to work in collaborative, practical, and hopeful ways as well.

The progression of the action research plan was developmental. Firstly, I wanted to understand how physical and cyber bullying played out in young peoples’ lives and the implications thereof. The rich data generated from the interviews with survivors in Phase one produced an important set of themes centered around the impact of video recording incidents of bullying and the sharing of these on social media platforms. This in-depth understanding and analysis allowed me to conceptualise and define extended bullying from the identification of a set of four dimensions of extension.

Phase two involved inviting a group of youth to come together in a collaborative workshop-mode to deepen the interrogation of extended bullying. In this, it was my intention to start shaping a process of partnership – building among survivor voices, youth, teachers, and myself – that would eventually culminate in the development of an educational resource based on these partners’ authentic experiences and insights. Survivors’ dehumanising experiences featured strongly as I sought ways to build their experiences into the educational resource and to translate those experiences into humanising conversations among participants. The receptiveness of participants towards the survivor experiences helped to facilitate this shift, positioning those at the very frontline of extended bullying as active champions of change.

The action research process and outcomes positioned teachers as central figures in the further development and refinement of the intervention. Apart from ongoing engagement with survivors’ experiences, I endeavoured continually to update the workshop groups on the study, creating opportunities for them to provide critical review of my action research plans. This ultimately enriched their understanding of extended bullying and advanced the study’s agenda. Teacher insights were vital not only to understanding the extent of the problem at schools but also to evaluating the roles of teacher training and curriculum development, as key aspects of intervention.

Each phase of the action research process informed the following phase. The process was rigorous, methodical, and hopeful, and it became a practical approach involving critical reflection and emancipatory action. These created opportunities for the formation of partnerships for critical interpretations of extended bullying. In many ways, this approach created the ontological space and opportunity for participants to develop a critical-thinking action framework which they could apply to a range of contexts and issues. In other words, it facilitated their development of identities as active and engaged citizens. Sharing in this space, I found the process equally empowering for me.

## **10.5 Reflections on the theoretical framework**

Freire, Evans, and Giroux's educational commitments, philosophical positions, and pedagogy facilitated a robust engagement between critical pedagogy and violence in the digital age. Action research served as a powerful tool for understanding and responding to this form of violence, offering concrete connections between theory and practice with praxis serving as a catalyst for negotiating new meanings and actions. This approach allowed young people and teachers space to articulate their experiences, perspectives, and hopes.

The linking of critical pedagogy to a theorising of experiences created a new space for sound insights that can shape curriculum development and policy aimed at addressing the growing levels of extended bullying in society. The praxis process nurtured confidence and strengthened partnership participation by allowing youth and teachers opportunities to exercise and experience the value of their own agency as they offered solutions, alternatives, or actionable strategies to transform the oppressive experiences of extended bullying.

The study's exploration of the four dimensions of extension provided insights that help bring into focus the complexities of extended bullying. More than revealing how pervasive these extensions are, the study revealed how the psycho-social impacts are also exacerbated and extended when viewed through the prism of multi-dimensional extension. The study emphasised the need to balance rigorous scholarship with the promotion of democratic social change.

The transformational agenda of the action research process, with its participatory framework, highlighted the potential roles and positions of teachers and their learners in the quest for social justice. The action research process also facilitated the formation of direct and indirect partnerships between survivors, young adults, and teachers. This very process is a departure from the banking concept of education which discourages partnerships and active engagement. In practice, the partnerships led to stronger participant conversations about

teaching, learning, and responses to extended bullying. Arguably, the action research process functioned to “resolve the teacher-student contradiction, to exchange the role of depositor, prescriber, domesticator for the role of student among students ... [which would] ... undermine the power of oppression and serve the cause of liberation” (Freire, 1970/1993, p. 61). In this regard the action research process disrupted the dichotomy that exists in banking education. Instead, it honoured the authenticity of participant contributions in all the phases. The design encouraged participant receptiveness, authentic feedback in partnership-mode, and reflection in action and on action.

The educational resource developed through this study uses a problem-posing approach and enacts critical pedagogies, both of which have the effect of promoting a range of critical thinking skills during workshops. Similarly, the action research process eradicated notions of teacher authoritarianism as it attended to, reflected upon, documented, and authenticated the contributions of survivors of extended bullying, youth, and teachers. Instead, the praxis process nurtured confidence and strengthened partnership participation. The approach allowed youth and teachers opportunities to exercise and experience the value of their own agency as they offered solutions, alternatives, or actionable strategies to transform the oppressive experiences associated with extended bullying.

## **10.6 Recommendations**

The rapid speed of technological advances in social media communication, together with the growing accessibility of such technology, has contributed to an increase in the posting of harmful content on digital platforms. It is important for all stakeholders to appreciate the multidimensional nature of extended bullying which has far-reaching consequences for a deeply divided, troubled society such as ours.

As a complex multi-dimensional societal challenge, extended bullying requires an equally robust, multi-sectoral response that includes policy and regulatory interventions that will compel key state clusters to develop agile interventions that can keep pace with the rapid

advances in technology. However, this research also points to the need for a robust partnership amongst, not only key state clusters but also technology developers, civil society, curriculum advisors, and scholars.

### **10.6.1 Harnessing Technology**

Ironically, whilst the rapid adoption of digital social media technology has resulted in a commensurate rise in extended bullying, the platforms themselves have proven to be powerful platforms for social change, particularly in the African context. Various scholars, including Bosco (2020), Dyson (2017), Fajimbola (2017), and Wasserman (2016), have noted the role that technology and social network sites play in peacebuilding efforts, mobilisation, activism, and social change. The recent #FeesMustFall campaign Bosch (2016) was one such example of social media activism.

According to the UN Violence Against Children report (APEVAC, 2016), there remains minimal formal, systematic support for young people who have negative online experiences, and a lack of knowledge about the resources that are available to young people and survivors of bullying. As much as social media platforms can be weaponised by aggressors, they can also be harnessed to support interventions that seek to curb the rising levels of cyber bullying and to provide support to survivors. Technology providers should be encouraged to invest in creating easily accessible online support resources built into platforms. Alternatively, this may be achieved through partnerships with educational activists who are pioneering research-driven interventions and resources to address all forms of bullying.

Evans argues that the connections between different forms of addressing violence and education must be meaningful. Thus, attention is drawn to the interpretation and uses of new media; the need for multiple and sustained conversations; the value of agency; participant and researcher positionality and social responsibility; listening more closely to the personal stories and experiences of others; and providing alternative ways of reporting, responding to, and dealing with different forms of violence. This, according to Evans (2019), is how



violence, in its novel and contemporary forms, needs to be confronted with newer vocabulary and a different vision. My own educational resource can likewise be made available via such technology.

### **10.6.2 Civil Society and the involvement of participants**

As a societal issue, extended bullying requires a comprehensive response, not only from the state in terms of regulatory policy and the enactment of legislation, but also from civil society activism. Social network sites play a pivotal role in drawing members of society, and even researchers, into the role of active participants for contributions to social change. To speak of the digital age, is to speak of its technological affordances and the vital role it plays in promoting new types of connections. The technological affordances offered through social media's network sites have shown to present us with rich theoretical and empirical dimensions. The opportunities available for integrating the social and technical for digital activism, peace-building processes, and projects are growing and show immense potential in democratising and developing societies. Powerful shifts in research and activism are also taking place because such technology creates platforms for scholar-activists to negotiate and encourage political and social change. These developments allow for interventions to address and promote reconciliation, conflict transformation, and online-based civil action.

We have seen in the four research phases how important it is for interventions to derive legitimacy by ensuring that the voices of active participants shape the responses put into place. Teachers themselves acknowledged that learner involvement was a key requisite in addressing various forms of bullying encountered. One of the learner participants remarked to a teacher participant that:

... I wish we were at school, sitting around a table having these same discussions ... we can talk about these feelings more openly and we can use these feelings to talk to others ... about it, like we are doing here.

It is within this context that NGOs need to understand young people's perspectives and place them at the centre of programmes developed to mitigate all forms of bullying. NGO's, such as the Pietermaritzburg-based Love to Live, have demonstrated how civil society responses can be shaped by the active involvement of learners, teachers, and the community. The NGO was established 23 years ago in response to a spate of learner suicides. Its interventions, which have expanded to include bullying, are based on active learner participation through workshops, the performing arts, and cultural diversity awareness campaigns. This NGO became a key partner in this study and will help rollout and pilot the educational resources for further evaluation.

### **10.6.3 Curriculum**

Muribwathoho (2015) observes that the Life Orientation programme in schools, intended to equip young people to deal with everyday challenges, has become ineffective in the face of rapid technological shifts. Such programmes, the scholar argues, have failed to enable learners to be critical thinkers or to make informed choices in the digital age. During the action research process, survivor, youth, and teacher participants lamented the inadequacy of the current Life Orientation curriculum and advocated for a more agile approach given the speed of social media technological advancement. In extended bullying, time is a focal dimension. Not only is technology advancing at a rapid space, but technology enables the swift spread of content to multiple audiences over an extended period of time. Accordingly, the school curriculum cannot remain static for, in doing so, it becomes irrelevant to the priorities and ethics of contemporary times. In this context, attention must be given to engaging and reflecting on important social issues, combining traditional and online media, such as online news articles and educational videos, and promoting learning through real-life scenarios.

### **10.6.4 Critical pedagogy must remain abreast of change**

Given the relevance of time and the swift pace of change, researchers too must accelerate the development of critical pedagogy so that it remains relevant. This means that resource

development must continually be reviewed and revised in accordance with the changing landscape. Teachers and learners need access to resources that will enable meaningful engagement with technologies, prevailing attitudes, and trends as they change through time.

Extended bullying has demonstrated how dimensionally complex bullying in a technology-advanced age has become. The educational resource developed from this study addresses current trends and observations but must continuously evolve in future to keep abreast of the changes in the digital world.

My embrace of action research was a fundamental prerequisite for the generation of authentic knowledge and insights from survivors, youth, and teachers. The participatory processes empowered the participants to become collaborative equals and intentionally gave weight to the voices of survivors in order to address power imbalances that arise from traditional methodologies.

Action research also empowered participants to become activists based on the understanding that their contributions were the basis for the formation of a transformative praxis, a meaningful personal and societal outcome from research. This sense of purpose runs as a golden thread throughout the research study. In many ways, action research and the development of an extended bullying praxis was cathartic and nurtured a sense that the survivors' suffering was not in vain.

The success of deploying action research in my study points to its value in addressing broader educational research on community and societal violence. Currently, the notion exists that schools are unresponsive to extended bullying and/or are unable to inculcate the qualities required in their learners, teachers, or community to combat extended bullying. On the contrary, this action research process and its outcomes strongly suggests that teachers, with their learners and community, have enormous potential to steer schools towards non-violence and social justice.

## 10.7 Conclusion

I set out on this journey as a personal quest to challenge my entire self and affirm my professional identity, primarily as an educational scholar, but also as a parent, reflecting on the lives of my three young adult children who inhabit a world where technology impacts nearly every facet of their lives.

Engaging with survivors and their life stories has been a traumatic experience. It is impossible to remain detached from the pain and suffering experienced. The startling realisation that a click of a button is all it takes to change someone's life dramatically is chilling yet led to profound observations on how technology has been weaponised to create violent spectacles in the age of digital violence cum entertainment. Although a click of a button only takes a moment, a digital moment, its consequences can be far reaching and last forever. This realisation formed the basis of my research and led to the original conceptualisation of extended bullying.

Powerful findings to emerge from my study are about human suffering and humanity's constant struggle to endure beyond the boundaries of pain and oppression. As a religious motif, Matthew 19:14 comes to mind, with the scripture stating, "Suffer little children and forbid them not to come unto me". This verse struck a particular chord for me, not just in terms of the vulnerability of children and young people, but also their enduring resilience to such suffering.

Encountering hope is more than cathartic. It's a call to action. An academic quest such as this must be premised on a pledge to make a difference. This study, the new understandings it generated, and the educational resource it developed and piloted, serve the higher purpose of engaged scholarship for social activism in the digital age.

## References

- African Partnership to End Violence Against Children (APEVAC). (2016). *Violence against children in Africa: A report on progress and challenges* (p. 67). United Nations.  
[https://violenceagainstchildren.un.org/sites/violenceagainstchildren.un.org/files/2021/violence\\_against\\_children\\_in\\_africa\\_a\\_report\\_on\\_progress\\_and\\_challenges.pdf](https://violenceagainstchildren.un.org/sites/violenceagainstchildren.un.org/files/2021/violence_against_children_in_africa_a_report_on_progress_and_challenges.pdf)
- Agatston, P., Kowalski, R., & Limber, S. (2012). Youth views on cyberbullying. In *Cyberbullying prevention and response: Expert perspectives* (pp. 57–71). Routledge/Taylor & Francis Group.
- Ahmad, T. (2020). Student perceptions on using cell phones as learning tools: Implications for mobile technology usage in Caribbean higher education institutions. *PSU Research Review*, 4(1), 25–43. <https://doi.org/10.1108/PRR-03-2018-0007>
- Ahmed, K. (2018). Teaching critical thinking and writing in higher education: An action research project. *Teacher Education Advancement Network Journal*, 10(1), Article 1.
- Alava, S., Frau-Meigs, D., & Hassan, G. (2017). *Youth and violent extremism on social media: Mapping the research*. UNESCO Publishing.
- Aldridge, J. (2014). Working with vulnerable groups in social research: Dilemmas by default and design. *Qualitative Research*, 14(1), 112–130.  
<https://doi.org/10.1177/1468794112455041>
- Allen, K. (2021, July 17). South Africa: Social Media, Riots and Consequences. *Institute for Security Studies*. <https://allafrica.com/stories/202107170226.html>
- Amit, S., Barua, L., & Kafy, A.-A. (2021). Countering violent extremism using social media and preventing implementable strategies for Bangladesh. *Heliyon*, 7(5), e07121.  
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.heliyon.2021.e07121>
- Anderson, M. (2018). *Humanization in the Digital Age: A Critique of Technophilia in Education* [Unpublished PhD, Georgia State University].  
[https://scholarworks.gsu.edu/eps\\_diss/183](https://scholarworks.gsu.edu/eps_diss/183)
- Artz, L., Burton, P., Ward, C. L., Leoschut, L., Phyfer, J., Lloyd, S., Kassanje, R., & Le Mottee, C. (2016). *Sexual victimisation of children in South Africa Final report of the*

*Optimus Foundation Study: South Africa* (Optimus Report) [Technical report]. UBS Optimus Foundation.

- Ashktorab, Z., & Vitak, J. (2016). Designing Cyberbullying Mitigation and Prevention Solutions through Participatory Design With Teenagers. *Proceedings of the 2016 CHI Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems*, 3895–3905.  
<https://doi.org/10.1145/2858036.2858548>
- Badenhorst, C. (2011). *Legal responses to cyber bullying and sexting in South Africa* (Technical Report Issue paper no. 10; pp. 1–20). Centre for Justice and Crime Prevention (CJCP). <https://www.lse.ac.uk/media-and-communications/assets/documents/research/projects/past-projects/researching-childrens-rights/Issue-Paper-10-Legal-reponses-to-cyberbullying-and-sexting-in-SA.pdf>
- Baldry, A. C., Farrington, D. P., & Sorrentino, A. (2016). Cyberbullying in youth: A pattern of disruptive behaviour. *Psicología Educativa*, 22(1), 19–26.  
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.pse.2016.02.001>
- Banda, F., Mudhai, O. F., & Tettey, W. J. (2009). Introduction: New Media and Democracy in Africa—A Critical Interjection. In O. F. Mudhai, W. J. Tettey, & F. Banda (Eds.), *African Media and the Digital Public Sphere* (pp. 1–20). Palgrave Macmillan US.  
[https://doi.org/10.1057/9780230621756\\_1](https://doi.org/10.1057/9780230621756_1)
- Baruth, G. D., & Mokoena, S. (2016). A Framework to Deal with Violence in South African Public Schools. *International Journal of Educational Sciences*, 12(2), 96–105.  
<https://doi.org/10.1080/09751122.2016.11890416>
- Bassey, M. (1999). *Case study research in educational settings*. Open University Press.
- Bauman, S. (2013). Cyberbullying: What Does Research Tell Us? *Theory Into Practice*, 52(4), 249–256. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00405841.2013.829727>
- Beaulieu, R. J. (2013). ACTION RESEARCH: TRENDS AND VARIATIONS. *The Canadian Journal of Action Research*, 14(3), Article 3.  
<https://doi.org/10.33524/cjar.v14i3.99>

- Bennett-Johnson, E. (2004). The root of school violence: Causes and recommendations for a plan of action. *College Student Journal*, 38(2), 199–203.
- Beran, T., & Li, Q. (2007). The Relationship between Cyberbullying and School Bullying. *The Journal of Student Wellbeing*, 1(2), Article 2.  
<https://doi.org/10.21913/JSW.v1i2.172>
- Berger, R. (2015). Now I see it, now I don't: Researcher's position and reflexivity in qualitative research. *Qualitative Research*, 15(2), 219–234.  
<https://doi.org/10.1177/1468794112468475>
- Besag, V. E. (1989). *Bullies and Victims in Schools. A Guide to Understanding and Management*. Open University Press. <https://eric.ed.gov/?id=ED397166>
- Bhana, D. (2015). When caring is not enough: The limits of teachers' support for South African primary school-girls in the context of sexual violence. *International Journal of Educational Development*, 41, 262–270.  
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijedudev.2014.08.003>
- Bhana, D., & Mayeza, E. (2016). We don't play with gays, they're not real boys ... they can't fight: Hegemonic masculinity and (homophobic) violence in the primary years of schooling. *International Journal of Educational Development*, 51, 36–42.  
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijedudev.2016.08.002>
- Bilali, R., & Staub, E. (2017). Interventions in real-world settings: Using media to overcome prejudice and promote intergroup reconciliation in Central Africa. In *The Cambridge handbook of the psychology of prejudice* (pp. 607–631). Cambridge University Press.  
<https://doi.org/10.1017/9781316161579.027>
- Binenwa, J. B. (2020). Assessing the Role of Media in Peace building: A Case Study of Juba, South Sudan. *KU Staff Publications Collections*, 1–16.
- Blaya, C., Audrin, C., & Skrzypiec, G. (2022). School Bullying, Perpetration, and Cyberhate: Overlapping Issues. *Contemporary School Psychology*, 26(3), 341–349.  
<https://doi.org/10.1007/s40688-020-00318-5>
- Bogdan, R., & Biklen, S. K. (1997). *Qualitative research for education: An introduction to theory and methods* (3rd ed.). Allyn & Bacon.

- Bøjer, M. (2018). Transformative scenarios process: How stories of the future help to transform conflict in the present. In *Berghof handbook for conflict transformation* (Online edition). Berghof Foundation.  
<https://www.berghoffoundation.org/de/publikationen/publikation/TransformativeScenariosProcess/>
- Bosch, T. (2016). Twitter and Participatory Citizenship: #FeesMustFall in South Africa. In B. Mutsvairo (Ed.), *Digital Activism in the Social Media Era: Critical Reflections on Emerging Trends in Sub-Saharan Africa* (pp. 159–173). Springer International Publishing. [https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-40949-8\\_8](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-40949-8_8)
- Boulton, M. J., Trueman, M., & Flemington, I. (2002). Associations between Secondary School Pupils' Definitions of Bullying, Attitudes towards Bullying, and Tendencies to Engage in Bullying: Age and sex differences. *Educational Studies*, 28(4), 353–370.  
<https://doi.org/10.1080/0305569022000042390>
- Boyd, D. M., & Ellison, N. B. (2007). Social Network Sites: Definition, History, and Scholarship. *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication*, 13(1), 210–230.  
<https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1083-6101.2007.00393.x>
- Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 3(2), 77–101. <https://doi.org/10.1191/1478088706qp063oa>
- Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2016). (Mis)conceptualising themes, thematic analysis, and other problems with Fugard and Potts' (2015) sample-size tool for thematic analysis. *International Journal of Social Research Methodology*, 19(6), 739–743.  
<https://doi.org/10.1080/13645579.2016.1195588>
- Brendtro, L. K. (2001). Worse than sticks and stones: Lessons from research on ridicule. *Reclaiming Children and Youth*, 10(1), 47–49.
- Burchell, K. (2015). Tasking the everyday: Where mobile and online communication take time. *Mobile Media & Communication*, 3(1), 36–52.  
<https://doi.org/10.1177/2050157914546711>
- Burns, A. (2015). Action research. In J. D. Brown & C. Coombe (Eds.), *The Cambridge Guide to Research in Language Teaching and Learning Intrinsic* (pp. 99–104). Cambridge University Press.



- Burton, P. (2008). *Dealing with school violence in South Africa* (Technical Report Issue paper no. 4; pp. 1–16). Centre for Justice and Crime Prevention (CJCP).  
<https://www.semanticscholar.org/paper/Dealing-with-School-Violence-in-South-Africa-1-Burton/02645463ec6acc9e6495a7d320090353a020732a>
- Burton, P. (Ed.). (2016). *Ending the Torment: Tackling Bullying from the Schoolyard to Cyberspace*. United Nations Publications. <http://digital.casalini.it/9789210583244>
- Burton, P., & Leoschut, L. (2013). *School violence in South Africa: Results of the 2012 national school violence study* (Monograph No. 12; Monograph Series, pp. i–114). Centre for Justice and Crime Prevention (CJCP).  
<https://wcedonline.westerncape.gov.za/documents/Psycho-Social%20Support/Positive%20Behaviour%20Programme/PBP%20Resources%20for%20Teachers/school%20violence%20in%20South%20Africa%20Report%202012.pdf>
- Burton, P., & Mutongwizo, T. (2009). *Inescapable violence: Cyber bullying and electronic violence against young people in South Africa* (Technical Report Issue paper no. 8; pp. 1–12). Centre for Justice and Crime Prevention (CJCP).  
[https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Tariro-Mutongwizo/publication/317226235\\_Inescapable\\_violence\\_Cyber\\_bullying\\_and\\_electronic\\_violence\\_against\\_young\\_people\\_in\\_South\\_Africa/links/592cab61a6fdcc84da8da313/Inescapable-violence-Cyber-bullying-and-electronic-violence-against-young-people-in-South-Africa.pdf](https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Tariro-Mutongwizo/publication/317226235_Inescapable_violence_Cyber_bullying_and_electronic_violence_against_young_people_in_South_Africa/links/592cab61a6fdcc84da8da313/Inescapable-violence-Cyber-bullying-and-electronic-violence-against-young-people-in-South-Africa.pdf)
- Byrne, J., Kardefelt-Winther, D., Livingstone, S., & Stoilova, M. (2016). *Global Kids Online, research synthesis 2015-2016* [Research synthesis]. UNICEF Office of Research - Innocenti and London School of Economics and Political Science.  
<http://www.globalkidsonline.net/synthesis>
- Cain, J. A. (2020). I'm the one: Social media, social identity, and elections. *Online Journal of Communication and Media Technologies*, 10(4), e202025.
- Carr, W., & Kemmis, S. (2003). *Becoming critical: Education knowledge and action research*. Routledge Falmer.  
<https://api.taylorfrancis.com/content/books/mono/download?identifierName=doi&identifierValue=10.4324/9780203496626&type=googlepdf>

- Cassidy, W., Brown, K., & Jackson, M. (2011). Moving from Cyber-Bullying to Cyber-Kindness: What do Students, Educators and Parents Say? In E. Dunkels, G. Franberg, & C. Hallgren (Eds.), *Youth Culture and Net Culture: Online Social Practices* (pp. 256–277). IGI Global. <https://www.igi.global.com/gateway/chapter/www.igi-global.com/gateway/chapter/50704>
- Cassidy, W., Brown, K., & Jackson, M. (2012). “Making Kind Cool”: Parents’ Suggestions for Preventing Cyber Bullying and Fostering Cyber Kindness. *Journal of Educational Computing Research*, 46(4), 415–436. <https://doi.org/10.2190/EC.46.4.f>
- Castells, M. (2015). *Networks of Outrage and Hope: Social Movements in the Internet Age* (2nd ed.). John Wiley & Sons.
- Cavana, R., Delahaye, B., & Sekeran, U. (2001). *Applied business research: Qualitative and quantitative methods*. John Wiley & Sons. <https://eprints.qut.edu.au/10523/>
- Chenzi, V. (2021). Fake news, social media and xenophobia in South Africa. *African Identities*, 19(4), 502–521. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14725843.2020.1804321>
- Chester, K. L., Callaghan, M., Cosma, A., Donnelly, P., Craig, W., Walsh, S., & Molcho, M. (2015). Cross-national time trends in bullying victimization in 33 countries among children aged 11, 13 and 15 from 2002 to 2010. *European Journal of Public Health*, 25(suppl\_2), 61–64. <https://doi.org/10.1093/eurpub/ckv029>
- Christiansen, I., & Bertram, C. (2014). *Understanding research: An introduction to reading research* (2nd ed.). Van Schaik.
- Cioppa, V. D., O’Neil, A., & Craig, W. (2015). Learning from traditional bullying interventions: A review of research on cyberbullying and best practice. *Aggression and Violent Behavior*, 23, 61–68. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.avb.2015.05.009>
- Cohen, L., Manion, L., & Morrison, K. (2011). *Research Methods in Education*. Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203224342>
- Cole, B., Maxwell, M., & Chipaca, A. (2014). Surviving in the shadows of war: Polyvictimised children in post-conflict Angola. *Crime Prevention and Community Safety*, 16(2), 87–104. <https://doi.org/10.1057/cpcs.2014.4>

- Connelly, F. M., & Clandinin, D. J. (1990). Stories of experience and narrative inquiry. *Educational Researcher*, 19(5), 2–14. <https://doi.org/10.3102/0013189X019005002>
- Cornish, F., Gillespie, A., & Zittoun, T. (2013). Collaborative analysis of qualitative data. In U. Flick (Ed.), *The SAGE Handbook of Qualitative Data Analysis* (pp. 79–93). SAGE.
- Costello, M., Hawdon, J. E., & Cross, A. (2017). *Virtually Standing Up or Standing By? Correlates of Enacting Social Control Online*. <https://vtechworks.lib.vt.edu/handle/10919/81716>
- Cox, A. J., & John, V. M. (2016). Transformative Learning in Post-apartheid South Africa: Disruption, Dilemma, and Direction. *Adult Education Quarterly*, 66(4), 303–318. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0741713616648376>
- Creswell, J. W. (2003). A framework for design. In *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative and mixed methods approaches* (pp. 9–11). SAGE Publications.
- Creswell, J. W. (2009). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches* (3rd ed.). SAGE publishers.
- Davis, K., Reich, J., & James, C. (2014). The changing landscape of peer aggression: A Literature review on cyberbullying and interventions. *Journal of Youth Development*, 9(1), 129–142.
- De Vos, A. S., Strydom, H., Fouche, C. B., & Delpont, C. S. L. (2005). *Research at grass roots: For the Social Science professionals* (3rd ed.). Van Schaik.
- denispc. (2023). *Comic book page with people talking. Comic strip background with speech bubbles. Vintage art*. <https://previews.123rf.com/images/denispc/denispc1606/denispc160600321/58517564-comic-book-page-with-people-talking-comic-strip-background-with-speech-bubbles-vintage-art-.jpg>
- Dick, B. (1993). *Action research theses* (Paper 50; Robust Processes Papers, p. 90). Interchange. [http://www.aral.com.au/DLitt/DLitt\\_P50arth.pdf](http://www.aral.com.au/DLitt/DLitt_P50arth.pdf)
- Dick, B. (2006). Action research literature 2004–2006: Themes and trends. *Action Research*, 4(4), 439–458. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1476750306070105>

- Dick, B. (2009). Action research literature 2006—2008: Themes and trends. *Action Research*, 7(4), 423–441. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1476750309350701>
- Dick, B. (2011). Action research literature 2008—2010: Themes and trends. *Action Research*, 9(2), 122–143. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1476750310388055>
- Dick, B., Stringer, E., & Huxham, C. (2009). Theory in action research. *Action Research*, 7(1), 5–12. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1476750308099594>
- Du Preez, C., & Prinsloo, J. (2017). An exploration of bullying in school context with specific focus on cyberbullying as a form of cybercrime in Tshwane, Gauteng. *Acta Criminologica : African Journal of Criminology & Victimology*, 30(3), 103–120. <https://doi.org/10.10520/EJC-bbccf2a34>
- Dube, B., & Hlalele, D. (2018). Engaging critical emancipatory research as an alternative to mitigate school violence in South Africa. *Educational Research for Social Change*, 7(2), 74–86. <https://doi.org/10.17159/2221-4070/2018/v7i2a5>
- Dyson, R. (2017). Peace building in a digital age: Negotiating boundaries to prevent violence. In N. L. Greidina & Y. R. Kamalipour (Eds.), *Communicating through the Universe* (pp. 225–239). Cambridge Scholars Publishing.
- Eikeland, O. (2006). The validity of action research-validity in action research. In L. Svensson & K. A. Nielsen (Eds.), *Action research and interactive research: Beyond practice and theory* (pp. 193–240). Shaker.
- Elo, S., & Kyngäs, H. (2008). The qualitative content analysis process. *Journal of Advanced Nursing*, 62(1), 107–115. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1365-2648.2007.04569.x>
- Espelage, D. L., & Swearer, S. M. (2003). Research on school bullying and victimization: What have we learned and where do we go from here? *School Psychology Review*, 32(3), 365–383. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02796015.2003.12086206>
- EU Kids Online Net Children Go Mobile. (2014). *Children's online risks and opportunities: Comparative findings from EU Kids Online and Net Children Go Mobile* [Monograph]. EU Kids Online, The London School of Economics and Political Science. <http://www.lse.ac.uk/media@lse/research/EUKidsOnline/Home.aspx>

- Evans, B. (2017, February 23). Opinion | Humans in Dark Times. *The New York Times*.  
<https://www.nytimes.com/2017/02/23/opinion/humans-in-dark-times.html>
- Evans, B. (2019). *Atrocity Exhibition: Life in the age of total violence*. The Los Angeles Review of Books.
- Evans, B. (2021). *Ecce Humanitas: Beholding the Pain of Humanity*. Columbia University Press.
- Evans, B., & Giroux, H. A. (2015a). *Disposable Futures: The Seduction of Violence in the Age of Spectacle*. City Lights Books.
- Evans, B., & Giroux, H. A. (2015b). Intolerable Violence. *Symplokē*, 23(1–2), 201–223.  
<https://doi.org/10.5250/symploke.23.1-2.0201>
- Evans, B., & Lennard, N. (2018). *Violence: Humans in Dark Times*. City Lights Publishers.
- Evans-Winters, V. E., & Esposito, J. (2010). Other people's daughters: Critical race feminism and black girls' education. *The Journal of Educational Foundations*, 24(1/2), 11–24.
- Fajimbola, J. O. (2017). Media, Propaganda, and the Image Dilemma of African States. In A. Olukotun & S. A. Omotoso (Eds.), *Political Communication in Africa* (pp. 121–132). Springer International Publishing. [https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-48631-4\\_8](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-48631-4_8)
- Fanon, F. (1952). *The wretched of the earth* (R. Philcox, Trans.). Grove Press.
- Fanon, F. (2012). Black skin, white masks [1952]. In C. Calhoun, J. Gerteis, J. Moody, S. Pfaff, & I. Virk (Eds.), *Contemporary Sociological Theory* (pp. 417–426). John Wiley & Sons.
- Farrell, L. C. (2013). The role of cyber and face-to-face verbal bullying on adolescent victims. *Journal of the Communication, Speech, and Theatre Association of North Dakota*, 25, 25–36.
- Feyisa, M. B., Feyisa, A. B., Moreda, A. K., & Hailu, Y. (2022). The practices and challenges of conducting action research in some selected secondary schools of Bale Zone, Oromia, Ethiopia. *Educational Action Research*, 0(0), 1–13.  
<https://doi.org/10.1080/09650792.2021.1997778>

- Finkelhor, D., Ormrod, R., Turner, H., & Holt, M. (2009). Pathways to Poly-Victimization. *Child Maltreatment, 14*(4), 316–329. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1077559509347012>
- Fox, W., & Bayat, M. S. (2008). *A guide to managing research*. Juta and Company Ltd.
- Freire, P. (1970). *Pedagogy of the oppressed* (M. B. Ramos, Trans.; 30th anniversary edition). Continuum.
- GCAS Media (Director). (2021, August 15). *Prof. Brad Evans presents a free lecture: 'Violence and the Void of Existence'*. [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=b3D\\_cboR-Yk](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=b3D_cboR-Yk)
- Giroux, H. A. (2010). Bare Pedagogy and the Scourge of Neoliberalism: Rethinking Higher Education as a Democratic Public Sphere. *The Educational Forum, 74*(3), 184–196. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00131725.2010.483897>
- Giroux, H. A. (2016). *Beyond the spectacle of terrorism: Global uncertainty and the challenge of the new media*. Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315635804>
- Giroux, H. A., & Evans, B. (2015). *Disposable Futures: The Seduction of Violence in the Age of Spectacle*. City Lights Publishers.
- Glickman, C. D., Gordon, S. P., & Ross-Gordon, J. M. (2014). *Supervision and instructional leadership: A developmental approach* (9th ed.). Allyn & Bacon.
- Goel, S., & Salganik, M. J. (2010). Assessing respondent-driven sampling. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences, 107*, 6743–6747. <https://doi.org/10.1073/pnas.1000261107>
- Golder, S. A., Wilkinson, D. M., & Huberman, B. A. (2007). Rhythms of Social Interaction: Messaging Within a Massive Online Network. In C. Steinfield, B. T. Pentland, M. Ackerman, & N. Contractor (Eds.), *Communities and Technologies 2007* (pp. 41–66). Springer. [https://doi.org/10.1007/978-1-84628-905-7\\_3](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-1-84628-905-7_3)
- Goodno, N. H. (2011). How Public Schools Can Constitutionally Halt Cyberbullying: A Model Cyberbullying Policy that Considers First Amendment, Due Process, and Fourth Amendment Challenges. *Wake Forest Law Review, 43*, 641–700.

- Gottlieb, E. E., & La Belle, T. J. (1990). Ethnographic Contextualization of Freire's Discourse: Consciousness-raising, Theory and Practice. *Anthropology & Education Quarterly*, 21(1), 3–18. <https://doi.org/10.1525/aeq.1990.21.1.05x1160p>
- Greenwood, D. J., & Levin, M. (2006). *Introduction to Action Research: Social Research for Social Change* (2nd edition). SAGE Publications, Inc.
- Grigg, D. W. (2010). Cyber-Aggression: Definition and Concept of Cyberbullying. *Journal of Psychologists and Counsellors in Schools*, 20(2), 143–156. <https://doi.org/10.1375/ajgc.20.2.143>
- Grundy, S. (1994). Action research at the school level: Possibilities and problems. *Educational Action Research*, 2(1), 23–37. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09650799400200007>
- Guba, E. G., & Lincoln, Y. S. (1994). Competing paradigms in qualitative research. In N. Denzin & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *Handbook of qualitative research* (pp. 105–117). SAGE.
- Harber, C., & Muthukrishna, N. (2000). School Effectiveness and School Improvement in Context: The Case of South Africa. *School Effectiveness and School Improvement*, 11(4), 421–434. <https://doi.org/10.1076/sesi.11.4.421.3559>
- Haynes, K. (2012). Reflexivity in qualitative research. In G. Symon & C. Cassell (Eds.), *Qualitative Organizational Research: Core Methods and Current Challenges* (pp. 72–89). SAGE.
- Hearn, G., Tacchi, J. A., Foth, M., & Lennie, J. (2009). *Action research and new media: Concepts, methods and cases*. Hampton Press. <http://www.hamptonpress.com/>
- Hemmi, A., & Crowther, J. (2013). Learning environmental activism through social networking sites? *Concept*, 4(1), Article 1.
- Henning, E., Van Rensburg, W., & Smit, B. (2005). *Finding your way in qualitative research*. Van Schaik. <https://www.vanschaiknet.com/book/view/107>
- Herr, K., & Anderson, G. L. (2005). *The action research dissertation: A guide for students and faculty*. SAGE Publications.

- Herr, K., & Anderson, G. L. (2014). *The Action Research Dissertation: A Guide for Students and Faculty* (2nd ed.). SAGE Publications.
- Hillis, S., Mercy, J., Amobi, A., & Kress, H. (2016). Global Prevalence of Past-year Violence Against Children: A Systematic Review and Minimum Estimates. *Pediatrics*, 137(3), e20154079. <https://doi.org/10.1542/peds.2015-4079>
- Hills, C. A. (2017). *Developing a law and policy framework to regulate cyber bullying in South African schools* [PhD, University of South Africa]. <https://core.ac.uk/download/pdf/85157458.pdf>
- Hinduja, S., & Patchin, J. W. (2012). Cyberbullying: Neither an epidemic nor a rarity. *European Journal of Developmental Psychology*, 9(5), 539–543. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17405629.2012.706448>
- Hinduja, S., & Patchin, J. W. (2015). Cyberbullying legislation and case law. *Implications for School Policy and Practice. Pridobljeno*, 5, 1–3.
- Holt, M. K., Finkelhor, D., & Kantor, G. K. (2007). Multiple victimization experiences of urban elementary school students: Associations with psychosocial functioning and academic performance. *Child Abuse & Neglect*, 31(5), 503–515. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chiabu.2006.12.006>
- Hunter, L., Emerald, E., & Martin, G. (2013). Methods of Analysing Field Texts to Construct Research Texts. In L. Hunter, E. Emerald, & G. Martin (Eds.), *Participatory Activist Research in the Globalised World: Social Change Through the Cultural Professions* (pp. 105–128). Springer Netherlands. [https://doi.org/10.1007/978-94-007-4426-4\\_7](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-94-007-4426-4_7)
- Irwin-Rogers, K., & Pinkney, C. (2017). *Social media as a catalyst and trigger for youth violence* (pp. 1–37). Catch-22 in partnership with University College Birmingham.
- Isidiho, P. E. (2009). *An exploration of bullying in public schools in Lesotho* [MA, University of South Africa]. <https://core.ac.uk/download/pdf/43166211.pdf>
- Jacobs, L. (2014). Framing of school violence in the South African printed media-(mis) information to the public. *South African Journal of Education*, 34(1), 1–16.
- John, V. M. (2020). Developing Peace Praxes with Conflict Mapping. *Peace Review*, 32(1), 32–41. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10402659.2020.1823564>



- Juan, A., Zuze, L., Hannan, S., Govender, A., & Reddy, V. (2018). Bullies, victims and bully-victims in South African schools: Examining the risk factors. *South African Journal of Education*, 38(1), Article 1. <https://doi.org/10.4314/saje.v38i1>
- Kabiawu, O., & Kyobe, M. (2015). Mobile Bullying and Victimization: A Study of Female Bully-Victims in South African High Schools. *Second International Conference on Advances in Women's Studies 2015*. International Conference on Advances in Women's Studies, Toronto, Canada.
- Kahane, A. (2012). *Transformative scenario planning: Working together to change the future*. Berrett-Koehler Publishers.
- Kahn, R., & Kellner, D. (2007). Paulo Freire and Ivan Illich: Technology, Politics and the Reconstruction of Education. *Policy Futures in Education*, 5(4), 431–448. <https://doi.org/10.2304/pfie.2007.5.4.431>
- Kaye, S., & Harris, G. (Eds.). (2017). *Building peace via action research: African case studies*. United Nations University for Peace.
- Keightley, E. (2012). Conclusion: Making Time – The Social Temporalities of Mediated Experience. In E. Keightley (Ed.), *Time, Media and Modernity* (pp. 201–223). Palgrave Macmillan UK. [https://doi.org/10.1057/9781137020680\\_11](https://doi.org/10.1057/9781137020680_11)
- Kellner, D. (1998). Multiple literacies and critical pedagogy in a multicultural society. *Educational Theory*, 48(1), 103–122.
- Kellner, D. (2001). Critical Pedagogy, Cultural Studies, and Radical Democracy at the Turn of the Millennium: Reflections on the Work of Henry Giroux. *Cultural Studies ↔ Critical Methodologies*, 1(2), 220–239. <https://doi.org/10.1177/153270860100100205>
- Kelly, P., Campbell, P., & Howie, L. (2018). *Rethinking Young People's Marginalisation: Beyond neo-Liberal Futures?* Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315651361>
- Kemmis, S., & McTaggart, R. (1988). *The action research planner*. Deakin University.
- Kemp, S. (2021). Digital in South Africa: All the Statistics You Need in 2021. *DataReportal – Global Digital Insights*. <https://datareportal.com/reports/digital-2021-south-africa>

- Kgatle, M. S. (2020). The Relationship between the Economic Strand of Contemporary Pentecostalism and Neo-Liberalism in Post-1994 South Africa. *Religions*, 11(4), Article 4. <https://doi.org/10.3390/rel11040156>
- Khuzwayo, N., Taylor, M., & Connolly, C. (2016). Prevalence and correlates of violence among South African high school learners in uMgungundlovu District municipality, KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa. *South African Medical Journal*, 106(12), 1216–1221.
- Kielhofner, G. (1982). Qualitative Research: Part One Paradigmatic Grounds and Issues of Reliability and Validity. *The Occupational Therapy Journal of Research*, 2(2), 67–79. <https://doi.org/10.1177/153944928200200201>
- King, N. (2004). Using templates in the thematic analysis of text. In C. Cassell & G. Symon (Eds.), *Essential guide to qualitative methods in organizational research* (pp. 256–270). SAGE Publications.
- Kivunja, C., & Kuyini, A. B. (2017). Understanding and Applying Research Paradigms in Educational Contexts. *International Journal of Higher Education*, 6(5), 26–41.
- Kowalski, R. M., Giumetti, G. W., Schroeder, A. N., & Lattanner, M. R. (2014). Bullying in the digital age: A critical review and meta-analysis of cyberbullying research among youth. *Psychological Bulletin*, 140(4), 1073–1137. <https://doi.org/10.1037/a0035618>
- Kowalski, R. M., & Limber, S. P. (2007). Electronic Bullying Among Middle School Students. *Journal of Adolescent Health*, 41(6, Supplement), S22–S30. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jadohealth.2007.08.017>
- Kreifels, I., & Warton, G. (2019). Addressing Violence in South African Schools. *SaferSpaces*. <https://www.saferpaces.org.za/understand/entry/school-violence-in-south-africa>
- Kritzinger, E. (2017). Cultivating a cyber-safety culture among school learners in South Africa. *Africa Education Review*, 14(1), 22–41. <https://doi.org/10.1080/18146627.2016.1224561>
- Kutskyi, A. (n.d.). *Mockery and bullying at school problem cartoon vector illustration* [Cartoon vector illustration]. <https://thumbs.dreamstime.com/z/sad-teenage-boy->

surrounded-classmates-mocking-him-scoffing-excruciate-cling-intimidate-taking-photos-smartphones-mockery-173857435.jpg

- Kyobe, M. E., Oosterwyk, G. W., & Kabiawu, O. (2016). The Nature of Mobile Bullying in the Western Cape High Schools of South Africa. *The African Journal of Information Systems*, 8(2), 45–69.
- Kyobe, M., Mimbi, L., Nembandona, P., & Mtshazi, S. (2018). Mobile Bullying Among Rural South African Students: Examining the Applicability of Existing Theories. *The African Journal of Information Systems*, 10(2), 85–104.
- Laas, A., & Boezaart, T. (2014). The legislative framework regarding bullying in South African schools. *Potchefstroom Electronic Law Journal*, 17(6), Article 6. <https://doi.org/10.4314/pelj.v17i6.12>
- Latif, M. A., & Widiaty, I. (2021). Technology implementation to promote digital learning. *The 5th Annual Applied Science and Engineering Conference (AASEC 2020)*, 1098, 1–6. <https://doi.org/10.1088/1757-899X/1098/3/032006>
- Law, D. M., Shapka, J. D., Hymel, S., Olson, B. F., & Waterhouse, T. (2012). The changing face of bullying: An empirical comparison between traditional and internet bullying and victimization. *Computers in Human Behavior*, 28(1), 226–232. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chb.2011.09.004>
- Leininger, M. (1994). Evaluation criteria and critique of qualitative research studies. In J. M. Morse (Ed.), *Critical Issues in Qualitative Research Methods* (pp. 95–115). SAGE.
- Leoschut, L., & Kafaar, Z. (2017). The frequency and predictors of poly-victimisation of South African children and the role of schools in its prevention. *Psychology, Health & Medicine*, 22(sup1), 81–93. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13548506.2016.1273533>
- Levi, P. (1976). After Thirty Years. *Jewish Quarterly*, 24(1–2), 39–40. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0449010X.1976.10705522>
- Lewin, K. (1946). Action research and minority problems. *Journal of Social Issues*, 2(4), 34–46.

- Liebenberg, D. (2021, August 22). Law enforcement officers placed on high alert amid shutdown rumours. *SABC News*. <https://www.sabcnews.com/sabcnews/law-enforcement-officers-placed-on-high-alert-amid-shutdown-rumours/>
- Livingstone, S., & Bulger, M. (2014). A Global Research Agenda for Children's Rights in the Digital Age. *Journal of Children and Media*, 8(4), 317–335. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17482798.2014.961496>
- Livingstone, S., & Smith, P. K. (2014). Annual Research Review: Harms experienced by child users of online and mobile technologies: the nature, prevalence and management of sexual and aggressive risks in the digital age. *Journal of Child Psychology and Psychiatry*, 55(6), 635–654. <https://doi.org/10.1111/jcpp.12197>
- Livingstone, S., Stoilova, M., & Kelly, A. (2016). Cyberbullying: Incidence, trends and consequences. In United Nations Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Violence against Children (Ed.), *Ending the torment: Tackling bullying from the schoolyard to cyberspace* (pp. 115–122). United Nations Publications. <https://www.torrossa.com/en/resources/an/5188657>
- Logan, R. K. (2021). The Good, Bad and Ugly of Social Media: Should Social Media Apps Be Regulated? *New Explorations: Studies in Culture & Communication*, 2(1), 72–81.
- Longhurst, R. (2003). Semi-structured interviews and focus groups. In N. Clifford & G. Valentine (Eds.), *Key methods in Geography* (pp. 117–132). SAGE Publications.
- Loseke, D. (2017). *Thinking About Social Problems: An Introduction to Constructionist Perspectives* (2nd ed.). Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315135601>
- Lusinga, S., & Kyobe, M. (2017). Testing a Typology of Mobile Phone Victimization Using Cluster Analysis. *The Electronic Journal of Information Systems in Developing Countries*, 78(1), 1–36. <https://doi.org/10.1002/j.1681-4835.2017.tb00574.x>
- MacPherson Institute (Director). (2015, October 22). *Henry Giroux: Where is the Outrage? Critical Pedagogy in Dark Times*. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CAxj87RRtsc>
- Martinhão, M. S. (2016). *ICT kids online Brazil: Survey on internet use by children in Brazil* [Survey]. Brazilian Internet Steering Committee. <https://cetic.br/publicacao/pesquisa->

sobre-o-uso-da-internet-por-criancas-e-adolescentes-no-brasil-tic-kids-online-brasil-2015

- Marwick, A., & Boyd, D. M. (2014). 'It's just drama': Teen perspectives on conflict and aggression in a networked era. *Journal of Youth Studies*, 17(9), 1187–1204.  
<https://doi.org/10.1080/13676261.2014.901493>
- Mas, L. (2021, April 19). Videos of South African girl driven to suicide by bullies shock the nation. *The Observers - France 24*.  
<https://observers.france24.com/en/africa/20210423-videos-of-south-african-girl-driven-to-suicide-by-bullies-shock-the-nation>
- McGarry, O. (2016). Repositioning the research encounter: Exploring power dynamics and positionality in youth research. *International Journal of Social Research Methodology*, 19(3), 339–354. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13645579.2015.1011821>
- McLaren, P. (1997). Paulo Freire's Legacy of Hope and Struggle. *Theory, Culture & Society*, 14(4), 147–153. <https://doi.org/10.1177/026327697014004007>
- McNiff, J. (2013). *Action research: Principles and practice* (3rd ed.). Routledge.  
<https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203112755>
- McNiff, J. (2014). *Writing and Doing Action Research*. SAGE.
- McNiff, J., Lomax, P., & Whitehead, J. (1997). You and Your Action Research Project. *British Journal of Educational Studies*, 45(3), 329–330.
- Melrose, M. J. (2001). Maximizing the Rigor of Action Research: Why Would You Want To? How Could You? *Field Methods*, 13(2), 160–180.  
<https://doi.org/10.1177/1525822X0101300203>
- Menesini, E. (2012). Cyberbullying: The right value of the phenomenon. Comments on the paper "Cyberbullying: An overrated phenomenon?" *European Journal of Developmental Psychology*, 9(5), 544–552.  
<https://doi.org/10.1080/17405629.2012.706449>
- Menesini, E., Calussi, P., & Nocentini, A. (2012). Cyberbullying and Traditional Bullying. In *Cyberbullying in the Global Playground* (pp. 245–262). John Wiley & Sons, Ltd.  
<https://doi.org/10.1002/9781119954484.ch12>

- Menesini, E., & Salmivalli, C. (2017). Bullying in schools: The state of knowledge and effective interventions. *Psychology, Health & Medicine*, 22(sup1), 240–253. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13548506.2017.1279740>
- Merriam, S. B., & Simpson, E. L. (1995). *A guide to research for educators and trainers of adults* (2nd ed.). Krieger Publishing Co.
- Mertler, C. A. (2008). Overview of the action research process. In *Action research: Teachers as researchers in the classroom* (2nd ed.). SAGE Publications.
- Mertler, C. A. (2017). *Action research communities: Professional learning, empowerment, and improvement through collaborative action research*. Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315164564>
- Meyer, E. (2008). A Feminist Reframing of Bullying and Harassment: Transforming schools through critical pedagogy. *McGill Journal of Education / Revue Des Sciences de l'éducation de McGill*, 43(1), 33–48. <https://doi.org/10.7202/019572ar>
- Meyer, L., & Chetty, R. (2017). Violence in schools: A holistic approach to personal transformation of at-risk youth. *Acta Criminologica : African Journal of Criminology & Victimology*, 30(3), 121–134. <https://doi.org/10.10520/EJC-bbcd4fd66>
- Miles, M. B., Huberman, A. M., & Saldana, J. (2013). *Qualitative data analysis: A methods sourcebook*. SAGE Publications.
- Mills, G. E. (2003). *Action Research: A Guide for the Teacher Researcher*. Prentice-Hall.
- Moschos, G. (2016). Empowering children and awareness raising. In P. Burton (Ed.), *Ending the Torment: Tackling Bullying from the Schoolyard to Cyberspace*. United Nations Publications. <http://digital.casalini.it/9789210583244>
- Mpofu, S. (2011). African media and the digital public sphere. *Ecquid Novi: African Journalism Studies*, 32(1), 104–106. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02560054.2011.545570>
- Muribwathoho, H. N. (2015). *The state of psychological services in secondary schools: Experiences of principals, school counsellors, educators and learners*. [PhD, University of KwaZulu-Natal]. <https://researchspace.ukzn.ac.za/handle/10413/14034>

- Mutahi, P., & Kimari, B. (2017). *The Impact of Social Media and Digital Technology on Electoral Violence in Kenya*. IDS.  
<https://opendocs.ids.ac.uk/opendocs/handle/20.500.12413/13159>
- Mutsvairo, B. (2016). Dovetailing Desires for Democracy with New ICTs' Potentiality as Platform for Activism. In B. Mutsvairo (Ed.), *Digital Activism in the Social Media Era: Critical Reflections on Emerging Trends in Sub-Saharan Africa* (pp. 3–23). Springer International Publishing. [https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-40949-8\\_1](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-40949-8_1)
- Navarro, R., Yubero, S., & Larrañaga, E. (Eds.). (2016). *Cyberbullying Across the Globe: Gender, Family, and Mental Health*. Springer International Publishing.  
<https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-25552-1>
- Ncontsa, V. N., & Shumba, A. (2013). The nature, causes and effects of school violence in South African high schools. *South African Journal of Education*, 33(3), 1–15.
- Neuman, D. (1997). Chapter 5: Phenomenography: Exploring the roots of numeracy. *Journal for Research in Mathematics Education. Monograph*, 9, 63–177.  
<https://doi.org/10.2307/749947>
- Neuman, W. L. (2000). *Social research methods: Qualitative and quantitative approaches* (4th ed.). Allyn and Bacon.
- Ngidi, L. Z. (2018). *Reducing school violence: A peace education project amongst stakeholders in Umlazi* [Doctor of Philosophy, Durban University of Technology].  
<https://doi.org/10.51415/10321/3297>
- Nieuwenhuis, J. (2010). Qualitative research and data gathering techniques. In Maree (Ed.), *First steps in research* (pp. 69–97). Van Schaik.  
<https://openknowledge.worldbank.org>
- Nixon, C. L. (2014). Current perspectives: The impact of cyberbullying on adolescent health. *Adolescent Health, Medicine and Therapeutics*, 5, 143–158.  
<https://doi.org/10.2147/AHMT.S36456>
- Nocentini, A., Zambuto, V., & Menesini, E. (2015). Anti-bullying programs and Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs): A systematic review. *Aggression and Violent Behavior*, 23, 52–60. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.avb.2015.05.012>

- O'Brien, R. (2001). An Overview of the Methodological Approach of Action Research. In R. Richardson (Ed.), *Theory and Practice of Action Research*. Universidade Federal da Paraíba. <https://homepages.web.net/~robrien/papers/xx%20ar%20final.htm>
- Ohliger, J. (1995). Critical views of Paulo Freire's work. *Annual Conference for the 1995 Iowa Community College Summer Seminar*. Annual conference for the Iowa Community College summer seminar, Madison, WI.
- Olweus, D. (1991). Bully/victim problems among schoolchildren: Basic facts and effects of a school based intervention program. In *The development and treatment of childhood aggression* (pp. 411–448). Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Inc.
- Olweus, D. (1993). Bullies on the playground: The role of victimization. In C. H. Hart (Ed.), *Children on playgrounds: Research perspectives and applications* (pp. 85–128). University of New York Press.
- Olweus, D. (2012). Cyberbullying: An overrated phenomenon? *European Journal of Developmental Psychology*, 9(5), 520–538. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17405629.2012.682358>
- Olweus, D. (2013). School Bullying: Development and Some Important Challenges. *Annual Review of Clinical Psychology*, 9(1), 751–780. <https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev-clinpsy-050212-185516>
- Oosterwyk, G. W., & Kyobe, M. (2013). Mobile Bullying in South Africa Exploring its Nature, Influencing Factors and Implications. In R. Kuusisto & E. Kurkinen (Eds.), *Proceedings of the 12th European Conference on Information Warfare and Security: ECIW 2013* (pp. 201–209). Academic Conferences Limited.
- Patchin, J. W., & Hinduja, S. (2006). Bullies Move Beyond the Schoolyard: A Preliminary Look at Cyberbullying. *Youth Violence and Juvenile Justice*, 4(2), 148–169. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1541204006286288>
- Pells, K., Portela, M. J. O., & Revollo, P. E. (2016). *Experiences of peer bullying among adolescents and associated effects on young adult outcomes: Longitudinal evidence from Ethiopia, India, Peru and Vietnam* (Discussion Paper No. 2016–03; Innocenti Discussion Papers, pp. 1–61). UNICEF Office of Research - Innocenti. [https://www.unicef-irc.org/publications/pdf/IDP\\_2016\\_03.pdf](https://www.unicef-irc.org/publications/pdf/IDP_2016_03.pdf)



- Percy-Smith, B., & Matthews, H. (2001). Tyrannical Spaces: Young people, bullying and urban neighbourhoods. *Local Environment*, 6(1), 49–63.  
<https://doi.org/10.1080/13549830120024242>
- Pieschl, S., Kuhlmann, C., & Porsch, T. (2015). Beware of Publicity! Perceived Distress of Negative Cyber Incidents and Implications for Defining Cyberbullying. *Journal of School Violence*, 14(1), 111–132. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15388220.2014.971363>
- Postigo, S., González, R., Montoya, I., & Ordóñez, A. (2013). Theoretical proposals in bullying research: A review. *Anales de Psicología / Annals of Psychology*, 29(2), Article 2. <https://doi.org/10.6018/analesps.29.2.148251>
- Pretorius, S., & Swanepoel, A. (2003). Action research to improve the effectiveness of an information centre. *SA Journal of Information Management*, 5.  
<https://doi.org/10.4102/sajim.v5i1.198>
- Ramirez, R., Mukherjee, M., Vezzoli, S., & Kramer, A. M. (2015). Scenarios as a scholarly methodology to produce “interesting research”. *Futures*, 71, 70–87.  
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.futures.2015.06.006>
- Richardson, D., & Hiu, C. F. (2018). *Developing a global indicator on bullying of school-aged children* (Working Paper WP-2018-11; Innocenti Working Papers). UNICEF Office of Research - Innocenti.  
<http://repositorio.minedu.gob.pe/handle/20.500.12799/6092>
- Riel, M. (2010). *Understanding action research*. Center for Collaborative Action Research.  
<http://cadres.pepperdine.edu/ccar/define.html>
- Riel, M. (2019). *Understanding collaborative action research*. ive Action Research, Pepperdine University. <http://cadres.pepperdine.edu/ccar/define.html>
- Roberts, P. (2015). *Paulo Freire in the 21st century: Education, dialogue, and transformation*. Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315632971>
- Roberts, P. (2017). Learning to live with doubt: Kierkegaard, Freire, and critical pedagogy. *Policy Futures in Education*, 15(7–8), 834–848.  
<https://doi.org/10.1177/1478210317736225>

- sabelskaya. (2023). *A group children or teenagers are bullying* [Vector image].  
<https://www.vectorstock.com/royalty-free-vector/a-group-children-or-teenagers-are-bullying-vector-26170818>
- Sandelowski, M. (1986). The problem of rigor in qualitative research. *Advances in Nursing Science*, 8(3), 27–37.
- Sanoff, H. (2016). *Visual research methods in design (Routledge Revivals)*. Routledge.  
<https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315541822>
- Sassen, S. (2012). Interactions of the Technical and the Social. *Information, Communication & Society*, 15(4), 455–478. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1369118X.2012.667912>
- Schott, R. M., & Søndergaard, D. M. (2014). *School Bullying: New Theories in Context*. Cambridge University Press.
- Schwab, K. (2017). *The Fourth Industrial Revolution*. Currency.
- Shivakumar, A. K., Stern, V., Subrahmanian, R., Sherr, L., Burton, P., Guerra, N., Muggah, R., Samms-Vaughan, M., Watts, C., & Mehta, S. K. (2017). Ending violence in childhood: A global imperative. *Psychology, Health & Medicine*, 22(sup1), 1–16.  
<https://doi.org/10.1080/13548506.2017.1287409>
- Sikhakhane, H. N., Muthukrishna, N., & Martin, M. (2018). The geographies of bullying in a secondary school context. *South African Journal of Education*, 38(1), Article 1.  
<https://doi.org/10.4314/saje.v38i1>
- Simmons, J., Wijma, B., & Swahnberg, K. (2015). Lifetime co-occurrence of violence victimisation and symptoms of psychological ill health: A cross-sectional study of Swedish male and female clinical and population samples. *BMC Public Health*, 15(1), 979. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12889-015-2311-3>
- Singh, G. D., & Steyn, T. (2014). The Impact of Learner Violence in Rural South African Schools. *Journal of Sociology and Social Anthropology*, 5(1), 81–93.  
<https://doi.org/10.1080/09766634.2014.11885612>
- Slonje, R., & Smith, P. K. (2008). Cyberbullying: Another main type of bullying? *Scandinavian Journal of Psychology*, 49(2), 147–154. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-9450.2007.00611.x>

- Smit, D. M. (2015). Cyberbullying in South African and American schools: A legal comparative study. *South African Journal of Education*, 35(2), 1–11. <https://doi.org/10.15700/saje.v35n2a1076>
- Smith, P. K. (2019). Research on Cyberbullying: Strengths and Limitations. In H. Vandebosch & L. Green (Eds.), *Narratives in Research and Interventions on Cyberbullying among Young People* (pp. 9–27). Springer International Publishing. [https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-04960-7\\_2](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-04960-7_2)
- Smith, P. K., Mahdavi, J., Carvalho, M., Fisher, S., Russell, S., & Tippett, N. (2008). Cyberbullying: Its nature and impact in secondary school pupils. *Journal of Child Psychology and Psychiatry*, 49(4), 376–385. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1469-7610.2007.01846.x>
- Somekh, B. (2006). Constructing intercultural knowledge and understanding through collaborative action research. *Teachers and Teaching: Theory and Practice*, 12(1), 87–106. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13450600500365460>
- Sonhera, N., Kritzing, E., & Loock, M. (2015). Cyber Threat Incident Handling Procedure for South African Schools. In N. Clarke & S. Furnell (Eds.), *Proceedings of the Ninth International Symposium on Human Aspects of Information Security & Assurance (HAISA 2015)* (pp. 215–232). Centre for Security, Communications & Network Research Plymouth University.
- Sontag, S. (2004, May 23). Regarding The Torture Of Others. *The New York Times*. <https://www.nytimes.com/2004/05/23/magazine/regarding-the-torture-of-others.html>
- South African Government. (2019). *National Action Plan to combat racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance* [Issue paper]. South African Government. <https://www.gov.za/documents/national-action-plan-combat-racism-racial-discrimination-xenophobia-and-related-0>
- Spears, B., Keeley, M., Bates, S., & Katz, I. (2014). Part A: Literature Review on the Estimated Prevalence of Cyberbullying Involving Australian Minors. In *Research on Youth Exposure to, and Management of, Cyberbullying Incidents in Australia: Synthesis Report*. University of New South Wales. <https://researchdirect.westernsydney.edu.au/islandora/object/uws%3A24645/>

- Srivastava, P. (2007). *Neither voice nor loyalty: School choice and the low-fee private sector in India* (Occasional Paper No. 134; Research Publications Series).  
<https://ir.lib.uwo.ca/edupub/114>
- Srivastava, P., & Hopwood, N. (2009). A practical iterative framework for qualitative data analysis. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 8(1), 76–84.  
<https://doi.org/10.1177/160940690900800107>
- Steinfeld, C., Ellison, N. B., Lampe, C., & Vitak, J. (2012). Online Social Network Sites and the Concept of Social Capital. In L. F. L. Francis, L. Louis, J. L. Qiu, & D. S. C. Chu (Eds.), *Frontiers in New Media Research* (1st ed., pp. 122–138). Routledge.  
<https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203113417-16>
- Sticca, F. (2013). *Bullying goes online: Definition, risk factors, consequences, and prevention of (cyber) bullying* [PhD Thesis, University of Zurich].  
<https://www.zora.uzh.ch/id/eprint/101644/1/sticca>
- Storch, N. (2005). Collaborative writing: Product, process, and students' reflections. *Journal of Second Language Writing*, 14(3), 153–173.  
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jslw.2005.05.002>
- Storch, N. (2019). Collaborative writing. *Language Teaching*, 52(1), 40–59.  
<https://doi.org/10.1017/S0261444818000320>
- Storch, N., & Wigglesworth, G. (2006). Writing tasks: The effects of collaboration. In M. del P. G. Mayo (Ed.), *Investigating tasks in formal language learning* (pp. 157–177). Multilingual Matters.
- Stringer, E. T. (2008). *Action research in education* (2nd ed.). Pearson Prentice Hall.
- Stringer, E. T. (2014). *Action Research* (4th edition). SAGE Publications.
- Thornberg, R., & Jungert, T. (2013). Bystander behavior in bullying situations: Basic moral sensitivity, moral disengagement and defender self-efficacy. *Journal of Adolescence*, 36(3), 475–483. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.adolescence.2013.02.003>
- Tokunaga, R. S. (2010). Following you home from school: A critical review and synthesis of research on cyberbullying victimization. *Computers in Human Behavior*, 26(3), 277–287. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chb.2009.11.014>

- Tomlinson, M., Dawes, A., & Flisher, A. J. (2012). Preventing the development of youth violence in the early years: Implications for South African practice. In C. L. Ward, A. van der Merwe, & A. Dawes (Eds.), *Youth violence: Sources and solutions South Africa* (pp. 141–174). University of Cape Town PRes.
- Tustin, D. H., Zulu, G. N., & Basson, A. (2014). Bullying among secondary school learners in South Africa with specific emphasis on cyber bullying. *Child Abuse Research in South Africa*, 15(2), 13–25. <https://doi.org/10.10520/EJC161329>
- Twyman, K., Saylor, C., Taylor, L. A., & Comeaux, C. (2010). Comparing Children and Adolescents Engaged in Cyberbullying to Matched Peers. *Cyberpsychology, Behavior, and Social Networking*, 13(2), 195–199. <https://doi.org/10.1089/cyber.2009.0137>
- UNESCO. (2022). International day against violence and bullying at school including cyberbullying | UNESCO. *UNESCO*. <https://www.unesco.org/en/days/against-school-violence-and-bullying>
- UNICEF. (2018). *#ENDViolence in schools*. UNICEF for Every Child. <https://www.unicef.org/end-violence/in-schools>
- UNICEF. (2019). *The #ENDviolence Youth Manifesto*. UNICEF for Every Child. <https://www.unicef.org/end-violence/youth-manifesto>
- United Nations. (2018, October 8). Bullying: Protection for children is a ‘fundamental human right’ says top UN advocate. *UN News*. <https://news.un.org/en/story/2018/10/1022562>
- United Nations General Assembly. (2015). *Transforming our world: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development* (Resource A/RES/70/1; pp. 1–35). United Nations. <https://undocs.org/en/A/RES/70/1>
- Van der Merwe, P. (2012). *An exploratory study on new technology and associated psychosocial risks in adolescents: Can digital media literacy programmes make a difference* [PhD, University of South Africa]. <https://core.ac.uk/download/pdf/43173612.pdf>
- Vanden Abeele, M. M. P., Van Cleemput, K., & Vandebosch, H. (2017). Peer influence as a predictor of producing and distributing hurtful images of peers and teachers among

- Flemish adolescents. *Journal of Children and Media*, 11(1), 69–87.  
<https://doi.org/10.1080/17482798.2016.1233123>
- Vanner, C. (2015). Positionality at the Center: Constructing an Epistemological and Methodological Approach for a Western Feminist Doctoral Candidate Conducting Research in the Postcolonial. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 14(4), 1–12. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1609406915618094>
- Walaza, M., Looock, M., & Kritzinger, E. (2014). A Framework to Integrate ICT Security Awareness into the South African Schooling System. *Proceedings of the Southern African Institute for Computer Scientist and Information Technologists Annual Conference 2014 on SAICSIT 2014 Empowered by Technology*, 11–18.  
<https://doi.org/10.1145/2664591.2664596>
- Wasserman, H. (2016). Forward. In B. Mutsvairo (Ed.), *Digital Activism in the Social Media Era: Critical Reflections on Emerging Trends in Sub-Saharan Africa* (pp. i–xv). Springer International Publishing. <https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-40949-8>
- Weiler, K. (2003). Feminist analysis of gender and schooling. *The Critical Pedagogy Reader*, 269–295.
- Whitehead, J., & McNiff, J. (2006). *Action Research: Living Theory*. SAGE.
- Widom, C. S., Czaja, S. J., & Dutton, M. A. (2008). Childhood victimization and lifetime revictimization. *Child Abuse & Neglect*, 32(8), 785–796.  
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chiabu.2007.12.006>
- World Economic Forum. (n.d.). *Fourth Industrial Revolution*. World Economic Forum.  
<https://www.weforum.org/focus/fourth-industrial-revolution/>
- World Health Organisation. (2020, June 8). *Youth violence*. <https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/youth-violence>
- Zuber Skerritt, O. (1990). Management Development and Academic Staff Development Through Action Learning and Action Research. *Educational and Training Technology International*, 27(4), 437–447.  
<https://doi.org/10.1080/1355800900270411>

Zuze, T. L., Reddy, V., Juan, A., Hannan, S., Visser, M., & Winnaar, L. (2016). *Safe and sound?: Violence and South African education* (Policy Brief March; pp. 67–75). Human Sciences Research Council.  
<https://repository.hsrc.ac.za/handle/20.500.11910/9541>

## APPENDICES

### Appendix A: Letter of permission to conduct research from the Department of Education



education

Department:  
Education  
PROVINCE OF KWAZULU-NATAL

Enquiries: Phindile Duma

Tel: 033 392 1063

Ref.:2/4/8/1747

Mrs S Jacobs  
PO Box 965  
Luximi  
3207


Dear Mrs Jacobs

#### PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN THE KZN DoE INSTITUTIONS

Your application to conduct research entitled: **"BULLYING IN PHYSICAL AND CYBER SPACES: THE EXPERIENCES OF YOUNG ADULT SURVIVORS IN THE DIGITAL AGE"**, in the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education Institutions has been approved. The conditions of the approval are as follows:

1. The researcher will make all the arrangements concerning the research and interviews.
2. The researcher must ensure that Educator and learning programmes are not interrupted.
3. Interviews are not conducted during the time of writing examinations in schools.
4. Learners, Educators, Schools and Institutions are not identifiable in any way from the results of the research.
5. A copy of this letter is submitted to District Managers, Principals and Heads of Institutions where the intended research and interviews are to be conducted.
6. The period of investigation is limited to the period from 26 March 2019 to 01 September 2021.
7. Your research and interviews will be limited to the schools you have proposed and approved by the Head of Department. Please note that Principals, Educators, Departmental Officials and Learners are under no obligation to participate or assist you in your investigation.
8. Should you wish to extend the period of your survey at the school(s), please contact Miss Phindile Duma at the contact numbers below.
9. Upon completion of the research, a brief summary of the findings, recommendations or a full report/dissertation/thesis must be submitted to the research office of the Department. Please address it to The Office of the HOD, Private Bag X9137, Pietermaritzburg, 3200.
10. Please note that your research and interviews will be limited to schools and institutions in KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education.

UMgungundlovu District

  
Dr. EV Nzama  
Head of Department: Education  
Date: 27 March 2019

KWAZULU-NATAL DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Postal Address: Private Bag X9137 • Pietermaritzburg • 3200 • Republic of South Africa

Physical Address: 247 Burger Street • Anton Lembede Building • Pietermaritzburg • 3201

Tel.: +27 33 392 1063 • Fax: +27 033 392 1203 • Email: [Phindile.Duma@kzndoe.gov.za](mailto:Phindile.Duma@kzndoe.gov.za) • Web: [www.kzndoe.gov.za](http://www.kzndoe.gov.za)

Facebook: KZNDOE... Twitter: @DBE\_KZN... Instagram: kzn\_education... Youtube: kzndoe

...Championing Quality Education - Creating and Securing a Brighter Future



## Appendix B: Letter of permission to conduct research from Love to Live



### LOVE TO LIVE

034-170-NPO

CARING FOR LIFE

TEL: (033) 3943301 FAX: (033) 3949900  
P.O Box 13695, Cascades, PMB, 3202  
lovetolive@telkomsa.net www.lovetolive.co.za



**Become a Buddy, Not a Bully**  
**Celebrating 20 years of service to the Community**

12<sup>th</sup> March 2019

Dear Suhana

**Permission to conduct research through the NPO, Love to Love**

Your letter dated 25 February 2019, requesting permission to conduct research with the youth and teacher members of the organization is acknowledged.

Please note that the letter has been passed through the executive committee on Wednesday, 6<sup>th</sup> March 2019. It gives us great pleasure to inform you that permission to conduct part of your research with the organisation's youth and teacher components has been granted. The organization will allow you to identify, approach and invite the respective participants to your research study. Please note that you may communicate with Ra'cesa Essa (Youth Division) and Raveen Mohanlall (teacher division) for further queries.

We wish you well with your studies and hope that through our on-going collaboration, we can continue to make a positive impact on the lives of children and their education.

Your sincerely

[Redacted Signature]

Dr SV Moodley  
Chairman  
082 4618 178

lovetolive@telkomsa.net

**Each and Every One Of Us Can Love To Live and Live to Love**

### Appendix C: Demographics of survivor participants in Phase one

Survivor participant (Pseudonym)	Gender	Age	School	Race	Occupation (at time of interview)
Teejay	Male	21	Private transfer to  Former Model-c	White	College student
Priya	Female	20	Public	Indian	Part-time employment
Jason	Male	19	Public	Indian	Part-time employment
Byron	Male	25	Public	Coloured	Employed
Siya	Male	19	Public	Black	Unemployed

Sample size = 5

## Appendix D: Survivor informed consent for Phase one

### Informed consent letter: Young Adult Survivor



#### **INFORMATION LETTER FOR YOUNG ADULT SURVIVOR PARTICIPANT IN THE STUDY:**

**Study title:** Bullying in physical and cyber spaces: The experiences of young adult survivors in the digital age.

#### **Researcher details:**

- Department: School of Education
- Project title: Bullying in physical and cyber spaces: The experiences of young adult survivors in the digital age.
- Principal investigator: Ms Suhana Jacobs, University of KwaZulu-Natal, [suhanajacobs@gmail.com](mailto:suhanajacobs@gmail.com) 072 102 9927
- Project supervisor: Professor V.M. John, University of KwaZulu-Natal [johnV@ukzn.ac.za](mailto:johnV@ukzn.ac.za) 033 326 5069

#### **1) Invitation paragraph**

You are being invited to take part in this educational study. This is an Action Research project aimed at investigating young adult survivors' experiences of cyber bullying. To help you decide if you would like to participate in the study, it is important for you to understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. Hence, please read this information letter carefully, feel free to discuss it with other potential participants/advisors and ask me anything you are not clear about. Take your time to decide whether or not you would like to take part. Thank you for reading this.

#### **2) What is the purpose of the study?**

This study is likely to strengthen our understanding of and offer clarity on young peoples' experiences with bullying in physical and cyber spaces. The nature of my research, action

research, can introduce us to a wide range of possibilities by collaborating and co-learning with participants to identify problems, develop interventions, and pilot interventions with the aim of bringing about change and improvement. The insights gained from this inquiry can further support new directions which can lead to the development and effective implementation of more robust tools, skills, and knowledge, which promote self-efficacy and mitigate young peoples' experiences of bullying in physical and cyber spaces.

#### **3) Why have I been chosen?**

You have been identified as a key informant and as a central figure to the research study. You will have the opportunity to share your experiences of cyber bullying. It is important that your story is listened to, as well as the meanings you attach to your experience. This will help me identify areas in need of development and capture your recommendations. This will help me to address some of the challenges faced by teachers and learners at schools presently.

#### **4) Do I have to take part?**

You are under no obligation to take part in this study and the decision to participate is entirely yours. If you do decide to take part, I will give you this information sheet and I will ask you to sign a consent form. Should you decide to take part you will still be free to withdraw from the study at any time and without giving a reason. Nothing will happen to anyone who decides to withdraw from the study. Your invitation to participate in the different phases of the study is strictly voluntary. I am aware that the nature of the research and your participation in the action research phases may trigger or cause you discomfort. Arrangements for counsellor support is in place and this service will be made available to you and at your request before, during, or after contact session/s.

#### **5) What will happen to me if I take part?**

I will invite you to participate in a face-to-face interview. Following the interview, you will be invited to participate in a youth collaborative workshop. You will be given sufficient time to decide if you would like to participate in the workshop. If you do, you will have the opportunity to engage in a range of creative learning activities, with other participants, that are geared towards developing a resource intervention or a set of tools for secondary school learners, as a response to cyber bullying. A second collaborative workshop



is planned where you and youth participants are invited to work alongside a group of committed teachers who have an active interest with regards to bullying that takes place in schools. You will be given sufficient time to decide if you would like to participate in the second workshop. This engagement with teachers is to assist us to improve, strengthen, and finalize the resource designed in the first workshop. The researcher will be part of the collaborative workshops.

**6) Will my taking part in the study be kept confidential?**

All information disclosed and used in this study will be kept confidential. You have a right to anonymity and so your name will not be used in the study. A pseudonym will be used so that you will not be recognised. The name of the school you attended and where the bullying incident/s occurred will also not be named in the study. Of importance to the research project is the capturing of the interviews which will be audio recorded. There will be no video recordings for the interviews. Audio recordings of the interview will be accessible only to the project supervisor and myself. All data will be stored in a safe place at the School of Education, Pietermaritzburg campus for five years, and thereafter be destroyed.

**7) What will happen to the results of the research study?**

You will timeously receive a summarized report on the outcomes and recommendations of the various phases of the action research process. The final research results will be made available to you. I will not reveal your name or address in any report, book, or presentation.

**8) Who is organizing the research?**

I, Suhana Jacobs, as a scholar of the University of KwaZulu-Natal, am responsible for organizing and conducting this study.

**9) Who has reviewed this study?**

The project supervisor, a group of academic scholars in the School of Education, KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education and the university's Ethics Committee.

**10) Contact for further information**

If you have any further concerns regarding any aspect or conduct of this research project, you may

contact me or my supervisor. You may also contact:

Dr Ansuri Pillay: Tel: +2733 260 3613, Email: [PillayA@ukzn.ac.za](mailto:PillayA@ukzn.ac.za)

OR

HSSREC Research Office (Ms. P. Ximba, Tel: +2731 260 3587, Email: [ximbap@ukzn.ac.za](mailto:ximbap@ukzn.ac.za))

Thank you.

Researcher Name: Suhana Jacobs

Date: 15 March 2019

**I have read and understood the information letter about this study. In agreeing to participate in this study by Ms Suhana Jacobs, I understand that:**

- a. The information collected will be used for the researcher's study, and may be presented at a conference and for publication in journals and a book.
- b. My participation is voluntary and I have the right to withdraw from the study at any time of my choice.
- c. I am aware that the researcher has made provisions for professional counselling and I can request counsellor support should the need arise, before, during, or after contact session/s.
- d. I understand that the data will be kept confidential and that I will remain anonymous throughout the study and in the reports.
- e. I have the discretion to allow the researcher access to others documents which she might find useful for the research purposes.
- f. I have the discretion to direct the researcher to other sources of information or other key informants which she might find useful for the research purposes.
- g. I am entitled to feedback on the study's findings on completion of the study.
- h. If I need further information, I can contact the researcher and her supervisor whose contact details have been included in the information letter.

**Declaration:**

I \_\_\_\_\_ (Full name of participant) hereby confirm that I understand the contents of this document and the nature of the research project and that I consent to participating in the research project. I hereby provide consent to: (Please circle response)

Participate in the face-to-face interview	YES	NO
Audio-record the face-to-face interview	YES	NO
Participate in the collaborative workshop with youth	YES	NO
Audio record the collaborative workshop and discussions	YES	NO
Participate in the collaborative workshop with teachers	YES	NO
Audio record the collaborative workshop with teachers	YES	NO

**Please sign the attached form if you consent to taking part in this study**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

Date

**Project Title:** Bullying in physical and cyber spaces: The experiences of young adult survivors in the digital age.

**Researcher:** Ms Suhana Jacobs  
[suhanajacobs@gmail.com](mailto:suhanajacobs@gmail.com)  
072 102 9927

**Participants:** Youth, teachers, and the researcher

Participant's name: .....

Contact number: .....

Convenient time to contact/call: .....

E-mail address: .....

### Appendix E: Demographics of young adult participants in Phase two

Participant (pseudonym)	Gender	Age	Race	School	Occupation
MH	male	25	White	Private	Employed
SS	male	23	Black	Former model C	Student/employed part- time
SP	male	28	Black	Public	Student/employed part- time
LS	female	24	Indian	Public	Student
KM	female	18	Indian	Private	Student
IB	female	18	White	Public/private	Student
SB	female	28	Indian	Public	Employed
SD	male	22	White	Private to Former model- c	Student
LZ	female	21	Black	Private	Student
TC	male	21	Black	Former model- c	Student
AS	female	23	Indian	Public	Student
SG	female	28	Coloured	Former model- c	Employed
SH	female	26	Coloured	Public	Employed
JB	male	29	Coloured	Public	Employed
SB	male	24	Black	Public	Part-time employed

NM	female	24	Indian	Former model- c	Student
----	--------	----	--------	--------------------	---------

**Sample size = 16**



## Appendix F: Young adult informed consent for Phase two

### *Informed consent letter – Youth participant*



### **RESEARCH PROJECT INFORMATION LETTER FOR YOUTH PARTICIPANT IN THE STUDY:**

#### **Study title and researcher details**

**Department:** School of Education

**Project title:** Bullying in physical and cyber space: The experiences of young adult survivors in the digital age.

**Principal investigator:** Ms Suhana Jacobs,  
University of KwaZulu-Natal,  
[suhanajacobs@gmail.com](mailto:suhanajacobs@gmail.com)  
072 102 9927

**Project supervisor:** Professor Vaughn John,  
University of KwaZulu-Natal  
[JohnV@ukzn.ac.za](mailto:JohnV@ukzn.ac.za)  
033 260 5069

#### **1) Invitation paragraph**

You are invited to take part in this educational study. This is an Action Research Project aimed at investigating young adult survivors' experiences of physical and cyber bullying. To help you decide if you would like to participate in the study, it is important for you to understand why the research is being done, what it will involve, and your role in the study. Hence, please read this information letter carefully. You can ask me about anything you are not clear. Take your time to decide whether or not you would like to take part. Thank you for reading this.

#### **2) What is the purpose of the study?**

This study is likely to strengthen our understanding and offer clarity on young peoples' bullying experiences. The nature of my research, action research, can introduce us to a wide range of possibilities by collaborating and co-learning with participants to identify problems, develop interventions, and pilot interventions with the aim of bringing about change and improvement. The insights gained from this inquiry can further support new directions which can lead to the development and effective implementation of more robust tools, skills, and knowledge, which promote self-efficacy and mitigate young peoples' experiences of bullying.

#### **3) Why have I been chosen?**

You have been chosen because you are a member of the Love to Live organization. The organization identified you as a potential participant for the project due to your commitment to and participation in a wide range of learner and youth educational programs. In particular, you are involved in the organisation's anti-bullying drives and workshops carried out in the various community centres and schools. Your input and ideas will add value to this study.

#### **4) Do I have to take part?**

You are under no obligation to take part in this study and the decision to participate is entirely yours. If you decide to participate, you will need to sign a consent form. Should you participate, you will still be free to withdraw from the study at any time and without giving a reason. Nothing will happen to anyone who decides to withdraw from the study.

#### **5) What will happen if I participate?**

You will be requested to participate in a collaborative workshop, working alongside other identified youth participants and myself. This workshop will take the form of a half/day workshop on an agreed day or over the school holiday.



You will engage in educational activities that can contribute to the development of an educational resource on physical and cyber bullying. Engaging in this important activity provides an opportunity to work with teachers to further improve and finalise the resource.

**6) Will my taking part in the study be kept confidential?**

All information disclosed and used in this study will be kept confidential. You have a right to anonymity and so your name will not be used in the study. A pseudonym will be used so that you will not be recognized. The name of the school you attended will also not be used in the study. Of importance to the research project is the capturing of discussions during the plenary sessions. These discussions will be audio-recorded. There will be no video-recordings. The audio-recordings will remain at the property of the university, accessible to the project supervisor and myself.

**8) What will happen to the results of the research study?**

You will timeously receive a summarized report on the outcomes and recommendations of the various phases of the action research process. The final research results will be made available to you. I will not reveal your name or address in any report, book, or presentation.

**9) Who is organizing the research?**

I, Suhana Jacobs, as a scholar of the University of KwaZulu-Natal, am responsible for organizing and conducting this study.

**10) Who has reviewed this study?**

My project supervisor, a group of academic scholars in the School of Education, Kwazulu-Natal Department of Education and the university's Ethics Committee.

**11) Contact for further information**

*If you have any concerns regarding the conduct of this research project, please contact:*

Prof Nyna Amin. Tel: 033 260 7255, Email: [<Amin@ukzn.ac.za>](mailto:Amin@ukzn.ac.za)

OR

HSSREC Research Office (Ms. P. Ximba, Tel: +27 31 260 3587, Email: [ximbap@ukzn.ac.za](mailto:ximbap@ukzn.ac.za))

Thank you.

Researcher name: Suhana Jacobs

Date:

**NB: Please sign the attached form if you consent to taking part in this study**

**Project Title:**

*Bullying in physical and cyber spaces: The experiences of young adult survivors in the digital age*

**Researcher:** Ms Suhana Jacobs

[suhanajacobs@gmail.com](mailto:suhanajacobs@gmail.com)

072 102 9927

**Project supervisor:** Professor V.M. John

[JohnV@ukzn.ac.za](mailto:JohnV@ukzn.ac.za)

033 260 5069

**Research Participants:** Young adult survivors, youth, teachers, learners, and the researcher

*I have read and understood the information letter about this study. In agreeing to participate in this study by Ms Suhana Jacobs, I understand that:*

- a) The information collected will be used for the researcher's study and may be presented at a conference and for publication in journals and a book.

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| b) My participation is voluntary and I have the right to withdraw from the study at any time of my choice.  | f) I am entitled to feedback on the study's findings on completion of study.  |
| c) The data will be kept confidential and that I will remain anonymous throughout the study and in reports unless I ask to have my real name used in the reports. | g) I have the discretion to inform the researcher of any discomfort that I may experience and that additional support in the form of counselling will be available to myself. |
| d) I have the discretion to direct the researcher to access other documents which she might find useful for research purposes.                                    | h) Additional support in the form of counselling is in place and this will be made available to me should I request such a service.   |
| e) I have the discretion to direct the researcher to other sources of information which she might find useful for the research purposes.                          | g) If I need further information, I can contact the researcher or her supervisor whose contact details have been included in the information letter.                          |

**Declaration:**

Please complete and sign this letter as a declaration of your consent to participate in this study willingly.

I, \_\_\_\_\_ (*Name in full*) hereby confirm that I understand the contents of this document, the nature of this research project and that I consent to participating in the research project. I hereby provide consent to: (*Please tick response*).

Audio-record the discussions during the plenary sessions	Yes	No
--	-----	----

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Signature of participant      Date**

Participant  
name:

\_\_\_\_\_  
 Contact Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Convenient time to contact /call: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail address (optional):



## Appendix G: Teacher informed consent for Phase three

### *Informed consent letter – Teacher participant*



#### **RESEARCH PROJECT INFORMATION LETTER FOR TEACHER PARTICIPANTS IN THE STUDY:**

##### **Study title and researcher details:**

**Department:** School of Education

**Project title:** Bullying in physical and cyber spaces:  
The experiences of young adult  
survivors in the digital age.

**Principal investigator:** Mrs. Suhana Jacobs, University  
of KwaZulu-Natal,  
[suhanajacobs@gmail.com](mailto:suhanajacobs@gmail.com) 072 102 9927

**Project supervisor:** Professor Vaughn John,  
University of KwaZulu-Natal  
[johnV@ukzn.ac.za](mailto:johnV@ukzn.ac.za) 033 260 5069

##### **1) Invitation paragraph**

You are being invited to take part in this educational study. This is an Action Research project aimed at investigating young adult survivor's experiences of physical and cyber bullying. To help you decide if you would like to participate in the study, it is important for you to understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. Hence, please read this information letter carefully; feel free to discuss it with other potential participants/advisor and ask me anything about which you are not clear. Take your time to decide whether or not you would like to take part. Thank you for reading this.

##### **2) What is the purpose of the study?**

This study is likely to strengthen our understanding of and offer clarity on young people's experiences with bullying in physical and cyber spaces. The nature of my research, action research, can introduce us to a wide range of possibilities by collaborating and co-learning with participants to identify problems, develop interventions, and pilot interventions with the aim of bringing about change and improvement. The insights gained from this inquiry can further support new directions which can lead to the development and effective implementation of more robust tools, skills, and knowledge, which promote self-efficacy and

mitigate young peoples' experiences of bullying in physical and cyber spaces.

##### **3) Why have I been chosen?**

You have been chosen because of your keen and active interest in the bullying that takes place at schools and your concern for the well-being of learners. You are also central to the phenomenon. Your inputs and ideas through collaborative engagement will add value to this study.

##### **4) Do I have to take part?**

You are under no obligation to take part in this study and the decision to participate is entirely yours. If you do decide to take part, I will give you this information sheet and I will ask you to sign a consent form. Should you decide to take part you will still be free to withdraw from the study at any time and without giving a reason. Nothing will happen to anyone who decides to withdraw from the study.

##### **5) What will happen to me if I take part?**

You will be requested to participate in a collaborative workshop, working alongside other identified teacher participants and myself. This workshop will take the form of a three-four hour workshop on an agreed day or over the school holiday.

This engagement will aim to improve and strengthen a resource intervention designed by the young adults. You will also have the opportunity to pilot the resource intervention by inviting selected learners in your school to engage with the resource. Your role will involve monitoring learner engagement with the resource and providing feedback to the researcher by filling out short monitoring cards. You will also be invited to a meeting to provide feedback on the resource implementation process. The implementation process will take place over a period of approximately four (4) weeks. I will set up an appointment and meet with the school principal before the implementation phase to share information regarding the study and the strategy that is planned to pilot the resource at the school.

##### **6) Will my taking part in the study be kept confidential?**

All information disclosed and used in this study will be kept confidential. You have a right to anonymity and so your name will not be used in the study (unless you request that I use your real name). A pseudonym will be used so that you will not be recognised. The name of the school will also not be named in the study. Of importance to the research project is the

capturing of the collaborative workshop with the use of a digital video/audio camera, so you won't be faceless. All video and audio recordings will remain at the property of the university, accessible to the project supervisor and the researcher.

**7) What will happen to the results of the research study?**

You will timeously receive a summarized report on the outcomes and recommendations of the various phases of the action research process. The final research will be made available to you. I will not reveal your name or address in any report, book, or presentation.

**8) Who is organizing the research?**

I, Suhana Jacobs, as a scholar of the University of KwaZulu-Natal, am responsible for organising and conducting this study.

**9) Who has reviewed this study?**

My supervisor, Professor Vaughn John, a group of academic scholars in the School of Education, KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education, and the university's Ethics Committee.

**10) Contact for further information**

If you have any concerns regarding conduct of this research project, please contact:

Dr. Ansurie Pillay, Tel: 033 260 3613,  
Email: [PillayA3@ukzn.ac.za](mailto:PillayA3@ukzn.ac.za) or  
HSSREC Research Office  
(Mrs. P. Ximba, Tel: +27 31 260 3587,  
Email: [ximbap@ukzn.ac.za](mailto:ximbap@ukzn.ac.za))

Thank you

Name: Suhana Jacobs  
Date:

***N.B Please sign the attached form if you consent to taking part in this study***

**Project Title :** Bullying in physical and cyber spaces: The experiences of young adult survivors in the digital age.

**Researcher :** Suhana Jacobs  
[suhanajacobs@gmail.com](mailto:suhanajacobs@gmail.com)  
072 102 9922

I understand that:

- a) My participation is voluntary and I have the right to withdraw from the study at any time of my choice.

- b) The information collected will be used for the researcher's study, and may be presented at a conference and for publication in journals and a book.
- c) The data will be kept confidential and that I will remain anonymous throughout the study and in the reports, unless I ask to have my real name used in the reports.
- d) I have the discretion to direct the researcher to other documents which she might find useful for the research purposes.
- e) I have the discretion to direct the researcher to other sources of information which she might find useful for the research purposes.
- f) I am entitled to feedback on the study's findings on completion of study.
- g) I have the discretion to inform the researcher of any discomfort that a learner may experience and that additional support in the form of counselling will be available to learner participants.
- h) If I need further information, I can contact the researcher or her supervisor whose contact details have been included in the information letter.

**Declaration:**

I, \_\_\_\_\_ (Full name of participant) hereby confirm that I understand the contents of this document and the nature of the research project and that I consent to participating in the research project. I hereby provide consent to: (Please TICK response)

Audio-record my collaborative workshop and discussions	Yes	No
Audio-record teacher meeting with researcher at the end of the implement phase	Yes	No

**Signature of participant**

**Date**

Participant's Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Name of School: \_\_\_\_\_  
Contact Number: \_\_\_\_\_  
Convenient time to contact / call: \_\_\_\_\_  
Email address: \_\_\_\_\_

### Appendix H: Demographics of school learner participants in Phase four

<b>Learner participant (pseudonym)</b>	<b>Gender</b>	<b>Age</b>	<b>School</b>	<b>Grade</b>	<b>Race</b>
JD	Female	15	HS	10	Indian
NN	Female	15	HS	10	Indian
JG	Male	15	NS	10	Indian
SK	Male	16	NS	11	Indian
GL	Male	16	DS	11	Black
IN	Female	14	WS	8	Black
HD	Female	15	KS	8	Black
ZB	Male	16	KS	9	Black
NC	Female	14	RH	10	Indian



SR	Male	15	KS	10	Black
MP	Male	14	KS	9	Black
ZR	Male	15	SS	10	Black
MG	Male	15	HS	9	Coloured
SN	Male	15	WS	10	Coloured
TP	Female	15	HS	10	Indian
CJ	Male	17	HS	11	Coloured

**Sample size = 16**

## Appendix I: Parents of learners informed consent for Phase four

*Informed consent letter - Parent/Guardian of learner*



### **RESEARCH PROJECT INFORMATION AND CONSENT LETTER TO PARENT/GUARDIAN FOR LEARNER PARTICIPATION IN THE STUDY:**

**Bullying in physical and cyber space:  
The experiences of young adult survivors  
in the digital age.**

#### **Study title and researcher details**

- Department: School of Education
- Project title: Bullying in physical and cyber space: The experiences of young adult survivors in the digital age.
- Principal investigator: Mrs Suhana Jacobs, University of KwaZulu-Natal,

[suhanajacobs@gmail.com](mailto:suhanajacobs@gmail.com)  
072 102 9927

- Project supervisor: Professor Vaughn John, University of KwaZulu-Natal

[JohnV@ukzn.ac.za](mailto:JohnV@ukzn.ac.za)  
033 260 5069

#### **1) Invitation paragraph**

Your child is invited to take part in this educational study. This is an Action Research project aimed at investigating young adult survivors' experiences of physical and cyber bullying. To help you

decide if you would like your child to participate in the study, it is important for you to understand why the research is being done, what it will involve, and your child's role in the study. Hence, please read this information letter carefully; feel free to discuss it with your child or ask me anything about which you are not clear. Take your time to decide whether or not you would like your child to take part. Thank you for reading this.

#### **2) What is the purpose of the study?**

This study is likely to strengthen our understanding of and offer clarity on young peoples' physical and cyber bullying experiences. The nature of my research, action research, can introduce us to a wide range of possibilities by collaborating and co-learning with participants to identify problems, develop interventions, and pilot interventions with the aim of bringing about change and improvement. The insights gained from this inquiry can further support new directions which can lead to the development and effective implementation of more robust tools, skills and knowledge, which promote self-efficacy, and mitigate young peoples' experiences of physical and cyber bullying.

#### **3) Why has my child been chosen?**

Your child has been chosen because she/he is a member of the Love to Live organisation. The organisation identified your child as a potential participant for the project due to your child's commitment to and participation in a wide range of learner and youth educational programs. In particular, your child is involved in the organisation's anti-bullying drives and workshops carried out in the various community centres and schools. Your child's input and ideas will add value to this study.

#### **4) Does my child have to take part?**

Your child is under no obligation to take part in this study and the decision to allow



your child to participate is entirely yours. If you decide to allow your child to participate, you will need to sign a consent form. Should your child participate, he/she will still be free to withdraw from the study at any time and without giving a reason. Nothing will happen to anyone who decides to withdraw from the study.

**5) What will happen if my child takes part?**

Your child will participate in a lesson on physical and cyber bullying and will engage with a resource developed for learners on physical and cyber bullying. Teachers and youth, who are also members of the organisation, contributed to the development of the resource and learning material. These teachers will offer a lesson to your child and other learners, also members of the organisation. They will help us trial the lessons that have been developed. No data will be collected directly from your child. Your child will take part in a lesson offered by school teachers involved in this study. Only the school teachers will provide data on the lessons.

Engaging in this important activity provides an opportunity to improve further and finalise the resource. This phase is expected to run for approximately three (3) hours in a community hall. The workshop program is attached to the consent form for further details.

**6) How does my child benefit from this participation:**

Your child's interaction with the resource is a crucial part of the final resource development. Some benefits of involving learners in the study and allowing your child to participate include:

- a) Learners become actively involved in a constructive teaching/learning process;
- b) New ideas, suggestions and recommendations from learners

regarding the resource design will be noted by teachers and considered during my feedback meeting with teachers;

- c) Learner participation can lead to the development of new knowledge, skills, and a greater awareness of physical and cyber bullying; more informed approaches for responding to incidents of physical and cyber bullying when it occurs; cyber safety; and digital citizenship, for example.

**7) Will my child's taking part in the study be kept confidential?**

As mentioned, no data will be collected directly from your child. Your child will take part in a lesson offered by school teachers involved in this study. Only the school teachers will provide data on the lessons. All information disclosed and used in this study will be kept confidential. Your child has a right to anonymity and so her/his name will not be used in the study. No names of learners will be mentioned in this study. The name of the school your child attends will also not be named in the study. There will be no use of any digital video cameras or audio/video-recordings. No photographs will be taken. Of importance to the research project is the monitoring and recording of learners' collective and overall interaction/engagement with the resource. The assigned teacher will monitor and make notes on the session. I will collect the monitoring information from teachers. This information will remain at the property of the university, accessible to the project supervisor and the researcher

**8) What will happen to the results of the research study?**

The final research results will be made available to you. Your child's name or address will not be used in any report, book, or presentation.

**9) Who is organizing the research?**



I, Suhana Jacobs, as a scholar of the University of KwaZulu-Natal, am responsible for organising and conducting this study.

**10) Who has reviewed this study?**

My project supervisor, a group of academic scholars in the School of Education, Kwazulu-Natal Department of Education, and the university's Ethics Committee.

**11) Contact for further information**

*If you have any concerns regarding conduct of this research project, please contact:*

Prof Nyna Amin. Tel: 033 260 7255, Email: [<Amin@ukzn.ac.za>](mailto:Amin@ukzn.ac.za)

OR

HSSREC Research Office (Ms. P. Ximba, Tel: +27 31 260 3587, Email: [ximbap@ukzn.ac.za](mailto:ximbap@ukzn.ac.za))

Thank you.

Researcher Name: Suhana Jacobs

\_\_\_\_\_  
Suhana Jacobs

Date \_\_\_\_\_

**NB: Please sign the attached form if you consent to your child taking part in this study**

**Project Title:**

*Bullying in physical and cyber spaces: The experiences of young adult survivors in the digital age*

**Researcher:** Mrs Suhana Jacobs

[suhanajacobs@gmail.com](mailto:suhanajacobs@gmail.com)

072 102 9927

**Project supervisor:** Professor V.M. John

[JohnV@ukzn.ac.za](mailto:JohnV@ukzn.ac.za)

033 260 5069

**Research Participants:** Young adult survivors, youth, teachers, learners, and the researcher

*I have read and understood the information letter about this study. In agreeing to allow my child to participate in this study by Mrs Suhana Jacobs, I understand that:*

- a) The information collected will be used for the researcher's study, and may be presented at a conference and for publication in journals and a book.
- b) My child's participation is voluntary and she/he has the right to withdraw from the study at any time.
- c) The data will be kept confidential and my child's name will not be used in the study or any reports.
- d) I am entitled to feedback on the study's findings on completion of the study.
- e) I have the discretion to inform the researcher or the teacher of any discomfort that my child may experience during the resource implementation phase.
- f) Additional support in the form of counselling is in place and this will be made available to my child should he/she request such a service.
- g) If I need further information, I can contact the researcher or her supervisor whose contact details have been included in the information letter.

**Declaration:**

Please complete and sign this letter as a declaration of your consent, i.e. you allow your child to participate in this study willingly.

I, \_\_\_\_\_ (name of parent/guardian)

hereby confirm that I understand the contents of this document, the nature of this research project and give consent for my child to participate in a lesson as part of the research project.

***I hereby give consent to:***

Allow my child to participate in the lesson as part of the project

YES NO

Allow my child to participate at a time arranged/planned by the researcher

YES NO

-----PARENT/GUARDIAN SIGNATURE

**DATE**

Child's name and surname: .....

Parent/guardian contact number: .....

E-mail address (optional): .....

## Appendix J: An overview of data generation practices

<b>Data generation practice</b>	<b>Explanation or Description</b>
Semi-structured interviews	Survivors – the key informants answered from their own frame of reference expressing their thoughts in a more conversational and informal manner (Bogdan & Biklen, 1997; Longhurst, 2003).
Scenario Presentations	Scenario methodology applied to studies involve iterations and revisions to establish emerging new and interesting research opportunities/researcher engaged with making sense of more complex and uncertain contexts/richer discussion and elaboration (Ramirez, Mukherjee, Vezzoli, & Kramer, 2015).
Collaborative writing	Structured design-thinking project/engaged learning by planning, discussing, reading, and writing/group task involved with writing texts, peer reviewing, and piecing together multiple contributions. Encourages expression, creativity, listening, and discussing (Storch, 2005, 2019; Storch & Wigglesworth, 2006).
Extending conversations	Participants are characters within their own and others' stories (Connelly & Clandinin, 1990). Pathways to enhance thinking, dialogue, and critical reflection are encouraged/involves the display of information from on-line and off-line spaces/professional conversations intensify/addressing more complex experiences within the educational context.
Plenary sessions	<p>Basic idea-gathering technique/production of creative and high quality ideas for improvement, conceptualisation, and evaluation of a collective set of ideas/leads for the design and development of a resource.</p> <p>Collective report back from small group discussions in which strategic plans, new directions, and tasks are established (O'Brien, 2001). Three plenary sessions were carried out in Phase two and Phase three respectively.</p>
Teacher feedback meeting Teacher feedback cards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enriched the evaluation process.</li> <li>• Carried important information.</li> <li>• Had its focus on resource results.</li> <li>• Identified areas for improvement and new needs (Pretorius &amp; Swanepoel,</li> </ul>

	2003).
--	--------

## Appendix K: Sources of data

Key research questions	Data generation activities	Data sources
1. What are young adult survivors' experiences of bullying in physical and cyber spaces?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Semi-structured interviews.</li> <li>• Extending Conversations</li> <li>• Scenario Presentations</li> <li>• Collaborative writing</li> <li>• Collaborative workshops</li> <li>• Plenary sessions</li> <li>• Piloting the resource</li> <li>• Teacher feedback meeting</li> <li>• Teacher feedback cards</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Individual interviews with survivors in Phase one.</li> <li>• A collaborative workshop with youth in Phase two.</li> <li>• A collaborative workshop with teachers in Phase three.</li> <li>• Teacher participants in Phase three piloted the educational resource with learner participants in Phase four.</li> <li>• Teacher feedback meeting in Phase four on the implementation and evaluation of the educational resource.</li> <li>• Teacher feedback cards supported the evaluation of the educational resource.</li> </ul>
2. How do young adult survivors respond to bullying in physical and cyber space?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Semi-structured interviews</li> <li>• Collaborative workshops</li> <li>• Plenary sessions</li> <li>• Piloting the educational resource</li> <li>• Teacher feedback meeting</li> <li>• Teacher feedback cards</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interviews with survivors in Phase one</li> <li>• Youth collaborative workshop</li> <li>• Teacher collaborative workshop</li> <li>• Teacher feedback meeting from piloting the educational resource with learners</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teacher feedback cards</li> </ul>
<b>3. What is the nature of bullying in physical and cyber space?</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I engaged with key themes after data analysis in each phase.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Outcomes of data analysis from interviews with survivors</li> <li>• Outcomes of data analysis from youth collaborative workshop</li> <li>• Outcomes from teacher collaborative workshop</li> </ul>
<b>4a. What resources can be developed to promote learner self-efficacy and mitigate the experiences of bullying in physical and cyber spaces?</b>  <b>4b. What can we learn from teachers piloting these resources with their learners?</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sharing and communicating results in each phase</li> <li>• Providing feedback and feed forward on recommendations</li> <li>• Educational tools were developed</li> <li>• Sustained interaction with educational tools to identify areas in need of development</li> <li>• Teacher feedback meeting for the evaluation of the resource</li> <li>• Feedback cards were used to report back on the implementation session</li> <li>• Feedback cards supported the evaluation of the resource</li> <li>• Discussions held during plenary sessions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recommendations from survivors based on their experiences and outcomes from analysis</li> <li>• Youth engagement with educational tools and recommendations</li> <li>• Teacher engagement with the educational tools and recommendations</li> <li>• Teacher feedback from piloting the resource and resource evaluation</li> <li>• Teacher feedback cards supported resource evaluation</li> </ul>

## **Appendix L: Interview schedule interviews with survivors in Phase one**

### **Part One – Biographical and school information**

1.1	Name	
1.2	Gender	
1.3	Race	
1.4	School attended	
1.5	Age at time of incident	
1.6	Grade at time of incident	
1.7	Age at time of interview	

### **Part Two: Survivors understandings of bullying**

- 2.1 What do you understand by the term bullying?
- 2.2 What comes to your mind when you hear the term cyber bullying?
- 2.3 What are some of the ways someone can be bullied in cyber space?
- 2.4 Was bullying or cyber bullying common in your school? In what ways?
- 2.5 Did you witness bullying incidents at your school or in cyber space? Can you describe an example that comes to mind?
- 2.6 What did you do or how did you feel after witnessing a bullying situation in school or online?
- 2.7 Presently, do you see bullying taking place online getting worse? Why do you say so?

### **Part Three: Survivor's own experience of physical and cyber bullying**

- 3.1 Do you think cyber bullying is worse than physical bullying?
- 3.2 Do you see physical and cyber bullying as a huge problem among school learners?



- 3.3 Thinking back, what was your own experience? Can you describe what happened to you?
- 3.4 What thoughts came to mind when you learnt about or saw your incident online? What was your reaction?
- 3.5 How did this incident make you feel? Do you think it affects the lives of those with a similar experience?
- 3.6 With whom did you share your experience?
- 3.7 Are you still affected by what happened to you? Why? How?
- 3.7.1 What support did you receive from:
- a) school/teachers
  - b) learners
  - c) family and close friends
  - d) community
- 3.7.2 Where you satisfied with the support? Why and/or why not?
- 3.8 How would you have liked your school or learners or family and friends or community respond to your incident?

- 3.9 What responsibilities do schools, learners, family and friends or the community have in stopping this type of bullying?
- 3.10 How do you think others experiencing this type of bullying are affected? How did you manage your emotions?
- 3.11 In what ways can we educate people, especially school learners, about the harm recording and posting videos does?

**Part 4:**

- 4.1 What are your thoughts on the interview?
- 4.2 Do you think I have learnt something with the information you shared on your bullying experience?
- 4.3 Would you like me to share your experiences with other participants?
- 4.4 I am interested in learning and understanding more about this type of bullying from youth and teachers. What are your thoughts on this?
- 4.5 I would like to, with the help from youth and teachers, raise awareness on physical and cyber bullying prevention in schools. Do you have any thoughts, suggestions or recommendations on how youth, teachers, and myself can become involved in preventing or addressing this type of bullying?
- 4.6 Would you be interested/comfortable to continue participating in this research study?

4.7 Do you have any questions for me?

**Additional information / comments:**

## Appendix M: Counselling services

	CONFIDENTIAL	PRACTICE NO. 2202956	
	<b>Dr. S.V Moodley</b> SPECIALIST PSYCHIATRIST M.B.B.S (Bombay), M.Med. (Psych)(Natal) 0343480 MP	<b>Telephones</b> Rooms: 033 394 3301 Residence: 033 347 3511 Fax: 033 394 9900 Cell: 082 461 8178	<b>Consulting Rooms</b> 190 Relief Street Pietermaritzburg 3201 email: lovetolive@telkomsa.net

13<sup>th</sup> March 2019

Dear Suhana

**Request for Counselling Services**

I have read the contents of your letter requesting counselling services for some of the participants in your study.

As I do provide counselling services/referrals in my professional and community outreach capacity, I will be able to provide same to your participants at no cost to your research endeavor. This service will be provided as per your request.

Wishing you the best in your studies.

Yours Sincerely



## Appendix N: Ethical clearance and ethical re-certification



08 July 2019

Mrs Suhana Jacobs (204518428)  
School of Education  
Pietermaritzburg Campus

Dear Mrs Jacobs,

**Protocol reference number : HSS/0244/019D**

**Project title:** Bullying in physical and cyber spaces : Experiences of young adult survivors in the digital age

### Approval Notification – Full Committee Reviewed Protocol

With regards to your response received on 01 July 2019 to our letter of 20 May 2019, the Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee has considered the abovementioned application and the protocol has been granted **FULL APPROVAL**.

Any alteration/s to the approved research protocol i.e. Questionnaire/Interview Schedule, Informed Consent Form, Title of the Project, Location of the Study, Research Approach and Methods must be reviewed and approved through the amendment/modification prior to its implementation. In case you have further queries, please quote the above reference number. PLEASE NOTE: Research data should be securely stored in the discipline/department for a period of 5 years.

The ethical clearance certificate is only valid for a period of 1 year from the date of issue. Thereafter Recertification must be applied for on an annual basis.

I take this opportunity of wishing you everything of the best with your study.

Yours faithfully



.....  
**Dr Rosemary Sibanda (Chair)**

/ms

cc Supervisor: Professor Vaughn John  
cc Academic Leader Research: Dr Ansurie Pillay  
cc School Administrator: Ms Sheryl Jeenarain

---

### Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee

**Dr Rosemary Sibanda (Chair)**

**Westville Campus, Govan Mbeki Building**

**Postal Address:** Private Bag X54001, Durban 4000

**Telephone:** +27 (0) 31 260 3587/8350/4557 **Facsimile:** +27 (0) 31 260 4609 **Email:** [ximbap@ukzn.ac.za](mailto:ximbap@ukzn.ac.za) / [snymannm@ukzn.ac.za](mailto:snymannm@ukzn.ac.za) / [mohunp@ukzn.ac.za](mailto:mohunp@ukzn.ac.za)

**Website:** [www.ukzn.ac.za](http://www.ukzn.ac.za)



**100 YEARS OF ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE**

**Founding Campuses:** Edgewood Howard College Medical School Pietermaritzburg Westville

22 April 2021

Mrs Suhana Jacobs (204518428)  
School of Education  
Pietermaritzburg Campus

Dear Mrs Jacobs,

Protocol reference number: HSS/0244/019D

Project title: Bullying in physical and cyber spaces: Experiences of young adult survivors in the digital age

### Approval Notification – Recertification Application

Your request for Recertification dated 21 April 2021 was received.

This letter confirms that you have been granted Recertification Approval for a period of one year from the date of this letter. This approval is based strictly on the research protocol submitted and approved in 2019.

Any alteration s to the approved research protocol i.e. Questionnaire/Interview Schedule, Informed Consent Form, Title of the Project, Location of the Study must be reviewed and approved through the amendment /modification prior to its implementation. Please quote the above reference number for all queries relating to this study.

**PLEASE NOTE:** Research data should be securely stored in the school/department for a period of 5 years

**All research conducted during the COVID-19 period must adhere to the national and UKZN guidelines.**

HSSREC is registered with the South African National Research Ethics Council (REC-040414-040).

Yours sincerely,



Professor Dipane Hlalele (Chair)

/dd

cc Supervisor: Professor Vaughn John  
cc Academic Leader Research: Dr Ansurie Pillay  
cc School Administrator: Ms Sheryl Jeenarain

---

Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee  
UKZN Research Ethics Office Westville Campus, Govan Mbeki Building  
Postal Address: Private Bag X54001, Durban 4000  
Tel: +27 31 260 8350 / 4557 / 3587  
Website: <http://research.ukzn.ac.za/Research-Ethics/>

Founding Campuses:  Edgewood  Howard College  Medical School  Pietermaritzburg  Westville

**INSPIRING GREATNESS**

## Appendix O: Facilitation plans for each activity in Phase two – Youth collaborative workshop

**Participants:** 16 youth participants and myself as facilitator

**Date:** 6<sup>th</sup> December 2019

**Venue:** School of Education building at the University of KwaZulu-Natal

**Time:** 10 am

ACTIVITY AND TIME ALLOCATION	RESOURCES	PURPOSE	PROBE/DEBRIEF
<b>Registration and Introduction</b>  <b>10 minutes</b>	Attendance register Signing of consent forms Name tags Ice-breaker activity	Participant to participant and facilitator interaction  Create positive atmosphere	Getting to know one another
<b>Sharing and communicating results</b>  <b>15 minutes</b>	<b>Power-point presentation and brief description on:</b> <b>Slide 1:</b> Title of research <b>Slide 2:</b> Study's phenomenon <b>Slide 3:</b> Types of bullying and cyber bullying. <b>Slide 4:</b> Focus on physical and cyber bullying	<b>Aim:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Brief discussion of different forms of bullying</b></li> </ul> Brief discussion over slides Participants begin to familiarise themselves and understand more about the nature of the phenomenon	<b>Background to the study</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Preparation for workshop</li> <li>Familiarisation</li> <li>Understanding</li> <li>Starting conversations</li> </ul>

		<p>Participants engage in discussions about general incidents.</p> <p><b>Aim:</b></p> <p>Frame and focus on the phenomenon</p> <p>Facilitator and participant engagement</p> <p>Focused conversations</p> <p>Instil critical awareness</p> <p>Enrich discussion</p>	
--	--	---	--

**Table O1: Facilitation plan for “*Extending conversations*” activity.**

<p><i>DATA GENERATING ACTIVITY 1</i></p> <p><i>EXTENDING CONVERSATIONS</i></p>			
Educational Tools	Format	Preparation	Teaching and Learning



<p><b>Online media elements news articles</b></p> <p><b>20 minutes</b></p> <p><b>Educational video presentations</b></p> <p><b>Audio-visual: video-clips</b></p>	<p>Gallery walk</p> <p>Poster-like newspaper articles (A3)</p> <p>Mounting board</p> <p>Prestik /Koki pens and Notebook and pen</p> <p>Educational video presentations</p> <p>YouTube video 1:</p> <p>Anna-Mare Hanekom (Director). (2018, June 21). <i>Raise your voice. Not your phone.</i>  <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TBOr46mWHQs">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TBOr46mWHQs</a></p> <p>Duration: 2min50 sec</p> <p>YouTube video 2:</p> <p>SenatorOrrinHatch (Director). (2018, March 14). <i>It's Time For the STOP School Violence Act.</i>  <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nR6NuSxBHcw">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nR6NuSxBHcw</a></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Accessing material online</li> <li>• Link articles to videos selected</li> <li>• Focus on real-life experiences</li> </ul> <p><b>Prepare and position participants to:</b></p> <p>a) Foster thinking</p> <p>b) Start conversations</p> <p>c) Encourage dialogue</p> <p>d) Think about inspiring action</p> <p>e) Encourage responses</p> <p>f) Elicit emotional responses</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inform on background of the study</li> <li>• Foster conversations on school violence and bullying</li> <li>• Invite discussion and dialogue</li> <li>• Construct arguments</li> <li>• Invite participant perspectives and experiences</li> <li>• Delve into physical and cyber bullying</li> <li>• Develop better understanding of phenomenon</li> <li>• View phenomenon as a reality</li> </ul>
--	---	--	---

<p><b>Plenary session one</b></p>	<p>Duration: 2min 39 sec</p> <p>YouTube video 3:</p> <p>eNCA (Director). (2019, October 16). <i>Two pupils have been killed in another wave of school violence in KwaZulu-Natal</i>.  <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZOShlWpHT4g">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZOShlWpHT4g</a></p> <p>Duration: 5 min 17 sec</p> <p>Participant mobile phones</p> <p>Ear phones (optional)</p> <p>Participant link to group WhatsApp</p> <p>Audio-recording</p> <p>Participants and facilitator gather for in-depth discussion</p>		
-----------------------------------	---	--	--

**Table O2: Facilitation plan for “Scenario presentations” activity.**

*DATA GENERATION ACTIVITY 2*

*SCENARIO PRESENTATIONS*

<b><u>ACTIVITY 2</u></b>	<b><u>TIME</u></b>	<b><u>PURPOSE</u></b>	<b><u>PROBE/DEBRIEF</u></b>
<b>Scenario</b>	<b><u>ALLOCATION/RESOURCES</u></b>		
<b>Presentation</b>	120 minutes	Presenting findings from Phase 1 analysis in the form of a storyboard.	Enhanced dialogue; constructive debates around finding
<b>Iteration session</b>	4 case profiles A3 booklet / poster format Writing material for noting alternatives/ solutions/ recommendations	Scenarios embedded at different points of survivor storyboard. Engagement with scenarios	alternate/better solutions  Expand on knowledge/ develop a better understanding  Report back

**Table O3: Facilitation plan for “Collaborative writing” activity.**

<p><i>DATA GENERATING ACTIVITY 3</i></p> <p><i>COLLABORATIVE WRITING</i></p>			
<b>Educational tool</b>	<b>Format</b>	<b>Preparation</b>	<b>Teaching and learning</b>
<b>Collaborative Writing</b>  <b>60 minutes</b>	In-depth writing exercises from complex scenarios  Writing material	Participants work in pairs  Participants provide in-depth alternatives,	Collaborative engagement  Sustained dialogue

<b>Peer review</b>		responses, and offer solutions	Draw up guidelines, approaches, or strategies to address and respond to extended bullying
<b>Plenary session</b>			

## Appendix P: Online news articles used in Phase two

- Capital Newspapers. (2017a, March 13). Carter High School pupil attack on parents. *Capital Newspapers*. <https://publiceyemaritzburg.co.za/39301/carter-high-school-pupil-attack-parents/>
- Capital Newspapers. (2017b, March 16). Concern as school violence increases. *Capital Newspapers*. <https://publiceyemaritzburg.co.za/39410/concern-school-violence-increases/>
- Capital Newspapers. (2019, February 7). Learner stabbed in school brawl. *Capital Newspapers*. <https://publiceyemaritzburg.co.za/53880/learner-stabbed-school-brawl/>
- da Costa, W. J. (2019, February 25). Disturbing cyber-bullying statistics ranks SA tops. *Inside Education*. <https://insideeducation.co.za/2019/02/25/disturbing-cyber-bullying-statistics-ranks-sa-tops/>
- Davids, N. (2014, November 7). There are better ways to deal with school violence. *The Mail & Guardian*. <https://mg.co.za/article/2014-11-07-there-are-better-ways-to-deal-with-school-violence/>
- EDITORIAL: We ignore our children's future. (2019, August 2). *The Mail & Guardian*. <https://mg.co.za/article/2019-08-02-00-editorial-we-ignore-our-childrens-future/>
- Gina, N. (2015, August 4). School Safety / Violence & Bullying in Schools; Quality Learning and Teaching Campaign (QLTC) Implementation: Progress report | PMG. *Parliamentary Monitoring Group*. <https://pmg.org.za/committee-meeting/21219/>
- John, V. (2014, May 20). School-fight websites incite further violence, say experts. *The Mail & Guardian*. <https://mg.co.za/article/2014-05-20-school-fight-websites-incite-further-violence/>
- Khanyile, N. (2018, September 10). Horror schools. *The Witness*. <https://www.citizen.co.za/witness/news/horror-schools-20180910-2/>
- Leoschut, L. (2017, March 7). Policing alone won't reduce violence at schools. *The Mail & Guardian*. <https://mg.co.za/article/2017-03-07-00-policing-alone-wont-reduce-violence-at-schools/>

- Macupe, B. (2019, August 1). Faction fights in KZN turn school playgrounds into battlefields. *The Mail & Guardian*. <https://mg.co.za/article/2019-08-01-faction-fights-in-kzn-turn-school-playgrounds-into-battlefields/>
- Mkancu, S. (2019, June 21). There's another, more prevalent violence at schools. *The Mail & Guardian*. <https://mg.co.za/article/2019-06-21-00-theres-another-more-prevalent-violence-at-schools/>
- Palm, K. (2019, June 20). School violence: What govt is doing to keep our children and teachers safe. *Eyewitness News*. <https://ewn.co.za/2019/06/20/sa-school-violence-what-s-being-done>
- Pillay, K. (2019, October 16). WATCH: Pupil killed in brawl. *The Witness*. <https://www.citizen.co.za/witness/news/watch-pupil-killed-in-brawl-20191016/>
- Violence in SA's schools is worse than you think, and spanking is part of the problem. (n.d.). *News24*. <https://www.news24.com/news24/violence-in-sas-schools-is-worse-than-you-think-and-spanking-is-part-of-the-problem-20190607>

## Appendix Q: Survivor case profiles

PRIYA: CASE PROFILE - PAGE 1

# CASE PROFILE: PRIYA

Storyline...

You know when boys and girls expect you to be all girly ... I am not ever like that. I am more a tomboy. My hair was completely short and that's when I started getting teased and being made fun of. They teased me at school then took pictures and video of me and posted on social media.

### MAKE A CHOICE

They destroyed my self-esteem. I still have a problem with my confidence because it carried on a long time. In that year, my first physical fight took place.

### WHAT WOULD YOU DO?

### MAKE A CHOICE

She constantly picked on me, sent me horrible messages saying she wanted to "catch me" outside of school. Besides she always said that I am ugly.

### WHAT WOULD YOU DO?

### MAKE A CHOICE

The school never really listened to my side of the story. They believed I was in the wrong as I am always in the office. Automatically, I was suspended but not the real bully in this case.

### WHAT WOULD YOU DO?

## YOU ARE THE HEADMASTER. HOW WOULD YOU RESPOND?

I was frustrated getting teased. It really didn't stop. The threats frightened me and I could sense that she was getting more serious. One day she confronted me in the toilets. An argument broke out and there was a scuffle. A teacher witnessed this and reprimanded us and we had to go to see the headmaster to explain our behaviour.

### RECOMMENDED PLAN

### RECOMMENDED PLAN

### RECOMMENDED PLAN

In our school, as soon as everyone sees a fight breaking out, learners are surrounding them. That is how teachers know a fight is taking place. The learners just start running together.

HOW SHOULD LEARNERS OTHERWISE RESPOND?

If I hear that a fight is going to take place at school the following day I will want to take action.

YOU ARE PRIYA. WHAT ACTION WILL YOU TAKE?



**WHAT IS THE PROBLEM?**

The learners don't show that they are sad or worried when watching these fights. They record and watch like it's some kind of show. That is how bullying is treated in school.

As the headmaster what advice would you give to the learners?

How do you encourage your friends to change their behaviour?

It worries you that your friends enjoy watching these fights. What do you tell them?

**HOW WOULD YOU HANDLE THE SITUATION?**

After school it is time to fight! Everyone finds it entertaining. They will not ask: "Why are you fighting?" or "You know you can handle it in a much better way."

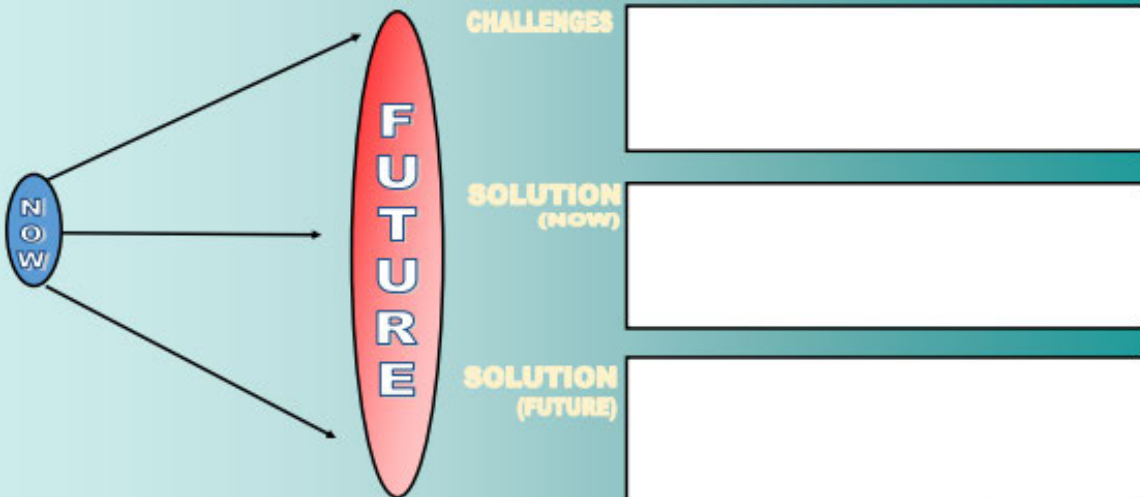
**RECOMMENDATION****RECOMMENDATION****RECOMMENDATION****PLAN OF ACTION**

When someone gets into a fight or is being bullied, learners don't show concern. It is for entertainment, yet it is worrying. If I see something, I will try to separate. In our school the learners don't help. They just watch the other person get bullied.

HOW DOES PRIYA'S STATEMENT MAKE YOU FEEL?



I tried to avoid them every way possible because I just didn't want to be around them at all. That's the reason I didn't like school. I didn't want to go every day to be put down. I was supposed to go get an education and not to be bullied in this way. So I just would just avoid them. Out of fear, I avoided going out to be publicly humiliated.



I think people who do this on social media have their own problems and enjoy bringing down others so they make themselves feel higher. Yet its completely downgrading and hurtful for the other person. I think they are going through something so they find ways to pick on others, especially online. With cyberbullying you can send it, post stuff and be anonymous. They can destroy a person.

*PRIYA GIVES A GOOD ACCOUNT OF A PERSON HURTING ANOTHER'S FEELINGS.*

When the images were circulated I was very frustrated and very hurt because I didn't do anything wrong to anyone for them to be so mean. I went to a student teacher, I didn't even know her name and just cried. I was like why is this being done to me when I am honestly a nice person? I don't worry about anyone or got in trouble.

*PRIYA DID NOT DESERVE TO FEEL THIS WAY.  
How would you make Priya feel better?*

# SOLUTIONS FOR THE PRESENT AND FUTURE

Everything is planned using their cell phones. These messages start spreading. When you back at school, expect a fight. A lot of hype and chirping goes on. The ones who claim that there is going to be a fight has to make sure they follow through, otherwise they going to look stupid.

CHALLENGE:

SOLUTION NOW

SOLUTION FUTURE



Maybe the person who wants to fight, screenshots conversations, maybe threats and puts it up on the status. So its not only two learners that know, its others who read the status. So you cannot disregard what you meant on social media, so the fight has to take place because a lot of learners know about it.

CHALLENGE:

SOLUTION NOW

SOLUTION FUTURE



I still have these fears. I don't have friends because I'm afraid to trust people I'm a very friendly person. I will greet you, I'm fun but I keep a limit to friends because I don't want to get into that place where I was.

CHALLENGE:

SOLUTION NOW

SOLUTION FUTURE



Parents cannot intervene. Everyone blocks parents and teachers. We have some serious fights, and no one is helping. All this starts on social media.

CHALLENGE:

SOLUTION NOW

SOLUTION FUTURE



## DECISION TIME

### HELP PRIYA

I kept quiet. I was depressed and my school work dropped. I don't to have friends because I do not know who I can trust. I was very much alone. Over a long time, I will just sit in my room alone. I hated school, just to be put down.

What would you change?

### HELP PRIYA

They don't understand that it scarred me emotionally, because until now, if you give me a compliment I feel very hurt to take that compliment because of being cyber bullied and made fun off.

What would you change?

### HELP PRIYA

They used to degrade me on Facebook. They used to comment, say really funny, hurtful things online. They used to laugh at me basically. Even the boys they did that. There were lots of comments like:

What would you change?

# CASE PROFILE: JASON

**Storyline...**

It all started when I posted a picture of myself on Instagram. I enjoyed gym and fitness. People react when you post a picture. If you like it, then you like it and if you don't, then that's fine too. But then, you got this guy that laughs and so I replied: "What's so funny?" He starts bickering and mocking me. This went on, starting on social media then into school...

During a fight, some learners are excited. It's entertaining for them, not knowing what the person who is being bullied is going through. Most learners take out their cell phones and record. No one separates.

I didn't expect an audience to be standing there as I was walking home. There are learners just standing with their cell phones. It's like an arena and you are in a ring.

I went to the police station to lay a charge of assault and to report on the video that was posted of me and the man who struck me. He had the video edited, reproduced and posted. I told the police everything they needed to know. I think police saw how much I was affected by the video.

You learn there is a fight going to take place between two learners you know

What's your plan of action?

---

---

---

---

I had to use this route to go home. I was faced with the unbelievable.

What would you have wanted to happen in this situation?

---

---

---

---

Jason did the right thing by going to the police

Is there something else Jason could have done?"

---

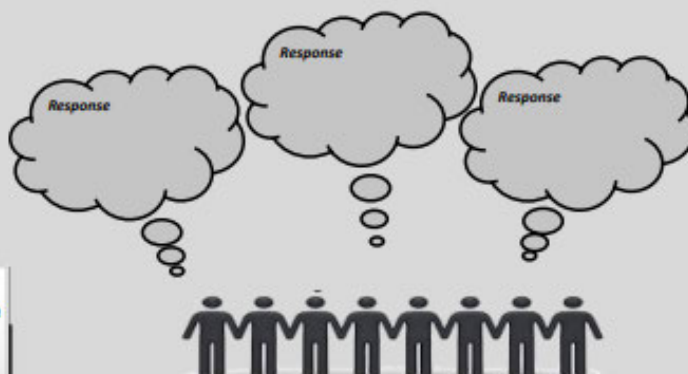
---

---

---

When I returned to school three days later it was really bad. The video was posted. It was circulating amongst the learners. They laughed and mocked me. I was just being tormented non-stop in school and on social media.

How would you respond to Jason at school?



I lost my friends. They all just backed off. There was no support. I was totally isolated in school. Maybe they were scared or felt it could happen to them if they hung around me. I felt betrayed because if I see my friend getting hurt, I will try to help.

You being one of Jason's friends, how would you approach this situation?

---

---

---

---

Social media is everywhere. Everything is posted these days. It is hard to try and stop it and harder to tell somebody to stop.

Do you agree with Jason?

---

---

---

---



The school is not active in taking proper action. Teachers on duty take action after something has happened. Violence is common in school. The school just announces 'stop fighting' and that's it. Yet, there should be programmes about bullying. This is real and there are consequences if the school doesn't act.

What challenges do schools face?

SUGGEST ALTERNATIVES / ACTIONS / SOLUTIONS

Challenges in reporting incidents

The police department should have some programme about bullying. They should address learners and listen to our stories and try to help us. In my case, the police did a very good job.

SUGGEST ALTERNATIVES / ACTIONS / SOLUTIONS

A couple of months ago I went to fetch my cousin from school. There was a stabbing incident happening in front of my eyes. This is unreal! It seems now its just about using weapons. It is out of control.

What challenges do schools face?

SUGGEST ALTERNATIVES / ACTIONS / SOLUTIONS

Even after my incident, there are still no security guards at school. Even if there were guards, they don't intervene. Outside of school it is not their problem.

**ACTION PLAN FOR SCHOOLS**

**CHALLENGES:**

**SOLUTIONS:**

There's a lot of parents that have to leave work, to pick their children to make sure they safe because, once you leave those gates you're on your own. Parents fear for their child's safety.

**ACTION PLAN FOR PARENTS**

**CHALLENGES:**

**SOLUTIONS:**

## MAKING A CHOICE

*Kids do it for popularity  
"The untouchables". Even the ones  
who post the video, they want fame.  
Make a name for themselves!*

## MAKING A CHOICE

*Boys carrying weapons to school was  
common. You don't see the weapons  
unless you know what they are getting  
into. For two years in my school no  
one searched me for weapons but they  
searched for drugs.*

## MAKING A CHOICE

*The school said that it's both our faults  
and so were suspended. I went to the  
police station because I didn't want to  
get suspended. The school said it's an  
outside issue, not a school matter.*

*What would you do?*

*What would you do?*

*What would you do?*

## DECISION TIME

Things were really bad  
when I returned to school.  
The video was posted  
already. I was laughed and  
mocked at.

Lots of learners knew about  
the fight after school. There  
was no way out for me. I  
had to face it.

Even though I know going to  
gym is a good for me, I  
stopped. I felt the complete  
opposite after the incident.

Offer a solution

Offer a solution

Offer a solution

# CASE PROFILE: BYRON

[Storyline...](#)

After that, my life was not the same. I was in a coma for over a month. By the time I got up, I didn't even know that the video went viral and that it was all over the news. All this was going on about me! Anything I had to know my mother and father showed me.

I was in a school stabbing incident. I was stabbed with a knife. The fight was recorded by the school kids and it went all over social media. It went viral.

*Is this bullying? Why do you say this?*

I don't remember much of the incident. When I got stabbed, I didn't feel anything. I ran to the principal's office and collapsed.

*School learners should not have to experience this?  
Elaborate*

The kids were telling me "Hey, we heard there's a bunch of boys waiting for you outside". They were warning me not to leave school. I said: "I'm going. I'm not scared".

*Do you agree with Byron's response? Why?*

It worried me. We didn't get along although we were from the same neighbourhood. You cannot run away from it, you just have to face it. Like that day...I had to face it.

*What alternatives did Byron have?*

I didn't expect any of the school kids to help me during the fight. It was not their problem and I'm cool with that.

**YOU KNOW BYRON.**

**WHAT WOULD YOU HAVE DONE IN HIS CASE?**

I don't think the teachers could help me. Maybe they were scared themselves. Also it is not their job.

COMMENT ON:  
BYRON'S VIEWPOINT

COMMENT ON:  
TEACHER'S SHOULD NOT BE AFRAID

COMMENT ON:  
TEACHER'S SHOULD NOT GET INVOLVED



I never informed anyone. As I said, the other kids already told me don't go out there. They are waiting for me and they have weapons. All different kinds of weapons, sticks, tasers and knives.

CHALLENGES:  
SOLUTIONS: (NOW)  
SOLUTIONS: (FUTURE)

Yes. These kind of things are very common. especially from the areas we come from. Even my best friend was stabbed a while ago.

CHALLENGES:  
SOLUTIONS: (NOW)  
SOLUTIONS: (FUTURE)

I did carry a weapon as well. Its not normal for students to carry knives but if its my life, its my decision.

CHALLENGES:  
SOLUTIONS: (NOW)  
SOLUTIONS: (FUTURE)

I was scared. But I said: "School is over and its time to go home. I am not worried about them".

CHALLENGES:  
SOLUTIONS: (NOW)  
SOLUTIONS: (FUTURE)

When I got up, I didn't know what happened, I though it was the same day but meantime it was weeks that I was laying there in hospital.

*School learners should never have to experience this. Take action:*

There are always smaller fights taking place outside school, but I didn't think this was going to be so big, like on social media and on the News channel on TV.

*Byron considers this a "Big Fight" because the video was posted on social media and it was on TV. Comment :*

Well the video of me is still on the internet, maybe six or seven years now. It hasn't been removed. I just had to watch it once and it haunts me every single day thinking about it.

*Byron should never have to experience this. What is your action:*

When I watched my video, it was close to about two hundred thousand views. It showed that one hundred and sixty five people liked the video. How do people like something like this?

*How do people "like" something like this? Comment:*

## BRYRON OFFERS A GOOD UNDERSTANDING OF HIS EXPERIENCES

The police do get involved but cannot do anything more about it!

*What more can be done?*

Small things start fights. Usually when people talk about you, talk behind your back, talk lies, gossip and spread rumours.

*Learners complain about rumours being spread on social media.  
Address your class:*

There are a few gangs. They operate in school and out of school. Learners feel proud being a gang member.

*As the headmaster, address the learners on Byron's statement:*

These fights are nothing new. Its something that has been going on over the years, from the time I was small. Videoing and posting it on social media is new.

Nobody stops the fights; maybe your friend will come and help you with the fight not stop you. Its just how it is.

I did get some counselling from a teacher when I went back to school. First it was one on one, then we had group counselling sessions. We were given some books to read on drug addiction and I was not doing drugs.

I was popular when I went back to school. Everyone knew about the video and will tell me that I was brave. The good people.

When I went back to school, all eyes were on me. Some teachers started talking to me, asking me what happened and how I'm feeling. I had more friends now. I was popular.

My friends knew what was going on but they could not interfere. They helped after I was stabbed. They helped put pressure on the wound as I was bleeding a lot.

The person who recorded and posted the video, I don't know what point they were trying to make. I don't have much to say about this action but just that its not a nice thing to do. Taking videos of these fights, posting it, you don't know how you making the other person feel.

*Draft a law or Act that prevents this kind of action!*

I think the kids just want to be famous. They quickly record stuff. Its for their status on social media, so they can be popular. They'd be bragging: 'I got a video... I'm the one who took that etc'. They talk proudly about it.

*You and your friend witness a fight. Your friend takes out her cell phone to record the fight. How do you react?*





# CASE PROFILE: TEEJAY

## Storyline...

The incident haunted me for over three years. I am still affected by it. This rumour created something. People are hearing about it, friends are hearing about it and family. And again, it was creating an image which wasn't me. It just didn't end. Those boys saw it as an excuse to confront me...

Things are changing. A newer generation is coming in. But teachers are not changing. It is not the same. Yes, a rumour spreads slowly by word of mouth and it stays in school, but through social media, it spreads like wildfire!

*Different times calls for approaches! How do you deal with Teejay statement?*

### CHALLENGES:

### SOLUTIONS: (Short-term—NOW)

### SOLUTIONS: (Long-term—FUTURE)

With traditional bullying it is easier to deal with. Bullying on social media is on a much grander scale.

*Describe how bullying on social media is bullying on a "grander scale"?*

Socially this incident had a very negative impact especially when I went to my new school. Other boys were plotting to have a go at me using social media. These boys were told to put me in my place.

*Teejay is really having a tough time! How can we help him?*

I worry about what people will think of me because of the video. This is not the person I am.

*Does it matter that Teejay feels this way? Why?*

## PROVIDE A RESPONSE TO TEEJAY'S STATEMENTS

There was no expulsion or suspension. We did not even get detention nor counselling.

There was tension towards me when I went back to school. I knew that I was the topic of conversation amongst the pupils due to this video clip. It created a hostile environment because the boys in the new school wanted me to know my place coming in.

The school will play one or two sad videos on bullying but they will not really explain the meaning of it, like the whole effect it actually has on us. I would rather be called any sort of name for the rest of my life than to have this sort of image.

Everyone is attacking you. It feels like the whole world is caving in.

Schools and social media are no longer separate.

When teachers don't support you or they say "just ignore it" then there is no

Teachers are too busy protecting the school's image

## DECISION-MAKING TIME

### HOW DOES TEEJAY'S STATEMENTS MAKE YOU FEEL?

Quite frankly, there needs to be more rules in place when it comes to recording and posting videos.

I was afraid to go out to socials. What if it was a planned assault or attack on me? So I just wouldn't go out.

I witnessed many serious fights but it was for entertainment and you are meant to laugh about it.

I feel like everyone is against me.

I was rock-bottom. They obviously wanted me to feel like I was nothing.

I had this fear. If anyone tried to be my friend, I thought: "What is your goal?"

I received so many threats, on social media, at both my schools, actually wherever I went.

## DISCUSS TEEJAY'S EXPERIENCES

There were things put out on social media of me and that developed an image of me that was very much not how I was or anything like who I am.

What would you say to Teejay?

The boy I had an altercation with, is trouble. He had a problem with my reading in class and every now and then he would tease and call me stupid and yet I was just shy.

What would you say to Teejay?

He passed his next remark and I went to confront him. He punched me in the head. I raised my arms and defended myself. I picked him up and he fell on his head. This is really not who I am.

What would you say to Teejay?

It became a scene. Everybody was looking. Everyone was aware that something serious was going to go down, even the teacher.

What would you say to Teejay?

An audience had gathered. Everybody knew of this thing that was brewing. No one, not the teacher, the prefects or the other learners who knew about this altercation helped break up the fight.

What would you say to Teejay?

Actually a parent, waiting in the car park heard the commotion and rendered assistance in breaking up the fight.

What would you say to Teejay?

# TEEJAY'S ACTIONS

TEEJAY: CASE PROFILE - PAGE 3

I went back to school the same day and gave my statement to the head of discipline. The teacher who knew about the altercation just sort of ignored the whole thing.

If you were that teacher, how would you have handled the situation?

A few weeks later, the headmaster saw the video and I went through it step by step. I was called in thinking I had to give my side of the story but I was just given the suspension. I did not give my side of the story.

What are your views on the school's approach?

The video clip was on social media. It circulated through all the high schools. Everyone knew about it and was talking about it on group chats.

You saw the video. How did you respond?

My teacher offered me counselling which I accepted. This didn't really help. All parties involved in school discipline need to get involved and talk it out.

Do you agree with Teejay?

I snapped because this boy kept going at me. I cooled down, prepared to leave for home but he wanted to start an altercation coming at me all the time. There was a scuffle.

Teejay wasn't going to back down. He stood his ground. Is Teejay right?

*Teejay's statements has serious implications. How are you going to tackle this?*

Teejay : The incident escalated. I got up to leave but he hit me. The whole grade gathered around with the main instigators of this rumour just standing by, watching what they caused.

Respond:

Teejay: More help must be given because this continues outside of school.

Yes, I agree (elaborate)

Teejay: I think that kids need to understand the consequences and the level of their actions.

Yes, I agree (elaborate)



---

**EDUCATIONAL RESOURCE FOR EXTENDED BULLYING**

---

**Package 1**

**Lesson Plan 1 : Exploring extended bullying**

- Worksheet 1 : My extended bullying experience... the story line
- Worksheet 2a/2b : Learning about extended bullying: the storyboard
- Worksheet 3 : Let's reflect and analyse
- Worksheet 4a/4b : Extended bullying: it doesn't happen by accident

**Package 2**

**Lesson Plan 2 : Understanding feelings**

- Worksheet 5 : Piecing it together
- Worksheet 6 : What others are saying?
- Worksheet 7a/7b : Feelings matter... let's connect
- Worksheet 8 : A tough lesson with TJ

**Package 3**

**Lesson Plan 3 : Responding to extended bullying**

- Worksheet 9 : Making headlines
- Worksheet 10 : Getting serious
- Worksheet 11 : Stop & think! Should I post this?
- Worksheet 12 : Help! Additional responses required
- Worksheet 13 : Analyse this! Let's chat

## PACKAGE 1

### Lesson Plan 1: Exploring extended bullying

---

<b>Date:</b>		<b>Learning area:</b>	
<b>Duration:</b>	110 minutes	<b>Lesson vocabulary:</b>	
<b>Topic:</b>			

#### Lesson Summary

Background: The advancement of technology and growth of social media has created new risks, threats, and vulnerabilities and has thus given rise to the phenomenon of extended bullying.

In this lesson learners will have the opportunity to explore and understand extended bullying. Learners will participate in a series of creative activities geared towards a collaborative learning project on extended bullying.

**Note to teachers:** The set of worksheets created in this resource package can be used with flexibility and interchangeably across the three lesson plans. This is highlighted in the lesson presentation.

#### Objectives:

By the end of this session, learners should be able to:

- know and understand what extended bullying is
- provide a definition for extended bullying
- describe and demonstrate an understanding of extended bullying

## Lesson presentation

Topic	Activity description	Duration
Worksheet 1	Introduction	20 mins
<b>My extended bullying experience: the story line</b> (group discussion)	<p>Have learners work in small groups.</p> <p>Start lesson with a reflection exercise after learners read worksheet 1.</p> <p>Prompt learners to think about each storyline.</p> <p>Brainstorm. Start a class discussion inviting learners to talk about and compare storylines.</p>	
Worksheet 2a & 2b	Have learners work in small groups.	30 mins
<b>Storyboard: Learning about extended bullying</b> (group discussion)	<p>Provide each group with worksheet 2. Allocate sufficient time for learners to read and familiarise themselves with each storyboard. Learners should be able to gain a broader understanding of extended bullying as experienced by the survivors.</p> <p>In their groups, learners can describe and take note of similarities and differences in extended bullying. This activity should prompt a lively class discussion as learners are encouraged to think and talk about their own meanings they attach to extended bullying.</p> <p>Have each group contribute their perspectives and understandings of extended bullying.</p> <p>The groups can collaborate to come up with at least five main characteristics that describe extended bullying. Learners may also choose to highlight, from their own knowledge, some possible encounters with extended bullying and to consider those too, as potential characteristics. .</p>	
Worksheet 3	Have learners work in their existing groups.	30 mins
<b>Let's reflect and analyse</b>	Provide each group with worksheet 3. Allow each group to read carefully through the questions.	

(group discussion and writing activity)	<p>Learners can also refer to worksheet 2 in order to answer the questions.</p> <p>Allow each group to share their answers. Other groups are invited to contribute their points of view and perspectives.</p>	
<p>Worksheets 4a &amp; 4b</p> <p><b>Extended bullying: It doesn't happen by accident!</b></p> <p>(Discussion &amp; writing activity)</p>	<p>Have learners work in pairs.</p> <p>Provide each pair with worksheet 4.</p> <p>Encourage learners to think about their earlier discussions in the introductory worksheets.</p> <p>Allow learners time to engage with and discuss scenarios in worksheet 4a and 4b. Learners can compare, describe, analyse, and draw conclusions on how each scenario progresses into extended bullying.</p> <p>Invite learners to make similar presentations, explaining their rationale to the rest of the class.</p>	30 mins

**Teacher observation / comments:**

---



---



---

**Teacher reflection / comments:**

---



---



---

**Facilitator notes:**

---



---



---





## MY EXTENDED BULLYING EXPERIENCE





# LEARNING ABOUT EXTENDED BULLYING

Read carefully through the storyboards and have a discussion in your group about the survivors experiences. Follow Byron & Siya's storyboard on the next page.



2a

**PRIYA'S STORY**

So you already know that the girls at school gave me a tough time. They teased and laughed at me. I tried to hide away or avoid them but they would just appear. They followed me on the school grounds, the corridors and the rest rooms.

Besides this, some of the girls would just use their cell phones and take pics of me and share with others during school. They confronted me in the rest room and started punching and pulling my hair whilst another recorded the altercation.

When I got home from school, I switched on my cell phone and saw the pics of my hair and the altercation on Facebook. Then I realised why everyone was laughing at me during the day. I was devastated!




**Don't stand by!  
Let's stand up!**

**TJ'S STORY**

I was constantly picked on. I was frustrated because every time I would avoid confronting him... he would always follow and intimidate me.

He followed me to the school gate at the end of the day. A fight broke out between us. The other learners stood around us, watched and laughed at me. It was not long after, that my cell phone went wild with the video of the fight on WhatsApp.

I immediately asked my parents to take me back to school to report the incident and the video. I also started to receive threatening messages. This was cyber bullying. It was the start to my worst nightmare!



**Help make this a bully free zone**

## LEARNING ABOUT EXTENDED BULLYING:


Read carefully through the storyboards and have a discussion in your group about the survivors experiences.



2b

There was chaos at school. Other learners warned me of a group of boys waiting outside the school gate for me. I was not surprised as there were ongoing problems with a few boys from the neighbourhood.

**BYRON'S STORY**



I knew I had to face them today. If I didn't, then they would come look for me in my neighbourhood anyway. I have been receiving these threats on my cell phone for a while now.

**Can we make  
a noise about bullying?**

A fight broke out, outside the school. I was stabbed. I managed to run back into the school to the principal's office where I collapsed. This incident was recorded and five years later it is still on the internet.

**A classroom lesson!!**



**SIYA'S STORY**

Sometimes when you want to post good things about yourself on Instagram, it may not go that way. I am in to fitness. But some boys don't like that. I was receiving negative comments from a few boys that attended my school.

These comments turned into arguments at school. It became worse when I was shown on a WhatsApp status that a fight was going to happen outside school that afternoon involving me.

**Bullying stops here!  
Don't you think?**

A crowd of learners gathered around me with their cell phones to record the fight. Besides knowing I had to fight back, I was shocked at how excited the learners were to witness what was about to happen.





## LET'S REFLECT AND ANALYSE

Your thoughts on extended bullying



3

Are the experiences similar to other stories you know about?

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

How would you describe extended bullying?

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

How would someone experiencing extended bullying feel?

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

In what ways do you consider extended bullying a form of cyber bullying?

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

What sources can you use to learn and understand extended bullying?

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

How has reading the story boards helped you understand extended bullying?

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## *Extended bullying: It doesn't happen by accident*

Read each of the survivors' comments. Describe how each scenario progresses into extended bullying.



She constantly picked on me and sent me horrible messages. She would threaten to sort me out after school. Besides, she always said that I am ugly.

---

---

---

---

---

This whole thing was planned because the next day the video of the fight was posted. The video was edited with music and then posted on social media. This was meant to humiliate me.




---

---

---

---

---

I looked at this boy's online status which said that he was going to fight with me after school. I told him that I was going to the police station to lay charges for bullying because one should not post these threats online.




---

---

---

---

---



There was a lot of attention towards me when I went back to school. I knew that I was a topic of conversation because of the video clip. It created a hostile environment.

---

---

---

---

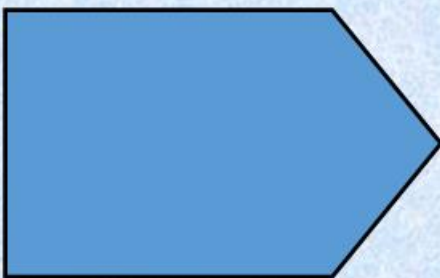
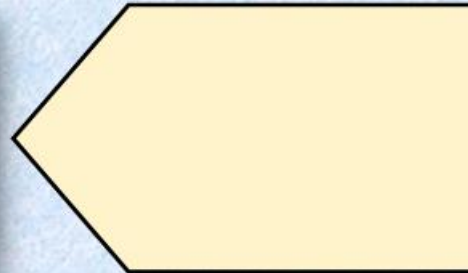
---



### ***Extended bullying: It doesn't happen by accident***

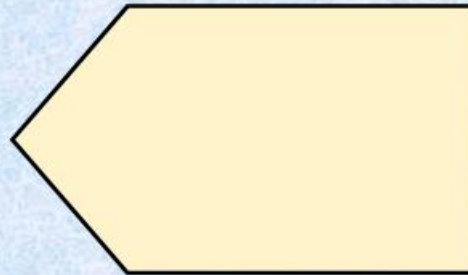
Read each of the survivors' comments. Describe how each scenario progresses into extended bullying.

*I really didn't expect this to be such a big fight. There are always smaller fights taking place outside school.*



*This incident had a negative effect especially when I went to my new school. Other boys at this new school were plotting to bully me from behind social media. Moving to a new school was not the answer.*

*No concern is shown for the bullied. Its more of entertainment. In our school the learners don't help. They just record or watch a fight.*



*The next day things really got out of hand. He started threatening me at school saying things like, he is going to beat me up again.*



## PACKAGE 2

### Lesson Plan 2: Understanding feelings!

---

<b>Date:</b>		<b>Learning area:</b>	Life Orientation
<b>Duration:</b>	130 minutes	<b>Lesson vocabulary:</b>	

#### Lesson Summary

Background: The advancement of technology and growth of social media has introduced new risks, threats, and vulnerabilities and has thus given rise to the phenomenon of extended bullying.

The activities designed for lesson 2 create opportunities for learners to connect and, thereby, deepen their understanding of negative feelings associated with extended bullying.

**Note to teachers:** The set of worksheets created in this resource package can be used with flexibility and interchangeably across the three lesson plans. This is highlighted in the lesson presentation.

#### Objectives:

By the end of this session, learners should be able to:

- gain a deeper understanding of the negative feelings associated with extended bullying
- better identify and evaluate the different feelings associated with extended bullying
- participate and respond respectfully in an online space and school setting

## Lesson presentation

Topic	Activity description	Duration
Worksheet 1	Introduction	10 mins
<b>My extended bullying experience: the story line</b>	<p>Allow learners to re-visit worksheet 1, 2a and 2b.</p> <p>Prompt learners to pay closer attention to the different feelings associated with extended bullying. Learners can note down the different feelings experienced.</p>	
Worksheet 2	Allow learners to discuss and describe these feelings	
<b>Storyboard: learning about extended bullying</b>		
Worksheet 5	Have learners work in small groups.	30 mins
<b>Piecing it together</b>	Each group will receive one (1) cut-out image.	
(pract ca , wr tten & d a o gue act v ty)	<p>Each group will focus on their image with a set of questions accompanying the image.</p> <p>Thereafter, allow each group to bring the images together to create a single picture.</p> <p>Once learners have achieved this, allow the groups to answer a set of questions accompanying the picture.</p> <p>Each group can do a presentation on the thoughts and discussion of the image they initially received and compare it to their thoughts and discussion on the picture as a whole.</p> <p>Learners can present their thoughts in terms of what, why, when and how in the picture.</p>	
Worksheet 6	Have learners work in groups.	30 mins
<b>What others are</b>	Provide each group with worksheet 6. Allocate sufficient time for learners to read and discuss the comments made by 'What	

<p><b>saying?</b></p> <p>(discuss on &amp; writing activity)</p>	<p>others are saying'. Learners begin to deepen their understanding of the impact of hurtful comments associated with extended bullying.</p> <p>Each group engages in a conversation around the negative comments 'by others'. Learners may want to share their own encounters with negative comments or statements. During their discussion, learners can choose to turn the negative comments into positive comments.</p> <p>Learners are given the opportunity to provide alternate, positive comments and then share their positive comments with the class.</p>	
<p>Worksheet 7a &amp; 7b</p> <p><b>Feelings matter...</b></p> <p><b>Let's connect!</b></p> <p>(reading, discussion, writing &amp; dialogue activity)</p>	<p>Have learners work in groups.</p> <p>Provide each group with worksheets 7a and 7b. Learners begin with reading each scenario and familiarising themselves with feelings expressed in the scenarios.</p> <p>Encourage learners to think of their earlier discussions (or refer back to) in the introductory worksheets, viz, worksheets 1; 2a and 2b for a broader understanding of feelings associated with extended bullying.</p> <p>Allow learners time to engage with and discuss scenarios in worksheets 7a and 7b. Learners can compare, describe, analyse, and draw conclusions on the feelings expressed in the scenarios.</p> <p>Invite each group to make presentations once the worksheets are completed, explaining their rationale to the rest of the class.</p>	<p>30 mins</p>
<p>Worksheet 8</p> <p><b>A tough lesson with TJ!</b></p>	<p>Have learners work in pairs.</p> <p>Provide each pair with worksheet 8.</p> <p>Encourage learners to consider TJ's feelings and relate these</p>	<p>30 min</p>



(discuss on, writing & dialogue)

feelings to the image on the worksheet. Learners may also refer back to the introductory worksheets 1, 2a and 2b to connect further with T.J's feelings.

Learners can then read through the questions, have a discussion in relation to the image, and proceed to answering the set of questions provided.

In their pairs, learners can read through the two scenarios provided. Encourage learners to engage further in discussions on feelings and then to proceed with addressing issues related to extended bullying.

**Teacher observation / comments:**

---

---

---

---

---

**Teacher reflection / comments:**

---

---

---

---

---

**Facilitator notes:**

---

---

---

## PIECING IT TOGETHER

Complete the following activity below



Each group receives 1 image.

Study your image.

Provide a short description of your image.

Describe the character in your image.

Do you get a sense of time of day from your image?

How does looking at your image make you feel?

Does your image have any object? If yes, what is the significance of the object?



**Allow each group to bring the images together to make a single picture.**

- 1) Has the picture provided enough information?
- 2) What story does this picture tell?
- 3) What have you learnt about from going through each image about the characters?
- 4) Are there any changes that you will make to the picture?
- 5) How will you change the role of each character?
- 6) How does the picture cause you to react emotionally?
- 7) Do you see this as an example of extended bullying?

## Read what others are saying?

6

The survivors encountered many hurtful comments during and after their experiences. Read some of these comments



Provide a positive comment to help change the way survivors feel...



Image copyright: © Inmagine Lab Pte Ltd, denispc, 2023



# FEELINGS MATTER: LET'S CONNECT



7a

Explain what action you can take to help the survivors cope with their feelings.

I tried to avoid them but they were all around. They follow me at school and then haunt me online. I didn't want to go to school to be put down every day. I was afraid of getting publicly humiliated.

---

---

---

---

I had this fear. If anyone tried to be my friend, I would wonder why? I received so many threats on social media and in both the schools I attended, actually wherever I went. So I was always afraid.

---

---

---

---

It wasn't the same when I went back to school. All eyes were on me. Everyone knew about the video. I was disappointed because I didn't want people to see me in this way.

---

---

---

---

I lost my friends. They all backed off and there was no support. I felt isolated. Maybe they were scared or felt the same would happen to them if they hung around me. I felt betrayed.

---

---

---

---

## Conversation starter...

Your best friend was involved in a series of ongoing fights with other learners at your school. To make matters worse, one physical altercation was recorded and posted on social media. This caused much humiliation and resulted in your friend staying away from school for a long period of time.

*You become determined to formally address this matter with teachers and learners at school about your friend's experience.*

***Discuss an approach that will ensure learners and teachers understanding of the pain caused by these actions.***

# FEELINGS MATTER: LET'S CONNECT



7b

Explain what action you can take to help the survivors cope with their feelings.

This incident haunted me for over three years. It still affects me. This rumour created a false image of myself. All my friends and family were hearing and talking about it. It didn't end for me. So these boys saw it as an excuse to confront me and 'put me in my place' so to speak.



OPTION ONE

OPTION TWO

I carry a weapon. It's not normal for learners to carry knives but this was my life. This was my decision. I was scared but I said school is over and it's time to go home. I had to face what was coming to me.



DECISION TIME

DECISION TIME

I stopped going to gym to be honest. Even though I know going to gym is a good space for me but I felt the complete opposite after the incident. Being laughed and mocked at by other learners was really disturbing.



I kept quiet about everything. I was depressed and my school work suffered. I don't have friends because I don't know who I can trust. I was very much alone. I hated school as I was just being put down.



MAKE A SUGGESTION

MAKE A SUGGESTION



## A TOUGH LESSON WITH TJ

8



Study the image below. I experienced something similar to learner C ..

Share your thoughts below.



### Conversation starter...

1. How does this picture make you feel?
2. Do you think learner C is going to be harmed further. How ?
3. Share your views on learner B & D actions. Are these acceptable?
4. Would you consider the actions of learners B & D a form of cyber bullying?
5. Why is this an important issue to discuss with learners, teachers & parents?
6. Do you find learners A & E's actions acceptable. Consider the different ways learners A & E can respond to learners B & D and then to learner C.

#### Let's talk

At the end of the school day, you and your friend are walking home. She shows you a video clip of a fight she recorded that morning in class. She appears excited as she mentions that she is going to post it on social media later that afternoon!

**How do you react / respond?**

#### Let's talk

You are a member of your school's anti-bullying committee. Many concerns are being raised over the steady rise of bullying incidents occurring amongst learners. This includes rumours, posting images and embarrassing video clips of fellow learners involved in physical bullying.

**How will the committee members address these concerns?**

## PACKAGE 3

### Lesson Plan 3: Responding to extended bullying

---

<b>Date:</b>		<b>Learning area:</b>	Life Orientation
<b>Duration:</b>	150 minutes	<b>Lesson vocabulary:</b>	

#### Lesson Summary

Background: The advancement of technology and growth of social media has introduced new risks, threats, and vulnerabilities and has thus given rise to the phenomenon of extended bullying.

Extended bullying draws a lot of attention. Often, it is not always clear to learners how to respond to their encounters with extended bullying, at school or on social media. In this lesson, learners will gain an awareness about the different responses extended bullying receives. The activities provide opportunities to engage with how others respond as well as how they, the learners, can respond to extended bullying issues.

**Note to teachers:** The set of worksheets created in this resource package can be used with flexibility and interchangeably across the three lesson plans. This is highlighted in the lesson presentation.

#### Objectives:

By the end of this session, learners should be able to:

- Understand the various responses extended bullying receives
- Evaluate and/or assess the appropriateness of the various responses extended bullying receives

- Identify and evaluate different responses used to communicate issues surrounding extended bullying
- Understand their own roles in participating and communicating appropriate responses to issues surrounding extended bullying

### Lesson presentation

Topic	Activity description	Duration
Worksheet 9	Allow learners to work in groups.	30 mins
<b>Extended bullying making headlines!</b> (discuss on, writing & dialogue)	<p>Each group will receive worksheet 9. In their groups, learners will read through the worksheet and have discussions on the different headlines.</p> <p>At this time, the learners will extend their reading and discussion to the second half of worksheet 9.</p> <p>Learners complete their answers to the activity. This activity should prompt a lively class discussion as learners are encouraged to think and talk about their own encounters with reading and hearing about other responses to extended bullying.</p>	
Worksheet 10	Each learner will receive worksheet 10. Allow learners sufficient time to read and understand the news article.	30 mins
<b>Getting serious!</b> (reading, discussion & written activity)	<p>Allow learners to enter into a general discussion of the article.</p> <p>Thereafter each learner can provide an answer/response in the spaces provided. This allows learners to appreciate the various responses and attention extended bullying receives from various sources. Learners can think about and provide their own response as well.</p>	
Worksheet 11	Each learner will receive worksheet 11. This activity gives the learner the opportunity to think about and make decisions around posting or sharing a video-clip. Learners need to note	30 mins
<b>Stop and Think!</b>		



(discuss on & writing activity)	<p>that the action of posting and/or sharing a video-clip is a response to extended bullying. Learners need to consider the advice provided by the survivors. Each learner will complete the worksheet and thereafter the class can enter into a discussion on their responses.</p> <p>Learners may also refer to worksheet 6 “What others are saying” to understand the range of responses to extended bullying.</p>	
Worksheet 12	Have learners work in groups.	30 mins
<b>Help! Additional responses required</b>  (discuss on & writing activity)	<p>Each group will receive worksheet 12.</p> <p>Allow time for learners to read a range of the various responses received during the extended bullying experience, as outlined by the survivors.</p> <p>Encourage learners to take note of the range of responses extended bullying receives and its source. Learners can compare the similarities and differences of the responses.</p> <p>To end the activity, each group can provide alternate responses to the survivor responses.</p> <p>Learners can re-visit worksheets 1, 2a and 2b to focus and highlight other responses to extended bullying.</p>	
Worksheet 13	Learners will work in pairs. Each pair will receive worksheet 13.	30 min
<b>Analyse this! Let's chat</b>  (reading, discussion & writing activity)	<p>Give learners time to read through and familiarise themselves with the two screen chats.</p> <p>Learners can engage in a conversation about each chat and grasp the nature of each chat. Learners may engage in a conversation about other similar screen chats they have encountered with extended bullying. Allow learners time to</p>	

discuss this.

Learners refer to the questions set out next to each screen chat, continue their discussion and note down their answers.

Learners will then proceed to enter into a class discussion highlighting the responses made in each of the screen chats.

**Teacher observation / comments:**

---

---

---

---

---

**Teacher reflection / comments:**

---

---

---

---

---

**Facilitator notes:**

---

---

---

---

What is happening in our schools?

## EXTENDED BULLYING

9

SEEMS TO BE MAKING HEADLINES OFTEN



Is this news worthy?

Why are these events an important community issue?



Why should we care about these events?

**Have a discussion on: WHAT MAKES THINGS GO VIRAL?**

**'LEARNERS SUSPENDED AFTER VIRAL BULLYING VIDEO'**

**'CYBER BULLYING: WHAT TEACHERS AND SCHOOLS ARE DOING'**

**'BULLY' VIDEO GOES VIRAL**

**'GRUESOME AND DISTURBING' EDUCATION DEPARTMENT. SAYS**



Videos of physical bullying is a disturbing trend on social media.

## READ & RESPOND



### "School bully" jailed for snubbing court

By: Thobeka Ngema

**READ: KZN education suspends two pupils after bully video goes viral**



A 16-year-old high school pupil has been sent to jail for three months after she failed to appear in court for her assault case. KwaZulu-Natal Education MEC Kwazi Mshengu welcomed the court's decision.

The Grade 11 pupil is on trial after a video depicting a female pupil severely assaulting another female pupil went viral in September last year. The pupil is seen kicking, slapping and punching the victim while other pupils watched. The video shows that one pupil tried to intervene.

The family of the assaulted pupil, opened a case at the local police station. The accused failed to appear in court and her parents said they did not know her whereabouts. According to a police spokesperson, the teenager tried to commit suicide after her arrest.

The family of the victim said their child had been subjected to teasing at school and was unable to concentrate ever since the video went viral on social media platforms.

Mr Mshengu was pleased in the way the law enforcement handled the matter. He said: "We have had a number of cases involving pupils who are bullying others in schools".

A member of National Teachers' Organization of South Africa, said "Schools must always be a safe haven for all teachers and pupils. Violence must be eradicated. The video of the gruesome assault, which was widely circulated was disturbing and shocking. These are also the pupils who assault their teachers".

A representative from The South African Principals' Association said that schools were plagued with bullies. He said schools needed to have codes of conduct that were understood by all, and those found guilty of gross misconduct must be dealt with swiftly and effectively.

Source: Daily News

23 March 2021

## GETTING SERIOUS!

Discuss then comment on the various responses this extended bullying event received

KZN Education Dept.

MEC for Education

The family

Teacher Union

Principal Organisation

My response



# STOP & THINK!

## Responding to a video clip you just received



Who will see this?  
Is this extended bullying?

Am I okay with everyone knowing I shared this information?

---

---

---

---

How do I feel right now?

---

---

---

---

Is it okay to share this information?



## Should I post this?

Will I regret this action later?

---

---

---

---

Do you really need to share this?



In what ways is this extended bullying?

If I post this, am I a bully?

---

---

---

---

Is it okay to share information about other people?

Is this bullying?



## HELPI Additional responses required

12



The survivors needed additional support to cope with their experiences.

How would you RESPOND to some of their challenges?

- ◆ Everyone is attacking me
- ◆ 'Ignore it' - teachers would say.
- ◆ The school is too busy protecting its image.
- ◆ School need more rules!

---

---

---

---

---

---



- ◆ No proper action from the school.
- ◆ Bullying is common.
- ◆ No programmes on bullying.
- ◆ Suspension is not the solution.

---

---

---

---

---

---



- ◆ The school didn't listen to my side of the story.
- ◆ The prefects try but learners don't listen.
- ◆ No teacher presence outside the school.

---

---

---

---

---

---



- ◆ Teachers couldn't help me. It's not their job.
- ◆ Teachers are scared themselves.
- ◆ Counselling was ineffective.

---

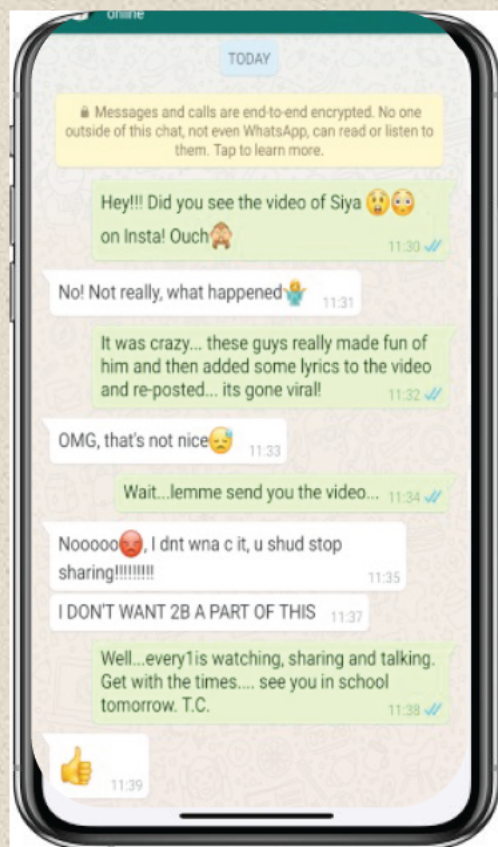
---

---

---

---

---



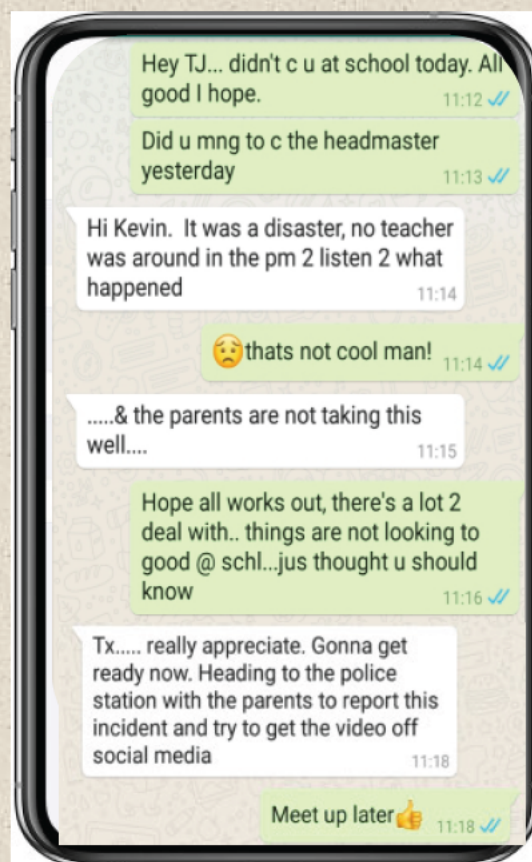
## ANALYSE THIS! LET'S CHAT

Look at the screen chat and answer the questions below

1. Describe the relationship between the two speakers.
2. What is going on in the chat?
3. What do you think occurred before the chat took place?
4. Draw conclusions about:
  - 4.1 Speaker A response
  - 4.2 Speaker B response
5. How will you respond if you were part of this chat?



1. Describe the relationship between the two speakers
2. What is going on in the chat?
3. What do you think occurred before the chat took place?
4. How do you think the school is responding to this incident?
5. Draw conclusions on Kevin's response to TJ's incident
6. Comment on how TJ is responding to his incident.





## Appendix S: Collaborative writing

<p><i>You are a bystander/witness to a serious incident that occurred just outside the school at the end of the school day. This incident really upset you more because you also witnessed a parent of one of the learners attack the learner that was being bullied.</i></p> <p><i>What plan of action do you and your parents take after you went home and discussed the whole incident with them?</i></p>	<p><i>As an active member/citizen in your community, you show a keen interest on matters relating to youth and general social problems plaguing the community. A very distraught mother approaches you and relays the story of how she witnessed her daughter being beaten in school, while she was browsing through Facebook.</i></p> <p><i>How will you deal/respond to this? State clearly your plan of action.</i></p>
<div></div>	<div></div>
<p><i>At the end of the school day, you and your friend are walking home. She shows you a video-clip of a fight she recorded which broke out between two girls in her class that morning. She appears very excited as she mentions to you that she is going to post it on social media later that afternoon.</i></p> <p><i>How do you react/respond?</i></p>	<p><i>As a proud member of the school's leadership programme, you notice during the tea-break, a huge commotion in the playground. A crowd of learners have gathered, laughing, cheering and they have their cell phones in their hands. You realise that a fight between two learners is about to ensue but you feel helpless and/or powerless to step in and break up the fight. However, you call a meeting the next day with your fellow leadership members to discuss the incident especially since witnessing the incident again on social media that evening.</i></p> <p><i>What is your plan of action, (now and future)</i></p>
<div></div>	<div></div>



How are you going to make them really understand how much pain is being caused by these actions?

[illegible]

How do you respond?

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal blue or grey ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There is no handwriting or other markings on the paper.

- How do you respond to what your son has just told you?
- As a parent you have to act fast, what is your plan of action?

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal blue or grey ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There is a vertical margin line on the left side, creating a narrow left margin. The paper appears to be from a notebook or a standard sheet of stationery.

- What do you think needs to be addressed?
- What needs to be changed? How?

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal blue or grey ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There is no handwriting or other markings on the paper.

## **Appendix T: Facilitation plan for Phase three – Teacher collaborative workshop**

<b><u>Participants:</u></b>	Teachers and myself as facilitator
<b><u>Date:</u></b>	22 October 2020
<b><u>Venue:</u></b>	Local school multi-purpose room accessible to teacher participants
<b><u>Time:</u></b>	9am start 12:30 end

### **Session one:**

- 9:00 Welcome, introductions, and light refreshments
- 9:15 Formal introduction to study
- Recap on previous work carried out in Phase one and Phase two
- Share and communicate findings in Phase one and Phase two
- Presentation of educational activities developed for youth in Phase two
- Teachers view and interact with activities
- 9:40 Brief discussion on the educational activities: record teachers' suggestions, perspectives, comments, and gaps
- Review, brainstorm, and discuss existing interventions (handouts)
- 10:10 Planning and making decisions of session 2 format
- 10:15 BREAK (15 minutes)

### **Session two:**

10:30 Engage with teachers on the rich insights gained from Phase two

To consider further development of the educational activities

Partner with teachers on the strengthening of educational activities as a unique intervention for extended bullying

### **Session three:**

11:45 Plenary session

Presentation of ideas and recommendations for the development of extended bullying educational resource

Record teacher experiences, challenges, and perspectives on extended bullying

Creating partnerships with teachers outside the workshop

12:30 Workshop ends

**Table T1: Outline of the workshop activities, their purpose and format in order to achieve the desired outcomes**

Activity	Purpose	Format
<b>Facilitator report on Phase one and Phase two of the study</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Provide teachers with background and awareness of</li></ul>	Slide presentation

	<p>partnerships formed with survivor and youth participants and their contributions.</p>	
<p><b>Summary of some key findings from Phase one and Phase two</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Teachers briefed on some key findings developed in Phases one and two.</li> </ul>	<p>Slide presentation</p>
<p><b>Introduction and teacher interaction with educational activities developed for Phase two</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Teachers introduced to educational activities developed for Phase two.</li> <li>Teachers briefed on youth participants' interaction with the activities and insights/triggers generated.</li> </ul>	<p>Slide presentation</p> <p>Display and hard copy handouts of educational activities to teachers</p>
<p><b>Mapping existing interventions</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Engage with teachers about their experiences and/or challenges concerning existing interventions, especially those that deal with extended bullying.</li> </ul>	<p>Facilitator compilation of a set of existing interventions as samples with which teachers can interact and offer critique and suggestions</p>
<p><b>Brainstorming</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Brainstorming and discussion on Phase two activities.</li> </ul>	<p>Discussion is audio-recorded</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discussion of Phase two insights/triggers.</li> <li>• Discussion of ideas arising out of existing interventions.</li> </ul>	
<b>Planning</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Collaborative engagement to examine, propose, and plan intervention ideas.</li> <li>• Develop and/or strengthen Phase two activities.</li> </ul>	Teachers' engagement with Phase two educational activities and existing intervention samples as a guide to develop and strengthen ideas
<b>Plenary session</b>  <b>Teacher presentations</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Presentations of proposed ideas and arguments, including strengthening, plugging gaps, and further suggestions for educational resource.</li> <li>• Developing ideas and/or suggestions and insights on Phase two insights/triggers.</li> </ul>	Audio-recorded discussion  Teacher note-taking  Teacher activity for insights/triggers

## Appendix U: Facilitation plan for piloting the resource in Phase four

### Participants

3 teacher participants from Phase three

16 learners from surrounding secondary schools who are part of the Love to Live organisation

Myself as facilitator

**Date** 29<sup>th</sup> April 2021

**Venue** Local community hall accessible to all participants

**Time** Teachers arrive: 9am  
Learners arrive: 9.30 am

TIME	SESSION	FORMAT
8.30 am	Facilitator task	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Set up venue and workstations</li><li>• Set out materials (writing paper, pens)</li><li>• Ensure Covid-19 protocol/regulations are in place – extra masks and hand sanitizer included</li></ul>
9.00	Session 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Teacher arrival and registration</li><li>• Short welcome</li><li>• Introduction to the workshop format and plan</li><li>• Introduce resource package to teachers</li></ul> <p><b>Teachers use balance of the time to look through:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Resource package with lesson plan and accompanying worksheets</li></ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Feedback cards</li> </ul>
<b>9.30</b>	Session 2	<p>Learner arrival</p> <p>Welcome learners and registration</p> <p>Ice breaker session</p> <p>Form respective learner groups</p> <p>Allocate teacher per group</p> <p>Light refreshment</p>
<b>10.00-11.30</b>	Session 3	<p>Each group is accompanied by a teacher to their allocated workstation</p> <p>Implementation session begins</p> <p>A teacher may (at their discretion) allow 15minute break during the session</p> <p>Learner session ends</p> <p>Learners may have refreshments and take their leave</p> <p>Teachers complete feedback cards</p>
<b>11.30</b>	Session 4	<p>Meeting with teachers on session 3 (audio-recorded)</p> <p>Collect all material and completed feedback cards</p>
<b>12 noon</b>	<b>WORKSHOP ENDS</b>	

## Appendix V: Teacher feedback card for use in Phase four

### Extended Bullying: Teacher feedback card

The following monitoring card will help to revise, improve, and produce the final resource. Please read through the card and rate the session by marking the box with a cross (X) that most accurately reflects your viewpoint.

#### A

Does the worksheet design:	Very Often	Often	Unsure	Occasionally	Never
Stimulate interest in learners?					
Hold learners' attention and engagement?					
Support innovation and creativity?					



## B

In developing 21 <sup>st</sup> century skills, do the activities promote:	Very Often	Often	Unsure	Occasionally	Never
Critical thinking?					
Collaborative learning?					
Problem solving?					
Creative thinking?					
Dialogue?					
<b>Other skills:</b> (please name the skill)					

# C

Learner involvement and participation in learning, did the learners:	Very Often	Often	Unsure	Occasionally	Never
Ask questions and develop answers?					
Explore and show interest in the activity they were completing?					
Encourage ideas, choices, and decisions about the activity they are completing?					
Contribute and exchange ideas to promote understanding and learning?					
Think about what and how they are learning?					
Complete activities to present beyond the classroom?					

## D

Does the resource:	Very Often	Often	Unsure	Occasionally	Never
Focus on and investigate a complex issue?					
Reflect an issue that generates interest and curiosity?					
Present an issue in a clear, concise way?					
Hold its sense of challenge and purpose?					
Provide an in depth enquiry into extended bullying?					
Reflect a unique teaching learning resource?					

**Please provide any general feedback not covered by the above questions:**

1. What worked best? Why?

---

---

2. What did not work? Why?

---

---

3. Was sufficient time allocated for the lesson?

---

---

4. Comment on the complexity of the lesson.

---

---

## Appendix W: Turnitin Report

### Final Submission

#### ORIGINALITY REPORT

<b>4</b> %	<b>3</b> %	<b>1</b> %	<b>1</b> %
SIMILARITY INDEX	INTERNET SOURCES	PUBLICATIONS	STUDENT PAPERS

#### PRIMARY SOURCES

<b>1</b>	<b>eddierockerz.files.wordpress.com</b> Internet Source	<1 %
<b>2</b>	<b>researchspace.ukzn.ac.za</b> Internet Source	<1 %
<b>3</b>	<b>www.ibdocuments.com</b> Internet Source	<1 %
<b>4</b>	<b>www.tandfonline.com</b> Internet Source	<1 %
<b>5</b>	<b>openscholar.dut.ac.za</b> Internet Source	<1 %
<b>6</b>	<b>Submitted to University of KwaZulu-Natal</b> Student Paper	<1 %
<b>7</b>	<b>doczz.net</b> Internet Source	<1 %
<b>8</b>	<b>research.gold.ac.uk</b> Internet Source	<1 %
<b>9</b>	<b>vital.seals.ac.za:8080</b> Internet Source	<1 %