THE IMPACT OF INTERVENTION STRATEGIES IN ADDRESSING BULLYING AMONG SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS IN MOTUPA CIRCUIT

by

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DECLARATION

I, **NTHATHENI SAMSON NELUHENI** declares that the study,

"**The Impact of Intervention Strategies in Addressing Bullying Among Secondary Students in Motupa Circuit Mopani District, Limpopo Province"**

…is my own original work, and that all the sources that I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.

_____ _____

Neluheni NS **Date**

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

This has not been an easy journey for me. I had to negotiate my way through the winding roads of research. Nevertheless certain, people made it possible for me to complete this dissertation, and those people are worth mentioning.

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Fourthly, I would like to thank my colleague and fellow student, Mr. Sebopetsa Ngwako Steven, for standing by me every step of the way, for his guidance, care and flexibility. I would never have been able to gather such great data without him.

Last, but not least, my special thanks go to the Almighty God, for giving me health and strength to pursue this endeavour.

DEDICATION

This study is dedicated to the following people: My late father, Tshamaano Johannes Koos Neluheni, whose courageous words to me were "**Nwananga, u konḓelele tshikolo" (My son you must persevere in schooling matters).** These words still resound in my head and ears; family members, such as my wife, Thilivhali Jane Neluheni, daughters Rendani, Tshamaano and Munei, for their patience, understanding, love, support, interest and encouragement during this study.

ABSTRACT

The study aims to investigate the impact of intervention strategies in addressing bullying among secondary school students. A literature study was conducted, in order to understand the views of different authors and other researchers on effective intervention strategies. An empirical study utilising the quantitative research approach was used. A questionnaire was employed to gather data. It was distributed among all secondary schools in Motupa circuit. The Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 17.0 was used to analyse data from the questionnaire using the maxim for statistical significance. Findings from the empirical study were discussed. The implication is that intervention and preventive strategies need to be based on personal and contextual factors, in order to effect change.

Key words: Bullying; impact; intervention strategies.

ACRONYMS

SASA: South African School Act

SPSS: Statistical Package for Social Sciences

FBA: Functional Behaviour Assessment

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CHAPTER 1

OVERVIEW OF THE STUDY

1.1 INTRODUCTION

The rise in school violence during the 1990s has prompted schools to take action against bullying. The Secret Service and the Department of Education studied 37 "incidents of targeted school violence" that occurred from 1994 to June 2000" (Vossekuil, 2002:12). Of particular concern is that, almost three- quarters of the attackers felt persecuted, bullied, threatened, attacked or injured by others prior to the incident (Vossekuil, 2002:21). It was determined that bullying was a factor that played some role in the perpetrator's decision to make the violent attack at school (Patchin & Hinduja, 2006:3). Schools have developed programmes to address the issues of school violence and bullying. Successful bullying prevention programmes focus on changing the school culture to one that discourages bullying (Olweus & Limber, 1999:379).

Girls who have been exposed to bullying have also devised coping strategies for themselves, despite feeling of helplessness and the desire to involve adults (Gamliel, 2003:417). These protective strategies include humour, ignoring a taut, retaliating verbally or physically, and avoiding instigation (Horowitz, Vessey, Carlson, Bradley, Montoya, McCullough & Joyce, 2004:171).

When attempting to rate strategies, research showed that the most common means of coping was avoiding or ignoring the bully as well as rational and calm confrontation (Gamliel, 2003:412-413; Smith & Shu, 2000:134). Avoiding bullies is also rated as an effective short-term strategy. The less frequently used strategies were found to be verbal retaliation and cathartic expression (Gamliel, 2003:412-413).

However, the effectiveness of pupil-generated strategies is doubtful. Studies maintain that, although learners are able to name effective strategies, emotional arousal interferes with their ability to put these strategies into practice (Gamliel, 2003:412-413).

In order for children to learn and teachers to teach, schools must be safe environments. These include the physical measures of safety, climate and culture of emotional safety and respect. As schools and communities become increasingly diverse, it is crucial that multiple stakeholders draw attention to the importance of creating and maintaining a school climate in which diverse children can learn in a climate free of harassment, bullying, and hate crimes. To combat these pervasive and deeply rooted social problems, schools must have access to the expertise of a wide range of disciplines, in order to develop and implement effective strategies of prevention and response (Patchin & Hinduja, 2006:3).

Froshl and Gropper (cited in Lumsden, 2002:3), suggest that a written anti-bullying policy should be distributed to everyone in the school community, in order to send the message that bullying incidents will be taken seriously. Olweus (1994:743) concludes that the approach to bullying, in schools, needs to involve interventions by teachers, the school, class, the individual and peers.

1.2 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Bullying is a problem that occurs in the social environment as a whole. The bully's aggression occurs in social contexts in which school personnel and parents are generally unaware of the extent of the problem. Other children are reluctant to get involved or simply do not know how to help their classmates. Because of these factors, effective interventions must involve the entire school community rather than focus only on the perpetrators and victims.

Studies have shown that bullying affects learners negatively, and this is a direct challenge to human dignity. Its damaging effect poses a challenge to schools determined to take action against student bullying. The questions that arise are: Is bullying posing a challenge in schools? What is the impact of intervention strategies used to address bullying among secondary school students?

1.3 THE AIM OF THE STUDY

The aim of the study is to investigate the impact of intervention strategies in addressing bullying among secondary school students. This will be realised through the following objectives:

- To identify challenges in addressing bullying in secondary schools;
- To identify available intervention strategies in terms of the Acts and policies on schools' safety in South Africa;
- To establish effective intervention strategies to address bullying in secondary schools; and
- To propose roles that school can play in addressing bullying in secondary schools.

1.4 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

In line with the problem described above, the research questions for this study are as follows:

- What causes bullying among secondary school students?
- In terms of Acts and policies on schools safety, what intervention strategies are available for schools to employ in South Africa?
- What effective intervention strategies can be used to address bullying in secondary schools?
- What role should schools play in addressing bullying in secondary schools?

1.5 THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES

This study examined the strengths of five different explanations of school bullying. First, the developmental theory asserts that bullying is an outcome of child development. This explanation argues that as children mature, they struggle to assert their social dominance. Bullying is, thus, a form of that struggle for dominance. This type of explanation engenders school policies that employ a problem-solving approach to anti-bullying programmes.

The second explanation attributes bullying to individual differences. Children who bully tend to experience low levels of empathy and high levels of psychoticism, while victims of bullying tend to have a low self-esteem and are psychologically introverted. School programmes that embrace this approach engage in anger management programmes and assertiveness programmes.

Third, bullying is explained as a sociocultural phenomenon in which bullying is an outcome of segregation into specified social groups with different levels of power. School policies that embrace this view engage in a curriculum and programmes that reduce discrimination and prejudice.

Fourth, bullying is described as a response to group and peer pressure. Bullying is explained within the social context of the school environment and its various social groupings. Anti-bullying programmes that embrace this perspective tend to employ programmes that work on the development of empathy.

Finally, bullying can be explained from a restorative justice perspective. This is similar to the individual differences perspective in that it shows the individual characteristics of the aggressor and the victim to contribute to the bullying problem. Restorative justice responses can be put in place by the school to reduce bullying behaviour.

These different explanations of bullying have different implications for school policy. The study, therefore, provides the schools with alternatives they can consider. Schools can determine which one works best in their environment (Rigby, 2003:2). These theoretical perspectives are described below.

1.5.1 Developmental Theory

Some explanations of bullying draw upon an understanding of child development. They point out that bullying begins in early childhood when individuals begin to assert themselves at the expense of others, in order to establish their social dominance. They tend, at first, to do so crudely, for instance by hitting out at others, especially those less powerful than themselves, in an attempt to intimidate them

(Rigby, 2003:2). As children develop, they begin to employ less socially reprehensible ways of dominating others. Verbal and indirect forms of bullying become more common than physical forms (Hawley, 1999:97-102).

Social environmental factors must also be taken into account. Thus, the developmental perspective is useful in providing guidance as to how bully/victim problems can be tackled. For example, older children are thought to be more likely to respond positively to problem-solving approaches, which require a more sophisticated appreciation of the options available to them (Stevens *et al.*, 2000:195-210).

1.5.2 Attributions to Individual Differences

Broad explanations in terms of developmental processes and environmental influences fail to take into account individual differences between people that may lead to interactions that result in one person bullying another. For example, children who repeatedly bully others at school tend to be low in empathic regard for others and are inclined towards psychoticism (Slee & Rigby 1993:112). Children who are frequently targeted as victims at school are inclined to be psychologically introverted, to have a low self-esteem, and lack social skills, especially in the area of assertiveness (Rigby, 2003:3).

How such qualities arise, has been subject to considerable debate. Currently, it is generally acknowledged that genetic influences play a part and that these may interact with adverse social conditions to which children may be exposed. For example, dysfunctional family life in which children do not feel loved and/or feel over-controlled by parents can lead to them acting aggressively at school, especially if the school ethos does not discourage aggressive behaviour (Rigby, 2003:3).

1.5.3 Bullying as a Socio-cultural Phenomenon

A further perspective seeks to explain bullying as an outcome of the existence of specified social groups with different levels of power. The focus is typically on differences which have a historical and cultural basis, such as gender, race or

ethnicity and social class. Major emphasis has been placed upon differences associated with gender. Males are seen as generally having more power than females. This is because society believes that males should be the dominant sex. In order to maintain their dominance, boys feel justified in oppressing girls. Numerous studies have, in fact, indicated that boys are more likely than girls to initiate bullying (Olweus, 1993; Smith & Sharp, 1994:115).

The sociocultural perspective on bullying can have striking implications of how a school approaches the problem of bullying. Attention is directed towards how the school curriculum, in its broadest sense, can influence children to accept and respect sociocultural differences. It is suggested that, not only should the school curriculum explicitly and directly address issues related to differences in gender, race or ethnicity and social class, in order to counter prejudice and discrimination, but, more importantly, it should indirectly address bullying through the cooperative problem-solving, emotional sensitivity and independent critical thinking. This view emphasises the use of the school curriculum as a means of developing emotional understanding and positive interpersonal relations rather than controlling undesirable behaviour through the use of negative sanctions and/or counselling methods that impose authoritarian solutions to bully/victim problems (Rigby, 2003:4).

1.5.4 Bullying as a Response to Group and Peer Pressure within the School

This approach has something in common with the sociocultural approach in that it conceives bullying as understandable in the social context. However, the context is not defined according to sociocultural categories such as gender, race and class. There is first a broad social context consisting of the behaviours and attitudes of members of the entire school community. Students are powerfully influenced by a smaller group of peers with whom they have relatively close association. Such groups are typically formed within a school on the basis of common interests and purposes, and they provide support for group members. They may also constitute a threat to outsiders, sometimes to ex-members, whom they may bully (Olweus 1993:3).

The implication for schools is that they must be aware of the roles played by groups as distinct from individuals. They need to identify groups and work with them. Several methods have been devised for working with groups of children who have bullied or are suspected of bullying others. The “no blame approach” (Maines & Robinson 1998:35), for example, involves a teacher or counsellor meeting with the group of children identified as having bullied someone, in the company of some other children. The teacher describes to the group the suffering that has been endured by the victim, and the group is expected to consider ways in which the situation can be improved. The “non-bullies” in the group are expected to exert positive peer pressure, that is, influence the “bullies” to act more benevolently towards the victim.

1.5.5 Bullying from the Perspective of Restorative Justice

This perspective recognises that some children are more likely than others to be involved in bully/victim problems as a consequence of the kind of character they have developed. Children who bully others typically feel little or no pride in their school, and are not well integrated into the community (Morrison, 2002:3). They mishandle their emotional reactions to the distress they cause by not experiencing appropriate feelings of shame. In fact, they tend to attribute unworthy characteristics to those they victimise.

By contrast, victims are prone to experience too much inappropriate shame. To some extent, this perspective is one that emphasises individual differences, as in Attributions to Individual Differences above.

In addition, an important role is ascribed to the school community and to significant people who are implicated in the problem, that is, significant others who care about them. These can include family and friends of both bullies and success is seen as greatly dependent on the support provided by those who care about the perpetrator as a person and the readiness of the community to forgive and provide sincere acceptance (Morrison, 2002:3).

However, no single view is sufficiently comprehensive in providing a definitive answer as to what is “best practice”. Therefore, in applying anti-bullying policies and procedures, schools should consider the strengths and limitations of each suggested

approach, and the appropriateness of its application to particular bully/victim problems.

1.6 DEFINITION OF CONCEPTS

The concepts "**impact", "**bullying" **and "intervention strategies"** clarified below, are crucial to the understanding of the phenomenon being studied.

1.6.1 Impact

Moswela (2004: 439) defines impact as, "A strong effect or impression". Choi (2005:315) defines impact as a measure of tangible and intangible effect (consequences) of one thing or entity's action or influence upon another.

1.6.2 Bullying

According to the U.S. Department of Education (1998:1), bullying refers to the intentional, repeated harmful acts, words, or other behaviour, such as name-calling, threatening and/or shunning, committed by one or more children against another. Rigby (2008:22) maintains that bullying is "the systematic abuse of power in interpersonal relationships". Naser *et al*. (2004:28) concur with Rigby when they define bullying as "intentional, repeated hurtful acts, words or other behaviour, such as name-calling, threatening or shunning, against another child or children."

1.6.3 Intervention Strategies

Ranganathan (2000:97) defines an intervention strategy as an immediate, short-term, psychotherapeutic approach, the goal of which is to help resolve a personal crisis within the individual's immediate environment.

1.7 RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

Research design is a plan for a research project, whereas the research methodology entails the use of instruments to solicit responses.

1.7.1 Research Design

Mc Millan and Schumacher (2001:166) state that a research design is the plan according to which we obtain research participants (subjects) and collect information from them. It describes what we are going to do with the participants to reach conclusions about the research problem that is the research hypothesis or the research questions. The research design that the researcher used, in this study, was quantitative in nature.

1.7.1.1 Quantitative approach

A description research method was used. Descriptive research is concerned with how what is or what exists is related to some preceding event that has influenced or affected a present condition or situation (White, 2005:98). Grinnell (in White, 2005:251) argues that the quantitative approach is usually based on what is called the "logical positivist" philosophy, which embraces the scientific method of enquiry, a method embodied in the problem-solving process.

1.7.2 Population and Sample

Every study is directed to address a problem of a particular population. Due to research constraints, the whole population cannot participate in the study. As such, a sample, which represents the target population described below, was drawn.

1.7.2.1 Population

A population can be described as all possible elements that can be included in the research (White, 2005:113). Airasian and Gay (2003:102) indicate that a population is the group of interest to the researcher, the group to which the results of the study will be generalised. According to Charles and Mertler (2002:45), the population includes all the individuals within certain descriptive parameters, such as location,

age or sex. Neuman (2003:216) states that the researcher's target population is a particular pool of individuals or cases that he or she wants to study. The target population, in this study, consists of principals, teachers and learners in Motupa Circuit in Mopani District, Limpopo Province.

1.7.2.2 Sample

According to White (2005:114), sampling means to make a selection from the sampling frame, in order to identify the people or issues to be included in the research. There are 12 secondary schools in Motupa Circuit. To select the schools to be studied, were first arranged alphabetically. Since a total of 3 schools was needed, the number were be divided by 4 makes to get 3. School number 4, 8 and 12 were sampled to participate in the study.

A random sampling procedure was used to select students in Grade 8 and Grade 11 at government and private secondary schools in Motupa circuit. Two classes in each grade were randomly chosen, resulting in 50 students being randomly chosen. To take care of the attrition due to absenteeism, dropouts or transferees, five additional students per grade were selected as replacements. The reason for that procedure was to have good and equal representativeness in the sample. The total sample for the three schools was 150 students.

1.7.3 Data Collection

Data was collected using questionnaires as a data collection technique. The questionnaire was used to gather factual information. An opionative or attitude scale was used to determine the opinions and attitudes of the subjects (Technikon South Africa, 1999:75). According to Bless and Smith (2000:156), a questionnaire is an instrument of data collection consisting of a standardised series of questions relating to the research topic to be answered in writing by participants. Wilson and McLean (1994:3) recommend a questionnaire as it is considered a useful instrument for collecting survey information. It also provides structured and, often, numerical data. It can be administered in the absence of the researcher, and is often straightforward to analyse.

The questionnaire was delivered to three sampled schools by the researcher. The purpose of the study and significance were explained to the participants and the instructions for the completion of the questionnaire were given. The completed questionnaire was later collected.

1.8 DATA ANALYSIS

Data analysis, as described by Mashall and Rossman (cited in White, 2005:256), order, structure and meaning to the mass of time consuming, creative and process.

1.8.1 Analysis of Quantitative Data

Quantitative data was computed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) student Version 17.0. The maxim for statistical significance was used. The responses from the questionnaire were organised, summarised and displayed as sets of numeric data in the form of tally sheets and bar graphs. Descriptive analysis was used to analyse quantitative data.

1.9 DELIMITATION

The study was conducted in secondary schools in Motupa Circuit. The circuit has a total of twelve secondary schools. All three secondary school principals were given a questionnaire to respond to. At the same time, educators from the three secondary schools were randomly sampled to participate in the exercise.

Firstly, this was done because school bullying is rife among secondary school students in Motupa Circuit. Secondly, Motupa Circuit has a large number of schools from the previously disadvantaged rural communities. This study, on intervention strategies to address bullying among secondary students, will have an impact on teaching and learning in the Circuit.

The confidentiality of the interviewees was honoured and upheld, in order to build trust and confidence in the researcher.

1.10 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

Bullying in secondary schools is a problem that cannot be ignored any longer. The fact that both the bully and the bullied are found in the school suggests that the school is well-placed to address bullying. This study is necessary and relevant as it will contribute to schools reducing and containing bullying significantly. It will also help in the management of cases of bullying.

The beneficiaries of this research project will be mainly the Department of Education, the disciplinary committees in secondary schools, and members of the school governing bodies. The study will help them understand how they should draw their disciplinary school policies.

Future researchers will also find this study useful as a reference point for further investigation on bullying.

1.11 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

The researcher sought permission from the Department of Education, Limpopo Province to visit schools. Permission was also sought from the circuit manager of Motupa Circuit. An ethical clearance letter from the university was obtained.

1.11.1 Anonymity

The interviewees were given tags, in order to conceal their identities. This made the participants feel free to express their personal feelings and experiences when answering questions asked by the researcher.

1.11.2 Privacy

The respondents' privacy was protected so that what they said remained confidential.

1.12 CHAPTER DIVISIONS

The dissertation consists of five chapters, arranged as follows:

Chapter 1 deals with the background of the problem, purpose of the study, significance of the study, research questions, delimitation of the study and chapter division.

Chapter 2 concentrates on the literature review, in order to provide a theoretical background to the problem under investigation.

Chapter 3 explores the research strategies and methods used to gather data.

Chapter 4 analyses the empirical investigation of the topic under research. It focuses on the research findings/results of the investigation. Analysis, interpretation and evaluation of the research results or findings was done.

Chapter 5 concludes with a summary of findings and makes recommendations of the research study. It also makes recommendations and provides guidelines for the future.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE STUDY

2.1 INTRODUCTION

Bullying among school children is certainly a very old phenomenon. Despite many strategies put in place to curb it, the problem persists. School is perceived as a place where students should feel safe and secure. However, the opposite is true. The reality is that a significant number of students are the target of bullying. Bullying, though old, is a widespread and world-wide problem. Most adults can remember incidents of bullying in which they were either bullies or bullied. In fact, until recently, the common perception was that bullying was a relatively harmless experience that many children experienced during their school years. However, over the past two decades, an extensive body of research has documented that bullying is a potentially damaging form of violence among children and the youth. So, while bullying is not a new phenomenon, what is new is the growing awareness that bullying has serious damaging effects on communities.

Bullying is a problem that occurs in the social environment as a whole. The bullies' aggression occurs in social contexts in which school personnel and parents are generally unaware of the extent of the problem. Other children are reluctant to get involved or simply do not know how to help their classmates. Because of these factors, effective interventions must involve the entire school community rather than focus on the perpetrators and victims alone.

The rise in school violence during the 1990s prompted schools to take action against bullying. The Secret Service and the Department of Education studied 37 incidents of targeted school violence that occurred from 1994 to June 2000 (Vossekuil *et al.*, 2002:12). Of particular concern is that almost three-quarters of the attackers felt persecuted, bullied, threatened, attacked or injured by others prior to the incident (Vossekuil *et al.,* 2002:21). It was determined that bullying was a factor that played some role in the perpetrator's decision to make the violent attack at school (Patchin & Hinduja, 2006:3). Schools have developed programmes to address the issues of

school violence and bullying. Successful bullying prevention programmes focus on changing the school culture to a climate that discourages bullying (Olweus & Limber, 1999:379).

Girls who have been exposed to bullying have also devised coping strategies for themselves, despite feelings of helplessness and a desire to involve adults (Gamliel, 2003:417). These protective strategies include humour, ignoring a taunt, retaliating verbally or physically, bullying, and avoiding instigators (Horowitz, Vessey, Carlson, Bradley, Montoya, McCullough & Joyce, 2004:171).

When attempting to rate strategies, research showed that the most common means of coping was avoidance or ignoring the bully, and rational and calm confrontation (Gamliel, 2003:412-413; Smith & Shu, 2000:134). Avoiding and ignoring strategies were also rated as effective short-term strategies. The less frequently used strategies were found to be verbal retaliation and cathartic expression (Gamliel, 2003:412-413). However, it is doubtful as to the effectiveness of pupil-generated strategies. Studies maintain that, although learners are able to name effective strategies, emotional arousal interferes with their ability to put these strategies into practice (Gamliel, 2003:412-413).

In order for children to learn and teachers to teach, schools must be safe environments which not only include physical measures of safety, but also a climate and culture of emotional safety and respect. As schools and communities become increasingly diverse, it is crucial that multiple stakeholders draw attention to the importance of creating and maintaining a school climate in which diverse children can learn in a climate free of harassment, bullying and hate crimes. To combat these pervasive and deeply rooted social problems, schools must have access to the expertise of a wide range of disciplines in order to develop and implement effective strategies of prevention and response (Patchin & Hinduja, 2006:3).

Froshl and Gropper (cited in Lumsden, 2002:3), suggest that a written anti-bullying policy should be distributed to everyone in the school community, in order to send a message that bullying incidents will be taken seriously. Olweus (1994:743)

concludes that the approach to bullying, in schools, needs to involve interventions by teachers, the school, class, individual and peers.

2.2 CAUSES OF BULLYING

Some of the literature on bullying suggests that perpetrators are children frustrated by lack of success in school. They build the reputation using aggressive behaviours against other adolescents who are physically and socially weaker (Fishman, 2002:210).

Similarly children who bully are often children who have been victimised themselves. For some, it may be a life experience they are having problems coping with that may leave them feeling that they have no control. For others, it could be a feeling of not fitting in, or feeling that they cannot meet the expectations of family or school. In order to feel more competent and successful, a child may try to control someone else to get some relief from their own feelings of powerlessness (Nansel, 2001:3).

Studies have equally shown that the family plays a central role in the development of social skills in youth. Parents who are supportive and involved with their children enable them to develop personal and social skills (Rigby, 1996:8). In many cases, the bully's formative years are marred by poor parental examples or by outright neglect. Many bullies come from homes where their parents are uninvolved or have, in effect, taught their children to use rage and violence to handle problems.

According to Patterson (1992:3), characteristics of bullies may interact with family conditions that serve to promote bullying. He went on further to reveal that the effect of family demographic variables, such as income and the education of parents, on the development of children's aggressive behaviour, are mediated by family circumstances. This is supported by Patterson *et al.* (1992:7) who posit that stress from low income, unemployment and lack of education within the family exacerbate the parents' antisocial tendencies, which in turn lead to harsh and inconsistent parental disciplinary practices. These disciplinary practices may, in turn, contribute to an increase in the children's aggressive behaviour patterns.

In the same vein, the family of the aggressive children is also characterised by harsh and inconsistent punishment practices. Poor and erratic discipline contributes to the development of aggressive behaviour because parents fail to consistently label, track and provide consequences for negative behaviour. Consequently, a large number of children's behaviours go unpunished. Furthermore, parents' use of harsh punishment practices may serve to model aggressive and antisocial models of problem solving and relating to others (Craig, 1998:20).

Lack of appropriate resources within the schools is also associated with higher levels of school bullying. Bullying often occurs when there is little or no supervision, such as in the school playground (Pepler, 1997:51).

The parent-child relationship has also been shown to be important. Children with positive relationships with their parents are less likely to participate in bullying (Rigby, 1994:501). In other words, children who are insecurely attached to their parents are more likely to bully their peers. In the same vein, it has also been shown that children, who perceive their families as less cohesive and less caring for each other, are also more likely to participate in school bullying (Bowers, Smith & Binney, 1994:3).

2.3 INTERVENTION STRATEGIES AVAILABLE IN TERMS OF THE CONSTITUTION OF SOUTH AFRICA, SASA AND SAFE SCHOOLS POLICIES

In terms of Section 10A of the Schools Act, bullying practices that are in the form of initiation practices that take place in schools, especially in boarding colleges, are directly in contrast to the fundamental right to have one's dignity respected (Section 10, SA Constitution). They violate section 12 which states that individuals should not to be treated or punished in a cruel, inhuman, or degrading way and section in which says that, in some cases, the right to life should be upheld (De Wet & Van Huyssteen, 2005:41-42).

Section 6 (2) (a) of the Children's Act provides that all proceedings, actions or decisions in a matter concerning a child must respect, protect, promote and fulfil the child's right which is set out in the Bill of Rights.

Section 8 of the Children's Act provides that the rights a child has, in terms of this Act, supplement the rights which a child has in terms of the Bill of Rights. All organs of state in any sphere of government and all officials, employees and representatives of an organ of state must respect, protect and promote the rights of children contained in this Act. A provision of this Act binds both natural and juristic persons, to the extent that it is applicable, taking into account the nature of any duty imposed by the right.

Section 9 of the Children's Act provides that, in all matters concerning the care, protection and well-being of a child, the standard that the child's best interest is of paramount importance must be applied. Section 18 (2) (a) of the Children's Act provides that parental responsibilities and rights that a person may have in respect of a child, include the responsibility and the right to care for the child.

The Children's Act encourages everyone, including all stakeholders in schools (Parents, educators, non-teaching staff members and learners) to respect, protect, promote and fulfil the children's rights as set out in the Bill of Rights. It also provides that these stakeholders take care and protect children. Whatever the school is doing, it must take the child's best interests into consideration. Stakeholders should consider the Children's Act during the process of establishing the anti-bullying policies in their schools.

The Code of Conduct must inform the learners of the way in which they should conduct themselves at school in preparation of their conduct and safety in civil society. It must set a standard of moral behaviour for learners and equip them with the expertise, knowledge and skills they would be expected to evince as worthy and responsible citizens. It must promote the civil responsibilities of the school and develop leadership.

When dealing with bullying in schools, the rules of natural justice that are embodied in Section 33 (1) of the Constitution should be considered. The aims of the rules of natural justice are to ensure fairness and justice in all disciplinary actions.

School authority over a learner begins when the learner enters the school premises and ends when the learner leaves the school premises. The authority also extends to learners on official school trips. During this time, all educators act on behalf of the parents (in loco parentis) (Joubert & Prinsloo, 2009:156).

Where learners bully other learners and staff members using dangerous objects or drugs, Section 8A (1) states that, unless authorised by the principal for legitimate educational purposes, no person may bring a dangerous object or illegal drugs into the school premises or have such objects or drugs in his or her possession on school premises or during any school activity. Section 8A (2) states that, subject to sub-section (3), the principal or his delegate may act randomly, search learners or the property of a group of learners for any dangerous objects or illegal drugs if fair and reasonable suspicion has been established. Section 8A (3), 8A (14) specifies all relevant factors, conditions and procedures that should be considered during the process of searching learners.

2.4 STRATEGIES TO PREVENT BULLYING

2.4.1 Intervention Strategies by Teachers

Studies show that teachers need to involve learners and parents in addressing the concerns of bullying (Noona, Tunney, Fogal & Sarich, 1999:3). The importance of family is crucial. In a study by Wilson (2003:1), children who were socialised by their families could use the experiences as tools in their own peer interactions.

Teachers are often identified as a key factor in sanctioning bullying and victimisation in their classrooms, mostly unintentionally (Newman & Horne, 2004:64). They are the ones who have the opportunity to create a safe learning environment in their classrooms. However, teachers may not be willing to intervene until they feel adequately equipped to stop the bullying behaviour (Stephenson & Smith, 1998:3). At times, they feel that intervening may only intensify the bullying or force the

problem “underground” (Besag, 1998:329). An intervention developed for teachers appears to be an effective process for helping to stop aggressive behaviours and bullying.

Many schools respond to incidents as they arise rather than work systemically to reduce the incidents of bullying. When this occurs, physical bullying may be addressed. However, indirect bullying might be ignored due to its ‘invisibility’ (Soutter, 2000:243). Even when intervention strategies are implemented, they address bullying among males and neglect bullying among females (Carney & Merrel, 2001:10). Bullies are able to take advantage of the fact that teachers are able to deal with physical bullying as it is more visible.

Teachers and school staff are in the front lines of bullying prevention, both in their day-to-day interaction with students and in enforcing the school’s bullying prevention policy and programme. They are important role models for students, and in establishing a positive school climate. They also play a significant role in helping to tailor their school’s bullying plan to match their school’s needs. It is important, therefore, in school climate surveys, to have good lines of communication with the principal (Pepler & Craig, 2000:1).

Kikkawa (1989:244) found that teachers frequently observe behaviour that they believe to be bullying, but are not certain whether to take action. This implies that teachers require education which will help them focus on the diversity of bullying behaviours to improve their skills of recognising and detecting bullying. This may, subsequently, enhance their confidence to intervene (Craig, Henderson & Murphy, 2000a:121).

Before teachers can prevent or intervene in bullying situations, they have to be able to recognise it. Research tells us that many teachers do not possess the knowledge or skills to recognise bullying behaviours among their students. Holt and Keyes (2004:3) report that a greater proportion of studies have found that teachers report lower prevalence rates of bullying than students do.

Teachers need to work with students at class level to develop class rules against bullying. Curriculum efforts in the classroom can teach those students directly involved in bullying alternative methods of interactions with role-playing exercises and related assignments (Banks, 1997:15). Teachers are also encouraged to use cooperative learning activities where the students interact with their peers in the regular classroom to reduce social isolation (Banks, 1997:2). Students need to be taught how to interact using modelling, coaching, prompting, praise, and other forms of positive reinforcement. Schools can take a proactive stance by implementing programmes that teach students social skills, conflict resolution, anger management, and character education (Lumslen, 2002:3).

It is important for the teacher to intervene in the bullying situation not only on the playground, but also in the classroom as this is where the child spends most of his school day. The teacher is at the forefront of any effort to cope successfully with the problem (Goldstein, Apter & Harootunian, 1994:3). Galloway and Roland (2004:21) advise that bullying is likely to be influenced by the quality of the social and educational climate in the classroom and school. This climate, as mentioned by Pepler, Sandra and Bella (2004:379), is one that discourages bullying and supports peer processes that help vulnerable children. Teachers are, therefore, seen as playing a key role in the problem of bullying, not only on the play field, but also in their classrooms.

Teachers working with their principals should be aware of additional programmes to assist with the integration of bullying prevention strategies in the school curriculum (Safe Schools, 2005:3). Under the leadership of their principals, teachers and other school staff members maintain order in the school and are expected to hold everyone to the highest standard of respectful and responsible behaviour. As role models, teachers and school staff uphold these high standards when they help students to realise their full potential, develop their sense of self-worth, maintain consistent standards of behaviours for all students, demonstrate respect for all students, parents and members of the school community, and prepare students for the full responsibilities of citizenship (Glover, 2000:1). Teachers need to intervene when learners are attacked in schools. According to Rodkin & Hodges (2003:110), it

is crucial to report incidents of violence, in order to combat violence successfully in schools.

Some teachers will need specific training on bullying prevention curriculum, but all school personnel need to know how to identify and respond to bullying, as well as how to model and reinforce positive problem-solving. They should know the symptoms of victimisation, how to reach out to victims, and the protocol for contacting the appropriate staff members or a student's parents (Olweus, 1997:14).

Teachers should educate students on certain issues related to bullying. Specifically, teachers should raise awareness by providing students with information about different participant roles and group mechanisms involved in bullying. Teachers should also emphasise that certain beliefs about bullying are false, such as the belief that bullied, students are at least partly to blame for their victimisation, that bullying makes the victims tougher, and that teasing is simply done in fun (Lumslen, 2002:32).

2.4.2 Intervention at the Individual Level

Prevention of bullying behaviour may well begin at the individual level. By identifying students at risk of involvement in bullying situations, the bully become potential victims or aggressors, and providing these students with appropriate skills training, the schools can put a stop to a bullying behaviour before it begins. Researchers have found that victims of bullying who developed assertiveness skills experienced reductions in bullying. Teaching empathy to bullies has also been recommended as an important component of any anti-bullying effort (Kaizer & Rasminsky, 2003:5).
However, to prevent bullying, schools may also look beyond those at-risk individuals. Whitted & Dupper (2003:5) suggest that the goal of the bullying prevention programmes should be to go beyond those students involved in bullying incidents, and aim to change the culture of the school at large. Universal programmes are designed to modify the school climate so that bullying becomes unacceptable and is punishable, while positive behaviours are rewarded. Instead of attempting to change one learner, they aim at changing the environment of the school by providing programmes that focus on enhancing awareness, improving the skills of students

and teachers, and changing school policies. Researchers agree that the most effective and efficient system for reducing the incidents of disruptive and antisocial behaviour in schools is a school-wide system of behaviour support (Chapman & Hofweber, 2000:10).

Bullying intervention programmes suggest that intervention may target individual students. For example, the victims may be taught self-assertion skills and how to handle the emotions arising from being bullied, while bullies may be helped to develop empathy for the victims, and form a support group involving victims (Pepler & Craig, 2000:329).

Intervention at an individual level includes discussions held with bullies (or small groups of bullies) and victims, as well as their parents, to ensure that bullying is ended and that victims receive the necessary support. Parents, educators and learners (including bullies, victims and other learners) should, therefore, be involved in the establishment and implementation of an anti-bullying programme (De Wet, 2005a:7).

The “rules-sanctions” approach focuses on setting clear rules against bullying behaviour, with consequences for students who break the rules. These kinds of policies typically adopt a punitive approach and set sanctions such as detention, withdrawal of privileges or suspension from school. Those that follow the “problem-solving” approach tend to respond in a non-punitive manner. Here, a school policy is more likely to utilise approaches to bullying such as counselling, with the emphasis on empathy-building and the rehabilitation of the bully rather than on blaming and punishing the bully.

Typically, rules against bullying are developed along with punitive consequences that range from nonphysical sanctions, for example, withdrawal of selected student privileges, to school suspension and expulsion. An extreme form of this, best known as “zero tolerance”, is an approach that was made popular in the 1990s (Skiba, 1999:7). This style of discipline that is intended primarily as a method of sending a message that certain behaviours would not be tolerated, has seen offenders being punished severely (through detention, suspension, or expulsion), no matter how

minor the offense. In Australia in 1972, approximately 4.2% of the student population was suspended from school at least once (Children's Defence Fund, 1975:8). In 2006, that number rose to 7% of the student population (Planty, 2009:118), and in 2010, the number had climbed again to 11.2% (Losen & Skiba, 2010:10).

As the use of exclusionary discipline rises, it is important to verify whether this approach is the right one. There are some problems with punitive approaches. First, they are consistent in nature with approaches to learning. Teachers show learners where they might have gone wrong and re-teach the skills using different methods or materials. Secondly, aggressive forms of punishment can reinforce a bully's already-held views that the best way to be powerful is through aggressive methods. Administrators that use their power to accept the original punish students may be viewed as playing out a parallel process of "might make right". Furthermore, punishment is unlikely to convert a negative relationship into a positive one and, therefore, has the potential to make it worse for victims (Duncan, 1996:8) and cultivate resentment in the bullies. Lastly, research has demonstrated that school suspension and expulsion appear to be effective only in removing troublesome students from school (Skiba, 1999:7). In fact, the well-documented long-term outcomes of these disciplinary methods appear to be further suspension and eventually school dropout (Estrom, 1986:11).

Developing both immediate and long-term strategies for identifying and working with bullies may be necessary. When teachers observe an incident of bullying, they can intervene by asking the bully to consider the consequences of his or her actions and to think how others feel. By talking calmly, yet firmly, to the bully, the teacher can make it clear that such behaviour is unacceptable. Teachers can show the bully alternative ways to talk, interact, and negotiate. At the same time, they can encourage victims to assert themselves (Baumeister, 2001:312).

When interacting with learners on a one-on-one basis, teachers should provide encouragement that acknowledges specific attributes, rather than dispense general praise, approval, or admiration for example that may appear to be contrived. Expressions of specific encouragement, as opposed to general praise, are

descriptive, sincere, take place in private, focus on the process, and help learners to develop an appreciation for their efforts and work. While developing a learner's self-esteem is a worth-while goal, false praise may, instead, promote narcissism and unrealistic self-regard. Teachers should avoid encouraging learners to think highly of themselves when they have not earned it (Baumeister, 2001:12).

Additional long-term strategies may include encouraging learners to resolve their own problems and use peers to mediate between bullies and their targets. Furthermore, teachers can spend time helping learners to form ties with peers who can offer protection, support, security, and safety, thus, helping to reduce learners' exposure to bullying (Ladd, Kochenderfer & Coleman, 1996:3).

Individualised interventions target learners who have had significant involvement in bullying situations, either as perpetrators or victims. These interventions, typically, focus on remedying specific externalising problems of bullies or internalising problems displayed by victims, using interventions like social skills and assertiveness training and anger management (Smith, Ananiadou & Cowie, 2003:328).

The level of involvement in bullying and victimisation can vary from student to student. If students who are involved in bullying do not respond to school-wide and class-level interventions, they may require individualised services such as referral for mental health services to address behavioural and emotional deficits related to their bully or victim behaviours. Juvonen, Graham & Shuster (2003:1231) note that it is important to recognise the unique problems of each of the groups, in order to intervene appropriately and effectively.

Despite the growing body of research on the etiology and dynamics of bullying and victimisation, there is little research on the effectiveness of specific interventions aimed at ameliorating the behavioural and emotional deficits that have been identified as characteristic of those involved in bullying as bully, victim, or bully victim. Much of the literature about interventions consists of logical suggestions based on symptoms or behaviours that have been identified in the bullying research (Juvonen *et al.*, 2003:1231). In some cases, interventions are recommended because they have been used successfully with similar problems or with youth

having similar symptoms. Such an approach makes sense since students who are labelled bullies or victims generally exhibit a number of clinical symptoms or behavioural deficits that are related to their involvement in bullying (Baumeister, 2001:12).

Intervention at the individual level must include support for and protection of the victims of bullying and discussions with the parents of bullies and victims (Olweus *et al.,* 1999:9-10). Teachers or other school personnel should not suggest that victims of bullying brought it on themselves or chastise them for not being able to solve their own problems (Vessey *et al.*, 1999:246). School social workers should make every effort and encourage other school personnel to make similar efforts to protect children who are victims of bullying (Dupper, 2003:8). It is important that bullies receive clear messages from school personnel that bullying will not be tolerated and should end.

2.4.2.1 Teaching victims self-assertion skills

Gini, Albiero, Benelli & Altoe (2008:535) assert that teaching communication competency skills, such as assertiveness, might help students resist bullying and support each other. In addition, Gini *et al.* (2008:535) examined interpersonal competencies of active defenders and passive bystanders in bullying situations and determined that bystanders were no less empathetic to victims than were defenders. However, bystanders lacked the necessary assertiveness skills and self-esteem to intervene. Similarly, Veenstra *et al. (*2007:3) found that bullies viewed themselves as more dominant than the victims viewed themselves, and victims reported experiencing higher levels of vulnerability than did bullies.

Davison (2007:13) assert, that if sexism is learned and violence is one manifestation, then our schools are the best places to help learners learn healthy attitudes. Schools can also pass sexist expectations to boys and girls we teach. Yoon and Kerber (2003:27) advocated that intervention efforts, including social skills, training, focused on assertive and pro-social skills. They could also improve the school climate and peer relationships and minimise bullying, particularly social exclusion. Bauman and Del Rio (2006:12) note that intervention efforts must be completely implemented, in order to make them effective.

Smith and Sharp (1994:9) found that empowering learners was an appropriate technique that encouraged them to take positive action against bullying through collaborative conflict resolution, peer counselling and assertiveness training. These techniques helped to build essential skills of effective communication, which can help them to resolve these problems themselves and offer support to their peers. Through regular in-class or after school sessions, learners learn specific strategies for dealing with difficult situations, such as attempts to bully them in assertive rather than passive or aggressive ways. They can talk about their experiences, and learn and practice effective responses. Various skills or techniques such as 'broken record' or 'fogging' are taught. Although expensive and time-consuming, training has been shown to help victims develop useful strategies and it works best with periodic refresher sessions. However, it does not solve bullying on its own (Smith & Sharp, 1994:9).

2.4.2.2 Helping emotions arising from being bullied

However, reducing the prevalence of bullying has achieved only limited success. School bullying can be difficult to combat, and so, inevitably, some students will be targeted. Therefore, it is argued that students need to be equipped with effective coping resources to deal with the negative effects of being bullied. Bullying is characterised by interpersonal transgressions and other such hurtful offences. Forgiveness, on the other hand, is a coping strategy for overcoming the negative emotional impact of these offences. While bullying damages its target's health and well-being, forgiveness has been found to provide benefits in these areas. Thus, forgiveness presents itself as a coping strategy with the potential for use in the context of social bullying (Naylor, Cowie & del Rey, 2001:334).

It is proposed that targets of school bullying should utilise forgiveness, in order to recover from the emotional hurt of being bullied. When operating via the process of emotional hurt, forgiveness could allow students to replace bullying induced negative emotions with positive emotions (Worthington & Wade, 1999:3). Forgiveness could also act as a buffer against the impact of bullying: those who are more forgiving have been found to possess superior physical and mental health, which could be protective against future offenses (Worthington & 1999:17).

Targets of bullying often need to seek support and advice from others (Naylor, Cowie & del Rey, 2001:334). Thus, many interventions involve the creation of peer-support systems within schools. These systems can help bullied students to avoid further episodes of bullying (Smith, 2004:3). Furthermore, school bullying can isolate its targets from their peers, making peer-support more difficult to implement (Smokowski & Kopasz, 2005:105).

Most school-based interventions have yielded limited successes, and some have failed altogether (Newman-Carlson & Horne, 2004:9). No initiative has ever resulted in the complete elimination of bullying at a school. There is no doubt that even the best intervention to do so is impossible. This does not imply that interventions should not be implemented; a reduction in school bullying is always desirable no matter its size. The point is that school bullying will inevitably affect some students regardless of whether there are anti-bullying initiatives in place or not. As such, efforts must be made to help students deal with the emotional aftermath of being bullied (Smokowski & Kopasz, 2005:105). Effective coping strategies are required. It is argued that school-based interventions forgiveness presents itself as one such strategy.

2.4.2.3 Helping bullies to develop empathy for the victims

Empathy comprises two aspects, namely being affective in nature and focusing on the process of feeling something due to the perceived feeling of the target person, and also being cognitive and focusing on understanding feelings and thoughts of the target person. These processes produce affective, as well as non-affective (Perceptual accuracy, behavioural tendencies) outcomes (Davis, 1996:18), which are all related to the target person's internal state.

A person witnessing another in need may, under some circumstances, experience empathic concern, which elicits an altruistic motivation to help (Yoon, 2004:3). Studies suggest that teachers expressing least empathy towards victims of indirect aggression are least likely to help them (Yoon, 2004:3). Yoon therefore, expected in the present study that empathy for victims would significantly predict the likelihood of teachers intervening, though not as strongly as perceived seriously (Yoon, 2004:3).

It should also be noted that, while empathy is seen here as a potential motivator for helping a victim of bullying, no assumptions are made in the study about the nature of that help. At a minimal level, it might entail stopping the specific incident, but, depending on the circumstances and school policy, it might include follow-ups with a range of individuals and groups, including the perpetrator of the bullying behaviour (Davis, 1996: 20).

2.4.2.4 Forming a support group involving victims and bystanders

Peer support systems are quite widely accepted as being an important part of a school's strategy to counteract bullying and create an atmosphere of safety in school by giving young people a structure within which they can discover and implement ways of improving the emotional health and well-being of their own school community. There is consistent evidence that the practice of peer support appears to give direction to address injustices such as bullying and deliberate social exclusion in the school community. As Cowie *et al.,* (2008:333) indicate it is the awareness that peer supporters are there to help which enables all learners to believe that school is a safe place to be. In other words, the observation (and in some cases the experience) of the helpfulness of sharing worries and anxieties with another has become an accepted method of coping with peer group issues of concern, notably bullying, as well as of changing the culture from one of indifference to others' suffering to one of shared concern.

Such approaches include the remedial guidance approach in combating school bullying. Remedial guidance focuses on offering interventions and therapies to students experiencing emotional, psychological, or behavioural difficulties. In the case of school bullying, a remedial guidance approach focuses on the individual student, victims, as well as bullies. Such an approach is a responsive and curative approach.

2.4.3 Interventions at the Classroom Level

Teachers, by virtue of their daily contact with students, can play a major role in preventing bullying. They can intervene in bullying incidents that occur in the classroom. Because of the social nature of bullying and the involvement of students

beyond bully and victim, it is important to intervene and change peer dynamics that support and encourage bullying behaviours (Juvonen *et al.*, 2003:1231). Merrell, Buchanan and Tran (2006:4) point out that relational aggression, because of its social nature, should be addressed from an ecological perspective with the school environment. They recommend the adoption of approaches that promote social interaction in order to decrease the probability that students will use aggression as a common mode of peer interaction. Rodkin and Hodges (2003:3) emphasise the importance of understanding both the horizontal organisation of the peer culture (the nature of existing relationships among individuals and groups) and the vertical structure (those who have social status and power and how that status and power influence the acceptance or rejection of bullying), in order to intervene to change bullying behaviour.

The classroom environment provides teachers with opportunities to observe and intercede when bullying situations arise within peer groups. More importantly, teachers can structure their classrooms in such a way as to discourage bullying and encourage pro-social behaviours. Kallestad and Olweus (2003:383) found that teachers were the key agents of change with regard to the adoption and implementation of classroom measures to address bullying. They were more likely to intervene if they perceived bullying to be a problem, and that implementation of classroom interventions was related to a reduction in bullying. Yoon (2004:13) found that empathy, feelings of self-efficacy in terms of addressing bullying, and the perceived seriousness of bullying, all influenced teachers to respond to bullying situations.

Clearly, bullying and hurtful teasing affects a learner's ability to learn and enjoy play, as well as the teacher's ability to teach. Within the classroom, teachers can begin addressing the problem by creating times for learners to talk about their concerns. Interestingly, one study showed that when children aged 5 to 7 years of age were asked about assisting someone who was being bullied, 37% replied that it was none of their business to help (Slee & Rigby, 1994:438).

According to Olweus (1999:10), to help prevent or decrease bullying, students' reports of bullying or violence should be taken seriously. To help decrease bullying

within classrooms, schools should increase supervision of the students (Beale & Scott, 2001:3). Teachers, can ask learners to talk about what makes them feel unsafe or unwelcome in school. Teachers then can make a list of the learners' responses, discuss them, and create corresponding rules. When necessary, the discussions can be continued during class meetings so that the rules can be reviewed, revised, and updated. Teachers can also show learners what to do to help themselves or other learners, and remind them of the consequences of breaking the rules. Teachers can reduce learners' anxiety by setting firm limits on unacceptable behaviour (Froschl & Sprung, 1999:75).

Teachers can work with students at the class level to develop rules against bullying. They can engage students in a series of formal role-playing exercises and related assignments that teach bullies alternative methods of interaction, implement cooperative learning activities to reduce social isolation, and increase adult supervision at key times (Erickson, 2001:1). One strategy to combat the problem involves the development of classroom rules against various forms of intolerant or negative peer behaviours. This approach requires the identification of unacceptable behaviours that may be operating in a classroom, some system to enable monitoring or possible rule infractions, and some set of consequences. Two techniques that might be helpful in implementing this sort of intervention are the Problem-Solving Meeting and the use of the Problem Box (Nansel *et al*, 2001:20).

If the bullying continues, teachers may need to make referrals to school counsellors who will work with learners, either individually or in groups, to talk about concerns, discuss solutions and options, and give suggestions on how to form friendships. Learners without close friends are more likely to be victimised and may benefit from specific suggestions for building friendships (Froschl & Sprung, 1999:3).

Certain types of curricula, especially those that provide opportunities for cooperative learning experiences, may make bullying less likely to flourish. Learners need to be engaged in worth- while, authentic learning activities that would encourage their interests and abilities (Katz, 1993:2). When they are intellectually motivated, they are less likely to bully others. For example, project work involves learners in in-depth investigations into topics of their own choosing. As they explore events and objects

around them in the classroom, in the school yard, in the neighbourhood, and in the community, they learn to cooperate, collaborate, and share responsibilities (Katz & Chard, 2000:432). Project work can be complemented by non-competitive games, role playing, and dramatisation to raise awareness of bullying and increase empathy for those who experience it. Some teachers use learners' literature to help create caring and peaceful classrooms (Morris, Taylor & Wilson, 2000:1).

Intervention within the classroom context includes the drawing up and enforcing of classroom rules which prevent bullying. Regular discussions should be held between class educators and learners to discuss various aspects of bullying and other anti-social behaviour. Discussions should also be held between class educators and parents (Olweus, Limber & Mihalic, 1999:9-10).

Classroom-wide interventions for bullying include setting up an environment that experts and rewards promote caring behaviour. This environment should reward those who stick up for victims and deter bullies, and should emphasize the importance of including all studies in activities (Coyle, 2008:3).

Even though intervention strategies are designed and implemented to address bullying, it is essential to recognise that students can be discreet in devising ways to disguise acts of bullying that occur outside the general area of the classroom (Peterson, 2005:26). Therefore, increasing public awareness and knowledge about bullying behaviour problems can be a sure way to reduce bullying. This can be achieved through: (a) Active involvement of teachers and parents in prevention programmes; (b) Vigilance by school personnel for incidents of bullying; (c) The development of firm sanctions and consequences for students who engage in bullying; and (d) teaching assertiveness skills to the bullied victims (Aluede, 2006:245).

Classroom-interventions include encouraging teachers to integrate bullying prevention material into their curriculum (Aluede, 2006:245). This can be accomplished by holding regular classroom meetings to discuss bullying. These classroom meetings can help increase students' knowledge of how to intervene,

build empathy, and encourage pro-social norms and behaviours (Olweus *et al.,* 1999:9-10). Teachers can also involve making class rules against bullying.

Teachers should also discuss the importance of bystanders in stopping bullying. Students should be taught that they have a responsibility to intervene if they observe someone being bullied at school. Bystanders need to be taught how their behaviours can either support or discourage bullies and that programmes that teach bystanders to recognise and report bullying have the greatest impact on reducing bullying (Rigby, 1995:1). Bystanders can be taught how to intervene to help victims (Atlas & Pepler, 1998:244). For example, bystanders can be taught to stand up for victims, include victims in group activities, and to report bullying to adults.

Because teachers spend the greatest amount of time with students during the day. Hazler (1996:20) believes that they are vital to the success of any bullying prevention or intervention programme. The establishment of classroom-specific rules for bullying has been supported as an effective component of a school-wide programme (Olweus, 1999:22). Effective classroom management and modelling of desirable behaviours can provide a basis for enforcing these rules. Teachers must not ignore or dismiss student reports of bullying if their goal is to prevent or decrease bullying behaviour. They must take every report seriously (Olweus, 1999:22).

Holding regular discussions with students to review and/or revise classroom rules, as well as to discuss the classroom climate is also recommended as an effective method for helping students take ownership in bullying prevention and intervention (Sullivan, 2000:10). For example, classroom teachers can build-in week class meetings during which they allow students to discuss what is and is not working in their class. After this discussion, the teacher and students might jointly modify classroom rules as necessary. Weekly classroom meetings might also reveal school-wide areas for revision. For example, if during the weekly class meeting students report an increase in name-calling in the hallways, teachers would want to monitor hallways to determine whether or not more supervision is needed in that area (Sullivan, 1999:211).

Students must develop an awareness of bullying, or more specifically, an awareness of which behaviours the school classifies as bullying, if they are to effectively help enforce school and classroom rules. Instructional methods and activities can be used to help increase students' understanding of bullying in addition to providing opportunities for them to expand their social circles and practice new behaviours. For example, information about bullying can be taught through cooperative learning methods, which can also facilitate students' successful interactions with others (Hazler, 1996:20). In addition, teachers can utilise literature addressing bullying in an effort to expose students to various types of bullying, as well as the consequences for both bullies and victims (Olweus, 1991:1). Upon hearing stories about bullying, students might recognise that they are not alone, that they might learn new coping mechanisms, or that they might realise how harmful their behaviours are to others.

Research on the contribution of perceived expectations of teachers indicate that it is unlikely that teachers may be able to influence bystanders behaviour by simply communicating their expectations that learners should intervene (Rigby & Johnson, 2006:438). Classroom-level interventions, which are more indirect and focused on developing more sympathetic attitudes towards victims are an approach that teachers, can make use of. These interventions may include encouraging educators to integrate bullying prevention material into their curriculum. This can be done by holding regular classroom meetings to discuss bullying. This would help increase learners' knowledge of how to intervene, build empathy, establish and enforce class rules against bullying.

Victims of bullying can be helped to recognise attributes that place them at risk of becoming targets. They can be helped to understand the consequences of their choices and also to modify their chances of becoming victims. Learners can also be taught conflict management, crisis intervention strategies and the value of non-verbal communication to decrease the likelihood of verbal or physical aggression (Purkey & Novak, 1996:101). Learner-level interventions in these programmes are designed to develop social competence by changing learners' knowledge, skills, attitudes, beliefs or behaviours by using interactive teaching techniques (role play). Life Orientation learning is the ideal platform on which to achieve these initiatives.

Teachers need to establish respectful standards of conduct for interactions and to take action when student norms support aggression. Teachers need to work with students to develop classroom meetings to discuss bullying. Classroom activities and discussions that help change students' views about the "coolness" of bullying may represent an important strategy for reducing bullying (Rodkin & Hodges, 2003:342). Teachers should model inclusive behaviours, make a special effort to reach out to peer-rejected and withdrawn students and to encourage students to be inclusive of their peers. There is evidence that when teachers are warm and caring to everyone, including aggressive and peer-rejected children, all students in the classroom will be less rejected by their peers (Rodkin & Hodges, 2003:344). Teachers should work to promote caring learning communities through such strategies as class meetings, group celebrations, and cooperative group work (San Antonio & Salzfass, 2007:15).

2.4.4 Intervention at Whole-School Level

Other interventions target the whole school, for example, devising a whole-school anti- bullying policy that is communicated to the whole-school community. Peer-led intervention utilises peer support such as peer counselling to improve students' communication skills and empathy skills, and peer mediation to resolve conflicts.

Prevention of school bullying is essential in any school system. Schools must take responsibility to protect the well-being of their students so that they can learn and achieve success. Researchers have found that prevention must involve peers due in part to the fact that bullying goes beyond the bully and victim. Students take on other participant roles such as being assistants of the bully, reinforcing the bully's actions, defending the victim, and being outsiders (Dake, Prince & Teljohann, 2003:5). Because bullying involves a group process, the prevention should involve a group process as well.

Bronfenbrenner (2000:10) suggests that development interventions should take place at the level of the macro system, as this would impact on all lower levels of development. This idea coincides with Souter *et al.* (2000:110) who state that an attitude change is required. Soutter *et al.* (2000:163) maintain that bullying works in

schools where learners lack an understanding of feelings and are deficient in empathy and, therefore, not willing to confront bullying.

Sherman *et al.,* (1998:2) looked at several environmental change strategies that could be implemented by schools in an attempt to prevent bullying. One such change is to regroup students by changing the school schedule. Staggering recess, lunch, and other between class times will minimise the number of bullies and victims present in a particular area at any one time. Sampson (2002:22) notes that this will allow supervisors to more easily spot bullying behaviours. In addition, Sampson (2002:21-23) recommends reducing the amount of time of students' supervision in those areas where bullying is expected; posting classroom signs prohibiting bullying, and listing the consequences for it; developing activities in less-supervised areas; and setting up a "bully box" in a neutral area that enables students to drop notes in the box alerting school officials about problem bullies or potential threats.

Addressing bullying in schools requires an approach that acknowledges the complexity of the problem. Effective violence prevention approaches in schools include those addressing acts of violence from occurring within the schools. For example, schools increasingly turn to school counsellors and other helping professionals in the school for leadership and help with establishing bullying prevention approaches are characterized by multiple interventions aimed at changing individuals and systems and which are supported by collaboration among stakeholders.

Erikson, Mattaini, & Mc Guire (2004:342) note the importance of "constructing cultures incompatible with violence and threat" rather than relying on curricula add-ones and narrow skills-training approaches. Developing a comprehensive approach that addresses bullying through both system and individual interventions is consistent with approaches that advocate for the prevention of a number of adolescent problem behaviours (Cunningham & Sandhu, 2000:215). These can be integrated with other school-based comprehensive plans to promote healthy pro-social behaviour (e.g. Safe Drug-free School Plans).

Whole-school interventions usually target all school members, that is the staff, pupils, and parents, in order to enhance their knowledge and responses to bullying. Since bullying springs from factors external to individual child subsystems, bullying interventions need to involve different systems within the school community, in order to have a significant consistent impact. A whole-school approach to bullying that is directed at the entire school context and involves a comprehensive, multilevel strategy that targets bullies, victims, bystanders-families, and community, becomes pertinent (Eadaoin *et al*., 2011:3). Whole school approaches to countering bullying involve all members of the school community (students, teachers, parents, and administrators) in the development of clear rules and consequences that discourage all forms of aggression (Sharp & Thompson, 1994:128). With a whole-school policy, children know that adults will follow through and protect interveners when bullying occurs. Whole-school anti-bullying policies should be initiated at elementary school level and should continue to support students throughout all levels of the school system.

Smith, Pepler & Rigby (2004:2) recommend that "countering bullying requires a whole school approach". Whole school approaches are generally characterised by coordinated action at the levels of individual student, the classroom and the school as part of a broader community. Elements of a whole school approach typically include the high school adopting a school anti- bullying policy; curriculum interventions to raise awareness of bullying and to teach students specific preventative and management strategies; and programmes for others to deal with known cases of bullying. Programmes for managing bullying within schools vary, but generally include discipline interventions and/ or the use of mediation sessions.

As school administrators and significant others struggle with ways to prevent acts of violence from occurring within their schools, they increasingly turn to school counsellors and other helping professionals in the school for leadership and help with establishing policies regarding safety (Fryxell & Smith, 2000:533). Indeed, school counsellors and psychologists are primarily agents of change and prevention within the school system (Eduwen, 2010:412). Therefore, school counsellors have a duty to strengthen their intervention skills, especially those strategies that would help deal with bullying problems in schools.

Kenny *et al.* (2005:142) observe that since bullies tend to show little empathy for their target, school counsellors will need to provide interventions to improve students' level of compassion and empathy. These may include activities that foster sensitivity for the feeling of others. Role reversal techniques where students role play situations in which they place themselves in the position of others, may help increase empathetic understanding. In addition, training school learners early in life to be empathic can help prevent them from turning into bullies (Aluede, 2006:139).

Therefore, school counsellors can be of great assistance to both bullies and victims by teaching them a new style of education called "empathy training". This teaches students as young as five years older to understand the feelings of others and to treat people with kindness. It is expected that those who go through this empathy training, when compared with those who have not, are more likely to be less aggressive.

Whole-school anti-bullying programmes illustrate the preventive guidance approach to school bullying. These programmes provide training in social skills, altering group norms, and increasing self-efficacy. A review of the effectiveness of anti-bully interventions has shown that the incidence of bullying cannot be reduced by implementing the curriculum alone. Implementation of intervention across schools has a higher success rate, and the anti-bullying curriculum is integrated into the regular school curriculum (Eadaoin *et al.,* 2011:8). School climate factors, such as interpersonal relationships and quality of communication, the important ecological factors influencing bullying, however, are not usually included in the whole-school intervention programme. Developmental guidance precisely address to building a positive school climate and a guidance-oriented community where each individual's rights are respected and valued.

Clearly, strategies and programmes to reduce the incidence of bullying in schools must start early in the elementary grades. Learners in the elementary grades are more empathic toward bullying behaviours and may be more prone to respond to interventions of a preventative nature (Rigby & Slee, 1991:438). In addition, younger learners have a higher rate of reporting bullying behaviours (Rigby & Slee, 1991:438). Educating students about bullying increases awareness of the

seriousness of these acts. Parents are particularly concerned as more and more of their learners are being victimised, and in some cases seriously hurt or killed by bullies. In some recent instances reported by the media, those who took the lives of classmates were victims of bullies who responded in a fatal manner (Baker & Gerler, 2004:3).

Whole-school based approaches target interventions at multiple levels within the school environment. These interventions often include a written document that outlines the school's position on bullying, and delineating protocols to uphold, in order to ensure enforcement of the code of conduct (Smith, 2003:2).

Several decades of prevention research have greatly expanded the knowledge base of the most effective strategies in school-based bullying prevention programmes. According to Whitted & Dupper (2005:36), the most successful school-based intervention programmes do more than just reach out to the individual learner; they seek to change the culture and climate of the school through a systematic, school-wide intervention approach. Advocates of the whole school approach, rather than individual-orientated intervention to bullying, presuppose that bullying behaviour may be controlled and re-channelled into more socially acceptable behaviour by means of a systematic restructuring of the social environment (Olweus *et al*., 1999:7). According to these authors, such restructuring should lead to fewer opportunities for bullying behaviour and fewer rewards. Furthermore, such restructuring should lead to the promotion and recognition of positive, friendly and pro-social behaviour.

Charach, Pepler & Ziegler (1995:21) agree that bullying is a problem that occurs in the social environment as a whole. The bullies' aggression occurs in social contexts in which teachers and parents are generally unaware of the extent of the problem and other children are either reluctant to get involved or simply do not know how to help. Given this situation, effective interventions must involve the entire school community rather than focus on the victims and perpetrators alone. Smith & Sharp (1994:249) emphasize the need to develop whole-school bullying policies, implement curricula measures, improve the school ground environment and empower students through a variety of exercises. Whole-school approaches to prevent bullying have been advocated since the late 1980s (Lane, 1989:5) and although only marginal to

moderate reductions in bullying have been experienced using a whole-school approach, a whole-school approach to date, is considered the most effective means of decreasing bullying within schools (Salmivalli, 2001:330). It is evident what aspects of the whole-school approach make some interventions more effective than others and what aspects hinder positive results.

The whole-school level, currently popular in schools, is predicated on the assumption that bullying is a systemic problem, and by implication, programmes must address the problem at all levels of the school. The Olweus Bullying Prevention Program (Olweus, 1993:64) was the first comprehensive whole-school intervention implemented on a large scale and systemically evaluated. Most programmes designated as whole-school share the core feature of the original Olweus program. These features typically include activities for the entire school, such as the development of an anti-bullying policy, increased adult supervision on school grounds, and the establishment of an anti-bullying committee. Within classrooms, teachers may develop behaviour codes with the learners and engage their students in a variety of curricula activities with anti- bullying themes. Parents of all learners receive information about the schools 'initiatives and goals, and they may be invited to participate directly in some activities. Whole-school programmes may mobilise peer-helpers in mediation or befriending programmes with appropriate adult supervision. In the context of these programmes, schools may also solicit community stakeholders (community leaders and organisations) to become involved in their initiatives. Finally, target interventions are usually offered to children directly involved in bully/ victims problems.

School personnel must recognise the pervasiveness of bullying and teasing and its detrimental effects on learners' development. In-service training that outlines a clear policy statement against bullying and intervention strategies for addressing it can be developed. The school also can develop a comprehensive plan geared to teach learners pro-social behaviours and skills. The learners may be involved in the development of such policies and strategies. They may provide their input on what behaviour is appropriate and identify sanctions against bullies (Lickona, 2005:3). School personnel could enlist families' support and involvement by sharing details of the policy through parent-teacher conferences and newsletters. Families need to be

aware of the specific sanctions that will be imposed on learners who bully, and they need opportunities to offer feedback and suggestions. It is important to encourage parents to talk with their learners about bullying. Learners who are bullied often believe that their parents are unaware of the situation, and that their concerns are not being addressed or discussed. However, learners do want adults to intervene (Froschl & Sprung, 1999:230). If families are kept informed, they can work as "team members" with school counsellors and teachers to change the school environment.

Additional sources of the school-wide support for learners who are bullied and teased may be developed, including mentoring programmes. Teachers can identify learners who need support, and find them a mentor. Learners may feel more at ease and less anxious when they have a "buddy," such as an older student, who can help intervene (Noll & Carter, 1997:3). Counsellors at one selected elementary school selected, trained, and supervised high School students to teach the younger learners how to deal with bullying and harassment. After implementation of this programme, the teachers observed a decline in reports of harassment (Frieman & Frieman, 2000:3).

Intervention at school level includes the administration of a questionnaire to establish the nature and scope of bullying at schools, school conferences, establishment of a bully prevention committee, and the development of a co-ordinated system to supervise learners during breaks. Parents and educators should meet regularly to discuss common problems and strategies (De Wet, 2005a:194).

Bullying problems can be managed in schools if school counsellors faithfully follow the seven strategies under the acronym "Scrapes" provided by Friend and Friend (as cited in McEachern, Kenny, Blake & Aluede, 2005:2). These are S-Self-esteem and social skills enrichment; C-Conflict resolution and mediation skills; R-Respect for difference, de- prejudicing exercises; A-Anger management and assertiveness training; P-Problem solving skills; E-Empathy training; and S-Sexual awareness training.

According to Holt *et al.,* (2009: 3), the most effective bullying prevention programmes take a multi- system perspective that targets myriad stakeholders for prevention

efforts. These include students, educators, and parents. This approach to bullying prevention aligns with the social-ecological model of bullying described by Espelage & Swear (2004:38) who assert that the multiple systems in which students take root influence bullying involvement. According to Newman, Horne & Bartolomucci "A bullying prevention programme that has been empirically supported and found to be helpful to teachers, school counsellors and psychologists, school administrators and parents who desire to address the increase in bullying occurring in the schools has been Buster". This is a psycho-educational intervention for reducing bullying which was developed by Newman, Horne & Bartolomucci (2000:143). The intervention seeks to increase teachers' knowledge and use of bullying intervention skills; to increase teachers' personal self-efficacy and self-specific types of children; and to reduce the amount of bullying and victimisation in the classroom.

The Bully Buster programme, according to Bedell & Horne (2000:39), is generally implemented in the form of a staff development training workshop which is typically implemented in the form of a staff development training workshop. It is also typically held over a course of three weeks for two hours per meeting. The contexts of the programme include information pertaining to bullying and victimisation, recommended intervention strategies, stress management techniques and classroom activities. The training programme is a composite of seven consecutive modules, each focusing on specific goals: (a) increasing awareness of bullying; (b) recognising the bully; (c) recognizing the victim; (d) taking charge (interventions for bullying behaviours); assisting victims (recommendations and interventions); (f) understanding the roles of prevention; and (g) developing relaxation and coping skills.

Vreeman & Carroll (2007:332), in their systematic review of school-based interventions designed to prevent bullying, concluded that the most effective interventions typically use a whole-school approach consisting of some combination of school-wide rules and sanctions, teacher training, classroom curricula, conflict resolution training, and individual counselling. Anti-bullying programmes exclusively directed at the bully, the victim, or both, without involving other students or addressing larger school climate issues, are less likely to be effective. In order to successfully address bullying problems, the entire school must comprise a culture of

respect. Expectations of how staff and students treat one another should be clearly reflected in school policies, and the rules for classroom interaction should be consistently modelled by adults and enforced in all school settings.

Teachers spend a substantial portion of the school day interacting with students and are, therefore, at the forefront of the battle against bullying. School climate research has indicated that by implementing consistent and effective interventions for school-based bullying, teachers can play a critical role in providing a safe and supportive environment that promotes student learning (Colvin *et al*., 1998:6). However, several studies have shown that students do not perceive educators to be effective in identifying or resolve bullying incidents and, therefore are reluctant to approach them for help (Craig, Henderson & Murphy, 2000:14). Remarking on the perceived ineffectiveness of teachers, Rigby and colleagues (1991) state that "research shows that without specific training, teachers have a poor understanding of bullying and how to manage it" (p.161). Despite the critical need for teacher preparation on bullying, teachers frequently report family to combat these behaviours due to lack of training (Holt & Keyes, 2004:122).

The first step of successful prevention or reduction of bullying requires educators to accurately recognise these behaviours and to possess the requisite knowledge skills, and dispositions to effectively intervene (Kokko & Porhola, 2009:175). It requires teachers to provide critical information regarding the types, prevalence, signs and consequences of bullying, as well as to educate teachers about how to intervene and prevent these behaviours (O' Moore, 2000:3). Studies have demonstrated that teachers can significantly reduce the negative effects of bullying (for example, poor academic achievement, absenteeism, increased mental and physical health concerns) if professional learning programmes specifically targeting the reduction of bullying are scarce (Rigby & Bagshaw, 2003:3).

Schools should apply disciplinary measures to pupils who bully, in order to show clearly that their behaviour is wrong. Disciplinary measures must be applied fairly, consistently, and reasonably, taking into account of any special educational needs or disabilities that the pupils may have as well as taking into account the needs of vulnerable pupils. It is also important to consider the motivations behind bullying

behaviour and whether it reveals any concerns for the safety of the perpetrators. Where this is the case, the child engaging in bullying may need support (Batsche & Knoff, 1994:4). All segments of the school community must work together to address the problem of bullying. This means that teachers, administrators, parents, and students need to cooperate as they assess the scope of the bullying problem in their school and come up with ways to respond to it effectively (Batsche & Knoff, 1994:4). Another important component for reducing bullying in schools is to increase students' social competence. Children's social competence leads to more friendships, positive relationships, and academic success (Welsh *et al.,* 2001:15). Intervention may also take on the form of supervision during recess and lunch time at schools. In a research conducted by Olweus (1993:25), it was found that the greater the number of teachers supervising during recesses periods, the lower the level of bullying/victim problems in the school. This indicates the great importance of having a sufficient number of teachers among learners during recess times.

Designing a strategy to combat bullying in the school, requires a whole-school approach particular to that specific school and its community. Involving the community, especially the parents, is a central aspect of this strategy. Research into the social normative influence about parental expectations indicates a positive contribution towards more pro-social and bullying- preventative behaviours in children (Rigby & Johnson, 2006:437). Parents can be mobilised through parent-teacher meetings and newsletters to parents that focus on bystander behaviour as a discouragement to bullying. Parents can encourage their children to be 'good' bystanders, to recognise the potential risks involved and to take steps to minimise them. Increasing the number of learners who express their disapproval of bullying when they see it happening can be the best deterrent for bullying and will benefit not only their own children, but the entire school population (Rigby, 2004:3).

Rigby & Johnson (2006: 438) argue that secondary schools constitute less of a community in which learners feel obligated to support and assist each other when needed than do primary schools, generally. Creating an ethos of caring and positive bystander behaviour should be encouraged in secondary schools to develop a more mutually supportive ethos, an ethos of caring, and to contribute towards more positive bystander behaviour.

The school should send a strong message to every member involved in the school and the community that bullying is taken seriously and will not be tolerated. This entails drafting a 'bullying prevention policy' for the school. This policy should be a 'working anti-bullying policy', which advertises a 'zero-tolerance' attitude towards bullying. The bullying prevention policy should be a negotiated and collaborative policy written by all involved in the school, stating clear indicators and guidelines for victims, offenders and bystanders. If bystanders know that they can intervene and that there are policy guidelines to support them, more positive bystander behaviours can be forthcoming. This bullying prevention policy should be distributed to everyone in the school community. Authorities should ensure ownership and consensus. In this way, a clear message can be sent that bullying incidents are taken seriously and that serious action will be taken in response to these incidents (Lumsden, 2002:4).

The bullying prevention policy should include a clear definition of bullying with examples and a specific a reporting procedure (Rigby, 1995:36). A confidential reporting system will encourage learners to report if they are victimised or have witnessed bullying. School staff should also encourage parents to report bullying if they suspect that their child is involved in bullying either as a victim, bystander or bully. The policy should clearly describe the process of addressing incidents of bullying in the school, as well as the consequences. Consequences, particularly for bystanders, should be considered. A stronger focus on peer mediation can significantly reduce aggressive incidents in the schoolyard.

Whitted & Dupper (2005:169) contend that school-level interventions should aim at clarifying and communicating behavioural norms, that is, developing classroom and school-wide rules that prohibit bullying and promote adult modelling of respectful and non-violent behaviour. Intervention efforts are unlikely to be successful unless school staff recognize bullying as a problem (Rigby, 1995:36) and that they have a significant role to play in this regard.

Although much remains to be learned about best practices for bullying prevention and intervention, the existing research suggests that universal school-based prevention programmes can be effective. A recent report by the Task Force on Community Preventive Services, Hahn *et al.* (2007:125) concluded that universal

school-based programs designed to prevent or reduce violent behaviour, including bullying, significantly reduced rates of violent behaviour and aggression for all grade levels.

In order to successfully address bullying problems, the entire school must uphold a culture of respect. Expectations for how staff and students treat one another should be clearly reflected in school policies, and the rules for classroom interaction should be consistently modelled by adults and enforced and reinforced in all school settings (Vreeman & Carroll, 2007:332).

Teaching students to restore relationships when they have conflicts is one of the important missions in schools. If conflicts arise, a social worker or teacher may be appointed as mediator to assist both parties to restore relationships. This kind of third-party mediation method is restorative practice. In the restorative process, it is hoped that bullies will understand how it feels to be a victim, and realise that what they did was wrong. Students who witness bullying can be involved to help both parties understand how bad the conflict was. At the same time, victims can express their feelings during the mediation session. In addition, it provides a chance for bullies to apologize and, if necessary, provide compensation. Peer mediation programs are also useful restorative strategies. Schools should consider training a number of “school harmony ambassadors” to help teachers deal with minor bullying issues (Sharp, 1996:250).

Effective discipline can make bullies realise what mistakes they have made and help them learn to improve themselves. This reiterative shaming technique is one of the methods found to be useful in combating bullying (Wong, 1999a:5). Students are reprimanded by authorities in observable behavioural terms without destroying their self-esteem. Before reprimanding the student, however, one should take into consideration the student’s personality and family background. One should also confirm that the student’s emotions are relatively stable. Any reprimand or shaming should be done in such a way that the students’ self-esteem is not hurt.

An effective strategy can educate bystanders, deter bullies, and, at the same time, empower victims. Most importantly, students may develop a resiliency that protects

them from becoming violent themselves or that makes them less vulnerable to the influence of violence. Resiliency is related to protective factors, which are crucial for keeping the youngsters from committing law- breaking acts. Good parental monitoring, fair reward and punishment practices, rational parent- child or teacher-student communication, use of forgiveness, and a strong sense of inter-dependency between child and parents or students and teachers, are effective protective factors and insulators of delinquency (Wong, 2001b:3). Research suggests that resilience can also come from early positive experiences that counter the negative effects of violence (American Psychological Association, 2003:15). These experiences include positive role models, development of self-esteem, and self-efficacy, supportive relationships; a sense of hope about the future; belief in oneself; strong social skills; good peer relationships, a close, trusting bond with a nurturing adult outside the family, great empathy and support from the mother or mother figure, and the sense that one is in control of one's life.

Successful school-based interventions for bullying depend on teachers and principal creating a climate that discourages bullying but encourages peer processes that support and include vulnerable children. Teachers should label bullying behaviour, not the person. They should identify the problem as bullying behaviour and avoid labelling children and youth as "bullies and victims." These labels limit how they think about themselves and how others think of them (Pepler *et al.*, 2004:331).

Schools that wish to address this problem have a variety of avenues to pursue. The school can introduce a code of conduct, which is a whole-school disciplinary policy with a clearly spelled out set of rules and regulations that should make it possible for all school personnel to work together safely and productively. It should state clearly, with examples, what is good and bad behaviour along with respect rewards and sanctions (Batsche & Knoff, 1994:4). The school needs to establish a whole-school approach to bullying by establishing an awareness of the bullying problem. The school needs to evaluate how friendly it is towards bullying. Awareness of bullying both within and outside of the school can help reduce the act. Also, increased school safety features, such as video monitoring, can provide more protection for students (Batsche & Knoff, 1994:5).

Students should be encouraged to report incidents of bullying by promising them anonymity. The school should develop a student watch programme by training student volunteers to patrol and report instances of bullying. In the classroom, teachers may use stories and drama to increase awareness of bullying and bully courts can be set up to address bullying issues. The school should provide training for students in problem-solving approaches, which include conflict resolution training, conflict management and quality circles. All of these can be positive ways of addressing inappropriate behaviour. These activities make the school safer and let students know that bullying is a violation of children's rights (Batsche & Knoff, 1994:5).

A central component of school bullying prevention is creating a school climate where students are welcomed, supported, and feel safe. School climate and social-emotional learning curricular strategies promote learning, as well as school safety. A substantial body of research documents state that when social-emotional learning is incorporated into the curriculum, students show higher levels of pro-social behaviour, more favourable attitudes towards school and others, and better academic achievement. They also experience lower levels of conduct problems and emotional distress (Batsche & Knoff, 1994:2).

Schools need to take an active approach to promoting good behaviour, respect for others and tackling all forms of bullying, including prejudice driven bullying and cyber bullying. Schools, with the support of parents, the wider community, the local authority and young people themselves, need to take effective action to prevent bullying happening in the first place. A preventative approach helps schools to safeguard the well-being of their pupils and staff as well as playing their parent in creating a society in which all treat each other with dignity and respect. When bullying does occur schools need to respond promptly and firmly. They need to apply disciplinary sanctions. They need to work with bullies so that they are held to account for their actions and accept responsibility for the harm they have caused. They need to, also support those being bullied (Ahmad & Smith, 1994:2).

Schools that effectively implement this framework provide physical, social emotional and academic supports that enable schools to decrease bullying and victimisation

and improve outcomes for all students. Indeed, school-wide interventions are more likely to positively affect the school climate and reduce bullying than individualised or classroom level interventions implemented in isolation (Ttofi & Farrington, 2011:3). Importantly, creating this kind of school environment takes time and requires an integrated, whole school approach, and an ongoing commitment from school leadership, staff, students, parents, and the community (Vreeman & Carroll, 2007:7).

Creating a safe and supportive school environment is critical to preventing and deterring bullying, mitigating the effects of aggression and intimidation, and supporting learning and academic achievement. A positive school climate is associated with less involvement in bullying either as a bully or victim, and increased academic rejection (Guerra, Williams & Sadek, 2011:3). Furthermore, students who perceive their school as safe and supportive are more likely to report threats to safety (Syvertsen, Flanagan & Stout, 2009:1).

Discipline policies and rules are the most commonly adopted strategies that schools use to prevent violence. Based on a modest body of research, characteristics of effective school rules and policies have been established. These include graduated sanctions that are commensurate with the seriousness of the infraction, rules that are clearly understood and perceived as fair, consistent application of rules and sanctions, the administration of positive sanctions for desirable behaviour, avoidance of excessive reliance on suspensions and expulsions, and the inclusion of rules prohibiting bullying and harassment (Gottfredson, 2001:23).

A school's response to bullying should not start at the point at which a child has been bullied. The best schools develop a more sophisticated approach in which school staff proactively gathers intelligence about issues between pupils, which might provoke conflict. They develop strategies to prevent bullying occurring in the first place. This might involve talking to pupils about issues of difference, perhaps in lessons, through dedicated events or projects, or through assemblies. Staff, themselves, will work best for the particular issues they need to address (Aronson, 2005:1). School which excel at tackling bullying have created an ethos of good behaviour where pupils treat one another and the school staff with respect because they know that this is the right way to behave. Values of respect for staff and other

pupils, an understanding of permeate the whole school environment and are reinforced by staff and older pupils who set a good example for the rest (Griffiths, 2009:3).

Reviews of school-based bullying programmes suggest that single-level programmes are unlikely to provide an effective solution due to the systemic and complex nature of bullying (Vreeman & Carroll, 2007:7). Rather, evidence suggests that multidisciplinary whole-school interventions are the most effective, non-stigmatizing means to prevent and manage bullying behaviour (Rigby & Slee, 2008:3). A universal intervention has the potential to reach those who are bullied, those who bully others, and, over time, promotes policy, practice and a positive ethos that fosters sustainability at a whole-school level (Michaud, 2009:3).

Parent education should also be a focus in whole-school action to reduce bullying. Ttofi & Farrington (2011:10) found that parent training was one of the programme elements significantly associated with both a decrease in bullying and being bullied. Providing parents with learning opportunities may be especially important to address cyber bullying because of the generation gap between parents and their 'Net Generation' children (Palfrey & Gasser, 2008:52). Increasingly, evidence suggests that whole-school universal interventions are the most effective, non-stigmatising means to reduce bullying behaviour (Vreeman & Carroll, 2007:333). Given that bullying is a systemic problem, it is unlikely that a single-level programme such as classroom curriculum only could provide an effective solution (Vreeman & Carroll, 2007:333).

In a recent review of school-based anti-bullying interventions, it was concluded that the overall success of such interventions in reducing bullying has been, at most, moderately successful (Rigby & Slee, 2008:108). Yet, it has been propose that interventions which incorporate a multidimensional, whole-school approach have a greater likelihood of success (Vreeman & Carroll, 2007:333), and that the degree of school commitment and implementation of the intervention is an important factor contributing to the effectiveness of interventions (Rigby & Slee, 2008:108).

Research suggests that schools should take a proactive approach when it comes to bullying- prevention by implementing policies and procedures that prohibit bullying (Elinoff, 2004:26). Several states have done this by implementing bullying-prevention laws. For example, Oklahoma implemented the School Bullying Prevention Act, which requires each school to create a safe School Committee (Elinoff, 2004:26). The Committee's goal is to study the issues related to bullying and create a safe environment for students, evaluate current programmes, and report findings to the administrator (Elinoff, 2004:26).

Orpinas, Horne & Staniszewski (2003:3) state that some schools respond to aggression and violence by implementing targeted programmes that are designed for a subgroup of students who are high risk for violent behaviours or universal programs that affect everyone in the school community. Research suggests that the most effective interventions are those that are universal and involve the entire school community (Canady, 2005:5). Miller (2005:1) found positive results with a comprehensive programme. Some other universal interventions include educational programmes meant to increase teacher and student awareness of bullying, academic/curricula restructuring and adaptation, behavioural-based interventions, positive school-wide discipline programmes, behavioural monitoring and reinforcement, cooperative learning, bullying-prevention programmes, and parent education programs (Sprague, 2001:26).

Effective anti-bullying strategies will help pupils to realize their academic potential and will contribute to the creation of a happy, healthy and safe school. A bullying culture can have a negative effect on pupils' learning and emotional well-being, as well as the reputation of the school (DFEE, 1999:2). The School Standards and Framework Act (1998:3) states that schools must encourage respect for others and, in particular, prevent all forms of bullying among pupils.

Many schools systems in an attempt to create a safer environment for students have taken steps to deal with bullying and school violence by using metal detectors, hiring security guards, and establishing policies that have a zero tolerance for school violence (Garrity, 1997:13). However, many victims report feeling that the school personnel's response to bullying situations is ineffective. Batsche & Knoff (1994:4)

reported that 40% to 60% of junior high school students indicate that teachers rarely tried to stop bullying. Because victims often feel ignored by teachers, they tend to report that they are being bullied, believing adults to be unsympathetic. Students feel this lack of action creates an environment of fear and intimidation and one in which bullying behaviour is acceptable.

Victims usually deal with this type of situation by avoiding school (Batsche & Knoff, 1994:3).

Numerous programmes have been created for bullying-prevention school safety. According to Canady (2001:4), bullying is a systemic problem and, therefore, requires a comprehensive anti-bullying programme to be successful. Canady further states that comprehensive programmes should include teaching social and conflict-resolution skills as well as establishing and enforcing anti- bullying rules. In addition, a successful programme must involve everyone (for example, staff, parents, all students) and not just bullies and their victims. The programme must be targeted at empowering bystanders (Brewster & Railsback, 2001:1).

Schools are the ideal environment in which to reduce bullying. Schools have the capacity to involve a large number of people and a variety of people from different levels of influence. For example, intervention to reduce bullying in schools can incorporate individual students, entire classes, teachers, head-teachers and family members. A whole-school approach to tackle bullying, as the name suggests, incorporates involvement from all those levels of influence in the school context (Stevens, Van Oost & De Bourdeaudhuij, 2001:101). A school in which positive school climate and classroom management are clear have school policies that are fair and consistent, pay attention to student safety, encourage academic achievement, and create positive peer and student-teacher relations (Wilson, 2004:7).

2.4.5 Peer-Led Interventions

Peer support models focus primarily on improving student relation-ships and include such forms as peer counselling, peer mediation, befriending, and participant role

approaches (Menesini *et al.,* 2003:9). Peer-led interventions typically comprise teaching peer helper's skills such as active listening, empathy, problem-solving, and support (Smith *et al*., 2005:71). These interventions involve the active participation of many students with the aim of fostering communication rather than blame among students involved in bullying. These interventions involve creation of roles and structures that enable students to act responsibly and empathically (Cowie & Olafson, 2000:72).

Peer-led approaches may be amenable and beneficial for teenagers who are less accepting of adult authority and direction than younger students (Englander & Lawson, 2007:330). There is some debate, however, about the benefit of employing students to facilitate and intervene in bullying situations because of the view that adult authority is necessary to address bullying problems (Pepler, Smith & Rigby, 2004:331).

Several factors must be considered when developing peer interventions to counter bullying (O' Connell, Pepler & Craig, 1999:328). First, children must be given transparent authorization and support to attempt to change entrenched dynamics and behavioural patterns for example, the aggressor, victimized child, and bystanders evident among children in bullying incidents. Second, children require strategies to help them intervene effectively. Peer interventions, for instance, must not be aggressive or hostile. This could elicit aggression and place the child intervener at risk of victimisation. More importantly, student interventions in bullying situations must be actively promoted and supported in the context of a whole-school anti-bullying initiative (O'Connell *et al*., 1999:328).

Peer support has grown in popularity and is now a widely used-bullying intervention in primary and secondary schools in a number of countries. It is generally believed that the inclusion of such projects in schools provide significant opportunities for young people to become actively involved in decision-making on matters which directly affect them (Parson & Blake, 2004:6). Some research suggests that peer support systems can provide benefits for users of the scheme, peer supporters themselves and schools in general (Naylor & Cowie, 1999:333). Peer counselling

involves student helpers who are trained and supervised to use active listening skills, in order to provide support to peer who are distressed.

Peer counselling has been widely used in health education, teaching academic skills, and fostering social skills (Garner & Martin, 1989:332) as well as in preventing and reducing bullying (Salmivalli, 1999:330). With respect to bullying, peer counselling is typically employed to support victimised learners (Salmivalli, 1999: 330). Although support provided by teachers and parents is undoubtedly important for victimised learners, they also need positive peer experiences. Peer counselling is one way of providing a positive peer experience (Salmivalli, 1999:331). A disadvantage of peer-led approaches is the high level of commitment required by school staff involved in recruiting, training, and supervising student peer counsellors who must have adult backing.

Peer mediation entails teaching students a nonviolent method through which to resolve conflicts. Students trained in mediation act as neutral third parties in resolving nonphysical disputes among students. The aim is to reduce violence by enabling students to resolve disagreements and misunderstandings before these escalate into full-blown conflicts. Peer mediation provides students with important tools and skills, including cooperation, communication, tolerance, positive emotional expression and conflict resolution with the overall goal of developing a peaceful and respectful school (Tutty, 2002:333).

Factors that impede successful peer mediation include irregular supervision by adults, insufficient numbers of peer supporters to address the problems, and bullying problems that are particularly severe (Cowie & Olafson, 2000:72). Another difficulty is the unequal participation by gender, whereby the majority of peer supporters are female as are the teachers who run peer mediation programmes (Smith, Ananiadou & Cowie, 2003:327). Other problems include students' fears that they will be ridiculed by their peers should they participate, as participating in mediation might not be considered "cool", self- consciousness about exposing problems to peers, or fear that initiating mediation will lead to retribution by the aggressor (The-Berge & Karan, 2004:333).

Similar to the other peer-led intervention, “befriending” entails teaching peer helpers the basic skills of active listening, empathy, and problem solving, and providing support to vulnerable peers (Naylor & Cowie, 1999:72). The “participant role approach” targets all individuals involved in a bullying incident. This approach is informed by the principle that effective intervention must target the whole group because most learners are involved to some degree, in bullying situations and assume roles supported by the peer group (Salmivalli *et al.,* 2005:1). The participant role approach aims to utilise the children in each of the bystander roles to stop bullying behaviours. With peers participating in clear ways intended to end bullying, the learners who bully may be less likely to sustain the bullying behaviour should they lose the audience and support (Salmivalli, 1999:331).

Peer-led interventions, like befriending or conflict resolution, involve teaching peer helpers the basic skills of active listening, empathy, problem solving, and supportiveness that they need to help students involved in a bullying situation. These interventions involve the active participation of many students, promote communication rather than blame among those involved in bullying, and create roles and structures that encourage students to act in responsible and empathic ways (Cowie & Olafson, 2000:332). The peer-led approach may be particularly advantageous for adolescents, who tend to be less accepting of adult authority and direction than younger learners (Salmivalli, 2001:742).

Support group approaches (e.g. The No-Blame approach, Shared Concern Method) include all participants and witnesses in a bully event. They are brought together to build citizenship education, understanding of human rights and development of emotional literacy through increased empathy for others. These methods constitute a forward-looking approach to offending and challenging behaviour, which places repairing harm done to relationships above the need for assigning blame and punishment (Bray, 2007:3). The Pikas (2002:10) and The No Blame Approach (Maines & Robinson, 1998:252) are two examples of the support group approach. The No Blame Approach has the following components: Interview the victim; convene a meeting with the people involved, ask the group for their ideas; leave it up to them; and meet with the group again. In a 1994 study, Smith and Sharp identified

that 45 out of 47 interventions utilising the secondary level and primary schools have demonstrated success.

A more behaviourally focused approach that is sometimes used is the Functional Behaviour Assessment (FBA, Larson *et al,* 2002:8). An FBA is a systematic process of identifying problem behaviours and the events that (a) Reliably predict occurrences and non- occurrences of those behaviours and (b) Maintain the behaviours across time. The purpose of gathering information is to improve the effectiveness, relevance, and efficiency of behaviour support plans and interventions (Sugai, Homer, Dunlap, Hieneman, Lewis, Liaupsin, Sailor, Tumbull & Wickham, 2000:1). If we can identify the conditions under which problem behaviour is likely to occur (triggering antecedents and maintaining consequences), we can arrange environments in ways that occurrences of problem behaviour can be reduced and teach and encourage behaviours that can replace problem behaviour. FBA is useful in identifying rein forcers and antecedents associated with problem behaviours such as bullying.

Other forms of peer-led intervention involve setting up cooperative work groups and, creating a circle of friends to support students at risk of victimisation. Peer support is where pupils help other pupils in their school, through formalised activities and with staff supervision. The central principle of peer support is that it can be helpful for children to receive support from their peers, rather than adults. A peer has been described as someone who is about the same age as you, for children this is usually someone in the same year, class or age grade (Smith, Cowie & Blades, 2003:136).
In terms of peer support in schools, the support may be provided by pupils in the same class or school year, but also by older pupils. Toda (200 5:59) describes peer support as social support by individuals who are similar in age/ or social conditions to the person receiving support. Others have noted that peer support builds upon the natural helpfulness normally found in friendship groups, and should be run by peers for peers (Topping, 1996:24). It provides a source of support from other young people for those who do not have friends or who would prefer to talk to on a non-friend. Peer supporters are likely to have more in common with the pupils needing help, than school staff (Topping, 1996:24). Peer support encourages a sense of positive citizenship within a school. It is defined as “a form of lived morality and

encompasses a range of activities and systems within which people's potential to be helpful to one another can be fostered through appropriate training" (Cowie & Smith, 2010:18). The idea of a lived morality points to the development of a supportive school ethos.

Peer support covers a range of approaches to bullying that aim to make use of the knowledge and experience of children and young people to develop the skills, self-esteem and confidence of their peers. Evidence confirms that peer support makes a significant contribution to reducing bullying (Cowie & Wallace, 2000:11). It allows children to reject bullying behaviour, take responsibility for them and helps them to empathise with others. The process also benefits peer educators' own personal development. A high level of school commitment is needed to train and support pupil volunteers. Peer support does not replace adult involvement and should be used as one approach among others (Peer Support Forum, 2002:3).

- **Setting up Cooperative Work Group**

Here, learners work together to solve a common task (design a new newspaper; jigsaw classroom). Cooperative group work has the potential to involve and integrate vulnerable, bullied learners in the class peer group, and has been shown to help in this respect. However the activities can be disrupted by bullying learners (Cowie, Smith, Boulton & Laver, 1994:3).

Cooperative group work gives learners the opportunity to work together on structured activities in class, and has been described as the most fundamental form of peer support (Cowie & Wallace, 2000:11). Cooperative group work can encourage an atmosphere of sharing, caring and friendship among staff in an entire school community. It also positively affects classroom atmosphere and student learning. One study found that students, who participated in group study sessions using cooperative learning techniques, improved both their social skills and their self-confidence (Petress, 2004:19). By requiring students to listen to fellow students' ideas and express their own views, this teaching strategy enhances both communication and cognitive skills in students and provides important opportunities to practice assertiveness (Petress, 2004:19). Awareness, tolerance and acceptance of diversity also improve in students. Another study found cooperative learning to be

an effective tool for preventing violence (Coghlam, 2000:2). Students developed and maintained friendships across racial, ethnic, social and economic lines, thus reducing conflicts among them.

Working or playing in cooperative groups helps children to develop assertive problem- solving skills, self-sufficiency, organisational and social skills and an ability to tolerate different perspectives on the same issue (Cowie & Sharp, 1994:3). These attributes build capacity and resilience in children enabling them to cope better with the negative effects of bullying. Similarly, Cowie, Smith, Boulton & Laver (1994:11), found that cooperative group work in junior classes reduced the victimisation of vulnerable children.

Aside from the more obvious social benefits of cooperative learning groups and directed to work together master the material, and praised as a group did better on an assessment of the task than did students working as individuals (Johnson, Johnson & Taylor, 1993:3). In another study, Aboriginal students' problem-solving and language skills both improved as a result of group work sessions (Demmert, 2001:8). Collectively, these results suggest that not only do cooperative learning strategies provide opportunities critical to developing problem-solving, communication and social skills and an appreciation of diversity in learners, but they can also facilitate learning and improve achievement.

- **Creating a Circle of Friends**

A circle of friends is a group of peers that gathers around the youth who have behavioural problems and are easily upset. Peers, as part of a circle, have been effective in helping bully-victim manage their anger, read social cues, and help de-escalate situations where the bully- victim feel slighted or singled-out. Also, the peer helper's motivation appears to improve the bully- victim's self-esteem, because they feel someone cares for them. The circle, when it meets together to check-in, is led by an adult facilitator who establishes ground rules with the youth and guides the conversations and problem solving (Newton, Taylor & Wilson, 1996:3). The circle of friends is an approach meant to support children experiencing emotional, behavioural or social difficulties in the educational setting by enlisting the help of the other children in their class and setting up a special group, or circle of friends. The

special group helps to set, monitor and review weekly targets in a meeting facilitated by an adult. Group members also provide support to facilitate the focus child's inclusion and to help achieve agreed targets (Newton, Taylor & Wilson, 1996:3).

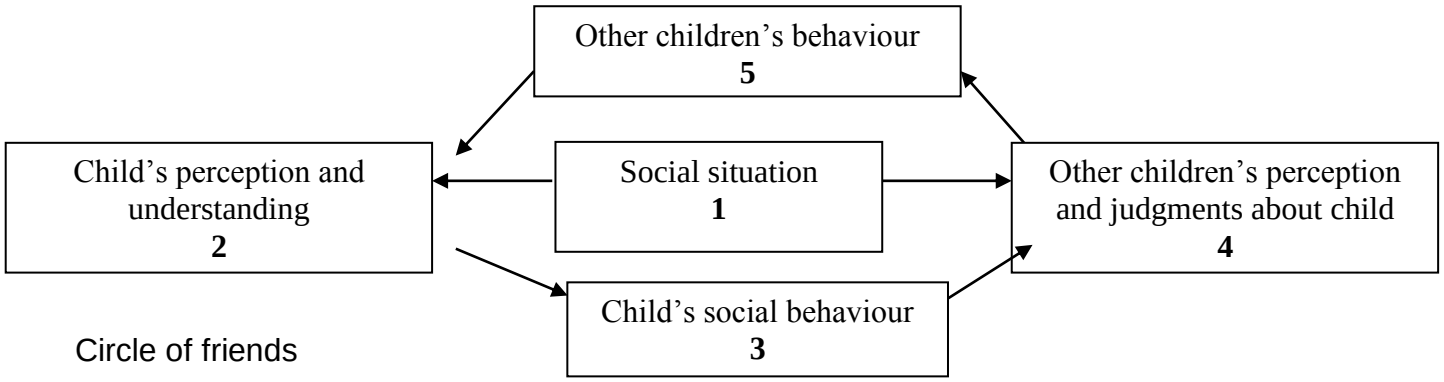

Fig 2.1: A model of social interaction in children
(Adapted from Dodge et al, 1986)

The circle quickly becomes a learning experience for all the children in the group as they talk about feelings, problem solve, listen, empathise, challenge, and work out better ideas for dealing with peers and adults. Experience has shown that there is need for clear boundaries throughout and clarity regarding how circle members should deal with disclosures from the child they are supporting. Circle processes and context can vary enormously and are affected by the style and strengths of the facilitator and what the group feels able to handle or pursue. This can range from deeply emotive material to 'straight forward' behavioural strategies. It is also important to hold follow up sessions to maintain and support the circle. The facilitator needs to keep in touch with the circle and school staff, especially in a new situation (Newton, Taylor & Wilson, 1996:4).

The circle of friends, as a time limited intervention, is appropriate for children in Key Stage 2 and older. It has been used to support children during secondary transfer or when moving into a new school context. For younger children and older young people, it may need some adaptation and modification. This approach has also been used to support children with social communication difficulties and with mild autistic spectrum needs, who experience friendship and interaction difficulties as well

as children with more significant disabilities, who may need a longer-term circle (Turner, 2011:110).

There is a growing body of evidence that suggests that peer support can reduce the amount of bullying. Peer support can help those who are bullied through active listening, mentoring and friendship. A circle of friends is a group of peers that gathers around the youth who has behavioural problems and is easily upset. Peers, as part of a circle, have been effective in helping the bully-victim manage his/her anger, read social cues, and help de-escalate situations where the bully-victim feels slighted or singled- out. Also, the peer helper's motivation appears to improve the bully-victim's self-esteem, because they feel someone cares for them. The circle, when it meets together to check-in, is led by an adult facilitator who establishes ground rules with the youth and guides the conversations and problem solving (Newton, Taylor & Wilson, 1996:3). Adults outside the circles should be informed of the circle's existence as well as support it and the youth for the best possible outcome (Parson & Blake, 2004:7).

In these circles, volunteer learners are trained to befriend and support other learners who are identified as isolated or rejected by their peers, and hence, vulnerable to bullying. Training involves increasing empathic skills, developing a flexible and creative method to form positive relationships with peers, and ingenuity in devising practical strategies to support victims (Cowie & Wallace, 2000:11).

In a circle of friends, children and young people volunteer to be part of a group that helps a specific child or young person, who may be experiencing a family illness or death or be disabled. The friends support and encourage the child. This approach has also been used to help children and young people who have behavioural problems.

The role of staff is central. Staff must understand both the intentions and processes of the initiative, provide advice, monitor it on a day-to-day basis, and support the efforts of the circle. The approaches have proved to be particularly useful in primary school (Whitted & Dupper, 2005:170).

In this technique, pupils are trained to befriend and support another pupil identified as vulnerable to bullying. The aim is to provide emotional support to vulnerable pupils who may feel rejected by their peers. This has proved effective in reducing aggressive behaviour, as well as developing the social skills of pupils who are bullied. With the agreement of pupil who are being bullied, the class meets in their absence. The teacher encourages the class to speak about the pupil positively and to say how they would feel if they were isolated. A small group of peers volunteers to be in the circle of friends and agrees on ways to help him/her. As well as benefiting the one needing support, it provides all participants with a creative way of forming positive interpersonal relationships with peers (Welsh, 2003:1).

A support network can be set up to build relationships around a vulnerable child/young person. Newton (1996:2) states that the circle of friend's method must first be explained to the individual and the parents, whose agreement and support are essential. If in school, a trained adult meets with the class to discuss how they would feel and behave if they were isolated or socially excluded and to consider how they may help and volunteer to form the individual's circle of friends (6-8 individuals). The group considers strategies for helping the individual and these are recorded and then prioritised. Case studies confirm that this is a flexible and creative method of forming positive relationship with peers and increasing insight into the individual's feelings and behaviour (Newton, 1999:3).

The circle of friends is one strategy or tool that has been widely used to promote social inclusion. It is recommended in social inclusion, Pupil Support, circular 10/99 as an example of best practice along with circle of time and peer mediation. It is particularly used in schools to promote the inclusion, rejection and isolation from their peers because of their disability, behaviour or some other individual difference. The circle of friends is an inclusive approach meant to support children experiencing emotional, behavioural or social difficulties in the educational setting by enlisting the help of a peer group drawn from the whole class, which is established as a special group/ circle of friends. This group helps to set, monitor and review weekly targets in a meeting facilitated by an adult (Welsh, 2003:3).

Although often used by primary schools, this technique can also prove to be an effective anti- bullying strategy in secondary schools (Ofsted, 2003:3). It provides emotional support to vulnerable pupils who may feel isolated and rejected by their peers. Pupils are trained to befriend and support another pupil identified as vulnerable to bullying. The approach also supports those who bully as a result of feeling isolated and rejected themselves (Ofsted, 2003:3).

2.5 ROLE SCHOOLS COULD PLAY IN ADDRESSING BULLYING IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS

Even though bullying in school stems from external social problems (Lee, 2004:53), Garrett (2003:93) states the importance of adult involvement with regards to the problem of bullying in the school environment. Schools have a capacity to make difference (Lee, 2004:53). These adults need to become more aware of the extent of the problem in the school and not just turn away and think it will just, 'go away'. They need to become focused and begin to change the situation (Garrett, 2003:93). Olweus (1993:69) is optimistic that once a school has decided to initiate systems against bullying, it is a good idea to organise a school conference day around the problem. The author mentions that various people such as the principal, teachers, school psychologist, school counsellor, as well as parents and students should be invited.

In order to bring about change in attitudes, schools need to make their communications and initiatives to involve individual learners, the school as an organisation, families and local communities. Schools should set a standard of behaviour which others will follow and unequivocally declare their abhorrence of bullying wherever it happens (Knox, 1997:72). Slee & Rigby (1998:57) deal with ways of using peer group pressure as a resource to reduce bullying.

It is also important that the school should engage teaching and non-teaching staff in the discussion and implementation of the anti-bullying programme. School officials should also encourage parents to report bullying if they suspect that their child is involved in bullying (DOE, 2003:16). The policy should describe how the school addresses incidents of bullying. School policies that address bullying must not be

limited to student bullying, but should include bullying of students by adults in the school (Rigby, 2003:115).

Awareness should also be raised amongst peoples, as well as the promotion of positive people relationships. One way to do this is suggested by Lee (2004:60) is to begin to embed ideas pupils' rights and responsibilities. One way to combat school violence is through prevention aimed at promoting positive youth development (Aspy, 2004:56). This should be based on the belief that all youth can use their strength or asserts for the betterment of society. This approach should specifically emphasise the development of those assets that enable youth to make positive contributions to their families and communities (Larson, 2005:3).

The school needs to establish a whole-school approach to bullying, by raising an awareness of the bullying problem. The school needs to evaluate how tolerant it is toward bullying. Awareness of bullying both within and outside of the school can help reduce the act. Also, increased school safety features such as video monitoring can provide more protection to students (Olweus, 1993:75). The school should develop a student watch programme by training student volunteers to patrol and report instances of bullying. In the classroom, teachers may use stories and drama to create awareness of bullying, and bully courts can be set up for addressing bullying issues. The school should provide training for students in problem-solving approaches, which include conflict resolution training, conflict management and quality circles.

Other researchers note that, in order to combat bullying, schools can implement some of the same principles found in youth violence prevention programmes. Schools should focus not only on decreasing aggression and other bullying behaviours, but also strive to create a positive social climate and a context inconsistent with such behaviours. Some additional keys include offering support to targets, setting and enforcing clear rules and consequences for violations, increasing communication among students regarding the problem, and encouraging parents and other community members to participate in the anti-bullying efforts of the school (Smokoski & Kopasz, 2005:1).

2.6 CONCLUSION

Lawrence (1998:228) notes that effective prevention of school disruption relies on the quality of school governance and the existence of clear consistent discipline policies. He says a firm, fair system for running a school appears to be the key factor in reducing violence. Furthermore, “where the rules are known and are firmly and fairly enforced, less violence occurs” and, schools that are run with clear explicit rules that are firmly and uniformly enforced, experience fewer disruptions.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1 RESEARCH DESIGN

Research design refers to a plan for selecting subjects, research sites, and data collection procedures to answer research question(s) (McMillan & Schumacher, 2006:117). McMillan & Schumacher maintain that the goal of a research design is to provide results that are judged to be credible. According to Creswell (2009:3), research designs are plans and procedures for research that span the decisions from broad assumptions to detailed methods of data collection and analysis. The research design is simply a plan or proposal to conduct a research (Creswell, 2009:5). Expounding from this, Charles and Mertler (2002:384) refer to the research design as the overall, detailed plan that shows how the researcher intends to obtain, analyse, and interpret data.

Welman & Kruger (1999:46) further define the research design as a plan according to which we obtain research participants and collect information from them. They further state that, in a research design, one describes what one is going to do with the participants with a view to reaching conclusions about the research problem. It is also a specification of the most adequate operations to be performed, in order to test a specific hypothesis under given conditions. They further state that, in a research design, the focus should be in the number of groups that should be used, whether these groups are to be drawn randomly from the populations involved and also whether they should be assigned randomly, and, lastly, what exactly should be done with them in the case of experimental research.

Bless & Smith (1995:63) define the research design as the planning of any scientific research from the first to the last step, and as a programme to guide the researcher in collecting, analysing and interpreting observed facts. According to Mouton (1998:107), a research design is a set of guidelines and instructions to be followed in addressing the research problem. Here, the main function will be to enable the researcher to anticipate what the appropriate research decisions should be so as to

maximise the validity of the eventual results. He further states that the research design could be viewed as the 'blueprint' of the research project that precedes the actual research process.

De Vos (1998:77) further defines a research design as "a blueprint or detailed plan" for how a research study is to be conducted, that is operationalising variables, electing a sample of interest to study, collecting data to be used as a basis for testing hypotheses, and analysing the results.

3.2 POPULATION AND SAMPLE

Every study is directed to address a problem of a particular population. Due to research constraints, the whole population cannot participate in the study. As such, a sample which represents the target population was drawn as described below.

3.2.1 Population

According to De Vos (1998:190), the population is a group that the researcher is interested in gaining information and drawing conclusions from. Furthermore, the population is sometimes offered to what as the universe, and it is defined as the entire group whom characteristics are to be estimated (Ndagi, 1984:75). The population is a group of interest to the researcher to which he/ she would like the results of the study to be generalisable (Gay, 1996:172).

A population is a group of elements or cases, whether individuals, objects, or events, that conform to specific criteria and from which the researcher intended to generalises the results of the study (McMillan & Schumacher, 2006:119). Airasian & Gay (2003:102) indicate that a population is a group of interest to the researcher, the group to which the results of the study will be generalised. According to Gay (1996:172), the population includes all the individuals within certain descriptive parameters, such as location, age or sex, while Neuman (2003:216) states that the researcher's target population is a particular pool of individuals or cases that he or she wants to study.

Bless & Smith (2000:85) define population as a set of elements that the research focuses upon and to which the results obtained by testing the sample should be generalised. In support of this, Mouton (1998:110) defines population as a collection of objects, events or individuals having some common characteristics that the researcher is interested in studying. It is the aggregate of all the cases that conform to some designated set of specifications. Babbie (1998:109) emphasises that population is that group about whom conclusions are to be drawn.

Bless & Craig (2002:342) define population as a complete set of events, people or things to which the research findings are to be applied. Welman & Kruger (1999:18) add that a population encompasses the entire collection of cases about which we wish to make conclusions. Bless & Smith (2000:84) further define population as the entire set of objects or people which is the focus of the research and about which the researcher wants to determine some characteristics. The target population in this study consists of principals, teachers and learners in Motupa Circuit of Mopani District in Limpopo Province.

3.2.2 Sample and Sampling Procedure

Merriam (1998:60) defines a sample as a unit of analysis. This unit of analysis includes people or settings selected with the goal of gaining a deep understanding of the phenomenon experienced by a carefully selected group of people (Mykut & Morehouse, 1994:56). Roberts (2004:135) defines a sample as a data source that includes a description of the individuals who participate in an interview. She distinguishes a sample from sampling by postulating that sampling is the process of selecting a number of individuals for a study in such a way that the individuals represent a larger group from which they come.

According to De Vos (1998:191), a sample is a subset of measurements drawn from a population in which the researcher is interested. A sample is studied in an effort to understand the population from which it is drawn. Sample refers to the group of elements drawn from the population. If is considered to be representative of the population and is studied in order to acquire some knowledge about the entire population (Bless & Smith, 2000:156). A sample is obtained by collecting

information about some members of the population only. A sample is a small portion of the total set of objects, events, or persons who together comprise the subjects of our study (Bless & Smith, 1995:86).

Bless & Smith (1995:86) describe a sample as a subset of the whole population which is actually investigated by a researcher and whose characteristics will be generalised to the entire population. According to McMillan & Schumacher (2006:119), a sample is a group of subjects or participants from whom the data are collected. The authors add that it is important for the researcher to carefully and completely define both the target population and the sampling frame.

A sample is believed to be a number of individuals from a population for a specific study. Samples must be representative of the population being studied, otherwise no general observations about the population can be made from studying the sample. Schumacher & McMillan (1993:598) define the concept "sample" as a number of individuals selected from the population for a study. It always substitutes a large group from which it was drawn.

Tuckman (1994:237) states that the first step in sampling is to define the population. Once it has been done, the researcher can select a sample or representative group from this population to serve as respondents.

According to White (2005:114), sampling means to make a selection from the sampling frame, in order to identify the people or issues to be included in the research. There are 12 secondary schools in Motupa Circuit. The schools were arranged alphabetically. Since a total of 3 schools were needed, the numbers were divided by 4 to get 3. School number 4, 8 and 12 were sampled to participate in the study.

A random sampling procedure was used to select students in grade 8 and grade 11 at government and private secondary schools in Motupa Circuit. Two classes each from Grade 8 and 11 were randomly chosen, resulting in 50 students being randomly chosen. To take care of the attrition due to absenteeism, dropouts or transferees, five additional students per grade were selected as replacements. If a class had

fewer than five absentees, dropouts or transferees only, the necessary numbers of substitutions was made to bring the number of students in the grade up to 40. The reason for that procedure was to have a representative sample. The total sample for the three schools was 150 students.

According to McMillan & Schumacher (2006:378), the sampling procedure is a process by which selection is done with a need to understand something about certain cases without needing or desiring to generalise to all such cases. In support of this, Stocker (1989:100) refers to the sampling procedure as a process by which a sample is drawn from a population. It is also indicated that sampling methods are used in research when one is unable to investigate the total population from which the researcher wants to obtain information.

In this research project, purposeful sampling was used because the researcher selected the schools that manifested the characteristics the researcher was interested in, that is schools with a track record on bullying cases. McMillan & Schumacher (2006:378) state that purposeful sampling involves selecting information-rich cases for an in-depth study when one wants to understand something about those cases without needing or desiring to generalise to all such cases. In purposeful sampling, participants manifest certain characteristics that the researcher is interested in (Struwig & Stead, 2001:122). In support of this, De Vos (1998:198) states that purposeful sampling is based entirely on the judgment of the researcher, in that a sample is composed of elements which contain the most characteristic, representative or typical attributes of the population. The strategy is to select units that are judged to be the commonest in the population under investigation.

Sampling, according to Bless & Smith (2000:156), is a technique by which a sample is drawn from the population. De Vos (1998:190) defines sampling as taking any portion of a population or universe as representative of that population or universe. According to Mouton (1998:110), the methodological criteria applied in the process of sampling are: a clear definition of the population; systematic drawing of the sample; drawing probability rather than non-probability samples; and observing the advantages of multi-stage versus simple random sampling.

3.3 DATA COLLECTION STRATEGY

In this study, a questionnaire was used as a data collection technique.

3.3.1 Quantitative Data Collection

McMillan & Schumacher (2006:178) state that quantitative measurement uses some type of instrument or device to obtain numerical indices that correspond to characteristics of the subjects. They further expand that the numerical values are then summarised and reported as the results of the study. According to Neuman (2003:542), quantitative data collection involves gathering information in the form of numbers. In this study, one questionnaire for educators were constructed and used to collect data.

Bless & Smith (1995:37) defines quantitative research as research conducted using a range of methods which use measurement to record and investigate aspects of social reality. They further state that quantitative research relies on measurement to compare and analyse different variables. The systematic changes in scores are interpreted or given meaning in terms of the actual world that they represent. In support of this, Struwig & Stead (2001:4) state that quantitative research examines constructs that are based on the hypotheses derived from a theoretical scheme. Leedy (2011:189) defines quantitative research as a type of research that involves making a careful description of observed phenomena and/or exploring the possible relationship between different phenomena. In support of this, Mouton (1998:162) states that the aim of quantitative research is not to discuss specific techniques of statistical analysis, but rather to provide a framework that could be used in making more sense of such techniques.

3.3.2 Questionnaire

A questionnaire was used to collect demographic data. The questions in the questionnaire were close ended because open-ended questions are too demanding of most respondents' time (Cohen, 2000:249). Fox (1969:551) states that this option

should be offered in any questionnaire where there is some likelihood that some of the respondents will not know the information requested.

According to Strauss & Myburgh (2000:47), a questionnaire has self-defined questions which a respondent should answer. It is commonly presented in written form. Behr (1993:72) states that a questionnaire is the most used technique and method to gather something written. The compilation of a self-defined questionnaire is the duty of the researcher to collect data for the research duty he/ she undergoes. The idea behind the questionnaire is to obtain information from the teachers.

Wilson & Mclean (1994:3) recommend a questionnaire as it is a useful instrument for collecting survey information. It provides structured, often numerical data, and can be administered in the absence of the researcher. A questionnaire is comparatively straightforward to analyse. According to Mason & Bramble (1997:316), the advantage of a questionnaire is that a large sample can be reached. A sample of the questionnaire that was designed for the study is attached as Appendices. The aim of the questionnaire was to obtain relevant information of all the participants of the selected sample. The questionnaire included agree, disagree, strongly agree and strongly disagree questions, as well as statements to which subjects had to respond by indicating their choices.

According to Leedy (2011:191), a questionnaire is a common place instrument for observing data beyond the physical reach of the observer. It may be sent to people a thousand of miles away, whom the researcher may never see. In support of this, McMillan & Schumacher (1998:51) state that a questionnaire is an instrument which comprises a series of questions that are answered by the respondents. De Vos (1998:89) states that a questionnaire is an instrument with open or closed questions or statements to which a respondent must react.

De Vos (1998:154) mentions various types of questionnaires, namely telephonic questionnaires, personal questionnaires, questionnaires delivered by hand, and group administered questionnaires. According to Bless & Smith (2000:156), a questionnaire is an instrument of data collection consisting of a standardised series of questions relating to the research topic to be answered in writing by participants.

In support of this, McMillan & Schumacher (2006:597) define a questionnaire as a written set of questions or statements that assess attitudes, opinions, beliefs, and biographical information. McMillan & Schumacher (2006:238) further state that a questionnaire is relatively economical, has standardised questions, and can ensure anonymity. Questions can be written for specific purposes, and a questionnaire can use statements or questions, but in all cases, the subject is responding to something written.

Questionnaires were used because they have some measure of objectivity, validity and reliability. In this study, questionnaires were administered to educators and school principals because they were able to read and understand the questions. In this study, the researcher used questionnaires delivered by hand. According to De Vos (1998:174), the researcher may deliver the questionnaires by hand so that respondent can complete them in their own time, and then collect them later. The researcher makes appointments to collect the questionnaires again.

3.4 RELIABILITY AND VALIDITY OF THE STUDY

According to Bless & Smith (2000:126), reliability is concerned with the consistency of measures. An instrument that produces different scores every time it is used to measure an unchanging value has low reliability. A reliable measurement is one where we obtain the same results on repeated occasions (De Vos, 1998:54). In support of this, Mouton (1996:144) states that reliability refers to the fact that different research participants being tested by the same instrument at different times should respond identically to the instrument. Vockell (1993:22) further asserts that reliability addresses the question of whether or not a measuring instrument is consistent. Struwig & Stead (2001:130) defines reliability as the extent to which test scores are accurate, consistent or stable. He further states that a test score's validity is dependent on the score's reliability since, if the reliability is inadequate, the validity will also be poor.

McMillan & Schumacher (2006:385) define reliability as the extent to which independent researchers could discover the same phenomena and to which there is agreement on the description of the phenomena between the researcher and

participants. Toma (2006:412) asserts that findings are reliable when various researchers using the same approach would find the same results. Merriam (1998:205) states that reliability refers to the extent to which research findings can be replicated.

The reliability of an instrument means that if the same instrument is used at different times or administered to different subjects from the same population, the findings should be the same. In other words, reliability is the extent to which a measuring instrument is repeatable and consistent (Maree, 2007:215).

The concept of validity can be looked at from two basic levels, namely are internal validity and external validity. On one hand internal validity deals with the question of how research findings match reality (McMillan & Schumacher, 1998:201). Toma (2006: 412) gives a quantitative slant to the definition of validity when he avers that internal validity refers to findings which enable the researcher to draw meaningful inferences from instances that measure what they intend to measure. McMillan & Schumacher (2006:391) agree with Merriam (1998) on what validity is when they aptly state that internal validity refers to the degree to which explanations of phenomena match the realities of the world.

Validity, on the other hand, is concerned with the soundness and the effectiveness of the measuring instrument (Leedy, 2011:32). Hudson (cited in De Vos, 2000:83) cites Hudson who says a valid measuring instrument has been described as doing what it is intended to do, that is measuring what it is supposed to measure. De Vos (2000:83) also states that the validity measure is one that measures what it is intended to measure. Validity means that the measurements are correct, that is the instrument measures what it is intended to measure and that it measures this correctly (Melville, 1996:41). According to McMillan & Schumacher (2006:157) state the term validity means the degree to which scientific explanations of phenomena match the realities of the world, it further refers to the truth or falsity of propositions generated by research.

3.5 DATA ANALYSIS

Data analysis as described by Marshall and Rossman (cited in White, 2005:256) tails bringing order, structure and meaning to the mass of time consuming, creative and fascinating process.

Quantitative data was computed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) student Version 17.0. The maxim for statistical significance was used. The responses from the questionnaire were organised, summarised and displayed as sets of numeric data in the form of tally sheets and bar graphs. Descriptive analysis was used to analyse quantitative data.

Data analysis is primarily an inductive process of organising data into categories and identifying patterns among categories (McMillan & Schumacher, 2006:461). Mykut and Morehouse (1994:26) point out that data analysis is to meant understand the phenomenon being investigated and to describe what is learned with a minimum of interpretation.

Data analysis can be done at a level where the challenge is to construct categories or themes. These categories or themes are devised intuitively but in a systematic process informed by the purpose of the study and the investigator's orientation and knowledge. Units of data are grouped into meaningful segments (Merriam, 1998:179). The categories constructed should reflect the purpose of the study, be exhaustive, mutually exclusive, sensitising and conceptually congruent (Merriam, 1998:183-184).

Data from the questionnaires were computed and analysed using the Statistical Package for Social Science (PSS) Version 17.0. Descriptive statistics were used. The alpha coefficient of 0.05 serves as the maxim for statistical significance. The analyses were executed in consultation with a statistical analyst, in order to exclude any misleading interpretation.

An analysis of information from individual questionnaires was conducted through identifying common themes from the participants' description of their experiences.

Irrelevant information was separated from relevant information and the relevant information broken into phrases or sentences, to reflect a single, specific thought. A cyclical approach of data analysis was used to analyse the collected information.

3.6 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

A researcher is ethically responsible for protecting the rights and welfare of the subjects who participate in a study that involves issues of physical and mental discomfort, harm, and danger (McMillan & Schumacher, 2006:16). The following were the ethical considerations in this study:

3.6.1 Privacy, Confidentiality and Anonymity

McMillan & Schumacher (1993:399) contend that researchers have a dual responsibility. Firstly, the researcher has to protect the participant's confidence from other actors in the setting. Secondly, the researcher should protect informants from the general reading public. For Burns, both the researcher and participants must have a clear understanding regarding the confidentiality of the results and findings of a study (Burns as quoted in Maree, 2007:299). Flowing from this, all reasonable steps to maintain the confidentiality of the participants were taken. All the information and responses shared by the participants during this study were kept private and the results were presented in an anonymous manner, in order to protect the participants' identities. All audio cassettes used during the study were destroyed as soon as the data analysis was done and the study completed.

3.6.2 Informed Consent and Voluntary Participation

Initial contacts with potential participants were made at different schools and the participants were provided with information related to the study. In addition, a letter of information providing details of the study was distributed to potential participants. An assurance of confidentiality and anonymity was provided to all the participants. The researcher obtained verbal consent before the questionnaires were administered. In addition the researcher ascertained the availability of and willingness by the participants to take part in the follow-up interviews at a later stage.

Potential participants were not required to give an immediate response. Instead, they were asked to fill-in, sign and fax their consent forms at a later date. This minimised the possibility of potential participants feeling that it was discourteous to refuse.

3.6.3 Participants' Right to Decline

Each participant was verbally informed of his or her right to decline participation in the study at any time and for any reason.

3.7 PERMISSION FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

A written request was sent to the Department of Education in Limpopo Province, for permission to conduct research in their schools. A synopsis of the research was presented under the following headings:

- The importance of the research;
- The aim of the research; and
- The involvement of teachers in the research.

After permission had been granted by the Department of Education, another letter was sent to the Motupa Circuit Manager for further permission to visit the schools. The selected schools were informed about the participation in the study by the Motupa Circuit Manager.

3.8 CONCLUSION

This chapter dealt with the research strategies and methods used to gather data. Presentation of data follows in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 4

DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATIONS

4.1 INTRODUCTION

Data from the questionnaire were computed and analysed using the Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) Version 17.0. Descriptive statistics were used. The alpha coefficient of 0.05 serves as the maxim for statistical significance. The analyses were executed in consultation with a statistical analyst to avoid any misleading interpretation.

Analyses of information from individual questionnaires were conducted through identifying common themes from the participants' description of their experiences. Irrelevant information was separated from relevant information and the relevant information broken into phrases or sentences to reflect a single, specific thought. A cyclical approach data analysis was used to analyse the collected information.

4.2 BIOGRAPHICAL DETAILS

Table 4.1: Teaching Experience in Years

Respondents	Frequency	Percent %
From one year to five years	4	2.5
From six years to ten years	23	14.3
From eleven years to fifteen years	42	26.1
From sixteen years to twenty years	37	23.0
Twenty one years upwards	55	34.1
Total	161	100.0

The largest percentage of the respondents (34.1%) is that of educators who had taught more than 21 years teaching experience.

Table 4.2: Gender

Respondents	Frequency	Percent %
Male	74	46.0
Female	87	54.0
Total	**161**	**100.0**

Fifty-four percent (54%) of the respondents who participated in the study are females and percent (46%) of the respondents who participated in the study are males. Therefore, the percentage of both males and females who participated in the study (46% and 54% respectively) did not differ much.

Table 4.3: Number of Participants per Position

Respondents	Frequency	Percent %
Teachers	85	52.8
HODs	37	28.0
Deputy Principals	21	13.0
Principals	18	11.2
Total	**161**	**100.0**

Fifty-two point eight percent (52.8%) of the respondents were teachers and 28% were HODs. Thirteen percent (13%) of the respondents were Deputy Principals and 11.2% percent were principals. The majority of the respondents were teachers.

4.3 DATA ANALYSIS

Table 4.4: Frequency of Fighting

Respondents	Frequency	Percent %
Agree	62	38.5
Disagree	60	37.3
Strongly agree	18	11.2
Strongly disagree	21	13.0
Total	**161**	**100,0**

Thirty-eight point five percent (38.5%) of the respondents agree that fighting is common among adolescents in the schools, while 37.3% of the respondents disagree that fighting is common among adolescents in the schools. Data reveals that fighting is common among adolescents in schools.

Table 4.5: Frequency of Bullying among Students

Respondents	Frequency	Percent %
Agree	50	31.1
Disagree	75	46.6
Strongly agree	21	13.0
Strongly disagree	15	9.3
Total	**161**	**100.0**

Forty-six point six percent (46.6%) of the respondents disagree that bullying is common among students in schools, while 31.1% of the respondents agree that bullying is common. Data, therefore, reveals that bullying is not a common feature among students because 46.6% the respondents disagreed with the statement that bullying is a common feature among students in schools.

Table 4.6: Frequency of Hitting among Students

Respondents	Frequency	Percent %
Agree	48	29.8
Disagree	80	49.7
Strongly agree	18	11.2
Strongly disagree	15	9.3
Total	**161**	**100.0**

Forty-nine point seven percent (49.7%) of the respondents disagree that hitting is common among students in school, while 29.8% of the respondents agree. The findings, show that hitting is not common in schools.

Table 4.7: Frequency of Pushing in Class and Assembly

Respondents	Frequency	Percent %
Agree	30	18.6
Disagree	90	55.9
Strongly agree	18	11.2
Strongly disagree	23	14.3
Total	**161**	**100.0**

Fifty-five point nine percent (55.9%) of the respondents disagree that students always push each other in class and assemblies while 18.6% of the respondents agree that students always push each other. It is the findings, therefore, show that students do not always push each other in class and assemblies because 55.9% disagree with the statement.

Table 4.8: Frequency of Learners who Carry Guns

Respondents	Frequency	Percent %
Agree	26	16.1
Disagree	87	54.0
Strongly agree	5	3.1
Strongly disagree	43	26.7
Total	**161**	**100.0**

Fifty-four percent (54%) of the respondents disagree that most learners carry guns and knives to school, while 16.1% of the respondents agree. This shows that learners do not carry guns and knives to school.

Table 4.9: Frequency of Overcrowded Classes

Respondents	Frequency	Percent %
Agree	66	41.0
Disagree	29	18.0
Strongly agree	56	34.8
Strongly disagree	10	6.2
Total	**161**	**100.0**

Forty-one percent (41%) of the respondents agree that classes are overcrowded while 18.0% of the respondents disagree. The findings, therefore, show that classes are overcrowded.

Table 4.10: Discrimination Based on Race and/or Ethnicity

Respondents	Frequency	Percent %
Agree	17	10.6
Disagree	103	64.0
Strongly agree	15	9.3
Strongly disagree	26	16.1
Total	**161**	**100.0**

Sixty-four percent (64%) of the respondents disagree that discrimination based on race and/or ethnicity is common among students, while 10.6% of the respondents agree. This is indicative of the fact that there is no discrimination based on race and/or ethnicity.

Table 4.11: Frequency of Learners who Bully others

Respondents	Frequency	Percent %
Agree	74	46.0
Disagree	16	9.9
Strongly agree	63	39.1
Strongly disagree	8	5.0
Total	**161**	**100.0**

Forty-six percent (46%) of the respondents agree that bullying learners are likely to come from homes where they experience neglect and abuse from both parents while 9.9% of the respondents disagree. The researcher supports the idea that bullying learners are likely to come from homes where the experience neglect and abuse from both parents.

Table 4.12: Frequency of Learners who Smoke and Drink

Respondents	Frequency	Percent %
Agree	82	50.9
Disagree	23	14.3
Strongly agree	36	22.4
Strongly disagree	20	12.4
Total	**161**	**100.0**

Fifty point nine percent (50.9%) of the respondents agree that most of the learners smoke and drink alcohol, while 14.3% of the respondents disagree with the statement. This shows that learners smoke and drink alcohol.

Table 4.13: Frequency of Students who Suffer from Peer Group Pressure

Respondents	Frequency	Percent %
Agree	79	49.1
Disagree	13	8.1
Strongly agree	67	41.6
Strongly disagree	2	1.2
Total	**161**	**100.0**

Forty-nine point one percent (49.1%) of the respondents agree that most students suffer from peer group pressure, while 8.1% of the respondents disagree. The researcher supports the idea that most students suffer from peer group pressure.

Table 4.14: Frequency of Girls Fall Victims of Rape or Sexual Assault

Respondents	Frequency	Percent %
Agree	42	26.1
Disagree	82	50.9
Strong agree	16	9.9
Strongly disagree	21	13.0
Total	**161**	**100.0**

Fifty point nine percent (50.9%) of the respondents disagree that girls fall victims to rape or sexual assault while 26.1% of the respondents agree. This means that girls do not fall victim to rape or sexual assault.

Table 4.15: Frequency of Suicidal Actions

Respondents	Frequency	Percent %
Agree	20	12.4
Disagree	83	51.6
Strongly agree	4	2.5
Strongly disagree	54	33.5
Total	**161**	**100.0**

Fifty-one point six percent (51.6%) of the respondents disagree that suicidal actions are common, while 12.4% of the respondents agree. This shows that suicidal actions are not common.

Table 4.16: Frequency of Learners Suffer from Low Self-esteem, Anxiety and Depression

Respondents	Frequency	Percent %
Agree	86	53.4
Disagree	13	8.1
Strongly agree	61	37.9
Strongly disagree	1	.6
Total	**161**	**100.0**

Fifty-three point four percent (53.4%) of the respondents agree with the statement that learners who are victims of bullying suffer from a low self-esteem, anxiety and depression, while 8.1% of the respondents disagree. The results indicate that learners who are victims of bullying suffer from a low self-esteem, anxiety and depression.

Table 4.17: Frequency of Bullying Disruption of Learning and Teaching

Respondents	Frequency	Percent %
Agree	76	47.2
Disagree	10	6.2
Strongly agree	72	44.7
Strongly disagree	3	1.9
Total	**161**	**100.0**

Forty-seven point two percent (47.2%) of the respondents agree that bullying leads to the disruption of learning and the teaching process, while 6.2% of the respondents disagree. The researcher concludes that bullying leads to the disruption of learning and the teaching process.

Table 4.18: Frequency of Environment Policies

Respondents	Frequency	Percent %
Agree	70	43.5
Disagree	24	14.9
Strongly agree	60	37.3
Strongly disagree	7	4.3
Total	**161**	**100.0**

Forty-three point five percent (43.5%) of the respondents agree that the school creates an environment that is secure through school policies, while 14.9% of the respondents disagree. The researcher concludes that the school creates an environment that is secure through school policies.

Table 4.19: Frequency of Strategies Plans

Respondents	Frequency	Percent%
Agree	65	40.4
Disagree	9	5.6
Strongly agree	80	49.7
Strongly disagree	7	4.3
Total	**161**	**100.0**

Forty point four percent (40.4%) of the respondents agree that schools have plans that provide children with strategies to deal with bullying, while 5.6% of the respondents disagree. The researcher supports the idea that schools provide plans and strategies to deal with bullying.

Table 4.20: SGB Maintains Discipline

Respondents	Frequency	Percent %
Agree	43	26.7
Disagree	93	57.2
Strongly agree	20	12.4
Strongly disagree	5	3.7
Total	**161**	**100.0**

Fifty-seven point two percent (57.2%) of the respondents disagree that the SGB of a school maintains discipline in a school, while 26.7% of the respondents agree. This is indicative of the fact that the SGB does not maintain discipline in a school.

Table 4.21: Frequency of Bullying and Fighting

Respondents	Frequency	Percent %
Agree	65	40.4
Disagree	4	2.5
Strongly agree	87	54.0
Strongly disagree	5	3.1
Total	**161**	**100.0**

Forty point four percent (40.4%) of the respondents agree that bullying and fighting are properly addressed in the code of conduct, while 2.5% of the respondents disagree. The researcher supports the idea that bullying and fighting are properly addressed in the code of conduct.

Table 4.22: Frequency of a Right to an Environment

Respondent	Frequency	Percent %
Agree	88	54.7
Disagree	9	5.6
Strongly agree	62	38.5
Strongly disagree	2	1.2
Total	**161**	**100.0**

Fifty-four point seven percent (54.7%) of the respondents agree that every person has a right to an environment that is not detrimental to his/her health or well-being, while 5.6% of the respondents disagree. This means that every person has a right to an environment that is not detrimental to his/her health or well-being.

Table 4.23: Frequency of Teachers in Addressing Bullying

Respondents	Frequency	Percent %
Agree	94	58.4
Disagree	6	3.7
Strongly agree	57	35.4
Strongly disagree	4	2.5
Total	**161**	**100.0**

Fifty-eight point four percent (58.4%) of the respondents agree that teachers should involve learners and parents in addressing bullying, while 3.7% of the respondents disagree. The researcher recommends that teachers should involve learners and parents in addressing bullying.

Table 4.24: Frequency of Victims

Respondents	Frequency	Percent %
Agree	98	60.9
Disagree	6	3.7
Strongly agree	54	33.5
Strongly disagree	3	1.9
Total	**161**	**100.0**

Sixty point nine percent (60.9%) of the respondents agree that victims should be taught self-assertion skills, while 3.7% of the respondents disagree. The results indicate that victims should be taught self-assertion skills.

Table 4.25: Frequency of Peer Support Bullying

Respondents	Frequency	Percent %
Agree	94	58.4
Disagree	8	5.0
Strongly agree	57	35.4
Strongly disagree	2	1.2
Total	**161**	**100.0**

Fifty-eight point four percent (58.4%) of the respondents agree that peer support systems are essential in counteracting bullying, while 5% of the respondents disagree. The researcher supports the idea that peer support systems counteract bullying.

Table 4.26: Frequency of Rules

Respondents	Frequency	Percent %
Agree	95	59.0
Disagree	4	2.5
Strongly agree	59	36.6
Strongly disagree	3	1.9
Total	**161**	**100.0**

Fifty-nine percent (59%) of the respondents agree that drawing up and enforcing class rules are important, while 2.5% of the respondents disagree. It is the researcher's contention that drawing up and enforcing class rules are needed in a school.

Table 4.27: Frequency of Bullying Policy

Respondents	Frequency	Percent %
Agree	94	58.4
Disagree	9	5.6
Strongly agree	54	33.5
Strongly disagree	4	2.5
Total	**161**	**100.0**

Fifty-eight point four percent (58.4%) of the respondent agree that the school should apply a whole-school anti-bullying policy, while 5.6% of the respondents disagree. The researcher supports the idea that a whole-school anti-bullying policy should be applied.

Table 4.28: Frequency of Cooperative Group Work among Bullied Learners

Respondents	Frequency	Percent %
Agree	72	44.7
Disagree	36	22.4
Strongly agree	25	15.5
Strongly disagree	28	17.4
Total	**161**	**100.0**

Forty-four point seven percent (44.7%) of the respondents agree that cooperative group work has the potential to involve and integrate vulnerable and bullied learners in class, while 22.4% of the respondents disagree. The researcher supports the argument that cooperative group work has the potential to involve and integrate vulnerable and bullied learners in class.

Table 4.29: Bullying Prevention Model

Respondents	Frequency	Percent %
Agree	80	49.7
Disagree	7	4.3
Strongly agree	63	39.1
Strongly disagree	11	6.8
Total	**161**	**99.9**

Forty-nine point seven (49.7%) of the respondents agree that the bullying prevention model should also include family and community as partners with the school, while 4.3% of the respondents disagree. The researcher supports the idea that the bullying prevention model should also include the family and community as partners with the school.

Table 4.30: Frequency of Preventing Bullying Behaviour

Respondents	Frequency	Percent %
Agree	84	52.2
Disagree	6	3.7
Strongly agree	66	41.0
Strongly disagree	5	3.1
Total	**161**	**100.0**

Fifty-two point two percent (52.2%) of the respondents agree that a safe school plan is an essential part of preventing bullying behaviour, while 3.7% of the respondents disagree. It is the researcher's contention that a safe school plan is an essential part of preventing bullying behaviour.

Table 4.31: Frequency of Police Department

Respondents	Frequency	Percentage %
Agree	65	40.4
Disagree	9	5.6
Strongly agree	83	51.6
Strongly disagree	4	2.5
Total	**161**	**100,0**

Forty point four percent (40.4%) of the respondents agree that police services should be engaged by the school, while 5.6% of the respondents disagree. The researcher recommends that police services should be engaged by the school.

Table 4.32: Frequency of Public Awareness Violence

Respondents	Frequency	Percent %
Agree	99	61.5
Disagree	9	5.6
Strongly agree	51	31.7
Strongly disagree	2	1.2
Total	**161**	**100.0**

Sixty-one point five percent (61.5%) of the respondents agree that community based efforts are geared towards raising public awareness of violence, while 5.6% of the respondents disagree. It would appear that community-based efforts should be geared towards raising public awareness of violence.

Table 4.33: Frequency of Human Rights among Learners

Respondents	Frequency	Percent %
Agree	72	44.7
Disagree	3	1.9
Strongly agree	84	52.2
Strongly disagree	2	1.2
Total	**161**	**100.0**

Forty-four point seven percent (44.7%) of the respondents agree that the school is a safe place for instilling respect for human rights in learners through policy, while 1.9% of the respondents disagree. The researcher concludes that school is a safe place for instilling respect in learners for human rights through policy.

Table 4.34: Frequency of Workshops

Respondents	Frequency	Percent %
Agree	81	50.3
Disagree	7	4.3
Strongly agree	70	43.5
Strongly disagree	3	1.9
Total	**161**	**100.0**

Fifty point three percent (50.3%) of the respondents agree that workshops for parents should be structured to help them to understand how they can help to prevent their children from being bullied in school, while 4.3% of the respondents disagree. It is the researcher's contention that workshops for parents should be structured to help them to understand how they can help prevent the children of their children.

Table 4.35: Frequency of Learner's Behaviour

Respondents	Frequency	Percent %
Agree	75	46.6
Disagree	8	5.0
Strongly agree	73	45.3
Strongly disagree	5	3.1
Total	**161**	**100.0**

Forty-six point six percent (46.6%) of the respondents agree that it is the responsibility of the school and parents to see to it that all learners behave well while at school, while 5% of the respondents disagree. There is nothing obvious in research..

Table 4.36: Frequency of Sharing Aspects of Bullying

Respondents	Frequency	Percent %
Agree	84	52.1
Disagree	9	5.6
Strongly agree	66	41.0
Strongly disagree	2	1.2
Total	**161**	**100.0**

Fifty two point one percent (52.1%) of the respondents agree that the sharing of aspects of bullying in school by both educators and parents can lessen problems leading to learner bullying, while 5.6% of the respondents disagree. The researcher supports the idea that both educators and parents should share aspects of bullying in the schools.

4 4 DATA INTERPRETATION

Since bullying behaviours are a common problem in schools today, it is essential that all schools create active and ongoing prevention and intervention programmes to combat bullying. Even though it is ideal to prevent bullying behaviours before they start, it is also fundamental to intervene when incidents of bullying occur (Whitney & Smith, 1993). Moreover, some teachers often misinterpret play fighting as bullying (Sullivan, 2006). Children also often play physical and verbal games that should be hard for adults to understand (Sullivan, 2000). Teachers, therefore, need to distinguish between bullying and playing to enable valid and reliable outcomes.

Moreover, for valid data, distinguishing between the types of bullying is required to correctly interpret the behaviour of children. However, forms of bullying behaviours indicated in this study were clearly categorised and described.

Most of the respondents disagreed that bullying is common among students in schools.

The literature review shows that different authors hold different opinions from those of the respondents. Charach, Pepler & Ziegler (1995, for example, argue that bullying is a problem that occurs in the social environment as a whole. The bullies' aggression occurs in social contexts in which teachers and parents are generally unaware of the extent of the problem and other children are either reluctant to get involved or simply do not know how to help. Given this situation, effective interventions must involve the entire school community rather than focus on the victims and perpetrators alone.

In Table 4.5, the researcher shows that 46.6% of the respondents believed that bullying is not common among students in schools.

Most of the respondents disagree that in class and at assembly students always push each other. The literature review reveals that different authors hold different opinions from those of the respondents. Juvonen *et al.,* (2003) state that teachers, by virtue of their daily contact with, can play a major role in preventing bullying. They can intervene in bullying incidents that occur in the classroom. Because of the social nature of bullying and the involvement of students beyond bully and victim, it is important to intervene and change peer dynamics that support and encourage bullying behaviours.

Furthermore, Kallestal & Olweus (2003) argue that the classroom environment provides teachers with opportunities to observe and intercede when bullying situations arise within peer groups. More importantly, teachers can structure their classrooms in such a way that they discourage bullying and encourage pro-social behaviours. Kallestad and Olweus (2003) found that teachers were the key agents of change with regard to the adoption and implementation of classroom measures which would address bullying. They further argue that teachers were more likely to intervene if they perceived bullying to be a problem, and that implementation of classroom interventions was related to a reduction in bullying. The information provided in Chapter 2 by Kallestal & Olweus 2003 shows that most of the students in the classroom and at assembly do not always push each other.

According to Rodkin & Hodges (2003:110), teachers need to intervene when learners are attacked in school. They further argue that, it is crucial to report incidents of violence, in order to successfully combat violence in schools.

Furthermore, the South African School Act of 1996 Section 8A (1) states that unless authorised by the principal for legitimate educational purposes, no person may bring a dangerous object or illegal drugs onto school premises or have such object or drugs in his or her possession on school premises or during any school activity. The findings clearly reveal that respondents disagree that learners carry guns and knives to school.

Most of the respondents disagree with the view that discrimination is common in schools. The literature review shows that different authors hold different opinions from those of the respondents.

According to Fishman (2002), bullying suggests that the perpetrators are children who are frustrated by lack of success in school. They build their reputation using aggressive behaviours against other adolescents who are physically and socially weaker.

In Table 4.10 the researcher show that the respondents believed that discrimination is not common in schools. Table 4.14 shows that most of the respondents (50.9%) disagree with the statement that girls fall victim to rape or sexual assault. The literature review reveals that different authors hold different opinions from those of the respondents. Gamliel (2003) says that girls who have been exposed to bullying have also devised coping strategies for themselves, despite feelings of helplessness and the desire to involve adults. The information provided shows that girls do not fall victim to rape or sexual assault as most of the respondents disagreed with the statement.

The literature review reveals that different authors hold different opinions from those of the respondents. Glover (2001) states that under the leadership of their principal, teachers and other school staff members maintain order in the school and are expected to hold everyone to the highest standard of respect and responsible

behaviour. Wong (1999a) mentions that effective discipline can make bullies realise what mistakes they have made and help them learn to improve themselves. This reiterative shaming technique is one of the methods found to be useful in combating bullying.

Patchin & Hinduja (2006) argue that, in order for children to learn and teachers to teach, schools must be safe environments which not only include the physical measures of safety, but also a climate and culture of emotional safety and respect. As schools and communities become increasingly diverse, it is crucial that multiple stakeholders draw attention to the importance of creating and maintaining a school climate in which diverse children can learn in a climate free of harassment, bullying, and hate crimes. To combat these pervasive and deeply rooted social problems, schools must have access to the expertise of a wide range of disciplines to develop and implement effective strategies of prevention and response.

Furthermore, Gottfredson (2001) states that discipline policies and rules are the most commonly adopted strategies that schools use to prevent violence. Based on a modest body of literature, characteristics of effective school rules and policies have been established.

Most of the respondents disagree that the SGB of a school maintains discipline in a school. The findings clearly reveal that the SGB of a school does not maintain discipline in a school.

4.5 SUMMARY

This chapter focused on data analysis and interpretation. According to data collected, it is evident that there are many cases of bullying in secondary schools. The occurrence of bullying in secondary schools poses a challenge to school authorities of coming up with mechanisms to be used to intervene, combat and even prevent the occurrence of bullying behaviours.

The next chapter presents a summary and discussion of the general findings. It also gives recommendations on how to combat the problem.

CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY, FINDINGS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

5.1 INTRODUCTION

In the previous chapter, data was analysed and interpreted. Questionnaires were used to obtain information from teachers in secondary schools in Motupa Circuit of Limpopo Province.

More information was carried out and an extensive literature review was conducted. Field work was conducted using questionnaires to collection data. All these are spelled out in chapter three and chapter four.

Lastly, chapter five presents the summary of major findings makes recommendations and draws conclusions based on the following research questions:

- What causes bullying among secondary school students?
- In terms of Acts and policies on schools safety, what intervention strategies are available for schools to employ in South Africa?
- What effective intervention strategies can be used to address bullying in secondary schools?
- What role should schools play in addressing bullying in secondary schools?

5.2 SUMMARY

5.2.1 Findings from Literature

The aim of the study, as mentioned in Chapter 1, is to investigate the impact of intervention strategies in addressing bullying among secondary school students in Motupa Circuit secondary schools.

After a careful study of literature, the researcher found out that there are no intervention strategies for bullying in secondary schools. In the literature study,

Newman & Horne (2004:64) state that teachers are often identified as a key factor in sanctioning bullying and victimisation in their classrooms, mostly unintentionally. They are the ones who have an opportunity to create a safe learning environment in their classrooms. However, teachers may not be willing to intervene until they feel adequately equipped to stop the bullying behaviour (Stephenson & Smith, 1998:3). At times, they feel that intervening may only intensify the bullying or force the problem "underground (Besag, 1998:329). An intervention developed for teachers appears to be an effective process for helping to stop aggressive behaviours and bullying.

Soutter (2000:243) also states that many schools respond to incidents as they arise rather than working systemically to reduce the incidents of bullying. When this occurs, physical bullying may be addressed and indirect bullying ignored due to its "invisibility". Even when intervention strategies are implemented, they address bullying among males and neglect bullying among females (Carney & Merrel, 2001:10). Bullies are able to take advantage of the fact that teachers are only able to deal with physical bullying as it is more visible.

Furthermore, Pepler & Craig (2000:1) mention that teachers and school staff are on the front line of bullying prevention, both in their day-to-day interaction with students and in enforcing the school's bullying prevention policy and programme. They are important as role models for students, and in establishing a positive school climate. They also play a significant role in helping to tailor their schools' bullying plans to match their schools' needs. The bullying prevention policy is therefore important in school climate surveys, and to have good lines of communication with principal. Kikkawa (1989:244) found that teachers frequently observe behaviour that they believe to be bullying but are not certain enough to take action against it.

Finally, the researcher is of the opinion that teachers require education which focuses on the diversity of bullying behaviours to improve their skills of recognising and detecting bullying. This may subsequently enhance their confidence to intervene.

5.3 FINDINGS FROM THE QUESTIONNAIRE

The researcher based his arguments on the various statements made by the respondents in the questionnaires.

5.3.1 Summary of Findings Pertaining to the Prevalence of Violent Behaviour in School

The research revealed the following findings pertaining to the prevalence of violent behaviour in schools:

- Fighting is common in school. The majority of the respondents (38.5%) agree with this view;
- Most of the respondents (46.6%) disagree that bullying is a common feature among students in schools; and
- Fifty-five point nine percent of the respondents disagree that in the classroom and during assembly students always push each other.

The researcher, therefore, concludes that the prevalence of bullying in schools not much.

5.3.2 Summary of Findings Pertaining to the Causes of Bullying in School

The research revealed the following causes of bullying in schools:

- Most of the respondents (54%) disagree that learners carry guns and knives to school.
- Forty-one percent of the respondents agreed to this view that classes are overcrowded in schools.
- Most of the respondents (64%) disagree with the statement that discrimination based on race and/or ethnicity is common among students.
- The larger percentage of the respondents agrees that bullying learners are likely from homes where they experience neglect and abuse from both parents.

The researcher, therefore, concludes by stating that carrying guns and knives are not the causes of bullying in schools.

5.3.3 Summary of Findings Pertaining to the Consequences of Bullying in Schools

The research revealed the following consequence of bullying in schools:

- Respondents agree that most of the learners smoke and drink alcohol;
- Most of the respondents (49.1%) agree that most students suffer group pressure;
- Girls do not fall victim to rape or sexual assault in schools;
- Suicidal actions are not common among the students;
- Almost 53.4% of the respondents agree with the statement that learners who are victims of bullying suffer from a low self-esteem, anxiety and depression; and
- Bullying leads to disruption of learning and the teaching process in schools.

The researcher, therefore, concludes that the consequences of bullying in school to lead the disruption of the learning and teaching processes.

5.3.4 Summary of Findings Pertaining to the Intervention Strategies Enshrined in the Acts and Policies used by South African Schools to Ensure Safety in their Schools

The researcher revealed the following findings pertaining to the intervention strategies embodied in the Acts and policies that schools in South Africa employ to ensure safety in the schools.

- The school creates an environment that is secure through school policies;
- Schools have plans that provide children with strategies to deal with bullying;
- All stakeholders maintain discipline in schools;
- Bullying and fighting are properly addressed in the code of conduct; and
- Every person has the right to an environment that is not detrimental to his health or well-being.

The researcher, therefore, concludes that intervention strategies to address bullying in schools are needed.

5.3.5 Summary of Findings Pertaining to the Effective Intervention Strategies Schools use to Address Bullying

The researcher revealed the following findings pertaining to the intervention strategies schools use to address bullying:

- The majority of the respondents indicated that teachers should involve learners and parents in addressing bullying;
- Respondents indicated that victims should be taught self-assertion skills;
- The majority of the respondents indicated that peer support systems to counteract bullying are needed;
- Almost 59.0% of the respondents agree that drawing up and enforcing class rules are important;
- The majority of the respondents indicated that schools should have a whole-school anti-bullying policy. The researcher believes that policies are an important starting point when dealing with the problem of bullying; and
- Cooperative group work has the potential to involve and integrate vulnerable and bullied learners in class.

The researcher believes that effective intervention strategies to address bullying in school are an important starting point.

5.3.6 Summary of Findings Pertaining to the Role School Plays in Addressing Bullying

The researcher revealed the following findings pertaining to the role schools play to address bullying:

- Almost 49.7% of the respondents indicated that the bullying prevention model should also include family and community as partners of the school;

- The majority of the respondents indicated that a safe school plan is an essential part of preventing bullying behaviour;
- Respondents indicated that the police department should be engaged in the school plan;
- The majority of the respondents (61.5%) indicated that community-based efforts should be geared towards raising public awareness of violence.
- Almost 44.7% of the respondents indicated that the school is a safe place for instilling in learners respect for human rights.
- Respondents indicated that workshops for parents should be structured to help them understand how they can help to prevent their children being bullied in school;
- Almost 46.6% of the respondents indicated that it is the responsibility of the school and parents to see to it that all learners behave well while at school; and
- The majority of the respondents also indicated that the sharing of aspects of bullying in schools by both educators and parents lessens problems leading to learner bullying.

The researcher, therefore, concludes that schools should institute a zero tolerance attitude towards bullying. Each child should know that victimisation will not be tolerated at all and that there will be serious consequences to contend with should individuals be involved in such negative behaviour.

5.4 RESEARCHERS RECOMMENDATIONS

5.4.1 Department of Education

- Whilst reading literature on intervention strategies, one possible way of preventing bullying and solving the bullying dilemma which the researcher identified involved including the problem in the curriculum, perhaps as part of the Life Orientation syllabus.
- The National Department of Education must also make various interventions bullying policies available to various Provincial Departments of Education.
- The various districts involved in the Department of Education should also provide support for each school with regards to the bullying interventions.

5.4.2 Intervention Strategies in Terms of Acts and Policies

- Teachers should develop a code of conduct for learners that will prohibit unacceptable behaviour.

5.4.3 Effective Intervention Strategies Schools use to Address Bullying

- Teachers, administrators, and all staff members receive specific training on the importance of and effective strategies to combat bullying behaviours.
- Teachers should take action against learners who bully others.
- Teachers should encourage healthy relations among all learners.
- Teachers should develop a code of conduct for learners that will prohibit unacceptable behaviours.

5.4.4 Role Schools Play to Address Bullying

- Schools should involve all stakeholders during the process of disciplining learners.
- Schools should have policies in place that are reviewed on a regular basis. As part of the policy, a school should have detailed procedures concerning punitive measures for bullies as well as preventative and educational strategies regarding bullying.

5.5 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

The aim of this study was to find out the impact of the intervention strategies in addressing bullying among secondary school students. Through this study, the researcher realised that there are no intervention strategies in most secondary schools.

The researcher recommends that further studies be conducted on this topic. Emphasis should be on the code of conduct of secondary school learners with

regard to bullying. The researcher further recommends that the following topics should be considered for further studies:

- The impact of intervention strategies in addressing bullying among primary school learners.
- The development and implementation of intervention strategies in order to reduce bullying in schools.
- Effective intervention strategies to address bullying among further education and training learners.
- Intervention strategies programmes to address bullying in Mopani District.

5.6 CONCLUSION

Bullying is found in every school and in every community in countries around the world. It is all too often the way young people interact in our society. When bullying is ignored, children will suffer ongoing torment and harassment. Bullying can cause lifelong damage to the victims and the bullies. A community's failure to deal with bullying in schools, in particular, endangers the safety of all students and teachers by allowing a hostile environment to interfere with learning.

It is everyone's responsibility to stop bullying creating a positive and peaceful environment that protects children and youth from bullying is a lengthy process requiring the commitment and involvement of educators, policymakers, police, parents, community organisations, and students. Taking bullying behaviour seriously is an important first step in working towards safe schools and communities.

The problems of bullying and victimisation are extremely complex. Consequently, interventions for these problems are also complex and should extend to all those involved, namely bullies, victims, peers, school staff, parents and the wider community. There is clear, unambiguous evidence that community action can dramatically reduce the incidence of bullying. Through training, collaboration, and carefully designed programmes, solutions can and must be found.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: QUESTIONNAIRE FOR DATA COLLECTION

TITLE: THE IMPACT OF INTERVENTION STRATEGIES IN ADDRESSING BULLYING AMONG SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS IN MOTUPA CIRCUIT

A. NB: Your honest response will be highly appreciated

Choose one option from the four given below by putting an x against your choice. An example has been done for you below:

Statement	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Agree	Strongly Disagree
1.1. Teen years are problematic years		X		
1.2. Late adolescents are bullies				x
1.3. Parents of teens are ignorant of the concept bullying			x	
1.4. In ill-disciplined schools bullying is rife			x	

A. BIOGRAPHICAL DETAILS

i. Years of teaching experience:_____

ii. Gender:_____

iii. Position (teacher/HOD/Deputy Principal/Principal):_____

1. **This question solicits your opinion regarding the prevalence of violent behaviour in schools**

Statement	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Agree	Strongly Disagree
1.1. Fighting is common in my school.				
1.2. Bullying is also common among students in my school.				
1.3. Hitting is also common among students in my school.				
1.4. In classes and assemblies students always push each other.				

2. **These are the causes of bullying in my school**

Statement	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Agree	Strongly Disagree
2.1. Most learners carry guns and knives to school.				
2.2. In my school , classes are overcrowded				
2.3. Discrimination based on race and /or ethnicity is common among students				
2.4. Bullying learners are likely to come from homes where they experience neglect and abuse from both parents				

3. The following are prevalent consequences of bullying in my school

Statement	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Agree	Strongly Disagree
3.1 Most of the learners smoke and drink alcohol.				
3.2. Most students suffer from peer group pressure.				
3.3. Girls fall victims to rape or sexual assault.				
3.4. Suicidal actions are common.				
3.5. Learners who are victims of bullying suffer from a low self-esteem, anxiety and depression.				
3.6. Bullying leads to disruption of learning and the teaching process.				

4. Intervention strategies enshrined in the Acts and policies employed by South African schools to bring safety to schools

Statement	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Agree	Strongly Disagree
4.1.The school creates an environment that is secure through school policies.				
3.7. Schools have plans that provide children with strategies to deal with bullying.				
3.8. The SGB of a school maintains discipline in a school.				
3.9. Bullying and fighting are properly addressed in the code of conduct.				
3.10. Every person has a right to an				

environment that is not detrimental to his/her health or well-being.				

5. Effective intervention strategies my school uses to address bullying

Statement	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Agree	Strongly Disagree
5.1. Teachers involve learners and parents in addressing.				
5.2. Victims should be taught self-assertion skills.				
5.3. Peer support systems are used to counteract bullying.				
5.4. Drawing up and enforcing class rules.				
5.5. Whole-school anti-bullying policy.				
5.6. Cooperative group work has the potential to involve and integrate vulnerable and bullied learners in the classroom.				

6. The role my school plays in addressing bullying

Statement	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Agree	Strongly Disagree
6.1 The bullying prevention model should include the family and community as partners of the school				
6.2 A safe school plan is an essential part of preventing bullying behaviour.				
6.3The Police service should be engaged in the school plan				
6.4 Community-based efforts should be geared towards raising public awareness of violence.				
6.5 The school is a safe place for instilling respect for human rights in learners.				
6.6 Workshops for parents should be structured to help them to understand how they can help to prevent bullying of their children in school.				
6.7. It is the responsibility of the school and parents to see that all learners behave well in the school.				
6. 8 Sharing aspects of bullying in the school by both the educators and parents lessens problems leading to learner bullying.				

THANK YOU///

These are the research questions

- What causes bullying among secondary school students?
- What are the consequences of bullying in schools?
- What intervention strategies are enshrined in the Acts and policies used by South African schools to ensure safety in their schools?
- What effective intervention strategies do schools use to address bullying in secondary schools?
- What role should schools play to address bullying in secondary schools?

APPENDIX B

Department of Curriculum Studies and Education Man: gement

Enq: Dr. Litshani NF
Contact: 0793419936

OFFICE OF THE DEAN
2011 -05- 0 6
SCHOOL OF EDUCATION
UNIVERSITY OF VENDA

Univers· · of Venda
P/Bag X 050
Thohoy: dou
0950
06th Ma 2011

The Head of Department
Department of Education
P/Bag X9489
POLOKWANE
0700

Sir: APPLICATION TO CONDUCT EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH A YOUR SCHOOLS IN MOTUPA CIRCUIT:

The above matter refers.

I, Dr. Litshani N.F- the Supervisor of Mr. Neluheni N.S student number 1 06970 kindly inform you that the above mentioned student has registered for M.Ed (Educ ional Management- full dissertation) for the 2011 academic year with the Univers y of Venda.

The title of the research project is

IMPACT OF SCHOOL BULLYING AMONG SECONDARY ST(ENTS

I therefore request a permission for the above mentioned student to conduct n educational research project at the selected/sampled schools which fall within your juris ction i.e. Motupa Circuit in Mopani District.

The above mentioned research project will be conducted from the 30th May 11 to the 10th June 2011.

Banking on your ever support.

Yours faithfully

Litshani

Researcher student: Sebopetsa N.S

Supervisor: Dr. Litshani N.F 93419936

UNIVERSITY OF VENDA "Quality Driven, Financial Sustainable, Rural-Based Comprehens e University

APPENDIX C

LIMPOPO
PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

DEPARTMENT OF
EDUCATION

Enquiries: Mr. Makola MC, Tel No: 015 290 9448 .E-mail: MakolaMC@edu.limpopo.gov.za

Ref.: Research

School of Education

Department of Curriculum Studies and Education Management

University of Venda

LIMPOPO PROVINCE
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
2011 -05- 12
H.O.D'S OFFICE
PRIVATE BAG X9489 POLOKWANE 0700

Dear Mr. Neluheni N.S.

RE: Request for permission to Conduct Research

1. The above bears reference.
2. The Department wishes to inform you that your request to conduct a research has been approved. Title: **THE IMPACT OF SCHOOL BULLYING AMONG SECONDARY STUDENTS** i.e. Mutupa Circuit in Mopani District.

3. The following conditions should be considered:

   3.1 The research should not have any financial implications for Limpopo Department of Education.

   3.2 Arrangements should be made with both the Circuit Offices and the schools concerned.

   3.3 The conduct of research should not anyhow disrupt the academic programs at the schools.

   3.4 The research should not be conducted during the time of Examinations especially the forth term.

University of Venda
Creating Future Leaders

APPENDIX D

SCHOOL OF EDUCATION:

Department of Curriculum Studies and Education Management

Enq: Mr. Neluheni NS
Contact: 076 909 2232
Persal no. 80400469

P.O.Box 3866
Tzaneen
0850
21st April 2011

The Circuit Manager
Motupa Circuit
P/Bag X 4031
TZANEEN
0850

Sir: APPLICATION TO CONDUCT EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH AT YOUR SCHOOLS: Mr. NELUHENI N.S

The above matter refers.

I kindly inform you that I have registered for M.Ed (Educational Management- full dissertation) for the 2011 academic year with the University of Venda. The title of the research project is **THE IMPACT OF SCHOOL BULLYING AMONG SECONDARY STUDENTS.**

I therefore request a permission to conduct an educational research at the selected/sampled schools which fall within your jurisdiction i.e. Motupa Circuit.

The above mentioned research will be conducted from the 23rd May 2011 to the 03rd June 2011.

Banking on your ever support.

Yours faithfully

The applicant: Neluheni N.S

Supervisor: Dr. .Litshani N.F 0793419936

OFFICE OF THE SCHOOL ADMINISTRATOR
2011 -04- 21
SCHOOL OF EDUCATION
UNIVERSITY OF VENDA

1