Developing a management framework to handle employees' experiences of workplace bullying

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REMARKS

The reader is reminded of the following:

- For this dissertation the American Psychological Association (APA) reference and editorial format was used, which is recommended by the publication manual (6th edition) for writers in the social and behavioural sciences.
- The Human resource management programme of the North-West University (Potchefstroom) policy clearly prescribes that all scientific documents as from January 1999 should follow the APA guidelines and writing style.
- Furthermore this full dissertation is submitted in the format of two research articles.
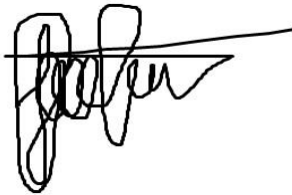
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DECLARATION

I, Jessica-Lynn Fick, hereby declare that "Developing a management framework to handle employees' experience of workplace bullying" is my own work. The views and opinions expressed in this work are those of the author and relevant literature references as shown in the references.

I also declare that the content of this research project will not be handed in for any other qualification at any other tertiary institution.

JESSICA-LYNN FICK   December 2016

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SUMMARY

Title: Developing a management framework to handle employees' experiences of workplace bullying

Keywords: Workplace bullying, bullying experiences, bullying causes, human recourse practitioners (HRP), HR practices, HR policies, company procedures, powerlessness, management framework

Literature from the past 20 years confirms that workplace bullying is not a new concept. Over this period, researchers have been dedicated to highlighting definitions of bullying, bullying acts, prevalence rates, risk factors and the outcomes of bullying behaviours. Organisations are fully aware of the effect of bullying and of the impact bullying behaviours have on the organisation's work environments. Although many researchers have noted these aspects, little progress is evident in literature of the management of its occurrence within organisations. Furthermore, few reporting frameworks for the human resource practitioners (HRPs) to handling these experiences are apparent.

Research suggests that in most cases where victims experience workplace bullying, the HRPs usually are the key role-players to assist employees to handle their experiences. It was further reported that when victims seek help, the first step is to seek help from the HRP departments, which highlights the important role that the HRPs can play when handling these experiences. This tendency indicates that the HRP needs proper guidelines and frameworks to assist in handling these experiences.

Therefore, the purpose of this study was to identify the experiences and causes of workplace bullying through a qualitative systematic review and meta-analysis and to suggest a basic framework for the HRP to be able to identify possible experiences and causes of workplace bullying. Secondly, after identifying the experiences and causes of workplace bullying, the study further attempts to identify handling practices regarding these issues. This was done by conducting an integrative literature review and proposing a framework for the HRP in order to assist in the handling of these experiences and causes. The study followed a qualitative research approach grounded in the social constructivism. The systematic review and meta-analysis was conducted with (n=47) sources and the thematic analysis was done by means of a manual method, which highlighted and organised main themes and phrases.

The main findings of this study revealed that experiences of bullying can be categorised into five main themes, these are threat to professional status, threat to personal standing, social exclusion/isolation, overload and destabilisation. Furthermore, findings revealed that workplace bullying causes can be sorted into three main concepts. These concepts are organisational causes, individual causes (which can be individual or perpetrator causes), and societal causes. Finally, an integrative review was conducted that followed the five steps of Whittemore and Knafl (2005) for conducting an integrative literature review. This review entailed 43 sources (*n*=43) with the main findings revealing 16 handling practices for the experiences and causes of workplace bullying. These practices can be sorted into four main categories and eight main themes that were identified after the systematic and meta-analysis was done.

OPSOMMING

Titel: Ontwikkeling van 'n bestuursraamwerk om werknemers se ervaring van werksplek boelie te hanteer

Sleutwoorde: Werksplek boelie, boelie ervarings, boelie oorsake, menslike hulpbronbestuur praktisyns (MHP), MH praktyke, MH beleide, organisasie prosedures, magteloosheid, bestuursraamwerk

Literatuur van die afgelope 20 jaar bevestig dat werksplek boelie nie 'n nuwe konsep is nie. Oor hierdie tydperk, het navorsers hulle aandag gewy aan die definisies van afknouery, boelie dade, omskakelingskoers, risikofaktore en die uitkomste van boelies gedrag. Organisasies is ten volle bewus van die effek van boelies en van die impak van boeliegedrag op werksomgewings van die organisasies. Hoewel baie navorsers hierdie aspekte opgemerk het, is daar min duidelike vordering in die literatuur van die bestuur van die voorkoms daarvan deur organisasies. Verder, kom baie min verslagdoening raamwerke voor vir menslike hulpbronne praktisyns (MHP) om die ervarings te hanteer.

Navorsing dui daarop dat die meeste gevalle waar slagoffers werksplek boelie ervaar, die MHP die hoof rolspelers is vir die werker om die ervarings te hanteer. Verder het dit navore gekom dat slagoffers wat uitreik vir hulp, die MHP die eerste afdelings is waar hulle aanklop vir hulp, wat beklemtoon die belangrike rol die MHP kan speel in die hantering van hierdie ervarings. Hierdie tendens wys daarop dat die MHP duidelike riglyne en raamwerke benodig om die ervarings te hanteer.

Die doel van die studie was om die ervarings en oorsake van werksplek boelie te identifiseer deur 'n kwalitatiewe sistematiese oorsig en meta-analise om 'n basiese raamwerk vir die MHP voor te stel, sodat hulle mootlike ervarings en oorsake van werksplek boelie kan identifiseer. Tweedens, na die identifisering van die ervarings van oorsake van werksplek boelie, het die studie verder gepoog om hanterings praktyke te identifiseer. Dit was gedoen deur 'n integrerende literatuuroorsig te doen en 'n raamwerk voor te stel vir die MHP om hul by te staan in die hantering van die ervarings en oorsake. Die studie volg 'n kwalitatiewe navorsings benadering gegrond in die sosiale konstruktivisme. Die sistematiese oorsig en meta-analise is uitgevoer met (n=47) bronne en die tematiese analise was uitgevoer deur middel van 'n persoonlike soektog, wat hooftemas en frase beklemtoon en georganiseerd het.

Die hoof bevindinge van die studie wys daarop dat die ervaring van boelie kan gekatoriseer word in vyf hoof temas, naamlik bedreiging vir professionele status, bedreiging vir persoonlike stand, sosiale uitsluiting/isolasie, professionele status, oorlading en destabilisering. Verder bevindinge wys daarop dat werksplek boelie oorsake kan georganiseer word in drie hoof temas. Die konsepte is organisatoriese oorsake, individuele oorsake (wat kan wees individuele of oortreder oorsake) en maatskaplike oorsake. Ten slotte, is 'n geïntegreerde hersiening gedoen volgens die vyf stappe van Whittemore en Knafl (2005) vir die uitvoer van 'n geïntegreerde literatuuroorsig. Dié oorsig behels 43 bronne (n=43) met die belangrikste bevindings wat daarop wys dat sestien (16) hanteringspraktyke vir die ervarings en oorsake van werksplek boelies is. Hierdie praktyke kan gesorteer word in vier hoofkategorieë en agt hooftemas wat geïdentifiseer is na die sistematiese en metaontleding gedoen is.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Introduction

Workplace bullying is not a new concept to literature and is studied in many organisations around the world (Bartlett, & Bartlett, 2011; De Wet, 2014; Zapf, Einarsen, Hoel, & Vartia, 2003). Samnani and Singh (2012) confirm that over the past 20 years, workplace bullying has been widely documented by various researchers'. However, various other studies (e.g. Dutton, & Ragins, 2007; Graves, 2002; Maurer, & Snyder, 2014; McKeown, Bryant, & Raeder, 2009) indicated that very little notable progress towards addressing workplace bullying within organisations has been made.

As a point of departure, the literature does not reveal consensus regarding a universal label, name or defined concept regarding the term workplace bullying. Heinz Leymann, a Scandinavian psychologist, first identified workplace bullying in the 1980s, and referred to this occurrence as 'mobbing' (Van Schalkwyk, 2011). When describing this experience, different terms are used to refer to this concept all over the world. Generally, the term used in France and Germany is 'mobbing' (Zapf, Knortz, & Kulla, 1996) and 'harassment' is the term used in Finland (Björkvist, Österman, & Hjelt-Bäck, 1994). The United States of America prefers to use the term 'aggression' (Baron, & Neuman, 1998). Australia and the United Kingdom primarily refer to the term 'workplace bullying' (Van Schalkwyk, 2011). In South Africa, researchers delineate workplace bullying as repetitive negative acts towards an individual (Botha, 2009; Cunniff, 2011; Pietersen, 2007; Upton, 2010). Numerous definitions of workplace bullying have also recently been put forward; however, there is still no clearly agreed upon description for workplace bullying (Kakoulakis, Galanakis, Bakoula-Tzoumaka, Darvyri, Chroussos, & Darvyri, 2015; Georgakopoulos, Wilkin, & Kent, 2011).

The following themes or similar themes become evident from the various definitions: imbalance of power (Harvey, Heames, Richey, & Leonard, 2006), frequency and duration of the bullying behaviour (Cunniff, & Mostert, 2012; Leyman, 1996; Salin, 2003), perceptions regarding being bullied (Geogakopoulos et al., 2011; Salin, 2003), and repeated negative acts (Cunniff, & Mostert, 2012; Einarsen, & Skogstad, 1996; Gilbert, Raffo, & Sutarso 2013; Leymann, 1996; Salin, 2003; Tehrani, 2001).

Time frames and the nature of the acts also add an element of further confusion. Bullying at work is a 'social interaction', where individuals persistently and frequently, over a period of time, perceive themselves to be on the receiving end of repeated and unwanted, deliberate or unconscious negative actions (Einarsen, & Skogstad, 1996; Geogakopoulos et al., 2011; Herbs, 2009, Rothmann, & Rothmann, 2006; Tehrani, 2001; 2012, Upton, 2010).

The consequences of these acts also cause victims to have difficulty in defending themselves due to unequal distribution of power and the victims' inability to defend themselves against these actions (Cunniff, & Mostert, 2012; Einarsen, & Skogstad, 1996; Gilbert, Raffo, & Sutarso, 2013; Leymann, 1996; Salin, 2003; Tehrani, 2001). After reviewing the definitions of workplace bullying, one can note that they are varied and they do not conform to any decisive framework (Georgakopoulos et al., 2011). This could possibly be due to the human element that must be considered regarding the personal experiences and perceptions that every individual has.

Samnani (2013) identified the power imbalance and sense of powerlessness as a key theme that was recurrent and deemed as one of the important aspects when identifying bullying. This power imbalance exists or is apparent between parties who hold a position of authority and the victims who are left with a sense of powerlessness (Einarsen, 2000; Keashly, & Jagatic, 2003). Powerlessness can be seen as the individuals' inability to defend themselves, or who are unable to secure their personal standing and finally lack the ability to have control over their job and job autonomy (Branch, Ramsay, & Barker, 2013; Einarsen, 2000; Dachapalli, & Parumassur, 2012). Several authors (Baltimore, 2006; Egues, & Leinung, 2014; Gillen, Sinclair, & Kernohan, 2004) are of the opinion that power and power struggles among employees are the bases of bullying behaviours at work.

Findings by Shallcross, Sheehan, and Ramsay (2008) indicated that imbalance can often be renowned in situations where managers normally abuse their power to bully their subordinates. Contradicting these findings, Branch, Ramsay, and Barker (2007), and Davenport, Distler-Schwartz, and Pursell-Elliott (1999) suggested that any employee at any level can encounter power struggles and not just from managers down but also from subordinates up. In addition, Einarsen, Hoel, Zapf, and Cooper (2003) went as far as to emphasise that if there is an equal balance in power, then these actions cannot be referred to as workplace bullying. It can be noted that bullying is about having an uneven power balance that leads to individuals repeatedly being exposed to negative acts, which leave them unable to defend themselves in the definite situations (Zapf, & Einarsen, 2005).

According to bullying literature (including; Botha, 2009; Cunniff, & Mostert, 2012; Einarsen, & Raknes, 1997, Hoel, & Cooper, 2001a; Leymann, 1996), negative acts are frequently identified and associated with bullying in a workplace that can be divided into five categories. These categories are divided according to the effect that the behaviour has on the individual, irrespective of the perpetrator's intention (Botha, 2009; Einarsen, & Raknes, 1997, Hoel, & Cooper, 2001b). The five categories cited in Botha (2009) are work-related

harassment, work overload, personal derogation, social exclusion, and violent threats and intimidation.

One distinctive theme that becomes noteworthy regarding the concept of workplace bullying is one of the perceptions individuals have regarding it. According to Escartin, Zapf, Arrieta, and Roddrguez-Carballeira (2010), this situation holds implications for researchers both theoretically and in practice, as this may cause under-reporting or over-reporting of findings in this field. Furthermore, Escartin et al. (2010) also suggest that these circumstances may have implications relating to the interventions that are implemented concerning workplace bullying. According to various authors (Carbo, & Hughes, 2010; Greenwald, 2010; Van Fleet, & Van Fleet, 2012), organisations rely on acceptable generalised definitions or suitable descriptions to develop policies within the workplace, but as such no universal strategies that define workplace bullying have been accepted.

Problem statement

Leymann (1996) argued that poor work environments are concurrent with bullying at work and are known as the 'work environment hypothesis' (Leymann, 1996; Salin, 2003; Salin, & Hoel, 2011). This viewpoint is considered the central idea in addressing the causes and antecedents of workplace bullying (Fox, & Cowan, 2015). Furthermore, Rayner, Hoel, and Cooper (2002) go as far as to advocate that workplace bullying is difficult to resolve because it becomes entrenched into the overall functioning of an organisation. Salin and Hoel (2011) also suggest that the work environment theory postulates that within the workplace, including admission to anti-bullying policies, organisational procurers and practices can influence interpretation and address bullying at work (Fox, & Cowan, 2015). Finally, Leymann (1996) mentioned that under the right circumstances, anyone can be a target for workplace bullying. The only difference is, as Cunniff and Mostert (2012) advocate, that diverse individuals experience workplace bullying at different levels.

As previously mentioned, the work environment hypothesis is grounded in the notion that poor work environments are stressful settings, which are usually poorly organised and create a prime environment that may result in circumstances that encourage bullying (Hauge, 2010; Leymann, 1996). Furthermore, various other factors, for example ill-defined policies and organisational practices, to mention but a few, within the organisation also contribute to this environment, by adding high levels of stress and frustration to employees and increasing the risk of interpersonal divergence and bullying to transpire (Agervold, & Mikkelsen, 2004).

In an attempt to prevent poor work environments, organisations implement various human resource management practices, policies and procedures. According to Armstrong and Taylor (2014), "human resource management (HRM) is the comprehensive and coherent approach to employment and development of people" and "can be regarded as a philosophy about how people should be managed" (p.1). HRM has numerous functions, which involve the application of company policies, procedures, HRM practices, and finally strategies to enhance employee well-being (Mayhew, 2015; Phillips, & Gully, 2014). Tan and Nasurdin (2011) described that HRM practices relate to definite practices within the organisation, official company policies, and organisational beliefs that are intended to attract, develop, encourage, and retain their workforce and finally to ensure the viability of the organisation. These procedures can also be considered specific systems used to express and define company policies that are put into place for the everyday functioning of any organisation (Business dictionary, 2015). Policies, according to the Business dictionary (2015), are a set of principles, rules and guidelines devised and implemented by organisations to manage their human capital to ultimately reach their overarching goal.

Respondents of a study, conducted by Cowan (2015), expressed a dire need for anti-bullying policies, practices and procures addressing the causes and experiences of bullying in the workplace. Moreover, respondents of Cowan's (2015) study also argued that existing practices did not have any official guidelines to resolve bullying, nor did they concisely describe any bullying behaviours, all of which implied that these results could not be used as an accurate source to identify bullying behaviours at work. Lifeooghe and Davey (2003) also cited that employees can experience bullying through company policies and procedures, which adds an extra dimension to the problem.

According to Jennifer, Cowie and Ananiadou (2003), to label a situation as bullying, the victim has to experience a feeling of hopelessness when trying to defend him-/herself in any given situation. Therefore, the experience of the individual is a focal point with individuals perceiving themselves as inadequate with feelings of hopelessness within the presenting situation. This individual perception is further highlighted as Shadovitz (2014) suggests that workplace bullying is a vague experience, which no one can accurately pinpoint, describe or identify, as this experience is too generalised and individualised. Moreover, workplace bullying has a slanted perception (Einarsen, 1999) as the actual experience of bullying is directly linked to the meaning that the individual attaches to this experience (Botha, 2009).

As summed up in the previous paragraph, workplace bullying is represented as a personally perceived and individually experienced event. Various questionnaires have been

used to reflect individuals' responses to this situation. Behaviours of the bullies and experiential responses of the victims are highlighted in these questionnaires, such as the NAQ-R, WAR-Q and WB-C requesting respondents to report any experiences regarding negative behaviours that they feel is workplace bullying (Fox, & Cowan, 2015). Individual experiences of workplace bullying may also entail other simultaneous causes, making the experience of workplace bullying complex (Branch et al., 2013; Salin, 2003; Zapf, 1999).

In an attempt to understand the causes of bullying behaviours, Lutgen-Sandvik, and Sypher (2009), Zapf, and Einarsen (2003) agree that various facets should be considered when identifying causes of workplace bullying, such as the organisation itself, social psychology of the workforce, and behaviours and responses of perpetrators and victims. In addition, the Workplace Bullying Institute (2014) suggested that, in certain cases, causes of bullying within organisations could be factors based on societies that overlook aggression and violent behaviour, as well as an individual's personality, skills and environments in which they find themselves in.

Magee et al. (2015) anticipated if the victim's experiences of bullying are understood, this could positively contribute to policies and producers within organisations to finally venture into reducing bullying at work. It is therefore proposed that if a management framework could be developed for handling an employee's experiences of workplace bullying, this might reduce the occurrence of bullying at work. In addition, if a link can be identified between the causes and experiences of bullying, a framework could be created using HRM policies, procedures and practices to manage both these experiences and causes in an effort to finally reduce the powerlessness that bully victims experience.

Research objectives

Primary objective
The primary objective of this study was to develop a framework for HRP for handling employees' experiences of workplace bullying

Secondary objectives
To determine experiences and causes of workplace bullying by conducting a systematic review and a quantitative meta-analysis

To propose a framework for HRP for handling employees' experiences of workplace bullying through an integrated literature review

Research design

This study followed a qualitative research design. A qualitative research design focuses more on understanding rather than explanation (De Vos, Strydom, Fouché & Delport, 2013). Furthermore, a qualitative research design uses naturalistic observation rather than controlled measurement with the subjective exploration of reality, that is to say, from the perspective of an insider (De Vos et al., 2013). This approach was chosen in an effort to explore theory-based traditions in order to gain an in-depth understanding of workplace bullying experiences and causes that will be considered when proposing a future-oriented HRP framework.

Furthermore, the ontological viewpoint is that of social constructivism. "The concept of knowledge as a 'mirror of reality' is replaced by the conception of the 'social construction of reality' where the focus is on the interpretation and negotiation of meaning of the social world" (Kvale, 1996, p. 41, as cited in De Vos, et al., 2013). The research perspective that was followed is that of a narrative reality of constructionism that can change continuously. Reality is therefore socially and personally constructed, which was reflected in the sources' viewpoints, which revealed their own narratives or personal truths.

Therefore, this study discovered the descriptions, experiences and reflections of workplace bullying, and therefore a qualitative approach aligned with the study's research orientation was deemed the most effective.

The goal of these methods was to explore relevant published articles in order to finally identify workplace bullying experiences and causes and handling practices. Therefore, the research question guiding this study was: "What are the experiences, causes and handling practices of workplace bullying in published research available over the past 10 years?"

Research method

A qualitative research approach was used to describe, explore and understand the context of the multifaceted phenomenon of workplace bullying, and it revealed relations among concepts, highlighted behaviours as well as generated and refined a theory (Fouché, & Delport, 2013; Glaser, & Strauss 1967; Patton, 2002). The ensuing theoretical framework that will be discussed is focused on in the second chapter.

Theoretical framework: Grounded theory

The aim of grounded theory is to develop a substantive theory that is grounded in data, rather than being an actual theory in itself (De Vos et al., 2013). Grounded theory focuses on

generating theory based on the study of social situations (De Vos et al., 2013). This theory has two unique characteristics: constant comparative analysis and theoretical sampling (Glaser, & Strauss, 1967). Constant comparative analysis entails an interactive process of concurrent data collection and analysis, which involves "the systematic choice and study of several comparison groups" (Glaser, & Strauss, 1967, p. 9). This means that the methods of constant comparison, where new data is gathered, actions observed and perceptions recorded of the sources are constantly compared with those of new sources in order to generate theory (De Vos et al., 2013).

Therefore, in considering this approach and methodology, it was thought fit that it would be well suited and effectual in exploring and identifying the experiences and causes of individuals with regard to workplace bullying. In light of the theoretical framework based on the grounded theory, and in order to achieve the objectives of this study, two data analysis strategies were implemented. Firstly, a systematic review will be done to identify possible relevant studies, which will form part of the theoretical population. Secondly, a qualitative meta-analysis will follow in order to identify consensus on workplace bullying experiences and causes.

To be able to identify a suitable sample for Chapter 2 of this study, the PRISMA statement (Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic review and Meta-analysis), and guidelines were employed (See Figure 1).

First strategy: The systematic review of literature

Chang, Voils, Sandelowski, Hasselblad, and Crandell, (2009) state that a systematic review endeavours to identify, evaluate and synthesise all prior relevant research studies regarding a specific topic in order to simplify research results and make these results more accessible. Furthermore, this method is constructed with explicit objectives and criteria for excluding or including relevant research studies (Farrington, Petrosino, & Welsh, 2001; Farrington, & Welsh, 2002). One benefit of these systematic reviews over traditional literature reviews is that the application of scientific principles and procedures applied to the review process results in a more rigorous design and reliable conclusion (Cooper et al., 2012).

Henceforth, to identify relevant sources through a systematic review, combined key aspects will be implemented. A literature search will be done through numerous data bases; *EBSCOhost, Sabinet Online, SA ePublications, ScienceDirect, Emerald and Google Scholar*. The search will be limited to studies have been published between 2005 until 2015. The

following type of sources will be selected for this study; journal articles, books, book chapters, theses and dissertations.

When searching for prospective studies, various terms or labels were used, as previously highlighted in the introduction, i.e. mobbing, harassment, aggression, workplace bullying, and negative acts. The terms will be combined with the following keywords, experiences and causes.

Systematic literature review objectives:

1) To identify all studies reporting victim experiences regarding workplace bullying

2) To identify all studies reporting possible causes regarding workplace bullying

Systematic literature review inclusion and exclusion criteria.
1) The study should investigate and report the experiences and causes of workplace bullying in which new data can be gathered, actions observed and perceptions recorded and compared.
2) The studies must be published between 2005 and the present year 2015 to ensure that the evident perspectives are monitored over a period of time, facilitating comparative analysis and theoretical sampling.

Second strategy: The qualitative meta-analysis approach in obtaining the sample for the study.
The term meta-analysis is typically used for a statistical summary of evidence produced through the systematic review design; however, it can also be used for assessing causes of problems and people's experiences through an analysis of qualitative data (Cooper et al., 2012). Jolliffe, and Farrington (2007) further comment that a meta-analysis is a survey research technique, composed of research reports that quantify research findings of the systematic review. Therefore, more specifically, a qualitative meta-analysis is used to generate a clear profile on literature regarding a certain topic, as this will contribute to the process of identifying frequent themes from various sources (Fengfeng, 2008). The aim of the meta-analysis was to identify similarities and contradictions among study findings, research designs and theoretical frames (Paterson et al., 2009).
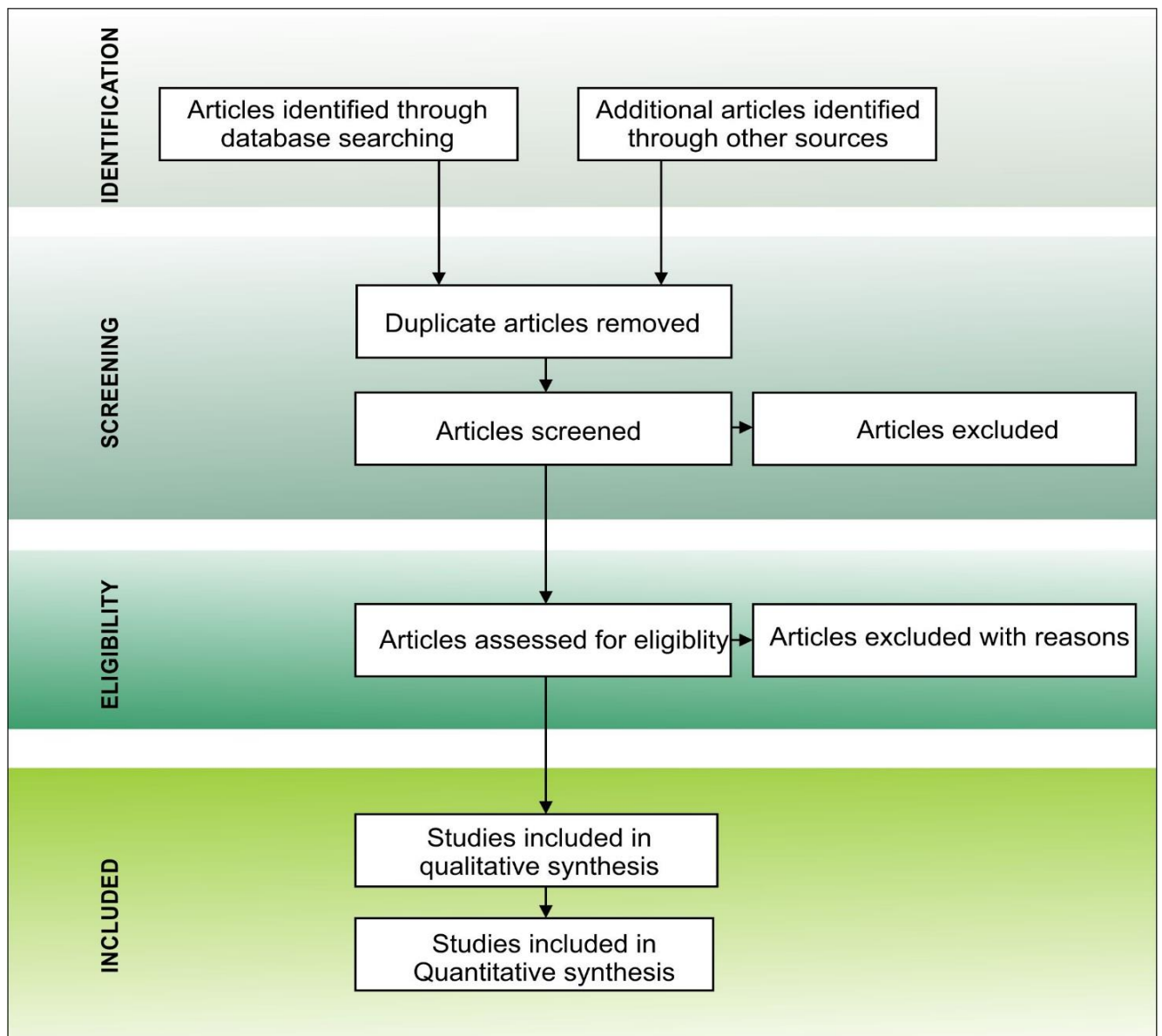
Figure 1: PRISMA flow diagram adapted from Moher, Liberati, Tetzlaff, and Altman (2009, p. 7)

Population and sample

Gravetter and Frozano (2003, .p. 465), as cited in De Vos, Strydom, Fouche and Delport (2012), referred to the term sample as implying "the simultaneous existence of a population or universe of, which the sample is a smaller section, or a set of individuals selected from a population" (p. 223). The population in this study was obtained by searching through several databases. After conducting this search for Chapter 2, the meta-analysis determined whether a

potential article was relevant and could be used to obtain data. Only then was an appropriate source identified.

This study therefore consisted of two main theoretical population sources. These sources entailed variations among concepts, designated categories and structure in terms of their property and scope (Strauss, & Corbin, 1998). According to Charmaz (2006), these sources focus on accumulating the analytic construct of theory by highlighting variations and recognising gaps that necessitate embellishment.

Data collection

As data collection and analysis occur simultaneously, it was not imperative that the researcher has to wait until the completion of the data collection before the analysis of data began (Cho, & Lee, 2014). Therefore, during the data analysis process, an incident would have been continually compared and contrasted with other incidents (Corbin, & Strauss, 1990). Furthermore, the researcher made continual comparisons between empirical data and concepts, between concepts and categories, among specific data and specific categories, and also among "different 'slices of data' in order to reach higher levels of abstraction and advance with the conceptualization" (Gregory, 2010, p.7).

Ethical considerations

The clarification of ethical issues is important. The fundamental ethical rule of social research is that it must bring no harm to participants (Babbie, 2007). Therefore, sources used in the meta-analysis of the systematic review and the integrative literature review were protected and the risks and benefits were weighed up regarding the study. It was therefore imperative that reporting of the findings obtained in this study was done in an unbiased and fair manner in an effort to reflect critical outcomes, which could be realistically utilised in policy and management procedures.

The following journals have been identified as possible opportunities for publication. As each journal has its own ethical and author guidelines, further investigation will be done as to the individual requirement of these journals. (a) *Journal of Behavioral Decision making*, Wiley-Blackwell, (b) *Journal of Human Resources*: University Wisconsin Press, and (c) *South African Journal of Business Management*, Association of Professional Managers South Africa.

Chapter division

The chapters in this full dissertation are presented as follows:

Chapter 1: Introduction

Chapter 2: Research article 1

Chapter 3: Research article 2

Chapter 4: Conclusion, limitations and recommendations

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CHAPTER 2

RESEARCH ARTICLE 1

EXPERIENCES AND CAUSES OF WORKPLACE BULLYING EXPERIENCES: A SYSTEMATIC REVIEW AND QUALITATIVE META-ANALYSIS

Abstract: Workplace bullying is not a new concept for researchers or organisations today. People are generally aware that bullying occurs in the workplace, but they do not necessarily have the right management framework or guidelines to assist when bullying occurs. Researchers tend to focus on definitions of bullying, bullying acts, prevalence rates, risk factors and the outcomes of bullying behaviours.

Purpose: The purpose of this paper was to explore the literature by means of a systematic review to identify possible sources that report experiences and causes of workplace bullying. Furthermore, this paper also attempted to identify experiences and causes of workplace bullying through a qualitative meta-analysis.

Design/methodology/approach: This research was conducted using a qualitative literature review research design and social constructivism as an ontological viewpoint. The PRISMA Statement (Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-analyses) was used as the methodological framework for this paper. This is an evidence-based set of items used for reporting systematic reviews and meta-analyses (Moher et al., 2010). A qualitative meta-analysis was followed to provide a clear summary of the findings. The thematic analysis was done by means of a manual method, which highlighted and organised main themes and phrases.

Findings: The main findings reveal that experiences of workplace bullying can be categorised into five main themes, namely: threat to professional status, threat to personal standing, social exclusion/isolation, overload, and destabilisation. Further findings reveal that bullying at work is multi-causal and can not only be explained by one cause, but rather by multiple causes, which can be categorised as causes due to organisational factors, individual causes (which can be individual or perpetrator factors), and societal causes.

Originality/value: This paper can assist the human resource practitioner (HRP) to identify experiences and causes of workplace bullying and to provide a basic framework to manage bullying experiences within their organisation. This paper will also inform and assist victims in labelling their experiences to make it easier to identify and explain their situation that contributes to the grievance procedure.

Keywords: Workplace bullying, bullying experiences, bullying causes, human recourse practitioner (HRP)

Introduction

Research regarding workplace bullying has recently passed the 20-year mark, and still today, significant contributions are being made in the theoretical development thereof (Samnani & Singh, 2012). Research generally describes workplace bullying as extreme, negative and persistent abuse, where victims experience an imbalance of power, which causes the victims to be distressed, humiliated and experience several other negative consequences (Cowan & Fox, 2015; Einarsen, Hoel, & Notelaers, 2009; Hurley, Hutchinson, Brandbury, & Browne, 2016). According to Fox and Cowan (2015) and Fox and Stallworth (2010), the consequences for the victims include health problems, such as post-traumatic stress disorder, identity crisis, depression, emotional vulnerability, self-doubt, anxiety and stress. Consequences for the organisation entail high costs, such as high levels of turnover intentions, absenteeism, job insecurity, condensed productivity and high legal costs (Glambek, Matthiesen, Hetland, & Einarsen, 2014; Fox & Cowan, 2015). Moreover, further counterproductive consequences for the organisation include damaged corporate reputation, reduced levels of employee loyalty, low commitment and abridged performance (Fox & Stallworth, 2010). Van Fleet and Van Fleet (2012) suggest that workplace bullying is problematic for organisations because there is no specific description of exactly what workplace bullying behaviour is. These occurrences have an impact on policymakers within the organisation, who find it challenging to adopt precautionary policies that contribute to the alleviation of these issues in the workplace (Hurley et al., 2016; Mikkelsen, Hogh, & Puggard, 2011).

Hutchinson, Vickers, Wilkes, and Jackson (2010), and Hurley et al. (2016) state that there is no fixed set of workplace bullying experiences. Nonetheless, Fox and Freeman (2011) contradict this as they state that there is a wide range of workplace bullying still evident. Even though these contradictions are evident in the literature, bullying experiences can range from harassment, offending a person, socially excluding an individual, and affecting someone's work environment negatively (Ciby & Raya, 2014; Einarsen, Hoel, Zapf, & Cooper, 2003; Saunders, Huynh, & Goiodman-Delahunty, 2007). Furthermore, to be able to label a situation as bullying, an individualistic perspective must be taken into consideration as individuals usually perceive themselves as being bullied and experiencing repeated and frequent negative acts over a period of time, which leave them powerless and unable to defend themselves (Cunniff & Mostert, 2012; Einarsen et al., 2003; Gilbert, Raffo, & Sutarso, 2013). Some experiences are subtler, whereas others are blatant or intentional and could potentially lead to physical acts of violence (Fox & Cowan, 2015).

Subtle behaviours are typically embedded in the workplace relations and processes (Hutchinson et al., 2010). Most of these acts are not enacted with extreme aggression or anger, which makes it difficult to pinpoint (Hutchinson et al., 2010). Subtle or unwitnessed bullying involves a sense of ambiguity, because victims cannot "prove" their experience and perpetrators usually claim that no harm was intended (Johnson, Boutain, Tsai, Beaton, & de Castro, 2015; Rayner & Lewis, 2011). These subtle behaviours or experiences include ignoring, gossiping, undermining acts, criticism, mean remarks, verbal abuse, spreading of rumours, humiliation, sabotaging an individual's work, and deliberately making the work life difficult for the individual, which places an immense amount of pressure on the individual (Desrumaux, Machado, Vallery, & Michel, 2016; Magee et al., 2015). Experiences such as stalking an individual, denigrating, degrading professional reputation, social isolation and exclusion, are also reported as bullying tactics (Gilani, Cavico, & Mujtaba, 2014). Being bullied can be seen as a subtle form of injury, which is rooted in the individual's psychological or cognitive realm of experiencing reality (Charilaos et al., 2015; Hurley et al., 2016).

In certain cases, there is no physical proof of bullying and the experience thereof can only be based on the victim's subjective experience of it (Johnson et al., 2015). These subtle bullying actions trigger different levels of individual experiences, which become part of the psychological encounter (Gromann, Goossens, Olthof, Pronk, & Krabbendam, 2013).

It must therefore be seriously considered that personal perceptions are a vital link in the experiencing of bullying behaviours. This psychological onslaught is therefore experienced as different levels or intensities of negative behaviours by each individual person, and these "bullying experiences" are very real to the victims and are of a deep psychological nature that can cause a profoundly rooted psychological injury (Gromann et al., 2013; Nielsen, Hetland, Matthiesen, & Einarsen, 2012).

Workplace bullying depends on the victim's perception (Einarsen, 1999), which further leads to the experience of these actions as a direct threat that the victim ascribes to a situation (Arentz et al., 2016; Botha, 2011). The subjective perception is the experience itself and the objective perception is the actions that breach the tolerable behaviour in society (Botha, 2011; Brodsky, 1976). In many instances, the behaviours are not easily recognised due to the individual's diverse subjective perceptions, which make the experiences very personal and unique (Botha, 2011). However, whatever the subjective or objective perceptions are, key elements that characterise the bullying experiences – including the intensity, frequency,

duration and power imbalances of the bullying act – remain (Botha, 2011; Rayner & Keasly, 2005).

Aspects of the experiencing of bullying behaviours by individuals can be summed up as an individual personally experiencing harm being done to them, which occurs on a repetitive basis, performed continuously over a period of time (Einarsen et al., 2003). Literature (Cunniff & Mostert, 2012; Einarsen & Raknes, 1997) indicates that frequent bullying experiences are divided into five categories, namely work-related experiences (such as work overload), violent threats, intimidation (blatant threats), personal derogation, and social exclusion, which can sometimes be viewed as subtler bullying (Botha, 2011). This subtle type of bullying is performed in a more covert manner, whereas actual or overt bullying can be openly noted with work-related harassment (Einarsen & Raknes, 1997; Einarsen, Hoel, Zapf, & Cooper, 2011). Botha (2011) and Herbs (2009) cite such negative behaviours as: withholding work-related information; removing individuals' work responsibilities; withholding any useful resources that the individual might need; unreasonable refusal to apply for leave; not considering an individual for possible training or promotions; accusations regarding lack of effort; and professional humiliation. There are some areas that are rather indistinct, such as work overload, where an individual could experience unreasonable work expectations, impossible deadlines and unnecessary disruptions (Avery, Tonidandel, Volpone, & Raghuram, 2010; Gamain-Wilk, 2013).

Personal derogating or destabilisation of an individual is the act that belittles the individual or the disparagement of someone's behaviours (Gamain-Wilk, 2013; Rayner & Hoel, 1997). These actions can include the following: public or professional humiliation; personal criticism; failure in giving credit when appropriate; giving meaningless tasks to complete; removal of responsibilities; unwarranted criticism or undermining comments, which undermine the standing or integrity of an individual; insulting or gossiping (Botha, 2011; Einarsen & Hoel, 2001; Öcel & Aydın, 2012); and verbalised ridiculing (Tehrani, 2012). If these acts are publicly declared or indicated, then overt accusations can be identified and seen as actual acts of bullying, which can lead to legal actions. However, if individuals perceive these acts as personal experiences and perceive the actions as negative, it is again very difficult to take action, since the underhanded actions are seen from a unique personal frame of reference (Trépanier, Fernet, & Austin, 2016).

Bullying can be experienced either covertly or overtly, where covert bullying refers to hidden actions or keeping the true intention of the bullying a secret, and overt bullying indicates

explicit or open actions that are done with intent (Anon, 2011; Olson et al., 2013). Bullying can therefore be viewed in the light of blatant, overt threats or actions that can be considered as real or true acts of bullying (Botha, 2011). On the other hand, bullying can also be subtler or covert: these behaviours are more personal and privately encountered, and cannot realistically be quantified as they are not "identifiable" (Botha, 2011). Such covert behaviours include actions of belittlement or disempowerment (Kaukiainen et al., 2001; Lee & Lovell, 2014).

Covert bullying, according to Barnes et al. (2012) and Olson et al. (2013), is difficult to manage by the human resource practitioner (HRP) due to its nature. Research has thus been more focused on overt rather than covert bullying (Hinshaw, 2002; Olson et al., 2013). This creates uncertainty on how to identify, respond to or manage these experiences (Barnes et al., 2012; Byers, Caltabiano, & Caltabiano, 2011). Several authors (Desrumaux et al., 2016; Nielsen, Notelaers, & Einarsen, 2011) have reported that generally, very little employees report workplace bullying experiences because victims feel fearful of the situation and the possible outcome. In most situations, the victim also has very little social support (Desrumaux et al., 2016).

The HRP is a key management function for managing human capital within an organisation. These practitioners should effectively promote a harmonious culture of civility, creating an environment of courtesy, safety and harmony in all aspects of human well-being (Binney, 2012). Therefore, the effective handling of bullying behaviours is an important facet to maintain a positive workplace atmosphere (Woodrow & Guest, 2014). As the HRP is more focused on human aspects of employee relationships, it is logical that these experiences could be resolved more effectively by trained and dedicated HRPs. Employers and HRPs should be motivated to reduce experiences of overt or covert bullying, since employee engagement is associated with higher profits, a higher self-rated performance, and greater organisational citizenship (Medlin & Green, 2009), which is generally positive for any organisation. As the HRP's are directly involved with the organisation human capital, they should and can play a key role in achieving these aims.

As stated in Cowan (2011), research has reported that most victims seek help from HR professionals within organisations (Glendinning, 2001; Lutgen-Sandvik, 2006) when faced with personal stressful situations, where the individual's usual coping skills are not sufficient to overcome the situation. In such a situation, experiences of bullying can be seen as the victim not having the ability to overcome his plight (Tehrani, 2013). This can therefore be considered another important aspect that emphasises the worth of an empowered HRP who can manage

employee relations effectively, especially regarding the sensitive yet devastating issues of personal stress and anxiety that workplace bullying creates.

Overt and covert experiences are multifaceted with various explanations, which challenge HRPs to pinpoint the exact experience and cause (Cowan, 2011; 2012). This limits HRPs to strategically develop company policies and practices to intervene effectively or to respond to bullying experiences (Barnes et al., 2012). Although findings by Cowan (2011) reported that HRPs generally agree that most organisations have anti-bullying policies that endeavour to manage these experiences, these policies still are not specific enough to actually assist in handling and detecting covert or overt experiences as they do not offer official guidelines or frameworks to assist in bullying experiences (Fox & Cowan, 2015). It is suggested with this research that clearly identified experiences and causes of workplace bullying can establish a framework for the management of the experience of bullying by employees. This would empower HRPs in understanding, handling and identifying experiences of bullying when they occur. Therefore, a management framework could lessen the frustration of all role players, and support could be implemented more effectively and strategically. The purpose of this paper was to explore the literature by means of a systematic review to identify possible sources that report experiences and causes of workplace bullying. Furthermore, this paper also attempted to identify experiences and causes of workplace bullying through a qualitative meta-analysis.

Method

Research design
A conceptual search of experiences and causes of workplace bullying was done by adopting the PRISMA Statement (Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-analyses) as the methodological framework for this paper (Moher, Liberati, Tetzlaff, Altman, & PRISMA Group, 2010). The goal of the PRISMA Statement was to improve transparency and scientific merit of reporting the reviewed sources and the meta-analyses (Moher et al., 2010). Due to the vast research that has already been done in workplace bullying, there is a large amount of existing literature available (Samnani & Singh, 2012). In using this design, the best method for summarising literature and obtaining evidence-based results was obtained (Cooper, Chenail, & Fleming, 2012). This design also assisted in adequately identifying the sources regarding experiences and causes of workplace bullying used for this paper (Cooper et al., 2012), which provided a realistic and reliable base for an HR management framework.

A systematic review is a review of a clearly formulated question that uses systematic and explicit methods to identify, select and critically appraise relevant research, and to collect and analyse data from the studies that are included in the review (Moher et al., 2010; Shamseer et al., 2015). These reviews set the reference standard for synthesising evidence because of their methodological rigor, and are becoming an increasingly common method (Moher et al., 2015). It was therefore central to the study to carry out a systematic review to ensure that there was justification for further research and to add to the knowledge already researched. The subset of the systematic review combines specific qualitative and quantitative findings from the selected sources, which will culminate in a conclusion (Cooper et al., 2012). For this paper, a qualitative meta-analysis was pursued, which provided a clear summary of the findings (Timulak, 2009). Schreiber, Crooks, and Stern (1997) defined qualitative meta-analysis as "the aggregating of a group of studies for the purposes of discovering the essential elements and translating the results into an end product that transforms the original results into a new conceptualization'' (p. 314). To facilitate the qualitative meta-analysis process for this paper, a manual method of thematic analysis was used to highlight themes, and to organise words and phrases that were identified from the reviewed sources (Freeling & Parker, 2015; Taylor, Kermode, & Roberts, 2011). Furthermore, a colour coding method (Freeling, & Parker, 2015; Taylor et al., 2011) was used to identify themes, words or phrases that were similar or related. These themes, words or phrases were grouped into sub-themes, after which main themes were established for both experiences and causes of workplace bullying.

The review and meta-analysis comprised four steps: firstly, the identification of potential sources; secondly, assessing source relevance; thirdly, initial screening inclusion and exclusion criteria; and finally, the meta-analysis which summarised the results.

Identification of potential sources

The search strategy involved inclusion criteria, exclusion criteria and suitable search terms that abetted in identifying potential sources in the databases. Databases that were used included EBSCOhost, Emerald, Google Scholar, SABINET and ScienceDirect. Furthermore, the key words that were used to obtain sources were: mobbing, harassment, aggression, workplace bullying, and negative acts.

Limitations that were set included that sources had to be published in English due to difficulties in translating and language bias (Tacconelli, 2010). Sources were also limited to

the period of publication between 2005 and 2015. This period was selected due to it producing the most relevant research on bullying (Samnani & Singh, 2012).

After implementing the search strategy, a population of 561 (N=561) possible sources were found, which further confirmed that the date delineation was sufficient for this paper and produced positive results. This population was also not limited to any specific field, industry or type of research design.

Assessing source relevance

A relevance screening criterion was used to exclude or include eligible sources for this study. This criterion entailed the screening of source titles and the abstracts in order to determine the relevance. Sources that were excluded reflected titles that were not relevant and on-topic sources with abstracts that did not accurately reveal experiences or causes of workplace bullying. A total of 325 sources were excluded from the population on the basis of not being relevant (e.g. Yamada, 2010; Escartin, Ullrich, Zapf, Schlüter, & Van Dick, 2013). A further 111 sources were excluded through abstract screening. Most of these were duplicates, non-English sources and irrelevant sources (e.g. Neyens, Baillien, Notelaers, & De Witte, 2007; Way, Jimmieson, Bordia, & Hepworth, 2013). Sources that seemed to be relevant on the basis of the abstract were retained. This resulted in 125 eligible sources, of which the full text was retrieved and considered for eligibility.

Initial screening inclusion and exclusion criteria

After the 125 sources had been inspected, 78 sources were excluded. These sources were excluded for the following reasons: 10 sources were not published in the given time frame; 21 sources due to inaccessibility; 28 sources were not relevant; 8 sources were non-English sources; and 11 sources did not report experiences or causes of workplace bullying. The sample we used for this paper was 47 sources (n=47), of which all the sources reported experiences and/or causes of workplace bullying. In addition, the selected sources varied regarding the publication date, research design, type of source, and population size. All abstracts of the sources were reviewed and the full text version was downloaded and saved to a file (see Appendix A for detailed information).

Results

The statistical summary of the years in which the sources were published can be seen in Table 1.

Table 1
Statistical reflection of the years in which sources were published

Number of sources	% Represented	Year of publication
2	4%	2005
5	11%	2006
4	9%	2007
3	6%	2008
4	9%	2009
6	13%	2010
3	11%	2011
4	9%	2012
5	11%	2013
8	17%	2014
3	6%	2015
n=47		

Various sources used different research designs, with eighteen (38%) of the sources following a qualitative research design, fifteen (32%) sources following a quantitative research design, and two (4%) of the sources following a mixed methods design. Furthermore, six (15%) of the sources followed a review research design, namely methodological, selective or critical review approach. One (2%) source was an editorial source and two (4%) sources used a report type style. The final two sources that were used were an analytical hierarchy process design and a trade publication. The population size of all the sources varied from three participants to a larger population of 10,339. See Appendix A for detailed information regarding reviewed sources.

Table 2 reflects the main themes and sub-themes that were identified in the data. In addition, the sources that reported an experience were also listed in the last column. The data revealed that experiences of workplace bullying can be divided into five main themes, namely: threat to personal standing, threat to professional status, social exclusion/ isolation, overload, and destabilisation. Moreover, several sub-themes were also identified in the data.

Table 2

Experiences of workplace bullying

Categories	Main themes	Sub-themes	No. of Ref	Source number
Threat to personal standing			15	6; 8; 10; 11; 12; 24; 26; 31; 33; 37; 38; 39; 40; 44; 46.
	Emotional bullying	Emotional terrorising	12	4:6: 9: 12:14: 16: 28: 35: 38; 43:46:47.
		Verbal threats	33	1; 4; 5; 6; 7; 9; 10; 12; 14; 16; 17; 18; 19; 21; 22; 23; 24; 26; 27; 28; 29; 32; 33; 35; 36; 37; 38; 39; 40; 41; 42; 44.
		Shouting at an individual	11	1; 14; 18; 19; 23; 24; 26; 32; 39; 41; 42.
		Personal and private attacks	13	7;8; 10; 12; 17; 23; 24; 35; 37; 38; 40; 41; 46.
		Annoying individual or teasing	10	4; 12; 14; 16; 17; 22; 36; 41; 42; 46.
		Manipulation and pretence	4	2; 12; 21; 35.
		Name calling		17; 24; 26; 35; 42.
		Humiliation	15	5; 8; 12;16; 18; 23; 24; 26; 28; 29; 32; 35; 40; 44; 45.
		Rumours	12	8; 12; 19; 22; 23; 26; 31; 35; 36; 38;39; 41.
		Gossip	12	7; 16; 22; 26; 29; 36; 38; 39; 40; 42; 41; 45.
		Terrorising	5	4; 6; 8; 23; 38.
	Physical bullying		24	4; 6; 7; 8; 9; 12; 14; 16; 19; 21; 23; 24; 25; 26; 27; 32; 35; 36; 37; 39; 41; 43; 46; 47.
		Negative eye contact	5	1; 12; 26; 31; 45.
		Damage property to intimidate (punching walls, kicking furniture)	6	8; 14; 16; 19; 24; 26
		Hit things	7	8; 12; 14; 16; 19; 24; 26
		Throwing things	5	12; 14; 19; 24; 26
		Physical attacks	14	8; 12; 14; 16; 19; 21; 24; 26; 32; 36; 37; 39; 41; 46.
Threat to professional status			13	1; 4; 8; 10; 11; 13; 16; 35; 38; 39; 40; 44; 45.
	Work-related Bullying	Belittling remarks	17	4; 10; 12; 14; 17; 23; 26; 27; 31; 33; 35; 36; 37; 40; 41; 45; 46.
		Criticism	16	1; 5; 12; 20; 21; 23; 26; 27; 28; 35; 36; 37; 39; 40; 41; 44.

		Professional humiliation	14	4; 10; 11; 14; 16; 18; 20; 23; 28; 32; 34; 35; 38; 45.
		Intimidation	20	2; 5; 6; 9; 10; 12; 14; 16; 17; 18; 23; 27; 29; 32; 35; 37; 38; 39; 40; 46.
		False accusations	9	1; 4; 12; 16; 23; 26; 28; 35; 45.
		Unethical communication/ approaches	12	2; 4; 5; 6; 8; 9; 16; 26; 27; 38; 44; 45.
		Undermining work	18	4; 16; 18; 21; 23; 24; 28; 29; 31; 34; 35; 36; 38; 39; 42; 44; 45; 46.
Social exclusion/ social isolation			9	8; 10; 11; 14; 16; 25; 29; 36; 38; 39.
	Social exclusion	Deprived from organisational resources	8	4; 16; 23; 24; 26; 32; 45; 46.
		Withholding information	23	1; 4; 9; 10; 11; 12; 15; 16; 19; 21; 22; 23; 24; 26; 31; 32; 35; 36; 37; 40; 41; 42; 45.
		Preventing or denying the individual to claim rights (e.g. leave)	11	4; 9; 11; 12; 16; 19; 24; 26; 32; 35; 45.
	Social isolation	Ignoring the individual	15	7; 8; 11; 14; 22; 23; 25; 26; 28; 29; 32; 35; 36; 39; 44.
		Ignoring complaints	12	2; 4; 9; 12; 18; 20; 21; 22; 32; 35; 39; 44.
		Gender or race exclusion	10	3; 6; 12; 13; 15; 19; 26; 27; 32; 36.
		Generally excluding	19	4; 6; 12; 14; 15; 16; 18; 23; 24; 25; 26; 28; 29; 34; 35; 36; 37; 42;46.
		Work in remote place with little contact	14	8;12; 14; 16; 24; 25;28; 29;31;35;36;38;41;44.
		Prevent victim to participate	15	4; 8;14;12;16;24;25;28;29;31;35;36;38;39;41
		Give tasks that are done alone	15	4;8 14; 12; 16; 24; 25; 28;29;31;35;36;38;39;41;
Overload			9	1; 8; 10; 11; 27; 35; 37; 39; 46.
	Task-related bullying	Unmanageable workload	20	1; 2; 4; 10; 11; 12; 14; 19; 21; 23; 26; 27; 31; 34; 35; 37; 39; 40; 41; 46.
		Excessive monitoring	13	1; 4; 16; 19; 24; 26; 33; 35; 36; 39; 40; 45; 46.
		Unrealistic expectations	15	1; 11; 12; 13; 16; 19; 23; 24; 26; 31; 34;35; 39; 41; 46.
		Excessive pressure	15	1; 2; 4; 5; 6; 14; 15; 19; 23; 34; 43; 44; 46; 47.
		Unreasonable deadlines	9	2; 12; 16; 23; 26; 31; 34; 39; 41.
Destabilisation			4	6; 10; 11; 39.
		Meaningless tasks	10	1; 2; 10; 15; 21; 26; 27; 35; 36; 39; 45.
		Setting unrealistic targets	7	11; 12; 16; 23; 34; 41; 45.
		Constantly reminded of mistakes	4	18; 28; 36; 46.
		Removing responsibilities	8	4; 12; 16; 18; 22; 23; 30; 35.
		Unprofessional conduct	4	1; 18; 19; 34.
		More tasks awarded than other staff at the same job level	9	2; 7; 11; 19; 21; 26; 37; 40; 44.
		Oppression	3	6; 7; 38.
		Work below competency	8	11; 12; 15; 16; 18; 26; 29; 38.

Table 3

Causes of workplace bullying

Categories	Main themes	Sub-themes	No. of Ref	Source number
Organisational causes				
	Job characteristics and organisational-related causes	Job design	3	15; 45; 46.
		Unclear goals	8	1; 3; 6; 27; 30; 34; 46; 47.
		Job demands	3	34; 39; 46.
		Role conflict	7	3; 15; 27; 30; 34; 44; 46.
		Role ambiguity	9	3; 15; 27; 28; 30; 34; 44; 45; 46.
		Lack of job control	7	1; 3; 11; 24; 27; 44; 46.
		Lack of training	13	2; 5; 7; 12; 15; 16; 19; 21; 26; 27; 31; 33; 42.
		Industry dependant	8	6; 11; 19; 34; 27; 28; 34; 47.
		Time restrictions	10	8; 19; 24; 26; 27; 33; 34;37; 45; 46.
		Stressful work	13	2; 3; 4; 5; 6; 9; 11; 20; 28; 34; 44; 45; 46.
		Physical aspects (crowded, noise, hot)	5	9; 19; 35; 46; 47.
		Job security	4	14; 19; 30; 37.
		Limited resources	6	4; 14; 23; 16; 26; 45.
	Organisational culture	Organisational culture	17	2; 5; 7; 8; 10; 11; 12; 25; 27; 28; 34; 35; 37; 40; 42; 44; 46.
		Organisational structure	15	6; 7; 8; 11; 13; 14; 15; 27; 30; 34; 35; 40; 42; 45; 47.
		Managers have a large span of control	5	6; 7; 11; 12; 27.
		HR systems	4	16; 21; 27; 33
		HRP has no control or power	6	16; 21; 27; 33; 42; 44.
		Destructive leadership/poor management	20	2; 5; 6; 8; 9; 10; 11; 12; 14; 15; 16; 19; 26; 27; 34; 35; 40; 44; 45; 46.
		Power imbalance/ power distribution	20	1; 2; 4; 5; 6; 7; 10; 12; 26; 27; 28; 36; 37; 39; 40; 42; 44; 45; 46; 47.
		Organisational practices	12	7; 9; 12; 16; 19; 20; 21; 36; 37; 42; 45; 47.
		Absence of policies	20	2; 4; 6; 7; 10; 11; 15; 16; 18; 19; 21; 26; 27; 31; 33; 41; 42; 44; 45; 46.
		Operational procedures	14	2; 13; 14; 18; 21; 27; 34; 35; 40; 41; 42; 44; 45; 47.
		Lack of union support	5	14; 19; 26; 33; 44.
		Organisational climate	12	6; 8; 13; 15; 19; 23; 27; 28; 30; 31; 44; 45.

		Quality of leadership	14	2; 5;6; 10;12; 14;15;16;27;34;40;44;45;46;
		Trust	5	12;14;16;44;46;
		Poor communication	14	4;5;7;8;9;12;19;21;26;27;28;38;40;41.
		Employee involvement	4	3;15;34;45;
		No counselling support/support in general	15	7; 8; 13; 15; 16; 21; 25; 26; 27; 33; 34; 42; 44; 45; 46.
	Organisational change	Threat of redundancy (layoffs)	7	1; 12; 14; 19; 27; 36; 37.
		Transformation	4	2; 11; 27; 36.
		Workforce shortages/ competitive	11	6; 11; 16; 25; 27; 28; 30; 34; 44; 45; 46.
		Diverse workforce	1	26
		Restructuring	12	1; 5; 6; 12; 14; 23; 25; 32; 36; 37; 42; 47.
		Downsizing	8	6; 12; 33; 36; 37; 42; 45; 47.
		Organisational change	16	1; 2; 6; 10; 11; 15; 19; 26; 27; 34; 36; 37; 40; 42; 45; 47.
		Change in management	5	6;8; 27;34;35;
		Budget cuts	3	19; 38; 45.
Individual causes: victim	Position of the victim	Individual characteristics Being different (gender, race, age, religion, title, status)	11	6; 8; 9; 13; 14; 16; 19; 26; 27; 28; 30; 35; 39; 42; 46.
		"Being in the out group" or minority	3	14; 36;42;
	Social incompetence and low self-esteem	Low self-esteem	8	12; 17; 19; 30; 35; 37; 39; 47.
		Low self-assertiveness	8	2; 5; 9; 12; 15;17; 30 ;47;
		Emotional instability	4	19; 30; 46; 47.
		Oversensitive	3	10; 12; 33;
		Passive character	4	5; 6; 9; 47.
		Less competitive	6	16; 27; 28; 30; 44; 45.
		Less stable	3	9; 30; 47.
		Role conflict	8	3; 15; 27; 28; 30; 34; 44; 46.
		Exploitable	9	9;12; 16;18; 22; 30 ;40; 42; 45;
		Unable to defend themselves	19	2;3;5;6;7; 9; 11;15;16; 18;19;21;25;26;30;33;36; 46;47
		Low in confidence	7	9; 16; 21; 30; 35; 38; 43.
		High levels of anxiety or social anxiety	5	7;12; 13; 30; 42; 47
		Adaptability	5	30 ;31; 34; 42; 45;
		Poor conflict management/ avoids conflict by not complaining	17	4; 5; 9;11; 12; 15; 16; 21; 27; 30; 33; 34; 35; 41; 44; 45; 46.

		Poor coping skills	17	4; 8; 9;10; 11; 15; 23; 27; 28; 30; 35; 39; 42; 44; 45; 46; 47.
		Poor problem-solving skills	7	7; 8; 9; 12; 16; 30; 37; 45.
		Problems understanding social cues or behaviour	5	15; 16; 30;39;45
		Misinterpret the situation	11	1; 6; 8; 9; 10; 19; 26; 27; 41; 45; 46.
	Overachiever conflicting group norms	Personality	16	4; 8; 10; 11; 15; 23; 27; 28; 30; 35; 39; 42; 44; 45; 46; 47.
		Conscientious	4	15; 19; 27; 47.
		Competency	12	7; 11; 12; 14; 16; 18; 29;30; 35; 39; 40; 47.
Individual causes: perpetrator				
	Threatened self-esteem	Self-esteem	13	6; 9; 12; 17; 19; 30; 35; 37; 38; 39; 43; 45; 47.
		Aggressive character	14	5; 6; 8; 9; 12; 13; 15; 19; 26; 28; 43; 44; 45; 46.
		Personality	16	4; 8; 10; 11; 15; 23; 27; 28; 30; 35; 39; 42; 44; 45; 46; 47.
		Compensates for own inadequacies	8	5; 9; 12; 19; 26; 35; 43; 44.
		Inferior complex	8	5; 6; 12; 16; 17;27; 30.;35;
		Envy	13	10; 15; 19; 26; 27; 30; 35; 38; 39; 40; 42; 44; 47.
		Perceived threat	10	1; 13;19; 27; 30; 35; 37; 42; 45; 46.
	Lack of social competence	Lack of emotional control	6	2; 5; 13; 30; 46; 47.
		Not aware of behaviour	6	4; 13;30;34;45;47
		Desire to hurt	4	12; 26; 27; 44.
		Poor conflict management	9	12; 15; 27; 33; 34; 35; 41; 45; 46.
		Self-awareness	11	2:12;13;17;19;30;37;38;39;43;47;
		Difficulty proving intent	6	26; 27; 29; 32; 44; 46.
	Micro-political behaviour	Competition	13	6; 7; 11; 12; 16; 25; 27; 28; 30; 35; 39; 42; 44; 45; 46
		Pressure to perform	14	1; 2; 4; 5; 6; 14; 15; 19;23; 34; 43; 44; 46; 47.
		Need to prove power	21	5; 6; 7; 10; 12; 14; 16; 18; 19; 21; 22; 27; 28; 32; 35; 36; 39; 40; 42; 43; 45.
		Need for control	17	3; 4; 5; 6; 12; 13; 14; 15; 16; 18; 19; 21; 24; 35; 40; 42; 44.
		Misuse of power	8	5; 6; 12; 16; 18; 22; 30; 40; 45.
		Individual rivalry (jealousy)	6	7; 11; 26; 27; 30; 40; 43.
		Strive to achieve own goals	6	5; 6; 12; 16; 20; 30

Societal			
	Economic crisis	7	4; 6; 10; 15; 23; 26; 46.
	Community problems	2	5; 46.
	Competitive market	11	6; 11; 16; 25; 27; 28; 30; 34; 44; 45; 46.
	Unresolved social problem	20	6; 7; 8; 9; 10; 13; 15; 16; 24; 27; 29; 30; 35; 38; 39; 41; 44; 45; 46; 47.
	Society does not know who deal with situation	3	13; 27; 46.
	Globalisation	1	6
	Legal system not addressing bullying	7	4; 6; 7; 16; 32; 33; 46.
	Political influences	4	16; 19; 22; 30

Table 3 entails all the main themes and sub-themes that emerged from the data collected during the review. The sources that reported identical or similar themes were also specifically noted in the table by a numerical value. The data revealed four main themes for the causes of workplace bullying, namely: organisational causes, individual causes, perpetrator causes, and societal causes.

Discussion

After conducting the meta-analysis, a total of nine categories with nine main themes and 115 sub-themes were identified from the data that were analysed. More specifically, data that were analysed for the experiences of workplace bullying amounted to five categories, namely threat to personal standing, threat to professional status, social exclusion/isolation, overload and destabilisation.

Data that were analysed regarding the causes of workplace bullying revealed three categories, namely organisational causes, individual causes, and societal causes. These categories revealed sub-themes in each category. A total of nine main themes and 75 sub-themes emerged. In this discussion, findings will be explained and central features that were most prominent in the data will also be elaborated on.

Experiences of workplace bullying

Literature regarding workplace bullying lists many experiences as bullying behaviours or negative acts that might be experienced by the victim (Moayed, Daraiseh, Shell, & Salem, 2006). To label an experience as bullying, the victim must feel inferior when defending themselves within the situation (Jennifer, Cowie, & Ananiadou, 2003). Rayner and Hoel (1997) initially divided these behaviours or acts into five categories. For this paper, these categories are viewed as victims' experiences of bullying rather than bullying behaviours or negative acts. According to Moayed et al. (2006), these five categories overlap due to the circumstance these experiences occur in. Thus, these five categories serve as a starting point or a guideline for identifying experiences of workplace bullying.

Threat to personal standing: Bullying can occur in two forms: either as emotional bullying or physical bullying (Celep & Konakli, 2013; Serin, Balkan, & Dogan, 2014; Yildirim & Yildirim, 2007). Findings (Dentith, Wright, & Coryell, 2014; Lewis, 2006; Trépanier, et al.,

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2016) suggest that experiences of emotional bullying are more prevalent at work than physical bullying. It is, however, irrelevant whether bullying at work is more emotional than physical: the basic problem is still that the victim is experiencing a negative environment when working. In order to categorise an experience as an emotional or physical attack, the victim has to perceive the experience as a threat to their personal standing (Gökçe, 2009; Serin et al., 2014; Qureshi, et al., 2015).

Experiences of emotional bullying that emerge from the data included verbal threats or shouting (Efe & Ayaz, 2010; Zabrodska & Kveton, 2013), name-calling, humiliation or gossiping (De Vos & Kirsten, 2015; Kostev, Rex, Waehlert, Hog, & Heilmaier, 2014; Ramsey, 2005). The data evaluated revealed several experiences of physical bullying, which ranged from less severe to actual life-threatening. These experiences included negative eye contact (Meyer & Kirsten, 2014; Speedy, 2006), damaging property (Gökçe, 2009; Hodson, Roscigno, & Lopez, 2006), kicking or punching walls (Buttigieg, Bryant, Hanley, & Liu, 2011; Van Fleet & Van Fleet, 2012), and physical attacks (Fahie & Devine, 2014; Gaetano & Ombudsman, 2010).

Threat to professional status: In this category, emotional bullying is the tactic generally used to bully the victim (Dentith et al., 2014; Vickers, 2014; Yildirim & Yildirim, 2007). Experiences are all work-related and are mostly aimed at discrediting or professionally humiliating the victim, resulting in threatening the professional status of the victim (Zabrodska & Kveton, 2013; Qureshi et al., 2015). Experiences identified from the data were: belittling remarks (e.g. De Vos & Kirsten, 2015; O'Driscoll et al., 2011), constantly criticising work (Lewis, 2006; MacIntosh, Wuest, Gray, & Cronkhite, 2010), any attempts to professionally humiliate or undermine work (Gardner Gilkes Benevides, 2012; Ciby & Raya, 2014), false accusations to discredit the victim (Meyer & Kirsten, 2014; Yildirim & Yildirim, 2007), and unethical approaches or communication (Cevik Akyil, Tan, Saritas, & Altunas, 2012; Moayed et al., 2006).

Social exclusion/ Social isolation: Social exclusion, according to Power and Wilson (2000), occurs when an individual is prevented from fully participating in normal social activities in the environment they find themselves in. On the other hand, social isolation is more relational and can be seen as the state of being estranged, where social relationships are restricted or absent (Matthews et al., 2016). The data collected for this category divided these experiences in either social exclusion experience or social isolation experiences.

Experiences of social exclusion that emerged from the data included that individuals can be deprived from organisational resources (Moayed et al., 2006; Vickers, 2014), and perpetrators withholding information from individuals, which hinder the victim to successfully complete their task at hand (McDuff, 2008; Meyer & Kirsten, 2014; Zabrodska & Kveton, 2013). Experiences that emerged from the data for social isolation, were ignoring an individual and their complaints (Celep & Konakli, 2013; Meyer & Kirsten, 2015), assigning a victim to work on tasks that are done alone, and placing the victim where there is little contact with colleagues (De Wet, 2010; Heugten, 2007). Preventing victims to participate in or attend meetings is another form of social exclusion (Ozturk, Sokmen, Yilmaz, & Cilingir, 2008; Trépanier et al., 2016).

Overload: This category refers to task-related experiences of bullying. The victim experiences undue pressure to produce against impossible deadlines and to complete overwhelming work tasks (Dentith et al., 2014; Poilpot-Rocaboy, 2006). Experiences identified in this category included that victims are presented with impossible workloads and in most cases, fail to complete tasks (Hemmings, 2013; Jackson, 2008). Unwarranted pressure is also experienced when victims are excessively monitored and checked on (Meyer & Kirsten, 2014; Vickers, 2014).

Destabilisation: Destabilisation occurs when the perpetrator undermines or disarms a victim by changing their responsibilities or task goals without informing or consulting them (Serin et al., 2014; Qureshi et al., 2015). In this category, victims experience acts that can devaluate them and leave them feeling powerless and out of control (Bas, 2011; Lewis, 2006). Experiences in this category include receiving meaningless tasks to complete (Gardner Gilkes Benevides, 2012; Fahie & Devine, 2014), trying to achieve unrealistic targets that are set by the perpetrator (Ciby & Raya, 2014; Vickers, 2014), and perpetrators who constantly highlight and remind the victim of their mistakes (Murray, 2009; Shallcross, Ramsay, & Barker, 2013). Victims can also experience that the perpetrator will award more tasks or less tasks to other individuals on the same job level (Celep & Konakli, 2013; Meyer & Kirsten, 2015). Victims can also receive work that is below their competency levels, which devalues them and their abilities (Jackson, 2008; Zabrodska & Kveton, 2013).

Causes of workplace bullying

Some researchers argue that bullying is triggered due to individual causes, such as personality traits of either the victim or perpetrator (Coyne, Seigne, & Randall, 2000; Glasø, Matthiesen, Nielsen, & Einarsen, 2007). Other researchers argue that factors related to the organisation or work, are the central causes of workplace bullying (Leymann, 1996). Whatever the case might be, Baillien et al. (2015) argue that causes of bullying can be various and diverse, all contributing to the general experience of bullying, rather than one specific cause being a reason.

Organisational causes of workplace bullying: Fox and Cowan (2015) and Coyne (2015) considered the work environment hypothesis by Leymann (1996) as one of the key theories used by researchers to address organisational causes of workplace bullying. According to Leymann (1996), this hypothesis advocates that if work environments are poorly organised or managed, it will create a stressful setting for individuals and will coexist with bullying at work. The main themes identified in this paper support the notion of the work environment hypothesis. These themes are: (1) job characteristics and organisational-related factors; (2) organisational culture; and (3) organisational change.

Job characteristics and organisational-related factors: Bullying is mostly associated with poor work environments (McDuff, 2008; Trépanier et al., 2016). In these environments, factors relating to the job or organisation can trigger (Trépanier et al., 2016). Job-related factors, such as poor job designs (Bas, 2011; Gardner Gilkes Benevides, 2012), unclear goals (Meyer & Kirsten, 2014; Neall & Tuckey, 2014) and unreasonable job demands (Ciby & Raya, 2014), can cause experiences of role conflict or role ambiguity, which can be directly linked to bullying at work (Bas, 2011; Neall & Tuckey, 2014). Furthermore, factors such as lack of job control and training causes frustration amongst employees, which also trigger bullying (Poilpot-Rocaboy, 2006; Zabrodska & Kveton, 2013). Findings reveal that bullying can also be industry-dependent, where bullying is more prevalent in some industries than others (Shallcross et al., 2013; Serin et al., 2014). High-pressured organisations or jobs have also been considered as prime causes of bullying (Meyer & Kirsten, 2014; 2015). Physical aspects of the job (noise, heat, cold, or crowded) and limited resources (Yildirim & Yildirim, 2007) have also been revealed as triggers for bullying at work (Poilpot-Rocaboy, 2006).

Organisational culture and climate-related factors: In most cases, the data revealed that where bullying is prevalent, the organisational culture was conducive to bullying behaviour and

bullying behaviour was built into the culture (Salin & Hoel, 2011). Further findings suggest that the organisational climate also encourages bullying (Murray, 2009; Serin et al., 2014) and that managers contribute to this culture by participating or overlooking abusive behaviour (Speed, 2006; Zabrodska & Kveton, 2013).

Weak leadership and poor communication also influence bullying (Buttigieg et al., 2011; O'Driscoll et al., 2011). Poor communication contributes to a low organisational climate and is also shown to be linked to bullying at work (Celep & Konakli, 2013; De Vos & Kirsten, 2015).

Bullying is also caused when organisations lack clear HR systems, like policies, practices and operational procedures (Hemmings, 2013; Lewis, 2006). Organisational structures in some cases also contribute to bullying due to restricting HRP control or power to manage bullying (De Wet, 2010; Vickers, 2014). A lack of union and counsellor support also causes bullying to continue (MacIntosh, 2005; Van Fleet & Van Fleet, 2012). Finally, a lack of employee involvement often plays a role in the occurrence of bullying (Bas, 2011; Ciby, & Raya, 2014).

Organisational change: Whether the organisational change occurs externally or internally, findings reveal that both influence the occurrence of bullying at work (Salin & Hoel, 2011). Internal factors such as layoffs or downsizing can create an opportunity for internal competition, which could trigger bullying behaviour to eliminate competition (Poilpot-Rocaboy, 2006; Serin et al., 2014; Speedy, 2006). Changes in management or restructuring could further cause confusion or insecurities among employees and could trigger bullying among colleagues (Gökçe, 2009; Hemmings, 2013). External factors such as labour shortages create a great deal of competition in the labour market, causing further bullying activities to occur (Serin et al., 2014; Vickers, 2014; Zabrodska & Kveton, 2013).

Individual causes of workplace bullying – the victims' perspective
In this section, the individual causes of bullying will be discussed, and attention will be given to the victim and issues surrounding this problem.

Victim perspective: Although numerous studies have investigated victim personalities as a possible cause of bullying or being a target for bullying, no concrete evidence has been

provided to confirm a typical victim personality type or a typical target profile (Gardner Gilkes Benevides, 2012; Matthiesen & Einarsen, 2007; Zapf & Einarsen, 2011).

Victim's position: The victim's position refers to where the individual, who is victimised, is placed or fits into the whole scenario (Zapf & Einarsen, 2011). If an individual is different to the group, they are highly prone to be bullied as they are seen as the outsider (Heugten, 2007; Vickers, 2014). Their position is identified through unique or "out of the ordinary" attributes, such as race, age and gender (Cevik Akyil et al., 2012; Gökçe, 2009; Serin et al., 2014), which makes them "apart" from the main group of "accepted" individuals. Studies have also found that if a victim is in the minority, they are also at higher risk of experiencing bullying (Lewis & Gunn, 2007; Heugten, 2007; Vickers, 2014).

Social incompetence and low self-esteem: Victims who find it hard to understand or correctly interpret their social environment or behavioural cues from others, could very easily be open to or interpret bullying incorrectly (Meyer & Kirsten, 2014; Serin et al., 2014). This situation reflects individuals who struggle socially to connect and have a low self-esteem. However, findings have revealed that several victim characteristics can be associated with bullying, namely being less competitive (Hemmings, 2013; Shallcross et al., 2013), individuals having low confidence (MacIntosh, 2005; Ozturk et al., 2008), and not having a very adaptable personality (Ciby & Raya, 2014; De Cuyper, Baillien, & De Witte, 2009). However, victims who open themselves to be exploited are also targets for bullying and find it difficult to defend themselves (Efe & Ayaz, 2010; Neall & Tuckey, 2014; Serin et al., 2014). Victims with these traits coupled with traits of anxiety in social environments and the lack of general social skills are also targets for possible bullying (Bas, 2011; Vickers, 2014). Individuals who have poor coping skills and poor conflict management skills can also be targets of bullying (Hemmings, 2013; Jackson, 2008; Van Fleet & Van Fleet. 2012) as well as those individuals who are emotionally unstable, oversensitive and effectively misinterpret social cues (Gardner Gilkes Benevides, 2012; Speedy, 2006). Even though researchers have attempted to establish whether victims who portray these characteristics are more vulnerable and more prone to bullying (Efe & Ayaz, 2010; Matthiesen & Einarsen, 2007; Meyer & Kirsten, 2015; Speedy, 2006), it has not been significantly established.

Overachievers, which result in conflicting group norms: Research revealed that overachievers tend to be very conscientious and perfectionistic, which tend to be annoying for other members

of a group. Furthermore, these overachievers tend to be very particular and critical, which in effect, threatens other members' self-esteem, self-competence beliefs and functionality, which result in more intense bullying reactions by perpetrators (Zapf & Einarsen, 2011). Victims who are overachievers are usually prompt, frank and rule bound, which clash with the group norms and further create opportunities for bullying behaviours (Coyne et al., 2000). In considering the abovementioned facts, it is clear that these scenarios provide the perfect environment for creating a bullying situation that facilitates and even promotes bullying behaviours for the perpetrators executing these actions (Bas, 2011; Buttigieg et al., 2011).

Individual causes of workplace bullying: The perpetrators' perspective
As with the previous section, where the victim was discussed, in this section, the perpetrator and issues regarding their character, reasons for their behaviour and the result of their actions will be highlighted.

Research regarding the perpetrator or the bully generally reveals that in most cases bullies tend to be male rather than female, and that these individuals are normally in higher management positions (Zapf & Einarsen, 2011). To date, researchers still cannot put forward a "typical bully" profile for perpetrators (Glasø et al., 2007; Hauge, Skogstad, & Einarsen, 2009). Findings have only attempted to provide general characteristics which are reported in literature.

Threatened self-view: In cases where bullying behaviours are evident, the self-view of the perpetrator, which they strive to protect, seems to be threatened or challenged, and in an effort to try protect this view, bullying behaviours are triggered (Cevik Akyil et al., 2012; Serin et al., 2014).

Several studies (Gardner Gilkes Benevides, 2012; Buttigieg et al., 2011; Ramsey, 2005) also reported this phenomenon and highlighted the fact that when the perpetrator's self-esteem is threatened, bullying behaviours are triggered. This can be seen when perpetrators perceive victims as a threat and therefore the perpetrator turns to bullying behaviours to eliminate this threat (Zapf & Einarsen, 2011). Bullies who have a high self-esteem usually respond with aggressive behaviour to protect this view (De Wet, 2010; Shallcross et al., 2013). Findings also reveal that in most cases, the perpetrator tends to have an aggressive character (Cevik Akyil et al., 2012; Speedy, 2006) and they struggle with an inferiority complex (Hemmings, 2013; Matthiesen & Einarsen, 2007), resulting in the perpetrator bullying to compensate for their own

inadequacies (Dentith et al., 2014; MacIntosh, 2005). Perpetrators also tend to envy their targets and this could therefore be one of the main reasons for bullying a victim (De Vos & Kirsten, 2015; Qureshi, et al., 2015).

Lack social competence and insight: Most perpetrators are not aware that the behaviours they display can be constituted as bullying, nor do the perpetrators perceive these behaviours as bullying (Efe & Ayaz, 2010; McDuff, 2008; Yildirim & Yildirim, 2007). Further research suggests that perpetrators lack self-awareness (Ozturk et al., 2008; Poilpot-Rocaboy, 2006) and the ability to control their emotions and behaviours, resulting in negative social behaviours such as screaming and swearing, which contributes to victims feeling degraded and bullied (Trépanier et al., 2016). Poor conflict management skills are also a major contributor to conflict at work and will inevitably also trigger bullying behaviours (Bas, 2011).

Micro-political: People's influences, preferences and perceptions: This aspect involves the influences of the individual's preferences, approaches, perceptions and influences with a work environment or situation (Schere, 2015). Possible reasons why perpetrators would want to influence victims within a work environment are varied and complicated. Competition amongst colleagues (Fahie & Devine, 2014; Jackson, 2008), the need to prove power (Dhar, 2012; Efe & Ayaz, 2010), the need to control victims (Murray, 2009; Van Heugten, 2010), and when perpetrators have the opportunity to misuse power and abuse victims (Efe & Ayaz, 2010; Zabrodska & Kveton, 2013) are all aspects to be considered. From the organisation's side, when the organisation pressurises individuals to perform and achieve organisational goals, it could also lead perpetrators to use any tactic to achieve their performance expectations by bullying subordinates (Hodson et al., 2006). Individual rivalry – such as jealousy, resentment and envy – can also trigger bullying (Celep & Konakli, 2013) as perpetrators have the urgent need to achieve personal goals without any tolerance for hindrances from others (Vickers, 2014; Zabrodska & Kveton, 2013).

Societal causes of workplace bullying

Organisations are directly impacted by the society in which they function (Berry, Gillespie, Fisher, & Gormley, 2016), therefore various factors, such as an economic crisis or a slump in the economy, directly impact on the organisation. Consequently, these external stressors affect the internal dynamics of the organisation, putting pressure on everyone, management and employees alike (Serin, Balkan, & Dogan, 2014). These stressors can and will usually trigger bullying within the organisation as individuals "fight for survival" (Serin et al., 2014; Qureshi et al., 2013). From a more holistic and comprehensive perspective, globalisation and international competitive labour markets also impact on local organisations and again put stress on the human element in the organisational structure of institutions, creating a "sink or swim" scenario that most definitely creates a climate for bullying in the "race" to succeed (Serin et al., 2014). Furthermore, unresolved social problems – like poverty, inequality and economic injustices and historical factors, which created present-day situations – can, by their very nature, trigger an atmosphere of discontentment which sparks bullying, intimidation and oppression, condoning these actions and causing an acceptable "bullying culture" (Gökçe, 2009; McDuff, 2008).

Society does not necessarily know how to deal with bullying and therefore "sweeps it under the carpet" and simply ignores these issues (Trépanier et al., 2016). Thus far, it is just "ignored" to such an extent that even the legal system has not yet satisfactorily addressed bullying or bullying behaviours at work (Serin et al., 2014; Yildirim & Yildirim, 2007).

After considering the above, the following basic framework (Figure 2) is developed for categorising experiences and causes of workplace bullying. This model suggests that experiences and causes of workplace bullying can be identified on two different dimensions. The first dimension that was identified, was that of experiences and causes of bullying, occurring on two different observational levels, namely covert or overt. The second dimension that emerged from the data, was that of experience and causes of bullying that were present on two possible behavioural levels, namely organisational climate or individual level. Thus, the experiences or causes that can be identified on an overt observational level, and which occur on an organisational climate level, can be labelled as an overt climate of bullying. All covert experiences or causes on an organisational climate level can thus be categorised as a covert climate of bullying. On an individual level, all overt experiences or causes of bullying can be identified as overt individual bullying, and all covert experiences or causes of bullying on an individual level can be labelled as covert individual bullying.

		Bullying observational levels	
		Overt	Covert
Behavioural levels of bullying	Organisational climate	Overt climate of bullying	Covert climate of bullying
	Individual level	Overt individual bullying	Covert individual bullying

Figure 2. Basic framework for experiences and causes of workplace bullying

Conclusions

The experiences and causes identified in this study have led to the researcher developing a structural model reflecting the possible experiences and causes of workplace bullying. The structural framework (Figure 2) can further be divided into two individual models for both experiences of bullying (Figure 3) and causes bullying (Figure 4).

The structural model suggested for experiences of bullying (Figure 3) suggests that overt climate bullying can be categorised into four main sections: organisational-related adversities, work overload, destructive work practices, and micro-management. Covert climate bullying can be categorised into three main sections: dysfunctional subtle adversities, isolation, and destabilisation. On the individual behavioural level overt individual bullying is categorised into five sections: emotional adversities, personal offenses, physical offenses, harassment, and discrimination. Covert individual bullying is categorised into four sections: degradation, body language, psychological offenses, and exclusion.

		Bullying observational levels	
		Overt experiences	Covert experiences
Behavioural levels of bullying	Organisational climate	Overt climate of bullying: • Organisational-related adversities • Work overload • Destructive work practices • Micro-management	Covert climate of bullying: • Dysfunctional subtle adversities • Isolation • Destabilisation
	Individual level	Overt individual bullying: • Emotional adversities • Personal offenses • Physical offenses • Harassment • Discrimination	Covert individual bullying: • Degradation • Body language • Psychological offenses • Exclusion

Figure 3. Framework for experiences of workplace bullying

The structural model suggested for causes of workplace bullying (Figure 4) can also be viewed on a two-dimensional continuum, as suggested in the basic framework (Figure 2). Causes of an overt climate of bullying can be categorised into two categories, namely deliberate inadequacies of strategic human resource management and deliberate inadequacies of organisational structure. As with overt climate of bullying, causes of covert climate bullying can also be grouped into two main categories, namely subtle inadequacies of strategic human resource management and subtle inadequacies of organisational structure.

On an individual level, causes of overt individual bullying are also categorised into two distinct groups, namely direct destructive management styles and direct destructive employee relations. Furthermore, covert individual bullying is categorised into subtle destructive management styles and subtle destructive employee relations.

		Observational causes	
		Overt causes	Covert causes
Behavioural Causes	Organisational climate	Overt climate causes of bullying: • Deliberate inadequacies of strategic human resource management • Deliberate inadequacies of organisational structure	Covert climate causes of bullying: • Subtle inadequacies of strategic human resource management • Subtle inadequacies of organisational structure
	Individual level	Overt individual causes of bullying: • Direct destructive management styles (manager or supervisor) • Direct destructive employee relations (colleagues and employees)	Covert individual causes of bullying: • Subtle destructive management styles (manager or supervisor) • Subtle destructive employee relations (colleagues and employees)

Figure 4. Framework for causes of workplace bullying

This structural model is therefore developed to endeavour to assist and guide all role players involved with and in these situations, namely the victims, the perpetrators and the HRPs. The structural model is therefore suggested to create a greater understanding of the situation, to facilitate identification of those victims who need assistance as well as those who commit or perpetrate the negative actions, and to ensure that appropriate and applicable action regarding these experiences are taken. If all these measures are acutely adhered to, it should result in a better workplace for all.

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Appendix A

Characteristics of theoretical sample (n=47)

Ref. num.	Reference	Title	Journal	Study design	Sample size	Study objective
1.	Meyer, & Kristen, (2014).	The effect of psychological violence in the workplace on health: A holistic eco-system approach	Health SA Gesondheid (Online),	Qualitative	29 Participants	Investigate Perceived effects of physiological violence.
2.	Meyer, & Kristen, (2015).	Psychological violence at a multi-campus further education and training college	South African Journal of Higher education	Quantitative	262 Participants	Aimed to determine the nature of psychological violence
3.	Neall, & Tuckey, (2014).	A methodological review of research on the antecedents and consequences of workplace harassment.	Journal of Occupational and Organizational Psychology	Methodological review	195 Articles	Quantify the nature and extent of methodological limitations within workplace harassment literature and to be able to critically appraise existing literature
4.	Yildirim, & Yildirim, (2007).	Mobbing in the workplace by peers and managers: mobbing experiences by nurses working in healthcare facilities	Journal of clinical nursing	Quantitative	710 Participants	Determining mobbing experiences by nurses who work in the healthcare facilities in Turkey
5.	Efe, & Ayaz, (2010)	Mobbing against nurses in the workplace in Turkey	International nursing review	Qualitative and quantitative Mixed method	206 Participants	Determine whether nurses have been exposed to mobbing and to reveal the causes of mobbing
6.	Serin, et al., (2014).	The perception and causes of mobbing: Turkey example.	Journal of Business Economics and Finance	Quantitative	124 Participants	To identify a relationship between mobbing and resources of mobbing

7.	Celep, & Konakli, (2013).	Mobbing experiences of instructors: causes, results, and solution suggestions.	Educational Sciences: Theory & Practice	Qualitative	8 Participants	Investigate the possible mobbing problems in universities, their causes and results, and attract attention to precautions that can be taken
8.	Gökçe, (2009).	Development of mobbing questionnaire for educators in Turkey	The Indian Journal of Social Work	Quantitative	1842 Participants	Develop a valid and reliable measurement tool for mobbing among educators.
9.	Cevik Akyil, et. al., (2012).	Levels of mobbing perceptions among nurses in Eastern Turkey	International nursing review	Qualitative	180 Participants	Describe and compare levels of mobbing perceptions among nurses I Eastern Turkey.
10.	Qureshi, et al., (2013).	Empirical investigation of mobbing, stress and employees' behaviour at workplace: quantitative refining a qualitative model.	Quality & Quantity	Quantitative	450 Participants	Identify causes of mobbing and their relationship between constructs.
11.	Zabrodska & (2013).	Prevalence and forms of workplace bullying among university employees	Employee Responsibilities and Rights Journal	Quantitative	1533 Participants	Extend current knowledge of workplace bullying in higher education by examining the prevalence and forms of workplace bullying among university staff.
12.	Speedy, (2006).	Workplace violence; The dark side of organisational life.	Contemporary Nurse	Selective review	NA	Focuses on bullying and mobbing in the workplace, addressing the types and causes characteristics of bullies and targets and the general impact of bullying.
13.	McDuff, (2008).	Organizational context and sexual harassment of clergy.	Sociology of Religion	Quantitative	1996 Participants	Investigating factors contributing to the chances of clergy experiencing harassment, and the impact of abuse on clergy work outcomes
14.	Hodson, et al., (2006).	Chaos and the abuse of power; Workplace bullying in the organisational and interactional context.	Work and occupations	Mixed method Quantitative and qualitative	148 Participants	To identify the relationship of powerlessness and organisational chaos on bullying.
15.	Bas, (2011).	A capital budgeting problem for preventing workplace mobbing by using analytic hierarchy process and fuzzy 0-1 bidimensional knapsack model.	Expert Systems with Applications	Analytic hierarchy process	NA	To propose a capital budgeting problem for preventative measures of workplace mobbing based on the fuzzy 0-1 bi-dimensional knapsack model with non-financial and financial budget limits.

16.	Vickers, (2014).	Towards reducing the harm: Workplace bullying as workplace corruption—A critical review.	Employee Responsibilities and Rights Journal	Review	NA	Developing a research agenda that recognises the potential areas of overlap.
17.	Ramsey, (2005).	Direct intervention on an increasing problem	Supervision	Trade publication	NA	Direct intervention on an increasing problem.
18.	Murray, (2009).	Workplace bullying in nursing: A problem that can't be ignored.	Medsurg Nursing	Review	NA	Presenting the history of workplace bullying in nursing and offering a potential solution.
19.	Buttigieg, et al., (2011).	The causes and consequences of workplace bullying and discrimination: Results from an exploratory study.	Labour & Industry: a journal of the social and economic relations of work	Qualitative	14 Participants	Developing an understanding of individual experiences of workplace bullying
20.	MacIntosh, et al.,(2010).	Workplace bullying in health care affects the meaning of work.	Qualitative Health Research	Qualitative	21 Participants	Grounded theory is used to explore the impact of workplace bullying on woman working in health care
21.	Lewis, (2006).	Nurse bullying: organisational considerations in the maintenance and perpetration of health care bullying cultures.	Journal of nursing Management	Qualitative	20 Participants	Examining bullying within nursing from a micro-sociological perspective and elucidate interactive mechanisms contributing to its causes and continuation within the nursing profession.
22.	Dhar, (2012).	Why do they bully? Bullying behavior and its implication on the bullied.	Journal of Workplace Behavioral Health	Qualitative	24 Participants	To examine the causes that lead to the development of workplace bullying behaviour and its subsequent implication on the bullied employee in the Indian organisational context.
23.	Moayed, et al., (2010).	Workplace bullying: a systematic review of risk factors and outcomes	Theoretical Issues in Ergonomics Science	Qualitative	7 Articles	To determine if there is an association between workplace factors and bullying, secondly to determine if there is an association between workplace bullying and health and work outcome
24.	Van Heugten, (2010).	Bullying of social workers; Outcomes of grounded study into impacts and interventions	Journal of Social Work	Qualitative	17 Participants	Exploring the context and impacts of bullying among social workers and identifying the appropriate approaches to intervention

25.	Jackson, (2008).	Editorial: Organising care delivery: facilitator or impediment to supportive working relationships in nursing.	Journal of clinical nursing	Editorial	NA	
26.	Van Fleet, & Van Fleet (2012).	Towards a behavioral description of managerial bullying	Employee Responsibilities and Rights Journal	Quantitative	451 participants	To develop a behavioural description of managerial bullying that better distinguishes among, behaviour that is bullying vs. other unacceptable behaviour that is not bullying and aggressive but acceptable behaviour.
27.	Hemmings, (2013).	Workplace harassment and bullying: U.S. federal employees	Doctoral dissertation, CAPELLA University	Qualitative	57 Participants	To obtain information regarding the causes of workplace bullying, to analyse various tactics engaged by the perpetrator and see how these issues affect the organisation.
28.	Shallcross et al., (2013).	Severe workplace conflict; The experience of mobbing	Negotiation and Conflict Management Research	Quantitative	10339 Participants	Reporting self-identified targets of mobbing, which advances understanding of the way the problem is conceptualised, including associated informal and formal power
29.	Kostev, et al., (2014).	Risk of psychiatric and neurological diseases in patients with workplace mobbing experiences in Germany: a retrospective database analysis	German Medical Science	Quantitative	3000 Participants	To analyse the incidents of certain neurologic and psychiatric diseases as a consequence of mobbing.
30.	Matthiesen, & Einarsen, (2007).	Perpetrators and targets of bullying: role stress and individual differences	Violence and victims	Quantitative	2215 Participants	Investigate whether targets and perpetrators of bullying at work portray certain personality characteristics.
31.	De Cuyper, et al., (2009).	Job insecurity, perceived employability and targets' and perpetrators' experiences of workplace bullying.	Work & Stress	Quantitative	693 Participants	Investigate association between job insecurity and workplace bullying from the perspective of both targets and perpetrators, and perceived employability as a moderator of these relationships.
32.	Carbo, (2009).	Strengthening the healthy workplace act – lessons from title VII IIED litigation and stories of target experiences	Journal of workplace rights	Qualitative	16 Participants	Utilizing stories of participants to further asses the legal options as well as Yamda's bill.

33.	MacIntosh, (2006).	Tackling workplace bullying.	Issues in Mental Health Nursing	Qualitative	21 Participants	Presenting participants strategies for intervening to address workplace bullying at personal, group, organisational, public, and policy levels.
34.	Ciby, & Raya, (2014).	Exploring victim's experiences of workplace bullying: a grounded theory approach.	Vikalpa	Qualitative	33 Participants	Explores victim's experiences from an interpretive perspective in the context of IT organisation in India.
35.	Dentith, et al., (2014).	Those mean girls and their friends: Bullying and mob rule in the academy	Adult Learning	Report	3 Participants	Highlighting the stories and experiences of three white women who were victims of bullying and mobbing in academic setting.
36.	Lewis, & Gunn, (2007).	Workplace bullying in the public sector: understanding the racial dimension.	Public Administration	Quantitative	247 Participants	Investigate if white British and minority ethnic employees working across a range of public sector organisations were exposed to bullying behaviours.
37.	Gaetano, & Ombudsman, (2010).	Bullying- A view from corporate world	Journal of the International Ombudsman Association	Report		Report a corporate view regarding bullying.
38.	Ozturk, et al., (2008).	Measuring mobbing experiences of academic nurses: development of mobbing scale.	Journal of the American Academy of Nurse Practitioners	Quantitative	162 Participants	To develop a mobbing scale for academic nurses and to determine their mobbing experiences
39.	Fahie, & Devine, (2014).	The impact of workplace bullying on primary teachers and principals	Journal of Educational Research	Qualitative	24 Participants	Redress imbalance of power, deepen understanding of the complex manner in which power is exercised within bullying relationships
40.	De Vos, & Kristen, (2015).	The nature of workplace bullying experiences by teachers and the biopsychosocial health effects.	South African Journal of Education	Qualitative	27 Participants	To report nature of workplace bullying experienced by teachers in South African schools and the biopsychosocial health effects.
41.	O'Driscoll, et al., (2011)	Workplace bullying: a survey of employee perceptions and attitudes.	Asia Pacific Journal of Human Resources	Quantitative	1700 Participants	Describe the reported incidents of bullying at work, along with relevant work attitudes and experiences, including psychological strain, ratings of subjective well-being, and levels of commitment to the organisation.
42.	Heugten, (2007).	Workplace bullying social workers.	Social Work Review	Qualitative	17 Participants	Reporting bullying experiences of social workers and the negative impact on work related confidence.

43.	MacIntosh, (2005).	Experiences of workplace bullying in a rural area	Issues in Mental Health Nursing	Qualitative	10 Participants	Focuses on reasons for principal-on-teacher bullying and the impact of the bullying on the victims.
44.	De Wet, (2010).	The reasons for and the impact of principal-on-teacher bullying on victims' private and professional lives	Teaching and Teacher Education	Qualitative	10 Participants	Focuses on reasons for principal-on-teacher bullying and the impact of the bullying on the victims.
45.	Gardner Gilkes Benevides (2012).	Mobbing: A not so new phenomenon	Doctoral dissertation, University of PHOENIX	Qualitative	12 Participants	Explore employees' perceptions of mobbing and report experience.
46.	Trépanier, et al., (2015).	Work environment antecedents of bullying: A review and integrative model applied to registered nurses	International journal of nursing studies	Review	12 Articles	To provide an overview of the current state of knowledge on work environment antecedents of workplace bullying and proses an integrative model of bullying applied to registered nurses.
47.	Poilpot-Rocaboy, (2006).	Bullying in the workplace: a proposed model for understanding the psychological harassment process	Research and Practice in Human Resource Management	Review	NA	Summaries literature and propose a specific model of psychological harassment process.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH ARTICLE 2

A FRAMEWORK FOR HUMAN RESOURCE PRACTITIONERS FOR HANDLING EMPLOYEES' EXPERIENCES OF WORKPLACE BULLYING

Abstract: Human resource practitioners (HRPs) could play an important role when handling employees' experiences of workplace bullying. If the HRP could have a basic handling framework to assist employees when handling these experiences, some frustration might be reduced among practitioners, and could possibly lead to reducing the occurrence of workplace bullying.

Purpose: The aim of this article is to develop a HRP framework for handling employees' experiences of workplace bullying. This article attempted to identify practices for handling the four categories of causes of workplace bullying, identified in Chapter 2, through an integrative literature review.

Design/methodology/approach: A qualitative research design was utilised in this study. An integrative literature review was used as a research method, which was guided by Whittemore and Knafl's (2005) five steps for conducting an integrative literature review. The first step that was followed was to define the problem for the literature search. After the literature were identified, a data evaluation and analysis process were performed to identify handling practices for the HRP framework.

Findings: The main findings revealed sixteen handling practices for the experiences and causes of workplace bullying. These practices can be categorised into the four main categories and under the eight main themes suggested in Chapter 2.

Originality/value: This paper provides HRPs with a basic guideline to assist victims and to handle their experiences of workplace bullying. Moreover, this paper serves as an opportunity for HRPs to serve as strategic partners within the organisation when dealing with or managing workplace bullying. Finally, this paper will inform and assist all parties involved to label the experience and to provide possible avenues for resolution or handling practices.

Keywords: Workplace bullying, bullying experiences, bullying causes, human resource practitioner (HRP), counterproductive workplace behaviour (CWB), human resource policies, company procedures, handling framework

Paper type: Research paper

Introduction

Victims of workplace bullying can encounter a variation of experiences that can be construed as unfair and unwanted incidents (Georgakopoulos, Wilkin, & Kent, 2011). These experiences can be either overt or covert, and may, in certain cases, even be considered as a violation of human or labour rights (Lee & Lovell, 2014; Olson et al., 2013). Overt bullying experiences can be seen as acts that are more explicit, with the perpetrators' intentions being more clear (Botha, 2011). Therefore, these experiences are easier to prove and can be verified externally as opposed to covert bullying as mentioned in Chapter 2. In contrast, covert experiences are subtler or hidden acts of bullying, with the intentions of the bully being more elusive (Lee & Lovell, 2014; Olson et al., 2013). These hidden acts complicate the experience by making it difficult to pinpoint or quantify, and therefore challenge the handling thereof (Botha, 2011). Covert experiences further complicate the grievance procedure due to the nature of validating the perception of the victim experiencing the act and the difficulties in proving if the act constitutes bullying (Olson et al., 2013).

Rivera, Martínez, and Cox (2014) stated that workplace bullying is a real occurrence in the work environment and an employee's experience of bullying holds innumerable consequences for the employer, the employee, HRP and the organisation. Consequences of the experience of workplace bullying for the individual also include reactions such as suicide (Leymann, 1992); resignation from the profession; effects on the physical well-being of the individual, including sleep and eating disorders; and psychological effects, such as anxiety, depression, and lowered self-esteem (Leymann, 1990; Matthiesen & Einarsen, 2001; Niedl, 1996; Vessey, DeMarco, Gaffney, & Budin, 2009; Zapf, 1999). The implications of workplace bullying for organisations include lower levels of job satisfaction and higher levels of sick leave (Kivimäki, Elovainio, & Vahtera, 2000; Quine, 2003). Subsequently, the organisation can expect counterproductive workplace behaviour (CWB) and an overall poor performance (Ritzman, 2016; Woodrow & Guest, 2014; Zapf & Einarsen, 2005). Furthermore, these outcomes can be very costly for organisations, whether it is litigation, corporate reputation, or employee health problems (Hoel & Einarsen, 2010; Namie, 2016). Thus, workplace bullying leaves a harmful, damaging outcome for the organisation and all parties involved.

The role of the human resource practitioner

In most circumstances, victims experiencing workplace bullying are generally referred to the organisation's HRP who is required to deal with managing and handling these bullying experiences effectively and efficiently (Boyd & Carden, 2010; Cowan, 2012). Harrington, Rayner, and Warren (2012) advocate that the HRP's perspective regarding workplace bullying is under-researched and that further insight into this perspective is needed. From a victim's point of view, if the victim decides to report bullying experiences, the first step is usually to seek help from the HRP (Cowan, 2012, 2015) by discussing the matter with them before taking further action.

Generally, when the HRP is required to manage a grievance, the formal process used to try and resolve the issue is guided by organisational policies and procedures (Harrington, Warren, & Rayner, 2015). Policies within an organisation serve as formal guidelines for employees, managers and the HRP to establish the values, principles, practices and procedures used to govern relationships within the organisation (Boyd & Carden, 2010). Policies are vital resources used to prevent and address work-related issues (Boyd & Carden, 2010; Ritzman, 2016). The experience of workplace bullying could also be included as one of these issues (Ritzman, 2016). There is also a significant difference between policies and procedures, where policies are the plans of action regarding the "what" aspects, and procedures highlight the "how" facets (Venter, Levy, Bendeman, & Dworzanowski-Venter, 2014). It can therefore be said that procedures serve as an official guideline on how decision-making is effectively established, and delineates what can and cannot be done, in essence reflecting the functional processes, methods and systems (Venter et al., 2014).

Both policies and procedures should provide an opportunity for employees to report perpetrators for bullying (Devonish, 2013; Ritzman, 2016). These set guidelines should be instated for optimally addressing incidents of workplace bullying. The detail embodied in anti-bullying policies should encourage initiatives which outline relative practices and procedures in the form of a framework on how to go about identifying, managing and dealing with the situation (Vartia & Leka, 2011; Woodrow & Guest, 2014). Organisational practices can be seen as the third formal action that can be followed when managing bullying experiences. These practices are the organisation's repetitious use of knowledge and behaviours to accomplish a specific level of functioning within the organisation (Kostova & Roth, 2002), ensuring standards and ethical benchmarks.

Victims may take informal action, such as counterproductive workplace behaviour (CWB), if workplace bullying experiences are not addressed or handled effectively (An, Boyajian, & O'Brien, 2016). Counterproductive workplace behaviour (CWB) can be regarded as deliberate actions with the intention to harm the organisation or its employees (O'Boyle, Forsyth, & O'Boyle, 2011). Actions that can be associated with CWB are undermining relationships, production deviance, withdrawal, sabotage, and theft (An et al., 2016). Fox and Stallworth (2005) argue that victims who experience workplace bullying generally tend to engage in CWB.

Human resource practitioner challenges in handling bullying experiences

Noting the fact that the HRP are more likely to play a crucial role in identifying, precluding, and resolving experiences of workplace bullying (Harrington, 2010), Lewis and Rayner (2003) claim that this section of the organisation's management structure experiences many challenges. In considering the possible formal actions taken by the HRP, it is seen that in most cases, the HRP handles complaints of bullying poorly and ineffectively, contributing to a higher occurrence of bullying and even adding to the continuation thereof (D'Cruz & Noronha, 2011; Vickers, 2014). Furthermore, the HRP tends to show a lack of confidence in responding to the experience of bullying, which may result in the tendency to ignore or avoid the situation, rather than finding appropriate practices to handle such experiences (Vickers, 2013, 2014). Cowan (2012) also highlights the fact that due to the countless challenges and lack of clarity in the role the HRP plays in the handling of bullying experiences, their actions and roles can result in the HRP not managing the situation effectively.

Cowan (2012) further identified several challenges which make it difficult for the HRP to address and handle bullying experiences of employees. These challenges include multiple labels and numerous definitions of workplace bullying, all of which contribute to confusion, frustration and difficulties for the HRP, especially when trying to establish if the experience is indeed a bullying experience or not as well as the role and function of various individuals in the situation (Cowan, 2012). Moreover, existing anti-bullying policies in many organisations are often vague and do not always have official guidelines to assist in identifying and interpreting the bullying experience (Cowan, 2011, 2012).

As previously mentioned, the definition of bullying challenges the HRP as it does not necessarily describe the presenting situation, and ultimately adversely influences the way the HRP goes about managing the experience (Cowan, 2012; Fox & Cowan, 2015). Further

complicating this challenge, are covert experiences of bullying that can be considered as ambiguous by all parties involved (Johnson, Boutain, Tsai, Beaton, & de Castro, 2015; Rayner & Lewis, 2011). This challenges the HRP and the victim when attempting to prove if experiences or incidents relate to actual bullying behaviours or actions (Fox & Cowan, 2015). To highlight an example of this challenge, ambiguous claims that are made can be as minor or as insignificant as someone taking recognition for your work or constantly interrupting you whilst speaking. Such experiences can be construed as bullying by some individuals (Fox & Cowan, 2015). In this situation, the principle of *onus probandi* (Sandefur, 2016) becomes important, where "*he who alleges must prove*".

Consequently, the challenges of *onus probandi* leads to the HRP not actually ignoring bully claims, but conceding that the claims challenge and frustrate them, which impedes them in effectively managing the experiences with appropriate practices (Fox & Cowan, 2015; Sandefur, 2016). Thus, if experiences of bullying behaviours can be described, quantified and proven, it could make the situation much more definite and clear-cut, facilitating the handling of the incident through policies, practices and procedures (Cowan, 2012).

In an attempt to minimise the possibility of such frustrations amongst HRPs and victims, Chapter 2 suggested a basic framework whereby victims and the HRP can identify the various experiences and the possible causes of the workplace bullying (see Figure 5).

		Bullying observational levels			
		Overt experiences/ causes		**Covert experiences/ causes**	
Behavioural levels of bullying	**Organisational climate**	**Overt climate of bullying:** • *Organisational-related adversities* • *Work overload* • *Destructive work practices* • *Micro-management*	**Overt climate causes of bullying:** • *Deliberate inadequacies of strategic human resource management* • *Deliberate inadequacies of organisational structure*	**Covert climate of bullying:** • *Dysfunctional subtle adversities* • *Isolation* • *Destabilisation*	**Covert climate causes of bullying:** • *Subtle inadequacies of strategic human resource management* • *Subtle inadequacies of organisational structure*
	Individual level	**Overt individual bullying:** • *Emotional adversities* • *Personal offenses* • *Physical offenses* • *Harassment* • *Discrimination*	**Overt individual causes of bullying:** • *Direct destructive management styles (manager or supervisor)* • *Direct destructive employee relations (colleagues and employees)*	**Covert individual bullying:** • *Degradation* • *Body language* • *Psychological offenses* • *Exclusion*	**Covert individual causes of bullying:** • *Subtle destructive management styles (manager or supervisor)* • *Subtle destructive employee relations (colleagues and employees)*

Figure 5. Combined framework of experiences and causes of workplace bullying

The abovementioned framework suggests that experiences and causes of bullying at work can be identified in two different dimensions, namely the observational levels and the behavioural levels of bullying. The first dimension, *bullying observational levels*, refers to the causes or experiences of bullying, which can be explained as either overt or covert; whereas the second dimension, *behavioural levels of bullying*, suggests that bullying experiences or causes occur on an organisational climate or individual level.

These experiences and causes are divided into four main categories: *overt climate of bullying*; *overt individual bullying*; *covert climate of bullying*; and *covert individual bullying*. *Overt climate of bullying* suggests that the experiences or causes of bullying are overtly or subtly experienced and occur due to organisational climate adversities. The second category, *overt individual bullying*, are experiences or causes seen as being subtle and occur on an individual level. *Covert climate of bullying* are experiences or causes that are more directly observed and occur on an organisational level. The final category, *covert individual bullying*, suggests that experiences and causes are direct and occur on an individual level.

The current study

The experience of workplace bullying has become a serious occupational hazard (Abed, Morris, & Sobers-Grannum, 2016). If the experiences of workplace bullying are not correctly identified and handled, it could ultimately jeopardise the viability of the organisation, which may result in countless detrimental consequences (Berry, Gillespie, Fisher, & Gormley, 2016; Boxall & Purcell, 2011; Fox & Stallworth, 2010), such as CWB (An et al., 2016; Fox & Stallworth; 2005). Fox and Cowan (2015) further suggest that organisations are in desperate need of effective interventions or guidelines to assist in the process of managing experiences of bullying effectively. According to Coyne (2011), various attempts have been made to address and handle workplace bullying; however, Barnes et al. (2012) recognise that these various initiatives are unclear and still lack substantial evidence, which indicate their lack of effectiveness. Harrington et al. (2012) advocate that the HRPs' perspective regarding workplace bullying is under-researched and that further insight regarding this perspective is needed. Furthermore, Namie (2016) suggested that no anti-bullying initiative can be operational if there is no accurate guidance and support from top management to lower-level managers. In order for organisations to follow the most effective response to experiences of bullying at work, Herbs (2009) suggests that an empowered HRP can play a significant role in managing this experience.

It is still evident that in most cases, the HRP lacks the appropriate understanding, skills, and resources to identify, address and handle the experiences of bullying optimally; therefore, the problem lies in the handling of these experiences (Tehrani, 2012). The nature of covert experiences contributes to the problem as it is extremely difficult to identify and handle without an official framework or guideline, and these experiences can cause great frustration amongst HRPs (Cowan, 2011, 2012; Olson et al., 2013).

The aim of this article is to develop an HRP framework for handling employees' experiences of workplace bullying. It was proposed that if the causes of workplace bullying are handled the experiences of bullying will be reduced. This article attempted to identify handling practices for the four categories of causes, identified in Chapter 2, through an integrative literature review.

Research method

According to Torraco (2005), Houck and Colbert (2016), an integrative literature review is a form of research that reviews, critiques, and synthesises representative literature on a specific

topic in an integrated manner. This is done in such a manner that new frameworks and perspectives on the topic can be generated. The reason for adopting an integrative review research method for the current study, was to address a new framework for HRPs to handle employees' experiences of workplace bullying. Bartlett and Bartlett (2011) further suggested that an integrative literature review is the best means to fully synthesise existing literature, specifically regarding workplace bullying as their study focused primarily on workplace bullying.

In conducting the integrative literature review, the first step was to establish the aim of the review. In this article, the aim of the review was to identify possible handling practices for the causes of workplace bullying. The design of this integrative review was guided by Whittemore and Knafl's (2005) five steps for conducting an integrative literature review. These five steps are: defining the problem; performing a literature search; data evaluation; and data analysis (Whittemore & Knafl's, 2005), which will be discussed next.

Defining the problem

To conduct this review, this article first identified the four main categories of causes suggested in Chapter 2, which were *overt climate causes of bullying*, *covert climate causes of bullying, covert individual causes of bullying,* and *overt individual causes of bullying,* in order to be able to conceptualise the variables that emerged from the review. The identified problem of this review concentrated on addressing and identifying possible sources that reported handling practices or interventions reflecting the handling of workplace bullying. This review had no restrictions regarding the type of source; all possible sources that reported handling practices for bullying at work were included.

Literature search

An electronic search was conducted through several databases for the period from 2006 to 2016. The databases that were used to conduct the electronic search included *Business Source Premier, Cumulative Index to Nursing and Allied Health (CINAHL), ScienceDirect, PsycInfo,* and *EBSCOhost*. The keywords used to guide the search strategy were: *strategic human resource management*, *policies*, *practices*, *procedures*, *bullying interventions*, *bullying preventions*, and *workplace bullying*. These keywords reflect the epitome of the article and provide the broadest conceptual information for obtaining maximum exposure for relevant citings.

According to Samnani and Singh (2012), workplace bullying literature has grown and significantly matured over the past 20 years, as too has the practices in handling workplace bullying experiences. Earlier, workplace bullying literature was still in its infancy phase (Leymann, 1990; Samnani & Singh, 2012); however, as the publications during the latter period of the last 20 years have changed, so did the HR practices, reflecting more relevant and applicable dealings regarding the present working environments. The last 10 years were specifically chosen for this article, since it was during this period that more relevant and applicable information could be obtained. The reference list of each source identified was manually reviewed in order to identify additional sources that were not revealed in the electronic search. The general inclusion criteria of all sources selected for this review were: the material had to be published in the English language as difficulty could have been experienced with translations or information could have been lost during this process; and, regarding the context of the data, ideal sources were cited in the context of workplace bullying and not schoolyard bullying. In Table 4, the specific inclusion and exclusion criteria utilised for this article is reported on. Figure 6 provides a detailed search strategy guided by the PRISMA flow diagram.

Table 4

Inclusion and exclusion criteria

	Inclusion criteria	Exclusion criteria	Total Excluded
Publication criteria	Published in English	Excluded if not published in English	396 Sources
Publication date	Published between 2006-2016	Excluded if published before 2006	21541 Sources
Context	Sources examine workplace bullying	Excluded sources examining school yard bullying	8711 sources

Data evaluation

The literature search through the various databases, as illustrated in Figure 6, followed the PRISMA flow diagram (Moher, Liberati, Tetzlaff, & Altman, 2009). The PRISMA flow diagram indicated that the initial search revealed $n=$ 14119 possible sources. After the exclusion criteria had been applied, 3 000 duplicate sources were eliminated, and a further 10 966 sources were excluded after title and abstract screening.

In total, 153 sources, full-text version were downloaded and a full review was conducted on these articles. Furthermore, 10 additional sources were identified from the

reference lists of these articles and were also used to supplement the original number. Finally, *n*=43 sources were included and used for the final data of the review.
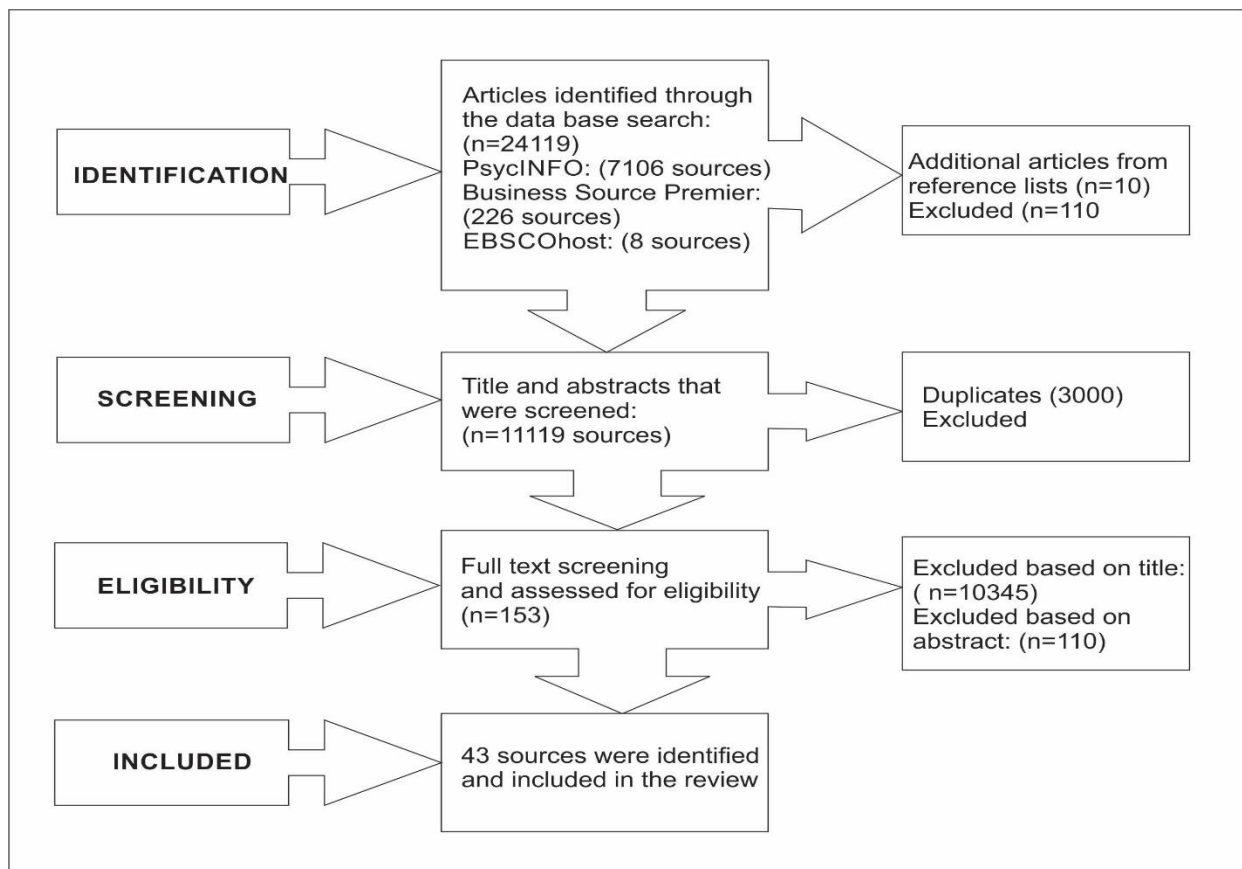

Figure 6. PRISMA flow diagram (Moher et al., 2009)

The results that are reported in Table 4 showed that all the sources identified for this review were published between 2006 and 2015. Two resources, which represented 4.7% of the data, were published in 2006, and three sources (7%) were published in 2007. The least represented year for the data was 2008: this single source represented 2.3% relevancy for the review. The year with the most representation of sources of data was 2009, with 20.9%. A total of 7 sources (16.3%) were identified for 2010 and 2011 together, representing 32.6% of the data. Two sources (4.7%) that were identified and used for the review were published in 2012. For both 2013 and 2014, each publication year revealed 3 sources (7%), and combined, represented 14% of the data. The final date for the collected data was 2015: this amounted to 6 sources, which represented 14% of the total findings. Finally, no sources were evident for the publication year of 2016.

The sources used for this review varied in research designs. However, the most prominent design used by 20 of the sources (46.5%) followed a qualitative research design. The second highest design used (10 sources, equalling 23.2%) were journal articles.

Furthermore, six sources (14%) followed a quantitative research design, and three sources (7%) followed a literature review method. The final two designs that were followed (2 sources, 4.7%) were professional editorial views, and two sources (4.7%) were magazine articles. The population size of the sources that was used ranged from 10 participants to a larger group of 921 participants. Only three sources consisted of a theoretical population ranging from 10 sources to 42 sources. See Appendix B for detailed description regarding the reviewed sources.

Quality appraisal

As there is no specific screening criteria in the evaluation and interpretation of the methodological quality of the sources (Almost et al., 2016), critical appraisal and quality scores are not essential. However, the researcher aimed to apply the criteria for qualitative data quality (Kawulich & Holland, 2012) in order to ensure that the research process complies to the indicators of qualitative trustworthiness, namely:

- credibility: when established, credibility proves that the reported findings are logical conclusions reliably derived from the data and analysis;
- transferability: indicates the extent to which it is possible that the results obtained in a certain study can be extended to contexts that share similarities with the said study;
- dependability: when fulfilled, specifies the research design, data and interpretations in a detailed, unbiased and verifying manner; and
- conformability: assigns the research findings with the characteristic of objectivity – the latter pertaining to the extent to which the said findings are supported by the data collected.

Data analysis

The aim of the data evaluation and analysis in the integrative literature process was to group the findings into the main categories as suggested in Chapter 2. The sources that were identified were reviewed and the relevant data were extracted and grouped (see Table 4) into two matrixes. These were covert responses versus overt responses, and organisational-level response versus individual-level responses. This extraction and grouping facilitated the synthesis process (Almost et al., 2016). The results of the study will be presented next.

Results

Table 5 shows that the findings revealed eight themes describing the handling practices and interventions for the causes of workplace bullying.

Table 5

Handling practices for the causes of workplace bullying

Themes	Handling practice	Results	Total	Source Number
Deliberate inadequacies of strategic human resource management	Education	• Providing information sessions regarding workplace bullying • Define workplace bullying and the possible experiences • Workshops (role-play, simulations, facilitated discussions, handling practices) • Recognise signs • Consequences • Methods of dealing • Information about strategies • Newsletters	29	1; 3; 4; 5; 6; 7; 8; 9; 10; 11; 12; 13; 16; 18; 19; 20; 21; 23; 24; 26; 27; 28; 29; 30; 32; 34; 35; 39; 43.
	Information sessions regarding policies	• Policy training • Policy development • Train HRP (development, implementation, revising, monitoring, compliance, enforce) • Policies should define bullying • Grievance procedure and the purpose of the policy • Developing a zero-tolerance polices • Dignity at work policy	32	1; 3; 4; 5; 6; 7; 8; 9; 10; 11; 15;16; 18; 19; 20; 25; 23; 24; 26; 27; 28; 29; 30; 32; 33; 34; 35; 37; 38; 39; 40; 43.
Deliberate inadequacies of organisational structure	Organisational systems	• Develop systems for reporting documenting and addressing (investigating) • Clear channels for official complaints (voice systems) • Presence and accessibility of grievance procedures	25	1; 4; 5; 7; 8; 9; 11; 12; 15; 16; 17; 19; 20; 21; 24; 26; 27; 28; 29; 30; 31; 32; 34; 35; 38.
	Organisational procedures	• Clear disciplinary actions (warnings, dismissal) • Ensuring accountability for rules • Clear employment contracts	27	1; 2; 4; 5; 6; 8; 9; 11; 12; 15; 18; 20; 24; 25; 26; 27; 29; 30; 32; 33; 34; 35; 37; 38; 39; 42; 43.
Subtle inadequacies of strategic human resource management	Tacit practice	• Assess and evaluate climate (surveys) • Assess need for culture change • Culture (respect, collaboration, excellence) • Complaint surveys • Set standards for professional conduct • Train HR as strategic partner	31	1; 2; 3; 4; 5; 7; 8; 10; 11; 12; 13; 14; 15; 17; 18; 19; 20; 23; 24; 26; 27; 28; 30; 32; 33; 34; 36; 37; 39; 42; 43.
	Tacit policies	• Establish code of conduct with clear statements	12	1; 3; 7; 10; 12; 13; 16; 19; 22; 26; 27; 32; 34; 35; 36.
Subtle inadequacies of organisational structure	Subtle organisational systems	• Clarity on terms and conditions of employment • Job design and organisation of work • Investigating turnover and sick leave figures • Competency assessments • HRP-trained screening • Training in screening employees on hiring	25	1; 3; 6; 7; 8; 9; 10; 11; 12; 14; 15; 18; 19; 20; 23; 24; 28; 30; 31; 32; 34; 38; 40; 41; 43.
	Organisational communication	• Open-door policy • Feedback • Anonymous complaint surveys or satisfaction surveys	7	7; 8; 19; 24; 33; 34; 37.
	Third-party involvement	• External agencies • consultants	19	1; 2; 6; 7; 9; 11; 17; 18; 19; 20; 21; 22; 23; 24; 25; 26; 28; 34; 41.

		• Ombudsperson • Union involvement and support • Safety committees • (neutral investigations)		
Direct destructive management styles (Managers/ Supervisors)	Accountability	• Supervisor/ Leader accountability/ non-complying policies • Bystander accountability • Managers should be committed to prevent bullying • (Buy-ins)	25	1; 3; 5; 7; 8; 9; 10;11; 14; 15; 16; 19; 23; 24; 26; 28; 29; 30; 33; 34; 38; 40; 41; 42; 43.
	Proactive interventions	• Managers trained in all interventions regarding bullying • Induction training/ on boarding (regarding bullying) • Communicating zero tolerance • Train HR in bullying investigation, problem-solving skills	21	1; 5; 7; 8; 9; 11; 12; 15; 17; 19; 20; 21; 24; 25; 28; 32; 33; 35; 38; 41; 43.
Direct destructive employee relations (Colleagues/ Employees)	Accountability	• Bystanders accountability	20	1; 2; 4; 5; 9; 15; 18; 20; 25; 26; 27; 29; 30; 33; 34; 35; 37; 38; 39; 43.
	Proactive interventions	• Guidelines to documentation (writing) on bullying experience (journal-keeping)	20	1; 4; 5; 7; 8; 9; 11; 12; 16; 19; 20; 24; 27; 28; 29; 30; 31; 32; 34; 35.
Subtle destructive management styles (Manager or Supervisor)	Leadership skills	• Leadership training styles (training) • Mentors/ coaches • Conflict management training • Diversity training • Discrimination training • Opportunities for conflict resolution training	26	1; 3; 5; 7; 9;10; 11; 13; 16; 18; 19; 20; 23; 26; 27; 28; 29; 31; 33; 35; 36; 38; 39; 40; 41; 43.
	Interpersonal skills	• Emotional intelligence training • Training communication skills • Stress-management training • Developing people skills • Attention to and development of interpersonal relationships skills	27	1; 4; 5; 7; 8; 9; 10; 11; 12; 13; 14; 15; 16; 19; 20; 21; 23; 26; 27;30; 32; 33; 34; 36; 37; 41; 43.
Subtle destructive employee relations (Colleagues/ Employees)	Group relations	• Diversity/discrimination management • Group dynamics • Fair performance appraisals • High-performance work teams • Team-based reward systems • Team-building • Develop database for shared knowledge	31	1; 3; 4; 5; 6; 7; 8; 9; 11; 21; 13; 15; 16; 17; 18; 19; 20; 21; 24; 26; 28; 30; 32; 33; 35; 36; 38; 39; 40; 41; 43.
	Interpersonal skills	• Employee Assistance Programmes • Counselling • Support whistle-blowers • Exit interviews • Individual participation in decision-making • Conflict management training • Emotional intelligence training • Stress-management training • Develop interpersonal relationships skills	26	1; 3; 5; 7; 9;10; 11; 13; 16; 18; 19; 20; 23; 26; 27; 28; 29; 31; 33; 35; 36; 38; 39; 40; 41; 43.

The four main categories and eight themes that emanated from Chapter 2 were used for grouping the findings of this article. The eight themes (listed in Table 5) with the seventeen handling practices were identified from the integrative literature review. Finally, the last column in Table 5 reflects the data representation of each specific handling practice.

Overt climate handling practices of bullying

The two themes that were identified under *overt climate handling practices of bullying*, were *handling deliberate inadequacies of strategic human resource management* and *handling deliberate inadequacies of organisational structure*.

Handling deliberate inadequacies of strategic human resource management
For this theme, the sources focused on educating employees regarding bullying and the experiences of bullying (*n=29*), as well as training employees pertaining to company policies, and more specifically, anti-bullying policies (*n=32*) and suggestions for additional policies (*n=29*).

According to Ferris (2009) and Weinand (2010), educating employees is usually the first step to a more comprehensive handling technique to understand workplace bullying. Moreover, three of the sources (Cleary, Hunt, & Horsfall, 2010; Pate & Beaumont, 2010; Van Heugten, 2010) suggested that these education sessions or workshops should include proper definitions, experiences, consequences and information regarding possible strategies to handle the bullying experience. Van Heugten (2010) reported that employees who have received educational workshops or information sessions are reported to have higher levels of confidence when addressing bullying. Workshops should include role-play, simulations, and facilitated discussions to identify experiences of workplace bullying and expose individuals to appropriate handling strategies (Eggertson, 2011; MacIntosh, 2006).

The majority of the sources (e.g. Anon, 2008; Bryant, Buttigieg, & Hanley, 2009; Duffy, 2009; Ferris, 2009; Fox & Stallworth, 2009; Stagg, 2010; Weinand, 2010) suggested that organisations should continually inform personnel regarding their anti-bullying policies, general policies, and procedures through information and training sessions, empowering individuals in handling bully experiences. Furthermore, findings revealed that the HRPs should be trained in policy development, revising and implementation of anti-bullying policies (Ferris, 2009; Fox & Stallworth, 2009; Harrington et al., 2015). Sources also identified the importance of monitoring compliance and ensuring that policies are enforced (Bryant et al., 2009; Cleary et al., 2010).

In addition to the recommendations, a zero tolerance to bullying policy and a dignity at work policy can be considered in order to considerably diminish and even eradicate workplace bullying (Ferris, 2009; MacIntosh, 2006; Pate & Beaumont, 2010).

Handling deliberate inadequacies of organisational structure

Sources for this theme suggested handling interventions, such as organisational systems (*n=25*) and organisational procedures (*n=27*).

In the broad suggested handling practice of organisational systems, various sources (Bartlett & Bartlett, 2011; Coursey, Rodriguez, Dickmann, & Austin, 2013) suggested that organisations should provide clear systems for reporting and documenting individual experiences. One of the participants in MacIntosh (2006) found that openly recording conversations, minimises the chances of negative behaviours toward individuals. Organisations should develop clear channels for formal complaints, also known as "voice systems" or investigative systems (D'Cruz & Noronha, 2010; Dillon, 2012; MacIntosh, 2006). Organisational procedures that were suggested are clear employment contracts that stipulate expectation of conduct and negotiated consequences if found guilty of workplace bullying. Procedures for handling bullying experiences should guide individuals and explain formal actions, such as warnings and dismissal procedures.

Covert climate handling practices of bullying

In the category *Covert climate handling practices of bullying*, the two themes that were evident were *handling subtle inadequacies of strategic human resource management* and *handling subtle inadequacies of the organisational structure*.

Handling subtle inadequacies of strategic human resource management

Within this theme, findings suggested that there were two main handling practices for this theme: handling tacit practices (*n=31*) and tacit procedures (*n=12*).

Organisations should assess their climate by evaluating company values and norms through surveys, which could identify the need for a culture change (Dillon, 2012). It was further identified that organisations could also consider a change where they adopt a culture of respect, regard for others and collaboration, which fosters excellence or support for others (Cleary et al., 2010; Keeling, Quigley, & Roberts, 2006). Anonymous complaint surveys can also be conducted to identify negative conduct and establish appropriate codes of conduct accordingly. Lastly, organisations should provide clear statements of expected and professional

conduct (Christmas, 2007; Cowan, 2011), with HRPs being trained as strategic partners within the organisation, when aligning strategies with the organisation's objectives (Fox & Cowan, 2015). Human resource practitioners must therefore be considered as strategic partners within organisational structures when managing employees, implementing initiatives and communicating messages from the top down (Boxall & Purcell, 2011; Namie, 2016). Phillips and Gully (2014) suggested that the HRP is one of the most critical functions of any organisation, needing to manage their employees effectively and contribute to organisational success.

Handling subtle inadequacies of organisational structure

Three handling interventions were evident for this theme, namely: subtle organisational systems ($n=25$), organisational communications ($=7$), and third-party involvement ($n=19$).

Firstly, findings suggested that organisations should provide clarity on conditions of employment. Clarity regarding job designs and work organisation can influence how experiences are made sense of (Fox & Cowan, 2015; Salin & Hoel, 2011). Investigations into turnover ratings and statistics of sick leave could suggest the presence of bullying experienced within the organisational system. Furthermore, competency assessments could assist organisations in identifying gaps and possible interventions (Olender-Russo, 2009b) that are evident within the organisation and could identify manners in which communication can be strengthened. However, initial training of HRPs and managers to thoroughly screen employees for possible aggressive signs before appointing the individual, could promote a more effective, proactive solution within the organisational system.

Organisational communication amongst employees can be improved by implementing open-door policies (Bryant et al., 2009; Cowan, 2011), and constructive and fair feedback sessions (Fredericksen & McCorkle, 2013; Lim & Bernstein; 2014). Anonymous complaint or satisfaction surveys were also suggested as a very useful practice for identifying negative conduct (Anon, 2008) and opening up communication of these problem areas.

Finally, third-party involvement was deemed as an important handling technique as it allows for higher reporting rates and a fairer handling process. Suggestions that were made were that external agencies investigate bullying experiences, and that consultants handle these experiences with an ombudsman monitoring complaints, unions supporting and representing members, and safety committees having an input (Keeling et al., 2006; Stewart, 2010).

Overt individual handling practices of bullying

Two themes, namely *handling direct destructive management styles: (Managers/ Supervisors)* and *handling direct destructive employee relations: (Colleagues/ Employees)* can be identified in the category of *overt individual causes of bullying*.

Handling direct destructive management styles: (Managers/ Supervisors)

Sources revealed two handling practices for this theme: leader accountability (*n=25*) and pro-active interventions (*n=21*).

Handling interventions suggested for this theme highlighted managers being held accountable for not taking adequate action when being aware of the situation, witnessing experiences or not complying with policies (Duffy, 2009; D'Cruz & Noronha, 2011; Ferris, 2009). Bystander accountability suggested by D'Cruz and Noronha (2011) makes workplace bullying everyone's problem. Managers and stakeholders should all be committed to prevent workplace bullying: in other words, management "buy-ins" are essential (Gemzøe Mikkelsen, Hogh, & Berg Puggaard, 2011; Randle, Stevenson, & Greyling, 2007). Proactive interventions identified were managers being trained in all interventions regarding bullying (Cleary et al., 2010; MacIntosh, 2006), receiving training for appropriate induction programmes and methods for communicating zero tolerance for bullying at work for new employees (Bryant et al., 2009; Dillon, 2012). Finally, the HRPs should be specifically trained in investigating bullying complaints and supporting individuals who experience bullying behaviours, as well as in the solving and identifying of handling practices (Harrington et al., 2015; Woodrow & Guest, 2014).

Handling direct destructive employee relations: (Colleagues/ Employees)

Two broad handling practices were suggested for this theme, which were bystander accountability (*n=20*) and proactive interventions (*n=20*).

Bystander accountability, as previously mentioned, should not just be applicable for mangers, but also for the rest of the employees and personnel. Witnessing bullying experiences and not reporting it, should be a serious offence. As D'Cruz and Noronha (2011) suggested, this method makes bullying at work everyone's problem and not just the victim's difficulty. The training of individuals regarding reporting, documentation and journal-keeping of bullying experiences can also be regarded as a proactive handling intervention for individuals.

Covert individual handling practices of bullying

The final category *Covert individual handling practices of bullying*, reveals that two themes are evident, namely *handling subtle destructive management styles: (Manager or supervisor)* and *handling subtle destructive employee relations: (Colleagues/ Employees)*.

Handling subtle destructive management styles: (Manager or supervisor)
Interventions such as developing leadership skills (*n=26*) and interpersonal skills (*n=27*) were identified for this theme.

Training managers and supervisors to develop their leadership skills in order to implement the appropriate leadership style within their departments when bullying occurs, is essential (Egues & Leinung, 2014; Johnson, 2011). Managers should have further training in order to be efficient coaches or mentors, which can lead to effective conflict management within bullying situations and can satisfactorily address bullying experiences (Olender-Russo, 2009a; Weinand, 2010). Furthermore, skills such as general conflict management training and the ability to choose the appropriate style of management to cope in conflict situations were also suggested (American Nursing Association, 2015; D'Cruz & Noronha, 2011; Georgiou, 2007). Training regarding the effective handling of diversity, discrimination and the management thereof (Fox & Stallworth, 2009; MacIntosh, 2006; McCalla, 2015) is also needed, as well as training managers to initiate and facilitate conflict resolution amongst employees (Gillespie, Gates & Fisher, 2015). Further aspects of training were suggested for interpersonal skill development, these being emotional intelligence and effective communication skills (Gillespie et al., 2015; Harrington et al., 2015; Johnson, 2011).

Handling subtle destructive employee relations: (Colleagues/ Employees)
Practices that were suggested for handling subtle destructive employee relations were group relations (*n=31*) and interpersonal skills development (*n=27*).

It was suggested that organisations tutor all employees regarding diversity management and discrimination practices (Fox & Stallworth, 2009; MacIntosh, 2006; McCalla, 2015). Training employees in group dynamics and developing appropriate communication skills (MacIntosh, 2006; Pate & Beaumont, 2010; Stagg, 2010) ensure that regular and fair individual and group performance appraisal is achieved (Cowan, 2011; Dillon, 2012; Fredericksen & McCorkle, 2013). Organisations should establish high-performance work teams through team-building activities and team-based rewards systems (Cleary, Hunt, Walter, & Robertson, 2009;

Gillespie et al., 2015; Lachman, 2014; Olender-Russo, 2009b; Woodrow & Guest, 2014), and should develop collective databases for shared knowledge that builds the organisation's capacity and sustainability (Duffy, 2009).

Regarding interpersonal skills development, organisations should offer services such as employee assistance programmes, counselling, and support or rewards for whistle-blowers (MacIntosh, 2006). Conduct exit interviews reading the work environment and employee satisfaction (D'Cruz & Noronha, 2011; Ferris, 2009; Georgiou, 2007). The organisation should also increase individual participation in decision-making and create autonomous employees with job control (Van Heugten, 2010). Developing interpersonal skills by training employees in conflict management, emotional intelligence, stress management and relationship skills are all positive initiatives (Gillespie et al., 2015; Harrington et al., 2015).

Discussion

As organisations have a legal duty to protect all employees against hostile work environments, organisations should implement the appropriate handling interventions (MacIntosh, 2006). The four categories and eight themes identified in Chapter 2 will be discussed, and the findings that were evident after conducting an integrative literature review, will also be elaborated on.

Coursey et al. (2013), and Pate and Beaumont (2010) suggested that educational workshops on workplace bullying is a very effective method for initiating behavioural changes amongst individuals at work. This handling technique also motivates individuals to be more responsive to negative behaviours at work and promotes a higher culture of respect (Coursey et al., 2013; Gardner et al. 2016). Furthermore, education regarding experiences and bullying at work empowers individuals to recognise signs of bullying and the experience thereof (Bryant et al., 2009). This further empowers individuals to weigh the facts of the circumstances (Gillespie et al., 2015), and can create an opportunity to handle these experiences effectively (Weinand, 2010). Furthermore, Egues and Leinung (2014), MacIntosh (2006), and Vessey et al. (2009) also noted education on bullying is a very effective method that identifies appropriate preventative strategies and encourages individuals to handle bullying at work. Vessey et al. (2009) argued that in most cases, employees have little or no opportunity to discuss bullying at work, and this has a great impact on dealing with and handling bullying behaviours when they occur.

In a study conducted by Ferris (2009), the participants reported that in most cases, organisations fail to communicate their policies, and many employees are not aware that these

anti-bullying policies even exist. This causes bullying experiences to be under-reported and creates a continuation of hostile environments. MacItosh (2006) reported that participants found it very effective to report and handle bullying if policies are clearly communicated and channels for official complaints are present. Poor implementation of anti-bullying policies has a great effect on the prevention of bullying and the continual occurrence of such behaviours (Bartlett & Bartlett, 2011; Coursey et al., 2013; Johnson, 2011; MacIntosh, 2006). According to Wiedmer (2010), organisations in general should consider serious policy changes, which highlight company anti-bullying strategies and clearly define workplace bullying. Salin (2008) supports this statement, since organisations usually lack clear statements, poor implementation strategies, and a deficiency in enforcing these policies.

By taking overt actions, the perceptions of the organisation being committed to handling and preventing bullying and minimising hostile environments (Woodrow & Guest, 2014), will be confirmed. According to Bartlett and Bartlett (2011), if policies are clear and in place, this will enlighten employees by providing them with formal methods to report workplace bullying experiences. Therefore, the knowledge of the various policies and the implementation thereof, plays a vital role in the success of these policies and intended practices (Coursey et al., 2013). Furthermore, Cowan (2011; 2015) noted that the HRPs should be specifically trained to revise and develop anti-bullying policies. Dillon (2012) suggested that audits regarding policies can also assist the HRP in finding gaps and making improvements. Another aspect that may be found useful, is employee manuals that explain policies, responses and actions regarding workplace bullying (Dillon, 2012). Half-day policy training for all is also very useful for all employees (Ferris, 2009) as this offers individuals engagement in the process of development, and assists in tailoring the policy to fit the organisation and the individual.

Duffy (2009) recommended that organisations use consultants to assist in policy development and implementation. Duffy (2009) also suggested the following key elements that should be included when a bullying policy is developed: 1) the purpose of the policy alongside a clear reference to core company values; 2) clear statements defining bullying behaviour; 3) example behaviours and actions of bullying must be emphasised; 4) provision must be made for appropriate contact persons; 5) clear information regarding resolution options must be stated; 6) alternative dispute-resolution options must also be made available; 7) grievance procedures must be noted; 8) statements of confidentiality must be reinforced, 9) time-frames must be explicitly explained; 10) accountability and sanctions must be stressed; and finally, 11) appeal procedures must be specified.

Anti-bullying systems within the organisation are there to support and empower individuals when investigating and reporting their experience. These anti-bullying systems can provide options for possible prevention or resolutions strategies (Bryant et al., 2009; Fox & Stallworth, 2009). According to MacIntosh (2006) and Wiedmer (2010), anti-bullying systems, such as guidelines for reporting and documenting experiences, can be crucial and effective when investigating a bullying experience. Unfortunately, in most cases, organisations fail to provide these supporting systems to guide individuals when taking action (Cleary et al., 2010; Weinand, 2010). Anti-bullying systems should provide multiple access points to lodge a complaint, such as union representatives, HRPs, managers, ethics offices, and should further provide guidelines in assisting the victim to write a formal complaint (Egues & Leinung, 2014; Fox & Cowan, 2015). Moreover, employees should have access to these systems, whether it is through the organisation's intranet, newsletters or billboards (Bryant et al., 2009; Fox & Cowan, 2015; Fox & Stallworth, 2009). Anti-bullying systems can be initiated from the very beginning, when clear employment contracts are initiated. In these contracts, there must be a clear stipulation that bullying is deemed as unlawful and is considered as an act of breaching an employee's contract, which could result in serious consequences. Such contracts can reduce the likeliness that individuals will bully: their attention is drawn to this fact, and they are fully aware of the organisation's views and policies on this issue (Duffy, 2009; Worksafe, 2016). Finally, organisations must also include consequences regarding the disciplinary action which can arise from workplace bullying, and the seriousness of the matter, which could culminate in dismissal procedures (Fredericksen & McCorkle, 2013; Lim & Bernstein; 2014).

Wiedmer (2010) argued that the culture of an organisation can either foster or eliminate bullying. Gardner et al. (2016) suggested that bullying experiences can be prevented if organisations create a positive culture, where people are treated with respect and their dignity is honoured. To achieve this, organisations should benchmark their existing culture by assessing the current norms and values through surveys, and reform negative cultures accordingly (Dillon, 2012) or reinforce positive cultures as needed. Organisations that are characterised as a fear-based culture, are less likely to be open for change or become more transparent, limiting their opportunities to be innovative and less successful in addressing or preventing the experience of workplace bullying (Duffy, 2009). Experiences of bullying are less evident in organisations that foster a culture of respect and demonstrate positive reactions, such as acknowledging employees when it is needed, valuing diversity, establishing inclusive work teams, and maintaining high standards of professional codes of conduct (Gardner et al. 2016; Olender-Russo, 2009b). Changing an organisational culture requires all employees to

work together and support each other to ensure a successful outcome (Eggertson, 2011). Wiedmer (2011) suggested four key elements to change and create a respectful culture among employees: 1) show appreciation; 2) treat all employees as "insiders"; 3) treat all employee problems with empathy; and 4) include and value all employees by treating them with dignity and giving the acknowledgment that is due to them.

Further ways to create a culture of respect is for the organisation to establish a clear code of conduct alongside anti-bullying policies. These measures would communicate that hostile behaviours at work are unacceptable and not tolerated (Bryant et al., 2009; Johnson, 2015). Organisations must therefore be responsible for setting out detailed statements regarding expected conduct and professional standards, which include a detailed rundown of all accepted and prohibited behaviours (Cowan, 2011; Lachman, 2014). Furthermore, as previously stated, organisations should provide clarity regarding structures which directly affect the individual, such as conditions of employment, job design and work organisation (Duffy, 2009; MacIntosh, 2006; Randle et al., 2007). This will enable employees to know exactly what is expected of them and how they should act within the organisation (Duffy, 2009), resulting in the reduction of personal interpretations by employees who manipulate the system to their advantage. Anonymous complaint surveys or satisfaction surveys, according to Pate and Beaumont (2010), also empower individuals, encouraging them to raise complaints and concerns by giving them a voice and reducing their fear of possible negative consequences.

Managers encouraging communication, fair feedback and open-door policies create a harmonious environment, giving employees an opportunity to freely raise their concerns and discuss confidential matters, fostering a trusting relationship between employees and management (Dimarino, 2011).

Focusing on the employee, findings suggest that individuals exposed to experiences of bullying are more prone to long-term sickness and high absenteeism, which has a long-term negative effect on turnover intentions (Eriksen, Hogh, & Hansen, 2016). Such situations should be handled and cannot just be ignored. Therefore, when obtaining third-party involvement (consultants, Employee Assistance Programmes (EAPs) or union representatives) to support the employee experiencing workplace bullying, it can be beneficial, since in some cases, organisations lack insight and skills to handle experiences effectively and fail to address the issue. D'Cruz and Noronha (2011), Ferris (2009), and Ironside and Seifert (2003) argued that consultants, EAPs or union representatives can play a vital role in addressing workplace bullying that is being experienced by employees, as these third-party consultants objectively manage these situations within the organisations. Johnson (2011) argued that organisations can

repair the damage that workplace bullying caused by helping individuals with EAPs, health programmes and counsellors, which are provided by external agencies. Therefore, if organisations use EPAs to assist in strengthening employees' resilience, it can reduce these individuals' vulnerability to hostile work environments (Jackson, Firtko, & Edenborough, 2007).

According to D'Cruz and Noronha (2011), implementing bystander accountability (witnessing hostile acts and not reporting these incidents) can also be a deterrent. The implementation of bystander accountability creates an environment where everyone is responsible for ensuring a bullying-free workplace, and all employees are then actively involved in addressing these issues as they will be required to report all incidents. Furthermore, bystander accountability creates a supportive environment and reflects a zero tolerance to bullying as employees can immediately report and proactively respond to bullying experiences (Davey-Attlee & Rayner, 2007; D'Cruz & Noronha, 2011).

Informal handling practices suggested by participants in MacIntosh (2006) state that individuals experiencing workplace bullying should document all incidents by writing down and recording the encounters, and saving all messages and emails as this can be crucial when addressing, reporting and proving their case.

Emotional intelligence is the ability to regulate one's own emotions effectively, be aware of and identify emotions in others, and have the ability to handle interpersonal relationships professionally, wisely and with empathy, learning from the experiences (Almost et al., 2016; Morrison, 2008). Employees who are emotionally intelligent are likely to be more sensitive and considerate to other employees' feelings (Cho, Bonn, Han, & Lee, 2016), reducing the experiences of workplace bullying. Managers who are deficient in high emotional intelligence can be viewed as a main cause of workplace bullying as their leadership styles reflect little empathetic behaviour, which is perceived as either facilitating or directly causing workplace bullying (Hoel, Glasø, Cooper, & Einarsen, 2010). Findings by Notelaers, De Witte, and Einarsen (2010) indicated that employees with a high level of participation in decision-making are associated with lower levels of bullying. The lack of decision authority can increase employee frustration, and leads to conflict and workplace bullying, which should be noted in the manager's leadership style. According to Woodrow and Guest (2016), transformational and transactional leadership styles are positively related to reducing workplace bullying. Thus, it is important to train managers to apply the correct management style to reduce workplace bullying.

The findings of Keashly and Neuman (2009) showed that if organisations implemented interventions that create a collaborative communication style, the experiences of workplace bullying would be reduced. A collaborative communication style can also assist in fair performance appraisals as this style will promote collaboration of high-performing teams (Randle et al., 2007). As performance reviews are useful tools to assess the employee's strengths, weaknesses and opportunities for development, honest communication by the employee is needed. To obtain these valuable results, opportunities must be provided for all role-players to gather insightful information regarding the effectiveness of the organisational systems, the handling of negative acts in the workplace, and the climate of the organisation − collaborative communication is therefore essential (Dillon, 2012).

Finally, exit interviews can also aid organisations in determining the level of workplace bullying within an organisation (Bartlett & Bartlett, 2011) as these interviews can provide valuable information to assist the employees that remain in the organisation, and assist the organisation to identify the level of workplace bullying and to make the appropriate changes.

Conclusions

Handling practices that were identified in this article led the researcher to develop a structural model for the HRPs to handle causes of workplace bullying and ultimately reducing employees' experiences of workplace bullying. The structural framework (Figure 7) suggests that handling practices can be categorised into two different dimensions: bullying observational levels (overt or covert) or behavioural levels (organisational climate or individual level). The handling practices identified for the category *overt climate handling practices of bullying* with the theme *handling practices for deliberate inadequacies of strategic human resource management*, were education and policy training.

For the theme *handling practices for deliberate inadequacies of organisational structure*, practices such as organisational systems and organisational procedures were suggested. In the category *covert climate handling practices of bullying*, tacit practices and procedures were suggested for the theme *handling practices for subtle inadequacies of strategic human resource management*. Moreover, *handling practices for subtle inadequacies of organisational structure* are subtle organisational systems, organisational communication, and third-party interventions.

In the category *overt individual handling practices of bullying* with both themes, *handling direct destructive management styles* and *handling direct destructive employee*

relations, practices such as leader/ bystander accountability and proactive interventions were identified for handling these experiences and causes of workplace bullying. In the final category, *covert individual handling practices of bullying* with the *theme: handling subtle destructive management styles*, practices such as leadership skills and interpersonal skill development were suggested. The final theme, *handling subtle destructive employee relations*, included handling practices such as developing group relations and interpersonal skills.

		Bullying observational levels	
		Overt	**Covert**
Behavioural levels of bullying	**Organisational climate**	**Overt climate handling practices of bullying** *1. Handling deliberate inadequacies of strategic human resource management* • **Educational sessions** • **Policy training and development** *2. Handling deliberate inadequacies of organisational structure* • **Organisational systems** • **Organisational procedures**	**Covert climate handling practices of bullying** *1. Handling subtle inadequacies of strategic human resource management* • **Tacit practices** • **Tacit procedures** *2. Handling subtle inadequacies of organisational structure* • **Subtle organisational systems** • **Organisational communication** • **Third-party involvement**
	Individual level	**Overt individual handling practices of bullying** *1. Handling direct destructive management styles (Managers/ Supervisors)* • **Leader accountability** • **Proactive interventions** *2. Handling direct destructive employee relations (Colleagues/ Employees)* • **Bystander accountability** • **Proactive interventions**	**Covert individual handling practices of bullying** *1. Handling subtle destructive management styles (Manager or supervisor)* • **Leadership skills** • **Interpersonal skills** *2. Handling subtle destructive employee relations (Colleagues/ Employees)* • **Group relations** • **Interpersonal skills**

Figure 7. HR practitioner's framework for handling employees' experiences of workplace bullying

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Appendix B

Description of reviewed sources

Ref. num.	Reference	Title	Journal	Study design	Sample size	Study objective
1.	MacIntosh, J. (2006).	Tackling workplace bullying.	*Mental Health Nursing,*	Qualitative	21 Participants	"Participants explored ways of diminishing, eliminating, or addressing bullying behaviours".
2.	Keeling, J., Quigley, J., & Roberts, T. (2006).	Bullying in the workplace: What it is and how to deal with it.	*British Journal of Midwifery,*	Professional issue	NA	"This article highlights bullying behaviours and describes the detrimental effect that this deviant behaviour has on victims. The organizational and professional responsibilities are addressed and details are given about where a victim can access help and support".
3.	Randle, J., Stevenson, K., & Grayling, I. (2007).	Reducing workplace bullying in healthcare organisations.	*Nursing Standard*	Professional issue	NA	"Provides an overview of the key issues in workplace bullying and suggests individual, team and organisational solutions to reduce its incidence".
4.	Christmas, K. (2007).	Workplace abuse: Finding solutions.	*Nursing Economics*	Literature review	NA	"Advance the way health care organizations identify and attract, and keep quality talent".
5.	Georgiou, G. (2007).	Anti-bullying tactics make a difference.	*RCM midwives*	Literature review	NA	"Present the guidelines and legal recourse available to those who experience bullying either directly or indirectly".
6.	Anon (2008).	Strategies to reduce workplace bullying	KAI TIAKI New Zealand	Magazine article	NA	Present strategies to reduce workplace bullying.
7.	Ferris, P. A. (2009).	The role of the consulting psychologist in the prevention, detection, and correction of bullying and mobbing in the workplace.	*Consulting Psychology Journal: Practice and Research*	Literature review	NA	"This article is to provide consulting psychologists with a foundation of knowledge regarding the concepts of bullying and mobbing that then provides the basis for conducting interventions primarily at the organizational level".
8.	Bryant, M., Buttigieg, D., & Hanley, G. (2009).	Poor bullying prevention and employee health: some implications.	*International Journal of Workplace Health Management*	Qualitative	14 Participants	"This paper aims to investigate employee reports of workplace bullying in which participants argue that poor management of bullying led to a range of health problems, both physical and mental".
9.	Fox, S., & Stallworth, L. E. (2009).	Building a framework for two internal organizational approaches to resolving and preventing workplace bullying: Alternative dispute resolution and training.	*Consulting Psychology Journal: Practice and Research*	Qualitative	NA	"To clarify the nature and boundaries of workplace bullying, to effectively measure its prevalence and provide a basis for moving beyond research toward developing accepted and effective organizational and public policy responses to bullying; and (b) to briefly outline the utility of two internal organizational methods of preventing and resolving bullying: alternative dispute resolution and anti-bullying training".
10.	Olender-Russo, L. (2009).	Reversing the bullying culture in nursing.	NR Web	Magazine Article	NA	Help leaders within the healthcare organisations who are struggling to manage disruptive behaviours and bullying in the workplace.

11.	Duffy, M. (2009).	Preventing workplace mobbing and bullying with effective organizational consultation, policies, and legislation.	*Consulting Psychology Journal: Practice and Research*	Qualitative	NA	"This article looks at the evolution of workplace protections for a variety of groups of workers who have been the recipients historically of discrimination and will also look at the current push for legislation to protect against workplace abuse".
12.	Cleary, M., Hunt, G. E., Walter, G., & Robertson, M. (2009).	Dealing with bullying in the workplace: Toward zero tolerance.	*Journal of Psychosocial Nursing and Mental Health Services*	Article	NA	"In this article, we examine interpersonal problems, particularly bullying, in the workplace and consider how mental health staff can foster a culture of workplace respect and respond to the requirements of professional standards for workplace behaviours".
13.	Vessey, J., Demarco, R., Gaffney, D., & Budin, W. (2009).	Bullying of staff registered nurses in the workplace: A preliminary study for developing personal and organizational strategies for the transformation of hostile to healthy workplace environments.	*Journal of Professional Nursing*	Quantitative	303 Participants	"Purpose of the overall study was to validate the occurrence of the bullying phenomenon in nurses across the United States and to examine the patterns of bullying found within the data".
14.	Olender-Russo, L. (2009).	Creating a culture of regard: An antidote for workplace bullying.	*Creative nursing*	Article	NA	To propose an antidote for bullying and creating a culture where employees treat each other with regard.
15.	Pate, J., & Beaumont, P. (2010).	Bullying and harassment: a case of success?	*Employee Relations*	Quantitative	200 Participants	"This paper aims to examine an attempt by an organisation to address the significant problem of bullying and harassment. In doing so the paper particularly centres on the question of how the relative success of bullying and harassment policies might be measured".
16.	Stagg, S. J. (2010).	Effectiveness of bullying and violence prevention programs.	*Workplace Health & Safety*	Qualitative	10 Articles	"The purpose of this systematic review was to identify best practices for preventing and managing workplace bullying among staff nurses".
17.	D'Cruz, P., & Noronha, E. (2010).	The exit coping response to workplace bullying: The contribution of inclusivist and exclusivist HRM strategies.	*Employee Relations*	Qualitative	10 Participants	"This paper aims to describe the role of human resource management (HRM) in targets' coping with workplace bullying".
18.	Van Heugten, K. (2010).	Bullying of social workers: Outcomes of a grounded study into impacts and interventions.	*British Journal of Social Work*	Qualitative	17 Participants	"To explore the context and impacts of these events, and the factors that were pivotal in the participants' journey back to self-confidence".
19.	Weinand, M. R. (2010).	Horizontal violence in nursing: history, impact, and solution.	*The Journal of Chi Eta Phi Sorority*	Article	NA	To provide an overview of the history, impact, and solutions for horizontal violence in nursing.
20.	Cleary, M., Hunt, G. E., & Horsfall, J. (2010).	Identifying and addressing bullying in nursing.	*Issues in mental health nursing*	Qualitative	NA	"This review provides an overview of bullying, how this impacts on nursing staff and ways to reduce bullying incidents to cultivate a more positive work environment".

21.	Stewart, S. (2010).	Confronting bullying.	*Nursing New Zealand*	Journal Article	NA	"Suggests that collective action by nurses and other health care workers is the key to challenging bullying".
22.	Beale, D., & Hoel, H. (2011).	Workplace bullying and the employment relationship exploring questions of prevention, control and context.	*Work, Employment & Society*	Qualitative	NA	"Existing secondary material and future research possibilities are then explored and discussed, with some conclusions that are aimed to take the research in this field in new directions".
23.	Gemzøe Mikkelsen, E., Hogh, A., & Berg Puggaard, L. (2011).	Prevention of bullying and conflicts at work: Process factors influencing the implementation and effects of interventions.	*International Journal of Workplace Health Management*	Quantitative	921 participants	"This paper aims to prevent bullying and conflicts at work and to identify process factors associated with the implementation and effects of such interventions".
24.	Cowan, R. L. (2011).	"Yes, We Have an Anti-bullying Policy, But…:" HR Professionals' Understandings and Experiences with Workplace Bullying Policy.	*Communication Studies*	Qualitative	36 Participants	"The purpose of the study was to gain a better understanding of the use of anti-bullying policy in the organisation".
25.	D'Cruz, P., & Noronha, E. (2011).	The limits to workplace friendship: Managerialist HRM and bystander behaviour in the context of workplace bullying.	*Employee Relations*	Qualitative	17 Participants	"This paper seeks to describe bystander behaviour including bystander decisions, actions and outcomes, in the context of workplace bullying".
26.	Johnson, S. L. (2011).	An ecological model of workplace bullying: a guide for intervention and research.	*Nursing Forum*	Article	NA	"The aims of this article are to (a) review the empirical findings that underlie and support an ecological model of workplace bullying, (b) propose how this model can be used to guide the development of interventions designed to prevent bullying and remediate its effects, and (c) discuss how this model can be used as a conceptual framework for research".
27.	Egues, A. L., & Leinung, E. Z. (2013).	The bully within and without: Strategies to address horizontal violence in nursing.	*Nursing forum*	Quantitative	303 Participants	"This paper defines horizontal violence in nursing and explores strategies to address it based upon shared information".
28.	Bartlett, J. E., & Bartlett, M. E. (2011).	Workplace bullying: An integrative literature review.	*Advances in Developing Human Resources*	Qualitative	42 Sources	"The purpose of the review is to examine workplace bullying, specifically, in regards to what types of workplace bullying are reported in the literature, explore the individual and organizational impacts of workplace bullying, and report the HRD professional's role in reducing workplace bullying".
29.	Eggertson, L. (2011).	Targeted. The impact of bullying, and what needs to be done to eliminate it.	*The Canadian Nurse*	Article	NA	Identify the impact of bullying and what must be done to eliminate it.
30.	Wiedmer, T. (2010).	Workplace bullying: costly and preventable.	*Delta Kappa Gamma Bulletin,*	Article	NA	"This article presents information about workplace bullying, including its prevalence, targeted individuals, bullying behaviours, employer practices, and steps to prevent bullying".

31.	Harrington, S., Rayner, C., & Warren, S. (2012).	Too hot to handle? Trust and human resource practitioners' implementation of anti-bullying policy.	*Human Resource Management Journal*	Qualitative	17 Participants	"By drawing on contemporary trust research, we provide a more nuanced understanding of the factors that shape the trust dynamics involved in bullying claims and identify potential contagion, or spill-over, from previous similar encounters. Second, by examining HRPs' perceptions of enacting anti-bullying practice when manager and employee are in conflict, we give voice to an under-researched perspective and provide further insight into the impact of HRM devolvement on employee outcomes and the HRP–manager relationship."
32.	Dillon, B. L. (2012).	Workplace violence: impact, causes, and prevention.	*Work Journal*	Qualitative	NA	"Using a variety of sources, the author explores the complex reasons for aggression and violence in workplace settings, as well as suggesting means of prevention and intervention".
33.	Fredericksen, E. D., & McCorkle, S. (2013).	Explaining organizational responses to workplace aggression.	*Public personnel management*	Qualitative	NA	"Propose the organizational Accountability Grid as an umbrella concept to understand how organizations become permissive or disciplined cultures in their responses to workplace aggression".
34.	Coursey, J. H., Rodriguez, R. E., Dieckmann, L. S., & Austin, P. N. (2013).	Successful implementation of policies addressing lateral violence	*AORN Journal*	Qualitative	12 Sources	"To conduct a literature review to locate and appraise evidence about effectively implementing lateral violence policies".
35.	Woodrow, C., & Guest, D. E. (2014).	When good HR gets bad results: exploring the challenge of HR implementation in the case of workplace bullying.	*Human Resource management Journal*	Qualitative	12 Participants	"The aim of this article is therefore to address the process of HRM implementation and its relationship with employee responses".
36.	Lachman, V. D. (2014).	Ethical issues in the disruptive behaviors of incivility, bullying, and horizontal/lateral violence.	*Medsurg nursing,*	Article	NA	Providing ethical issues in the disruptive behaviours of incivility, bullying, and horizontal/lateral violence.
37.	Lim, F. A., & Bernstein, I. (2014).	Civility and workplace bullying: Resonance of Nightingale's persona and current best practices.	*Nursing forum*	Article	NA	"This article explores the subject of WPB and incivility in nursing and contextualizes Nightingale's experience with contemporary issues and offers best practices solutions".
38.	Fox, S., & Cowan, R. L. (2015).	Revision of the workplace bullying checklist: the importance of human resource management's role in defining and addressing workplace bullying.	*Human Resource Management Journal*	Quantitative	204 Participants	"1). Differentiate behaviours considered by HR to be legitimate exercise of managerial prerogatives and duties from bullying behaviours. 2). Specify behaviours that comprise blatant and subtle bullying. 3). Redefine bullying based on HRPs' broad criteria of characteristics that must be present for a situation to be considered bullying".
39.	American Nursing Association. (2015).	ANA Sets 'Zero Tolerance' Policy for Workplace Violence, Bullying	*American Nursing Association News*	Article	NA	Call on health care employers to implement violence prevention programs.

No.	Author	Title	Journal	Method	Participants	Aim
40.	McCalla, S. A. (2015).	Policy Characteristics for the Prevention of Workplace Bullying Antecedents by Heterosexist: A Delphi Study.	*Journal of Psychological Issues in Organizational Culture*	Quantitative	60 Participants	"The aim of this study's was to obtain organizational practices or policies that can help diminish the risk of heterosexism as it pertains to workplace bullying of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgendered (LGBT) workers".
41.	Harrington, S., Warren, S., & Rayner, C. (2015).	Human Resource Management practitioners' responses to workplace bullying: Cycles of symbolic violence.	*Organization Journal*	Qualitative	17 Participants	"Address how HRPs themselves interpret and respond to claims of bullying. By drawing on Bourdieu's concept of 'symbolic violence'".
42.	Johnson, S. L. (2015).	Workplace bullying prevention: a critical discourse analysis.	*Journal of advanced nursing*	Qualitative	15 Participants	"The aim of this study was to analyse the discourses of workplace bullying prevention of hospital nursing unit managers and in the official documents of the organizations where they worked".
43.	Gillespie, G. L., Gates, D. M., & Fisher, B. S. (2015).	Individual, relationship, workplace, and societal recommendations for addressing healthcare workplace violence.	*Work Journal*	Qualitative	NA	"The purpose of this article is to highlight the special issue authors' and guest editors' recommendations for protecting healthcare workers from being victimized and incurring the negative consequences of having experienced workplace violence".

CHAPTER 4

CONCLUSION, LIMITATIONS AND RECONMENDATIONS

CONCLUSIONS, LIMITATIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The purpose of this chapter is to conclude the general objective of this study and the specific objectives that were set in the beginning of this study for all the chapters. Furthermore, the limitations and recommendations for future research will also be elaborated on in this chapter.

Conclusions

The first objective for this study was to identify experiences of workplace bullying and the causes of workplace bullying through a systematic review and a meta-analysis.

Experiences of workplace bullying

The findings reveal that experiences of workplace bullying can be categorised into five main themes, namely threat to professional status, threat to personal standing, social exclusion/isolation, overload and destabilisation.

Threat to personal standing: Within this category, experiences include verbal threats or shouting, name-calling, humiliation, or gossiping (De Vos & Kirsten, 2015), as well as various aspects of physical bullying (Fahie & Devine, 2014; Meyer & Kirsten, 2014). In order to label and categorise these experiences as a hazard to personal standing, the victim has to acknowledge and personally perceive the acts as a personal threat (Serin, Balkan, & Dogan, 2014; Qureshi, et al., 2015).

Threat to professional status: Bullying experiences are seen as work-related incidents that are mostly aimed to discredit or professionally undermine an individual (Zabrodska & Kveton, 2013; Qureshi et al., 2015). These threats can be seen when individuals experience constant work criticism, belittling remarks made by colleagues or management, false accusations aimed at discrediting the individual, professional humiliation or undermining the work of a person and unethical approaches to, or communication with individuals within the workplace (Ciby & Raya, 2014; De Vos & Kirsten, 2015; Meyer & Kirsten, 2014).

Social exclusion/ Social isolation: This aspect occurs when individuals find themselves secluded and prevented from fully participating in normal social activities within their work environment (Power & Wilson, 2000). Social isolation can be seen as more relational in nature, whereby an individual is estranged, social relationships restricted or worse, totally absent

(Matthews et al., 2016). Experiences of social exclusion include actions that deprive an individual from organisational resources, behaviours or actions that purposefully withhold information from individuals and actions that hinder the victim's ability to successfully complete his/her tasks (Vickers, 2014; Zabrodska & Kveton, 2013). If one looks at the experiences for social isolation, it is evident that individuals do tasks alone with little contact with their colleagues as well as overt actions that hinder or prevent individuals from participating in or attending work-related functions, meetings or gatherings. Individuals are also ignored and their complaints go unheeded and overlooked (Celep & Konakli, 2013; Trépanier, Fernet, Austin, & Boudrias, 2016).

Overload: This aspect refers to task-related bullying experiences, whereby individuals receive unrealistic and unbearable workloads and deadlines resulting in failure to complete tasks. Experiences regarding overload include actions such as previously mentioned, totally unrealistic and impossible deadlines, constant and intolerable pressure to perform and being excessively monitored and checked (Dentith, Wright, & Coryell, 2014; Hemmings, 2013; Meyer & Kirsten, 2014).

Destabilisation: This feature occurs when the perpetrator or bully undermines or disarms an individual by changing their responsibilities or task goals without informing or consulting them (Serin, Balkan, & Dogan, 2014; Qureshi et al., 2015), resulting in the individual experiencing devaluation of their efforts and feelings of powerlessness and not being in control (Bas, 2011; Lewis, 2006). Experiences in this category include aspects relating to unrealistic targets set for individuals, constantly reminding and pointing out shortcomings of an individual, overloading the individual with more tasks (or inappropriately taking away tasks) if compared with other personnel on the same job level and receiving work that is below their competency level as well as devaluating their abilities (Ciby & Raya, 2014; Meyer & Kirsten, 2015).

Causes of workplace bullying

The findings reveal that causes of workplace bullying can be categorised into three categories, i.e. organisational causes, individual causes and societal cases.

Organisational causes of workplace bullying

Organisational causes were further divided into three themes, namely job characteristics and organisational-related factors, organisational culture and climate-related factors and organisational change.

Job characteristics and organisational-related factors: This category reflects bullying to be mostly associated with poor work environments (McDuff, 2008; Trépanier, Fernet, Austin, & Boudrias, 2016). Job-related factors within the work environment, such as unclear goals, poor job designs, lack of job control, lack of training and unreasonable job demands can all contribute to poor work environments(Gardner Gilkes Benevides, 2012; Neall & Tuckey, 2014). Workplace bullying can also be industry-dependent or prevalent in high-pressured organisations (Shallcross, Ramsay, & Barker, 2013; Serin, Balkan, & Dogan, 2014; Meyer & Kirsten, 2015).

Organisational culture and climate-related factors: Results also highlighted that organisational culture was conducive to bullying behaviour as bullying behaviours were built into the culture (Salin & Hoel, 2011). Further findings suggested that an organisational climate also encouraged bullying (Murray, 2009; Serin, Balkan, & Dogan, 2014) and that managers could contribute to this culture by participating in and reinforcing the culture of bullying or by overlooking abusive behaviour (Speedy, 2006; Zabrodska & Kveton, 2013) and turning a blind eye to offences.

Other factors that directly influenced bullying behaviours and opportunities for bullying were weak leadership and poor communication (Buttigieg, Bryant, Hanley, & Liu, 2011; O'Driscoll et al., 2011). Poor communication specifically contributed to a low organisational climate and was shown to be intricately linked to bullying behaviours at work (De Vos & Kirsten, 2015). Weak leadership, which includes the lack of clear HR systems in organisations (lack of applicable policies, practices and operational procedures) was also noted (Hemmings, 2013).

In other cases, organisational structures contributed to bullying due to the restriction of HRP control or power to manage bullying (De Wet, 2010; Vickers, 2014). This was compounded by the lack of union and counsellor support, which resulted in the bulling behaviours to continue unabated (MacIntosh, 2005; Van Fleet & Van Fleet, 2012). Finally, a

lack of employee involvement was noted to play a primary role in the occurrence of bullying (Bas, 2011; Ciby, & Raya, 2014).

Organisational change: Whether organisational change occurred externally or internally, findings revealed that any change influenced the occurrence of bullying at work (Salin & Hoel, 2011). Internal factors, such as layoffs or downsizing, created a favourable breeding ground for the opportunity for internal competition (Serin, Balkan, & Dogan, 2014). This internal turmoil tended to trigger bullying behaviour with the aim of eliminating any competition in order to survive the imminent threat of job loss (Poilpot-Rocaboy, 2006; Serin, Balkan, & Dogan, 2014). Changes in management or restructuring further caused confusion and insecurity among employees and also triggered bullying among colleagues (Gökçe, 2009; Hemmings, 2013). External factors such as labour shortages created a great deal of competition in the labour market resulting in further bullying activities to occur in order to recruit and retain the best workers in a minimal pool of labour resources (Serin, Balkan, & Dogan, 2014; Zabrodska & Kveton, 2013).

Individual causes of workplace bullying revealed two perspectives, each with its own unique themes, the victim's perspective and the perpetrators perspective.

Individual cause: victim's perspective

The victim's perspective incorporated four themes; Victim's perspective, victim's position, social incompetence or low self-esteem and overachievers.

Victim perspective: From numerous studies, a victim's perspective has been investigated in order to identify typical victim personalities, which are evident within a workplace situation where bullying acts are prominent. However, very little results have been put forward to prove or disprove such a typical victim profile (Gardner Gilkes Benevides, 2012; Zapf & Einarsen, 2011).

Victim's position: The victim's position refers to where and how the victim is positioned in the bullying scenario (Zapf & Einarsen, 2011). If there are any differences that define an individual as different from the group, there is a high probability that these individuals will be prone to bullying as they are seen as outsiders (Heugten, 2007; Vickers, 2014). These individual differences are identified through unique or 'out of the ordinary' attributes, such as race, age and gender (Cevik Akyil, Tan, Saritas, & Altuntas, 2012; Gökçe, 2009). This sets victims

'apart' from the main group of 'accepted' individuals. Furthermore, studies have also reflected that if a victim is in the minority, they also tend to be at higher risk of experiencing bullying from their colleagues (Lewis & Gunn, 2007; Vickers, 2014).

Social incompetence and low self-esteem: Another cause of workplace bullying that was considered from the victims' perspective was those individuals who found it hard to understand or correctly interpret their social environment or behavioural cues from others. This tended to open these individuals and their behaviours up to be incorrectly interpreted as bullies or people displaying bullying behaviours (Meyer & Kirsten, 2014; Serin, Balkan, & Dogan, 2014) when this situation actually reflected individuals who struggle socially to connect and have a low self-esteem. Furthermore, findings have revealed that social incompetence reveals several victim characteristics that can be directly associated with bullying, namely being less competitive, low confidence and not having a very adaptable personality as well as victims who open themselves up to be exploited are also targets for bullying and find it difficult to defend themselves (Efe & Ayaz, 2010; Neall & Tuckey, 2014); these factors compound an already delicate workplace bullying situation (Ciby, & Raya, 2014; Shallcross, Ramsay, & Barker, 2013). Generally, victims with these traits, coupled with traits of anxiety in social environments and the lack of general social skills, are main targets for possible bullying (Bas, 2011; Vickers, 2014). This, combined with individuals who have poor coping skills, poor conflict management skills, emotional instability, over-sensitiveness and the inability to interpret social cues, will also be primary targets of negative acts of bullying behaviours (Gardner Gilkes Benevides, 2012; Hemmings, 2013; Van Fleet & Van Fleet. 2012).

Overachievers, which result in conflicting group norms: From a victim's perspective, research revealed that overachievers tend to be very conscientious and perfectionistic, which leads to be a source of irritation and annoyance for other members of a group (Zapf & Einarsen, 2011). With the overachievers tending to be very particular and critical, the other group members' self-esteem, self-confidence, beliefs and functionality become threatened, resulting in intense bulling reactions by perpetrators (Zapf & Einarsen, 2011). Victims who are overachievers are usually prompt, frank and rule bound, which furthermore clash with the group norms and further create opportunities and situations that are conducive to bullying behaviours (Coyne et al., 2000).

Individual causes of workplace bullying: The perpetrators' perspective

This category was further divided into three themes, namely threatened self-view, lack of social competence and insight and micro-political.

Threatened self-view: When bulling behaviours are experienced, the threatened self-view of the perpetrator seems to be problematic and in an effort to try to protect this view, bullying behaviours are triggered and become evident (Cevik Akyil, Tan, Saritas, & Altuntas, 2012; Serin, Balkan, & Dogan, 2014). This phenomenon has been reported in several studies (Gardner Gilkes Benevides, 2012; Ramsey, 2005) and highlights the fact that when the perpetrator's self-esteem is threatened, bullying behaviours become more prominent. Therefore, when perpetrators perceive victims as a threat, the perpetrator turns to bullying behaviours to eliminate this perceived threat and handle the presenting situation (Zapf & Einarsen, 2011). Perpetrators who have a high self-esteem generally respond with more hostile behaviours (De Wet, 2010; Shallcross, Ramsay, & Barker, 2013), and also have an aggressive character (Cevik Akyil, Tan, Saritas, & Altuntas, 2012; Speedy, 2006) and often struggle with an inferiority complex (Hemmings, 2013; Matthiesen & Einarsen, 2007). These character features result in the perpetrator bullying to compensate for their own inadequacies (Dentith, Wright, & Coryell, 2014; MacIntosh, 2005) as these perpetrators also tend to envy their targets. This reflected one of the main reasons for the bullying of a victim (De Vos & Kirsten, 2015; Qureshi, et al., 2015).

Lack social competence and insight: In considering a lack of social competence, most individuals are not really aware of their behaviour, which can be considered problematic. This underpins the fact that many perpetrators are also not aware that the behaviours they display can be constituted as bullying, nor do they perceive these behaviours as bullying (Efe & Ayaz, 2010; McDuff, 2008; Yildirim & Yildirim, 2007). Research further suggests that as perpetrators lack self-awareness (Ozturk, Solmen, Yilmaz, & Cilingr, 2008; Poilpot-Rocaboy, 2006) and their deficiency in the ability to control their emotions and behaviours, negative social behaviours result. These behaviours include actions such as screaming, swearing, showing hostile conduct and poor conflict management (Bas, 2011), all of which contribute to the victim feeling degraded and bullied (Trépanier, Fernet, & Austin, 2016), inevitably triggering and promoting bullying behaviours.

Micro-political: People's influences, preferences and perceptions: Within a work environment, an individual's preferences, approaches, perceptions and influences are of importance and can shape the nature of bullying behaviours (Schere, 2015). Aspects that further promote and contribute towards bullying behaviours are competition between colleagues (individuals needing to prove power and have a need to control) and individuals who have opportunities to misuse power and then do so (Dhar, 2012; Fahie & Devine, 2014; Van Heugten, 2010). Within organisations, pressure to perform was also noted as a factor that leads to perpetrators using any tactics to enhance performance and achieve performance expectations; this was usually done by bulling subordinates (Hodson, Roscigno, & Lopez, 2006). Individual rivalry was seen as another area that triggered bulling. Jealousy, resentment and the urgent need to achieve personal gaols without any tolerance or consideration for others (Celep & Konakli, 2013; Vickers, 2014; Zabrodska & Kveton, 2013) came up as noteworthy features. The final category identified for causes of workplace bulling are of a societal nature, where broader more holistic factors are considered.

Societal causes of workplace bullying

Looking at a broader contest, factors such as an economic crisis or a slump in the economy have direct influences on any organisation. These external stressors very often affect the internal dynamics of an organisation, resulting in everyone being put under pressure; employer and employee alike (Serin, Balkan, & Dogan, 2014; Qureshi et al., 2013). In considering a more holistic and comprehensive perspective, globalisation and international competitive labour markets also influence and affect local markets and organisations. This, in turn, puts stress on the human element within local organisational structures of institutions, creating a 'sink or swim' scenario that most definitely generates negative climates within organisations that result in a 'race' to succeed and survive, creating an ideal environment for bulling (Serin, Balkan, & Dogan, 2014). Considering the more local context, unresolved social problems, poverty, inequality, economic injustices and historical factors, which created and still contribute towards present-day conditions, an atmosphere of discontentment is evident. The very nature of this situation is conducive to creating and sustaining a climate ripe for intimidation and oppression, and furthermore, encouraging and condoning an acceptance of these actions, resulting in an acceptable 'bullying culture' (Gökçe, 2009; McDuff, 2008).

In general, society does not necessarily know how to deal with bullying and the 'bullying culture' and therefore 'sweeps it under the carpet', simply ignoring these serious issues and pretending they do not happen (Trépanier, Fernet, Austin, & Boudrias, 2016). It has

become such a serious contentious issue that even legal systems have not yet satisfactorily addressed bullying or bullying behaviours at work (Serin, Balkan, & Dogan, 2014; Yildirim & Yildirim, 2007).

Human resource practitioners handling practices for experiences of workplace bullying

The second objective for this study was to identify handling practices for the HRPs, which could guide the HRP in handling the employees' experiences and assist in recognising causes of workplace bullying. After conducting the integrative literature review, the handling practices were identified. The handling practices that where identified for deliberate and subtle inadequacies of strategic human resource management will now be explained, namely educating employees, policy training, tacit practices and tacit procedures.

Educating employees: The primary manner in which to handle deliberate inadequacies of strategic human resource management is through education. Education sessions or workshops should include well-delineated and appropriate definitions, experiences, consequences as well as detailed information regarding possible strategies to handle any bullying experience (Cleary, Hunt, & Horsfall, 2010; Pate & Beaumont, 2010; Van Heugten, 2010). Employees who have received educational training or attended workshops are reported to have higher levels of confidence when addressing bullying and tend to be more comfortable in handling these incidents (Van Heugten, 2010). Workshops are another manner in which information can be accessed and training provided for various role-players. During these educational opportunities, aspects such as role-play, simulations and facilitated discussions to identify experiences of workplace bullying should be included in order to expose individuals to appropriate handling strategies and familiarise HRP with the complicated dynamics of workplace bulling problems (Eggertson, 2011; MacIntosh, 2006).

Policy training: Personnel should be continuously informed about the organisation's anti-bullying policies, other general policies regarding any other aspects of bullying and be abreast of the appropriate procedures regarding the reporting of bullying (Fox, & Stallworth, 2009; Weinand, 2010). This must be done by a cyclic process of training sessions and individual empowerment of personnel in order to minimise and eventually eradicate any bullying experiences that may occur. A further vital step that must be considered, which is reflected in many of the findings, reveals that the HRPs should be specifically trained in policy development and revision as well as the implementation of these anti-bullying policies (Ferris,

2009; Harrington, Warren, & Rayner, 2015). Many sources also identified the importance of monitoring the enforcement and compliance of these policies (Bryant, Buttigieg, & Hanley, 2009; Cleary, Hunt, & Horsefall, 2010).

In addition to these recommendations, to crucial policies should be implemented these are, firstly, a zero tolerance to bullying policy and secondly a dignity at work policy. If these are considered and implemented a considerable decline in bullying behaviour and even a total eradication can be expected (Ferris, 2009; MacIntosh, 2006; Pate & Beaumont, 2010).

Handling tacit practices and *tacit procedures*: Unspoken or implicit procedures and practices within organisations usually contribute towards the organisation's climate. To assess this climate, an evaluation of a company's norms and values, which is usually done through surveys, is identified for culture changes (Dillon, 2012). Furthermore, organisations can also consider other changes, for instance they can adopt a culture of respect and regard for others, an ethos of collaboration, philosophies that foster excellence and general attitudes that promote support for others (Cleary, Hunt, & Horsefall, 2010; Keeling, Quigley, & Roberts, 2006). Therefore, to establish an appropriate code of organisational conduct, anonymous complaint surveys can be conducted, giving the victim a voice and a level of functional self-respect. It must also be noted that even though tacit practices and procedures are unspoken or implicit, it does not necessarily mean that they will be ethically upheld. Again, it needs to be mentioned that organisations need to provide clear statements of expected and professional conduct (Christmas, 2007; Cowan, 2011). To monitor and ensure that these implicit practices are maintained, it goes without saying that HRPs must be trained as strategic partners within the organisation, who will competently align strategies with the organisation's objectives (Boxall & Purcell, 2011; Fox & Cowan, 2015; Namie, 2016).

Deliberate and subtle inadequacies of organisational structure
When handling deliberate and subtle inadequacies of organisational structure, the following practices emerged: Organisational systems, organisational procedures, subtle organisational systems, organisational communications and third-party involvement.

Organisational systems: In any organisation, there should be a clear system for reporting and documenting individual experiences of workplace bullying (Bartlett & Bartlett, 2011; Coursey, Rodriguez, Dickmann, & Austin, 2013). Clear channels and structures for formal complaints, also known as 'voice systems' or 'investigation systems' should be accessible to all personnel,

or if no such system is available, one should be initiated (D'Cruz & Noronha, 2010; Dillon, 2012; MacIntosh, 2006).

Organisational procedures: Organisational procedures that should be in place to combat any form of negative acts should consist of well-defined employment contracts that stipulate acceptable and expected codes of conduct as well as the consequences that will ensue if anyone is found guilty of workplace bullying. Therefore, all organisational procedures for handling any form of bullying or negative acts should be explicit enough to guide all role-players as to the explaining or defining of all concepts, the delineation of all unacceptable negative acts or behaviours and lastly, explicitly clarify the consequences of any negative acts. Furthermore, protocols or recognised organisational procedures that will be followed that elucidate all formal actions that will be taken against the perpetrator, such as warnings and dismissal procedures, must be thoroughly expounded upon.

Subtle organisational systems: Within organisations, ambiguous job designs are detrimental to the meaning an individual makes of various experiences (Fox & Cowan, 2015; Salin & Hoel, 2011). Investigations into aspects such as turnover ratings, high incidents of sick leave and absenteeism within an organisation, can indicate a subtle organisational system that infers the presence of bullying experienced within the organisational system. Therefore, in order to adequately to assess the organisational climate, competency assessments must be executed in order to assist organisations in identifying these subtle gaps and to introduce possible interventions (Olender-Russo, 2009b). As the underling supposition is that these factors are subtle, it must be acknowledged that no overt pointers can be conclusively identified, and therefore in order to overcome these aspects, communication must be strengthened, awareness training of HRPs and managers inculcated in all aspects of instruction and open and honest acknowledgement of the occurrence of workplace bulling must be recognised. Furthermore, thorough screenings of employees for possible aggressive signs before appointment will also be an effective, proactive solution to minimise the chances of negative behaviours.

Organisational communications: Improving organisational communication among employees is of prime importance, and therefore by promoting and implementing open-door policies (Bryant, Buttigieg, & Hanley, 2009; Cowan, 2011), constructive and interactions are achieved with positive interpersonal communicational exchange realised (Fredericksen & McCorkle, 2013; Lim & Bernstein; 2014). As also mentioned previously, to further enhance organisational

communicational aspects, anonymous complaint surveys or satisfaction surveys (Anon, 2008) are ideal for empowering employees and creating networks that can make role-players aware of problems and timeously circumvent serious difficulties.

Third-party involvement: Third-party involvement was also noted as an important handling technique. Third-party involvement allows for higher reporting rates and a more fair handling process as independent agencies are open to investigate any bullying experiences and provide external consultants who handle these experiences with an ombudsman monitoring complaints and unions supporting and representing members, with safety committees also having an input, resulting in a totally fair, equitable and just procedure (Keeling, Quigley, & Roberts, 2006; Stewart, 2010).

Direct and subtle destructive management

Handling direct and subtle destructive management styles for managers and supervisors, the handling practices identified are as follows: Leader accountability and pro-active interventions and developing leadership skills and interpersonal skills.

Leader accountability and pro-active interventions: Handling the identified interventions that were suggested for this theme highlighted the reality that managers must be held accountable for not taking adequate action when they are overtly aware of a bullying situation, witnessing individuals experiencing negative acts or if managers do not comply with company policies (Duffy, 2009; Ferris, 2009; D'Cruz & Noronha, 2011). Bystander accountability, suggested by D'Cruz and Noronha (2011), makes workplace bullying everyone's problem by encouraging managers and stakeholders to all be committed to preventing workplace bullying; in other words, management 'buy-ins' are essential (Gemzøe Mikkelsen, Hogh, & Puggard, 2011; Randle, Stevenson, & Greyling, 2007). During the literature review, proactive interventions were identified whereby managers were trained in all aspects regarding bullying, appropriate induction programmes and methods communicating zero tolerance for bullying at work (Bryant, Buttigieg, & Hanley, 2009; Cleary, Hunt, & Horsefall, 2010; Dillon, 2012; MacIntosh, 2006). Finally, the HRPs should be specifically trained in investigating bullying complaints and also in supporting individuals who experience bullying behaviours, as well as identifying handling practices (Harrington, Warren, & Rayner, 2015; Woodrow & Guest, 2014).

Developing leadership skills and interpersonal skills: The development of leadership skills for managers, supervisors and everyone in positions of authority is absolutely non-negotiable as these measures facilitate appropriate leadership styles, which then timeously circumvent bullying behaviours when they occur (Egues & Leinung, 2013; Johnson, 2011). Depending on the various managers' positions, further specialised training must be given in order to be efficient coaches or mentors as this will inevitably lead to more effective conflict management, greater satisfaction when resolving bullying situations and greater contentment of all parties when addressing bullying experiences (Olender-Russo, 2009a; Weinand, 2010). Specialised training that aims at pertinently addressing skills such as general conflict management, choosing appropriate management styles, emotion regulation ability, mediation and negation, among others, in order to cope in a conflict situation, is essential (American Nursing Association, 2015; D'Cruz & Noronha, 2011; Georgiou, 2007).

Another aspect that must be considered is training leaders regarding the effective handling of diversity and discrimination (Fox & Stallworth, 2009; MacIntosh, 2006; McCalla, 2015) and preparing them to initiate and facilitate conflict resolution among employees of organisations (Gillespie, Gates, & Fisher, 2015). To conclude, interpersonal skills development (emotional intelligence, effective communication and emotional regulation) is also absolutely vital when developing effective leaders and managers (Gillespie, Gates, & Fisher, 2015; Harrington, Warren, & Rayner, 2015; Johnson, 2011).

Direct and subtle destructive employee relations

The final category examined revealed two practices for handling these direct and subtle destructive employee relations: Bystander accountability and proactive interventions, as well as group relations and interpersonal skills development.

Bystander accountability and proactive interventions: Bystander accountability must be relevant for all organisational members, as witnessing of any bullying experiences is a serious offence, which should be reported. This approach to unacceptable behaviour makes everyone accountable and the actions become everyone's problem, not just the individual who is being victimised (D'Cruz & Noronha, 2011). Again, it must be emphasised that because these incidents are now becoming mandatory to report further training regarding reporting, documentation, and journal keeping of bullying experiences by all role players, can also be regarded as a proactive handling intervention for organisations.

Group relations and interpersonal skills development: In developing group and employee interpersonal skills, the tutoring of all role-players is essential regarding diversity management, tolerance and discriminatory practices (Fox & Stallworth, 2009; MacIntosh, 2006; McCalla, 2015). To achieve an acceptable level of interpersonal skills from the organisation's employees, everyone should continually be informed about the intricacies of group dynamics, appropriate ways in which to communicate, regular and fair (group and individual) appraisals and receive constant feedback (Cowan, 2011; Dillon, 2012; Fredericksen & McCorkle, 2013; MacIntosh, 2006; Pate & Beaumont, 2010; Stagg, 2010). Interpersonal skills are further developed by the organisation offering services such as employee assistance programmes, counselling for employees and their families as well as support or rewards for whistle-blowers (MacIntosh, 2006). Furthermore, organisations should establish high performance work teams by engaging in regular team-building activities and having team-based rewards systems (Cleary, Hunt, Walter, Robertson, 2009; Gillespie, Gates, & Fisher, 2015; Lachman, 2014; Olender-Russo, 2009b; Woodrow & Guest, 2014). This develops a collective database for shared knowledge and builds an organisation's capacity and sustainability (Duffy, 2009). Conducting of exit interviews gives valuable insight into reading the work environment and gauging employee satisfaction (D'Cruz & Noronha, 2011; Ferris, 2009; Georgiou, 2007); however, this may be too little too late, and therefore by increasing individual participation in decision-making and creating autonomous employees with job control (Van Heugten, 2010), many organisational problems will be minimised or even eradicated.

The general objective of this study was to develop a framework for the HRP to handle the experiences of workplace bullying. See Figure 8 for the framework. The framework (Figure 8) combined all three basic models identified in Chapter 2 and Chapter 3. The framework includes categories of experiences of workplace bullying, possible causes and the suggested handling practice.

		Bullying observational levels					
		Overt experiences/ causes			**Covert experiences/ causes**		
Behavioural levels of bullying	**Organisational climate**	**Overt climate of bullying:** • *Organisational-related adversities* • *Work overload* • *Destructive work practices* • *Micro-management*	**Overt climate causes of bullying:** • *Deliberate inadequacies of strategic human resource management* • *Deliberate inadequacies of organisational structure*	**Overt climate handling practices of bullying** *1.Handling deliberate inadequacies of strategic human resource management* • Educational sessions • Policy training and development *2. Handling deliberate inadequacies of organisational structure* • Organisational systems • Organisational procedures	**Covert climate of bullying:** • *Dysfunctional subtle adversities* • *Isolation* • *Destabilisation*	**Covert climate causes of bullying:** • *Subtle inadequacies of strategic human resource management* • *Subtle inadequacies of organisational structure*	**Covert climate handling practices of bullying** *1.Handling subtle inadequacies of strategic human resource management* • Tacit practices • Tacit procedures *2.Handling subtle inadequacies of organisational structure* • Subtle organisational systems • Organisational communication • Third party involvement
	Individual level	**Overt individual bullying:** • *Emotional adversities* • *Personal offenses* • *Physical offenses* • *Harassment* • *Discrimination*	**Overt individual causes of bullying:** • *Direct destructive management styles (manager or supervisor)* • *Direct destructive employee relations (colleagues and employees)*	**Overt individual handling practices bullying** *1.Handling direct destructive management styles (Managers/ Supervisors)* • Leader accountability • Proactive interventions *2.Handling direct destructive employee relations (Colleagues/ Employees)* • Bystander accountability • Proactive interventions	**Covert individual bullying:** • *Degradation* • *Body language* • *Psychological offenses* • *Exclusion*	**Covert individual causes of bullying:** • *Subtle destructive management styles (manager or supervisor)* • *Subtle destructive employee relations (colleagues and employees)*	**Covert individual handling practices of bullying** *1.Handling subtle destructive management styles (Manager or supervisor)* • Leadership skills • Interpersonal skills *2.Handling subtle destructive employee relations (Colleagues/ Employees)* • Group relations • Interpersonal skills

Figure 8: A framework for HRP for handling employees' experiences of workplace bullying

Limitations

In this study, as with all research, there were limitations and restrictions that influenced the entire study as a whole and also some of the results that were presented. Even though there were plenty of sources available dealing with the causes and experiences of workplace bullying, there was little basic information regarding the HRP's role in the handling of these situations. As this aspect was clearly evident, a major gap was noted and this study tried to bridge this area within the scope of the HRP. Unfortunately, most of the information was from other countries and could therefore not be generalised within a specific context. It is therefore suggested that findings within this study are further investigated and verified within the South African context. Furthermore, South Africa is a country where many important facets influence bullying and bullying behaviours, such as the history, social inequalities and socio-economic factors, to name just a few, and therefore to consider the phenomenon of bulling in all its diverse facets is just too large for this study, and therefore further investigation is recommended.

Recommendations

Recommendations for future research

Recommendations for future research are to do a more in-depth investigation of the literature regarding experiences, causes and handling practices for the past 20 years. This would elucidate a historical perspective of the topic, providing a useful background, which can be compared to present modern-day practices. In doing so, problems and trends can be highlighted, and this could ensure that one does not repeat any injustices. Furthermore, other elements can be considered, especially for the unique South African context, where culture and aspects of religious convictions play a great part in society, which directly and indirectly affect organisations. Future studies could specifically focus on identifying and elaborating on experiences, causes and handling practices of bullying behaviour with regard to racial groups, cultural diversities and socio-economic strata in a South African society.

Recommendations for practice

Organisations and HRP's should attempt to handle experiences of workplace bullying and consider this phenomenon from all aspects. It must be noted that cultural, religious and racial attributes play a major role and must be considered within the South African context.

Therefore, it is recommended that all organisations must, to some extent, implement a minimum level of training for all employees. This training must provide information, knowledge and facts regarding workplace bullying. All related matters must be addressed in workshops and training sessions, which must provide detailed information, strategies, reporting procedures and general support that are aimed at addressing these experiences. Furthermore, organisations should develop anti-bullying policies and monitor the governance and compliance thereof. Other practices, which supplement anti-bullying policies, such as dignity at work policy, evolve a culture of respect, emotional regulation training and counselling support and employee assistance programmes as well as encouraging union support, will sustain and promote a positive work climate. Therefore, empowering the HRP personnel to effectively manage and handle bullying experiences is the ultimate goal.

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