

# **Teachers' experiences of power relations as psychological violence**

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## DECLARATION

I hereby declare that *Teachers' experiences of power relations as psychological violence* is my own work. This dissertation is being submitted for the **MAGISTER EDUCATIONIS** degree and has not been submitted at any other academic institution. All consulted sources have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete reference.

**Alecia Human-van der Westhuizen**

## **DEDICATION**

This dissertation is dedicated to my husband, JC van der Westhuizen, and my daughter, Amalia, who offered me unconditional love and support throughout the course of my study. I also dedicate this study to the two people who not only formed the foundation and support network on which I built my life, but who are also two of the best friends and parents a child can ask for: Albertyn and Annlie Human.

## SUMMARY

The purpose of this study is to examine teachers' experiences of power relations as psychological violence and the impact it has on their health. This study, using a qualitative approach, thus investigates the association between power relations and the dimensions thereof and how it manifests as psychological violence. In turn, it may have detrimental effects on the health of the teacher and the whole teaching-learning process. Based on the findings, recommendations for this - and future research - are proposed.

Open-ended phenomenological interviews were used to collect the qualitative data. Eleven participants indicated their willingness to be individually interviewed for the study. The qualitative findings indicated that teachers experience power relations as psychological violence, it is experienced severely and emanates mostly from colleagues in management positions. The most prevalent and severe forms of power relations as psychological violence as experienced by teachers include being subjected to power abuse from principals; being subjected to autocratic management styles and management's power abuse through the abdication of responsibility. The most severe physical health consequences as experienced by teachers include feeling tired and experiencing physical ill health. It further emerged that the most severe psychological health consequences were experienced in the form of feelings of helplessness and feeling emotional or wanting to cry. Teachers' lack of work productivity and motivation were the most severe behavioural consequence because of the experience of power abuse as psychological violence. Teachers' personal and family relations and teachers withdrawing socially were the most evident social consequence due to negative experiences.

The findings from the study indicated that teachers experience power relations as psychological violence in various forms and that it is highly prevalent. The research results have shown that teachers identified many dimensions of power relations, such as management styles, the perception or experience of someone's power or "weak point", possessing no power or status, female teachers being treated in a subordinate manner and racial or cultural differences of others as a contributor to abuse power in relationships at school.

This study contributes towards the power relations and psychological violence literature in general and in particular, teachers' experiences in South Africa. In the light of the findings the study recommends that teacher support programmes should be put in place in order to address the experience of power relations as psychological violence. It further recommends

that teachers and students studying to become teachers should be provided with information about power relations as psychological violence to create awareness.

**Key words:** abuse; authority; health impact; intimidation; perceived power; power abuse; power imbalance; power; psychological violence; status; structural power; teachers; threats; victimization; workplace violence.

## OPSOMMING

Die doel van hierdie studie is om onderwysers se ervaringe van magsverhoudings as psigologiese geweld en die impak wat dit op hul gesondheid het, te ondersoek. Hierdie studie ondersoek dus die assosiasie tussen magsverhoudings en die dimensies daarvan en hoe dit manifesteer as psigologiese geweld, deur van 'n kwalitatiewe benadering gebruik te maak. Op sy beurt kan dit nadelige gevolge op die gesondheid van die onderwyser en die hele onderrig-leerproses hê. Aanbevelings vir hierdie en toekomstige navorsing word op grond van die bevindinge voorgestel.

Oop-fenomenologiese onderhoude is gebruik om die kwalitatiewe data in te samel. Elf deelnemers het hul bereidwilligheid aangedui om individueel aan onderhoude vir die studie deel te neem. Die kwalitatiewe bevindinge het aangedui dat onderwysers magsverhoudings as psigologiese geweld ervaar, dat dit as erg ervaar word en dat dit meestal afkomstig is van kollegas in bestuursposisies. Die mees algemene en ernstige vorme van magsverhoudings as psigologiese geweld soos deur onderwysers ervaar, sluit in: onderworpe aan magsmisbruik van skoolhoofde, blootstelling aan outokratiese bestuurstyle en bestuur se magsmisbruik deur die abdikasie van verantwoordelikhede. Die ernstigste fisiese gesondheidsgevolge soos ervaar deur onderwysers is om moeg te voel en die ervaring van fisiese swak gesondheid. Dit het verder na vore gekom dat die mees ernstige psigologiese gesondheidsgevolge is ervaar in die vorm van gevoelens van hulpeloosheid en om emosioneel te voel of te wil huil. Onderwysers se gebrek aan produktiwiteit en motivering was die ernstigste gedrags-gesondheidsgevolge as gevolg van die ervaring van magsmisbruik as psigologiese geweld. Onderwysers se persoonlike en gesinsverhoudings en onderwysers wat sosiaal onttrek was die opvallendste sosiale gesondheidsgevolge as gevolg van negatiewe ervarings.

Die bevindinge van die studie het aangedui dat onderwysers magsverhoudings as psigologiese geweld in verskeie vorme ervaar en dat dit baie algemeen voorkom. Die navorsingsresultate het getoon dat onderwysers baie dimensies van magsverhoudings geïdentifiseer het, soos bestuurstyle, die persepsie of ervaring van iemand se krag of "swak punt", die besit van geen krag of status, vroulike onderwysers wat op 'n ondergeskikte wyse behandel word, en rasse- of kulturele verskille van ander wat bydra tot die misbruik mag in verhoudings by die skool.

Hierdie studie dra by tot die magsverhoudings- en psigologiese geweld-literatuur in die algemeen en in die besonder onderwysers se ervarings in Suid-Afrika. In die lig van die bevindinge van die studie word daar aanbeveel dat onderwyser-ondersteuningsprogramme in plek gestel word ten einde die ervaring van magsverhoudings as psigologiese geweld te takel. Verder word daar ook aanbeveel dat onderwysers en onderwys-studente van inligting oor magsverhoudings as psigologiese geweld voorsien word om bewustheid daarvan te skep.

**Sleutelwoorde:** dreigemente; gesag ; gesondheidsimpak; intimidasie; krag; kragwanbalans; magsmisbruik; misbruik; onderwysers; psigologiese geweld; status; strukturele krag; viktimisasie; waargenome krag; werkplekgeweld.

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## CHAPTER 1

### 1 ORIENTATION TO THE RESEARCH STUDY

#### 1.1 ORIENTATION AND MOTIVATION

The principal concern of this study is to investigate power relations as psychological violence as experienced by teachers and the impact it has on their health. This is done with specific reference to the association of power relations, the dimensions thereof and how it manifests as psychological violence. If the manifestation of power relations is experienced as psychological violence, it may have detrimental effects on the health of the teacher and the whole teaching-learning process. Power relations and its dimensions, as well as its impact on health, are therefore studied to gain enriched understanding of the phenomenon psychological violence.

In this study, psychological violence is used as an umbrella term for a variety of behaviours which include, but is not limited to bullying, victimisation, workplace incivility, harassment, employee abuse, threats, workplace aggression, mobbing, intimidation and undermining.

Psychological violence may be described as:

“Unwanted conduct based on age, disability, HIV status, domestic circumstances, sex, sexual orientation, gender, race, colour, language, religion, political, trade union, or other opinion or belief, national or social origin, association with a minority, birth or other status that negatively affects the dignity of men and women at work. Repeated and overtime offensive behavior – verbal, non-verbal, visual, psychological or physical – through vindictive, cruel or malicious attempts to humiliate, marginalize or undermine an individual or groups of employees and includes, but is not limited to, psychological pressure, harassment, intimidation, threats, coercion, conspiracies, manipulation, extortion and hostile and unfair behaviour which could impact on the worth, dignity, emotional and physical well-being and health of the victim” (Di Martino, 2003:2; and Steinman (as quoted by the Work Trauma Foundation, 2010) and Kirsten, 2007:2).

From the description above, it is clear that many traits, characteristics or forms of status may serve as a basis for directing unwanted conduct and de facto offensive behaviour. This study will however only focus on the issues falling under the dimensions of power relations as basis for psychological violence between teachers. In this study, power relations is used as an umbrella term for a variety of behaviours which may be referred to and is sometimes used interchangeably, as the concept of power, power struggle, power abuse, abuse, power

dynamics, control, influence or authority of an influential person/group and the way in which people or groups behave toward each other.

Power is a core dimension of social interactions and relationships. Also social interactions and relationships are characterised by differences in power, dominance or status among social interacting partners (Schmid Mast, 2010). According to Vanderkerckhove and Commers (2002), authority is legitimate power. The ethically worrying aspect of mobbing is the nature of organisational power abuse. Downward workplace mobbing could also be defined as repeated hierarchical abuse of power. The abuse of power lies in the use of formal power status for organisationally nonrational behaviour (Vanderkerckhove & Commers, 2002). On the other hand, Branch, Ramsey and Barker (2007) state that power can also be derived from informal sources, such as contacts with influential people, the perception of an individual's standing in the organisation, and knowledge of the other person's vulnerabilities that could be exploited. Essentially, power and the abuse thereof seem to be an important component in the manifestation of workplace mobbing or psychological violence.

In an attempt to understand power relations we can argue that it forms a distinct part of human interaction. In other words power relations stem from the daily interactions and behaviours of people. More precisely, it could be the inadequate manifestations and transformations of power relations and the sophisticated abuse of power with regard to the right of power in the workplace which could lead to the experience of psychological violence.

According to Piccione and Razin (2009), power relations is indeed a fundamental component of human interaction. In social environments, two types of power shape a significant number of human relations: individual power and group power. Individual power manifests itself in one-on-one relations and generally originates from material, personality or psychological strength. Group power manifests itself in interactions between sets of individuals or in one-on-one interactions between individuals belonging to different sets.

One can argue that, in a South African context, power relations seem to play an important role, especially in die education profession, because it could manifest as a one-on-one power struggle between principals with different management styles, teachers with different personalities and dominance behaviour, colleagues with different levels of competence and parents and learners. It could also manifest in the form of group power when it comes to colleague cliques within schools, gender and race struggles within schools, schools with

different status levels, teachers and the education department, teachers unions, groups involved in labour disputes and organised strikes.

Vanderkerckhove and Commers (2002) explain that the current organisational context of organisations is determined by a globalisation process which could be characterised by increased competition from foreign industries, rapidly changing product markets, deregulation, flexible capitalism, in structural adjustments, efficiency gains, competitiveness and increased productivity. However, it is not the organisational problems that mob people, but people reacting inadequately to these shifts. One can argue that the manifestation of power relations as psychological violence in South African education can be partly contributed to the transformation of the education system over the past two decades and the way teachers reacted to these changes.

It can be also be argued that existing group power struggles in South Africa today may be ascribed to power struggles of interaction between individuals belonging to different groups. Steinman's research in the health sector pointed to the fact that minorities (irrespective of race) in workplace settings were more prone to be at the receiving end of workplace violence (Steinman, 2010). One can conclude that an important proposition to be derived from power abuse and power relations struggles is that it emerges from the human interaction and transformation of the post-apartheid education system.

Gender also seems to play an important role in power relations and power abuse, due to the socially constructed views of society with regard to gender. Research findings on gender and psychological violence seem to be inconclusive and inconsistent. Large-scale studies for the most part report fairly equal victimisation rates for men and women (Hoel & Cooper, 2000). However, studies in specific occupational groups, for example nurses, have shown different patterns, typically that members of the underrepresented gender have reported significantly higher rates of abuse and bullying. Closer examination of the relationship between power relations and gender reveals even more complex patterns, for example in terms of the position and gender of the bully (Eriksen & Einarsen, 2004).

The contradictory data and patterns between gender and psychological violence found in previous research indicates the need for further research on the relevance of gender in bullying to fully understand the concept of power relations as psychological violence. In a South African context, this could be significant due to the fact that the rate of female employees in the education profession is much higher than in other jobs. On the other hand, more men are employed in senior positions or as principals, giving them psychological

strength and power. This highlights the need of studying gender and how it plays a role as a dimension of power relations and psychological violence in a transformed education system. The consideration of power relations provides a specific take on studying psychological violence in the teaching profession. It describes how human interaction power relations and struggles, struggles between minorities and previously disadvantaged majorities and gender could give way to psychological violence.

“Health is defined by the World Health Organization (WHO), as a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being, and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity. Health is a dynamic condition resulting from a body’s constant adjustment and adaptation in response to stresses and changes in the environment for maintaining an inner equilibrium called homeostasis” (Business Dictionary, 2010). If power relations are shown to constitute psychological violence, the health of teachers may also suffer as a consequence. Research by Steinman (2010) suggests that the following stress-related psychological and physical health effects in victims of psychological violence include but is not limited to: anxiety (94%), sleeplessness (84%), obsession over the situation (76%), clinical depression (41%), self-destructive habits (35%), thoughts of violence to others (21%), suicidal thoughts (22%), panic attacks, heart palpitations and increased heart rate (48%), headaches and migraines (23%), chronic fatigue syndrome or connective tissue/joint pain (43%), irritable bowel (23%), weight swings (40%), chest pains (21%), exhaustion, taking to bed (45%), hypertension (16%) and stress related skin changes (28%).

One can extrapolate thus far that the relationship between the elements of power relations and power struggles may manifest as psychological violence, and impact on teachers’ health. These elements co-exist in the education profession in South Africa at all levels, and the argument to study and focus on these issues separately and as a whole will enable a deeper understanding of this phenomenon and, in turn, teachers and future research would benefit. The anticipation, therefore, is that this study may present findings that perceptions of power relations experienced as psychological violence could be associated with aspects such as the dimensions of power, and as a consequence may impact on health issues. To date, very little empirical research has been done in the education profession to examine the potential links between incidences of power relations, power abuse, psychological violence and the everyday experiences of members of different racial and gender groups in South Africa. The goal with this research is to create a broad description of power relations as psychological violence impacting on teachers’ health.

## 1.2 PROBLEM STATEMENT

The rapid transformation in South African education over the past two decades, 1994 to the present, knotted together a variety of societies, cultures, language groups, ethnic backgrounds, beliefs, attitudes, races and genders. I experience the transformation of the post-apartheid South African education system as very diverse and it often plays a part in creative and prolific work environments. I have however also experienced that it can contribute to conflict, aggression, power struggles, power abuse and dissimilarity which may give way to psychological violence.

Other factors such as continued reformation of the schooling system, learner outcome changes, temporary or part-time positions, increased workload, longer working hours, growing pressures for increased results, and strikes and union disputes also add to the escalated presence of the abuse of power to be experienced as psychological violence in the teaching profession in South Africa. It has also been my experience that employees who have a high teaching workload experience high levels of stress and tension. The significance of gender and race in the experience of the abuse of power as psychological violence by teachers' in South Africa needs to be examined, because the ratio of female teachers is much higher compared to male teachers. There have been reports in previous research that, when one gender or racial group is under-represented in the workplace, it plays a role in power abuse in the workplace.

Psychological violence often leads to greater and prolonged consequences, not only for those involved, but also negatively affects the learning and working environment as well as the opportunities for staff members' to achieve desired goals. Much of the evidence on psychological violence, power relations and dimensions thereof and the effects on health, draw on studies done internationally (Einarsen 2007; Fox & Stallworth 2004; Hutchinson & Eveline 2010) in various workplaces as well as students at school. Nevertheless, conceptual limitations of this research limit full understanding of this phenomenon as experienced by teachers in South Africa. It is therefore necessary to recognise these limitations, and to conduct similar research within the teaching profession in South Africa to enable enriched understanding of this phenomenon.

It is thus possible to argue that dimensions of power relations and the effects on health are closely related to psychological violence as experienced by teachers. As discussed previously, this is one of very few studies undertaken where the focus is on teachers' experiences of power relations as psychological violence, and not the students. My hope is

that this study will enable an enriched understanding, increase awareness, provoke further research, encourage possible designing of preventative and intervention strategies and ultimately promote dignity, equality and freedom for all teachers in South Africa.

### **1.3 RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

In an attempt to address the above problem statement, the anticipation is to find answers to the following research questions:

- What is the nature of power relations?
- What is the association between power relations as psychological violence?
- What is the experience of power relations as psychological violence among teachers?
- What is the influence of power relations as psychological violence on teachers' health?

### **1.4 AIMS OF THE STUDY**

#### **1.4.1 General Aim**

The general aim and focus of this study is to investigate the experience of power relations as psychological violence and the impact it has on the health of teachers.

#### **1.4.2 Specific Aims**

This study will focus on the following specific aims:

- Investigate through a literature study the nature of power relations.
- Investigate through a literature study the association between power relations and psychological violence.
- Conduct qualitative research to investigate teachers' experiences of power relations as psychological violence.
- Conduct qualitative research to investigate the influence of power relations as psychological violence on teachers' health.

## **1.5 A BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY**

The choice of research approach for this proposed study is qualitative in the form of a phenomenological approach. According to Creswell (2009: 13), phenomenological research is a strategy of inquiry in which the researcher identifies the essence of human experiences about a phenomenon as described by participants. Niewenhuis (2008: 59) agrees by saying these studies generally attempt to understand phenomena through the meanings that people assign to them. It is clear to see why I regarded a phenomenological study as the most appropriate approach to investigate the problem, not only because teachers' actual experiences of power relations as psychological violence will be studied, but also because it had been told by themselves.

The qualitative researcher asks questions to allow the participants to share views and he also wants to understand the setting of the participants through visiting this setting and gathering information personally. Ivankova, Creswell & Plano Clark (2008: 259) notes the researcher serves as an instrument of data collection and asks participants broad, open-ended questions to allow them to share their views about and experiences with the phenomenon. Creswell (2009:8) states that researchers also interpret what they find, an interpretation shaped by the researcher's own experiences and background. Therefore, the process of qualitative research is largely inductive, with the inquirer generating meaning from the data collected in the field (Creswell, 2009:9) In this study interactive "face to face" interviews were conducted to allow participants to share their views and experiences about the phenomenon. The researcher will then interpret and generate meaning from the information obtained from the interviews.

The sites for the research were public and/or private schools. No specific school has been selected for the research. The reason for this was that the researcher is planned to personally approach teachers that have been exposed to power abuse as psychological violence, and not necessarily schools.

Before a participant teacher was selected, the following criteria had to be considered for inclusion to this study: firstly, that the teacher were exposed or observed power relations or power abuse in any school context; secondly, that they were exposed or observed psychological violence at their school ; thirdly, that they could provide insight and information which will lead to a deeper understanding of teachers' experiences of power relations as

psychological violence; and lastly that they were aware that their participation was completely voluntary. Criteria about the school where he or she is employed that needed to be taken into consideration is that the school must have both male and female teachers. If the participant did not meet the criteria, he or she was not suited for the proposed study.

No preference were given to the type of school in terms of typical scholarly activities, infrastructure, history, tradition or social networking. The researcher comes from Somerset East in the Eastern Cape where she also worked as a teacher before relocating to Paarl where she currently resides. Therefore it was convenient for the researcher to conduct her research in the Eastern Cape as well as the Western Cape. Many teachers work in the Cape Winelands District town of Paarl in the Western Cape and the Cacadu District town of Somerset-East in the Eastern Cape, and the hope was to find a selected few willing participants who have experienced power abuse as psychological violence. I wrote an article to the two local newspapers, the Paarl Post and the Somerset Budget, explaining the phenomenon of power relations as psychological violence in my intended research. The anticipation was to find participants by inviting teachers who have experienced power relations as psychological violence to contact me telephonically or via e-mail. Once willing teachers had contacted me telephonically I explained the sensitive matter of the research and ask a few questions to see whether they adhere to the criteria for inclusion in the study. The research design and methodology is explained in more detail in Chapter 3.

## **1.6 PARADIGMATIC PERSPECTIVE**

A paradigm can be described as an intellectual perception or view, accepted by an individual or a society as a clear example, model, or pattern of how things work in the world (Business Dictionary, 2010). Researcher's paradigms mark out an agreed sense of seeing the world in terms of their perception, understanding and interpretation of it and their experiences or how it could be studied. These views are shared by a group of scientists, marked by a common conceptual language.

The researcher's intellectual perception or view influences the whole research process, planning, data collection, data analysis, execution and findings of the research. It is therefore necessary to provide a short profile of the researcher. In qualitative research the researcher is especially important, as she is the primary instrument that generates and analyses data.

The researcher is a graduated senior secondary teacher with an B.Ed. Hons degree from North West University. I have been trained in Learner Support, School Guidance and Educational Psychology. During three years of employment and as a student in the United Kingdom I had contact with teachers of many nationalities. Many of these teachers were exposed to continuous psychological violence and the abuse of power at their schools. They then ended up working as au pairs or nannies rather than teachers, because they wanted to escape from being exposed to the daily abuse of power at schools. During my employment in senior secondary education in South Africa, I also came into contact with teachers who face the daily pressures and challenges of power abuse and psychological violence. I experienced the transformation of the post-apartheid education system as a positive one that brings forth creative and diverse work environments. On the other hand, I also experienced that it contributes to conflict, aggression and dissimilarity, which give way to power abuse and psychological violence.

As a researcher my discernment of psychological violence in the education profession has been formed not only by my own experiences as a teacher, but also the experiences of other teachers. I became interested in teachers experiences of power abuse as psychological violence and the impact it has on their health.

Power abuse as psychological violence has numerous negative effects on many teachers in the education profession in South Africa, and the aim is to provide a broad description of this phenomenon. Once a teachers' experience of power relations as psychological violence has been identified and described, relevant conclusions and suggestions can be made. Relevant suggestions will make it easier to decide on measures to be taken to prevent power abuse and psychological violence and it will contribute to future studies.

## **1.7 THE CONTRIBUTION OF THE STUDY TO THE RESEARCH FOCUS AREA**

The study and the findings of the research will contribute to an enriched understanding of the experience of power relations as psychological violence in the education profession and the effect it has on health. I hope that this research will increase awareness, provoke further research, encourage the designing of preventative and intervention strategies and, ultimately, promote dignity, equality and freedom for staff members in die education profession.

The enriched understanding of this phenomenon will contribute towards improvement strategies for dignity, equality and freedom, which in turn will contribute to improved health of staff in the education profession. The hope is that this study will be a contribution to research that is devoted to develop sustainable education and teaching and learning environments in South Africa.

## 1.8 CONCEPT CLARIFICATION

The following terms are key concepts in this study:

- **Power**

Power is the ability to cause or prevent an action, make things happen; the discretion to act or not to act. Opposite of disability, it differs from a right in that it has no accompanying duties (Business Dictionary, 2010).

- **Relations**

The way in which two people or groups of people feel and behave towards each other. (Oxford Dictionary, 2003).

- **Race**

A definition for race according to the Merriam-Webster Dictionary (2012) is a class or kind of people unified by shared interests, habits, or characteristics.

- **Racism**

Any action, practice, or belief that reflects the racial worldview—the ideology that humans are divided into separate and exclusive biological entities called “races,” that there is a causal link between inherited physical traits and traits of personality, intellect, morality, and other cultural behavioral features, and that some “races” are innately superior to others.. (Merriam-Webster Dictionary, 2012).

- **Gender**

Gender refers to the socially constructed roles, behaviours, activities, and attributes that a given society considers appropriate for men and women. To put it another way: "Male" and "female" are sex categories, while "masculine" and "feminine" are gender categories.

Aspects of sex will not vary substantially between different human societies, while aspects of gender may vary greatly (World Health Organization, 2010).

- **Gender Expression**

How one chooses to dress, walk, talk and accessorize to express one's gender identity (Meyer, 2009).

- **Gender Nonconformity**

When a person's gender expression varies from that which is traditionally expected for a person of that sex; for example, when a male shown an interest in dance or fashion, or when a female enjoys rough and aggressive sports and activities (Meyer, 2009).

- **Minority**

The smaller in number of two groups constituting a whole; a part of a population differing from others in some characteristics and often subjected to differential treatment (Merriam-Webster Dictionary, 2011).

- **Status**

A position in relation to others (Merriam-Webster Dictionary, 2011).

## **1.9 DIVISION OF CHAPTERS**

Chapter One: Orientation to the research study

Chapter Two: The nature of power relations as psychological violence

Chapter Three: Research design and method

Chapter Four: Data analysis and literature control

Chapter Five: Summary, findings, limitations and recommendations

Bibliography

## **1.10 SUMMARY**

Chapter 1 has given an orientation to the research study. It includes a motivation for the study, a problem statement, the identification of research questions, the aims of the research, a brief discussion on the research design and methodology, the researcher's

paradigmatic perspective, the possible contribution of the study to the research focus area, the clarification of important concepts and the division of chapters.

Chapter 2 will discuss the nature of power relations as psychological violence.

## CHAPTER 2

### 2 THE NATURE OF POWER RELATIONS AS PSYCHOLOGICAL VIOLENCE

#### 2.1 INTRODUCTION

Nearly 18 years ago when apartheid was abolished in South Africa the society built on minority privilege and majority disempowerment and oppression came to an end. Among other things the South African society became aware of significant inequalities, workplace violence and discrimination. Today, the South African people still denote their feelings about continued abuse of power, power relations, psychological violence and other forms of inequalities in the workplace. The International Labour Organisation (2012a) articulates that discrimination in employment takes on many forms, and occurs in all kinds of work settings. It entails treating people differently because of characteristics such as race, colour or sex, which results in and reinforces inequalities. Skills and competencies cannot be developed, rewards to work are denied and a sense of humiliation, frustration and powerlessness takes over (International Labour Organisation, 2012b). One could extrapolate that perhaps today such inequalities and abuse of power takes place in a more covert and modern way, but the impact of these experiences on the individual might be the same.

The two sectors of the economy in which workers are most likely to be bullied are the health and education sectors – i.e the public sector. He (Coleman, 2007) also states that bullying really is an act of domination or humiliation committed by someone who has power against someone who has little or none power (Coleman, 2007). According to the SAOU (Suid Afrikaanse Onderwysersunie, 2011), it is not only the learners at school and their parents who harm teachers in some or other way, but it also comes from colleagues in the workplace. They have found that the general discipline of learners deteriorates on a regular basis as the feeding area of a school changes and more people with diverse outlooks on life are involved in schools. At the same time the parents as well as the staff of the school contribute to changes; this then brings about new forms of stress and conflict for teachers. Similarly, Chamberlin (2010) revealed that U.S. teachers are not just underappreciated; more than one-quarter are threatened on the job by their students, 27% said they had been verbally threatened by a student in the past year, 37% had been the target of obscene or sexual remarks from students, 31% said a student had made an obscene gesture to them or groped them, 19% said they had been intimidated by a student and 13% by a student's parent. Parents and staff with diverse views on life as well as the deterioration of learner discipline

could affect inequalities and consequently the abuse of power within schools in South Africa. These issues could be central to workplace diversity issues, such as who is hired; who is given responsibilities, who makes the important decisions, who gets access to valuable resources, who is the bully, who is being bullied and who gets rewarded the most for their contribution on what basis. Coleman (2007) refers to the relationship between the employer and the employee as “monopsony power”. It means, at the very least in the short term, that an employee is stuck with an employer. Although one cannot always grasp how individuals or groups within the workplace get along and respond to one another, one has to consider power abuse and power relations within the workplace to understand the occurrence of psychological violence.

In Chapter 2 the focus is on a range of dimensions falling under the umbrella of experiences of power relations as psychological violence. The chapter begins with an attempt to form a concept of power relations from existing literature. The chapter explores the dyadic relationship between power relations and psychological violence. It is associated with different types of interpersonal behaviours possibly acting as enabling structures or triggering circumstances for psychological violence. Thereafter, gender and race are discussed as dimensions of power relations. Power relations as psychological violence are described as it occurs in the workplace, which in turn could enable a deeper understanding of the dimensions of this phenomenon. The chapter concludes with the negative consequences on the health of an individual experiencing power relations as psychological violence.

## **2.2 THE POWER RELATIONS – PSYCHOLOGICAL VIOLENCE DYAD**

The power relations – psychological violence dyad refers to the way in which these behaviours can be regarded as a pair. Power is a core dimension of social interactions and relationships (Schmid Mast, 2010). Power is broadly defined as the ability to exert influence over others and (Hershcovis & Barling, 2010). They also suggest that power is readily and accurately perceived by group members, and serves as a prioritisation device in dyadic interaction, giving priority to the emotions, goals, and actions of high-power individuals in shaping interdependent action. Individuals are more likely to attend to the actions of their more powerful counterparts because those in positions of power can influence their outcomes. Supervisors’ legitimate positions allow them to control important organisational resources, including pay allocation, promotions, and work assignment (Hershcovis & Barling, 2009). In turn, subordinates expect supervisors, as formal agents of the organisation, to treat

them in a respectful manner. It is also suggested that relatively powerless individuals have an increased sensitivity to threat or punishment. Similarly Hodson, Roscigno and Lopez (2006:409) found that minority workforces and workers in low-end service jobs also routinely experience bullying at the hand of supervisors.

According to Lasswell (2009:10), the power relation is a give-and-take situation; to give a more dynamic twist to the word, it is giving-and-taking. It is cue-giving and cue-taking in a continuing spiral of interaction. The flow of activity between two or more interacting persons is guided by the presentation of cues at the focus of attention of the participants. Many situations are so highly specialised that the cue-giving function is concentrated in one person. Also the conductor is a continuing source of cues at the focus of the orchestra's attention. Although cue-giving is highly concentrated in the conductor, commanding officer or foreman, the function is not wholly monopolised by any one of them. In many human relationships it is obvious that the giving and receiving of cues is not concentrated in the hands of one participant (Lasswell, 2009:10). In addition, Steinman (in *The People Bottomline*, 2012) defines psychological violence as the intentional use of power, including threat of physical force, against another person or group, that can result in harm to family life, livelihood, physical, mental, spiritual, moral or social development.

Bullying, as a form of psychological violence, constitutes the misuse of power or position that undermines a person's ability, or leaves them feeling angry, powerless, frightened, hurt or depressed. The features of bullying behaviour can take on many different forms, such as sadistic or aggressive behaviour over time, humiliating or ridiculing, criticism in public that is designed to humiliate rather than educate, exclusion from meetings, persistent, unwanted, unneeded criticism in private, treating colleagues (definitely including trainees) as children and not adults (WI, 2009). Similarly, Meyer (2011:245) found that participants experience their relationship with managers as a "school teacher-pupil" or a "parent-child" relationship, the manager as the "teacher or parent" and participants as the "pupils or children". In some instances managers even refer to staff members as "children" that needs correcting. Add to that the undermining of staff by replacing their area of responsibility unreasonably or without justification, withholding information to deliberately affect a colleague's performance, constantly changing work deadlines or work guidelines (WI, 2009).

From the above-mentioned explanations it becomes apparent that power relations and psychological violence may often be two behaviours of the same kind. Seven types of interpersonal behaviours and social perceptions in a hierarchy that contributes to the

interpersonal power relations and exist within an organisation are described, in turn it could lead to behaviour of psychological violence (Schmid Mast, 2010).

### **2.2.1 Actual Power**

Schmid Mast (2010) describes actual power as trait and state power aspects that a person possesses, and subsumes status, position power, and personality dominance. Trait is defined as a characteristic and state is defined as the condition that someone or something is in (Oxford Dictionary, 2003:652 & 598). Position power of the target affects how powerful he or she is perceived as being. According to Schmid Mast (2010), actual power of the perceiver affects to what degree he or she perceives the social interaction partner as powerful. Research conducted by De Vos (2010:65) also revealed that educational managers view their managerial position as an image they have to protect because it gives them a sense of power. They protect this image by engaging with targeted educators aggressively and they use these violent methods to demonstrate their power to other staff members and simultaneously emphasise that their authority should not be questioned or underestimated (De Vos, 2010:65). Similarly, Matsela (2009:210) found that participants felt that they were being undermined and coerced at work. It also emerged from the experiences of participants as well as the words they used to describe their experiences, for example “very authoritarian”, “autocratic”, and “Hitler regime”, that participants are being controlled by means of autocratic management styles (Meyer, 2011:261). On the other hand, educational managers may protect their image with violent behaviour because of envy. De Vos (2010:68) also posits that educational managers are often envious because of their lack of characteristics that educators portray. They dislike educators with high creativity, popularity, confidence and professional achievement, to name a few. This type of envy or jealousy can contribute to workplace violence (De Vos, 2010:68).

Lewis and Orford (2005) found that a lack of support signifies a decrease in a target's resources and ability to defend themselves, it increases the targets vulnerability to and shifts the imbalance of power further towards the bully (denial, personalising problems, maintaining) thus increasing the perceived threat posed by bullying. De Vos (2010:78) agrees by saying interviewees experienced a lack of support from the educational system in general. Bullies continuously target educators who have no support and fail to defend themselves by any means possible. This lack of support thus contributes to workplace violence. An example of actual power is an educational manager who influences his

colleagues. He is well-spoken and has a reputation of being powerful at his school, these are a few distinguishing features of his personal nature.

### **2.2.2 Structural Power**

The word structural refers to the way in which something is constructed or organised, or something's supporting framework or essential parts (Oxford Dictionary, 2003:609). According to Schmid Mast (2010), structural power and position power are used interchangeably and describe the power an individual possesses because he or she holds a certain function (e.g. a CEO), to which a predetermined specific level of power together with role expectations is attached. Formal hierarchies are pre-existing vertical structures that are "filled" with people and provide each individual with a certain amount of structural power. The CEO is the top position in a company's hierarchy and the holder of this position is equipped with extensive power e.g., to downsize departments or to restructure the company (Schmid Mast, 2010). Keashly (2007) agrees by saying the higher the rank of the perpetrator, the more formal organisational power the perpetrator has to follow through threats and this leaves targets with reduced resources to control it.

Salin (2003) states that the importance of power structures and power imbalances in organisations can partly explain the large number of victims being bullied by supervisors (Salin, 2003). Lopez, Hodson and Roscigno (2009) also suggest that workplace harassment emerges out of the hierarchical power relations and struggles for power in the workplace. Power can be formal or informal, formal power is based on one's hierarchical position in an organisation, for example a superior who persecutes subordinates (Rayner & Keashly, 2005).

According to Schmid Mast (2010), relationships in the workplace, in the larger society, and even within the family, are hierarchically structured. Hierarchies can be very pronounced, such as in the military, while others are quite flat. The workplace is an arena suffused by power relations; how these power relations play out has important consequences for personal dignity and organisational livelihood. Einarsen, Hoel, Zapf and Cooper (2011:15) state that the imbalance of power often mirrors the formal power structure of the organisational context in which the bullying scenario unfolds. They also state that this would be the case when someone is on the receiving end of negative acts from a person in a superior position in the organisational hierarchy. The study of power relations has often placed emphasis on the imbalance of power and differences among individuals and groups within organisations.

Organisational relationships are almost inevitably hierarchical and characterised by inequalities in relative power and status. Hierarchical authority is a unique form of power whose effects permeate the systems of organisations and translate directly into observable differences in how persons in high versus low status positions are treated. Salin (2003) shares the thought in stating that in organisations where there are strong power an imbalance there appears to exist a particular form of institutionalised bullying.

It is also plausible that hierarchical status may affect an employee's vulnerability to co-workers' aggressive actions (Aquino, 2000). This argument is based on the notion that employees are least likely to harm a high status co-worker for two reasons. First, the latter will be perceived as having high retribution potential; second, he or she will be perceived as being more deserving of positive deferential treatment. Aquino (2000) expresses that because organisations are often arenas in which highly aggressive behaviours are rewarded, those who rely on these behaviours may tend to gain greater influence and power. Consequently, others may be wary of retaliating against them, even if they behave provocatively. In contrast, employees who typically rely on obliging or avoiding styles are less likely to acquire power and would therefore be perceived as easy targets for exploitation or mistreatment.

### **2.2.3 Status**

Status can be defined as a person's position or rank in relation to others or high rank or prestige (Oxford Dictionary, 2003:599). Schmid Mast (2010) refer to status as the power that an individual possesses because of her or his social group membership, given that different social groups often hold different amounts of social power. Role expectations are linked to individuals of different groups. Role expectations is defined as the belief of a person's function (Oxford Dictionary, 2003:213). Low-status service work can thus become fertile ground for abusive personal conduct, especially at a time when there are strong pressure on middle managers, for example, to cut labor costs (Hodson, Roscigno & Lopez 2006:386).

According to Lopez et al (2009), powerlessness and low relative status are core determinants of victimisation and general assaults on one's dignity at work. On the other hand research conducted by Fast, Halevy and Galinsky (2011) revealed that the combination of high-power and low-status led to more demeaning tendencies than any other combination of power and status. They have suggested that low-status individuals are more motivated than high-status individuals to demean others, and that power frees them to do so. It is possible

that low-status individuals are motivated to demean others in order to meet their need to view the world as a balanced and just place. Perhaps showering low-status powerholders with flattery and/or respect assuages negative feelings about their low-status roles and leads them to treat others positively. This possibility offers insight into why people tiptoe around low-status powerholders: they want to avoid being demeaned and obstructed. Opportunities of advancement might also eliminate demeaning tendencies; if the individual has the opportunity to advance, he or she might treat others well in the pursuit of such advancement (Fast et al, 2011).

DiTomaso, Post and Parks-Yancy (2007) suggested that power makes it possible to develop status distinctions and, status confers honor that provides greater access to opportunity and resources. Similarly, majorities often can create institutions that work in their favor, which contributes to their accumulation of resources and ultimately to status honor. In organisations, power and status are often aligned, but those with high status, for example, in terms of reputation or expertise, are not always those with the greatest access to resources (DiTomaso et al 2007). In addition Einarsen et al (2011:314) point out that group members who take a position not held by the majority – as do whistleblowers who voice their concern – are more influential if they appear credible, confident, competent, and objective. If you speak out collectively or if it is a natural part of your job to take action when irregularities occur, it is less likely that your personal outcome of the whistleblowing is retaliation or workplace bullying.

Einarsen et al (2011:314) state that the link between the whistleblower and retaliation hinges on social power. A whistleblower's attempts to influence or terminate the wrongdoing may be seen as a power struggle in which the dominant coalition may either accept, or alternatively, refuse this initiative by bringing the wrongdoing to an end, or may balance the power struggle by retaliating against the whistleblower. Powerful whistleblowers, especially those with expert or informal power are more protected against reprisals than those lacking such bases of power.

According to the resource dependency orientation, organisation members are powerful when the organisation depends on them for their resources, or potential contributions (Namie, 2009). Therefore, some whistleblowers may be relatively powerful and to some extent protected against retaliation and subsequent workplace bullying. This may be the case if the organisation depends on those individuals who blew the whistle and if the organisation does not depend on continuation of the wrongdoing or on the wrongdoer. The (Still) Bullying with impunity Labour Day Survey 2009 (Namie 2009) revealed that bullies are not losing their

jobs, but as always targets are the ones banished from employment. The principal findings were as follow: 1.6% of incidents bullies lost their jobs for any reason; by contrast 31.3% of bullied individuals lost their jobs by layoff, termination or by quitting; and additional 12.3% were off work due to psychological injury; 43.5% of targets lost their jobs for no reason of their own making; doing nothing to the bully 54% (ensuring impunity) was the most common employer tactic and 37% was the most common consequence of retaliation for the bullied targets (Namie, 2009).

High status employees generally have more control over valued outcomes like pay, promotion opportunities, social recognition, and access to support networks than low status employees (Aquino, 2000). On the other hand as discussed by Aquino (2000) employees in low status positions may often be perceived by others as being less deserving of fair treatment, making them more vulnerable to others' aggressive actions. An example in the education sector may be junior teachers' who are new to the profession who often have relatively low status in the eyes of colleagues, learners and parents, are exposed to power abuse because of their status.

#### **2.2.4 Personality Dominance**

Personality is described as a person's distinctive character (Oxford Dictionary, 2003:451). Dominance refers to most important or powerful (Oxford Dictionary, 2003:180). Schmid Mast (2010) says that personality dominance is understood as an individual difference in the extent to which a person has the desire to influence or control others. Even when there is a structural hierarchy in place, people differ in how dominantly they behave in their respective power positions, and this might depend on their personality dominance, among other factors. According to Schmid Mast (2010), obtaining information that a certain individual is dominant in terms of his or her personality might affect how powerful he or she is perceived.

#### **2.2.5 Dominance Behaviour**

Schmid Mast (2010) states that dominance behaviour is behaviour that is used with the goal to gain or maintain control or influence over another. It should be noted that any behaviour can be in the service of trying to influence others, even helping someone when the intent is to influence or control someone else. Receiving help creates a dependency of the person receiving the help (e.g. the person is obligated to thank the helper, to be grateful to the helper, or to reciprocate the help) and a power difference thus emerges. Also, if the helper uses helping behaviour with the goal of creating this dependency, it would be considered

dominance behaviour (Schmid Mast, 2010). Nevertheless, there are a number of behaviours that are typically and frequently used to manifest or enhance one's power and these are often labeled as dominance behaviours: for example, speaking a lot, speaking in a loud voice, close and interpersonal distance. An example of dominance behaviour is a principal who feels inferior and uses dominance behaviour and abuses his power to control his colleagues (Schmid Mast, 2010).

The perception of each other's power is not only crucial for hierarchy formation, but also for maintaining or renegotiating individual hierarchy positions. Also detecting that one interaction partner shows increased dominance behaviour might challenge the other's power position and result in a power struggle (Schmid Mast, 2010). In a power struggle, both interaction partners show increased dominance behaviour and only when one gives in to signal that he or she accepts the lower rank, is a hierarchy again established (Schmid Mast, 2010).

De Vos (2010:73) agrees by saying It seems that colleagues use verbal abuse to demonstrate power over their victim. Verbal abuse may also be used to psychologically hurt the targeted educator. In addition, De Vos (2010:69) found that educational managers mostly use rage or temper tantrums to humiliate staff members. This type of rage is used to demonstrate power and to induce fear among onlookers. Educational managers tend to use rage, temper tantrums and humiliation in the presence of witnesses to emphasise that they should be feared. Once more, humiliation can be used to demonstrate power or authority. Educational managers therefore ensure that targeted educators are in an inferior position (De Vos; 2010:69).

### **2.2.6 Perceived Power**

Perceived power is the impression an observer or interaction partner gains of a target's power. The Oxford Dictionary's definition for perceived is to regard in a particular way (Oxford Dictionary, 2003:448). Perceived power can stem from the knowledge of each other's position, it could be power (e.g., one is the boss of the other) and/or status (e.g., one is a pilot and the other one is an office clerk). It can also stem from information a person receives about the interaction partner's personality dominance level (e.g., he/she is quite a dominant person) or his or her expertise. It is also based on each other's observable behaviour within the workplace, especially when there is no formal hierarchy in place (Schmid Mast, 2010).

According to Lewis and Orford (2005), the occurrence of bullying may present risks for everyone within an organisation, bullies who are perceived as powerful implicitly threaten others who might speak out. Even in stable employment environments, some workers have more power than others. Although power for some may provide at least a limited protective shield, it leaves those with less power all the more vulnerable to bullying (Hodson et al, 2006:386).

In this environment, top management bullies middle management to implement aggressive cost cutting and middle management passes on the abuse to frontline workers. Job insecurity may also create a “shortened shadow of the future” under which people feel less constrained to act civilly because of reduced expectation of having a relationship in the future (Hodson, Roscigno & Lopez, 2006:386). The research of Blasé & Blasé (2008:276) agrees by saying job insecurity in particular is a common and important form of powerlessness in the workplace and should be strongly associated with increased bullying. Those with less power will be more likely victims of bullying. Hodson, Roscigno and Lopez (2006: 386) suggests that the most commonly cited cause for increased bullying is the increasingly insecure job environment associated with powerlessness and low status, brought about by the corporate restructuring and outsourcing. Such insecurity, it is suggested, diminishes worker power and creates a pressure-cooker environment in which civility is replaced by bullying as supervisors and managers seek to intimidate and blame employees for their mutually held fears about the future security of their jobs.

Power and powerlessness are not static attributes of individuals or groups of individuals. The workplace is an arena sufficed with power relations; how these power relations play out has important consequences for material livelihood and personal dignity (Hodson, Roscigno & Lopez 2006:385). Teachers who have experienced psychological violence that came from principals also experienced strong feelings of powerlessness (Blasé & Blasé, 2008:276).

According to Einarsen et al (2011:54), another manifestation of power that is much more concrete is the focus on the identification of the relative power differential between the actor and the target within the organisational and social contexts as a potential vulnerability or as a protective factor. Also, as mentioned before, the proposition is that those in low-power positions (subordinates, entry-level employees, and women) are more vulnerable to being the target of hostile behaviours than those in higher power positions (supervisors, bosses, men). Conversely, those in high-power positions are hypothesised as more likely to be the instigators of hostile workplace behaviours (Einarsen et al, 2011:54). Therefore one could deduct that the value of high-power position, access to resources and influence could give

way to potential abuse of power and the use of psychological violence. Einarsen et al (2011:15) agree by stating that the person bullying is often a person in a position of power, like a manager, supervisor, foreman, superintendent, executive or director. In a similar line of thought Schmid Mast (2010) says that power is an inherently relational concept that manifests in an interaction or relationship with another person. A high-power person can only be high power if there is at least one other person who is low power.

De Vos' research indicates that even learners make use of the impression they have of a target educators' power. Learners make use of verbal abuse against educators and can be based on perceived physical or psychological vulnerabilities of the targeted educator. The power they may hold over the educator, may come from their knowledge of the educator's vulnerabilities. Their swearing and ridicule boost their popularity among peers (De Vos, 2010:75).

### **2.2.7 Experienced Power**

According to Schmid Mast (2010), experienced power describes the extent to which a person feels powerful in a given situation with a given interaction partner for a given task or type of interaction. Experienced is defined as practical involvement in an activity, event and knowledge or skill gained through this (Oxford Dictionary, 2003:214).

Competence refers to a person's potential contributions to the social interaction, and encompasses skills, abilities, or knowledge relevant for the social interaction at hand, which can be solving a task, taking a decision or discussing a subject, among others (Schmid Mast, 2010). According to Schmid Mast (2010), competence of the interaction partners affects the perception of this interaction partner's power. It is thus postulated that the information aspect of the interaction affects the perception of this person's power. Competence can function as a proxy for actual power in the eyes of the perceiver. Lewis and Orford's (2005) study revealed that through bullying, individuals could wield power in quasi-legitimate forms against other individuals, for example targeting unpopular employees who remained isolated and unprotected.

Branch et al (2007) say that problems arise when either party within this interdependent relationship in the workplace denies or hinders the other in achieving their goals. For example, a staff member can acquire power when they withdraw an item valued by a manager (such as information or expertise) as a way of impeding a manager from achieving their managerial goals. Moreover, the power of a staff member is particularly significant

when their knowledge, skills and expertise are difficult to replace. In addition educators also reasoned that they were bullied because of their prominent positions in the educational sector. Victims are often more highly qualified than their bullies and this will automatically place them in a position of authority (DeVos, 2010:63). According to Branch et al (2007), a manager's dependency on their staff provides staff with a form of power that they could potentially abuse. Therefore, just as a manager can abuse the dependency of staff, so too can staff abuse the dependency managers have on them with regard to producing and fulfilling the goals of the organisation.

A performance expectation describes the anticipation of each group member's capacity to make a meaningful contribution towards solving a task Schmid Mast (2010). Performance expectations can stem from so called specific (e.g., expertise) or diffuse (i.e., gender, age) status cues and, because they are shared by all group members, they become self-fulfilling prophecies. To illustrate, when a man (opposed to a women) is expected to perform particularly well on a given task (i.e., high performance expectation), the group will provide more opportunities for him to contribute, his contributions will be valued more, and he will finally gain more influence in the group, thus have more status and power (Schmid Mast, 2010).

De Vos' (2010:76) research points out that educators often feel powerless when it comes to interaction with certain learners. Educators are often threatened or intimidated by learners'- especially boys'- physical stature. Bullies' power over their victims, stem from physical size or strength. Learners may sense educators' fearfulness of their physical characteristics (De Vos, 2010:76). This gives them even greater control and power. Learners are aware that their physical characteristics trigger fear within their victims, which gives them more power to be physically aggressive to educators. They perpetrate physical violence, which includes hitting or shoving educators, as well as throwing objects at them (De Vos; 2010:76).

### **2.3 THE CONCEPTUALISATION OF POWER RELATIONS AS PSYCHOLOGICAL VIOLENCE**

Conceptualisation refers to the formation of an abstract idea such as power relations and psychological violence (Oxford Dictionary, 2003:120). Benesch (1999) articulates that it is not possible to understand psychological violence without taking the concept of power into consideration. Up to now power has received little efficient attention in literature on

psychological violence. Einarsen et al (2011:54) agrees by expounding that the conceptualisation of power rarely appears in definitions of the constructs related to hostile workplace behaviours, but that it does have a place in the theoretical discussions of why some people behave in these ways.

### **2.3.1 Power is the central issue**

According to Foucault, in Benesch (1999) power is “always already there”; one can never be outside its domain. In other words power exists in and can spread through every part of a workplace. It is multiple and pervasive, not “localised in the State apparatus”. Power, for Foucault, in Benesch (1999), is the central issue for contemporary life, provoking such questions as who makes decisions for me, who is preventing me from doing this and telling me to do that. How are these decisions on which my life is completely articulated taken (Benesch, 1999).

### **2.3.2 Power differences during interaction**

Interaction refers to the way in which something or someone have an effect on each other (Oxford Dictionary, 2003:327). Schmid Mast (2010) articulates that in many of our daily interactions, if power differences are not pre-established between interaction partners; then, a hierarchy forms. Even if a hierarchy exists, the low-power individual might challenge the powerful individual’s position, in which case the latter will most likely not conform to the behavioural expectations linked to a low-power position (Schmid Mast, 2010).

On the other hand managers’ bullying behaviour confirms their constant need to be powerful and in control of their victims. They may have a lack of social competency and therefore use bullying to gain social control (Poilpot-Rocaboy, 2006). According to Hazler, Carney and Granger (2006:298), bullies view their image as the way to power and use aggressive actions to protect this image. As a result they may demonstrate predatory bullying: they abuse their power over a vulnerable person who has done nothing to give grounds for the aggression (Randall, 2001:9).

Some educational managers, who bully educators, are known to selectively spot victims and purposefully engage in serial bullying (Cartwright & Cooper, 2007:285). According to De Vos (2010:59), educational managers are unable to accept criticism from others and they seem to be easily offended when educators criticise or question their decision making, working methods or way of thinking. As a result, they use violent methods to gain back their sense of

autonomy and authority (De Vos, 2010:59). It is important to recognise that the imbalance of power between the parties is a central feature in many definitions of bullying. Formal power differences are a possible source of imbalance in power; in contrast to for example “petty tyranny” bullying is not limited to vertical aggression from supervisors towards subordinates.

Power imbalances can also be the consequence of other individual, situational or societal characteristics, the required power differences can also rise among peers. A power imbalance between the perpetrator and the victim results in power games where perpetrators use their power over their victims in order to undermine them for their own ends (Kirsten & Matsela, 2007:6). According to Salin (2003), perceived power imbalance is a prerequisite for bullying to occur, since without it the person towards whom the aggression is directed could withstand the direct or indirect attacks and retaliate, thus preventing the bullying from beginning. Cowie, Naylor, Rivers, Smith and Pereira (2002) agrees by saying some imbalance of power is usually thought to characterise bullying. In addition, it should be noted that power imbalances may also evolve over time and that the bullying process itself may give rise to further increasing power imbalances (Salin, 2003).

### **2.3.3 Power relations are interpersonal**

Lasswell (2009:10) speaks of power and powerful as an ellipsis, leaving out what is perhaps the longest arc of the circle constituting a power relation. Interpersonal is defined as being, relating to, or involving relations between persons (Merriam-Webster Dictionary, 2011). Power is an interpersonal situation; those who hold power are empowered. They depend upon and continue only so long as there is a continuing stream of empowering responses. He states that even a casual inspection of human relations will convince any competent observer that power is not a brick that can be lugged from place to place, but a process that vanishes when the supporting responses cease.

In a similar line of thought Meyer (2011:208) articulates that the more experienced staff members experience psychological violence more often and more severe than staff members with less experience. Also, as these staff members are more experienced, employers may expect or demand more from them, without providing them with the recognition for their input or expertise, thereby adding to their experienced perception of unfairness. De Vos (2010:60) found that the confidence educators have to perform well in their profession threaten colleagues and educational managers, which can contribute to workplace violence.

According to Einarsen et al (2011:15), an employee will in most cases be more dependent on his or her supervisor than vice versa. A single individual will be more dependent on the work group than the other way around. Thus, Einarsen et al (2011:15), note that at times the perceptions of targets may be more dependent on the actual instigator of a negative act than the act itself. Meyer (2011:218) found that academic staff members experience psychological violence more often than both management and administrative staff members.

Salin (2003) on the other hand points out that in some cases even subordinates, especially if acting in a group, may muster enough power to bully a supervisor. Einarsen, Hoel, Zapf & Cooper (2011:15) agrees by saying in other cases, a group of colleagues may bully a single individual, who for obvious reasons finds it difficult to defend him- or herself against this overwhelming group of opponents. De Vos (2010:77) found that while educational managers mostly bully educators by themselves, colleagues form gangs to bully targeted educators. Peers may join the group out of fear that they will also be victimised. Support from other group members creates a sense of power over the victim. De Vos (2010:77) also states that learners make use of mobbing or the forming of gangs to bully educators. Mobbing is prevalent when bullying behaviour is perpetrated by a group, rather than an individual person. She also states that learners' violence upon educators is thus motivated by social influences. Bullies in a group support and sustain each others' behaviour. Mobbing also makes it more difficult to identify the instigator. Consequently this contributes to workplace violence. Accordingly, Hoel and Cooper (2000) emphasise that the source of power isn't always a superior position, but may be informal based on knowledge and experience as well as access to support from influential persons. Lasswell (2009:28) also agree by saying power may also be based on social position (respect). In many cases uprightness (a reputation for rectitude) is a basis for power (Laswell, 2009:29). To understand the dynamics of power relations in the workplace, one must understand power relationships power among individuals and groups at various levels within an organisation.

Power and powerlessness are fundamentally relational in nature, defined by ongoing, if subtle and assumed, rights and relationships (Hodson et al, 2006). Recent literature on power demonstrated that power does not only weigh on individuals as a force that says no; it traverses and produces things; it induces pleasure, forms knowledge and produces discourse. It needs to be considered as a productive network which runs through the whole social body (Marginson, 1997) In most cases, recent literature share an approach to power relations and highlights the determining significance of hierarchies, individual power, group power and that power emerges in interactions and in turn it affects social interactions within the workplace.

### **2.3.4 Vulnerability or protective factors for targets**

According to Einarsen et al (2011:54), power has not explicitly been a key aspect of definition of hostile workplace behaviour, but power is embedded in the actor motive as well as the vulnerability or protective factors for targets. Supportive of the notion of power as control, almost 60% of the targets responding to a Web-based survey of workplace bullying indicated that they were being bullied because they refused to be subservient (Namie, 2000). Salin (2003) concurs by saying bullying has been seen as involving a power imbalance where the target is subjected to negative behaviour on such a scale that he or she feels inferiority in defending him- or herself in the actual situation. Einarsen (1999) states that a victim who is constantly teased, badgered and insulted, perceives that he or she has little recourse to retaliate.

Even in stable employment environments some workers have more power than others. Although power for some may provide at least a limited protective shield, it leaves those with less power all the more vulnerable to bullying (Hodson et al 2006). Einarsen (1999) maintains that knowledge of someone's "weak point" may become a source of power in a conflict situation. Also, bullies typically exploit the perceived inadequacies of the victim's personality or work performance, which in itself indicates the victim's powerlessness. Meyer (2011:249) adds that individuals find it problematic that management does not distribute work or workload equally amongst staff members and causes some staff members to have an excessive workload whilst others do nothing.

However, Einarsen et al (2011:15) indicate that in a conflict situation one may argue that some individuals may initially feel that they are as strong as their opponent, but they gradually come to realise that their first impressions were wrong or that their own or their opponents' moves have placed them in a weaker position. Therefore from the point of view of targets a power deficit emerges. According to Einarsen et al (2011:16), an equal balance of power in a harsh conflict is considered hypothetical, since the balance of power in such situations is unlikely to remain stable for a period of time. Hence, bullying may result from the exploitation of power by an individual or by a group, as well as from taking advantage of a power deficit on the part of the target.

## 2.4 GENDER DIMENSIONS OF POWER RELATIONS

A brief overview of gender, as well as a few associated terms is provided, to assist in the formation of a general view of what is known in literature. A dimension is defined as an aspect or feature of something (Oxford Dictionary, 2003:168). In this sense it may be regarded as a starting point for the argument that gender is associated with power relations due to socially constructed views and beliefs of gender.

Gender is mostly socially constructed, in other words, it is constructed in and through society by means of different views of people and their roles within society. Gender is therefore constructed by a wide range of social forces and dynamics, including children's relations with peers and adults, the media, schooling, relationships, sociocultural norms, and the workings of organisations and governments.

Research findings on gender and bullying seem to be inconclusive (Hoel & Cooper, 2000). Large scale studies for the most part reports fairly equal victimisation rates for men and women (Hoel & Cooper, 2000). However, studies in specific occupational groups, for example nurses, have showed different patterns, typically that members of the underrepresented gender have reported significantly higher rates of bullying. Closer examination of the relationship between bullying and gender reveals even more complex patterns, for example in terms of the position and gender of the bully (Eriksen & Einarsen, 2004). The ILO (2012b) argues that women are usually in a disadvantages position in the workplace compared to men, therefore the promotion of gender equality implies explicit attention to women's needs and perspectives.

Gender-role spillover suggest that men harass women because they are accustomed to dealing with women in a subordinate role in the domestic and social spheres, and this behaviour carries over into the workplace. Therefore, the subordinate feminine role defined originally and principally in the home, carries over into the workplace and creates scripts for both men and women about how they should interact – scripts that allow or even facilitate sexual harassment and gender harassment. Salin (2003) agrees by saying that power differences are associated with traditional gender roles and minority status may also affect bullying behaviour, as it can be assumed that women and minorities are perceived to have less power and status. At the same time, there are also significant negative effects of unequal power relations and expectations on men and boys due to stereotyping about what it means to be a male. Instead, both women and men, boys and girls, should be free to

develop their abilities and make choices – without limitations set by rigid gender role and prejudices – based on personal interests and capacities (ILO, 2012b).

According to Lopez et al (2006), forms of general and sexual harassment emerge in settings characterised by physically demanding work and minority work groups. In such contexts, both general and sexual harassment enforce formal and informal status hierarchies and social exclusion. Lopez et al (2006) suggest that sex ratios heavily skewed in either direction can produce greater sexual harassment because gender becomes more visible in such settings. Where the female population is high, femininity of the population becomes highlighted leading to a greater potential for harassment. In heavily male occupational settings female entrants may be visible and harassed because of the potential threat they bring to male jobs and occupational identities.

According to Einarsen et al (2011:253), gender harassment is the type of sexual harassment that occurs most often and is most likely to occur in isolation of others. Gender harassment is not sexual behaviour, per se, in that its aim does not seem to be to gain sexual access to the target. Rather, it may be better construed as sexist behaviour or behaviour that is intended to put down or offend those targeted. They provide the example of women who are perceived as gender role deviants are often punished through gender harassment (Einarsen et al, 2011:253).

Individual differences in sexism may contribute to male propensities for gender harassment. Manipulated situational factors, such as having one's sense of masculinity threatened by being outperformed by a woman on a masculine task and being exposed to a film depicting the sexist treatment of women, also contributed to men's propensities to exhibit sexist verbal behaviours in these studies. Sexism is defined as prejudice or discrimination based on sex; especially : discrimination against women (Merriam-Webster Dictionary, 2011). In a similar vein to this to Meyer (2011:84) articulates that gender nonconformity refers to a person's gender expression when it varies from that which is traditionally and culturally expected for a person of that sex; for example when a male shows an interest in dance or fashion, or when a female enjoys rough and aggressive sports and activities. Meyer (2011:84) states that gendered harassment is any unwanted behaviour that polices and reinforces the traditional notions of heterosexual masculinity and heterosexual femininity and includes (hetero) sexual harassment, homophobic harassment, and harassment for gender nonconformity.

According to Flynn (2007), gay and lesbian teachers are fearful of "coming out", revealing their gender identity or sexual orientation, for fear that they would be discriminated against in

schools. Teachers should be evaluated on the basis of their teaching only, not with regard to their sexual orientation. He also referred to the Section 27 of the Equality Act which could allow schools to discriminate against gay and lesbian teachers in order to protect their ethos (Flynn, 2007). Many teachers were fearful that this could be invoked by school boards. Butera and Levine (2009:42) agrees by saying as far as social identity is concerned, the notion of gender reflects the socially learned components of masculinity and femininity rather than the aspects derived from biological sex. In this retrospective, men and women are conceived as individuals who, in the process of socialisation, have been “acculturated” to adopt gender organising principles of instrumentality and relatedness, socially constructed, respectively, as masculine and feminine (Butera and Levine, 2009:42).

Following this point of view, gender functions as an actual culture that offers gender lenses through the internalisation of which biological males and females are progressively transformed into masculine and feminine adults who evaluate and enact behaviours and attitudes in different ways according to their perceived gender appropriateness (Butera and Levine, (2009:42). In addition, Einarsen et al (2011:15) enunciate that one set of risk factors involves the nature of the job, specifically the “gender context”, or the numbers of men and women who interact at work.

Traditionally masculine jobs or jobs where women are “gender pioneers” (i.e., among the first women in that job) pose a higher risk for sexual harassment for women. Women working in male-dominated organisations experienced more frequent harassment than those working in female-dominated organisations. More specifically, women with relatively masculine personalities working in contexts dominated by men experienced the highest levels of harassment (Einarsen et al, 2011:15). According to the Merriam-Webster Dictionary (2012) masculine can be defined as having the qualities distinctive of or appropriate to a male and personality as the complex of characteristics that distinguishes an individual; especially : the totality of an individual's behavioral and emotional characteristics.

According to the World Health Organization (2010), women and men differ in terms of biological make-up, power, status, norms and roles in society. WHO Member States and international agreements stress that these differences must be acknowledged analysed and addressed through gender analysis and actions. Without due attention to gender equality, healthy services, programs, laws and policies will have limited effects. Women and men will not achieve their full health potential over the life-course. Gender equality is considered a critical element in achieving decent work for all women and men, in order to effect social and institutional change that leads to sustainable development with equity and growth.

Gender equality refers to equal rights, responsibilities and opportunities that all persons should enjoy, regardless of whether one is born male or female (ILO, 2012b). The ILO (2012b) states that in the context of the world of work, equality between women and men includes the following elements: equality of opportunity and treatment in employment; equal remuneration for work of equal value; equal access to safe and healthy working environments and to social security; equality in association and collective bargaining; equality in obtaining meaningful career development a balance between work and home life that is fair to both women and men and equal participation in decision-making at all levels (ILO, 2012b).

Einarsen et al (2011:254) confirm that men who admitted to having engaged in gender harassment were also likely to see the organisational climates where they worked as supporting such behaviour. Thus, the tendency to admit gender harassment was related to perceptions that there were few company sanctions for such behaviour and that the workplace was highly sexualised. Therefore sexually harassing behaviours are more likely in organisational environments that tolerate or condone such behaviour. While some individuals seem more likely to commit these behaviours than others, even those with proclivities for sexually harassing behaviour seem reluctant to harass when local social norms discourage such behaviour Einarsen et al (2011:254).

Some person factors, such as gender identification (i.e. the degree to which men's self-concepts were identified with the social category of male) not only produced "main effects" in the predicting sexually harassing behaviour but also interacted with the situational factors, such as threat legitimacy (i.e., whether a woman describe herself as traditional or nontraditional) such that those men who more strongly self-identified as male were even more likely to harass when the woman identified herself as nontraditional (Einarsen et al 2011:254). Previous studies of workplace bullying have compared bullying among men and women. While gender issues in workplace bullying have received limited consideration, this contrasts with the extensive research literature focusing on sexual harassment (Hoel and Cooper, 2000). There is evidence that the frequency, forms and effects of workplace bullying differ between men and women.

According to Einarsen et al (2011:249), in many organisational and cultural settings gender harassment is the most common form of sexual harassment, followed by unwanted sexual attention, and then by sexual coercion. In comparing this to a legal analysis of sexual harassment, sexual coercion often constitutes quid pro quo sexual harassment, whereas unwanted sexual attention and gender harassment constitute what is termed hostile

environment sexual harassment. Sometimes unwanted sexual attention may be argued to constitute a form of quid pro quo sexual harassment if toleration of such behaviour becomes a term or condition of employment (Einarsen et al, 2011:249). Experiences of sexually harassing behaviour are potentially sources of stress for workers. Such negative behaviours undermine the physical and mental health of workers and reduce their productivity (Einarsen et al, 2011:254).

Melbourne psychologist Evelyn Field states that women bully just as much as men do, but because more bullies are managers and more managers are male, more bullying is done by men. But you can certainly get a lot of bullying from women and sometimes they behave more aggressively than males (Field, 2004). According to Field (2004) working women are expected to be aggressive and masculine, because they are worried to be perceived too emotional or passive, and can be more aggressive and demanding than any man. Professional women are often hardest on their own sex (Field, 2004). De Vos (2010:29) acknowledges that educators' gender contributes to their vulnerability to experience workplace violence.

Although men are also on the receiving end of workplace violence, research studies indicate that women are more frequently harassed (De Vos, 2010:29). Males seem to experience that they are discriminated against because of the application of transformation, while female interviewees perceive a gender hierarchy in their workplace (De Vos, 2010:29). Similarly, according to the 2010 Workplace Bullying Institute, there are more female targets of bullying than men and there are more male perpetrators than female. Men are targeted more frequently by men than women. Meyer (2011:9) acknowledges gender as an important force in shaping behaviours and informs how we interact with each other and understand ourselves.

According to Schmid Mast (2010), information about a person's status (e.g. seeing the interaction partner is a woman) affects how powerful the person is perceived. Men and women are not only associated differently with power, men are also associated with being more hierarchical and women with being more egalitarian (Schmid Mast, 2010).

The contradictory data and patterns between gender and psychological violence indicates the need for further research on the relevance of gender in psychological violence to fully understand the concept of power relations. In a South African context this will be significant due to the fact that socially constructed views on gender may vary substantially and that the rate of female employees in the education profession is much higher than in other jobs. On

the other hand, more men are employed in senior positions or as principals, giving them psychological strength and power. This highlights the need of studying gender and how it plays a role in power relations and psychological violence in a transformed education system.

## **2.5 RACE DIMENSIONS OF POWER RELATIONS**

When apartheid was practiced prior to 1994 black people were considered inferior to whites. According to Rodrik (2006), the transformation that South Africa has undergone since its democratic transition in 1994 is nothing short of remarkable. Prior to 1994, the South African economy and politics were dominated by the white minority, and even though the Apartheid regime had begun to unravel in the 1980s, the majority of blacks remained deprived of basic political and economic freedoms (Rodrik, 2006). On the other hand cries of reverse racism or anti-white racism and –bias where white minorities are the subject of racism and effected by affirmative action are also made. Organisations undergoing radical changes such as the application of affirmative action in the workplace can create a bullying culture. Interviewees indicated that educational managers whom are appointed based on affirmative action, do not nessecarily have the essential skills to be in management positions. Educational managers may take on the role of the bully because of their feelings of inadequacy and lack of competence to perform in a managerial position. Educators thus provoke their educational managers by frequently referring to their perceived incompetence (De Vos, 2010;79).

According to F.W de Klerk (2010, 2), a former South African president, South African whites are now the victims of racial discrimination (Scholtz, 2010).. He also states that apartheid is back and that whites are the victims of unfair racial discrimination. Too many blacks occupy positions that they are not qualified for, and even the ANC admits that huge mistakes are made (Scholtz, 2010). One can argue that an important proposition to be derived from race and power struggles is that it emerges from human interaction and the transformation of the post-apartheid system.

One can infer that existing power struggles in South Africa today may be ascribed to power struggles of interaction between individuals belonging to different races and groups. According to De Vos (2010:59), educators' race is identified as a high-risk personal characteristic that place them at risk to be victimised in the workplace. The application of transformation in the workplace can create a diverse employee group. Teachers indicated that they are victimised for being the 'minority' race in the workplace. Thus, they are bullied

for being the only black person in a white group, or vice versa. In a sense, victimised educators have become 'paranoid' because they attribute workplace violence only to the application of transformation in the workplace (De Vos, 2010:59). She also states that an underlying reason for workplace violence may be that colleagues from different races often misunderstand each other's working methods and way of thinking. This causes conflict in the workplace: one party may feel offended or threatened because of the other parties' different working methods and way of thinking. Consequently, this contributes to workplace violence (De Vos, 2010:59). The research findings of Hodson, Roscigno and Lopez (2006:386) support this argument by saying race and ethnicity are visible markers of potential vulnerability and provide a case for psychological violence.

Steinman's research in the health sector pointed to the fact that minorities in workplace settings were more prone to be at the receiving end of workplace violence in respect of minorities, and particularly racial discrimination (Steinman, 2007). She states that the South African government implemented measures that would ensure that previously disadvantaged individuals would have access to the resources of the country in a bid to empower its majority black population (Steinman, 2007). In this case it is called "fair discrimination (Steinman, 2007).

Steinman (2007) also suggests that what is needed is a delicate balance between the rights of minorities and the rights and aspirations of a previously disadvantaged majority and a constant monitoring of the situation in the case of South Africa to prevent this well-intended legislation from becoming oppressive (Steinman, 2007). Similar to the work of Steinman, Kohut (2008:30) posits that four out of five minority employees will encounter workplace bullying. What is more, employees in a particularly exposed and visible situation, for example minorities, are more likely to become victims of bullying (Salin, 2003). Similarly, Hodson et al (2006:386) found that minority workforces may also be more vulnerable to workplace harassment. To the extent that minority workers are less powerful than majority workers, they make especially vulnerable targets for general harassment. The problem is not only that bullying of minority workers may be motivated by racism, but also that workplace bullies may find minority workers easy targets. Workplace bullies often attempt to socially isolate and ostracise their victims. This may be easier in the case of minority workers, because these workers already face a certain degree of social isolation from majority groups (Hodson et al (2006:386).

Research (De Vos, 2010:62) also indicates that educators who differ culturally from learners, colleagues and educational managers are bullied in the workplace. South Africa's

diverse ethnic cultures may increase misunderstandings and conflict situations in the workplace. Teachers recognised the significant difference between various cultures' working methods in their work contexts (De Vos, 2010:62). She also states that white teachers indicated that they are more rigid in their profession and stresses their need for the school system to be more structured or disciplined. Black teachers indicated that they are more flexible in their profession without any strict schedule or teaching method. Both parties agreed that this issue leads to conflict and initially contributed to workplace violence. It is clear that educators' unawareness of the different cultural norms, can contribute to their vulnerability to experience workplace violence (De Vos, 2010:62).

## **2.6 THE CONSEQUENCES OF POWER RELATIONS AS PSYCHOLOGICAL VIOLENCE**

Long ignored, denied or considered to be a harsh reality which just has to be accepted as part of life, it is only recently that violence at work has started to receive the attention that it deserves as a serious safety and health hazard which has a high cost for victims and enterprise performance alike (ILO, 2012c). According to Teacher Support Network (2010), teachers and lecturers are subject to pressures such as low public self-esteem, increasingly difficult students and parents, lack of control over the job, internal politics, a blame culture and excessive working time and workload. These factors can cause stress. Stress undermines the ability to get things done and can affect physical and mental health. In addition to these factors, Kohut (2008: 30) states that the scope of workplace bullying is so wide that it has significant hidden costs to the overall work force. Kohut (2008) lists reduced productivity, leading to reduced organisational profits, destabilisation of the national economy, higher absenteeism and stress-related health problem and increased health insurance costs, low morale among workers, leading to lack of motivation to produce, high employee turnover rates, increased training cost for "replacement employees and heightened potential for workplace violence" (Kohut, 2008: 30).

### **2.6.1 Physical Consequences**

According to the Teacher Support Network (2008), reports from their Support Line suggest that levels of stress in the education sector are well above the average for industry and society in general. The Teacher Support Network (2008) lists the following physical symptoms as a result of stress caused by psychological violence. Sleep is disturbed and

less restful; complaints of general aches and pains last longer and can develop into tense muscles and a general lethargy; headaches and migraines become more frequent; one becomes more susceptible to colds and flu and in the long-term one may be at greater risk of heart attacks and stroke (Teacher Support Network, 2008). Teachers indicated that they experienced chronic stress reactions after exposure to severe and repeated workplace bullying. They showed signs of mild to serious burnout, after experiencing high blood pressure and skin rashes. Teachers are often hospitalised because of chronic physical reactions to stress (De Vos 2010;80).

91% of teachers in Australia stated that their physical health suffered because of being bullied, in an electronic survey of more than 800 teachers. Duffy and Sperry (2007) list physical consequences as reduced immunity to disease, and increased likelihood of heart disease and stroke is also associated with long-term stress such as is experienced in workplace mobbing. The argument is supported by the research findings of Meyer (2012:223), who found that physical symptoms of teachers became worse with the onset of psychological violence: 23% experienced a worsening of stress headaches; 21% reported feeling chronically fatigued or tired got worse; 19% reported that disrupted sleep worsened; 14% reported that migraines worsened; 14% reported that body aches in muscles and joints worsened, while 14% reported that exhaustion, leading to an inability to function, worsened. Significant weight changes ranked fifth and was reported by 12% of the respondents. She also reported alarming respondents regarding the worsening of life-threatening physical health conditions: high blood pressure/hypertension as experienced by 9%; heart problems (e.g. heart arrhythmia, heart racing, heart attack) as experienced by 8%; sharp chest pain after activity/exercise as experienced by 8%; asthma or allergies as experienced by 8%; chest pain as experienced by 7% (Meyer, 2011:224).

Meyer (2011:225) also lists new physical health symptoms that became evident due to psychological violence: namely feeling chronically fatigued or tired, as reported by 19% of respondents; disrupted sleep, as reported by 18% of respondents; stress headaches, as reported by 16% of respondents; exhaustion, leading to an inability to function, as reported by 14% of respondents, and sharp chest pain after activity or exercise, as reported by 13% of respondents. She also adds a list of new physical health symptoms that are considered to be life-threatening: sharp chest pain after activity/exercise, as experienced by 13% of respondents; chest pain, as experienced by 12% of respondents; heart problems (e.g. heart arrhythmia, heart racing, heart attack), as experienced by 10% of respondents; asthma or allergies, as experienced by 9% of respondents; high blood pressure/hypertension, as experienced by 8% of respondents (Meyer, 2011:225).

## 2.6.2 Psychological consequences

According to the Teacher Support Network a registered charity ([www.teachersupport.info](http://www.teachersupport.info)), a psychological consequence of power relations as psychological violence includes but is not limited to the following: a person finding himself often irritable and withdrawn, finding it harder to maintain concentration and becoming increasingly forgetful, anxious and depressed. Research by De Vos (2010:81) revealed that educators are severely traumatised after continuous experiences of workplace violence. Victimised educators show signs of Posttraumatic Stress Disorder and severe depression, and, as a result, they often make use of counseling services, have regular visits to their general practitioners, but also need to have psychiatric care and prescriptions for antidepressants. Victimised educators' physical health is affected in such way that they need prescribed medication for various medical conditions. The use of medication can have a significant impact on educators' work performance (De Vos, 2010:81). Educators also experience feelings of helplessness while being continuously bullied in the workplace. They are vulnerable and feel that they do not have the power or the resources to protect themselves. Consequently, they are susceptible to repeated victimisation (De Vos, 2010:81). Staff members also cry as a result of negative experiences (Meyer, 2011:573). Educators' helplessness is usually accompanied by depression (De Vos 2010:82). De Vos (2010:82) found that teachers indicate that they frequently re-experience traumatic incidences.

According to Duffy and Sperry (2007), in many ways, feeling dead, wanting to be dead, feeling invisible, and abandoned are accurate descriptions of the psychological and interpersonal injuries suffered by victims of workplace mobbing. As argued by Salin (2003), the effects of stress can be partly explained by the fact that stress increases job dissatisfaction and lowers aggression thresholds for the concerned individuals, and partly by the fact that it does not allow for time-consuming conflict solving. According to Duffy and Sperry (2007), mobbing victims commonly become so preoccupied with what has happened to them that they cease to be able to function effectively, causing derivative injuries of job loss and financial loss. They also say that these victims may experience profound feelings of self-doubt, shame, and humiliation, leading to increased self-imposed isolation from their natural web of social contacts.

Meyer (2011:222) agrees by stating psychological symptoms that became worse with the onset of psychological violence include: 29% experienced that anxiety, stress and excessive worry became worse; 19% reported a worsening of depression; 17% experienced a worsening of loss of concentration; 15% reported a worsening of obsession over details at

work; 14% reported that feelings of panic worsened; 14% reported a worsening regarding feelings of edginess, irritability, being easily startled and constantly on guard. Meyer's (2011:222) research also indicate new psychological health symptoms with the onset of psychological violence: loss of concentration and feeling edgy, irritable, easily startled and constantly on guard as experienced equally by 18% of respondents; 17% of respondents experienced feelings of panic; 16% of respondents felt depressed; 16% of respondents thought about being violent towards others and 15% of respondents experienced anxiety, stress and excessive worry. Also note that suicidal thoughts, which is a very serious symptom, were experienced by 9% of respondents as a new symptom as a result of psychological violence.

### **2.6.3 Behavioral Consequences**

Behavioural symptoms may include increased consumption of stimulants such as alcohol and nicotine, frequently changing eating habits, becoming less reliable, less punctual, more often absent from work or more accident prone, and personal relations can often become strained for no apparent reason (Duffy & Sperry, 2007). Participants also described that they dread going to work as a result of negative experiences (Meyer, 2011:611). Duffy and Sperry (2007) describe the workplace as a place with its own web of social connections and contacts, where mobbing victims tend to become ostracised and isolated. They also say that colleagues and workmates who stood by and watched the mobbing occur tend to shy away from the victim as if somehow there is guilt by association, even if they previously had cordial relations with the victim. One colleague of a mobbing victim described the reactions of others as similar to the not uncommon reactions of friends and family of someone who is dying: they begin to withdraw and move away from the person, as if the person is already dead (Duffy & Sperry, 2007).

What emerged from De Vos' (2010:83) research is that in some cases, victimised educators project their anger and hostility physically toward another party. Another behavioural symptom includes educators' social isolation or withdrawal and it is usually accompanied by depression. These educators withdraw themselves socially, which has a significant impact on their social life and profession (De Vos, 2010:82). Educators may isolate themselves out of fear that they will be victimised by another party. Otherwise, they doubt that others will be supportive and understanding of their situation (De Vos, 2010:83). Participants also revealed that they experienced personality changes, acting contrary to their own personality and becoming a "changed" person as a result of negative experiences (Meyer, 2011:572). Similarly, Duffy and Sperry (2007) add that if the mobbing experience is left untreated it can

take over the identity of the victim and rob the victim of a sense of self and rob the family of the multidimensional person they knew and cared for. If the victim is forced out of a job, the resulting loss of income causes financial stresses and the ensuing strain of shame and humiliation of not being the provider he or she once was.

#### **2.6.4 Social Consequences**

Another consequence of psychological violence is the way in which family members of the victim is affected. Duffy and Sperry (2007) reported that, depending on the circumstances of a mobbing victim's expulsion from the workplace, questions about re-employment ability may surface, affecting the entire family in a profound way. The victim's shame and humiliation may then come to encompass other members of the family. Marriages in which one spouse was a mobbing victim will be affected at every level of the relationship. Communication, intimacy and sex, work, demonstration of affection, parenting, and household management are all likely to be affected (Duffy & Sperry, 2007).

Lewis & Orford (2005) agree by describing the "ripple effect" as how workplace bullying impacts on some relationships outside of the workplace, with negative, long-term and distressing effects for participants and others. They also explain that the ripple effect also increased participants' vulnerability through reducing availability, accessibility and the range of support available. In the "ripple effect" the stresses of workplace bullying interacted with other stresses in participants' relationships, particularly at home, to both increase stress and diminish potential sources of support (Lewis & Orford, 2005).

The study of Duffy and Sperry (2007) seeks to illuminate that workplace mobbing extracts a huge price and that it is paid by the victim and the family. For intervention to be successful it must include the victim, the family, and the organisation. The health injuries caused by workplace mobbing are catastrophic and leave their mark for a long time. According to Duffy and Sperry (2007), there are changes in communication patterns with family members: changes in affect, increased irritability, and negativity are inevitably going to strain even the best of relations. The victim's preoccupation with the mobbing experience is likely to result in both obsessive preoccupation and a general lack of communication or in a need to constantly talk about the mobbing as if it were the only aspect of the victim's life (Duffy & Sperry, 2007).

In a similar line of thought, the research study by De Vos (2010:84) revealed that educators experience a deterioration of social and family relations after their experience of workplace

violence. The result may be divorce, as well as a further decline in social relations and work performance. The research also states that the experience of workplace violence has an effect on educators' work productivity. Teachers indicated that they have less passion for the teaching profession after their experience of workplace violence. Eventually, these educators pursue the teaching profession merely for financial income (De Vos, 2010:84).

The study of Lewis and Orford (2005) have shown that personal relationships were perceived as at best surviving, and even relationships which participants had experienced as strong and supportive were unable to work well as bullying continued. Significant others who were affected by bullying were generally powerless in the workplace and had difficulty enabling participants to challenge bullying, especially given participants difficulty in being heard. Families and especially partners struggled to meet high or increasing demands for support, especially since workplace problems remained unresolved (Lewis & Orford, 2005). In effect perceived support declined for participants, particularly perceived belief in them, which led to conflict within relationships. According to Lewis and Orford (2005), one female teacher in their study even said her husband perceived her as having some responsibility for allowing bullying to continue, especially since she had not followed his advice to confront the bully. Over time some teachers stopped disclosing workplace issues within close relationships.

## **2.7 SUMMARY**

This chapter provided a comprehensive discussion about power relations and dimensions of power relations contributing to workplace psychological violence and has been arranged into categories: gender and race. The consideration of power relations and all its dimensions provide a specific take on studying psychological violence in the teaching profession. It supports formulations of power relations as psychological violence as an evolving and complex social process. The chapter thus emphasises the importance of human interaction, human relations and struggles, abuse in relationships, struggles between minorities and previously disadvantaged majorities, gender and race, and how it could give way to psychological violence and in turn the detrimental effects on health as a consequence.

Chapter 3 will discuss the research design and method that was used in the study.

## **CHAPTER 3**

### **3 RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHOD**

#### **3.1 INTRODUCTION**

The previous chapter's literature review illuminates how power relations, the abuse of power and all its dimensions can be associated with psychological violence, as well as the detrimental effects on teachers' health.

The research design and method in this chapter have been used to collect information from participants who had experienced power relations as psychological violence. A detailed description of the qualitative approach that was used will be presented. The aim is thus to describe the methods that were utilised to collect and analyse data in this study. It also explains validity, reliability, limitations and ethical considerations.

#### **3.2 RESEARCH DESIGN**

The research design for this study is a phenomenological research design. Mouton (2008: 55) explains that a research design is a plan or blueprint of how you intend conducting the research. He states that the research design focuses on the logic of the research: what kind of evidence is required to address the research question adequately (Mouton 2008: 56). In a similar vein to Mouton, Nieuwenhuis (2008:70) states that a research design is a plan or strategy which moves from underlying philosophical assumptions to specifying the selection of participants, the data collection techniques to be used and the data analysis to be done.

According to Creswell (2009:4), qualitative research is a means of exploring and understanding the meaning individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem. Nieuwenhuis (2008: 50) posits that qualitative research attempts to collect rich descriptive data in respect of a particular phenomenon or context with the intention of developing an understanding of what is being observed or studied. It therefore focuses on how individuals and groups view and understand the world and construct meaning out of their experiences.

Qualitative research is thus concerned with understanding the processes and the social and cultural contexts which underlie various behavioural patterns. The emphasis is on the quality

and depth of information and not on the scope or breadth of the information provided (Nieuwenhuis 2008: 51).

### 3.2.1 Motivation for the use of a qualitative research design

The rationale for using the qualitative research design is the complementary nature of this design and its relevance to answer the questions in this study. As a researcher I wanted to see through the eyes of the participants, and to understand and describe the phenomenon as it naturally occurs in each participant's context. The reason for this is to develop understanding of the meaning conveyed by the participants.

Qualitative research incorporates several different methodologies namely (Creswell 2009: 181):

- *qualitative observations* are those in which the researcher takes *field notes* on the behaviour and activities of individuals at the research site. In these field notes the researcher records, in an unstructured way, activities at the research site. Qualitative observers may also engage in roles varying from a non-participant to a complete participant.
- in *qualitative interviews*, the researcher conducts face-to-face interviews with participants or interview participants by telephone. These interviews involve unstructured and generally open-ended questions that are few in number and intended to elicit views and opinions from the participants.
- during the process of research, the investigator may collect *qualitative documents*. These may be public documents (e.g., newspapers, minutes of meetings, journals, scripts, books, official reports) or private documents (e.g., personal journals, letters and e-mails).
- qualitative data consists of *qualitative audio and visual materials*. This data may take the form of photographs, videotapes, or any form of sound.

By incorporating some of these qualitative methodologies, allowed the researcher to capture useful information and give comprehensive insight into teachers' experiences of power relations as psychological violence.

### **3.2.2 The phenomenological approach in qualitative research**

Qualitative research uses a number of approaches to gain insight into lived human experiences such as: ethnography, grounded theory, case studies, phenomenological research and narrative research (Creswell, 2009:13). This study specifically regarded the phenomenological approach as the most appropriate approach since it provides the researcher with information on the lived experiences of the participants on the phenomena in their social setting.

According to Nieuwenhuis (2008:59), phenomenological studies generally attempt to understand phenomena through the meanings that people assign to them. Creswell (2009:13) agrees by viewing phenomenological research as a strategy of inquiry in which the researcher identifies the essence of human experiences about a phenomenon as described by participants. More specifically, Moustakas, (*in* Creswell, 2009:13) asserted that understanding the lived experiences marks phenomenology as a philosophy as well as a method, and the procedure involves studying a small number of subjects through extensive and prolonged engagement to develop patterns and relationships of meaning. A phenomenological study allows the researcher to investigate teachers' lived experiences of power relations as psychological violence as told by themselves.

### **3.3 RESEARCH METHOD**

Social constructivism is typically seen as an approach to qualitative research. As noted by Creswell (2009:8), social constructivists hold assumptions that individuals seek an understanding of the world in which they live and work. Individuals develop subjective meanings of their experiences – meanings directed toward certain objects or things. Qualitative researchers believe that the world is made up of people with their own assumptions, intentions, attitudes, beliefs and values, and that the way of knowing reality is by exploring the experiences of others regarding a specific phenomenon – an attempt to see how others have constructed reality by asking about it.

In qualitative research people look at human events in a more holistic way that attempts to locate individual actions in their cultural contexts (Nieuwenhuis, 2008:55). This means that human activities need to be investigated in terms of meanings – why people say this, do this or act in this or that way – and must be interpreted by linking them to other human events to

enable greater understanding. Nieuwenhuis (2008:59) also contends that qualitative research therefore acknowledges an interactive relationship between the researcher and participants, as well as between the participants and their own experiences and how they have constructed reality based on those experiences.

An extensive literature review was the medium through which the phenomenon was explored initially to gain understanding of the stories, experiences and voices of people in past literature. Materials utilised during the literature review include but is not limited to academic books, journal articles, newspaper articles, web pages, thesis and dissertations. The literature review was a continuous process, because the researcher continuously went back to the literature to try and make meaning of the phenomenon and in turn understanding the real-life experiences of the participants.

Additional strategies that were utilised during the process of data collection for the study include: extensive time (months) were spent speaking to colleagues, friends, teachers and lay people that crossed my path. I spoke to them about my planned research and in turn I listened to their opinions and ideas about the research.

The last method that was used to generate data was interviews with the teachers who have experienced power abuse as psychological violence. During this phase of the research, strategies such as sampling, interviews and triangulation and the researcher as the instrument were utilised.

### **3.3.1 Sampling**

Sampling refers to the process used to select a portion of the population for the study (Nieuwenhuis, 2008:79). Sampling includes the identification of key informants, stratified purposive sampling and the criteria used for inclusion in the study.

- **Key Informants**

The key informants for this study consisted of eleven voluntary teachers from primary, secondary schools and colleges from the Western and Eastern Cape who have experienced power relations as psychological violence. As a particularly sensitive topic, articles were placed in local newspapers the Drakenstein Gazette and Somerset Budget to attract teachers who are willing to participate in this research study. Eight female teachers and three male teachers participated in the research. One teacher was in the age category 20-

30, four teachers were in the age category 31-40, two teachers were in the age category 41-50 and four teachers were in the age category 51-60. Six of the participants were from the Western Cape and five of the participants from the Eastern Cape. Six of the participants were from primary schools and five from secondary schools or colleges. Five of the participants were employed as teachers, five were in the position of grade or subject head and one in the position of deputy principal or principal.

- **Stratified purposive sampling**

Stratified purposive sampling means selecting participants according to preselected criteria relevant to a particular research question (Nieuwenhuis, 2008: 79). Nieuwenhuis (2008:79) also states that the sample size may or may not be fixed prior to data collection, and very often depends of the resources and time available to the researcher. Voluntary teachers who had been exposed or still are exposed to power relations as psychological violence were selected to participate in this research study. Because of the very sensitive nature of this research topic, teachers had to be made aware that participation is completely voluntary and all information will be strictly confidential.

The teachers' who were selected to participate in the research were expected to provide understanding and apprehension of power relations or the abuse of power in relationships in the school context, as well as insight in their own assumptions, intentions, attitudes, beliefs and values, of their experience of power abuse.

- **Criteria for inclusion of participants to this study**

The criteria for teachers' who wanted to participate in this study include:

- that they have been exposed or observed power relations or the abuse of power in any school context;
- that they have been exposed or observed psychological violence in any school context;
- that they could provide insight and information which lead to a deeper understanding of teachers' experiences of power relations as psychological violence;
- that they were aware that their participation is completely voluntary.

### **3.3.2 Data Collection**

Phenomenological interviews and the researcher herself were used as instruments during the data collection process of the research. According to Creswell (2009:178), the data collection steps for qualitative research include setting the boundaries for the study, collecting information through unstructured or semi-structured interviews, documents, and visual materials as well as establishing the protocol for recording information.

Therefore the questions to be asked during the interviews were determined prior to the interview. The questions were formulated in such a way so that responses allowed the interviewer to probe, explore new ideas, and identify new lines of inquiry and clarifying of answers. This ensured a convinced understanding of the participants' perceptions, experiences and understandings. Once the interview questions were formulated, a pilot study was launched in order to make changes to the interview questions if the need arose. The length of an interview was approximately one hour and the expected length of the field work was approximately three months.

#### **3.3.2.1 Phenomenological interviews**

During this phenomenological study the researcher wanted to discover meaning, articulated "essences" of meaning of teachers' lived experiences of power relations as psychological violence. Phenomenological research uses the analysis of significant statements, the generation of meaning units, and the development of what Moustakas (1994) calls an essence description (Creswell, 2009:184).

Interviews are very popular in qualitative research. According to Creswell (2009:232), qualitative interviews mean that the researcher conducts face-to-face interviews with participants or interview participants by telephone. These interviews involve unstructured and generally open-ended questions that are few in number and are intended to elicit views and opinions from participants.

Creswell (2009:183) lists the following protocol as important during qualitative interviews:

- a heading (date, place, interviewer, interviewee)
- instructions for the interviewer to follow so that standard procedures are used from one interview to another

- the questions, typically an ice-breaker question, followed by 4 – 5 questions that are often sub-questions in a qualitative research plan
- probes for the 4 – 5 questions, to follow up and ask individuals to explain their ideas in more detail or to elaborate on what they have said
- a final thank-you statement to acknowledge the time the interviewee spent during the interview

### **3.3.2.2 *Semi-structured interviews***

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with eleven teachers' who have experienced power relations as psychological violence; appointments were made to discuss the research and to gain permission in their personal capacity. Once permission was granted, appointments were made for semi-structured interviews with the selected participants. Telephonic reminders were sent to the selected participants a few days prior to the interviews.

The data were collected through face-to-face, one-on-one semi-structured interviews. According to Nieuwenhuis (2009:87), an interview is a two-way conversation in which the interviewer asks the participant questions to collect data and to learn about the ideas, beliefs, views, opinions and behaviours of the participant. More specifically, the semi-structured interview is commonly used in research projects to corroborate data emerging from other data sources and it usually requires the participant to answer a set of predetermined questions.

Nieuwenhuis (2008: 87) explains that semi-structured interviews are commonly used in research projects to corroborate data emerging from other data sources. It seldom spans over a long time period and usually requires the participant to answer a set of predetermined questions. It does allow for probing and clarification of answers. Nieuwenhuis (2008:87) also adds that, as a researcher you need to be attentive to the responses of your participant so that you can identify new emerging lines of inquiry that are directly related to the phenomenon being studied, and explore and probe these. During the face-to-face semi-structured interviews, each participant was asked a set of questions which allowed the researcher to collect rich descriptive data and it helped to view the phenomenon through the eyes of the participant.

There are seven factors that Nieuwenhuis (2008:88) lists as the key elements to successful interviewing. These elements were kept in mind during the data collection process, and it includes the following:

- the key was to find the person(s) who are the best qualified, in terms of the research question, to provide the researcher with the information required.
- making it clear to the person being interviewed what the aim of the interview was and what information are needed from them. It was essential to verify that they are willing to be interviewed. Importantly it was good practice to go back to them to verify whether your understanding of what they have shared with me is actually what they meant.
- my aim was to collect rich and descriptive data on the phenomenon being explored and till data saturation.
- my questioning strategy was vitally important. I avoided questions where the participant would answer “yes” or “no” and took care that the questions are clear and neutral.
- the type of question was as important as the way I asked it. I included a variety of questions ranging from experience and behaviour questions to opinion and value questions, feeling questions, knowledge questions and sensory or value-based questions.
- good interviewers are good listeners who do not dominate the interview and understand that they are there to listen. I therefore did not take shortcuts by only hearing what I wanted to hear. I tried not to be judgmental and never criticised them since I was there to understand, not to judge. My intension was not to play psychologist or counselor, and never argued or disagreed with the participants since I needed their perceptions and/or experiences.
- I observed the respondents’ non-verbal communication and checked my own verbal cues, such as maintaining eye contact and keeping an upright position.

### **3.3.2.3 *Interviewing victimized teachers***

The willing participants were contacted to arrange for an interview at a time and place that was suitable for them. Face-to-face semi-structured phenomenological interviews were conducted with teachers who have experienced power relations as psychological violence. Writing down answers to questions can be very time-consuming; therefore the interviews were audio-taped. Each participant was asked for their consent, before the interview was audio-taped. In addition to audio-taping the interview, written notes were taken so that extra questions could be asked at the end of the interview.

The audio tapes were transcribed in the form of typed copies shortly after the interviews. The safe keeping of the audio tapes and the original typed copies were ensured with storage in a safe. The electronic versions of the typed copies were protected with a password; therefore the retrieval is limited to the researcher.

The researcher made an effort to make the participants feel comfortable and to thoroughly explain the nature of the research to them. They were given the assurance that they may withdraw from the study at any time. It was explained that all participants remain anonymous, and that data will be treated with the strictest confidentiality. Both the researcher and participants signed a binding agreement that also explains that data gathered will be used for research purposes only. .

The following questions were asked during each interview, allowing for probing in between:

- Do you think that the use of power plays a role in relationships at your school at all? Why? (*Dink jy die gebruik van mag speel 'n rol in verhoudinge by jou skool? Hoekom?*)
- Can you tell me of instances where power has been abused in relationships at your school? What happened? (*Kan jy my van gevalle vertel waar magsverhoudinge misbruik word by jou skool? Wat het gebeur?*)
- Did you experience abuse of power in relationships at your school personally, and, if so, what happened? (*Het jy die misbruik van magsverhoudinge persoonlik ervaar by jou skool? Indien wel, wat het gebeur?*)
- Does gender play a role in this abuse of power in relationships at your school? Please explain. (*Speel geslag a rol in hierdie misbruik van mag in verhoudings by jou skool? Verduidelik asseblief.*)
- Does race play a role in this abuse of power in relationships at your school? Please explain. (*Speel ras 'n rol in hierdie misbruik van mag in verhoudings by jou skool? Verduidelik asseblief.*)
- Have you observed other teachers experiencing the abuse of power in relationships in any context at your school? What happened? (*Het jy gesien dat ander onderwysers die miskbruik van magsverhoudinge in enige konteks by jou skool ervaar? Wat het gebeur?*)
- Do you think that the abuse of power in relationships can be categorised as psychological violence? Explain. (*Dink jy dat die misbruik van magsverhoudinge gekatogoriseer kan word as psigologiese geweld? Verduidelik.*)

- What is the impact of psychological violence on your health - health meaning physical, mental and social well-being? (*Watter impak het psigologiese geweld op jou gesondheid – met ander woorde jou fisiese, sielkundige en sosiale welstand?*)
- Have you observed the impact of psychological violence on other teachers' health? If so, please explain. (*Het jy die impak van psigologiese geweld op ander onderwysers se gesondheid waargeneem? Indien wel, verduidelik asseblief.*)

### **3.3.3 Triangulation**

Triangulation can be seen as the use of multiple sources and perceptions to clarify meaning. According to Maree and van der Westhuizen (2008:40), crystallisation refers to the practice of “validating” results by using multiple methods of data collection and analysis. He advises researchers to consider multiple and conflicting voices, differing and interacting interpretations to facilitate triangulation and crystallisation. Triangulation were achieved through the use of various methods and multiple sources to prove the validity of the data.

All of the participants were interviewed separately to ensure that no participant could interfere and influence another participant. During the data analysis, all the participants' responses were compared to determine similarities and differences. All participants' responses were compared to existing data in the literature to enable triangulation. Triangulation thus relates it to a selection of sources and methods to help substantiate reliability and validity of the research findings.

### **3.3.4 The researcher as an instrument**

The researcher's role and involvement in the data collection process was vital. It involves the role of the researcher in the data collection process, the researcher's communication techniques, and the use of field notes.

#### **3.3.4.1 The role of the researcher**

Contrary to typical quantitative techniques where objectivity is the goal, qualitative studies accept researcher subjectivity as something that cannot be eliminated and see the researcher as the “research instrument” in the data gathering process (Nieuwenhuis,

2008:79). Moreover, the researcher's involvement and immersion in the changing, real world situation is essential, since the qualitative researcher needs to record those changes in the real-life context. (Nieuwenhuis, 2008:79). During qualitative research, the inquirer is typically involved in a sustained and intensive experience with participants. Inquirers explicitly identify their biases, values, and personal background, such as gender, history, culture, and socio-economic status, that may shape their interpretations formed during a study (Creswell, 2009:177). In addition, gaining entry to a research site and the ethical issues that might arise are also elements of the researcher's role.

According to Creswell (2009:177), the researcher must include statements about past experiences that provide background data through which the participants can better understand the topic, the setting and the researcher's interpretation of the phenomenon. It is also necessary to recognise participant bias, values, personal background and personal interests with regard to the research topic and process.

The researcher was responsible for arranging the interviews. The researcher's role during the interviews was to observe and listen carefully. She then also had the role of transcriber and data analyst with regard to interviews as well as triangulation of data. The researcher needed to be aware of her own insight and experiences and how it had an effect on the results of the research.

#### **3.3.4.2 Communication Techniques**

Communication is the means through which the researcher is able to gather data and information from the participants. It is very important to make use of proper communication techniques, because it could have an effect on the result of the research project. A few important communication techniques that the researcher must adhere to include:

- be a good listener and give the participant ample time to speak
- be sensitive to traumatic experiences
- create a relaxed atmosphere which is vital in establishing a good interviewer-interviewee relationship
- reflect on your understanding of content and feelings during interviews
- paraphrasing by formulating a statement from what the participant has said
- making summaries of feedback from the participants to form a general view
- request clarifications when the participants' response is vague or unclear
- ask for examples and description when necessary

### **3.3.4.3 Field notes : Observational notes**

According to Mouton (2008:108), keeping extensive field notes in qualitative fieldwork of observations and other forms of data collection is essential in order to capture the context of such an observation. As a researcher, I firstly kept notes of the time schedule of all the interviews, the set-up during the interviews and the place where it took place. Secondly I made notes of what was happening and what was said during the interview, even though I recorded the interview as well. Thirdly I made notes of observations during the interview, impressions of the interviewee's position, body language and attitude, as well as any additional information that the interviewee provided. Finally I took notes of my own reflections with regard to conversations, moments of confusion, feelings, assumptions, intuitions, reactions and new ideas during the interviews.

## **3.4 DATA ANALYSIS**

Qualitative data analysis is usually based on an interpretative philosophy that is aimed at examining meaningful and symbolic content of qualitative data. Phrased differently, it tries to establish how participants make meaning of a specific phenomenon by analysing their perceptions, attitudes, understanding, knowledge, values, feelings and experiences in an attempt to approximate their construction of the phenomenon (Nieuwenhuis, 2008:99). Nieuwenhuis (2008:99) also states that this is best achieved through a process of inductive analyses of qualitative data where the main purpose is to allow research findings to emerge from the frequent, dominant or significant themes inherent in raw data, without the restraints being imposed by a more structured theoretical orientation. A qualitative phenomenological study was used to gain insight into the world of teachers who have experienced or have been subjected to power relations as psychological violence.

### **3.4.1 Theory of data analysis**

Grounded theory is a qualitative strategy in which the researcher derives a general, abstract theory of a process, action, or interaction grounded in the views of participants in a study (Creswell, 2009:229). This research study is based on the grounded theory.

According to Nieuwenhuis (2008:77), the major difference between grounded theory and other research methods is its specific approach to theory development – grounded theory

seeks to develop the theory that is grounded in data systematically gathered and analysed. The grounded theory approach claims to be inductive rather than deductive. Data collection and theory generation can be seen as two parts of the same process.

### **3.4.2 Method of data analysis**

According to Nieuwenhuis (2008:99), qualitative data analysis tends to be an on-going and iterative process, implying that data collection, processing, analysis and reporting are intertwined, and not merely a number of successive steps. In qualitative studies researchers often find it advisable and necessary to go back to the original field notes and verify conclusions, or to go back to the participants to collect additional data and to verify it, or to solicit feedback from participants consulted in the research. Mouton (2008:108) agrees by saying data analysis involves “breaking up” the data into manageable themes, patterns, trends and relationships. He says the aim of analysis is to understand the various constitutive elements of one’s data through an inspection of the relationships between concepts, and to see whether there are any patterns or trends that can be identified or isolated, or to establish themes in data. The researcher explores the phenomenon of power relations as psychological violence through interviews with open-ended questions which brings forth important data on the experiences of teachers, rather than having predefined hypotheses.

Nieuwenhuis (2008:100) concludes by saying when analysing qualitative data, your goal is to summarise what you have seen or heard in terms of common words, phrases, themes or patterns that would aid your understanding and interpretation of that which is emerging. Your aim is never to measure, but to interpret and make sense of what is in the data, and this requires creativity, discipline and a systematic approach. These are the guidelines that were followed to ensure that what was found is credible and trustworthy.

### **3.4.3 Triangulation in data analysis**

According to Nieuwenhuis (2008:80), triangulation is a measure used to enhance trustworthiness of data. Triangulation is a traditional strategy for improving the validity and reliability of research or evaluation of findings. Triangulation is used extensively for the confirmation and generalisation of research findings. Therefore to ensure the internal validity of measurement of the selected teachers’ experiences in this phenomenological study, triangulation was ensured by means of various sources. In other words, data was collected

from a number of sources in line with the motivation and purpose of the research. In triangulation different sources of data should corroborate one another.

### **3.4.4 Trustworthiness**

Trustworthiness is of the utmost importance in qualitative research. Assessing trustworthiness is the acid test of your data analysis, findings and conclusions. Accordingly, you need to constantly keep the procedures that can be used for assessing the trustworthiness of the data analysis in mind (Nieuwenhuis, 2008:113). These procedures include consistency checks and credibility or stakeholder checks.

Nieuwenhuis (2008:113) also highlights a few pointers to enhance trustworthiness that I kept in mind for this study:

- using multiple data sources helped me to check the findings
- verifying new data by submitting the transcripts to the participants to correct errors or facts
- keeping notes of research decisions taken, as it helped others to follow my research reasoning
- greater trustworthiness in coding data by asking an independent coder to code some of the data
- stakeholder checks by allowing participants and people of interest to comment on or assess the research findings
- verifying and validating the findings may be done by providing copies of a draft report to your participant and asking them to write comments
- controlling for bias by involving other in the ways indicated above can remedy the problem for bias
- avoiding generalisation through understanding from the participants' perspective's and not to generalise across a population
- maintaining confidentiality and anonymity
- stating the limitations of the study upfront helped the reader better understand how the researcher arrived at her conclusions.

#### **3.4.4.1 Credibility**

In qualitative research, credibility can be seen as the believable and accurate proposal of the phenomenon as described by the researcher. Credibility can also be described as the

guarantee that the researcher's conclusions are rooted in the data. During this study, credibility was established by applying triangulation to the methods of data collection and data analysis.

#### **3.4.4.2 *Transferability***

Transferability refers to the degree to which generalisation can be made from the data of the research study to make it applicable to the wider population and settings - in other words, the degree to which other researchers are able to apply the methods and analysis of this research study to other research studies in other contexts. Although the aim of qualitative research is not to generalize the findings, I ensured transferability as I used a broad description of the research situation and contexts, also supplying clear and detailed information about teachers' experiences of power relations as psychological violence. However, as a phenomenological research study, the goal is to seek understanding from participants' experiences, and it will not necessarily be to generalise the findings of this research study.

#### **3.4.4.3 *Dependability***

Dependability can be seen as the need for the researcher to provide justification for the continuous changing context within which the research occurs. The researcher provided detail and thoroughness when it came to describing the research process. This in turn help the reader to understand and follow the trend of the whole research process.

#### **3.4.4.4 *Confirmability***

Confirmability refers to whether the data analysis and interpretation of the study is rooted in the study and the events of the study itself, rather than the researcher's personal feelings. As mentioned before, the researcher must avoid bias by following all of the above guidelines when analysing and concluding data.

### **3.5 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS**

When people are used as participants in a research study it is necessary to take note of a few ethical considerations. This is done by grounding the study in the Ethical Code of

Conduct of the Professional Board for Psychology when it comes to professional competence, confidentiality, informed consent, as well as research and publication (Health Professions Council of South Africa, 2006).

### **3.5.1 Professional Competence**

The researcher involved in this research study confined the study area to education, training and appropriate professional experience. If it seems necessary to support teachers, professionals from a multi-disciplinary team will be approached.

### **3.5.2 Confidentiality**

According to Maree and van der Westhuizen (2008: 41), an essential ethical aspect is the issue of the confidentiality of the results and findings of the study and the protection of the participants' identities. Due to the fact that the research topic is sensitive and that it could be a traumatic experience for teachers, it was very important to assure teachers that all statements as well as their identity would remain completely anonymous and confidential. The data and information gathered during the interviews will be stored in a safe for five years. No one except the researcher has access to original transcripts and audiotapes, and all teachers identities will remain anonymous at all times.

### **3.5.3 Informed consent**

All teachers were given a good formative explanation about the purpose of the research and given time for clarification. The researcher introduced herself and explained all recording processes thoroughly. The voluntary nature of the research was also explained. The teacher participants as well as the researcher signed the confidentiality report and agreement as well as the letter of consent. It was made clear that the participants could withdraw from the study at any given time without any penalty.

### **3.5.4 Research and publication**

The research was planned and conducted in such a way that it adheres to the legislation. It stretches from the proper explanation of the purpose of the research study to the confidentiality report and the letter of consent. Accurate results of all the findings of teachers'

experiences of power relations as psychological violence were conveyed in the research report.

### **3.6 SUMMARY**

This chapter presented an in-depth and formative description of the empirical research process. It included the qualitative research design, research method, sampling, data collection, data analysis and ethical considerations.

Chapter 4 presents the findings and results of the teachers' experiences of power relations as psychological violence during the data analysis, supported by a literature control.

## **CHAPTER 4**

### **4 DATA ANALYSIS AND LITERATURE CONTROL**

#### **4.1 INTRODUCTION**

This chapter provides the findings that were obtained during the data-analysis. The findings will be discussed briefly and triangulated with literature control.

#### **4.2 DATA ANALYSIS**

Eleven interviews were done individually with teachers who have experienced or have been exposed to power relations as psychological violence at their workplace in the Boland in the Western Cape and the Blue Crane District in the Eastern Cape. Follow-up interviews were done telephonically or via e-mail when it was necessary to clarify information given by the participant teachers. All the interviews were recorded with a digital voice recorder and then transcribed. During the interviews the researcher made field notes to ask additional questions from new leads, but it also proved to be very useful during the transcribing process.

##### **4.2.1 Coding**

Meaningful phrases, quotes and words were then identified from each interview to be grouped together as corresponding themes throughout the interviews.

#### **4.3 DISCUSSION: RESULTS OBTAINED FROM THE INTERVIEWS**

The data obtained from the interviews was then categorised and tabulated. The number of participants who shared a similar experience is indicated in the last table. Direct quotations from the participants are utilised as an explanation for each sub-category. The participants are identified with the symbol "P". The first participant will thus be "P1", while "P2" and "P3" refers to the second and third participant.

Brackets are periodically included with descriptive notes added to the quotations; the intention of this is generally to identify the bully or person to which the participant refers. On the other hand, brackets are also used to translate from Afrikaans to English, as all of the interviews were conducted in Afrikaans to suit participants' preference of language. Two to three quotations will be included in each sub-category to illustrate meaning; the rest of the quotations will be placed in appendix B, categories and sub-categories.

After each separate main and sub-category table, a brief discussion and interpretation of the specific category is provided. It will also be triangulated with a literature control.

Furthermore, all categories and any additional categories should be not be interpreted separately, but must rather be seen as a whole, or as a part of the holistic and dynamic process that promotes my understanding of teachers' experiences of power relations as psychological violence.

#### **4.3.1 Category 1: Teachers' personal experiences on the nature of power relations in relationships at their school**

Interviewees admitted their experiences on the nature of power relations in relationships at their school. They identified certain dimensions of power relations, such as work performance, senior teacher status and learners, which often play a role in the abuse of power in relationships at school. These experiences are born form teachers' past and present experiences of power relations as psychological violence.

<b>CATEGORY</b>	<b>SUB-CATEGORY</b>	<b>PARTICIPANTS n = 11</b>
4.3.1 Teachers' personal experiences on the nature of power relations in relationships at their school.	4.3.1.1 Work performance as a potential source of power abuse	5
	4.3.1.2 Teachers are exposed to verbal abuse	5
	4.3.1.3 Power abuse from senior teachers	4
	4.3.1.4 Power abuse from parents	4

	4.3.1.5 Power abuse from learners	4
	4.3.1.6 Negative experiences of teachers related to their qualifications	3
	4.3.1.7 Whistleblowers experience power abuse	2
	4.3.1.8 Being subjected to power abuse because of envy	2
	4.3.1.9 Teachers being humiliated or offended by insults	2
	4.3.1.10 Power abuse from groups formed within staff	2
	4.3.1.11 Substance abuse by learners as a form of power abuse	2

#### **4.3.1.1 Work performance as a potential source of power abuse**

Interviewees said they perceived work performance, completion of tasks, competence of individuals, inadequate work performance or even hiding one's own poor work performance as something that may become a potential source of power abuse. Competence of the interaction partners affects the perception of this interaction partner's power. It is thus postulated that the information aspect of the interaction affects the perception of this person's power. Competence can function as a proxy for actual power in the eyes of the perceiver (cf par. 2.2.7). The knowledge of someone's "weak point" at work may become a source of power in a conflict situation. Also, bullies typically exploit the perceived inadequacies of the victim's personality or work performance, which in itself indicates the victim's powerlessness (cf par. 2.3.4).

P7: "... en wat nou gebeur, is wanneer ek miskien 'n voorstel vir hulle gee, sal hulle hulle nie steur daaraan nie, want hoekom, dis nou ... wat weet ek ek kom dan nou net hier aan."

*[... and what is happening now, is when I make a suggestion to them, they will not be bothered by it, because, they think ... what do I know; I am too new here.]*

P8: “Mag speel ’n groot rol, hulle dink hulle is slimmer of meer intelligent... hulle dink opdragte wat hul uitvoer is ten alle tye reg (bestuursposies).”

*[Power plays an important role, they think that they are more clever or intelligent ... they think that the tasks they perform are correct at all times (management positions).]*

P11: “As van die werk nie afgehandel of klaar is nie ... dan word almal aangesê die werk is nie gedoen nie ... maar dan weet ons eintlik maar wie dit is.”

*[When some of the work is not completed... then everyone is told that the work is not done... but then we know who it actually is.]*

#### **4.3.1.2 Teachers are exposed to verbal abuse**

Teachers are often exposed to verbal abuse from colleagues in management positions, colleagues and learners. Interviewees indicated that it could be a way of the abuser to enhance and display their power. Behaviours that are typically and frequently used to manifest or enhance one’s power include speaking a lot and speaking in a loud voice; these are often labelled dominance behaviour. It also seems that colleagues use verbal abuse to demonstrate power over their victim. Verbal abuse may also be used to psychologically hurt the targeted educator (cf par. 2.2.5). Learners also make use of verbal abuse against educators; this can be based on the perceived physical and psychological vulnerabilities of the targeted educator (cf par. 2.2.6).

P3: “Hulle is baie onbeskof en maak aanmerkings wat nie van pas is om so met ’n onderwyseres te praat nie (leerlinge).”

*[They are very rude and make comments that are not suited to speak to female teachers that way (learners).]*

P4: “Ek ervaar dit elke dag dat mag definitief misbruik word op grond van hoe ’n persoon aangespreek word... en hoe opdragte uitgedeel word (skoolhoof).”

*[I definitely experience the abuse of power every day when it comes to how a person is spoken to... and the way tasks are shared (principal).]*

P9: “So ek word daagliks aan verbal abuse blootgestel, en dis so kleinlik... hy skree op jou, of hy sal skree op ’n kind daar van sy stoepie af, sê vir daai juffrou sy moet in haar klas wees, sy mag nie rondstap nie (skoolhoof).”

*[I am exposed to verbal abuse daily, and it's so petty ... he yells at you, or he will shout at a child from his porch, tell that teacher she must be in her class, she is not allowed to walk around (principal).]*

#### **4.3.1.3 Power abuse from senior teachers**

Teachers identified the high power and authority that is assigned to senior (older) teachers as one that plays a role in the abuse of power when it comes to relationships with junior teachers. With this high power though, comes low status. The victims of power abuse suggested that they are often more motivated and more knowledgeable in certain areas and have the determination to perform well in their profession, and these qualities threaten senior colleagues, which could contribute to power abuse. The combination of high power and low status led to demeaning tendencies. It is suggested that low-status individuals with high power are motivated to demean others in order to meet their need to view the world as a balanced and just place (cf par. 2.2.3).

P4: “Mag word definitief in my geval toegepas deur van my seniors, en dit is somtyds moeilik om te verklaar hoekom en waarom.”

*[In my case power is definitely abused by my seniors, and it is sometimes difficult to explain why and how.]*

P7: “Ek was in trane, want ek het nie geweet wat om te doen nie ... dit was 'n groot funksie gewees ... sy sê toe sy gaan vir die hoof sê (senior onderwyseres).”

*[I was in tears and didn't know what to do ... it was a large function ... she said she was going to tell the principal (senior teacher).]*

P8: “Ek is mos ouer as jy, al is ons op dieselfde vlak, so kry jy nou gou daardie goete reg of in die rondte om daardie taak te verrig ... die ouer personeel by die skool het nie sekere kundigheid om take te verrig nie, kyk hulle studeer mos nie verder nie ... so jonger persone soos ek genoem het, se gedagtes word net afgeskiet deur hulle.”

*[Because I am older than you, even though we are at the same level, therefore you have to organise this and that to complete the task ... the older staff at our school do not have the skills to complete certain tasks, because they do not study further ... but the younger staff's ideas are shot down by them as I already mentioned]*

#### **4.3.1.4 Power abuse from parents**

Teachers indicated that they find it demoralising to experience power abuse from parents. It could be in the form of insults, intimidation, threats or aggression. They feel that parents

have no idea of their own responsibilities and that they are powerless against them for fear of repercussions or even prosecution. Learners at school and their parents harm teachers in some or other way. Also U.S. teachers are not just underappreciated, 13% revealed they have been intimidated by a student's parent (cf par. 2.1). The participants responded in the following way:

P10: "Ouers wat saamstaan en 'n onderwyser afpers ... en die een wat by die huis bly is nie noodwendig die een wie se ouers jou kom dreig het nie."

*[Parents gang up and blackmail a teacher, and the one staying home isn't necessarily the one whose parents threatened you.]*

P11: "Ouers wat jou kom dreig en hulle mag misbruik as jy nie die sport afrig soos hulle verwag en as hulle kind nie in die span speel wat hulle dink nie."

*[Teachers will come and threaten you and abuse their power if you don't coach like they think you should coach and their child is not playing in the team they think he/she should play.]*

P13: "Die ouers is nie so onskuldig nie, dit is 'n bose kringloop."

*[The parents are not that innocent, it is a vicious cycle.]*

#### **4.3.1.5 Power abuse from learners**

Teachers indicated that they feel threatened in relationships they have with learners. Interviewees feel that learners will abuse their power either single-handedly or acting as a group to question and challenge the authority they are subjected to. Teachers often feel they possess no power and status when it comes to the classroom situation where they are the minority and the learners the majority. Teachers are subjected to power abuse and psychological violence from learners and they are left with feelings of helplessness and despair. Majorities can often create institutions that work in their favour, which contributes to their accumulation of status (cf par 2.2.3). Subordinates, especially, if acting in a group, may muster enough power to bully a supervisor. Learners make use of mobbing or form gangs to bully teachers. Learners' violence upon teachers is thus motivated by social influences. Bullies in a group support and sustain each other's behaviour (cf par 2.3.3). Learners make use of the impression they have of a target teacher's power. The power they may hold over the teacher, may come from their knowledge of the teacher's vulnerabilities (cf par. 2.2.6). More than one-quarter of teachers are threatened on the job by their students, 37% had been the target of obscene or sexual remarks from students, 31% said a student had made an obscene gesture to them or groped them, 19% said they had been intimidated by a student (cf par 2.1).

P3: "...as 'n groep het hulle meer mag en sal lelike goed vir my sê... as 'n groep gang hulle baie saam... hulle sal definitief die feit dat hulle kan saamstaan as 'n groep, gebruik en manipuleer."

*[...they have more power as a group and they will say despicable things to me ... they gang up as a group ... they will most definitely use and manipulate the fact that they can stand together as a group.]*

P11: "...daai kind klim oor die banke en letterlik rand daardie kind aan met sy vuiste, hy slaan hom dat die bloed loop ... ek is geboelie met emosies wat ek nog nooit ervaar het nie, ek het nog nooit 'n fight kaalhande gesien nie ... dis was emosioneel baie sleg ... ek het gevoel daardie seun het geen respek vir my nie en ook nie vir die professie nie."

*[... the child scrambled over the desks to literally attack the other child with his fists, he hit him that the blood splattered ... I was bullied with emotions that I have never experienced before, I have never seen a fight bare-handed ... it was emotionally very disturbing for me ... it felt like the boy had no respect for me and no respect for the profession.]*

P13: "... op die bord staan daar baie keer 'n vieslike woord geskryf en dan lag hulle hulle dood daaroor ... hulle sal partykeer aspris nie hul gulp toemaak nie, hulle is regtig rou ... hulle het daardie mag en hulle misbruik dit."

*[... they will often write a foul word on the blackboard and then they laughed themselves silly ... they will sometimes purposely not close their zips, they are really raw ... they have the power and they misuse it.]*

#### **4.3.1.6 Negative experiences of teachers related to their qualifications**

Teachers suggested that their qualifications are often perceived by colleagues or management as a reason for either being less or more deserving of unfair treatment. Teachers that are well qualified, or more qualified than the abuser, are often the victims of power abuse as psychological violence. They also feel that they are restricted in achieving their goals by this type of unfair treatment. Victims are often more highly qualified than their bullies (cf par. 2.2.7). Problems may arise when either party within this interdependent relationship in the workplace denies or hinders the other in achieving their goals (cf par. 2.2.7).

P7: "... die dat ek 'n graad het en hulle 'n diploma ... dit was nie vir hulle 'n eye-opener nie ...grootmense was soos kinders optree."

[... *the fact that I have a degree en they have a diploma ... it wasn't an eye-opener for them ... adults acting like children.*]

P8: “Wat my verstand te bowe gaan, is hoe kan iemand met 'n diploma georchastrate is om die bestuurspos te kry ... maar die persoon wat twee grade het, kry nie die pos nie nie.”

[*It blows my mind that the person with a diploma is orchestrated to get the management position ... but the person with two degrees does not get the position.*]

P11: “Van die begin af was die intensie dat as daar 'n betrekking kom ... want omdat ek nou goed gekwalifiseer is ... en dat daar definitief vir my gese is dat ek eerste in *line* is vir 'n permanenete pos.”

[*From the start the intention was that if there is a permanent position vacant ... and I was definitely told that I would be first in line for a permanent position because I am well qualified.*]

#### **4.3.1.7 Whistleblowers experience power abuse**

Whistleblowers who attempted to end the wrong-doing, came off worse than the wrong-doer. Some interviewees admitted that they did not react with empowering responses against the wrong-doer. The link between the whistleblower and retaliation hinges on social power. A whistleblower's attempts to influence or terminate the wrongdoing may be seen as a power struggle in which the dominant coalition may either accept, or alternatively, refuse this initiative by bringing the wrong-doing to an end, or may balance the power struggle by retaliating against the whistleblower. Powerful whistleblowers, especially those with expert or informal power are more protected against reprisals than those lacking such bases of power (cf par. 2.2.3). Therefore, some whistleblowers may be relatively powerful and to some extent protected against retaliation and subsequent workplace bullying. This may be the case if the organisation depends on those individuals who blew the whistle and if the organisation does not depend on continuation of the wrong-doing or on the wrong-doer (cf par.2.2.3).

P6: “Ek het agterna gesê dit moet genotuleer word dat ek kapsie gemaak het, en hy het dit ook geweier en weer kapsie gemaak en gesê dit word nie genotuleer nie (skoolhoof).”

[*I said afterwards that it should be noted that I objected, and this he also refused and again objected, saying it will not be minuted (principal).*]

P9: “En as jy besluit om hom aan te vat, gaan jy die slegste daarvan afkom en jy gaan meer daaronder ly as hy ... daar is 'n onderwyseres wat in opstand met hom gekom

het, sy het hom aangekla, OBOS (onderwysbestuurs-en-ontwikkelingsentrum) toe gegaan, ens., maar op die ou einde het sy bedank (skoolhoof).”

*[If you decide to take him on, you will be worse off than him... there is a female teacher that came in revolt with him, she accused him, went to the EMDC (educational management and development centre), but in the end she resigned (principal).]*

#### **4.3.1.8 Being subjected to power abuse because of envy**

Envy is described as resentful awareness of an advantage enjoyed by another joined with a desire to possess the same advantage (Merriam-Webster Dictionary, 2012). Interviewees expressed concern about power abuse due to envy among colleagues or colleagues in management positions. Some envious colleagues will abuse their power, by spreading unkind stories, use malicious gossip or to try beat their target or outperform them in an unacceptable way. Educational managers are often envious because of their lack of characteristics that teachers portray. They dislike teachers with high creativity, popularity, confidence and professional achievement, to name a few. This type of envy or jealousy can contribute to workplace violence (cf par. 2.2.1).

P6: “Omdat ons as onderwysers gedink het om ’n fasiliteringsproses te begin op pad na ’n effektiewe skool... en hy het dit gesien as kleinlik ... dit laat my dink aan my kinderjare: as jy nie vir my van jou brood gee nie, speel jy nie met my albasters nie tipe van scenario ... en dit was vir my onprofessioneel en onaanvaarbaar (skoolhoof).”

*[... because we as teachers thought of having a facilitation process to get us on the road to an effective school ... but he saw it as petty ... it makes me think back to my youth, with the type of scenario if you don't give me some of your bread, you won't play with my marbles ... I regarded that as unprofessional and unacceptable (principal).]*

P7: “Maar die ding is die vroumense skinder heeldag, maar al wat my help is dat die hoof 100% agter my staan en hulle haat dit.”

*[The women gossip all day, but the only thing that helps me is the fact that the principal is 100% behind me, and they hate that.]*

#### **4.3.1.9 Teachers being humiliated or offended by insults**

Humiliation refers to reducing to a lower position in one's own eyes or the eyes of others (Merriam-Webster Dictionary, 2012). A definition for insult is to speak or act so as to offend someone (Oxford Dictionary, 2003:325). Interviewees indicated that they often have the unwelcome experience of being humiliated or offended by a colleague or managers in the presence of colleagues, learners or parents. Educational managers tend to use rage, temper tantrums and humiliation in the presence of witnesses to emphasise that they should be feared. Once more, humiliation can be used to demonstrate power and authority. Educational managers therefore ensure that targeted teachers are in an inferior position (cf par. 2.2.5). Also the feature of bullying can take on many forms, such as humiliating or ridiculing and criticism in public that is designed to humiliate rather than educate (cf par. 2.2).

P6: “En almal het die reg om vrae te vra ... maar niemand het die reg om beledigings te kry nie (skoolhoof).”

*[Everyone has the right to ask questions ... but no one has the right to receive insults (principal).]*

P8: “... in die verleentheid gestel voor kollegas of ander in die personeelkamer (skoolhoof).”

*[...to be humiliated in the presence of colleagues or other in the staff room (principal).]*

#### **4.3.1.10 Power abuse from groups formed within staff**

Interviewees indicated that group forming within the staff restricts collaboration and enables manipulation and the abuse their power. A group of colleagues may bully a single individual, who for obvious reasons finds it difficult to defend himself/ herself against this overwhelming group of opponenets (cf par. 2.3.3). Colleagues form gangs to bully targeted teachers. Peers may join the group out of fear that they will also be victimised. Support from other group members creates a sense of power over the victim (cf par. 2.3.3). One of the participants articulated this as follows:

P6: “Dit veroorsaak ook groepvorming, sodat die prinsipaal mense maklik kan manipuleer en beïnvloed.”

*[This causes the forming of groups which enables the principal to manipulate and influence people easily.]*

P7: “Dit is wel so dat mag misbruik word, by ons skool is daar so ’n groepie mense wat altyd saam is, hulle voel hulle is meer senior as jy, al is hulle jou eweknie ... en hulle voel hulle kan jou dwing om dinge te doen.”

*[It is true that power is misused, there is this group of people at our school that is always together, they feel that they are more senior than us even when they are your peers ... they feel that they can force you to do things.]*

#### **4.3.1.11 Substance abuse by learners as a form of power abuse**

Teachers identified the abuse of substances by learners as a type of power they use to abuse teachers. Learners grow up very quickly in a vastly changing and tempting adult world where they have alcohol and drugs at their disposal; this makes them very knowledgeable and experienced about these things and advanced for their age.

P11: “Ek dink die geweldige grootword in ’n grootmensewêreld maak dat hulle dit regkry om jou in ’n posisie te sit wat jou ongemaklik laat voel ... ek was eintlik so getraumatiseer, en dan die gevolge na die tyd, goed die kind was positief getoets vir dwelms, vir absoluut alles.”

*[I think the their fast growing up in an adult world, enables them to put you in a position that makes you feel uncomfortable ... I was actually so traumatised, and then the consequences afterwards, the child was tested positive for drugs, for absolutely everything.]*

P13: “Die een sal vir die ander een sê jy gebruik dagga ... en ek vind dit nie net by die Graad 6- en 7- kinders nie, selfs vir die jonger kinders is dit ’n helse grap as jy praat oor dit ... hulle wil jou net laat weet hulle weet alles en hulle doen hierdie goed.”

*[One will say to the other you use marijuana ... and I find that it is not only at Grade 6 and 7 children, even for the younger children it is a hell of a joke when you talk about it ... they just want to let you know that they know everything and they use these substances.]*

#### **4.3.2 Category 2: Teachers’ experiences of the role of gender and race in the abuse of power as psychological violence**

Interviewees experience increasingly abusive behaviour from colleagues in management positions, colleagues and learners at their schools. Interviewees feel that female teachers are more susceptible of being victims of power abuse than male teachers. The relationship

between bullying and gender reveals complex patterns, in terms of the position and gender of the bully (cf par. 2.4). Power differences are associated with traditional gender roles, and minority status may also affect bullying behaviour, as it can be assumed that women and minorities are perceived to have less power and status (cf par 2.4). Interviewees also indicated that they are victimised for being the minority race in the workplace (cf par. 2.5). Race is a visible markers for potential vulnerability (cf par. 2.5).

CATEGORY	SUB-CATEGORY	PARTICIPANTS n = 11
4.3.2 Teachers' experiences of the role of gender and race in the abuse of power.	4.3.2.1 Teachers being subjected to power abuse from principals	6
	4.3.2.2 Female teachers being treated in a subordinate manner	3
	4.3.2.3 Teachers' race place them at risk	3
	4.3.2.4 Cultural or racial differences of others as a contributor to power abuse	3
	4.3.2.5 Boys abuse their power by being physically intimidating	3
	4.3.2.6 Female teachers experiencing an unequal work load	2
	4.3.2.7 Power abuse through male dominance behaviour	2

#### **4.3.2.1 Teachers being subjected to power abuse from principals**

Interviewees have been confronted with power abuse and aggressive behaviour, there were male victims as well as female victims, and most of the offenders were male principals. In most of these cases neither the male nor female teachers take the principal on about his behaviour. Men who admitted to having engaged in gendered harassment were also likely to see the organisational climates where they worked as supporting such behaviour (cf par. 2.4). There are more female targets of bullying than men and there are more male perpetrators than females. Men are targeted more frequently by men than women. (cf par 2.4).

P8: “My prinsipaal was vir my twee jaar kwaad gewees ... hy het voor hom gekyk en my geïgnoreer, hy was aanvallend teenoor my gewees.”

*[My principal was mad at me for two years ... he ignored me and looked straight ahead, he was offensive towards me.]*

P9: “Dit is mos so dat hy die vrouens aftakel, en selfs waar jou kinders skoolgaan.”

*[It is true that he will attack the women and break them down, and even where your children go to school.]*

#### **4.3.2.2 Female teachers being treated in a subordinate manner**

Subordinate is defined as placing in or occupying a lower class, rank, or position (Merriam-Webster Dictionary, 2012). Interviewees admitted they often feel underappreciated when exposed to power abuse, female teachers are often scared of their male colleagues and feel that they are treated with a distinct lack of respect. It often reflects how some male colleagues feel about females outside of work, including the subordinate role females take on at home. Gender-role spillover suggests that men harass women because they are accustomed to dealing with women in a subordinate role in the domestic and social spheres, and this behaviour is transferred to the workplace (cf par. 2.4). The subordinate female role defined originally and principally at home, transfers to the workplace and creates scripts for both men and women how they should interact (cf par. 2.4). The participants gave the following statements:

P4: “Mans beskou hulle maar basies as oorhoofs oor vrouens ... in my geval is die mans minder as die vroue, maar die mans is nog steeds oorheersend wat mag betref.”

*[Men basically consider themselves as being superior to women ... in my case, the men are less than the women but the men still dominate with regard to power.]*

P6: “Daai ou manier van die man het die mag oor die vrou.”  
[*That ancient way of the man has power over the woman.*]

#### **4.3.2.3 Teachers’ race place them at risk**

Teachers’ race is identified as a dimension of power relations which could place them at risk to experience power abuse. Transformation in the workplace as well as in the classroom creates diverse groups which affect relationships at work. Interviewees indicated that they are victimised for being the ‘minority’ race in the workplace, therefore, they are bullied for being the only black person in a white group or vice versa. An underlying reason for workplace violence may be that colleagues from different races often misunderstand each other’s methods and way of thinking (cf par. 2.5).

P3: “Dan kom ek agter daar is nog baie rass spanning en probleme.”  
[*Then I realise there is still a lot of racial tension and problems.*]

P8: “Die minderheid van ras het ’n groot invloed, daardie persoon gaan nie sommer uitkom met sake stel nie, al is dit briljante idees, want daardie persoon gaan *inferior* voel.”  
[*The minority of race has a great influence, that person will not just state his business, even though that person has brilliant ideas, because that person will feel inferior.*]

P9: “Eintlik hou hy niks van wit mense nie, hy het nog daai ou mentaliteit van wit mense en hy kan nie vorentoe dink nie. (skoolhoof)”  
[*He actually does not like white people at all, he still has the old mentality of white people, and he cannot think forward (principal).*]

#### **4.3.2.4 Cultural or racial differences of others as a contributor to power abuse**

Teachers said that cultural or racial differences play a role in the abuse of power. An underlying reason for power abuse may be that people from different cultures often misunderstand each other’s ways and working methods. Teachers who are culturally different from learners, colleagues and educational managers, are bullied in the workplace. South Africa’s diverse ethnic cultures may increase misunderstandings and conflict situations in the workplace. Interviewees recognised the significant difference between various cultures’ working methods in their work contexts. Teachers’ being not aware of the different cultural norms can contribute to their vulnerability to experience workplace violence (cf par. 2.5). This causes tension that leads to conflict in the workplace: one party may feel offended

or threatened because of the other party's different working methods or way of thinking (cf par 2.5).

P8: "Daar het ras definitief 'n groot rol gespeel, hulle voel hulle het *authority* en hulle is reg, hulle sienswyse is reg (swart mense)."

*[Race played a big role; they feel that they have authority and that they are right, their way of thinking is correct (black people).]*

P11: "Die Gr. 10/11-seuns gaan Junie of Desember maand vir die unisiasie proses ... daar is 'n totale verandering, buiten die bewustheid van hul seksualiteit wat nou hiper voor is maar dan om 'n gesagsrol van 'n blanke vrou te aanvaar is nul ... die realiteit van dit is baie groter as wat mens besef (Xhosa-seuns)."

*[In June or December the gr. 10/11 boys go for the initiation process ... there is a total change, besides the awareness of their sexuality now, but then to accept an authoritative role from a white woman is zero ... the reality of this is much bigger than we think (Xhosa boys).]*

P13: "Hulle praat baie keer hul eie taal, en jy as onderwyser praat met hulle en sê hulle mag nie. Maar hulle praat onder mekaar en dan kan jy sien hulle lag nou oor dinge wat hulle onder mekaar praat en wat jy nie mag weet nie (Xhosas)."

*[They often speak their own language, and then you as teacher talk to them and tell them not to do that. But they talk among themselves and you can see them laughing about things that they talk about that you are not supposed to know (Xhosas).]*

#### **4.3.2.5 Boys abuse their power by being physically intimidating**

Intimidation implies inducing fear or a sense of inferiority into another (Merriam-Webster Dictionary, 2012). Interviewees indicated that they are exposed to physical intimidation at school from learners or boys in particular. Female teachers who are physically small in size compared to boys who are physically big experience the abuse of power in the form of physical intimidation. Teachers often feel powerless when it comes to interaction with certain learners. Teachers are often threatened or intimidated by learners' - especially boys' - physical stature. Bullies' power over their victims stems from physical size or strength. Learners may sense teachers' fearfulness of their physical characteristics. This gives them even greater control and power. Learners are aware that their physical characteristics trigger fear within their victims, which gives them more power to be physically aggressive toward teachers (cf par. 2.2.7).

P3: "... baie van die seuns wat groter is as ons onderwyseresse en wat probeer intimiderend wees, en fisies intimiderend wees, soos om in die deur te staan... want hulle is groter en sterker as ek."

*[...many of the boys are bigger than the female teachers, they try to be intimidating, and physically intimidating, for example they will stand in the doorway ... because they are bigger and stronger than me.]*

P11: "...my fisiese grootte boelie my verskriklik baie, so ek dra die hoogste skoene wat daar is, dat ek net lank is, as ek net groter was, dan voel ek of ek power het."

*[... my physical size bullies me tremendously, I will wear the highest shoes there is, so that I can be tall, if I could just be bigger then I would have felt I have power.]*

P13: "Toe maak hulle daai tongklap van hulle, daai cheeky geluide wat hul het, maar jy weet op die ou einde stap jy maar aan, want dit is groot seuns, hulle is te oud vir hul standerd ... wat kan jy nou doen ... hulle weet dit en hul is fisies groot ook, en jy is skrikkerig ..."

*[They made those tongue clicking, those cheeky sounds that they have, and in the end you keep on walking, because they are big boys who are too old for their grade ... what can you do ... they know this and they are big and physical and this scares you ...]*

#### **4.3.2.6 Female teachers experiencing an unequal work load**

Female interviewees reported that they are the majority and that they experienced an unequal workload. They do more of the work at their schools, but at the same time they experience power abuse most often. Where the female population is high, femininity of the population becomes high-lighted, leading to a greater potential for harassment (cf par 2.4). Participants also found it problematic that management does not distribute work or workload equally amongst staff members, causing some staff members to have an excessive workload, whilst others do nothing (cf par. 2.3.4).

P9: "Die slagoffers by die skool is die vrouens ... die vrouens vat die voortou met alles ... die vrouens maak alles gebeur by die skool en ek glo nie daar is by hom respek vir enige vrou nie (skoolhoof)."

*[The victims at the school are the women ... the women takes the lead with everything ... the women make everything happen at school and I believe he has no respect for any woman (principal).]*

P11: "... dit is net die vrouens wat al die werk doen ... as daar gevra word dat personeel moet volunteer om iets te doen, is dit altyd die vrouens wat hul hand opsteek."

*[... it is only the women who do all the work ... when staff members are asked to volunteer to do something, it is always the women who put up their hands.]*

**4.3.2.7 Power abuse through male dominance behaviour**

Interviewees admitted that men are in the minority at their workplace, but they still have power that they abuse to maintain their power over the female majority. Dominance behaviour is behaviour used with the goal to gain or maintain control or influence over others. It should be noted that behaviour can be in the service of trying to influence others, even helping someone when the intent is to influence or control someone else (cf par 2.2.5).

P4: “Al is die mans in die minderheid, het hulle nog steeds die mag oor die vrouens wat die meerderheid is.”

*[Even though the men are in the minority, they still have the power over the women who are the majority.]*

P9: “Daar was op ’n stadium ’n pos oop vir ’n Departementshoof; hy het gesorg dat nie een van ons vrouens dit kry nie (skoolhoof).”

*[At a time there was a vacancy for a Head of Department, he saw to it that none of the women got it (principal).]*

**4.3.3 Category 3: Teachers’ perceptions of the role of work environmental factors in the abuse of power relations as psychological violence**

CATEGORY	SUB-CATEGORY	PARTICIPANTS n = 11
4.3.3 Teachers’ perceptions of the role of work environmental factors in power relations as psychological violence	4.3.3.1 Being subjected to autocratic management styles	6
	4.3.3.2 Management’s power abuse through the abdication of responsibility	6
	4.3.3.3 The experience of	3

	being surrendered to an imbalance of power	
	4.3.3.4 Staff in management positions display the abuse or misuse of power	3
	4.3.3.5 Experience feelings of work insecurity	3
	4.3.3.6 Power abuse through coercion	2
	4.3.3.7 Principals abuse of power to manipulate school governing bodies	2
	4.3.3.8 Teachers being treated like children	2

#### **4.3.3.1 Being subjected to autocratic management styles**

Teachers often disagree about certain management styles or strategies, especially if the person in the position of power exercises absolute power, or if it is a harsh way of abusing their authority. Teachers admitted to feeling abused by the autocratic management styles and strategies used by their principals. Harsh ways of abusing authority are used and as a result teachers are vulnerable to abuse. It emerged from the experiences of participants, as well as the words they used to describe their experiences, for example “very authoritarian”, “autocratic”, and “Hitler regime” that participants are being controlled by means of autocratic management styles (cf par. 2.2.1).

P4: “Die skool waar ek is, moet jy hare op jou tande hê, hy is ’n diktator en jy word so afgetakel. (skoolhoof)”

*[The school where I work you must have nerves, he is a dictator and he breaks you down (principal).]*

P6: “My onmiddellike hoof bo my het ’n groot mate van autokratiese bestuurstyl, die bevelvoerende bestuurstyl, dit gaan selfs oor na ’n erge vorm van tirannie (skoolhoof).”

*[My immediate principal above me, has an autocratic leadership style, authoritarianism, it could even be seen as a severe form of tyranny (principal).]*

P9: “By ons skool is daar net persoon wat die mag het, wat die mag vir homself toeëien, en hy besluit alles ... hy vrees nie eens vir God nie, want hy dink hy is God (skoolhoof).”

*[At our school there is only one person who has the power, he assigns all the power to himself and he decides everything ... he shows no fear of God, because he thinks that he is god (principal).]*

#### **4.3.3.2 Management’s power abuse through the abdication of responsibility**

Abdicate implies giving up sovereign power or sometimes evading responsibility (Merriam-Webster Dictionary, 2012) Interviewees identified a lack of management, mostly from colleagues in management positions and the Department of Education, in playing a role in the abuse of power. When management is absent by avoiding their responsibilities, it almost sends out a message or serves as a basis for the abuse of power. Lack of support signifies a decrease in a target’s resources and ability to defend themselves, increases their vulnerability to the bully and shifts the imbalance of power further towards the bully (denial, personalising problems, maintaining self) thus increasing the perceived threat posed by bullying. Interviewees experienced a lack of support from the educational system in general. Bullies continuously target teachers who have no support and fail to defend themselves by any means possible. This lack of support contributes to workplace violence (cf par 2.2.1).

P10: “Verlede jaar met die oortollige onderwysers is daar mos vir ons gesê die onderwysers moet self die oortollige onderwysers identifiseer, nou dit is selfmoord vir ’n skool (Departement van Onderwys).”

*[Last year with the excesss teachers we were told that the teachers themselves have to decide which teachers are in excess, and this is suicide for any school (Department of Education).]*

P11: “Hierdie ding met die mans word nie aangespreek of reggestel nie... (skoolhoof).”

*[This issue with the men does not get addressed or rectified...(principal).]*

P13: “Ons sit baie keer sonder boeke, maar dan is daar ander skole wat die skryfbehoeftes tot teen die dak gepak staan ... dit is ’n klug, nee o Vader die Department doen ook nie hulle werk nie. Hulle is regtig pateties en so wag hul maar net dat die weke omgaan.”

*[Often we have been without books, but then there are other schools where the stationery is stacked to the roof ... it is a farse, the Department also does not do their job. They are really pathetic and they are just waiting for the weeks to pass.]*

#### **4.3.3.3 The experience of being surrendered to an imbalance of power**

To surrender means to yield to the power, control, or possession of another upon compulsion or demand (Merriam-Webster Dictionary, 2012). Interviewees see the imbalance of power as circumstances at their schools which negatively surround and influence the organisation as a whole and as a result power is abused which affects the welfare of everyone involved. Teachers who are in low power positions feel more vulnerable to being a target of hostile behaviours than those in high power positions. The imbalance of power often mirrors the formal power structure of the organisational context in which the bullying scenario unfolds. This would also be the case when someone is on the receiving end of negative acts from a person in a superior position in the organisational hierarchy (cf par 2.2.2). The importance of power structures and power imbalances in organisations can partly explain the large number of victims being bullies by supervisors (cf par. 2.2.2).

P6: “My hoof maak geen geheim daarvan dat hy ’n ou vir vendettas is en hy ’n ou vir ’n oog vir ’n oog is ... en as jy seer maak, maak ek seer, dit gaan nie werk in enige tipe instansie nie ...”

*[My principal does not keep it secret that he is a force to be reckoned with, and that he is a man for vendetta’s... and if you hurt me, I will hurt you, this will not work in any type of institution...]*

P9: “By ons skool is daar net een persoon wat die mag het, wat die mag vir homself toeëien, en hy besluit alles ... dit kom net van een kant af (skoolhoof).”

*[There is only one person at our school who has all the power, he assumes all the power for himself, and he decides everything ... it only comes from one source (principal).]*

P11: “Ek sit daar en voor die tyd was daar nou eintlik gesê dit is my profiel ... met ander woorde (vak uitgelaat om identiteit te beskerm) wat ek gee. Ek sit daar en dink, *oh my word*, wat gaan nou hier aan ... hier word oor my kop gepraat, oor my ... en so gaan dit aan, en ek het daar gesit en gevoel wat gaan hier aan, dit is nie ’n lekker gevoel nie. Jy is uitgelewer, absoluut.”

*[I was sitting there and before the time it was actually said that this is my profile ... in other words (subject omitted to protect identity) that I teach. I sat there thinking, oh my word, what's going on here ... they are talking over my head, about me ... and it*

*went on like this, while I was sitting there I thought to myself what is going on here, this is not a good feeling, I felt completely extradited.]*

#### **4.3.3.4 Staff in management positions display the abuse or misuse of power**

Interviewees indicated that staff members in management positions display manipulative behaviour to get what they want. It often also involves a display of their stronger and more powerful position. The higher the rank of the perpetrator, the more formal organisational power the perpetrator has to follow through threats, and this leaves targets with reduced resources to control it (cf par. 2.2.2). Supervisors' legitimate positions allow them to control important organisational resources, including pay allocation, promotions and work assignment (cf par. 2.2). Workplace harassment emerges out of the hierarchical power relations and struggles for power in the workplace (cf par 2.2.2).

P4: "Ek dink dit is opsetlik, en dat die een in die magsposisie dit misbruik en *he wants to feel in charge* (skoolhoof)."

*[I think it is on purpose and that the one in the position of power misuses his power and he wants to feel in charge (principal).]*

P5: "Ons vergadering het nie goed afgeloop nie, sy het gesit en grinnik ... sy het agterna die sielkundige gebel vir 'n onderhoud sonder my, maar my sielkundige het gesê dit gaan nie gebeur sonder haar pasiënt nie (KSB – Kringspanbestuurder)."

*[She sat there grimacing, our meeting did not go well... afterwards she phoned the psychologist to ask for a meeting without me, but my psychologist said that is not going to happen without her patient (CTM – Circuit Team Manager).]*

P6: "As daar miskien in die pyplyn 'n vooruitsig is van 'n permanente pos, sal hy dit misbruik en die onderwyser sal dus moet doen wat hy wil hê (skoolhoof)."

*[If there is a prospect of a potential permanent position in the pipeline, he will abuse it so that the teacher will have to do exactly what he wants (principal).]*

#### **4.3.3.5 Experience feelings of work insecurity**

Teachers attach great importance at feeling secure in their teaching positions. They admitted that they expect principals, educational managers and the Department of Education to provide this security. People in these higher positions have fears about the future, and in turn they abuse power, which leads to psychological violence. This can be intimidating and consequently leaves teachers feeling insecure. Job insecurity in particular is a common and important form of powerlessness in the workplace and should be strongly associated with

increased bullying. Those with less power will be more likely victims of bullying. The most commonly cited cause for increased bullying is the increasingly insecure job environment. Such insecurity, it is suggested, diminishes worker power and creates a pressure-cooker environment in which civility is replaced by bullying, as supervisors and managers seek to intimidate and blame employees for their mutually held fears about the future security of their jobs. (cf par. 2.2.6)

P8: "... jy kan nie net ontslaan word nie, mense ken nie die prosedures wat gevolg kan word nie, en dit veroorsaak ook stres."

*[... you cannot just be fired, people are not familiar with the procedures that can be followed, and this also causes stress.]*

P9: "... hulle voel net soos jy en is net so bang soos jy ... so op die ou einde is jy maar net *man alone* ... poste is skaars, ek kan nie bekostig om my pos te verloor."

*[... they feel exactly the same as you and are just as scared ... thus in the end you are man alone ... vacancies are scarce and I cannot afford to loose my post.]*

P10: "En daar word jy nie veel van 'n keuse gegee nie, daar word net vir jou gesê jy moet dit doen, en omdat poste op die huidige oomblik skaars is, kan jy nie sommer net aansoek doen vir 'n ander pos nie."

*[You are being told you have to do it, you are not given much of a choice, and you cannot just apply for a new position because teaching vacancies are scarce at the moment.]*

#### **4.3.3.6 Power abuse through coercion**

Coerce is defined as to achieve something by force or threat and coercion as the act, process or power of coercing (Merriam-Webster Dictionary, 2012). Teachers experience the abuse of power as a forceful act and pressure that emanates from management to achieve certain things. Educational managers view their managerial position as an image they have to protect because it gives them a sense of power. They protect this image by engaging with targeted teachers aggressively and they use these violent methods to demonstrate their power to other staff members and simultaneously emphasise that their authority should not be questioned or underestimated (cf par. 2.2.1). Also, participants felt that they were being undermined and coerced at work (cf par. 2.2.1).

P5: "Die mense wat gewoonlik minder mag het, sê net niks ... want as dit kom van bo af, gaan die meeste onderwysers stilbly en niks sê nie."

*[The people who usually have less power will say nothing ... because when it comes from the top most teachers will keep quiet and they will say nothing.]*

P9: “Maak nie saak wat nie, jy moet maar doen wat hy sê ... want as jy dit nie doen nie... dan word jy weer aangekla van pligsversuim.”

*[It does not matter what happens, you just have to do what he say ... if you don't do it ... you will be accused of refusing your duties.]*

#### **4.3.3.7 Principals abuse of power to manipulate school governing bodies**

Interviewees admitted that their school principals abuse their structural power as a minority through manipulating the school governing bodies as a majority. Not only is the school principal abusing his/her power but is equipped with even more power through these actions. Structural power and positional power are used interchangeably and describe the power an individual possesses because he or she holds a certain function e.g. a CEO, to which a predetermined specific level of power together with role expectations is attached (cf par 2.2.2).

P6: “Die beheerliggaam wat 'n handjievool mense is ... word maklik gemanipuleer deur die prinsipaal as 'n minderheidsgroepie.”

*[The governing body which is a handful of people ... are easily manipulated by the principal as a minority group.]*

P9: “Ons het die saak nie eens aangevat nie, want die beheerraad was saam met hom in met dit, hy beïnvloed die beheerraad, so wat is jou kanse (skoolhoof).”

*[We did not even take the matter on, because the governing body is with him on this, he influences the governing body, so what is your chances (principal).]*

#### **4.3.3.8 Teachers being treated like children**

Interviewees indicate that they often feel they are being treated like children. This is the intended misuse of power to place them in an inferior position or it could also be used to demonstrate power or authority. The features of bullying behaviour can take on many different forms, such as treating colleagues (definitely including trainees) as children and not adults. Participants also experienced their relationships with managers as a “school teacher-pupil” or a “parent-child” relationship, the manager as the “teacher or parent” and participants as the “pupils or children”. In some instances managers even refer to staff members as “children” that need correcting (cf par. 2.2).

- P3: "...die onderhoof sal noggal sy magsposisie misbruik, hy is al baie jare by die skool en kollegas van my ouderdom was by hom in die skool gewees ... hy (kollega) was verskriklik ontsteld gewees oor hoe hy hanteer is, veral op die manier dat hy soos 'n kind hanteer is en nie soos 'n volwassene as 'n onderwyser van die skool nie."  
*[The deputy principal will often abuse his position of power, he has been at the school for many years and colleagues of my age have been his students ... He (colleague) was terribly upset about how he was treated, especially in the way that he was treated like a child and not a teacher of the school.]*
- P8: "Nou word jy behandel soos 'n kind."  
*[Now you are treated like a child.]*

#### **4.3.4 Category 4: Teachers experienced physical and psychological health consequences of power relations as psychological violence**

Interviewees experienced physical and psychological health consequences because of power abuse as psychological violence at their schools. These negative experiences made interviewees unhappy, as it affected their health in such a way that it affected and undermined their ability to get things done.

##### **4.3.4.1 Teachers' physical health consequences after experiencing power relations as psychological violence**

<b>CATEGORY</b>	<b>SUB-CATEGORY</b>	<b>PARTICIPANTS n = 11</b>
4.3.4.1 Teachers' physical health consequences after experiencing power relations as psychological violence	4.3.4.1.1 Teachers feel tired	7
	4.3.4.1.2 Teachers experience physical ill health	6
	4.3.4.1.2 Teachers experience headaches	2

#### **4.3.4.1.1 Teachers feel tired**

Interviewees indicated that they experienced tiredness. The physical symptoms that became worse with the onset of psychological violence were the 21% of respondents that reported feeling chronically fatigued or tired. Also new physical health symptoms that became evident due to psychological violence include the 19% of respondents that reported feeling chronically fatigued or tired (cf par. 2.6.1).

P5: “Ek was moeg elke middag en het net by die huis gelê.”

*[I was tired every afternoon and I just stayed at home.]*

P10” “Dit maak jou moeg, dit steel jou lewenslus ... dit het 'n definitiewe impak.”

*[It makes you tired, it steals your vitality ... it has a definite impact.]*

P11: “Ek is moeg as ek in die middag van die skool af kom.”

*[When I get home from school in the afternoons I am tired.]*

#### **4.3.4.1.2 Teachers experience physical ill health**

Interviewees admitted to a list of physical health consequences due to the experience of power relations as psychological violence. Physical symptoms include disturbed and less restful sleep, complaints of general aches and pains last longer and can develop into tense muscles. You become more susceptible to colds and flues and in the long term you may be at a greater risk of heart attacks and strokes. They showed signs of mild to serious burnout, after experiencing high blood pressure and skin rashes. Another physical consequence is a reduced immunity to disease, as well as body aches in muscles and joints that worsened. (cf par 2.6.1).

P5: “Na al die ondervindings het ek aan hoë bloeddruk begin ly, ek het ook hoë cholesterol opgebou, hartkloppings, bewerasies ...”

*[After all these experiences I started having high blood pressure, I also started having high cholesterol, heart palpitations, trembling ... ]*

P7: “Dit laat jou sleg voel ... jou nek en rug is stokstyf.”

*[It makes you feel bad ... your neck and back are stiff.]*

P13: “...ek het siek geraak en ek is dokter toe, en hy het vir my gesê dit is gordelroos.”

*[... I fell ill and went to the doctor, he told me that it is shingles.]*

#### 4.3.4.1.3 *Teachers experience headaches*

Victims of power abuse as psychological violence said that they experience headaches. Headaches and migranes occurred more frequently. Also 23% of respondents found that stress headaches became worse (cf par. 2.6.1).

P11: "...of kopseer, is een van die goed wat baie gebeur, dat jy dink *oh my word* hier kom dit al weer."

*[... or headaches, is one of the things that I get quite often and then I think to myself oh my word here it comes again.]*

P13: "...sy staan elke oggend op met 'n kopseer."

*[... she wakes up with a headache every morning.]*

#### 4.3.4.2 *Teachers' psychological health consequences of power relations as psychological violence*

Teachers who are victims of power relations as psychological violence experience psychological health consequences, which has a profound effect on work satisfaction and work efficiency.

CATEGORY	SUB-CATEGORY	PARTICIPANTS n = 11
4.3.4.2 Teachers' psychological health consequences of power relations as psychological violence	4.3.4.2.1 Teachers experience feelings of helplessness	6
	4.3.4.2.2 Teachers feel emotional or cry	6
	4.3.4.2.3 Teachers experience stress	5
	4.3.4.2.4 Teachers experience feelings of negativity	4

	4.3.4.2.5 Teachers experience depression	4
	4.3.4.2.6 Teachers experience a lack of interest or involvement	3
	4.3.4.2.7 Teachers use medication to cope	3
	4.3.4.2.8 Teachers experience victimisation	2
	4.3.4.2.9 Teachers constantly think about the experience of abuse	2

#### **4.3.4.2.1 Teachers experience feelings of helplessness**

Interviewees indicated that they experienced intense feelings of helplessness accompanied with feeling angry, disappointed, doubting themselves, as well as shame. Teachers may also experience feelings of helplessness (cf par 2.6.2).

P4: "... wat dit vir jou voel dit raak nou vir jou regtig te veel om te hanteer."

[... it feels that it is really getting too much too handle.]

P5: "Ek was keelvol, in (spesifieke maand uitgelaat om identiteit te beskerm) het ek histories geraak en gevra as hy nie dinge regmaak nie, dan gaan ek my tas vat en loop."

[I had enough, I became hysterical in (specific month is omitted to protect identity) and asked him if he does not fix things, I am going to pack my bags and go.]

P11: "Jy voel magteloos, kwaad, teleurgesteld."

[You feel helpless, angry, disappointed.]

#### **4.3.4.2.2 Teachers feel emotional or cry**

Interviewees experienced feeling emotional or wanting to cry because of power abuse as psychological violence at their workplace. Staff members also cry as a result of negative experiences (cf par. 2.6.2).

P5: “... ek was emosioneel en het aanmekeer gehuil.”

[... *I was emotional and I cried all the time.*]

P7: “... ek was in trane ...”

[... *I was in tears ...*]

P9: “Ek het gevoel ek wil net huil ...”

[*I felt like I just wanted to cry ...*]

#### **4.3.4.2.3 Teachers experience stress**

Stress is defined as a state resulting from a stress; especially: one of bodily or mental tension resulting from factors that tend to alter an existent equilibrium (Merriam-Webster Dictionary, 2012.) Victims of power abuse experience stress. The effects of stress can be partly explained by the fact that stress causes increased job dissatisfaction. 29% of participants experienced anxiety, stress and excessive worry have become worse with the onset of psychological violence (cf par. 2.6.2). Stress undermines the ability to get things done and can affect physical and mental health (cf par. 2.6).

P4: “Ek eet geweldig baie as gevolg van die spanning wat ek huidiglik ondervind.”

[*I eat a lot because of the stress I am currently experiencing.*]

P5: “Dit gee jou stres.”

[*It gives you stress.*]

P7: “Dan gaan jy dokter toe en probeer verduidelik, maar ek dink die dokter weet al dit is stres.”

[*Then you try to explain when you go to the doctor, but I think that the doctor already knows it is stress.*]

#### **4.3.4.2.4 Teachers experience feelings of negativity**

Teachers experience negative feelings when they experience power relations as psychological violence. Workplace bullying leads to low morale among workers, leading to a lack of motivation to produce (cf par 2.6).

P5: “Dis waarom ek sê hulle mag dwing hulle af en gebruik hulle mag om jou verder seer te maak en jou verder negatief te maak.”

*[That's why I say they force their power on you and they use their power to hurt you further and to continue to make you more negative.]*

P9: “Alles is korrup man, die Departement ook, ek het geen vertrouwe in die Departement ook nie.”

*[Everything is corrupt the Department also, I too, have no confidence in the Department.]*

P11: “...daar is min goed wat jou so geboelie laat voel as jy het gewerk het, om nie beloon te word nie ... en jy weet 'n ou raak negatief, daar is definitief 'n ontsettende groot komponent van negatiwiteit.”

*[There are few things that make you feel more bullied than when you have worked hard and you are not rewarded ... you know a person becomes negative, there is definitely an excessively large component of negativity.]*

#### **4.3.4.2.5 Teachers experience depression**

Depression is seen as a state of feeling sad: a psychoneurotic or psychotic disorder marked especially by sadness, inactivity, difficulty in thinking and concentration, a significant increase or decrease in appetite and time spent sleeping, feelings of dejection and hopelessness, and sometimes suicidal tendencies (Merriam-Webster Dictionary, 2012). Teachers experience depression associated with the experience of power abuse as psychological violence. Victimised teachers show signs of severe depression and, as a result, they often make use of counselling services or have regular visits to their general practitioner. They also in many ways feel dead or have feelings of wanting to be dead (cf par 2.6.2). One participant articulated this as follow:

P10: “Dit maak jou depressief...”

*[It makes you depressed...]*

#### **4.3.4.2.6 Teachers experience a lack of interest or involvement**

Teachers identified their personal lack of involvement to such an extent that their daily duties are done in a mechanical manner indicative of a lack of interest. A person often finds himself irritable and withdrawn, finding it harder to maintain concentration and becoming increasingly forgetful (cf par 2.6.2).

P4: “Die mense (onderwysers) is al so afgetakel, hulle gaan maar net saam met die stroom.”

[*The people (teachers) are so degraded they will just go with the flow.*]

P6: “... ons gaan net deur die *motions* elke dag...”

[*... we just go through the motions every day...*]

P10: “... dan kom hulle op ’n punt dat hulle net deur die *motions* gaan.”

[*... they then came to a point that they just go through the motions.*]

#### **4.3.4.2.7 Teachers use medication to cope**

Victimised teachers admitted to taking medication to cope in adverse conditions and stressful situations. Some of them have never had the need to take medication before. They have to learn to keep head above water throughout the year despite of abusive circumstances, work stressors, limited social support or health problems. Victimised teachers’ physical health is affected in such a way that they need prescribed medication for various medical conditions (cf par. 2.6.2).

P3: “Ek voel die heelyd tam en vir die eerste keer in my lewe moet ek multivitamines drink vir energie om deur die dag te kom.”

[*I feel tired all the time and for the first time in my life I must drink multivitamins for energy to get through the day.*]

P5: “Die dokter het vir my ’n pil gegee wat my laat slaap het en hy het my afgeboek.”

[*The doctor gave me a pill to let me sleep and he booked me off sick.*]

P8: “Jy kan mos nie vier Mybulen tablette drink nie; dit is nie goed vir jou gesondheid nie.”

[*You can not take four Mybulen tablets, it just isn’t good for your health.*]

#### **4.3.4.2.8 Teachers experience victimisation**

Teachers experience increased victimisation while being exposed to power abuse. Consequently they are susceptible to repeated victimisation (cf par. 2.6.2).

P5: “Sy was baie onprofessioneel gewees, sy is besig om my te viktimiseer.”

[*She was very unprofessional, she is busy victimising me.*]

P6: “Dan weet ek hulle is bang hulle word geviktimiseer.”

[*I know they are afraid of being victimised.*]

#### 4.3.4.2.9 *Teachers constantly think about the experience of abuse*

Some of the participants reported that they continuously think about the negative experiences, for example when they are at home, every day when they get up for work and while standing in front of their class. Interviewees indicate that they frequently re-experience traumatic incidences. Mobbing victims commonly become so preoccupied with what has happened to them that they cease to be able to function effectively (cf par 2.6.2).

P4: “Selfs voor jou klas is jy nie jousef nie, want jou gedagtegang is baie by hierdie goed en hoe mag op jou toegepas word.”

*[Even in front of your class you are not yourself because your thoughts are constantly occupied about this stuff and the power abuse against you.]*

P9: “... maar more-oggend as ek opstaan, begin ek weer dink oor die goed.”

*[... but once I get up tomorrow morning I start thinking about these things again.]*

### 4.3.5 **Category 5: Teachers experience behavioural and social relations consequences of power relations as psychological violence**

#### 4.3.5.1 *Teachers display behavioural changes after experiencing power relations as psychological violence*

CATEGORY	SUB-CATEGORY	PARTICIPANTS n = 11
4.3.5.1 Teachers display behavioural changes after experiencing power relations as psychological violence	4.3.5.1.1 Teachers' work productivity and motivation declines	5
	4.3.5.1.2 Teachers retaliate or have the notion to retaliate	3
	4.3.5.1.3 Teachers are reluctant to go to work	3
	4.3.5.1.4 Teachers	3

	<p>experience changes in their personality</p> <p>4.3.5.1.5 Teachers experience having negative feelings towards learners</p>	3
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#### **4.3.5.1.1 Teachers' work productivity and motivation declines**

Interviewees indicated that they can not do their work like they used to anymore and that they lack motivation. A person may become less reliable, less punctual, more often absent from work and more accident-prone for no apparent reason. (cf par 2.6.3).

P4: "Maar omdat jy selfrespek verloor, gaan die liefde 'n bietjie kwyn vir die saak hoekom jy regtig daar is om te doen."

*[But because you lose self respect, you lose the passion for what you are really there to do.]*

P5: "Ek kon nie my werk doen in die klas soos ek wou, ek was nie lus vir boeke merk, klas gee."

*[I couldn't do my work in class the way I wanted, I did not feel like marking books or teaching.]*

P6: "Dit voel vir my die dames by die skool doen hul werk omdat hul bang is ... eerder as vir die passie daarvoor ... en dit maak die onderwysers se moraal laag."

*[To me it feels as if the ladies do their work at school because they are afraid ... rather than for the passion of it ... and this lessens the teachers' morale.]*

#### **4.3.5.1.2 Teachers retaliate or have the notion to retaliate**

Interviewees indicated that they often have the desire to retaliate against the colleague abusing power, but they hardly ever take action. New psychological health symptoms with the onset of psychological violence include 15% of the respondents saying they thought about being violent towards others (cf par. 2.6.2). Organisational members are powerful when the organisation depends on them for their resources, or potential contributions, therefore some may be relatively powerful and to some extent protected against retaliation and subsequent workplace bullying (cf par 2.2.3).

- P3: “So as iemand (kollegas) vir jou iets sê, is jy amper automaties op die aanval, want jy voel dit is ’n aanval op jou persoonlik.”  
*[If somebody (colleagues) is telling you something you are almost automatically on the attack, because you feel it is an attack on you personally.]*
- P5: “Ek het al vroeër in die jaar histeries by die skool geraak, ek het net gevoel toe ek in die klas instap en alles is net dieselfde, het ek net gevoel vandag gaan ek ’n kind gooi met iets of slaan, ek beter myself net verwyder ...”  
*[Earlier in the year I have been hysterical at school, when I walked into the class I just felt everything is exactly the same, I just felt today I’m going to throw something at a child or hit him, therefore I better remove myself ...]*
- P9: “Soos Maandag met die godsdienstige-geval het ek gevoel om op te staan en hom (skoolhoof) een taai klap te gee.”  
*[As on Monday with the religious incident, I wanted to stand up and give him (principal) a hard slap.]*

#### **4.3.5.1.3 Teachers are reluctant to go to work**

Reluctant refers to feeling or show hesitation or unwillingness. As a result of experiencing power abuse at work teachers indicated that they did not enjoy their work any more and that they did not want to get up in the mornings to go work. They said that they felt tired and wanted to stay in bed. It transpired that participants do not enjoy their work any more as a result of negative experiences. Participants described dreading having to go going to work as a result of negative experiences (cf par. 2.6.3).

- P3: “Mens voel regtig jy het nie meer lus om in die oggende op te staan en skool toe te gaan nie.”  
*[One really does not feel like getting up in the morning to go to school.]*
- P7: “Dit was elke dag ’n struweling wat opgebou het na ’n groot ding ... ek wou nie eens meer skool toe gaan nie.”  
*[Every day was a struggle building up to something bigger ... I did not even want to go to school anymore.]*
- P8: “Op die ou einde raak dit net jy voel jy is nie lus vir die besigheid nie, jy is nie lus om skool toe te gaan nie.”  
*[In the end you just don’t feel in the mood for this business, you do not want to go to school.]*

#### **4.3.5.1.4 Teachers experience changes in their personality**

Interviewees said that their personalities change because of the experience of power abuse. Participants revealed that they experienced personality changes, acting contrary to their own personality and becoming a “changed” person as a result of negative experiences (cf par. 2.6.3).

P3: “...ek weet nie of ek as persoon daardeur verander het nie, ’n mens raak op ’n manier hard...”

*[... I don't know if I changed as a person because of it, in a way one becomes tough...]*

P4: “Ek het baie gewig aangesit, omdat my lus vir so baie dinge afgetakel was, ek was baie sportief, en ek toon baie min belangstelling daarin deesdae.”

*[I have put on a lot of weight, because my desire for so many things diminished, I used to be very sporty, but these days I show very little interest in sport.]*

P11: “Ek is eintlik ’n ekstrovert, ek put eintlik my energie uit mense uit, ek kry juis nie my energie uit stilte nie, so ja dat mens eintlik ’n persoonlikheidsverandering ondergaan, wat ’n ou eintlik noop om na die ander kant toe te gaan.”

*[I'm actually an extrovert and I obtain my energy from people, I do not get my energy from silence, so yes it is true that you actually undergo a personality change, which forces you to go to the other side.]*

#### **4.3.5.1.5 Teachers experience having negative feelings towards learners**

Teachers expressed concern about learners regularly challenging their authority. They experienced tension in their relationships with learners, especially with those of a different race. Tension occurs mostly when teachers punish learners for not following school rules. Learners usually deny their wrong behaviour and accuse teachers of enforcing the rules unequally on all learners. Teachers see this as a strategy learners use to take authority away from them and dodging responsibility for their own actions. Teachers admitted to feeling bad about it, but having unkind and negative feelings towards learners. If the mobbing experience is left untreated it can take over the identity of the victim and rob the victim of a sense of self (cf par. 2.6.3).

P5: “...daar was ’n stadium wat ons mekaar *emotionally abuse* het, as jy iets sleg aan my doen, doen ek iets sleg aan hulle (leerlinge).”

*[... there was a time where we abused each other emotionally, if you do something*

*bad towards me, I do something bad towards them (learners).]*

P7: "...ek het skuldige gevoel daaroor, want hy is 'n kind en ek is 'n grootmens, maar daar was 'n tyd wat ek hom nie voor my oë kon verdra het nie juis oor sy gedrag."

*[...I felt guilty about it because he was a child and I am an adult, but there was a time that I couldn't stand seeing him, because of his behaviour.]*

P11: "As dit Vrydag raak, is ek moeg ek is gatvol, ek wil nie 'n kind sien nie, ek wil nie 'n swart mens sien nie, weet jy hoe erg is dit."

*[When it gets to Friday I am tired I've had it up to here, I do not want to see a child, I do not want to see a black person, do you know how bad it is.]*

#### **4.3.5.2 Teachers' health problems often results in the deterioration of social relationships**

CATEGORY	SUB-CATEGORY	PARTICIPANTS n = 11
4.3.5.2 Teachers' health problems often results in the deterioration of social relationships	4.3.5.2.1 Teachers personal or family relations suffer	8
	4.3.5.2.2 Teachers withdraw socially	8

##### **4.3.5.2.1 Teachers' personal or family relations suffer**

Teachers admitted that the members of their families, their marriages, husband and children are affected at every level of their relationships because of the experience of power abuse. Workplace mobbing extracts a huge price and it is paid by the victim and the family. The "ripple effect" describes how workplace bullying impacts on relationships outside of the workplace, with negative, long-term and distressing effects for participants and others (cf par. 2.6.4).

P4: "Dit het definitief 'n invloed op my huisgesin en gesinslewe ook, want jy kom met *moodswings* huis toe en jy kom met 'n klomp bagasie elke dag huis toe met dit wat op jou gelaai is."

*[It has definitely had an impact on my family and family life too, you come home with*

*moodswings and you come home every day with a lot of luggage with all that is loaded onto you.]*

P7: “Jou man ly daaronder, jou kinders ly daaronder, as jy omgekrap en sleg voel as jy by die huis kom, dan weet hulle nie wat aan gaan nie.”

*[Your husband suffers and your children suffer because of it, if you are upset and feel bad when you get home they do not know what is going on.]*

P13: “Jy is kortaf en kwaai met jou man, want jy is nie nou baie lus vir praat nie.”

*[You are abrupt and angry with your husband because you are not in the mood to talk.]*

#### **4.3.5.2.2 Teachers withdraw socially**

Interviewees indicated that they have lost interest in certain things they used to enjoy and even withdraw on a social basis. Teachers’ social isolation or withdrawal is usually accompanied by depression. These teachers withdraw themselves socially, which has a significant impact on their social life and profession (cf par. 2.6.3). Victims may experience profound feelings of self-doubt, shame and humiliation, leading to increased self-imposed isolation from their natural web of social contacts (cf par. 2.6.2).

P3: “Vrydae middae wil jy net slaap en ontspan, want jy is fisies net uitgeput.”

*[Friday afternoons you just want to sleep and relax because you are physically exhausted.]*

P5: “Ek was altyd sosiaal, maar naweke het ek niks meer gedoen nie.”

*[I was always social, but over weekends I do nothing anymore.]*

P11: “...as dit Vrydag raak, is ek selfs nie lus vir kerk toe gaan nie, ek voel al hoe meer ek ontrek my.”

*[...when it gets to Friday, I don't even feel like going to church, I feel like I am withdrawing myself more and more.]*

## **4.4 OBSERVATIONS FROM FIELDWORK**

Abused teachers were interviewed in a safe environment to protect them from further victimisation. Most interviewees were cautious because of their fear that they would be abused again if their perpetrator knew about their participation in this research. A further two teachers were over-cautious and declined to participate in this study. Two teachers withdrew

from the study, also for fear of their identity being exposed. One teacher's interview was omitted, because in the end she said that she had never experienced power abuse as psychological violence. It became apparent that teachers' work environment threatens their physical, psychological and emotional well-being.

Teachers' lack of control over their profession, constant conflict at work, feelings of helplessness and frustration evidently had an effect on their self-esteem. The effect of their negative experiences at work were visible through physical signs such as looking tired and tense, shaking, tearfulness and even avoiding eye contact. During interviews, teachers expressed similar emotions to what they have experienced during their experience of power abuse as psychological violence. The growing pressures at school and lack of support for these teachers contribute to their experiences of power relations as psychological violence beyond a question or doubt. Ultimately they pay the price, as well as their loved ones, and they are caught in a cycle of destruction from which there is no relief or escape.

#### **4.5 SUMMARY**

This chapter provided teachers' personal experiences on power relations as psychological violence. Other categories such as teachers' experiences on the role of gender and race in the abuse of power, work environmental factors and physical, psychological, behavioural and social health consequences as a result of power relations as psychological violence, were also illuminated. Identified categories were supported with literature, which was discussed in Chapter 2.

Chapter 5 will cover the summary, findings, limitations, and recommendations of the study.

## **CHAPTER 5**

### **5 SUMMARY, FINDINGS, LIMITATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **5.1 INTRODUCTION**

This chapter concludes the research study, with a summary of the previous chapters (Chapters 1 to 4) regarding teachers' experiences of power abuse as psychological violence. This chapter begins with providing a summary of the research study. Thereafter the key findings of this study will be discussed, limitations of this study will be identified and recommendations for future research studies will be provided.

#### **5.2 SUMMARY OF THIS RESEARCH STUDY**

Workplace psychological violence and its impact on health has become an important matter in workplaces, it has also become a major topic of interest among researchers. Many traits, characteristics or forms of status and power may serve as a basis for directing unwanted conduct and behaviour in the form of psychological violence, but it has become evident that limited research exists concerning the issues falling under the dimensions of power relations as basis for psychological violence between teachers (cf Chapter 1). The rapid transformation in South African education over the past two decades, knotted together a variety of societies, cultures, ethnic backgrounds, religions, beliefs, attitudes, races and genders. Moreover, other factors such as continued reformation of the schooling system, learner outcome changes, temporary or part-time positions, increased workload, longer working hours and growing pressures for increased results also add to the escalated presence of the abuse of power to be experienced as psychological violence in the teaching profession in South Africa (cf Chapter 1).

Thus far, very little empirical research is done in the education profession to examine the potential links between incidences of power relations, power abuse, psychological violence and the everyday experiences of members of different racial and gender groups in South Africa. The abuse of power lies in the use of formal power status for non-rational behaviour; power can also be derived from informal sources, such as contacts with influential people, an individual's standing in the workplace, and knowledge of the other person's vulnerabilities that could be exploited (cf Chapter 1). The research is an effort to create an enriched

understanding and increase awareness about power abuse among teachers and ultimately promote dignity, equality and freedom for all teachers in South Africa.

**Chapter 2** investigated the nature of power relations as psychological violence. Literature were consulted to identify a range of dimensions falling under the umbrella of experiences of power relations as psychological violence (cf Chapter 2). The chapter discussed various interpersonal behaviours and social perceptions of power in the power relations – psychological violence dyad which ultimately could lead to the behaviour of psychological violence. This included actual power, structural power, status, personality dominance, dominance behaviour, perceived power and experienced power. The conceptualisation of power relations as psychological violence was presented as power as the central issue, power differences during interaction, power relations are interpersonal and the vulnerability or protective factors for targets. Dimensions of power relations were then discussed. The consequences of power relations as psychological violence were investigated, which explained the detrimental impact on teachers' health; health meaning a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being, and not just the absence of disease. Teachers could experience incidences of power abuse perpetrated by learners, parents, colleagues or colleagues in management positions. Teachers' experiences of power abuse as psychological violence could lead to negative physical, psychological, behavioural or social consequences.

In **Chapter 3** a detailed description of the qualitative approach was presented. It provided the blueprint of how the research was conducted (cf Chapter 3). It included the research design and methods that were used during the research. A phenomenological approach in qualitative research was explained for being appropriate because it provided the opportunity to explore teachers' lived experiences of power abuse as psychological violence. In this way, as a strategy of inquiry, the researcher could identify the essence of human experiences about the phenomenon power abuse as described by participants. This chapter also described the data-collecting methods, which included the phenomenological interviews, interviewing victimised teachers, triangulation, the role of the researcher and communication techniques. The chapter then included the steps that were taken to analyse the obtained data.

**Chapter 4** presented the qualitative data as it was analysed. Interpretations were made in the form of meaningful phrases, quotes and words from the data and then it was triangulated with the literature findings in Chapter 2. The data was then put into context to present teachers' experience of power relations as psychological violence. The findings of this

process indicated teachers' experience of power abuse as psychological violence as widespread and current, and that it originated mostly from colleagues in management positions, colleagues and learners.

## **5.3 CONCLUSIONS**

The conclusions of this study have been made with regard to specific and general aims of this study.

### **5.3.1 Specific Aims**

#### ***5.3.1.1 The first specific aim of this study was to investigate the nature of power relations through a literature study***

The literature findings in Chapter 2 entailed that power is perceived by all members in a workplace, and serves as a prioritisation device, in other words giving priority to the emotions, goals and actions of high power individuals. Those colleagues in positions of power can influence outcomes such as pay allocation, promotions and work assignment. Power abuse and discrimination in employment takes on many forms and occurs in all kinds of work settings (cf par. 2.2). It implied that people are treated differently because of characteristics such as race and gender, which results in and reinforces inequalities. Skills and competencies cannot be developed, rewards to work are denied, it brings about new forms of stress and conflict, and a sense of humiliation, frustration and powerlessness takes over (cf par. 2.1). Results of this study confirmed that the misuse of power or position undermines a person's ability and leaves them feeling angry, powerless, frightened, hurt or depressed.

#### **a) The power relations – psychological violence dyad**

Literature findings indicated that bullying behaviour, as a form of psychological violence can take on many different forms, such as sadistic or aggressive behaviour over time, humiliation or ridiculing, criticism in public that is designed to humiliate rather than educate, exclusion from meetings, persistent, unwanted, unneeded criticism in private, treating colleagues (definitely including trainees) as children and not adults (cf par. 2.2). In addition, there are also the undermining of staff by replacing their area of responsibility unreasonably or without justification, withholding information to deliberately affect a colleague's performance,

constantly changing work deadlines or work guidelines (cf par. 2.2). Results have indicated that power relations and psychological violence are behaviours that could be regarded as two behaviours of the same kind, as in a dyadic relationship.

#### **b) Seven types of interpersonal behaviours in a hierarchy that contributes to interpersonal power relations**

The seven types of interpersonal behaviours in a hierarchy that contribute to interpersonal power relations within an organisation are actual power, structural power, status, personality dominance, dominance behaviour, perceived power and experienced power (cf par. 2.2.1 – 2.2.7). It became apparent that these are behaviours that are present during social interactions within the workplace and that it has an effect on how powerful a person is perceived. The expression of power for example, from the principal towards a teacher in the staffroom and how they perceive each other's power, will determine how each of them behaves, feels, thinks and perceives.

#### **c) Gender and race dimensions of power relations**

Literature findings imply that people have socially constructed views and beliefs of gender. It is socially constructed patterns of women and men's lives and relations and is the outcome of social forces and relations. In other words, it is constructed in and through society by means of different views of people and their gender roles within society. Literature findings also argue that women are usually in a disadvantaged position in the workplace compared to men (cf par. 2.4). The findings of the research suggest that information about a colleague's actual power and status (e.g. seeing that the colleague is a woman) affects how powerful that colleague is perceived. Men and women are not only associated differently with power; men are also associated with being more hierarchical and women with being more egalitarian. The literature also identified race as well as minority race as a high-risk personal characteristic that place them at risk to be victimised in the workplace. Transformation within the workplace can create diverse employee groups. Colleagues from different races often misunderstand each other's work methods and way of thinking and this causes conflict in the workplace. Consequently, teachers' experiences and recognition of these significant views on gender and race, as well as how it plays a role in power abuse, influence their awareness and experience of psychological violence.

### **5.3.1.2 *The second specific aim was to investigate the association between power relations and psychological violence through a literature study***

According to literature, it is not possible to understand psychological violence without taking the concept of power into consideration (cf par. 2.3). Power exists in and can spread through every part of a workplace, and is defined by on-going rights and relationships which were also found to be the result of this study. It has become apparent that not all colleagues in management positions behave equally: some are democratic leaders, while others may be autocratic leaders. Some teachers are more competent than others in certain areas; some teachers are more flexible, while others are more rigid in their profession. These are just a few of the factors that influence daily interaction and power relations amongst colleagues. Power differences are not always pre-established, and even in a hierarchy that exists, the low-power individual might still challenge the high-power individual's authority or position (cf par. 2.3.2). In this case, the low-power individual does probably not conform to the behavioural expectations linked to a low-power individual. The imbalance of power is therefore a central feature or is thought to characterise psychological violence. The imbalance of power and abuse of power can be seen as a prerequisite for psychological violence to occur and in turn it creates a stressful work environment for teachers.

### **5.3.1.3 *The third specific aim was to conduct qualitative research to investigate teachers' experiences of power relations as psychological violence.***

#### **a) Teachers' personal experiences on the nature of power relations**

The research results have shown that teachers identified certain dimensions of power relations, such as work performance, senior teacher and power abuse from parents, to often play a role in the abuse power in relationships at school (Par 4.3.1). Teachers portrayed similar personal experiences and behaviours on the nature of power relations in the workplace as those indicated in the literature findings (cf par. 2.2.7, par. 2.3.4, par. 2.2.5, par. 2.2.3). These included certain experiences, such as being subjected to power abuse from learners (cd par. 4.3.1.5), negative experiences related to qualifications (cf par. 4.3.1.6), whistleblowers experiencing power abuse (cf par. 4.3.1.7), power abuse because of envy (cf par. 4.3.1.8), being humiliated (cf par. 4.3.1.9) and power abuse from groups within staff (cf par. 4.3.1.10). Work performance as a potential source of power abuse (cf par. 4.3.1.1) and being exposed to verbal abuse (cf par. 4.3.1.2) were acknowledged by victimised teachers as playing a significant role in the power abuse as psychological violence.

### **b) Teachers' experiences on the role of gender and race in the abuse of power**

Results also indicated that teachers' specific experiences on the role of gender and race contribute to their vulnerability to experience power abuse. Teachers being subjected to power abuse from principals (cf par. 4.3.2.1), female teachers being treated in a subordinate manner (cf par. 4.3.2.2), teachers' race placing them at risk (cf par. 4.3.2.3), cultural or racial differences of others contributing to power abuse (cf par. 4.3.2.4), male learners abusing their power by being physically intimidating (cf par. 4.3.2.5), female teachers experiencing an unequal work load (cf par. 4.3.2.6) and power abuse through male dominance behaviour (cf par. 4.3.2.7) can be identified as experiences provoking power abuse. The findings from the data confirmed that teachers perceived gender and race as a dimension of power that negatively affects interpersonal behaviour to experience psychological violence.

### **c) Teachers' perceptions on the role of work environmental factors in power relations as psychological violence**

Teachers' perception of work environmental factors playing a role in power relations as psychological violence corroborated with literature findings. Being subjected to autocratic management styles (cf par. 4.3.3.1), management's power abuse through the abdication of responsibility (cf par. 4.3.3.2), the experience of being surrendered to an imbalance of power (cf par. 4.3.3.3), staff in management positions displaying the abuse or misuse of power (cf par. 4.3.3.4), experiencing feelings of work insecurity (cf par. 4.3.3.3), power abuse through coercion (cf par. 4.3.3.6), principal abusing power to manipulate governing body (cf par. 4.3.3.7), teachers being treated like children (cf par. 4.3.3.8) play a role in the experience of power abuse. The above-mentioned work environmental factors affect how power is used or abused in the workplace. Most of the power abuse emanates from colleagues in management positions. How powerful a colleague in a management position is perceived to be depends on the knowledge of his actual power. Consequently, this contributes to the experience of power relations as psychological violence.

#### **5.3.1.4 *The fourth specific aim was to conduct qualitative research to investigate the impact of power relations as psychological violence on teachers' health***

Teachers are subject to pressures such as low public self-esteem, increasingly difficult students and parents, lack of control over the job, internal politics, a blame culture and excessive working time and workload. These factors can cause stress. Stress undermines the ability to get things done and can affect physical and mental health (cf par. 2.6). Results

have indicated that educators are primarily abused by colleagues in management positions, colleagues and learners.

Research findings include the following as physical health consequences: teachers feel tired (cf par. 4.3.4.1.1), experience physical ill health (cf par. 4.3.4.1.2) and experience headaches (cf par. 4.3.4.1.2). The findings of the research are supported by the literature where even more physical symptoms were listed.

The psychological consequences of power relations are observable in the following ways: teachers experience feelings of helplessness (cf par. 4.3.4.2.1), teachers feel emotional or cry (cf par. 4.3.4.2.2), teachers experience stress (cf par. 4.3.4.2.3), feelings of negativity (cf par. 4.3.4.2.4), depression (cf par. 4.3.4.2.5), a lack of interest or involvement (cf par. 4.3.4.2.6), teachers use medication to cope (cf par. 4.3.4.2.7), teachers experience victimisation (cf par. 4.3.4.2.8), they constantly think about the experience of abuse (cf par. 4.3.4.2.9). Research results about the psychological consequences on the teachers' health corroborated with literature findings.

The impact on the behaviour of teachers manifests in the following ways: teachers' work productivity and motivation decline (cf par 4.3.5.1.1), teachers retaliate or have the notion to retaliate (cf par 4.3.5.1.2), they are reluctant to go to work (cf par 4.3.5.1.3), teachers experience changes in their personality (cf par 4.3.5.1.4), teachers experience having negative feelings towards learners (cf par 4.3.5.1.5). The findings also revealed that teachers' health problems often result in the deterioration of social relationships with teachers' personal or family life suffering (cf par 4.3.5.2.1) or the teacher withdrawing socially (cf par 4.3.5.2.2). The findings on the research about behavioural- and social consequences are supported by the literature.

### **5.3.2 General Aim**

#### ***5.3.2.1 The general aim and focus of this study was to investigate the experience of power relations as psychological violence and the impact it has on the health of teachers***

The research conducted in the Cape Winelands and the Cacadu districts portrays teachers' specific experiences on power abuse as psychological violence and the negative impact it has on their health, meaning physical, mental and social well-being. Apart from the fact that

the dimensions of power encouraged psychological violence, a connection seems to exist between these two behaviours.

### **5.3.3 Larger relevance of this study**

Firstly, results of this study corroborated with literature findings on teachers' experiences of power relations as psychological violence. It can therefore be assumed that experiences of power relations as psychological violence will generally be similar, irrespective of working contexts.

Secondly, results of this study indicated that power abuse in power relations plays a significant role in teachers' experiences of psychological violence. This research emphasises the need for the Human Rights Commission and Educational Department to a) consider and address power abuse as in school settings; b) acknowledge teachers as victims of power abuse; c) acknowledge the detrimental effects on the health of the teacher, also the whole teaching-learning process; d) acknowledge teachers, colleagues in management positions and learners as perpetrators of power relations as psychological violence.

## **5.4 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY**

The following issues can be identified as having a limiting effect on this study:

- The group of interviewees is not representative of the whole population of teachers who have experienced power relations as psychological violence in the workplace, therefore the findings of the study are only applicable to teachers who participated in the study and generalising should be done with caution;
- Teachers often do not realise or recognise that they are exposed to power abuse. It almost seems that certain behaviours of power abuse as psychological violence have been part of the daily routine for so long that it has been normalised in the workplace;
- A further two teachers declined to participate in the study and two participants withdrew from the study due to the fear that they would be abused by colleagues because of their participation in the study - even though the researcher reassured them of complete confidentiality;
- One participant's interview was omitted, because she said she did not experience power relations as psychological violence.

- Due to time and practical restraints, not all the teachers who indicated their interest to be interviewed could not be interviewed;
- The researcher also could have included a quantitative component to this study.

## **5.5 RECOMMENDATIONS**

The following recommendations can be made concerning this study and future studies on power relations as psychological violence.

### **5.5.1 Recommendations concerning this study**

- Individuals must undergo psychometric testing to measure mental capabilities and behavioural style to assess employment suitability before being appointed in managerial positions;
- Providing information to teachers and student teachers about power relations as psychological violence to create awareness: thus, recognising signs of abuse; recognising psychological violence; recognising the detrimental effects on health. This information can be provided in the form of information sessions, team-building or role-play exercise, brochures, posters or workshops. This can be done locally and nationally;
- Teacher support programmes should be put in place in order to address the experience of power relations as psychological violence;
- Implementing counselling services at schools that teachers have access to; and
- Providing accessible legislative support for abused teachers at schools.

### **5.5.2 Recommendations concerning future studies on power relations as psychological violence**

- The lack of research on teachers experiences of power relations, creates a substantial gap in literature;
- It is recommended that research be done on South African teachers' awareness of power abuse and power relations;
- It is also recommended that further research be done on the dimensions of power (e.g. personality dominance, status, perceived power, actual power etc.) in South African schools;
- Further research on the contribution of how gender and racial behaviour is interpreted by teachers in terms of power relations in South African schools;

- Power comes in all shapes and colours. The position of a person in a school does not entirely determine how power is expressed or perceived in interpersonal behaviour. Further research on specific behaviour and how power is expressed and perceived by teachers in South African schools.
- The development of a standardised questionnaire on power abuse and power relations which can be used by academics as part of research process on power relations as psychological violence.

## **5.6 SUMMARY**

This chapter provided a brief summary, as well as a discussion concerning the findings, limitations and recommendations of this study. Findings from this study confirmed that teachers experience power relations as psychological violence, and that it has an impact on their health. It is envisaged that this study will not only result in a general awareness of power relations and power abuse as experienced by staff members, but that it will also stress the need for researchers to further research the dimensions of power relations as psychological violence as experienced by teachers.

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## APPENDIX A: ETHICAL CLEARANCE LETTER, LETTER OF CONSENT AND LANGUAGE EDITORS' LETTER



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### ETHICS APPROVAL OF PROJECT

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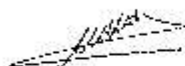
This is to certify that the next project was approved by the NWU Ethics Committee:

<p><b>Project title :</b> Teachers' experiences of power relations as psychological violence</p> <p><b>Student :</b> Ms A van der Westhuizen</p> <p><b>Project leader:</b> Dr GJC Kirsten</p> <p><b>Ethics number:</b> NWU-00075-11-A2</p> <p><small>(Status: S = Submission, R = Re-Submission, P = Provisional Authorisation, A = Authorisation)</small></p> <p><b>Expiry date:</b> 22 June 2016</p>
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The Ethics Committee would like to remain at your service as scientist and researcher, and wishes you well with your project. Please do not hesitate to contact the Ethics Committee for any further enquiries or requests for assistance.

The formal Ethics approval certificate will be sent to you as soon as possible.

Yours sincerely



Me. Marietjie Halgryn  
NWU Ethics Secretariate



**ETHICS NUMBER: NWU-00075-11-A2**

**TITLE OF THE RESEARCH PROJECT**

Teachers' experiences of power relations as psychological violence.

**PROJECT HEAD:** Dr. G.J.C. Kirsten

**LETTER OF CONSENT**

Dear participant,

Please take your time to read through the summary below. Acquaint yourself with the information, before signing the consent form:

Research suggests that psychological violence is not a marginal phenomenon and statistics show that teachers are one of the top groups of employees being bullied. Psychological violence or bullying can be seen as repeated and overtime offensive behaviour – verbal, non-verbal, visual, psychological or physical – through vindictive, cruel or malicious attempts to humiliate, marginalise or undermine an individual or groups of employees and includes, but is not limited to, psychological pressure, harassment, intimidation, threats, coercion, conspiracies, manipulation, extortion and hostile and unfair behaviour which could impact on the worth, dignity, emotional and physical well-being and health of the victim”.

Power relations may be referred to, and is sometimes used interchangeably, as the concept of power, power struggle, power dynamics, control, influence or authority of an influential person/group and the way in which people or groups behave toward each other. Research also found that the most common forms of bullying are misuse of power or position (70%), verbal insults (69%), and undermining by overloading or criticism (68%).

The rapid transformation in South African education over the past two decades, 1994 to the present day, knotted together a variety of societies, cultures, ethnic backgrounds, beliefs, attitudes, races and genders. The transformation of the post apartheid South African education system is very diverse and it often plays a part in creative and prolific work

environments. It can also contribute to conflict, aggression, power struggles and dissimilarity with regard to gender, race, position and status which give way to psychological violence. Other factors, such as continued reformation of the schooling system, learner outcome changes, temporary or part-time positions, increased teaching workload, longer working hours, growing pressures for increased results, and strikes and union disputes also add to the escalated presence of power relations as psychological violence in the teaching profession in South Africa.

Research suggests that the following stress-related psychological and physical health effects in victims of psychological violence include, but is not limited to: anxiety (94%), sleeplessness (84%), obsession over the situation (76%), clinical depression (41%), self-destructive habits (35%), thoughts of violence to others (21%), suicidal thoughts (22%), panic attacks, heart palpitations and increased heart rate (48%), headaches and migraines (23%), chronic fatigue syndrome or connective tissue/joint pain (43%), irritable bowel (23%), weight swings (40%), chest pains (21%), exhaustion, taking to bed (45%), hypertension (16%) and stress related skin changes (28%).

The aim of this study is to describe teachers' experiences of power relations as psychological violence. The anticipation is to gain understanding and determine how power relations are associated with psychological violence and ultimately bring this fiendish phenomenon into focus.

The researcher requests your written consent to enable the collection of data for the research. Participation remains voluntary and any participant is at any stage of the research free to withdraw without stating reasons. All data collected will be treated as confidential.

Thank you.

.....  
Participant

.....  
Researcher: Mrs. A. Human-van der Westhuizen

 **Cliff Smuts Taalpraktisyn/Language**  
**Practitioner**

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11 November 2012

Hiermee verklaar ek, Cliff Smuts, dat ek die verhandeling *Teachers' experiences of power relations as psychological violence* deur Alecia Human-van der Westhuizen, wat vir die graad Magister Educationis voorgelê word, geredigeer/taalkundig versorg het.

I, Cliff Smuts, hereby state that I edited the language of the dissertation *Teachers' experiences of power relations as psychological violence* by Alecia Human-Van der Westhuizen, which is being submitted for the degree Magister Educationis.

**APPENDIX B: FINDINGS FROM QUALITATIVE RESEARCH CATEGORIES, SUB-CATEGORIES AND QUOTATIONS**

**4.3.1 Category 1: Teachers’ personal experiences on the nature of power relations in relationships at their school**

<b>CATEGORY</b>	<b>SUB-CATEGORY</b>	<b>PARTICIPANTS n = 11</b>
4.3.1 Teachers’ personal experiences on the nature of power relations in relationships at their school.	4.3.1.1 Work performance as a potential source of power abuse	5
	4.3.1.2 Teachers are exposed to verbal abuse	5
	4.3.1.3 Power abuse from senior teachers	4
	4.3.1.4 Power abuse from parents	4
	4.3.1.5 Power abuse from learners	4
	4.3.1.6 Negative experiences of teachers related to their qualifications	3
	4.3.1.7 Whistleblowers experience power abuse	3
	4.3.1.8 Being subjected to power abuse because of envy	2
	4.3.1.9 Teachers being humiliated or offended by insults	2
	4.3.1.10 Power abuse from groups formed within staff	2

	4.3.1.11 Substance abuse by learners as a form of power abuse	2
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#### 4.3.1.1 Work performance as a potential source of power abuse

P6: “Dit is ook deel van ons prinsipaal se slinkse maniere ... en dinge te omseil wat hy nie wil doen of in belangstel nie.”

*[This is also part of our principal’s wicked ways ... to go around things that he does not want to do or that he is not interested in.]*

P7: “... en wat nou gebeur, is wanneer ek miskien ’n voorstel vir hulle gee, sal hulle hulle nie steur daaraan nie, want hoekom, dis nou ... wat weet ek ek kom dan nou net hier aan.”

*[... and what is happening now, is when I make a suggestion to them, they will not be bothered by it, because, they think ... what do I know I am too new here.]*

P8: “Mag speel ’n groot rol, hulle dink hulle is slimmer of meer intelligent ... hulle dink opdragte wat hul uitvoer is ten alle tye reg (bestuursposies).”

*[Power plays an important role, they think that they are more clever ... they think that the tasks they perform are correct at all times (management positions).]*

P9: “Ons wat nou al baie jare by die skool is vat voortou ... die ander dag het hy gesê die wat so lekker handjies gevou sit sal nou moet opstaan en goed doen (skoolhoof).”

*[We that have been here for many years take the lead at school ... the other day he said that those that sit here with hands folded should get up and start doing things (principal).]*

P11: “As van die werk nie afgehandel of klaar is nie ... dan word almal aangesê die werk is nie gedoen nie ... maar dan weet ons eintlik maar wie dit is.”

*[When some of the work is not completed ... then everyone is told that the work is not done ... but then we know who it actually is.]*

#### 4.3.1.2 Teachers are exposed to verbal abuse

P3: “Hulle is baie onbeskof en maak aanmerkings wat nie van pas is om so met ’n onderwyseres te praat nie (leerlinge).”

*[They are very rude and make comments that are not suited to speak to female teachers that way (learners).]*

P4: “Ek ervaar dit elke dag dat mag definitief misbruik word op grond van hoe ’n persoon aangespreek word ... en hoe opdragte uitgedeel word (skoolhoof).”

*[I definitely experience the abuse of power every day when it comes to how a person is spoken to ... and the way tasks are shared (principal).]*

P5: "... hulle sê kliphard ek gaan jou die lelikste vloekwoorde ... (leerlinge)."

*[... they will say it out loud, I will do you the ugliest curse words ... (learners).]*

P8: "Dan word daar nou hard met jou gepraat, gaan na jou klas toe (skoolhoof)."

*[Then you are spoken to in a harsh way, go to your class (principal).]*

P9: "So ek word daagliks aan *verbal abuse* blootgestel, en dis so kleinlik... hy skree op jou, of hy sal skree op 'n kind daar van sy stoepie af, sê vir daai juffrou sy moet in haar klas wees; sy mag nie rondstap nie (skoolhoof)."

*[I am exposed to verbal abuse daily, and it's so petty ... he yells at you, or he will scream at a child from his porch, tell that teacher she must be in her class, she is not allowed to walk around (principal).]*

#### **4.3.1.3 Power abuse from senior teachers**

P4: "Mag word definitief in my geval toegepas deur van my seniors, en dit is somtyds moeilik om te verklaar hoekom en waarom "

*[In my case power is definitely abused by my seniors, and it is sometimes difficult to explain why and how.]*

P7: "Ek was in trane, want ek het nie geweet wat om te doen nie ... dit was 'n groot funksie gewees ... sy sê toe sy gaan vir die hoof sê (senior onderwyseres)."

*[I was in tears and didn't know what to do ... it was a large function ... she said she was going to tell the principal (senior teacher).]*

P8: "Ek is mos ouer as jy, al is ons op dieselfde vlak, so kry jy nou gou daardie goete reg of in die rondte om daardie taak te verrig ... die ouer personeel by die skool het nie sekere kundigheid om take te verrig nie, kyk hulle studeer mos nie verder nie ... so jonger persone, soos ek genoem het, se gedagtes word net afgeskiet deur hulle."

*[Because I am older than you, even though we are at the same level, therefore you have to organise this and that to complete the task ... the older staff at our school do not have the skills to complete certain tasks, because they do not study further ... but the younger staff's ideas are shot down by them as I already mentioned.]*

P:10 "Die senior onderwysers sal byvoorbeeld die junior onderwysers intimideer."

*[For example the senior teachers will intimidate the junior teachers.]*

#### **4.3.1.4 Power abuse from parents**

P3: "Ouers wat ook onderwysers boelie."

*[Parents that also bully teachers.]*

P10: "Ouers wat opgang en 'n onderwyser afpers ... en die een wat by die huis bly, is nie

noodwendig die een wie se ouers jou kom dreig het nie.”

*[Parents gang up and blackmail a teacher, and the one staying home isn't necessarily the one whose parents threatened you.]*

P11: “Ouers wat jou kom dreig en hulle mag misbruik as jy nie die sport afrig soos hulle verwag nie en as hulle kind nie in die span speel wat hulle dink nie.”

*[Teachers will come and threaten you and abuse their power if you don't coach like they think you should coach and their child is not playing in the team they think he should play.]*

P13: “Die ouers is nie so onskuldig nie, dit is 'n bose kringloop.”

*[The parents are not that innocent, it is a vicious cycle.]*

#### **4.3.1.5 Power abuse from learners**

P3: “... as 'n groep het hulle meer mag en sal lelike goed vir my sê ... as 'n groep *gang* hulle baie saam ... hulle sal definitief die feit dat hulle kan saamstaan as 'n groep, gebruik en manipuleer.”

*[... they have more power as a group and they will say despicable things to me ... they gang up as a group ... they will most definitely use and manipulate the fact that they can stand together as a group.]*

P7: “Verlede jaar was ek amper in die hospital oor 'n seun in my klas ... dit was hel gewees.”

*[I almost ended up in hospital last year because of a boy in my class ... it was hell.]*

P11: “... daai kind klim oor die banke en letterlik rand daardie kind aan met sy vuiste, hy slaan hom dat die bloed loop... ek is geboelie met emosies wat ek nog nooit ervaar het nie, ek het nog nooit 'n *fight* kaalhande gesien nie ... dis was emosioneel baie sleg ... ek het gevoel daardie seun het geen respek vir my nie en ook nie vir die professie nie.”

*[... the child scrambled over the desks to literally attack the other child with his fists, he hit him that the blood splattered ... I was bullied with emotions that I have never experienced before, I have never seen a fight bare-handed ... it was emotionally very disturbing for me ... it felt like the boy had no respect for me and no respect for the profession.]*

P13: “... op die bord staan daar baie keer 'n vieslike woord geskryf en dan lag hulle, hulle dood daaroor ... hulle sal partykeer aspris nie hul gulp toemaak nie, hulle is regtig rou ... hulle het daardie mag en hulle misbruik dit.”

*[... they will often write a foul word on the blackboard and then they laugh themselves silly... they will sometimes purposely not close their zips; they are really raw ... they have the power and they misuse it.]*

#### 4.3.1.6 Negative experiences of teachers related to their qualifications

P7: "... die dat ek 'n graad het en hulle 'n diploma... dit was nie vir hulle 'n eye-opener nie ... grootmense was soos kinders optree."

*[... the fact that I have a degree en they have a diploma ... it wasn't an eye opener for them ... adults acting like children.]*

P8: "Wat my verstand te bowe gaan is hoe kan iemand met 'n diploma georchestrate word om die bestuurspos te kry ... maar die persoon wat twee grade het, kry nie die pos nie."

*[It blows my mind that the person with a diploma is orchestrated to get the management position ... but the person with two degrees does not get the position.]*

P11: "Van die begin af was die intensie dat, as daar 'n betrekking kom ... want omdat ek nou goed gekwalifiseer is ... en dat daar definitief vir my gesê is dat ek eerste in line is vir 'n permanenete pos."

*[From the start the intention was that if there is a permanent position vacant ... and I was definitely told that I would be first in line for a permanent position because I am well qualified.]*

#### 4.3.1.7 Whistleblowers experience power abuse

P6: "Ek het agterna gesê dit moet genotuleer word dat ek kapsie gemaak het, en hy het dit ook geweier en weer kapsie gemaak en gesê dit word nie genotuleer nie (skoolhoof)."

*[I said afterwards that it should be noted that I objected, and this he also refused and again objected, saying it will not be recorded (principal).]*

P9: "En as jy besluit om hom aan te vat, gaan jy die slegste daarvan afkom en jy gaan meer daaronder ly as hy ... daar is 'n onderwyseres wat in opstand met hom gekom het, sy het hom aangekla, OBOS (onderwysbestuurs-en-ontwikkelingsentrum) toe gegaan ens, maar op die ou einde het sy bedank (skoolhoof)."

*[If you decide to take him on, you will be worse off than him ... there is a female teacher who confronted him, she accused him, went to the EMDC (educational management and development centre), but in the end she resigned (principal).]*

#### 4.3.1.8 Being subjected to power abuse because of envy

P6: "Omdat ons as onderwysers gedink het om 'n fasiliteringsproses te begin op pad na 'n effektiewe skool ... en hy het dit gesien as kleinlik ... dit laat my dink aan my kinderjare: as jy nie vir my van jou brood gee nie, speel jy nie met my albasters nie

tipe van scenario ... en dit was vir my onprofessioneel en onaanvaarbaar (skoolhoof).”

*[... because we as teachers thought of having a facilitation process to get us on the road to an effective school ... but he saw it as petty ... it makes me think back to my youth, with the type of scenario if you don't give me some of your bread, you won't play with my marbles ... I regarded that as unprofessional and unacceptable (principal).]*

P7: “Maar die ding is die vroumense skinder heeldag, maar al wat my help is dat die hoof 100% agter my staan en hulle haat dit.”

*[The women gossip all day, but the only thing that helps me is the fact that the principal is 100% behind me, and they hate that.]*

#### **4.3.1.9 Teachers being humiliated or offended by insults**

P6: “En almal het die reg om vrae te vra ... maar niemand het die reg om beledigings te kry nie (skoolhoof).”

*[Everyone has the right to ask questions ... but no one has the right to receive insults (principal).]*

P8: “... in die verleentheid gestel voor kollegas of ander in die personeelkamer (skoolhoof).”

*[... to be humiliated in the presence of colleagues or others in the staff room (principal).]*

#### **4.3.1.10 Power abuse from groups formed within staff**

P6: “Dit veroorsaak ook groeppvorming, sodat die prinsipaal mense maklik kan manipuleer en beïnvloed.”

*[This causes the forming of groups which enables the principal to manipulate and influence people easily.]*

P7: “Dit is wel so dat mag misbruik word; by ons skool is daar so 'n groepie mense wat altyd saam is; hulle voel hulle is meer senior as jy al is hulle jou eweknie ... en hulle voel hulle kan jou dwing om dinge te doen.”

*[It is true that power is misused, there is this group of people at our school that is always together, they feel that they are more senior than us even when they are your peers ... they feel that they can force you to do things.]*

#### 4.3.1.11 Substance abuse by learners as a form of power abuse

P11: “Ek dink die geweldige grootword in ’n grootmenswêreld maak dat hulle dit regkry om jou in ’n posisie te sit wat jou ongemaklik laat voel ... ek was eintlik so getraumatiseer, en dan die gevolge na die tyd, goed die kind was positief getoets vir dwelms, vir absoluut alles.”

*[I think their fast growing up in an adult world enables them to put you in a position that makes you feel uncomfortable ... I was actually so traumatised, and then the consequences afterwards, the child was tested positive for drugs, for absolutely everything.]*

P13: “Die een sal vir die ander een sê jy gebruik dagga ... en ek vind dit nie net by die Graad 6- en 7-kindere nie, selfs vir die jonger kindere is dit ’n helse grap as jy praat oor dit ... hulle wil jou net laat weet hulle weet alles en hulle doen hierdie goed.”

*[One will say to the other you use marijuana ... and I find that it is not only the Grade 6 and 7 children, even for the younger children it is a hell of a joke when you talk about it ... they just want to let you know that they know everything and they use these substances.]*

#### 4.3.2 Category 2: Teachers’ experiences on the role of gender and race in the abuse of power as psychological violence.

CATEGORY	SUB-CATEGORY	PARTICIPANTS n = 11
4.3.2 Teachers’ experiences on the role of gender and race in the abuse of power.	4.3.2.1 Teachers being subjected to power abuse from principals	6
	4.3.2.2 Female teachers being treated in a subordinate manner	3
	4.3.2.3 Teachers’ race place them at risk	3
	4.3.2.4 Cultural or racial differences of	3

	others as a contributor to power abuse	
	4.3.2.5 Boys abuse their power by being physically intimidating	3
	4.3.2.6 Female teachers experiencing a unequal work load	2
	4.3.2.7 Power abuse through male dominance behaviour	2

#### 4.3.2.1 Teachers being subjected to power abuse from principals

P3: “Hy sal byvoorbeeld by ons klas inkom sonder om te klop aan die deur, en ek voel dit is misbruik van sy magsposisie.”

*[For example, he would come into our class without knocking on the door, and I feel it is abuse of his of power.]*

P4: “As ek nou in hierdie geval praat van mag, sal die persoon bokant jou maklik die oggend vir jou sê ons het 3 nm. of 4 nm. dit of dat aan, sonder dat jy geken was of sonder dat jy genoeg tyd gehad het om reëlings te tref.”

*[If I may speak of power in this case, in the morning the person above you will easily say we have this or that at 3 p.m. or 4 p.m. without knowing you about it or not giving you enough time to make arrangements.]*

P5: “Hier het die hoof weer sy mag misbruik in die manier waarop die situasie hanteer is”

*[Here the principal abused his power again in the way the situation was handled.]*

P6: “Die vrouens is baie meer versigtig en baie meer banger ...”

*[The women are much more careful and much more scared ...]*

P8: “My prinsipaal was vir my twee jaar kwaad gewees ... hy het voor hom gekyk en my geignoreer, hy was aanvallend teenoor my gewees.”

*[My principal was mad at me for two years ... he ignored me and looked straight ahead, he was offensive towards me.]*

P9: “Dit is mos so dat hy die vrouens aftakel, en selfs waar jou kinders skoolgaan.”

*[It is true that he will attack the women and break them down, and even where your children go to school.]*

#### 4.3.2.2 Female teachers being treated in a subordinate manner

P4: “Mans beskou hulle maar basies as oorhoofs oor vrouens ... in my geval is die mans minder as die vroue, maar die mans is nog steeds oorheersend wat mag betref.”

*[Men basically consider themselves as superior to women ... in my case, the men are less than the women but the men still dominate with regard to power.]*

P6: “Daai ou manier van die man het die mag oor die vrou.”

*[That ancient way of the man has power over the woman.]*

P11: “Ek is graadhoof, nadat ek twee keer gevra het omdat die goed nie aankom nie, het ek dit toe gekry ... die vrouens se goed was netjies uitgetik, toe is die man se goed ... hy het vier sinnetjies op 'n papiertjie geskribbel ... so dis maar net daai ding van ek worry nie.”

*[I am grade head, after I have asked twice for the work because I did not receive it yet ... the women's work was well was neatly typed, when the man's work ... he had scribbled four sentences on a piece of paper ... therefore it's just that thing of not worrying.]*

#### 4.3.2.3 Teachers' race place them at risk

P3: “Dan kom ek agter daar is nog baie rass spanning en probleme.”

*[Then I realise there is still a lot of racial tension and problems.]*

P8: “Die minderheid van ras het 'n groot invloed, daardie persoon gaan nie sommer uitkom met sake stel nie, al is dit briljante idees, want daardie persoon gaan *inferior* voel.”

*[The minority of race has a great influence, that person will not state his business, even though that person has brilliant ideas, because that person will feel inferior.]*

P9: “Eintlik hou hy niks van wit mense nie, hy het nog daai ou mentaliteit van wit mense en hy kan nie vorentoe dink nie. (skoolhoof)”

*[He actually does not like white people at all, he still has the old mentality of white people, and he cannot think forward (principal).]*

#### 4.3.2.4 Cultural or race differences of others as a contributor to power abuse

P8: “Daar het ras definitief 'n groot rol gespeel, hulle voel hulle het *authority* en hulle is reg, hulle sienswyse is reg (swart mense).”

*[Race played a big role; they feel that they have authority and that they are right, their way of thinking is correct (black people).]*

P11: “Die Gr. 10/11 seuns gaan Junie of Desember maand vir die unisiasieproses ... daar is 'n totale verandering, buiten die bewustheid van hul seksualiteit wat nou hiper voor

is, maar dan om 'n gesagsrol van 'n blanke vrou te aanvaar is nul ... die realiteit van dit is baie groter as wat mens besef (Xhosa-seuns).”

*[In June or December the gr. 10/11 boys go for the inisiation process ... there is a total change, besides the awareness of their sexuality now, but then to accept an authoritative role from a white woman is zero ... the reality of this is much bigger than we think (Xhosa boys).]*

P13: “Hulle praat baie keer hul eie taal, en jy as onderwyser praat met hulle en sê hulle mag nie. Maar hulle praat onder mekaar en dan kan jy sien hulle lag nou oor dinge wat hulle onder mekaar praat en wat jy nie mag weet nie (Xhosas).”

*[They often speak their own language, and then you as teacher talk to them and tell them not to do that. But they talk among themselves and you can see them laughing about things that they talk about that you are not supposed to know (Xhosas).]*

#### **4.3.2.5 Boys abuse their power by being physically intimidating**

P3: “... baie van die seuns wat groter is as ons onderwyseresse en wat probeer intimiderend wees, en fisies intimiderend wees, soos om in die deur te staan ... want hulle is groter en sterker as ek.”

*[... many of the boys are bigger than the female teachers, they try to be intimidating, and physically intimidating, for example they will stand in the doorway ... because they are bigger and stronger than me.]*

P11: “... my fisiese grootte boelie my verskriklik baie, so ek dra die hoogste skoene wat daar is, dat ek net lank is, as ek net groter was dan voel ek of ek *power* het.”

*[... my physical size bullies me tremendously, I will wear the highest shoes there is, so that I can be tall, if I could just be bigger then I would have felt I have power.]*

P13: “Toe maak hulle daai tongklap van hulle, daai *cheeky* geluide wat hul het, maar jy weet op die ou einde stap jy maar aan, want dit is groot seuns hul is te oud vir hul standard ... wat kan jy nou doen ... hulle weet dit en hul is fisies groot ook, en jy is skrikkerig ...”

*[They made those tongue clicking, those cheeky sounds that they have, and in the end you keep on walking, because they are big boys who are too old for their grade ... what can you do ... they know this and they are big and physical and this scares you ...]*

#### 4.3.2.6 Female teachers experiencing a unequal work load

P9: “Die slagoffers by die skool is die vrouens ... die vrouens vat die voortou met alles ... die vrouens maak alles gebeur by die skool en ek glo nie daar is by hom respek vir enige vrou nie (skoolhoof).”

*[The victims at the school are the women ... the women takes the lead with everything ... the women make everything happen at school and I believe he has no respect for any woman (principal).]*

P11: “... dit is net die vrouens wat al die werk doen ... as daar gevra word dat personeel moet volunteer om iets te doen, is dit altyd die vrouens wat hul hand opsteek.”

*[... it is only the women who do all the work ... when the staff members are asked to volunteer to do something, it's always the women who get their hands up.]*

#### 4.3.2.7 Power abuse through male dominance behaviour

P4: “Al is die mans in die minderheid het hulle nogsteeds die mag oor die vrouens wat die meerderheid is.”

*[Even though the men are in the minority, they still have the power over the women who majority.]*

P9: “Daar was op 'n stadium 'n pos oop vir 'n Departementshoof, hy het gesorg dat nie een van ons vrouens dit kry nie (skoolhoof).”

*[At a time there was a vacancy for a Head of Department, he saw that none of the women got it (principal).]*

### 4.3.3 Category 3: Teachers’ perceptions of the role of work environmental factors in power relations as psychological violence

CATEGORY	SUB-CATEGORY	PARTICIPANTS n = 11
4.3.3 Teachers’ perceptions of the role of work environmental factors in power relations as psychological violence	4.3.3.1 Being subjected to autocratic management styles	6
	4.3.3.2 Management’s power abuse through the abdication of	6

	responsibility	
	4.3.3.3 The experience of being surrendered to an imbalance of power	3
	4.3.3.4 Staff in management positions display the abuse or misuse of power	3
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	4.3.3.6 Power abuse through coercion	2
	4.3.3.7 Principals abuse of power to manipulate school governing bodies	2
	4.3.3.8 Teachers being treated like children	2

#### 4.3.3.1 Being subjected to autocratic management styles

P4: “Die skool waar ek is, moet jy hare op jou tande he, hy is ’n diktator en jy word so afgetakel. (skoolhoof)”

*[The school where I work you must have nerves, he is a dictator and he breakes you down (principal).]*

P5: “So as prinsipaal of skoolhoof moet jy maak soos ek sê en soos ek wil hê jy moet maak.”

*[Therefore as principal or head you should do as I say and as I want you to do.]*

P6: “My onmiddelike hoof bo my het ’n groot mate van autokratiese bestuurstyl, die bevelvoerende bestuurstyl, dit gaan selfs oor na ’n erge vorm van tirannie (skoolhoof).”

*[My immediate principal above me, has an autocratic leadership style, authoritarianism, it could even be seen as a severe form of tyranny (school principal).]*

P8: “Ek is die prinsipaal en jy sal moet luister of ek is die adjunkhoof en jy moet daardie taak uitvoer ... dit is ’n autokratiese bestuurstyl in die skool.”

*[I am the principal and you have to listen, or I am the vice principal and you have to*

*complete these tasks... it is an autocratic management style at our school.]*

P9: “By ons skool is daar net persoon wat die mag het, wat die mag vir homself toe eien, en hy besluit alles ... hy vrees nie eens vir God nie, want hy dink hy is god (skoolhoof).”

*[At our school there is only one person who has the power, he assigns all the power to himself and he decides everything ... he shows no fear of God, because he thinks that he is God (principal).]*

P10: “Daar word jy nie veel van ’n keuse gegee nie, daar word net vir jou gesê jy moet dit doen.”

*[You are not given much of a choice, you are just being told you have to do this.]*

#### **4.3.3.2 Management’s power abuse through the abdication of responsibility**

P4: “Definitief word mag oorspeel deur hoe daaglikse goed gekanaliseer word na die volgende persoon toe.”

*[Power is definitely overplayed through the daily channeling of tasks to the next person.]*

P5: “Die maatskaplike werker het my belowe hulle gaan planne uitwerk en terug kom na my toe ... sy het gesê ek moet net vasbyt; dit is amper vakansie, en hulle sal plan maak ... tot vandag toe het hulle nog nie terug gekom na my toe nie.”

*[The social worker had promised me they are going to work out plans and come back to me ... she said I should just hang in there it is almost vacation, and they will make a plan ... to this day they have not come back to me.]*

P6: “Informasie wat nie gedeel word nie, besluite wat nie uitgevoer word nie, geen korrektiewe, konflikbestuur wat afwesig is, regtig omgee wat afwesig is.”

*[Information that is not being shared, decisions are not executed, no corrective conflict management, really care that is absent.]*

P10: “Verlede jaar met die oortollige onderwysers is daar mos vir ons gesê die onderwysers moet self die oortollige onderwysers identifiseer, nou dit is selfmoord vir ’n skool (Departement van Onderwys).”

*[Last year with the excess teachers we were told that the teachers themselves have to decide which teachers are in excess, and this is suicide for any school (Department of Education).]*

P11: “Hierdie ding met die mans word nie aangespreek of reggestel nie ... (skoolhoof).”

*[This issue with the men does not get addressed or rectified ... (principal).]*

P13: “Ons sit baie keer sonder boeke, maar dan is daar ander skole wat die skryfbehoeftes tot teen die dak gepak staan ... dit is ’n klug, nee o vader, die Department doen ook

nie hulle werk nie. Hulle is regtig pateties en so wag hul maar net dat die weke omgaan.”

*[Often we have been without books, but then there are other schools where the stationery is stacked to the roof ... it is a farse, the Department also do not do their wjob. They are really pathetic and they are just waiting for the weeks to pass.]*

#### **4.3.3.3 The experience of being surrendered to an imbalance of power**

P6: “My hoof maak geen geheim daarvan dat hy ’n ou vir vendetta’s is en hy ’n ou vir ’n oog vir ’n oog is ... en as jy seer maak, maak ek seer, dit gaan nie werk in enige tipe instansie nie ...”

*[My principal does not keep it secret that he is a force to be reckoned with, and that he is a man for personal vendettas ... and if you hurt me, I will hurt you, this will not work in any type of institution ...]*

P9: “By ons skool is daar net een persoon wat die mag het, wat die mag vir homself toe eien, en hy besluit alles ... dit kom net van een kant af. (skoolhoof)”

*[There is only one person at our school who has all the power, he assumes all the power for himself, and he decides everything ... it only comes from one source (school principal).]*

P11: “Ek sit daar en voor die tyd was daar nou eintlik gese dit is my profiel ... met ander woorde (vak uitgelaat om identiteit te beskerm) wat ek gee. Ek sit daar en dink, *oh my word*, wat gaan nou hier aan ... hier word oor my kop gepraat, oor my ... en so gaan dit aan, en ek het daar gesit en gevoel wat gaan hier aan, dit is nie ’n lekker gevoel nie. Jy is uitgelewer, absoluut.”

*[I was sitting there and before the time it was actually said that this is my profile ... in other words (subject omitted to protect identity) that I teach. I sat there thinking, oh my word, what's going on here ... they are talking over my head, about me ... and it went on like this, while I was sitting there I thought to myself what is going on here, this is not a good feeling, I felt completely extradited.]*

#### **4.3.3.4 Staff in management positions display the abuse or misuse of power**

P4: “Ek dink dit is opsetlik, en dat die een in die magsposisie dit misbruik en *he wants to feel in charge* (skoolhoof).”

*[I think it is on purpose and that the one in the position of power misuses his power and he wants to feel in charge (principal).]*

- P5: “Ons vergadering het nie goed afgeloop nie, sy het gesit en grinnik ... sy het agterna die sielkundige gebel vir ’n onderhoud sonder my, maar my sielkundige het gesê dit gaan nie gebeur sonder haar pasiënt nie (KSB – kringspanbestuurder).”  
*[She sat there grimacing, our meeting did not go well ... afterwards she phoned the psychologist to ask for a meeting without me, but my psychologist said that is not going to happen without her patient (CTM – Circuit Team Manager).]*
- P6: “As daar miskien in die pyplyn ’n vooruitsig is van ’n permanente pos, sal hy dit misbruik en die onderwyser sal dus moet doen wat hy wil hê (skoolhoof).”  
*[If there is a prospect of a potential permanent position in the pipeline, he wil abuse it so that the teacher has to do exactly what he wants (principal).]*

#### 4.3.3.5 Experience feelings of work insecurity

- P8: “... jy kan nie net ontslaan word nie, mense ken nie die prosedures wat gevolg kan word nie, en dit veroorsaak ook stres.”  
*[... you cannot just be fired, people are not familiar with the procedures that can be followed, and this also causes stress.]*
- P9: “... hulle voel net soos jy en is net so bang soos jy ... so op die ou einde is jy maar net *man alone* ... poste is skaars, ek kan nie bekostig om my pos te verloor.”  
*[... they feel exactly the same as you and are just as scared ... thus in the end you are man alone ... vacancies are scarce and I cannot afford to loose my post.]*
- P10: “En daar word jy nie veel van ’n keuse gegee nie, daar word net vir jou gesê jy moet dit doen, en omdat poste op die huidige oomblik skaars is, kan jy nie sommer net aansoek doen vir ’n ander pos nie.”  
*[You are being told you have to do it, you are not given much of a choice, and you cannot just apply for a new position because vacancies are scarce at the moment.]*

#### 4.3.3.6 Power abuse through coercion

- P5: “Die mense wat gewoonlik minder mag het, sê net niks ... want as dit kom van bo af, gaan die meeste onderwysers stilbly en niks sê nie.”  
*[The people who usually have less power will say nothing ... because when it comes from the top most teachers will keep quiet and they will say nothing.]*
- P9: “Maak nie saak wat nie, jy moet maar doen wat hy sê ... want as jy dit nie doen nie ... dan word jy weer aangekla van pligsversuim.”  
*[It does not matter what happens, you just have to do what he say ... if you don't do it ... you will be accused of refusing your duties.]*

#### 4.3.3.7 Principals abuse power to manipulate school governing bodies

P6: “Die beheerliggaam wat ’n handjievol mense is ... word maklik gemanipuleer deur die prinsipaal as ’n minderheidsgroepie.”

*[The governing body which is a handful of people ... are easily manipulated by the principal as a minority group.]*

P9: “Ons het die saak nie eens aangevat nie, want die beheerraad was saam met hom in met dit, hy beïnvloed die beheerraad so wat is jou kans (skoolhoof).”

*[We did not even take the matter on, because the governing body is with him on this, he influences the governing body, so what your chances (principal).]*

#### 4.3.3.8 Teachers being treated like children

P3: “... die onderhoof sal nogal sy magposisie misbruik, hy is al baie jare by die skool en kollegas van my ouderdom was by hom in die skool gewees ... hy (kollega) was verskriklik ontsteld gewees oor hoe hy hanteer is, veral op die manier dat hy soos ’n kind hanteer is en nie soos ’n volwassene as ’n onderwyser van die skool nie.”

*[The deputy principal will often abuse his position of power, he has been at the school for many years and colleagues of my age have been his students ... he (colleague) was terribly upset about how he was treated, especially in the way that he was treated like a child and not a teacher of the school.]*

P8: “Nou word jy behandel soos ’n kind.”

*[Now you are treated like a child.]*

### 4.3.4 Category 4: Teachers experienced physical and psychological health consequences as a result of power relations as psychological violence

#### 4.3.4.1 Teachers’ physical health consequences after experiencing power relations as psychological violence

CATEGORY	SUB-CATEGORY	PARTICIPANTS n = 11
4.3.4.1 Teachers’ physical health	4.3.4.1.1 Teachers feel tired	7

consequences after experiencing power relations as psychological violence	4.3.4.1.2 Teachers experience physical ill health 4.3.4.1.3 Teachers experience headaches	6  2
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#### 4.3.4.1.1 Teachers feel tired

- P3: “Almal is op hierdie stadium moeg en uitgeput ...”  
[*Everyone is tired and exhausted at this stage ...*]
- P5: “Ek was moeg elke middag en het net by die huis gelê.”  
[*I was tired every afternoon and I stayed at home.*]
- P7: “Verlede jaar het hy my afgesit vir ’n week, ek kon nie uit die bed uit opstaan nie, ek was te moeg.”  
[*Last year he booked me off for a week, I could not get up from the bed, I was too tired.*]
- P9: “...maar ek is nou moeg en ek gaan myself siek maak.”  
[*...but now I'm tired and I'm going to make myself sick.*]
- P10” “Dit maak jou moeg, dit steel jou lewenslus ... dit het ’n definitiewe impak.”  
[*It makes you tired, it steals your vitality ... it has a definite impact.*]
- P11: “Ek is moeg as ek in die middag van die skool af kom.”  
[*When I get home from school in the afternoons I am tired.*]
- P13: “... dit maak ’n ou gedaan.”  
[*... it makes you exhausted.*]

#### 4.3.4.1.2 Teachers experience physical ill health

- P3: “Wel ek is al vir ’n paar maande lank siek.”  
[*Well, I have been ill for a couple of months now.*]
- P5: “Na al die ondervindings het ek aan hoë bloeddruk begin ly, ek het ook hoë cholesterol opgebou, hartkloppings, bewerasies ...”  
[*After all these experiences I started having high blood pressure, I also started having high cholesterol, heart palpitations, trembling ...*]
- P7: “Dit laat jou sleg voel ... jou nek en rug is stokstyf.”  
[*It makes you feel bad ... your neck and back are stiff.*]
- P8: “Dit maak mens siek.”  
[*It makes you sick.*]

P11: “... dat ek letterlik soos fisies maagpyn kry...”

[... *that you literally and physically get stomachaches ...*]

P13: “... ek het siek geraak en ek is dokter toe, en hyhet vir my gesê dit is gordelroos.”

[... *I fell ill and went to the doctor, he said that it is schingles.*]

#### 4.3.4.1.3 Teachers experience headaches

P11: “... of kopseer, is een van die goed wat baie gebeur, dat jy dink *oh my word* hier kom dit al weer”

[... *or headaches, is one of the things that happens quite often and then you think oh my word here it comes again.*]

P13: “... sy staan elke oggend op met 'n kopseer.”

[... *she gets up with a headache every morning.*]

#### 4.3.4.2 Teachers' psychological health consequences after experiencing power relations as psychological violence

CATEGORY	SUB-CATEGORY	PARTICIPANTS n = 11
4.3.4.2 Teachers' psychological health consequences after experiencing power relations as psychological violence	4.3.4.2.1 Teachers experience feelings of helplessness	6
	4.3.4.2.2 Teachers feel emotional or cry	6
	4.3.4.2.3 Teachers experience stress	5
	4.3.4.2.4 Teachers experience feelings of negativity	4
	4.3.4.2.5 Teachers experience depression	4
	4.3.4.2.6 Teachers	3

	experience a lack of interest or involvement	
	4.3.4.2.7 Teachers use medication to cope	3
	4.3.4.2.8 Teachers experience victimisation	2
	4.3.4.2.9 Teachers constantly think about the experience of abuse	2

#### 4.3.4.2.1 Teachers experience feelings of helplessness

P4: "... wat dit vir jou voel dit raak nou vir jou regtig te veel om te hanteer."

*[...feels that it is really getting too much too handle.]*

P5: "Ek was keelvol, in (spesifieke maande uitgelaat om identiteit te beskerm) het ek histories geraak en gevra as hy nie dinge reg maak nie, dan gaan ek my tas vat en loop."

*[I had enough, I became hysterical in (specific months omitted to protect identity) and asked him if he does not fix things right, I am going to pack my bags and go.]*

P6: "Dit bederf alles, 'n mens wat nie daai tipe menslike verhouding benadering volg nie ... maak jou moedeloos, ek sien dit as 'n tipe van abuse, regtig."

*[It spoils everything, a man who does not have the type of human relationship approach ... makes you despondent; I see it as a type of abuse, really.]*

P7: "Toe dink ek net by myself, dit is darem nou ongevraagd hoor, ek het so sleg gevoel, om te dink my kollegas wil regtig nie vir my by die skool hê nie."

*[So I just thought to myself, this is really uncalled for, I felt so bad to think my colleagues really don't want me at school.]*

P11: "Jy voel magteloos, kwaad, teleurgesteld."

*[You feel helpless, angry, disappointed.]*

P13: "Maar wat vir my die ergste is, almal praat en praat en vertel dieselfde stories, maar daar gebeur niks nie. Dit is almal se probleem, waar gaan die oplossings vandaan kom."

*[But for me the worst of all is everyone talk and talk and tell the same stories, but nothing happens. It is everyone's problem, where will the solutions come from.]*

#### 4.3.4.2.2 Teachers feel emotional or cry

- P5: "... ek was emotioneel en het aanmekaar gehuil."  
[... *I was emotional and I cried all the time.*]
- P6: "... by sommige onderwysers is die emosies hoog en die trane lê maar vlak."  
[... *for some teachers the emotions are high and tears are very close.*]
- P7: "...ek was in trane..."  
[...*I was in tears...*]
- P8: "Party opvoeders huil op die skoolterrein."  
[*Some teachers cry on the school grounds.*]
- P9: "Ek het gevoel ek wil net huil..."  
[*I felt like I just wanted to cry....*]
- P11: "Dit was vir my baie sleg, ek het net uitgebars in trane en geloop."  
[*It was really bad for me, I just left and burst into tears.*]

#### 4.3.4.2.3 Teachers experience stress

- P3: "Dit is regtig emosionele aftakeling."  
[*It is really emotional abuse.*]
- P4: "Ek eet geweldig baie as gevolg van die spanning wat ek huidiglik ondervind."  
[*I eat a lot because of the stress I am currently experiencing.*]
- P5: "Dit gee jou stres."  
[*It gives you stress.*]
- P7: "Dan gaan jy dokter toe en probeer verduidelik, maar ek dink die dokter weet al dit is stres."  
[*Then you try to explain when you go to the doctor, but I think that the doctor already knows it is stress.*]
- P13: "In my geval was dit spanning."  
[*In my case it was stress.*]

#### 4.3.4.2.4 Teachers experience feelings of negativity

- P5: "Dis waarom ek sê hulle mag dwing hulle af en gebruik hulle mag om jou verder seer te maak en jou verder negatief te maak."  
[*That's why I say they force their power on you and they use their power to hurt you further and to continue to make you more negative.*]
- P6: "Jou lamp se olie word op as onderwyser, en jy moet die volgende geslag se onderwysers se lamp aansteek, maar wat los jy vir hulle."

*[The oil in your lamp as teacher dries up, and you need the light up the next generation of teachers, but what do you have left to leave them.]*

P9: “Alles is korrup man, die Departement ook, ek het geen vertroue in die departement ook nie.”

*[Everything is corrupt the department also, I too, have no confidence in the Department.]*

P11: “... daar is min goed wat jou so geboelie laat voel as jy het gewerk het, om nie beloon te word nie ... en jy weet ’n ou raak negatief, daar is definitief ’n ontsettende groot komponent van negatiewiteit.”

*[There are few things that make you feel more bullied than when you have worked hard and you are not rewarded ... you know a person becomes negative, there is definately an excessively large component of negativity.]*

#### **4.3.4.2.5 Teachers experience depression**

P3: “Sulke goed takel mens af en depressief voel.”

*[These types of things break you down and makes you feel depressed.]*

P5: “Verlede kwartaal was daar drie mense met depressie af van die skool”

*[There were three people off from school with depression last term.]*

P6: “En dit is juis so ’n persoon wat depressie het en wat besluit het nou kan ek nie meer nie, iets moet gedoen word ...”

*[And it is precisely such a person who has depression and who decided I can not take this anymore, something must be done ...]*

P10: “Dit maak jou depressief ...”

*[It makes you depressed ...]*

#### **4.3.4.2.6 Teachers experience a lack of interest or involvement**

P4: “Die mense (onderwysers) is al so afgetakel, hulle gaan maar net saam met die stroom.”

*[The people (teachers) are so degraded they will just go with the flow.]*

P6: “... ons gaan net deur die *motions* elke dag...”

*[... we just go through the motions every day...]*

P10: “... dan kom hulle op ’n punt dat hulle net deur die *motions* gaan.”

*[... they then came to a point that they just go through the motions.]*

#### **4.3.4.2.7 Teachers use medication to cope**

P3: “Ek voel die heelyd tam en vir die eerste keer in my lewe moet ek multivitamines drink vir energie om deur die dag te kom.”

*[I feel tired all the time and for the first time in my life I must drink multivitamins for energy to get through the day.]*

P5: “Die dokter het vir my ’n pil gegee wat my laat slaap het en hy het my afgeboek.”

*[The doctor gave me a pill to let me sleep and he booked me off sick.]*

P8: “Jy kan mos nie vier Mybulen tablette drink nie, dit is nie goed vir jou gesondheid nie.”

*[You can not take four Mybulen tablets, it just isn't good for your health.]*

#### **4.3.4.2.8 Teachers' experience victimisation**

P5: “Sy was baie onprofessioneel gewees, sy is besig om my te viktimiseer.”

*[She was very unprofessional, she is busy victimising me.]*

P6: “Dan weet ek hulle is bang hulle word geviktimiseer.”

*[I know they are afraid of being victimised.]*

#### **4.3.4.2.9 Teachers constantly think about the experience of abuse**

P4: “Selfs voor jou klas is jy nie jouself nie, want jou gedagtegang is baie by hierdie goed en hoe mag op jou toegepas word.”

*[Even in front of your class you are not yourself because your thoughts are constantly occupied about this stuff and the power abuse against you.]*

P9: “... maar more-oggend as ek opstaan, begin ek weer dink oor die goed.”

*[... but once I get up tomorrow morning I start thinking about these things again.]*

**4.3.5 Category 5: Teachers experience behavioral and social relations consequences as a result of power relations as psychological violence**

**4.3.5.1 Teachers display behavioural changes after experiencing power relations as psychological violence**

CATEGORY	SUB-CATEGORY	PARTICIPANTS n = 11
4.3.5.1 Teachers display behavioural changes after experiencing power relations as psychological violence	4.3.5.1.1 Teachers work productivity and motivation declines	5
	4.3.5.1.2 Teachers retaliate or have the notion to retaliate	3
	4.3.5.1.3 Teachers are reluctant to go to work	3
	4.3.5.1.4 Teachers experience changes in their personality	3
	4.3.5.1.5 Teachers experience having negative feelings towards learners	3

**4.3.5.1.1 Teachers work productivity and motivation declines**

P4: “Maar omdat jy selfrespek verloor, gaan die liefde ’n bietjie kwyn vir die saak hoekom jy regtig daar is om te doen.”

*[But because you lose self respect, you loose the passion for what you are really there to do.]*

P5: “Ek kon nie my werk doen in die klas soos ek wou, ek was nie lus vir boeke merk, klas gee nie.”

*[I couldn't do my work in class the way I wanted to, I did not feel like marking books or teaching.]*

P6: “Dit voel vir my die dames by die skool doen hul werk omdat hul bang is ... eerder as vir die passie daarvoor ... en dit maak die onderwysers se moraal laag.”

*[To me it feels as if the ladies do their work at school because they are afraid ... rather than for the passion of it ... and this lessens the teachers' morale.]*

P8: “Sielkundig raak dit jou; jy kan nie konsentreer op dit waarmee jy besig is nie, die fokus is nie daar nie.”

*[Psychologically it becomes too much; you can not concentrate on what you're doing, the focus is not there.]*

P13: “Dit breek jou moed, meeste onderwysers sê waar lê eenuur nog, dit klink of jy 'n swak onderwyser is, maar jy is so gespanne.”

*[It breaks your heart, most teachers say when is it going to be one o' clock; it sounds like you're a bad teacher, but you're just so tense.]*

#### **4.3.5.1.2 Teachers retaliate or have the notion to retaliate**

P3: “So as iemand (kollegas) vir jou iets sê, is jy amper automaties op die aanval, want jy voel dit is 'n aanval op jou persoonlik.”

*[If somebody (colleagues) is telling you something you are almost automatically on the attack, because you feel it is an attack on you personally.]*

P5: “Ek het al vroeër in die jaar histeries by die skool geraak, ek het net gevoel toe ek in die klas instap en alles is net dieselfde, het ek net gevoel vandag gaan ek 'n kind gooi met iets of slaan, ek beter myself net verwyder ...”

*[Earlier in the year I have been hysterical at school, when I walked into the class I just felt everything is exactly the same, I just felt today I'm going to throw something at a child or hit him, therefore I better remove myself ...]*

P9: “Soos Maandag met die godsdiens-geval het ek gevoel om op te staan en hom (skoolhoof) een taai klap te gee.”

*[As on Monday with the religious incident, I wanted to stand up and give him (principal) a hard slap.]*

#### **4.3.5.1.3 Teachers are reluctant to go to work**

P3: “Mens voel regtig jy het nie meer lus om in die oggende op te staan en skool toe te gaan nie.”

*[One really does not feel like getting up in the morning to go to school.]*

P7: “Dit was elke dag ’n struweling wat opgebou het na ’n groot ding ... ek wou nie eens meer skool toe gaan nie.”

*[Every day was a struggle building up to something bigger ... I did not even want to go to school any more.]*

P8: “Op die ou einde raak dit net jy voel jy is nie lus vir die besigheid nie, jy is nie lus om skool toe te gaan nie.”

*[In the end it you just don't feel in the mood for this business, you do not want to go to school.]*

#### **4.3.5.1.4 Teachers experience changes in their personality**

P3: “... ek weet nie of ek as persoon daardeur verander het nie, ’n mens raak op ’n manier hard...”

*[... I don't know if I changed as a person because of it, in a way one becomes tough...]*

P4: “Ek het baie gewig aangesit, omdat my lus vir so baie dinge afgetakel was, ek was baie sportief, en ek toon baie min belangstelling daarin deesdae.”

*[I have put on a lot of weight, because my desire for so many things diminished, I used to be very sporty, but these days I show very little interest in sport.]*

P11: “Ek is eintlik ’n ekstrovert, ek put eintlik my energie uit mense uit, ek kry juis nie my energie uit stilte nie, so ja dat mens eintlik ’n persoonlikheidsverandering ondergaan, wat ’n ou eintlik noop om na die ander kant toe te gaan.”

*[I'm actually an extrovert and I obtain my energy from people, I do not get my energy from silence, so yes it is true that you actually undergo a personality change, which forces you to go to the other side.]*

#### **4.3.5.1.5 Teachers experience having negative feelings towards learners**

P5: “... daar was ’n stadium wat ons mekaar *emotionally abuse* het, as jy iets sleg aan my doen, doen ek iets sleg aan hulle (leerlinge)”

*[... there was a time that we emotionally abused each other, if you do something bad to me, I do something bad to them (pupils).]*

P7: “... ek het skuldig gevoel daarvoor, want hy is ’n kind en ek is ’n grootmens, maar daar was ’n tyd wat ek hom nie voor my oë kon verdra het nie juis oor sy gedrag.”

*[... I felt guilty about it because he was a child and I am an adult, but there was a time that I couldn't stand seeing him, because of his behaviour.]*

P11: “As dit Vrydag raak, is ek moeg ek is gatvol, ek wil nie ’n kind sien nie, ek wil nie ’n swart mens sien nie, weet jy hoe erg is dit.”

*[When it gets to Friday I am tired I've had it up to here, I do not want to see a child, I do not want to see a black person, do you know how bad it is].*

**4.3.5.2 Teachers' health problems often results in the deterioration of social relationships.**

CATEGORY	SUB-CATEGORY	PARTICIPANTS n = 11
4.3.5.2 Teachers' health problems often results in the deterioration of social relationships	4.3.5.2.1 Teachers' personal or family relations suffer	8
	4.3.5.2.2 Teachers withdraw socially	8

**4.3.5.2.1 Teachers' personal or family relations suffer**

P3: "...dan is mens mos maar krapperig, en dan sit mens vas met jou meisie of ou, man of vrou."

*[...then one feels a bit touchy, and then you argue with your girlfriend or boyfriend, husband or wife.]*

P4: "Dit het definitief 'n invloed op my huisgesin en gesinslewe ook, want jy kom met mood swings huis toe en jy kom met 'n klomp bagasie elke dag huis toe met dit wat op jou gelaai is."

*[It has definitely had an impact on my family and family life too, you come home with mood swings and you come home every day with a lot of luggage with all that is loaded onto you.]*

P5: "Ek moes vir drie weke in die (kliniek se naam uitgelaat om identiteit te beskerm) klinkiek lê, my dogter het so gehuil, sy kan dit nie meer vat dat ek daar is nie. My dogter moes verantwoordelikheid aanvaar vir my hele huishouding en sy kon dit nie hanteer nie."

*[I had to stay in the (clinic's name omitted to protect identity) clinic for three weeks, my daughter cried so much, she could not take it that I was there. My daughter had to accepted responsibility for my entire household and she could not handle it.]*

- P6: “Van my vrou se kant af, is dit ook nie vir haar lekker nie.”  
*[On my wife’s side, she did not enjoy it either.]*
- P7: “Jou man ly daar onder, jou kinders ly daaronder, as jy omgekrap en sleg voel as jy by die huis kom dan weet hulle nie wat aan gaan nie.”  
*[Your husband suffers and your children suffer because of it, if you are upset and feel bad when you get home they do not know what is going on.]*
- P8: “Jy kan nou maar sê jy neem nie die werk huis toe nie, maar op een of ander manier gaan daar gesels word oor die werk by die huis en dit veroorsaak konflik by die huis ook.”  
*[You can say you don’t take your work home, but in one way or another, we will talk about work at home and this also causes conflict at home.]*
- P11: “En as jy nou dink aan tyd en energie, gaan die beste tyd van my dag in ander mense se kinders in, en nie in my eie kinders nie, en dit is vir hulle swaar.”  
*[And if you are thinking of time and energy, the best time of the day goes into other people’s children, and not into my own children, and it is hard for them.]*
- P13: “Jy is kortaf en kwaai met jou man, want jy is nie nou baie lus vir praat nie.”  
*[You are abrupt and angry with your husband because you are not in the mood to talk.]*

#### **4.3.5.2.2 Teachers’ withdraw socially**

- P3: “Vrydagmiddae wil jy net slaap en ontspan, want jy is fisies net uitgeput.”  
*[Friday afternoons you just want to sleep and relax because you are physically exhausted.]*
- P4: “Dit het my sosiale lewe en my welstand, het dit definitief ’n invloed...”  
*[It has affected my social life and my well-being, it definitely has an influence...]*
- P5: “Ek was altyd sosiaal, maar naweke het ek niks meer gedoen nie.”  
*[I was always social, but over weekends I do nothing anymore.]*
- P7: “Ek sit nie in die personeelkamer pouses nie, want ek wil nie in hul geselskap wees nie.”  
*[During break times I don’t even go to the staffroom, because I do not want to make conversation with them.]*
- P9: “Ek hou my besig by die huis, ek doen goed en pak projekte aan, ek probeer sosiaal wees en myself geniet. Want hy is nie daar nie (skoolhoof).”  
*[At home I keep myself busy, I do stuff and take on new projects, I try to be social and to enjoy myself. Because he is not there (principal).]*
- P10: “... mense wat hulself onttrek, wat op ’n Vrydagmiddag in hul koshuiskamer instap en hulself toesluit en eers op ’n Maandagoggend weer daar uitstap.”

*[People who withdraw themselves, on a Friday afternoon they walk into their dorm room and lock themselves away and then only on a Monday morning they will walk out of there.]*

P11: "... as dit Vrydag raak, is ek selfs nie lus vir kerk toe gaan nie, ek voel al hoe meer ek onttrek my."

*[... when it gets to Friday, I don't even feel like going to church, I feel like I am withdrawing myself more and more.]*

P13: "Jy is nie eens lus om êrens heen te gaan nie, jy wil net Vrydagaand rustig by die huis wees, want jy is moeg na die week, jy is gedaan."

*[You do not even feel like going somewhere, on a Friday evening you just want to be quietly at home, because you are tired after the week, you're exhausted.]*