#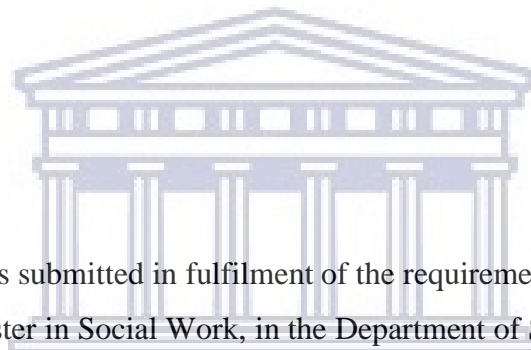 EXPLORING THE PERCEPTIONS OF EDUCATORS OF LEARNERS WITH EXPERIENCES OF BULLYING ON SOCIAL MEDIA AND EXPOSURE TO CHILD PORNOGRAPHY

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A full thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the
degree of Master in Social Work, in the Department of Social Work,
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University of the Western Cape.

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Date: November 2020

ABSTRACT

It is well documented that learners in South Africa face increasing levels of bullying, at either school, or more recently, via the various social networks. More alarming is the fact that bullying through social networks often include exposure to a range of inappropriate content, such as child pornography.

The researcher's aim in this current study was to explore the perceptions of educators of learners, who had experienced bullying on social media and exposure to child pornography. The learners were in grades 7 to 10 at schools in the Western Cape Department of Education districts. In this explorative, qualitative study, the researcher explored the perceptions of those educators, who were tasked with managing all learners in their classrooms, including those who had been subjected to bullying on the social networks. Purposive sampling was employed to select educators from the schools in the Western Cape Province districts. Data collection was accomplished through interviews with open-ended questions to elicit rich, in-depth data.

The data analysis followed the steps of Tesch, to ensure that the findings were verified, and reflected the responses of the participants. After the necessary permission had been granted, the gathered data were digitally recorded. All ethic obligations, such as informed consent, debriefing, beneficence, anonymity, confidentiality, and avoidance of harm were adhered to throughout the research process. Specific obligations were considered to ensure that none of the participants' rights was compromised. The participants were informed about the risks and legal implications, regarding bullying on social media and exposure to child pornography.

The findings revealed that the educators lacked knowledge of bullying on social media and exposure to child pornography. Most of the educators admitted that they were unaware of any specific Education Department programme, designed to help victims of bullying on social media and exposure to child pornography. All the educators acknowledged that they had a role to play, regarding bullying on social media and exposure to child pornography. The educators disclosed that they were unaware of any legislation that addressed these issues, and emphasised that educators should be trained on the obligations of all relevant legislation. Ultimately, the educators admitted that they were not completely knowledgeable about the procedures to deal with victims of bullying on social media, as well as exposure to child pornography.

KEYWORDS

Child

Child Sexual abuse content

Educator

Grooming

Pedophiles

Perceptions

Pornography

Sex Offenders

Sexual Predator

Sexual violence

Social media

LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

CSAM – Child Sexual Abuse Materials

DBE – Department of Basic Education

FCS – Family Violence, Child Protection Unit and Sexual Offences Unit

FPB – Film and Publication Board

ICT – Information and Communications Technology

INHOPE – International Association of Internet Hotlines

ISPA – Internet Service Provider Association

LEA – Law Enforcement Agency

NTDT – Notice to Take Down Procedure

SA – South Africa

SACE – South African Council for Educators

SAPS – South African Police Service

UNCRC – United Nation Convention on the Rights of Children

USA – United State of America

WC – Western Cape

WCED – Western Cape Education District

WASPA – Wireless Application Service Providers Association

DECLARATION

I, Muridili Murendeni, declare that the work of this thesis, entitled, *"Exploring the perceptions of educators of learners with experiences of bullying on social media and exposure to child pornography"* is my own work.

All the sections of this thesis that cite quotations, or describe an argument, and concept developed by other authors, have been referenced with complete references, including all secondary sources accessed, to demonstrate that this material had been adopted, to support my thesis.

Full Name: Muridili Murendeni

Date: November 2020

Signature: …………………………………………………………..

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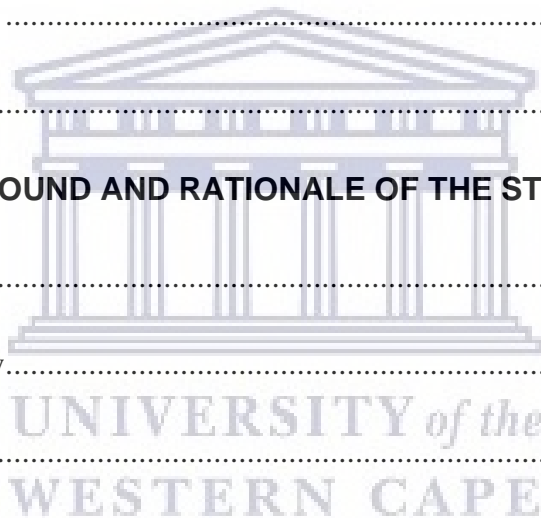
DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to the almighty God, for granting me the strength throughout my research, as well as the guidance and wisdom to complete. Also, to my late father, for the motivation, love and support throughout.

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CHAPTER ONE

BACKGROUND AND RATIONALE OF THE STUDY

1.1. Introduction

In this current study, the researcher explores the perceptions of the educators of learners, who had experienced bullying on social media and exposure to child pornography, specifically, rather than the broader concept of bullying. All the educators, included in this current study, had more than two years' experience of dealing with learners, who had experienced bullying on social media, as well as exposure to child pornography, as opposed to educators with no experience in dealing with these incidences. In this chapter, the following topics are discussed, in detail, namely, the rationale of the study, the problem formulation, the purpose of the study, the aim of the study, the research question, the research objectives, data collection and analysis, as well as the significance of the study, while the key concepts are also defined.

In order to comprehend the perceptions of the educators, the researcher was of the opinion that a closer investigation into the nuances of these perceptions was necessary. Bullying on social media, as well as exposure to child pornography, have legal implications; therefore, it was important for the researcher to determine what these legal implications were, as they related to this current study. The South African Constitution provides a clear moral foundation and excellent principles for society, based on greater value, ability, equality, status, non-sexism, as well as more peaceful and democratic organisation (Republic of South Africa [RSA], Act No. 108 of 1996). Similarly, the aim of the post-apartheid education system appears to be the creation of a more peaceful and democratic society (Harber & Mncube, 2017, p. 117). However, it is important to note that all social media software, are social, in the sense that they are products of social processes (Fuchs, 2017, p. 41). According to Cunningham and Cunningham (2017, p. 168). social workers would also have an important role to play in a social democratic strategy designed to tackle the underlying causes deeply rooted social problems that includes bullying in social media and exposure to child pornography.

In addition, the Criminal Law (Sexual Offences and Related Matters) Amendment Act, 2007 (Act No. 32 of 2007; also referred to as the Sexual Offences Act) dealt extensively with the definition of child pornography while Children's Act (Republic of South Africa [RSA], Act 38

of 2005) chapter 2 deals with the general principles pertaining to all children in south Africa. Every child has the responsibilities appropriate to the child's age and ability towards his or her family, community and the state (Mathaphuna, Louw, & Groenewald, 2015, p. 228). Cunningham & Cunningham (2017, p. 20) stated that children have been at the forefront of social policy and social work practice developments over the past decade and its assumed that hardly a month goes without some expose of child abuse or neglect in the media.

It is assumed that both learners and educators spend most of their time at school, or an institution of learning. This assumption is supported by McElvaney (2016, p. 140), who highlights that children spend most of their time in schools, outside their homes; therefore, teachers are often the adults, best placed to observe when children are in distress. According Greenhow, Sonnevend, & Agur, (2016, p. 1), the past ten years have revealed significant growth in access to web technology, as well as the educational possibilities of social media. Currently, it is possible to use social media to construct and portray an online identity, sharing everything, from major life events, to what was consumed for breakfast on any particular morning (Golbeck, 2015, p. 1).

Although, every child deserves an equal opportunity to attend a safe and culturally responsive school, some students continue to face various forms of harassment, on the basis of their race, status, class, gender, immigration status, ability (mental and/physical) religion, beliefs/faith, sexual orientation, ethnicity, gender expression, native language and other forms of differences (Boske & Osanloo, 2015, p. 1). Therefore, it would appear that the learners' first points of contact with any form of bullying on social media, as well as exposure to child pornography, would be the school settings. It is safe to assume that in the field of child protection lack of knowledge about the sources of information makes it difficult to assign jurisdiction keeping in mind that working with ambiguity, risk and uncertainty are fundamentals of children and family social work (Parrott & Maguinness, 2017, p. 79). The researcher is of the opinion that social workers got a critical role to play in a broader conception of children's welfare, focusing upon wider structural determinants that can impact upon their wellbeing.

Rogers (2013, p. 229) asserts that the provision of, and access to, quality education for young children, has been a long-standing challenge for social workers, as educational opportunities are vital for the short and long-term development of the children. In addition, ensuring that quality programmes exist for children from all backgrounds is an important charge of the

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profession (Rogers, 2013). However, the researcher is of the opinion that children are being exposed to diverse information via the internet, some of which are destructive, and promote various dubious activities, such as sex trade and trafficking. Consequently, the researcher was interested in determining the educators', as well as the schools', knowledge of bullying on social media, as well as exposure to child pornography.

In recent years, it appears that the rise in the media attention has contributed to an increase in online articles, academic research, popular books, and everyday conversations about pornography (Comella & Tarrant, 2015, p. 3). Besides, social media use, according to the researcher, cannot be separated from technology, as it is assumed that technology has influenced the rapid growth in the use of social media, where bullying and exposure to child pornography may occur. Consequently, Ray (2016, p. 143) asserts that current technology is changing the way in which people learn, communicate, and socialize. The capabilities of the internet have attracted criminals and criminal organisations, who are taking advantage of the information and interaction infrastructure offered by the internet, and exploiting vulnerabilities inherent to the internet (Kremling & Parker, 2018, p. 2).

It appears that the internet, as a super highway of technology, has expanded on the opportunities for people to meet and develop close relationships, through activities such as, social networking (Myspace, Facebook), services of online dating, emails, chat rooms and new groups. Critics, therefore, are concerned that this trend will undermine face-to-face interactions (Weiten & Hassim, 2016, p. 51). Social media platforms, as well as the ways in which they are being used, are constantly evolving (Cowie & Myers, 2018, p. 117). Many have debated the excessive use of technology concerning the development of children (Ray, 2016, p. 103). Therefore, it could be argued that the internet, various mobile technologies, and computers, have dramatically reshaped modern society with its excessive use.

Although it is very difficult to comprehend, it appears that, two decades ago, most individuals did not own a cellular telephone (cell phone), and a personal computer was still a somewhat expensive piece of equipment to own (Holt, Bossler, & Seigfried-spellar, 2018, p. 2). Statistics of cell phone use, involving bullying on social media and exposure to child pornography in South Africa, may be difficult to obtain. According to Louw & Louw (2014, p. 285), although the exact statistics of South African children's cell phone use are not available, studies elsewhere in the world indicate that children start to use cell phones at an increasingly younger

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age. Therefore, before exploring the perceptions of educators, with experience in dealing with cyberbullying and exposure to child pornography, it is critical to outline, the development milestones of the children, who are deemed to be at increased risk. Besides, educators appear to be the individuals, who spent most of their time with learners in the school setting.

Branscombe & Baron (2017, p. 354) assert that one factor, which plays a vital role in exploring the effects of all types of media violence, also involves desensitization. The media appears to have been transformed, tremendously, in the new South African democracy, and has claimed its independence from government and the free-market environment, in which it could conduct its business (Nevondwe & Matokota, 2013, p. 175). Therefore, it would appear that the transformation of the media in South Africa has contributed greatly to the increased number of individuals with access to social media, where bullying, as well as exposure to child pornography, occur.

According to the researcher, another assumption is that no specific minimum or maximum age, safeguards learners from experiencing incidences of bullying on social media, as well as exposure to child pornography. Rogers (2013, p. 234) states that middle childhood (from the age of 5 or 6, to approximately 11 years), is the time when growth and development continue at a steady, consistent pace, particularly in the area of physical, cognitive, and motor skills. During this time, children are increasingly exposed to the influence of their peers, and, as a result, they become more focused on achievement and self-control. Therefore, it could be concluded that development, in all aspects of the child's life, remains important, as s/he attempts to understand the various challenges that children face.

Interpol and Europol use the term, *child sexual abuse material*, when referring to, what generally is considered, child pornography, because, since children are unable to give consent, and are being harmed physically and emotionally, the phrase *pornography* is reductive and unfair to the victims (Holt, Bossler, & Seigfried-spellar, 2018, p. 299). Exposure to child pornography occur in various ways. However, according to the researcher's general observation, it cannot be ignored that children, specifically, may be guilty of creating child pornography, and are active participants in the acts of bullying on social media. Holt, Bossler, and Seigfried-spellar (2018, p. 299) assert that *child pornography* is a legal definition that extends to certain images, which focus on sexual acts, or sexualized images of children.

The various modes of communication, available in the country, make communication easy, internationally. Therefore, the researcher considered it crucial to investigate the possible devices that could be employed for bullying on social media, as well as exposure to child pornography. The *internet* has been explained as a network of computers and technology that link computers into the information superhighway (Wiid & Diggines, 2015, p. 89). *Facebook* appears to provide instant access to the world, and because it is a social networking site, it has limited boundaries. According to Comella & Tarrant (2015, p. 245), an individual's reputation could suffer infinite harm from reckless posting and sharing of information via this medium, as it is popular in society, and has a huge potential for serious damage; therefore, a considerable need exists, to ensure that the use of this medium to commit criminal acts of this nature is discouraged. In addition, evidence suggests that the roles of bullies and victims tend to persist from childhood and adolescence to adulthood, from school contexts to higher education, and even to the workplace context (Cowie & Myers, 2018, p. 12).

According to the South African Council for Educators 2015/16 Annual Report (SACE, 2016), learners spend most of their formative years at schools. This implies that educators spend most of their time with the learners; therefore, when problems related to the learners need solving, they are the most relevant structure to approach. Violence has become part of everyday life in schools, which is why the researcher decided to explore the perceptions of the educators, who had experience with bullying on social media (SACE, 2016). School bullying could also clarify how a society lives, through the actions of its youth (Schott & Sondergaard, 2014, p. 21).

Social workers deal with deeply rooted social problems in communities including bullying on social media and exposure to child pornography, whilst element of assessing, developing and managing social media networks can be very complex and in order for social workers to incorporate social media network skills and analysis into their professional practice, it is important that they understand some basic background, concepts and theories related to social media networks scales (Scales, Streeter & Cooper, 2014, p. 304). The educator's role is as important as that of parents; however, the researcher was more interested on the perceptions of the educators, because they spent a significant amount of time with the learners, who appear to be at risk in the school environment. Educators are expected to inform children and parents of ways to keep children safe on the internet. This should be done on an ongoing basis, informing children of the risks of interacting online, while still maintaining a good relationship with them, to allow free communication.

1.2. Rationale for the study

Terre Blanche, Durheim, & Painter (2006, p. 84) state, "research rationale provides reasons for the research to be conducted". The rationale for the study involves providing motivation to highlight why that particular phenomenon is worthy of investigation (Weiten & Hassim, 2016, p. 44). Chapter two of the South African Constitution (RSA, 1996) guarantees a variety of human rights to everyone in the Republic of South Africa, without containment on the hierarchy of rights, which simply implies that all the rights enshrined in the Constitution are important, and no single right is more important (Nevondwe & Matokota, 2013, p. 175). Among all these rights, the freedom of expression and dignity are included, which implies that, while learners have the right to freedom of expression, such a right should not be in violation of another person's right to dignity.

Everyone, including, but not limited to organised criminal gangs, such as drug traffickers, human traffickers, the Mafia, and many others, very soon realised the opportunities, offered by a connected world (Kremling & Parker, 2018, pp. 2-3). In an attempt to address the issues associated with bullying, the intervention and role of educators need to be considered seriously. The researcher observed that the perceptions of educators, regarding this phenomenon were scarcely addressed in literature, which has left a void in this research. In addition, the number of children involved in these practices is unclear, and the exact number of children subjected to cyberbullying, is unknown. These realities greatly motivated the researcher to explore the perceptions of educators of learners, who had experienced bullying on social media.

According to Branscombe and Baron (2017, p. 362), most people have either experienced, or observed, bullying during their childhood and teen years, which occasionally continues into adulthood, although in different forms. Therefore, child protection is everyone's responsibility, and those who work with children, have an added responsibility of being available to children, when they need to disclose abuse, or harm (McElvaney, 2016, p. 7). An added concern is that the majority of children appear to be highly skilled in the use of technology, especially social networks, which is rapidly becoming a normal way of life, particularly in the modern world (Nevondwe & Odeku, 2014, p. 132). According to Louw & Louw (2014, p. 374), during adolescence, these technologies become increasingly important socialisation tools. Although all children develop and mature at different rates, many social networking sites have established minimum age requirements, typically exceeding the age of 9 years, in response to

the emotional readiness of young children for such content. In fact, one of the most popular social networking sites, *Facebook*, requires its users to be a minimum age of 13 years (Ray, 2016, p. 131).

Consequently, Davies & Ward (2012, p. 48) highlights that schools are settings, in which there are opportunities for educators, to be alert to constellations of problems, as well as to seek the needed assistance, to protect children from the dangers associated with the internet (cybersafety). Access by young people and children to cyberspace and devices, such as mobile phones, leads to increased risks of abuse, as well as exposure to potentially unknown, undesirable, and explicit content that may be inappropriate for children of certain ages. Therefore, as mentioned previously, the educators' role in keeping children safe from this type of experience is as important as the parents'. On an ongoing basis, educators should inform children and parents of ways to keep them safe on the internet, as well as the risks of interacting online, while maintaining a good relationship with children, to allow free communication.

Wiid & Diggines (2015, p. 8) further assert that, in general, the standard of living in Western countries appears to have risen sharply. This suggests that a smaller percentage of consumers' income is spent on necessary goods; therefore, available funds is spent more on unnecessary, luxury goods. These luxury goods include gadgets that children may use to bully others on social media, or through which they might become victims of bullying in social media, and be exposed to child pornography. Regarding the decision to report acts of child abuse, according to Grant & Ray (2013, p. 184), recent research suggests that several factors influence teachers, as well as other professionals. These factors include a teacher's uncertainty about the symptoms, because of his/her unfamiliarity with the definition of abuse; unfamiliarity with the reporting process; concerns about liability; the potential consequences for the victim, once a report is filed; and a reluctance to report the abuse, because of the consequences attached to reporting, and its impact on the family involved.

1.3. Problem formulation

According to Bless, Higson-Smith, & Sithole (2013, p. 394), a research problem entails a brief statement, embedded in literature, about the topic that the researcher wishes to investigate. Babbie and Mouton (2010, p. 48) avers that the statement of a research problem should be clear and unambiguous, as well as related to the research objectives. Wiid & Diggines (2015, p. 9)

concur that good research should be characterized by a clearly defined research problem, that leaves no room for ambiguity. A well-presented research problem, according to Bless et al. (2013), is one that satisfies *five Ws*: *What* is the problem? *Where* is it located? *When* does it occur? *What* aspects are of primary concern? *Why* is investigating this problem important? However, Strydom (2011, p. 79) suggests that before conducting, or even designing a research study, the researcher must have a clear idea of the direction in which s/he envisages the study to proceed, which could later be refined in the form of a research problem statement, and/or research question.

The state of media freedom, and its associated independence in South Africa, remains a major concern, as, often, it is accused of being unfair, insensitive and disrespectful of people's constitutional rights (Nevondwe & Matokota, 2013, p. 175). Social media also makes informal peer-to-peer and amateur-to-amateur education increasingly salient (Greenhow, Sonnevend, & Agur, 2016, p. 21). Consequently, with greater internet and social media use, children are at increased risk of exposure to bullying (in the form of cyberbullying, which is the use of electronic media to repeatedly harass, humiliate and threaten others), harassment, and adult content (Ray, 2016, p. 144). In addition, children under the age of 16 years are unable to understand the implications of their actions completely, especially infants, toddlers, and young children, who may not be able to communicate verbally (Holt et al., 2018, p. 299). However, many children have disclosed that they had been bullied at school. Others admitted to bullying their classmates, while some claimed to have been, both the victim, and the bully, at some stage in their short lives (Branscombe & Baron, 2017, p. 363).

The main threads of literature on this subject appear to confirm some of the researcher's anecdotal observations, as a Child Protection Official, practicing in the media industry, particularly, the Film and Publication Board. South Africa faces increasing levels of bullying and exposure to child pornography, either at school, or more recently via the various social networks. More alarming is the fact that bullying and exposure to child pornography have legal implications that need to be observed, of which, it could be assumed, the general members of the public might not be aware. The aim of this current study, therefore, to address the question of who is involved in this practice, is critical, as no one should be exonerated from this act.

The Film & Publication Board is a regulatory body, concerned with the classification of materials (films, publications and games), as well as the protection of consumers, particularly

children. The board implements this protection by engaging them in various campaigns that involve the media, school outreach visits, community outreach visit programmes, and social media network platforms, to advocate against child pornography, among other things (Nevondwe & Odeku, 2014, p. 132). Much of the outreach work is conducted with child welfare organisations and the schools, in order to address the effects of this problem on the learners. However, the day-by-day observations, while interacting with the learners at the schools, through the Film & Publication Board outreach campaigns, revealed that several educators might be guilty of this offence, which cannot be ignored. In addition, several cases have been recorded in the media, involving learners who were caught watching explicit sex videos on their devices (cell phones) in the class, and often while the lesson was in progress (Harber & Mncube, 2017, p. 107).

Sexual exploitation has also been conceptualized as a form of sexual bullying between young people (Hallett, 2017, p. 94). McElvaney (2016, p. 7) states that child sexual abuse, typically, occurs in secret, and often, according to research, this secret is never divulged, and could remain hidden for many years. The media recently reported on cases of bullying, particularly sexting and baiting-out videos, involving sexual domination, which is a form of bullying, exercised mostly by young boys (Cowie & Myers, 2018:81).

In addition, Jenks & Jenks (2016, p. 80) highlight that problems related to bullying via electronic devices are becoming more common and visible on campuses. Some students have used computers, or personal devices, during their free time at home, to bully teachers, administrators and students on campus (Jenks & Jenks, 2016, p. 80). Ultimately, what could be concluded about child pornography is that increased parental guidance on, or supervision of, the child's use of the internet, intensified awareness of the illegality of creating, possessing and distributing child pornography among the youth, as well as the proper regulation of online media, could prevent the spread of this societal scourge (Nevondwe & Odeku, 2014, p. 135).

In the past decade, significant growth has been observed in the access to web technology, as well as in the educational possibilities of social media. These changes challenge previous conceptualisations of education and the classroom, and pose practical questions for students, educators, and the administrators (Greenhow, Sonnevend, & Agur 2016, p. 1).

1.4. Purpose of the study

The purpose of a study could be explained in three stages. Firstly, it is a general statement of the researcher's aim. Secondly, it is an account of where the aim originates from, as well as the importance of the findings, and the rationale of the research. Thirdly, it deals with specific hypotheses or questions that the researcher is investigating (Terre Blanche et al., 2006, p. 84). The main purpose of this study, therefore, was to explore the perceptions of educators of learners, with experiences of bullying on social media and exposure to child pornography.

1.5. Aim of the study

Fouché & Delport (2011) refer to the *aim* as something that an individual tries to do, or achieve. The research aim specifies and operationalizes the focus of the intended study (Terre Blanche et al., 2006, p. 84). The aim of this study was to explore the perceptions of educators of learners, with experiences of bullying on social media, and exposure to child pornography.

1.6. Research question

According to Doody and Bailey (2016, p. 19), a research question may be described as the formulation of vague thoughts about a subject into a specific question. Wiid & Diggines (2015, p. 57) highlight that a good research question identifies the theoretical construct, transcends the data, and has recognisability, significance, robustness, and the capacity to surprise. The research question for this current study was, "What are the perceptions of educators of learners with experiences of bullying on social media, and exposure to child pornography?"

1.7. Research Objectives

Monette (2005, p. 320) defines objectives as the measurable criteria for success. In addition, Wiid & Diggines (2015, p. 28) advises that it is important for researchers to ensure that their research is objective and correct. This study was guided by the following objectives:

- To gain in-depth understand of the perceptions of educators of learners with experience of bullying on social media and exposure to child pornography.

- To explore and describe the role of educators, when dealing with victims of bullying on social media and exposure to child pornography.

1.8. Research methodology

A qualitative research method, with an explorative design, was used to achieve the aim of this current study. Educators with two and more years of teaching experience, from all the metro districts in the Western Cape Provincial Department, comprised the population for this current study. Non-probability sampling, specifically purposive sampling, was used to select the sample to participate in this research study; however, they had to be educators of learners, who had experienced bullying on social media, and exposure to child pornography.

The researcher approached the principals of each school to request a convenient time to distribute and explain the information sheets about the study to the educators. After receiving written consent from those who voluntarily agreed to participate, the data were collected from the sample through semi-structured interviews, with face-to-face interaction, and open-ended questions, in a conducive environment. The participants granted permission for the use of a voice recorder, during the interviews, while the researcher also documented field notes.

Trustworthiness and all ethics considerations were observed throughout the research study. The gathered data were transcribed and analysed by the researcher to make sense of the complex story related by the participants. A thematic data analysis process was used to analyse the findings of the research study.

1.9. Significance of the study

It is anticipated that this current study will contribute new ideas on how educators should manage bullying on social media and exposure to child pornography in South African schools. In addition, this current study could equip schools, educators, social workers and members of the SGBs with new approaches to eliminate, not only bullying, but also violence at schools. This current study could also determine the knowledge and skills required by educators and schools in managing incidences of bullying on social media, and exposure to child pornography. Most importantly, it is anticipated that this study would offer advice on implementation of the code of conduct, policies, as well as other relevant disciplinary strategies, or programmes, provided by the Department of Education, specifically, on the prevention and the management of bullying on social media and exposure to child pornography.

This study could assist the Department of Basic Education to explore the possibility of incorporating online safety for children, as a subject in the curriculum, to inform them, from an early age, and empower them to protect themselves from online predators. In addition, this study could assist the Department of Social Development to explore possibilities to develop uniform online child protection programs to be rolled out at schools, churches, child and youth care centers and communities. Most importantly, this study could assist future researchers to refine their ideas regarding bullying on social media and exposure to child pornography, for both the educators, school social workers and the schools.

1.10. Definitions of the key concepts

Behaviour: Any response carried out by an organism (Weiten & Hassim, 2016, p. 4)

Bullying: Bullying involves emotional harm [physical or psychological], repetition [the victims being targeted repeatedly], and the power imbalance [the bully abuses his/her power over that of the victim] (Kassin, Fein, & Markus, 2017, p. 461).

Child: According the Children's Act, Act No. 38 of 2005 (Republic of South Africa [RSA], 2005), a child is defined as a person under the age of 18 years.

Child pornography: Child pornography "refers to the sexualised depictions of children produced, distributed, accessed or stored via various internet facilitated paths such as web-cams, bulletin boards, email, websites and peer-to-peer networks (Kremling & Parker, 2018, p. 75).

Child sexual abuse material: Term used to refer to child pornography, on the basis that children are unable to give consent, and are being harmed physically, and emotionally (Holt et al., 2018, p. 660).

Child sexual exploitation: Is the coercion, without displaying moral principles, or the pure manipulation of children and young people into engaging, or participating in sexual activities (Hallett, 2017, p. 23).

Cyberbullying: Is often defined as the use of information and communications technology, such as email, cell phones, instant messaging, and social media, to engage in deliberate, repeated, and hostile behaviour, which is intended to harm others (Branscombe & Baron, 2017, p. 364).

Cybercrime: Is committed by a perpetrator who understands and uses special knowledge, as well as non-public information of cyberspace, to commit a crime (Holt et al., 2018, p. 664).

Cybernetics: The principles that regulate the dissemination of information, or messages (Louw & Louw, 2014, p. 472).

Desensitisation: The reduction of, or an action of diminishing, an emotion-related physiological reactivity, in response to the stimulus (Kassin, Fein, & Markus, 2017, p. 491).

Educator: Any person, who teaches, educates or trains other people. Additionally, it refers to any individual, who offers professional educational services, including professional therapy, and education psychological services, at any public school, the departmental office, or the adult basic education centre. It could also refer to any person, appointed in a post at any educator establishment, under the Employment of Educators Act (Republic of South Africa [RSA], Act No. 76 of 1998)

Paedophile: An individual with a sexual attraction to individuals under the age of 18 years (Holt et al., 2018, p. 691).

Pornography: Explicit sexual material (including pictures/images, videos, paintings) that appear to be of an explicitly sexual in nature (Kassin et al., 2017, p. 492).

School-based bullying: A systematic abuse of power in a relationship formed at a school, characterised by: (1). Aggressive acts directed (by one or more individuals) towards victims that a reasonable person would avoid; (2). Acts that usually occur repeatedly over a period; and (3). Acts, in which there is an actual, or perceived, power imbalance between perpetrators and victims, with victims often being unable to defend themselves effectively against perpetrators (Slee, 2017, p. 47).

Social media: Social media does not have a single, widely accepted definition, as it is a group of web-based applications that allow for the creation and exchange of user-generated content (Burns, 2015, p. 586).

Social networking: Is a web-based interface, intended to establish and facilitate the interaction, communication, collaboration, as well as connection between individuals and groups, by utilizing numerous tools, such as emails, wiki, blogs, tweets, and instant messaging, to enable a sharing of digital information (Issa, Isaias, & Kommers, 2016, p. 19).

Social worker: Is a person registered as a social worker in terms of section 17 of the social service professional act, 1978 no.110 of 1978 (Mathaphuna, Louw, & Groenewald, 2015, p. 262).

Violence: Is defined an action, or actions, by people against people, which is/are liable to cause physical or psychological harm (Harber & Mncube, 2017, p. 4).

1.11. Chapter outline

Chapter 1: The researcher presents an introduction to, background of, and rationale for the study. The problem formulation, the aim, objectives, research question, purpose, aim, and significance of the study, as well as the methodology, definitions of key concepts and the overview of the chapters are also provided.

Chapter 2: The researcher provides the theoretical framework of the study.

Chapter 3: The researcher focuses on a literature review for the study. Current literature of bullying on social media and exposure to child pornography is reviewed, contrasted and compared.

Chapter 4: The researcher focuses on the research methodology. Specific consideration was given to the way the study was conducted, based on the aims and objectives of the study. The sample of the participants, data collection and data analysis procedures, as well as the ethics considerations are also presented.

Chapter 5: The researcher presents the main findings, relevant to the focus of the study. These findings are presented in a thematic analysis.

Chapter 6. The discussion of the main findings are presented in this chapter. A synthesis of the findings, the main threads in the literature and studies are provided. The limitations of the study are presented, as well as the recommendations for the future research and practice.

CHAPTER TWO

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK OF THE STUDY

2.1. Introduction

According to Babbie (2016, p. 103), a theory is a systematic explanation of the observations that relate to a particular aspect of life. Rogers (2013, p. 5) asserts that a theory is a set of ideas, or concepts that, when considered together, help to explain certain phenomena, and allow behaviour and events to be predicted. Kassin et al. (2017, p. 28) concur that a theory is an organised set of principles that are used to explain observed phenomena.

The main theoretical framework that was chosen for this study is the Ecological Systems Theory, which is associated with the Russian-born, American psychologist, Urie Bronfenbrenner (Heslop & Meredith, 2019, p. 138). According to Rogers (2013, p. 42), Ecological Systems Theory explains human development, by describing the aspects of the individual, the environment, as well as the interaction between the two. This author further states that the tenets of Ecological Theory suggest that people are active participants, actively involved in their environments, as well as their own development (Rogers, 2013, p. 42). This theory opposes some developmental theories, whose tenets suggest that people are passive, and do not play an active role in their development. However, Rogers (2013, p. 42) adds that both development and environments are always evolving.

According to Rogers (2013), people are born with negative and positive tendencies, which are influenced equally by nature (environment), and nurture (development). Development around people, therefore, is influenced by the actions of the individual, occurrences in the individual's environment, and interactions between the two. In order for the researcher to understand bullying on social media, and exposure to child pornography, with all its complexities, as well as the developing interventions that are based on this complex understanding, the Ecological Systems Theory (Heslop & Meredith, 2019, p. 138) was considered.

The following topics are discussed in this chapter: the Ecological Systems Theory, in detail; the Ecological Systems Perspective, in relation to this current research study; the importance of applying the micro-mezzo-macro conceptualisation in this current study; the importance of

applying the Ecological Systems Theory; Peer ecology; analysing the Ecological Systems Theory, and the Ecological Fallacy. However, knowledge of the interaction processes, in which the roles of bullies, victims, their assistants, defenders and bystanders are formed, and maintained, remains scant (Cowie & Myers 2018, p. 12). The topic of pornography (as contentious and intriguing as it may be) warrants sophisticated methods and frameworks to address the dilemmas of the ethics of production, sexism, racism, compulsive use, consent and the law (Comella & Tarrant, 2015, p. 3).

The Micro-Mezzo-Macro Conceptualisation is discussed, due to its relevance in describing the environmental factors that characterises bullying on social media, as well as exposure to child pornography. As with the micro-mezzo-macro approach, the Ecological Systems Theory contains several levels that describe the factors in a person's environment, which are significantly important in development (Rogers, 2013, p. 44). The importance of applying the Ecological Systems Theory is also discussed. In addition, the value of analysing the Ecological Systems Theory and Ecological Fallacy cannot be ignored, and is discussed, as well. Techno-deterministic approaches, which assume that the rise of these technologies result in a more democratic society, dominate studies of the *Web 2.0* and social media (Fuchs, 2017, p. 122).

2.2. The Ecological Systems Theory

Social ecology has a particular focus on the social, institutional and cultural contexts of people-environment relationships (Slee, 2017, p. 87). Therefore, the Ecological Systems Theory (Heslop & Meredith, 2019, p. 138) helps the researcher to identify the educator's perceptions of learners with experiences of bullying on social media, as well as exposure to child pornography. While Mishna (2012, p. 38) explains the underlying component of this current study, the Ecological Systems Theory (Heslop & Meredith, 2019, p. 138) provides an understanding of reciprocal, synergistic contributions to the development of all the components of an individual's environment. In the Ecological Systems Theory (Heslop & Meredith, 2019, p. 138), bullying and exposure to child pornography dynamics are perceived to extend beyond the children, who bully (perpetrators), or who are bullied (victims). Cyberbullying and inappropriate photography, therefore, have become hindrances in schools, and considered the main reason that many South African schools have banned the use of cell phones in the classroom (Louw & Louw, 2014, p. 286).

The Ecological System Theory explains how the phenomena of bullying and exposure to child pornography is encouraged, or inhibited, due to complex relationships between an individual and his/her family, peer group, school, community and culture. The theory assumes that everyone is part of the system that locates an individual at the centre, and includes all systems that affect that individual. However, the ecological approach is not associated with being *green* or *sustainable development* (Krientner & Kinicki, 2014, p. 20).

The fundamental tenet of the Ecological Systems Theory is that, the way in which individuals perceive their environments and experiences, significantly affects their well-being (Heslop & Meredith, 2019, p. 138). Specifically, the meaning that people attach to incidents they experience, as well as the way they interpret those events, in the context of their environments, determines how those events influence their complete well-being (Rogers, 2013, p. 42). For example, two children at the same school may react differently to an incident of bullying on social media, as well as exposure to child pornography, which might be stressful to both of them. One might view cyberbullying on social media as an opportunity to learn and develop more skills on how to be cybersmart on social media, moving forward, while the other might take on the role of a victim. In contrast, family and systematic therapy avoids working with individuals; instead, it seeks to bring family members together, to consider what is transpiring in the family system, and navigate towards solutions (Heslop & Meredith, 2019, p. 138).

Louw & Louw (2014, p. 286) highlight that cyberbullying and inappropriate photography have become significant problems in schools, which highlights the importance of the educator's perceptions of cyberbullying on social media and exposure to child pornography.

2.3. Ecological systems perspective

Duper (2013, p. 1) concurs with Mishna (2012), and explains that the "ecological systems perspective is a useful framework" for a better understanding of bullying, in all its complexities, as well as to develop interventions based on this complex understanding. Duper (2013, p. 1) adds that the ecological systems framework is conceptualized as a series of concentric circles of influence, which imposes intrapersonal, family, peer, community, and a wider societal influence on behaviour and development. Within the ecological framework, each individual is viewed as an inseparable part of the various social systems, for example school, home, neighbour, or peer group, within which s/he functions (Duper, 2013, p. 1).

This model was relevant to this current study, as it guided the researcher to relate to the educators' daily interaction with children, during the interviews. Applying the Ecological Systems Theory, predicts that the circumstances surrounding the students and educators, determines whether the students act aggressively, or non-aggressively, because the environment around people is constantly changing, and in order to change the environment, the support and understanding of the school staff must be established, as children mature. Children increasingly use their cell phones for social networking (keeping in close contact with their peers); however, the cell phone may be misused, a negative outcome being cyberbullying, which children (and adolescents) use to harm others (Louw & Louw, 2014, pp. 285-286).

Ecological systems perspective was selected because people are multicultural individuals, who may identify with multiple groups, with specific values, and a particular set of experiences, thereby locating them and their families in terms of race, religion, class, sexual orientation, occupation, migration experiences, nationality, and ethnicity (Goldenberg & Straton, 2018). Therefore, it is important to view the ecological system, in contrast to the general school system. According to Wittenkamp (2018, p. 64), the school system reinforces and perpetuates elements in a culture. Therefore, according to the researcher's experience, when people have children attending an international school, it implies that the local school had been *un-chosen*, implicitly. The reason could be that they were unwilling for their children to be indoctrinated with values, to which they did not subscribe. Alternatively, it could be that they were travelling to many places; hence, an international education, with a standard curriculum, made it easier for the child to move between schools. Another reason could be that the local schools did not have adequate strategies to deal with cases of cyberbullying and exposure to child pornography. However, when a practice that does not promote success on a campus, becomes the norm, educators must work together, to change that practice (Jenks & Jenks, 2016, p. 1).

2.4. Micro-Mezzo-Macro conceptualisation

Rogers (2013, p. 43) highlights that the organisation of ecological theory is very similar to that of the micro-mezzo-macro conceptualisation.

- **Microsystem:** In ecological theory, this level includes all the roles and relationships in a person's immediate environment. This level includes the physical places, such as, the

home, the school, the work place, and the neighbourhood, which are the places where people often have daily face-to-face contact with one another.

- **Mesosystem:** In ecological theory, the focus at this level is on the interactions among two, or more environmental settings, in which people live. For example, the dynamics in an individual's work and home lives, often influence each other, this is demonstrated when an brings the stress of work into the home.

- **Exosystem:** All the social settings, in which incidents happen to affect people (for example, the child's school, parent's workplace, or neighbourhood community centre), make up the exosystem. Although an individual is not, necessarily, an active participant in these settings, what happens in these settings, affect them directly or indirectly. For example, the policy on school closure in the community. Although the residents of the community are not involved in the decision-making, their children and families are affected by them. Alternatively, some families may decide to move their children from one school to another school district, or bus their children to a school that is far away. The residents, who do not have any children, will somehow also experience the impact of the change in the community, created by this decision.

- **Macrosystem:** This level encompasses all the ways in which the larger cultural factors affect an individual's development. This includes the aspects of laws, political philosophies, and the cultural beliefs.

Slee (2017, p. 86) concurs with this conceptualisation, and, subsequently, outlines the following settings and contexts:

- **Microsystem:** Incorporates the individual characteristics of the child and the various settings in which the child is located, for example, family, school and neighbourhood.

- **Mesosystem:** The focus is on the inter-relationship between elements of the microsystem and contexts, for example, how a family responds to the school system and their experiences with it.

- **Exosystem:** Elements of the exosystem do not impinge on the child directly, but influence the child through one of the microsystems.

- **Macrosystem:** This is composed of settings that refer to the much larger cultural or sub-cultural environment in which the child lives, and refers to the values and mores that form part of the broader environment.

- **Chromosystem:** Includes all environmental events that occur across the life span, which questions how events, such as bullying at school, affect the way a child develops.

Regarding this assertion, the researcher decided to delve deeper into analysing what the rationale could be, when referring to ecosystemic, as an approach, and not a theory. According to Moore, Viljoen, & Meyer (2017, p. 468), the ecosystemic approach is not a specific personality theory, but rather an integration of certain fields of study, such as the systems theory, ecology and cybernetics. Similarly, epistemology refers to a particular way of thinking, which determines how people view and understand the world around them. This will assist the researcher to explain the rationale for the theory, regarding this particular field of study, namely, exploring the educator's perceptions of learners with experience of cyberbullying and exposure to child pornography (Moore et al., 2017, p. 468).

According to Gibson's Theory of a Direct Perception (Gibson, 1979), the information in respective sensory receptors, including the sensory context, is all that is needed to perceive anything. As the environment supplies all the information needed for perception, this view is often referred to as *ecological perceptions* (Sternberg & Sternberg, 2017, p. 82). Therefore, higher cognitive processes are necessary, to mediate between an individual's respective sensory experiences and his/her perceptions, as existing beliefs, or higher-level inferential thought processes, are unnecessary for perceptions (Sternberg & Sternberg, 2017, p. 82).

2.5. Applying the Ecological Systems Theory

By observing the research participants' *microsystem*, their developmental status as children, teenagers, and all the settings they interacted with, as well as the roles they played in each, could be assessed by applying the Ecological Systems Theory. These roles may involve the children's physical, emotional, and the cognitive development. The microsystem initially reflected the dynamic mother-child relationship, but has expanded to those relationships that most immediately, and directly, affect the child's development, including the physical environment of their home, school, church and neighbourhood, as well as their interaction with their family, educators, peers, social workers and priest (Heslop & Meredith, 2019, p. 71).

The *mesosystem* pertains to the relationships and interconnections between the microsystems, for example, between the family and the school (Heslop & Meredith, 2019, p. 71). By observing the participants' *mesosystem*, the way two or more of the systems in the children's environment interact, to influence their development, would be considered, including how they interact with others in the school setting (Heslop & Meredith, 2019, p. 71). The participants' *exosystem* refers to those social settings in which the child is not actively involved, namely, their guardians' places of employment, places where they socialize, and their community engagements (Heslop & Meredith, 2019, p. 71). This helps to establish the environment that affects them indirectly, but that, potentially, could influence their development.

The *macrosystem* would involve local, national and international economic pressures, school policies regarding educational standards, societal attitudes and families, teenagers and minority groups, as well as other factors that affect individuals' lives, considering the wider social, cultural, legislative and community networks that affect family and child, such as laws (Heslop & Meredith, 2019, p. 71). In addition to assessing the levels to which children experience cyberbullying problems, the ways in which each child deals with the problems, as well as how their interaction with others and the environment affect their functioning and development, need to be assessed. Given all this information, the researcher would decide on which factors of the children's environment exert the greatest influence on his/her development and functioning. Consequently, these factors would indicate which interventions needed to be developed, to improve the children's circumstances.

Because of the interactive nature of this theory, as with the micro-mezzo-macro approach, it is likely that as the interventions are applied on one level, or with a few aspects of the children's environment, the intervention would cause a ripple effect on other areas of children's environment, creating change in the children's circumstances. Therefore, childhood development stages are important to social workers, when they assess the children's needs; however, they are not definitive indications of exactly what to expect (Heslop & Meredith 2019:71).

2.6. Peer Ecology

Peer ecology is the part of the children's microsystem that involves them interacting, influencing, and socialising with peers (Slee, 2017, p. 36). Students who bully, and enjoy some

social status, are connected to the peer ecology, while rejected bullies are disconnected. The victims' standing is a bit clearer, as typically, they are disconnected from the peer group (Slee, 2017, p. 36).

2.7. Analysing Ecological Systems Theory

Perceiving client problems through the lens of the Ecological Systems Theory could be daunting. Potentially, there are an endless number of areas, in each level, which could possibly be assessed, and could seem overwhelming. The scope of the theory also makes it difficult to test empirically, to predict behaviour (Rogers, 2013, p. 48).

2.8. Ecological Fallacy

According to Babbie (2016, p. 103), Ecological Fallacy is an assumption that an inference about an ecological unit, also defines the individuals who make up the unit. For the purposes of this current study, the ecological fallacy refers to the notion of erroneously drawing conclusions about individuals, based solely on the observation of the group. According to Weiten & Hassim (2016, p. 338), behaviour is the outcome of an ongoing series of internal conflicts, between what is referred to as the *id, ego*, and *superego*.

According to Moore et al. (2017, p. 53), the *id* is the innate, primitive component of the psyche (id is the Latin word for 'It'), and is in direct contact with the body, from which it obtains energy for all behaviour. The *ego* develops from the *id*, because it has to ensure the individual's survival, and is formed through the individual's contact with the outside world. The superego is the intrapsychic representative of society's moral codes, which serves to pressurise the *ego* into abiding by these codes. It develops from the ego through a complicated process, in which the behavioural and moral codes of society play an important role (Moore et al., 2017, p. 54).

Louw & Louw (2014, pp. 20-21) highlight that the *id* is a reservoir of primitive instincts and drive, present at birth, and demands immediate gratification of bodily needs and wants. The *ego* is the practical, rational component of the personality that begins to emerge during the first year of life, as infants learn that they cannot always have what they want. The *superego* appears to be the moral agent in the child's personality, which emerged during the preschool years, as the child begins to internalise adult standards of right and wrong.

2.9. Conclusion

The main theoretical framework employed in this current study was Ecological Systems Theory, which was clearly outlined, in detail. The Ecological System Perspective, as well as the importance of applying the micro-mezzo-macro conceptualisation, in relation to the research study, were also discussed and clearly outlined, respectively. The importance of applying the Ecological Systems Theory, as well as the analysing of the Ecological Systems Theory, and the Ecological Fallacy, in relation to the research study, were presented, as well.

Various research studies confirmed that the Ecological Systems Theory was the most suitable theory, which the researcher could employ, to understand the perceptions of educators of learners with experience of bullying on social media and exposure to child pornography. The Ecological Systems Theory directly linked to the researcher's vision of the topic under scrutiny. Evidence of ecological factors was presented, to assist the researcher in understanding the behaviour of the educators and learners, as well as the environment, from which both originated. Environment plays a critical role, as the researcher is tasked with determining whether it contributed to the behaviour of bullying among learners. The ecological factors also clarified the educators' relationships, while dealing with the problem of cyberbullying on social media, and exposure to child pornography. In the following chapter, the researcher reviews, compares and contrasts the main threads in literature, pertaining to bullying on social media, and exposure to child pornography.

CHAPTER THREE

LITERATURE REVIEW

3.1. Introduction

In this chapter, the current literature relevant to bullying on social media and exposure to child pornography is reviewed, contrasted and compared. The literature review is also aimed at identifying the main threads of the literature that influence this topic area. The perceptions of educators of learners with experiences of bullying on social media and exposure to child pornography are explored and described. The following topics are discussed, compared, and contrasted:

The history of internet and cyberspace;

- Social media and technology tools;

- Cyberbullying;

- Child pornography;

- The role of schools in addressing bullying on social media and exposure to child pornography;

- The role of the teachers;

- The role of parents;

- The role of social workers

- Bullying on social media and child pornography legislative framework;

- Bias, prejudice, or identity-based bullying; as well as

- Bullying prevention and possible solutions.

According to Bless, Higson-Smith, and Sithole (2013), a literature review is an integrated summary of all the available literature relevant to a research question. Consequently, the researcher consulted studies, articles in accredited journals, policy documents, and dissertations (published and unpublished), related to the research questions outlined in this

study. These publications included the Bangladesh e-journals, Research in higher education journal, journal of social science, journal of sociology, international human rights law review, as well as cybercrime, cyberbullying, social media, child pornography and research academic books. Many of the factors that motivate behaviour are learned over time; therefore, any account of what motivates people, regarding how, and what people learn, needs to be addressed (Weiten & Hassim, 2016, p. 51).

Mass media are not necessarily technologies, but can be regarded as techno-social systems. They have technological levels of artefacts, which enable and constrain a social level of human activities, creating knowledge that is produced, diffused, and consumed with the help of the artefacts of the technological level (Fuchs, 2017, p. 39). The researcher is cognizant of the importance of social media use, but also worried about the effects that this could have on young people, specifically, regarding bullying on social media and exposure to child pornography. Currently, in Britain, the importance of social and digital media, in the lives of young people, cannot be understated (Cowie & Myers, 2018, p. 116). Social workers naturally focus on most pressing and immediate psychosocial issues which is to protect and safeguard the most vulnerable children from any disturbing form of harm and abuse including bullying in social media and exposure to child pornography (Cunningham & Cunningham, 2017, p. 168).

3.2. History of internet and cyberspace

According to Kremling & Parker (2018, p. 4), the internet dates back to the first telegraph in 1836. The telegraph revolutionised the way people communicated by using a code (the Morse code, which consisted of dots and dashes), which is similar to the way computers communicate currently, using 0s and 1s. Between 1858 and 1866, the transatlantic cable was the first to allow instantaneous communication across the Atlantic Ocean (Kremling & Parker, 2018, p. 4). At present, cables connect people across the entire globe. Telephones were first used with computers in 1976, and later provided the basis for internet connections via modems, which had to be plugged into the computer, or more currently, wireless connections (Kremling & Parker, 2018, p. 4).

The main aim of communication technology is to enhance communications, as well as ensure collaboration and connections among various educational sectors, communities, and the business sector (Issa, Isaias, & Kommers, 2016, p. 4). The communication technology

"application of scientific knowledge for practical purposes" was subsequently termed the internet, which simply refers to an effective network that connects people at a significant rate (Issa et al., 2016, p. 4). In this context, internet connections could be useful for pre-adolescents to complete their homework assignments, research information, and engage in learning games. Additionally, social media could be used to connect with others, as well as entertain. However, the internet exposes children to content and media that may not be developmentally appropriate (Ray, 2016, p. 144).

Golbeck (2015, p. 5) highlights, "The history of social media is a topic that deserves its own book, but understanding the major motivations, and points of development in the timeline, will help to understand the current landscape and uses of these technologies". In addition, the digital network, which is the set communication standard for digital transmission, could also form an increasingly conspicuous, as well as important informal part of the education system, and has been present, or existent, even before the initial development of the internet (Greenhow, Sonnevend, & Agur, 2016, p. 21).

3.3. Social media and technology tools

According to Nevondwe and Matotoka (2013, p. 175), "The media has transformed rapidly in the new South African democracy, and has claimed its independence from government and a free market environment, in which it can conduct its business." There is no single, widely accepted definition for social media. Burns (2015, p. 586) cautions that social media is a group of web-based applications that allow the creation and exchange of user generated content. Social media emphasises reciprocity and communications, and allows users to, not only download information, but also upload and share their own content. The adoption of social networking has been very useful, especially in the education sector, as a means of improving knowledge acquisition, and encouraging social interaction between students, as well as students and lecturers (Issa et al., 2016, p. 4).

The advances in technology, the various mediums of communication, and the general changes in communication patterns, may have resulted in an unacceptable and undesirable communication behaviour (or misbehaviour) among children, who use these technologies. The perceived distance, and the accompanying sense of anonymity, created by the various electronic communication methods, have all contributed to the development and occurrence of

some of this misbehaviour. The world has become increasingly digital, with a very thin line between digital and actual reality (Molapo & Khumalo, 2018, p. 8). This implies that technology has usurped conventional practices and procedures, and expedited the integration of the fourth industrial revolution.

Social media have its dangers and benefits; however, one of the benefits of social media networks, regarding educational environment settings, is that they support student goal setting, providing academic support, in terms of research, self-monitoring, as well as self-reflection, during the knowledge acquisition process (Issa et al., 2016, p. 130). Therefore, social media could be used for learning purposes, by forming a necessary base of beliefs about learning culture, understanding, knowledge, facts, skills, and expertise that is quite intense, and different from the foundational assumptions of taking responsibility, which underlie the structure and general practices of traditional educational institutions (schools, colleges and centres) (Greenhow et al., 2016, p. 95). According to Kassin, Fein, and Markus (2017, p. 429), online abuse, such as bullying via a social network site, or the cries for attention and help from suicidal individuals, may be met with the *bystander effect,* as the diffusion of responsibility could be greater online, because of the physical and psychological distance, the online world creates. Social media plays a very critical role in connecting people, and helping them to maintain their relationships with significant others. This connection helps people to nurture and support relationships in all spheres of their lives, as it presents countless ways of sharing and interacting (Golbeck, 2015, p. 1).

Greenhow et al. (2016, p. 99) emphasise that social media can be categorised into three groups, representing a progression of how many participants utilise it, as follows: Sharing (Social bonding, Photo and video sharing, Social networking, Writers workshops/fanfiction), Thinking (blogs, podcast, online discussion, twitter), Co-creating (wikis, or collaborative file creation, mashups or collective media creation, collaborative social change communities).

3.4. Cyberbullying

3.4.1. Definition of Cyberbullying

According to Patchin and Hinduja (2016, p. 191), cyberbullying is the intentional and repeated harm to one another, using computers, cell phones, and other electronic devices. In support of this definition, Smith (2014, p. 80) adds that cyberbullying refers to bullying

carried out via electronic media, mainly mobile phones, and the internet. For this current research, it is crucial to understand *cyberstalking* in the context of cyberbullying. According to Holt, Bossler, and Seigfried-spellar (2018, p. 664) cyberstalking is an online communication that may cause victims to experience fear for their personal safety, and/or emotional distress. Another important distinction should be made between *sexting* and cyberbullying. According to Slee (2017, p. 154), sexting involves the creation and transmission of sexual content via the electronic media.

"Social exclusion anxiety fuels bullying through a set of mechanisms that are linked to a desire for alleviation, and a wish to allow an individual, and his/her group, to control the conditions for inclusion and exclusion" (Schott & Sondergaard, 2014, p. 69). An earlier quoted definition of cyberbullying included the use of information and communication technologies, by an individual or group, mainly to support deliberate, repeated, and hostile behaviour, which is intended to harm others (Smith, 2014, p. 18). According to Cowie & Myers (2018, p. 3), bullying at school takes many forms, and includes the following behaviour:

- Spreading nasty rumours on the grounds of age, race, sex, mental health, disability, sexual orientation, and religion or belief;

- Physically attacking an individual;

- Ridiculing acts, or demeaning an individual;

- Social exclusion elements;

- Unwelcomed sexual advances/acts;

- Posting embarrassing material online;

- Threatening someone, either directly, or anonymously, online.

3.4.2. The impact/effects of cyberbullying

A major finding from the study of Campbell, Spears, Slee, Buttler, and Kift (2012) revealed that students, who had been victimised through traditional bullying, reported that they considered their bullying, harsher, crueller, and a greater impact on their lives, than students, who had been cyberbullied. However, the correlates of their mental health revealed that cyber victims reported significantly more social difficulties, higher anxiety

levels, and depression, as opposed to traditional victims (Campbell et al., 2012). In some cases, cyberbullying could have long-term effects on the victims, who could experience a variety of emotions. According to Chadwick (2014), these effects could include:

- Depression;

- Anxiety;

- Low self-esteem;

- Suicidal thoughts;

- Angry and vengeful;

- Lonely and isolated.

These effects could be debilitating for the victims, who usually experience a sense of not belonging in their communities or schools, and avoid being social, because of the embarrassment caused by cyberbullying. Some of the victims feel exposed and humiliated, others feel vulnerable and powerless, as well as infuriated with themselves and their circumstances (Smith & Thompson, 2018). Many incidents of cyberbullying are not reported, because the victims assume that the police would not consider their circumstances seriously.

The school system, school leaders, and the education sector in its entirety, are equally affected by the issue of bullying, both directly and indirectly (Smit, 2015, p. 4). According to Schott and Sondergaard (2014, p. 89), the archive of teacher and student talk, generated in their pilot study, revealed a major problem with distinguishing between *conflict* (seen as normal' violence), and *bullying* (seen as pathological). Additionally, bullying affects children's physical health, emotional health, school attendance, interaction with others, level of educational attainment, their concentration span, their social relationships, as well as mental health consequences, which could be severe, and even long lasting (Cowie & Myers, 2018, p. 3).

3.4.3. Cyberbullying statistics

According to Kassin, Fein, & Markus (2017, p. 461), bullying involves emotional harm (physical or psychological), repetition (the victim is targeted many times), and a power imbalance (the bully tends to abuse his/her perceived power over the victim, since

children and adolescents, globally, are physically, sexually, or emotionally bullied by their peers, at some point). This implies that, for victims, there is a relationship between bullying and other forms of physical, sexual, or emotional harm to self (suicide). Due to the complexity associated with the understanding of what *cyberbullying* is, this could be hindering attempts to quantify the prevalence of this phenomenon (Cowie & Myers, 2018, p. 118).

One of the major challenges, when assessing the rate of cyberbullying, is that, as with traditional bullying, most incidents go unreported (Cowie & Myers, 2018, p. 118). In one survey, 32 percent of teens reported that they had experienced harassment and bullying online (Lenhart, 2007, cited in DeVito, 2019, p. 359). In another survey, 26 percent of teens reported that they had experienced bullying via their cell phones (Lehnart, Ling, Campbell, & Purcell, 2010, cited in DeVito, 2019, p. 359). According to Mallory (2018, p. 4), nearly 1-in-5 parents, worldwide, report that their children had experienced cyberbullying; while in the USA, more than a quarter of parents report cyberbullying incidents, up from 15% in 2011. Globally, 1-in-3 parents report that children in their community had experienced cyberbullying, while the majority of parents in South Africa know of a child, who had been victimised by cyberbullying (Mallory (2018, p. 5).

Regarding cyberbullying incidence on social media, the survey of Mallory (2018, pp. 7–9) revealed that 66% of all incidents of cyberbullying occurred on social media, with 47% perpetrated from mobile phones, 43% emanating from online messaging, 25% from online chatrooms, 13% from emails, 8% from other websites, and 9% from other technologies. The survey also revealed that 67% of all incidents of bullying were committed by classmates, 29% by a young person, 15% by known adults, 14% by adult strangers, 11% by unknown, and 3% by those who preferred not to answer (Mallory 2018, pp. 7-9). Almost 40% of the students admitted that they had been cyberbullied, while approximately 70% of the cyberbullies admitted to being bullied online (Huddleston, 2016, p. 148). The statistics of cyberbullying is shocking, especially, considering the number of years since the introduction of the internet. In addition, school-based interventions vary, as some may be directed at either the whole school/class, or target the behaviour of the perpetrators of bullying, while others could be levelled at the victims, the bystanders, or possibly, the defenders.

Physical bullying is also a great concern, as 68% of all students, globally, worry about being physically assaulted, or threatened with a weapon at school. In addition, 71% of females feel threatened, compared to 63% of males, while 69% of young Blacks and 54% of young whites worry about being attacked at school. More than half of the students (52%) claimed that bullying at their school included teasing and insults, while 26% said it was perpetrated through pushing, hitting or beating. The victims may also be distinguished by some physical features, such as clumsiness, obesity, disability, or a different hair colour from the majority (Smith & Thompson, 2018, p. 9).

3.5. Child pornography

3.5.1. Definition of child pornography

According to the Film and Publication Act (Republic of South Africa [RSA], Act 65 of 1996), as amended, Child Pornography "include[s] any image, however created, or any description of a person, real or simulated, who is depicted, made to appear, look like, represented or described as being under the age of 18 years - engaged in sexual conduct; participating in, or assisting another person to participate in sexual conduct; or showing or describing the body or parts of the body of such a person in a manner or circumstances which within context amounts to sexual exploitation, or in such a manner that is capable of being used for the purpose of sexual exploitation".

Criminal Law (Sexual Offences and Related Matters) Amendment Act, 2007 (Act No. 32 of 2007; define child pornography and further stated that a person ("A") who unlawfully and intentionally, whether for the sexual gratification of A or of a third person ("C") or not, exposes or displays or causes the exposure or display of child pornography to a complainant 18 years or older ("B"), with or without the consent of B, is guilty of the offence of exposing or displaying or causing the exposure or display of child pornography to a person 18 years or older. A Knysna businessman, Mr X, 59 years old, faced 79 charges, including rape, indicent assault, abduction, public indecency, the creation and production of child pornography, soliciting and human trafficking for sexual purposes, involving at least four (4) counts of child victims committed over a 10 year period (Mathaphuna, Louw, & Groenewald, 2015, p. 238).

According to the Children's Act (Republic of South Africa [RSA], Act 38 of 2005), pertaining to issues of social media and exposure to child pornography, the act deals with sexual abuse

and commercial sexual exploitation of children which include using a child in or deliberately exposing a child to sexual activities or pornography; or procuring or allowing a child to be procured for commercial sexual exploitation.

3.5.2. Definition of sexting

Sexting, in a South African context, could also be regarded as child pornography, and could lead to the prosecution of children, or anyone involved therein, under the Films and Publications Act (RSA, 1996), which could also be regarded as an unintended consequence of such a legislation. The organisation stakeholders, namely, the internet service providers and child protection institutions, are located both inside and outside the pornography industry, and include children, who are sexual abuse victims, customers and/or would be customers, as well as companies that profit from the online sale of pornographic materials (Comella & Tarrant, 2015, p. 3)

3.5.3. Concerns regarding exposure to child pornography

Various websites are regarded with much suspicion, such as the photo-heavy site of Tumblr, where pornography is popular, and unfortunately, through which cases of child pornography have allegedly been shared (Golbeck, 2015, p. 157). While some countries, particularly those in the Western hemisphere, have been more prolific regarding research on this topic, child sexual abuse is considered a global phenomenon, currently (McElvaney, 2016, p. 20). The extent, to which children engage with available technology, is underestimated, because of its advancement and proliferation. Electronic devices, such as cellular phones, replicate, or mirror many functions of the computer, consequently, allowing children and young people unfettered access to information, including, but not limited to, sexually explicit material. However, children may also experience ambivalent emotions, after accessing these sites, as they are often motivated by curiosity to explore such material (Louw & Louw, 2014, p. 286).

According to Nevondwe and Odeku (2014, p. 135), the following can also be deduced from learners' exposure to child pornography:

- The lack of proper parental supervision regarding the children's use/excessive use of the internet;

- The lack of awareness about the illegality of creating and distributing child pornographic content among the youth; and

- The lack of proper regulation of online media to prevent the spread of child pornography.

3.5.4. Impact/effects of child pornography

Child pornography is regarded as sexual abuse, which encompasses a broad range of behaviours, displayed in various ways, including, but not limited to, a variety of relationships, varying from a once off, or a few incidences, to ongoing abuse over a number of years. Its psychological impact on the child could also vary. Sexual abuse could have devastating effects on children, for example, the lack of concentration, low self-esteem, mood disorders such as anxiety, depression, anger and aggression, substance abuse, and post-traumatic stress, as well as somatic difficulties, self-harming behaviour, self-blame, dissociation, and difficulties in maintaining relationships, including sexually related difficulties (McElvaney, 2016, p. 27). Holt et al. (2018, p. 299) assert that individuals, who are "under the age of 16 are unable to fully understand the implications of their actions, particularly infants, toddlers, and young children who may not be able to verbally communicate".

3.6. The role of schools in addressing bullying on social media and exposure to child pornography

In order to understand the educators' perceptions of dealing with bullying on social media and exposure to child pornography, it would be important to understand the role of schools in addressing this growing scourge. Traditionally, the school environment has always been perceived as safe; a setting in which teacher-pupil, as well as peer-peer relationships are encouraged (Jenks & Jenks, 2016). Therefore, school leaders should have extensive knowledge of provincial laws and local government policies, in terms of what schools should be doing to address the problem of bullying (Jenks & Jenks, 2016, p. 1).

The most effective approach of schools to confront and manage continuous bullying on social media, is the *whole school approach*, which implies the implementation of the necessary, integrated, proactive system that will prevent future incidence of bullying (Venter, 2013, p. 245). The school's failure to deal with issues associated with bullying, will allow a hostile

environment to interfere with the learning in a school setting. The South African government is very determined to create special needs education, which will serve as an integrated component of the education system, and their perceived main task would be to change the attitudes, behaviour, teaching methods, curriculum, and the physical environment, in order to meet the needs of all learners (Louw & Louw, 2014, p. 253).

The role of schools include, but is not limited to, teaching children about violence, as well as highlighting its causes in the classroom, which significantly impacts on the actual educator training, as well as their knowledge acquired over time (Harber & Mncube, 2017, p. 176). Technology has been evolving steadily, to meet the need of the information sharing practice (Issa, Isaias, & Kommers, 2016, p. 4). However, safety at schools becomes the responsibility of educators and policy makers, whose primary responsibility is to promote and safeguard safe-schools programmes, establish comprehensive anti-bullying policies, anti-harassment policies, and respective procedure documents that clearly outline the commitment, as well as the school's responsibility to address and eliminate any form of bullying practice (Boske & Osanloo, 2015, p. 14).

However, the educators' and school leaders' attitude towards bullying, as well as their traditions, moral standards, and beliefs (about what people would do, or should do), influence the level of bullying that would be tolerated at class and school level. Similarly, these same factors influence the number of pupils, who would be perceived as *reinforcers* of bullying behaviour, or *defenders* of the victims (Smith, 2014, pp. 133–134). Classes vary in all these aspects, and there is scant support for a scapegoating theory, implying that all classes will have victims, as a focus for hostility, or frustration. School-level variations (beyond classroom-level variations) emerge as comparatively insignificant; however, they are still considerable in various aspects, as well as in some studies, as would be evident by the success of some school-level interventions (Smith, 2014, pp. 133-134). Besides, when the school leaders, namely, the principal, superintendent, as well as the board of trustees, support a certain practice, educators might still to feel uncomfortable about implementing, or even suggesting changes (Jenk & Jenks, 2016).

3.7. Role of the teachers

Educators fulfil the critical role of educating children about their rights, and providing them with support, while assisting them to recognize the infringement, or violation of their rights (McElvaney, 2016, p. 140). Their role is as important as that of the parents, as they are required to interact with, and inform children, as well as parents, of ways to keep them safe on the internet. This could be done formally, or informally, on an ongoing basis, informing children of the risk of interacting online, while maintaining a good relationship, to allow free communication between them and the educator (McElvaney, 2016, p. 140). Ultimately, the focus on *people* also draws attention to the obvious, yet neglected fact that "teachers are people too", and therefore, should be treated as both agents and rights-holders in development (Bengtsson, Barakat, & Muttarak, 2018, p. 3)

Bullying is a very serious problem in schools, and so many bullying episodes could have been stopped, as soon as they had commenced, if educators had intervened (Boske & Osanloo, 2015, p. 6). These interventions, however, are rare, or ineffective, as educators, in most cases, are usually not present, when the bullying occurs, and often, are never informed about these incidents. Additionally, even when teachers observe the bullying, directly, their actions to stop the incidents often appear to be unsuccessful (Boske & Osanloo, 2015, p. 6). Educators are trained to teach children, according to a curriculum, and it is important that they become the first point of contact, when incidents of bullying occur at school; however, the lack of training and skills to manage bullying, specifically, often lead to unsuccessful anti-bullying programmes (Boske & Osanloo, 2015, p. 6).

The teachers' role is crucial for the identification of bullies, as well as the implementation of measures to ensure that the victims of bullying are acknowledged, and the bullying acts dealt with accordingly, instead of ignored (Schott & Sondergaard, 2014, p. 89). The high visibility of educators creates curiosity, as educators, in a sense, are public figures, whom children perceive as their primary caregivers (Jenks & Jenks, 2016, p. 35). One of the key roles of education, which encourages healthy nutrition and behaviours, is the building of health literacy among children and adults (Bengtsson, Barakat, & Muttarak, 2018, p. 38). Teachers are significant, as individuals who teach school subjects, and as stable adults who support the class's attainment of norms, providing models for appropriate relational praxes (Schott & Sondergaard, 2014, p. 71)

3.8. The role of parents

According to Cowie & Myers (2018, p. 188), parents, guardians, and local communities fulfil an important role in a whole school approach to address bullying. Successful schools generally seek to consult and involve parents/guardians, as well as members of the local community, in their response to bullying, while remaining clear about the school's approach to the issue, as family and parenting characteristics do influence the risks of being in the bully or victim roles (Cowie & Myers (2018, p. 188). Parents should always form part of, or be included in the solution to the bullying problem, in a whole school approach; however, from the interviews with parents, it appears that they feel more helpless than teachers do, in dealing with the problem (Venter, 2013, p. 247). Louw & Louw (2014, p. 253) highlights the importance of parents accepting partial responsibility for their children's education.

According to the researcher, dealing with the issues of cyberbullying and exposure to child pornography could be very complicated and challenging, simultaneously, especially when a child, or young person, is involved. According to Slee (2017, p. 104), although the young child increasingly encounters others outside the home, and spends time in the care of others, the family and primary caregivers are still the focus of a large part of their daily life. In a preventative sense, a warm and authoritative type of parenting, as well as a generally, well-functioning family will always be important factors to reduce the chances of a child becoming involved in bullying, in almost any capacity. It is understandable that parents and caregivers rely mostly on electronic devices, such as televisions, iPad, cell phones, laptops, androids, and computers to keep their children occupied, which may be because parents and caregivers spend a considerable amount of time working, or busy with other personal issues (Huddleston 2016, p. 102). Unfortunately, the role of parents has not been explored, beyond this defined preventative aspect, as scant information is available on the subject. Communication between parents and the respective schools is crucial, in terms of recognising the symptoms of bullying, as well as taking early steps to deal with the phenomenon. Education is important because in cyberbullying, a person, usually a child is being harassed online, with true/untrue information obtained about the victim, which is used by the perpetrator to torment, and incite hate towards the victim (Molapo & Khumalo, 2018, p. 75).

Children should feel free to interact and discuss their online and digital practices with their parents and caregivers, for example, social networking's sites, to understand how to use their

online tools. Parents should be available to discuss the use of ICT with their children, and supervise its use, as well as discuss how to cope with any unpleasant messages, or abusive content, and the importance of keeping records, in such cases (Smith, 2014, p. 145). Before regarding any behaviour as sexual harassment or bullying, such behaviour should be handled under the defined provisions of relevant policy, irrespective of whether such a behaviour is considered bullying, bullying on social media, or cyberbullying. In addition, schools (along with parents) have an obligation to keep track of what students are doing online, and have the responsibility of protecting them (Patchin & Hinduja, 2016, p. 117).

Technology has provided students with countless opportunities to connect and communicate with friends, as well as collaborate to engage in schoolwork. However, it also allows those with ill intent to use the very same technology to engage in different types of anti-social behaviour. One aspect that has to be explored is, the extent to which technology has created a new class of people, or individuals, who mistreat others (Patchin & Hinduja, 2016, p. 43). Parents, and teachers, could benefit from additional knowledge on child development, to be aware of what to expect, or not expect, from the children in their care, for example, teachers and parents could be educated about the child's experience, which would enable them to view the challenge from the child's perspective (Ray, 2016, p. 162)

It is critical to understand the behaviour of the bully, as well as the victim, regarding the power dynamics, and imbalance that exists between the bully and the victim, as bullying acts occur repeatedly, over time (Venter, 2013, p. 241). Parents could help to make the relationship collaborative, by communicating with the educators and students, regarding the importance of education, as well as that, by respecting and supporting the teacher, the student will be allowed to have the best educational experience (Jenks & Jenks, 2016, p. 106). The general understanding is that cyberbullying acts have devastating effects on those involved. It could result in discipline for the bully, whether it occurs on/off campus, involves an electronic device at school, or involves own personal electronic device at home, or at a third-party location, and results in a substantial disruption of the learning environment, as defined in the school policy.

3.9. The role of social workers

Social work services requires collective responsibilities and institutional collaboration, hence social workers has always advocated for social, mental and emotional support for those with health needs and stressed the importance of collaboration and multi-professional partnership to

address individual, societal and community health problems (Webb, 2017,p. 124). Social work being a noble profession does not usually involve physical heavy lifting and social workers are unlikely to develop a bad back pains or physical strain caused by workload while performing their duties, other than perhaps the stain of performing administrative tasks and learning over a computer writing case notes (Greer, 2016, P. 2).

More often there is the perception in society which suggest that social work or social workers only concerns with doing administration in an office setting while the experience indicated that social work provides opportunities for the most vulnerable members of the society including children to be part of amazing efforts that genuinely make a difference to the quality of communities and people (Morley, Ablett & Macfarlane, 2019, p. 21). The role of social workers are guided by the South African council for social service profession that provides policy guidelines for code of conduct and rules for social workers, setting out standards of professional conduct required of social workers when carrying their daily activities (Mathaphuna, Louw, & Groenewald, 2015, p. 169).

The roles of social workers are not limited and in addition the social construction actually means that as a society we have to decide on which behaviours in which within the contexts are abusive to children, and which of these behaviours, we decide are abusive, require some form of intervention, and what should be the nature of the intervention plane because there is none given and as the social workers or child protection actors we have to decide (Parrott & Maguinness, 2017, p79). This narrative was supported by Lane & Pritzker (2018, p. 9) who stated that to advance the profession of social work, address the many challenges society faces, and ensure that social works values and principles help guide our policy process and ensure that all social workers, regardless of field of practice or method, require core knowledge and skills to be able to deal with a wide range of issues faced by the society.

3.10. Bullying on social media and child pornography legislative framework

South Africa ratified the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child [UNCRC] (UNGA, 1989) in 1995. Article 1 of the UNCRC defines a child as a person under the age of eighteen years (UNGA, 1989), as does the Children's Act No. 38 of 2005 (RSA, 2005). The internet has become an international publishing and research medium, as well as a superhighway, which has instigated some legal problems and implications, for which no legal

precedents have yet been set (Van der Merwe, Roos, Eiselene, Pistorious, & Nel, 2016, p. 14). However, it is well documented that a legislative framework is crucial, when dealing with cyberbullying and child pornography.
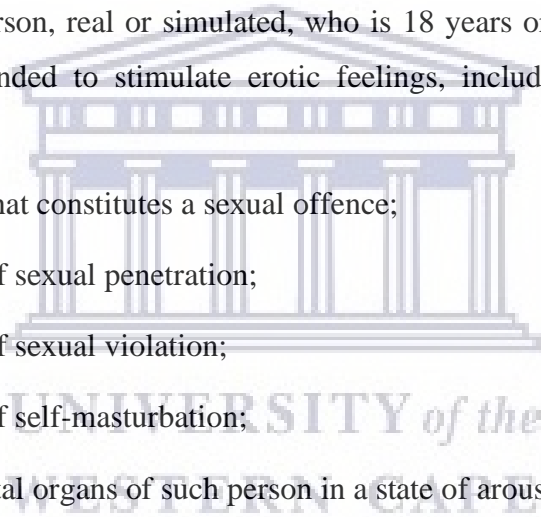
According to Holt, Bossler, and Seigfried-Spellar (2018, p. 303), "The availability of digital photography, webcams, high-speed internet connections, editing software, and removable storage media make it possible for individuals to create high-quality images and videos of deplorable acts of sexual abuse involving children for consumption around the world". Therefore, for the orderly, and fair pursuit of education, in a peaceful environment, the South African Schools Act (Republic of South Africa [RSA], Act 84 of 1996), particularly section 8, states that the governing body of a public school must develop, and adopt, a code of conduct for learners, in consultation with the learners, the parents, and the educators involved. According to this act, the code of conduct for learners must always be aimed at establishing a disciplined, purposeful and conducive school environment, dedicated to the improvement and maintenance of the quality of the learning process (Harber & Mncube, 2017, p. 118). Social media has grown to become the worldwide mode of communication and is the fundamental tool that simplifies the way in which people communicate, globally (Issa, Isaias, & Kommers, 2016, p. 17). The changes in the world of technology in this era is transforming the way in which children interact with society, how they play, and learn, which requires them to have deeper understanding of the way in which technology affects childhood development (Ray, 2016, p. 115).

In the Constitutional Court case of De Reuck v Director of Public Prosecution (De Reuck, 2004, p. 1, SA-406 CC), the general definition of pornography was defined as, "the explicit description or exhibition of sexual subject or an activity in literature, painting, films, etc in a manner that is intended to stimulate erotic feeling rather than aesthetic feeling". The Constitutional Court used this definition, from the New Shorter Oxford English Dictionary (Brown, 1993), as a very useful guide, and further added that erotic feelings and aesthetic feelings are not necessarily mutually exclusive from the definition. On this matter, the court highlighted that, where the aesthetic feelings element is predominant, the image, however, would not constitute pornography. The Constitutional Court defined child pornography, by removing, or excluding, materials that were substantially aesthetic. The court further observed the notion that the stimulation of erotic feelings, rather than aesthetic feelings, is an essential, critical element of the definition of child pornography. Any image that, predominantly,

stimulates the aesthetic feelings, is not necessarily included in the definition. It does require that the images viewed, as objectively as possible, have as its predominant purpose, the stimulation of erotic feelings in certain human beings, who may be conveniently referred to as the target audience (Nevondwe & Odeku, 2014, p. 134).

The United Nations General Assembly unanimously adopted the Convention on the Rights of the Child in 1989 (UNGA, 1989). Child pornography issues are specifically addressed in the convention, which required each country to "take all the appropriate national, the bilateral and the multilateral measures to make sure that they prevent: (c) the exploitative use of children in pornographic performances and content materials" (UNGA, 1989, Article 34). Additionally, according to the Criminal law (Republic of South Africa [RSA], Sexual Offences and Related Matters Amendment Act 32 of 2007), "Child Pornography means any image, however created, or any description of a person, real or simulated, who is 18 years or older, of an explicit or sexual nature that is intended to stimulate erotic feelings, including any such image or description of such person:

a) engaged in an act that constitutes a sexual offence;

b) engaged in an act of sexual penetration;

c) engaged in an act of sexual violation;

d) engaged in an act of self-masturbation;

e) displaying the genital organs of such person in a state of arousal or stimulation;

f) unduly displaying the genital organs or anus of such person;

g) displaying any form of stimulation of a sexual nature of such person's breasts;

h) engaged in sexually suggestive or lewd acts;

i) engaged in or as the subject of sadistic or masochistic acts of a sexual nature;

j) engaged in any conduct or activity characteristically associated with sexual intercourse;

k) showing or describing such person:

   (i) participating in, or assisting or facilitating another person to participate in; or

   (ii) being in the presence of another person who commits or in any other manner being involved in, any act contemplated in paragraphs (a) to (j); or (l)   showing or describing the body, or parts of the body, of such person in a manner or in

circumstances which, within the context, violate or offend the sexual integrity or dignity of that person or any category of persons under 18 or is capable of being used for the purposes of violating or offending the sexual integrity or dignity of that person, any person or group or categories of person."

Considering the rapid pace at which modern technology develops, methods to curb this form of bullying hardly keeps pace. While learners have the right to free speech and expression, in terms of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (RSA, 1996), cyberbullying, in a school environment, could also interfere with other fundamental rights that are entrenched in the same Constitution, including, the right to equality, the right to dignity, and the right to privacy (Smit, 2015, p. 4). As a result, dealing with the issue of cyberbullying in the schools setting requires an enormous *balancing act*. The question of how to guarantee all the rights enshrined in the Constitution (RSA, 1996), in an effective manner, while still protecting the most vulnerable learners and educators in a school environment, emerges forthwith. In an attempt to address bullying on social media, and exposure to child pornography, the focus shifts to the current legislative framework that alludes to the right to freedom of expression, as well as the *balancing act* in South Africa, after which, possible solutions to the problem would be suggested and implemented (Smit, 2015, p. 4).

According to Smit (2015, p. 4), cyberbullying is not prohibited in South Africa by legislation, which appears to be creating a gap, as well as a deficiency in the overall legal system. In addition, there appears to be a great interrelation between child pornography and sexting across the spectrum. The Electronic Communications and Transactions Act (Republic of South Africa [RSA], Act 25 of 2002), therefore, aids the gathering of information, and it affords cyber-inspectors a wide-ranging power, regarding seizures and the investigation. Viewing, and being in possession of child pornography, as well as child sexual abuse content, is an easy crime to commit, and an easier crime to get away with, due to its complexity (Holt, Bossler, & Seigfried-Spellar, 2018, p. 303).

3.11. Bias, prejudice, or identity-based bullying

According to Huddleston (2016, p. 140), bullying and cyberbullying are closely connected; therefore, it is critical for the researcher to understand the various identity-based characteristics. Race, religion, belief, disability, sexual orientation, or gender identity, could be used as a

pretext, or justification for bullying behaviour, and be manifested in the kinds of behaviour (for example, insulting words), which may, in turn, be based on these characteristics (Huddleston, 2016, p. 140). Jenks and Jenks (2016, p. 35) highlight the fact that those educators who encounter slanderous, or libellous speech, have to consider the court's ruling that expressing negative opinions about individuals in prominent positions, such as school administrators and other educators, is not illegal, provided the opinions are factual, and do not interfere with the individual's work duties. These elements, often based on stereotyped views of social groups, are also referred to as bias behaviour bullying, or prejudice-related bullying. They not only target individuals, but also reflect on the negative attitudes towards a wider sub-community, or a group with whom those individuals identify, or are believed to identify with (Jenks & Jenks, 2016, p. 35). This type of bullying, which is believed to occur online in cyberspace, and perpetuated through social media, deserves to be regarded as cyberbullying (Smith, 2014, p. 85).

According to Slee (2017, p. 153), cyberbullying is difficult to measure, define and understand. To regulate cyber-crime, the nature of the internet, on-line environments, and the crime, must be understood first. In addition, the problem of child pornography, or child sexual abuse content, from a global perspective, only escalates because of the differences in national and international legislature (Slee, 2017, p. 153). Brown (2017, p. 41) suggests that the temptation may exist to treat sexual interest as distinct from cognitive constructs, which may be criminogenic in sexual offending.

The possession, distribution, and production of internet child pornography is criminally sanctioned in several countries. South Africa is listed as one of the top five countries that legislate the full scope of child pornography, be it possession, distribution, or production of internet pornography, which is criminally sanctioned in those countries (Nevondwe & Odeku, 2014, p. 132). In the past, to access pornography, an individual had to risk visiting a store to purchase magazines, such as Playboy or Hustler; therefore, it is important to search for to the presence of those magazine and novel images, as it could indicate the offenders' ability to network on the internet. In essence, the more magazine and novel images; the more involved the offender may be in internet child pornography rings (Huddleston, 2016, p. 29). The rapidly evolving and expansive technology is most critical in the child's life, when considering the child's developmental stages (Ray, 2016, p. 131).

The South African Constitution (RSA, 1996, Section 16) states clearly, "everyone has the right to freedom of expression which include freedom of the press and other media; freedom to receive or impart information or ideas; freedom of artistic creativity; academic freedom and freedom of scientific research". This implies that the right of the cyberbully to exercise his artistic creativity on the internet, or online space, will have to be weighed against the victim's rights to privacy and dignity. From an ethical viewpoint, bullying destroys a person's right to personal dignity. However a person's dignity could also be impaired, when s/he is subjected to degrading treatment, or humiliating conduct, which includes the posting of inappropriate content, intimidating posts and pictures, or abusive content, in the form of text messages, as well as images on the internet, and social networking sites (DeVito, 2019, p. 359). According to Huddleston (2016, p. 141) bullying has a two-fold negative effect on the victims, as the wounds that result are often physical and psychological. As mentioned previously, cyberbullying may infringe on various human rights, such as the right to freedom of expression, right to dignity, right to bodily, and psychological integrity, and right to privacy. Therefore, an appropriate balance must be drawn between the right to freedom of expression, and the rights to privacy, human dignity and bodily and psychological integrity. It may seem appalling that some people would place evidence of crimes they had committed, including cyberbullying, in their own social media, online, and cyber space, which could be viewed as the introduction of a new criminal technique (Eastton, 2015, p. 317).

3.12. Conclusion

The focus of this chapter was to review, compare, and contrast the literature of bullying on social media and exposure to child pornography. The review included the history of the internet and cyber space, social media and technology tools, cyberbullying, child pornography, as well as the roles of schools, teachers, parents and social workers in addressing bullying in social media and exposure to child pornography. The legislative framework, bias/prejudice or identity based bullying was explored.

The main threads in literature were employed to reveal the concept of bullying on social media, examine the exposure to child pornography, and assess the perceptions of educators, taking into account the school, community, and the Department of Education environments. The literature clearly outlined that the advances in technology, the different mediums of

communication, and the general changes in communication patterns, have resulted in unacceptable and undesirable communication behaviour (or misbehaviour) among children, who engage with these technologies. Bullying on social media and exposure to child pornography remain major risks that the online space poses to its users. In this chapter, the researcher also provided statistics and information on national and international patterns of cyberbullying, as well as exposure to child pornography trends. The following chapter is focussed on the research methodology and processes.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

4.1. Introduction

In this chapter, the researcher focuses on the research methodology employed to explore the perceptions of the educators of learners, who had experienced bullying, and exposure to child pornography on social media. Methodology suggest set of rules and procedures to guide research, against which its claims could be evaluated and understood. According to Wiid & Diggines (2015, p. 89), flaws in methodology could provide results that are invalid, unreliable, or even useless beyond the original study. In this current study, the researcher outlines how the participants were recruited to participate, as well as how the data were collected, analysed, and verified. In addition, the researcher discusses the ethics of the research process, and reflects on the processes followed. A qualitative research design approach was taken in this current study, while the aim was to explore. The research setting, population, sample, data collection tool, data collection process, are discussed in detail. The significance of the study is also presented, exploring those perceptions of educators, on completion of the research process.

4.2. Methodological approach

According to Babbie and Mouton (2001, p. 647), the research methodology refers to the methods, techniques, and procedures, used in the process of implementing and applying the research design, or research plan, as well as the underlying principles and assumptions that underlie their use. Social research can serve many purposes, of which, three of the most common and useful purposes are, exploration, description, and explanation (Babbie, 2016, p. 90). Although a given study could have more than one of these purposes, and most do, examining them separately is very useful because each purpose has a different implication for other aspects of the research design.

Therefore, the research method used for this study was qualitative research method, using an explorative design, to understand the underlying feelings, values, and perceptions, as well as the research data, in context. Qualitative approach was used to explore the perceptions of

educators of learners, who had experienced bullying, and exposure to child pornography on social media.

4.2.1. Research approach

For this current study, the researcher selected the qualitative research approach, which is conducted by employing a range of methods that use qualifying words and descriptions to record and investigate the aspects of social reality (Bless, Higson-Smith, & Sithole, 2013, p. 394). According to Leedy and Ormrod (2016, p. 141), qualitative research "encompasses several approaches to research that are in some respects, quite different from one another".

Davies and Hughes (2014, p. 216) state that the analysis of qualitative data is one of the most exciting tasks in research. They continue that, with perseverance, and an organised approach, the researcher emerges with an excellent analytical account of the evidence gathered, some reflections on the nature and the meaning of that evidence, an acknowledgement of the possible influence of it, as well as a subjective starting point and conclusions that flow naturally from the examination of the evidence. Engaging this paradigm was appropriate, as the researcher was interested in gaining an in-depth understanding of the perceptions of educators, who teach children at secondary school, apparently, at a risky age.

4.2.2. Research design

A research design could be explained as the framework of methods, or plan that outlines how the researcher would successfully conduct the scientific research investigation (Weiten & Hassim, 2016, p. 44). Wiid and Diggines (2015, p. 42) concur by stating that a research design implies research planning. According to Babbie (2016, p. 90), exploratory studies are appropriate for more-persistent phenomena. In this qualitative study, an exploratory research design was considered relevant to assist the researcher to gain a better understanding of the perceptions of educators of learners, who had experienced bullying and exposure to child pornography on social media platforms.

4.2.3. Research setting

The research setting could be viewed as the physical, social, or cultural site at which the researcher conducts the research study. For this qualitative study, the focus was mainly

on the natural setting of the research participants, who were educators from all the Metro districts in the Western Cape Provincial Department of Education.

Prior to the interviews, the researcher requested participants to indicate a place that they will find comfortable doing interviews. This was done mainly because the researcher is of the view that every participant should be able to relax and share his or her thoughts while they are feeling comfortable. For this reason, almost all participants were interviewed at school setting, particularly in their offices and classrooms. The researcher ensured that the educators are not interrupted on their daily duties hence all the face to face interviews were conducted on their free period and after school hours.

4.2.4. Population

According to Bless, Higson-Smith, and Sithole (2013, p. 394), a population is a complete set of events, people, or objects on which the research findings are to be applied. The population for a study is a group (usually people) about whom the researcher wishes to draw a conclusion (Babbie, 2016, p. 103). For this current research, the researcher follows the definition of population, as defined by Wiid & Diggines (2015, p. 183), who defines it as the total group of people, or entities, from which information is required.

For the purpose of this current study, the population refers to the educators, who teach students from grades 7 to 10, regardless of gender and race, in public schools of the Western Cape Education Department (WCED). Educators were selected from the Western Cape Education Department's Metro districts, namely, Metro North, Metro East, Metro South, and Metro Central.

4.2.5. Sampling

A sample could be explained as a subdivision of the population that is similar, or possess the same characteristics, which, therefore, is representative of the research population (Weiten & Hassim, 2016, p. 44). According to Wiid and Diggines (2015, p. 183), a sample is defined as a subset of a population (or universe). In order for a researcher to establish a sample in research, a comprehensive process of sampling should transpire. Babbie and Mouton (2010, p. 166) assert that sampling is a process of selecting a group of people, or social phenomena, to be studied from the large universe to which they belong; however, there is a possibility of bypassing sampling, should the population be

found manageable. Sampling is a tool, or technique, through which the sample of the research study is drawn from the population (Bless, Higson-Smith, & Sithole, 2013, p. 395).

Once permission was granted by the relevant authority/ies (Appendices A & B), the researcher approached the principals at each school to request a convenient time to explain to the educators what the study would entail, as well as distribute information sheets. The intended participants had to be educators with experience of dealing with learners, who had experienced bullying and exposure to child pornography on social media. Educators, who did not possess such experience, were not considered for recruitment to participate in the study.

4.2.5.1. Sampling methods

For the purpose of this current study, the researcher selected non-probability sampling, and employed purposive sampling to select the sample to participate in the research. According to Babbie (2016, p. 186), non-probability sampling includes any technique, in which the sample is selected in a way not suggested by probability theory, for example, reliance on the available subjects, as well as purposive (judgemental), quota, and snowball sampling. Purposive (judgemental) sampling, therefore, is a type on non-probability sampling, in which units to be observed, are selected, based on the researcher's judgement about which ones would be the most useful, or representative (Babbie, 2016, p. 187). According to Gray (2009, p. 152), purposive sampling is the most cost effective, and the least time-consuming.

After the selection of the sample, the researcher was confident that it would provide the required responses, during data collection. All the participants, who participated in this current research study, were fully informed about the purpose of the research, as well as what they would be required to do. In addition, they were informed about their right to withdraw from the study, at any time, without prejudice.

In order for participants to take part in this study the following criteria of inclusion had to be met:

- Registered professional educators with SACE

- Either male or female

- Any race

- Educators with more than two years of experience

- Must have handled incident in relation to the study

- Educators who were willing to participate

Educators with the following characteristics were excluded from the study.

- Educators who were on leave during the period of study.

- Educators from private schools.

- Retired educators.

The participants were educators from all the four metro districts in the WCED, with experience in contending with bullying, as well as exposure to child pornography on social media. Ultimately, 11 participants were selected as the sample for this current study.

4.2.6. Data Collection

Various methods of data collection could be used, to obtain a detailed account of the phenomenon under study, namely, interviews, focus group discussions, observations, tests, or questionnaires (Terre Blanche, Durheim, & Painter, 2006, p. 85). According to Creswell (2013, p. 145), data collection includes, obtaining permission from the relevant authorities, applying a conducive sampling strategy, selecting a suitable data collection method, conducting credible data collection sessions, developing the necessary means of recording information (both digitally, and in writing), storing the data, and anticipating the ethical issues that may arise. Wiid and Diggines (2015, p. 327) concur, and state that all applicable information about the method used to gather the data, must be provided. Therefore, the researcher must indicate whether the data was collected from primary or secondary sources, as well as clarify what type of data collection method was used. For this current study, data were collected through individual semi-structured interviews, with open-ended questions, to achieve the explorative aspect of the study. The researcher conducted one interview with the participants and the interview were recorded.

4.2.6.1. Preparation for data collection

The researcher initiated the process by seeking permission from the relevant authority of the WCED to conduct the study. Subsequent thereto, the researcher engaged the principals for permission to interact with the prospective participants to introduce himself, and explain what the study was about, as well as the inclusion and exclusion criteria. After permission was granted, the researcher introduced the information sheet (Appendix C) to the prospective participants, and explained the purpose and aim of the study. The consent form (Appendix D) was introduced next, and those, who agreed to participate in the study, were asked to sign the consent form, before commencing with the data collection process. In addition, the researcher requested their permission to use an audiotape recorder to capture what was shared.

4.2.6.2. Method of data collection

According to Weiten and Hassim (2016, p. 51), interviews are among the most frequently used qualitative techniques for data collection. An interview is a "technique in which the researcher will read a question to participants and record their verbal responses" (Monette, Sullivan, & De Jong, 2008, p. 488). Similarly, an interview is a data collection technique, or method, based on a series of research-topic-related questions, which are to be answered by the research participant (Bless, Higson-Smith, & Sithole, 2013, p. 392). According to Babbie (2016, p. 528), the interview method is a data collection process, in which one person (the interviewer) poses questions to another (the participant).

Individual, semi-structured interviews follow a script of prescribed questions, commonly referred to as an interview guide (Appendix E). According to Weiten and Hassim (2016, p. 52), an interview guide enables the researcher to probe new leads, while covering predetermined questions. Maree (2007, p. 87) define an interview as a two-way conversation, in which the interviewer asks the participants questions to collect data and learn about the ideas, beliefs, views, opinions and behaviours of the participant.

4.2.6.3. Data collection process

The researcher's aim was to explore the perceptions of educators of learners, who had experienced bullying on social media, and exposure to child pornography. The pre-formulated ideas, or questions, were related to the main research question. The researcher used probing questions (probes), when required, to clarify what had been disclosed, and to gain more in-depth information on the topic under discussion. The interview sessions were conducted at the schools, to which the educators were attached; however, the researcher ensured that the participants' daily duties were not disrupted. The interviews were conducted in a conducive school environment setting, where the individual discussions between the researcher and educators were subject to data saturation. During the interviews, all the collected data were audiotape recorded, while the researcher also recorded field notes.

4.2.7. Data analysis

According to Wiid and Diggines (2015, p. 20), analysis involves using the data contained in the system, and making in-depth calculations and analysis, including cross calculations, seasonal analyses, comparative calculations, as well as other more complex statistical procedures, such as the factor analyses. Houghton, Murphy, Shaw and Casey (2015, p. 9) clarify the process of qualitative data analysis as rigorous and creative organizing, finding patterns in, as well as extracting themes from, the data. Although there are no system rules for this process, it has to be a systematic and logical process.

The researcher transcribed the audio-recorded, semi-structured interviews, verbatim, and interpreted, where necessary, as the participants were allowed to express themselves, freely. The data analysis for this current study was guided by Creswell's application of Tesch's framework for qualitative data analysis (Creswell, 2009; Botma, Greef, Mulaudzi, & Wright, 2010). The researcher collected data, based on a set of questions put to the participants, who had experienced the phenomenon under study. Units were transformed into clusters of meaning, and expressed as concepts, which were grouped together to create a general exploration of the perceptions, as well as how they were experienced.

- The researcher carefully read all the transcriptions, taking notes of the ideas that emerged during the process. The researcher obtained a sense of all the collected data through reading the transcripts carefully.

- The researcher selected one interview, for example, the shortest one, the one at the top of the pile, or the most interesting one, and examined it, while asking, "What is this all about?" The purpose was to establish the underlying meaning of the information presented.

- After reading the transcripts, repeatedly, the researcher arranged the similar topics in groups, by forming columns labelled as, major topics, unique topics, and remnants.

- Subsequently, the researcher abbreviated the topics as codes, entered the codes beside the appropriate segments of text, and scrutinised the organisation of data, to check whether new categories, or codes, would emerge.

- The researcher chose the most descriptive wording for the topics, and converted them into categories. The aim was be to reduce the total list of categories, by grouping related topics together. Links were established between all the categories, to indicate the interrelationship.

- Finally, the abbreviation of each category was decided, and the codes were arranged in alphabetical order.

- The data material belonging to each category were stored in one place, and a preliminary analysis was performed.

- The recoding of the data was performed, because it was necessary for the research (De Vos, Strydom, Fouché, & Delport, 2005, pp. 340-341)

4.3. Trustworthiness

Trustworthiness refers to the validity and reliability of a qualitative research design. According to De Vos, Strydom, Fouché, and Deport (2005, p. 345), trustworthiness refers to the credibility of the study findings, as well as the criteria that can be judged. In addition, it explores how transferable and applicable the findings are to other settings, or groups of people, as well as how sure the researcher is that the findings would be replicated if the study were conducted with the same participants in the same context. The challenge for the researcher, therefore, is

to ensure that the findings would be replicated if the study were conducted with the same participants, in the same context. In addition, the researcher should also ensure that the findings reflect the participants' views, and the inquiry itself, instead of a creation of the researchers' hierarchy biases, or prejudices (De Vos et al., 2005, p. 345).

Trustworthiness is established by the strategy of establishing the credibility, transferability, dependability, and conformability of the research study. Consequently, the characteristics of credibility, transferability, dependability, and conformability, were considered by the researcher to ensure the trustworthiness of this current research study.

- **Credibility**

  According to De Vos et al. (2005, p. 346), this is the alternative to internal validity, as the goal is to demonstrate that the enquiry was conducted in a manner, which ensured the accurate identification and description of the subject. The researcher established the credibility of this current study by applying triangulation to the methods of data collection and data analysis (Maree, 2007, p. 297). The researcher ensured that he observed both verbal and non-verbal reactions from the educators during the face to face semi-structured interviews and only information presented by the educators was used on the final report. The researcher used the audio tape to ensure that the information gathered is a true reflection of the responses provided by educators in response to the questions posed to them.

- **Transferability**

  Maree (2007, p. 297) refers to transferability as *generalisability*, and regards it as a way of taking the findings and transferring them, or applying them to other contexts. Lincoln and Guba (1985) propose that this is the alternative to external validity or generalisability, in which the burden of demonstrating the applicability of one set of findings to another context rests more with the investigator, who would make the transfer, than with the original investigator. The findings of this current study confirmed similarities and synergy with other research that the researcher was able to review during the period of conducting this study. The researcher was able to compare and contrast the findings with already existing literature and assumption through the study.

- **Dependability**

According to Maree (2007, p. 297), dependability implies the degree to which the researcher can convince the observer that the findings occurred as s/he states they did. De Vos et al. (2005, p. 347) add that dependability is the alternative to reliability, by which the researcher attempts to explain changing conditions in the phenomenon under scrutiny, as well as changes in the design, created by an increasingly refined understanding of the setting. According to Bryman (2014, p. 392) dependability entails ensuring that complete records are kept of all phases of the research process, problem formulations, selection of research participants, interview transcripts, data analysis decisions in accessible manner. The researcher ensured that the observation notes and audio tape kept safe and be available for verification and audit purposes. The researcher was able to ensure that peers act as auditors during the course of the research and ensuring to what extent the proper procedure is being followed.

- **Conformability**

De Vos et al. (2005, p. 347) assert that conformability captures the traditional concept of objectivity. Lincoln and Guba (1985) emphasise the need to assess whether the findings of the study could be confirmed by another, because, by doing so, the evaluation is removed from some inherent characteristics of the researcher (objectivity), and placed solely on the data. The researcher was able to conduct the face to face interview in a conducive environment with all educators in a professional manner and this was done in good faith with all participants. The researcher ensured that the data collection process was free from bias and all interviews were recorded and safely stored.

4.4. Ethics Considerations

According to Wiid and Diggines (2015, p. 25), ethics can be defined as a set of principles, or rules and the norms of conduct for acceptable behaviour. Ethical issues, considered relevant to this current study, are discussed next.

4.4.1. Informed consent

According to Babbie (2016, p. 527), informed consent is the concept, in which subjects offer their voluntary participation in a research project, based on a complete

understanding of the possible risks involved. Informed consent involves an individual's deliberate willingness, accompanied with a voluntary decision, to form part of, or fully participate in, a research study, based on, among other things, the researcher's description of what would be required of them, during such research participation (Kassin, Fein, & Markus, 2017, p. 47).

According to Wassenaar (2006, p. 72), in order to adhere to this ethical aspect, the researcher needs to consider the following points:

a) Providing participants with important information, regarding the proposed study,

b) Confirming the participants' competence, and general understanding of the topic,

c) Informing the participants about their voluntariness, as well as their freedom to withdraw from the study at any time, without prejudice, and

d) Formalizing of the informed consent.

In this current study, the researcher was of the opinion that informed consent involved a professional relationship between the researcher and the participants in the research study. The participants were informed that participation was by choice, and the right to withdraw from the study, at any time, was their right. An assurance was given to all the participants that the data collected would only be used for research purposes. Permission to record, or use a voice recorder, to capture the interview proceedings, was requested from each participant, before the data collection process commenced. After the information sheet (Appendix C) was read to the participants, they were asked to confirm their consent by signing the consent form (Appendix D). Informed consent should always be based on the notion that research participation is strictly voluntary (Leedy & Ormrod, 2016, p. 107).

4.4.2. Confidentiality

According to Babbie (2016, p. 65), in a research project, the researcher must guarantee confidentiality, especially when s/he could identify any given persons responses, but pledges not to do so, publicly. In any research study, involving human beings, the participants' right to privacy must always be respected. Under no circumstances should a research report, either oral or written, be presented in such a manner that others could become aware of the way in which a particular participant responded, or behaved, unless

the participant had granted such permission in writing, specifically (Leedy & Ormrod, 2016, p. 109).

Confidentiality implies that each individual has the right to privacy, and as such, it is always his/her right to decide when, where, to whom, and to what an extent, his/her attitudes, beliefs, and behavior could be revealed. To maintain confidentiality, researcher ensured that the tape-recorded interviews were kept safe in a locked cabinet, and informed the participants that the research supervisor would be the only person allowed to access such information. In addition, they were advised that the interview guides, together with the device containing the recorded information, would only be kept in a safe place for a period of five years.

4.4.3. Anonymity

According to Babbie (2016, p. 65), anonymity is achieved in a research project, when neither the researcher, nor the readers of the research findings, can link a given response to a given participant, exactly. In this current study, no form of identity was observed in either the voice recordings, or the transcripts. Instead, codes, in numerical form, were allocated to each participant. During the research process, as well as on completion, the data, together with the audio-recorder, was stored in a locked filing cabinet, while the computer files were password-protected. The participants were assured that their names and personal details, or any identifying information, would not be included in the final research report, as the researcher also used pseudonyms throughout the process, to protect the names of the participants.

4.4.4. Beneficence

De Vos, Strydom, Fouché, & Delport (2011, p. 116) define beneficence as "an obligation to maximize possible benefits and minimize possible harm". A researcher considers all the possible consequences of the research process, and balances the risks with the necessary, proportionate benefits. In this current study, the researcher unequivocally informed the participants regarding non-remuneration for participation in the research study. To avoid deception, the participants were unambiguously advised that this current study would be conducted for academic purposes only, as deception involves withholding information, or offering incorrect information, to coerce a subject into participating. Ethics in research fulfils a critical role, which helps to avoid any possible

problems that may have arisen. In this current study, pertinent information was not withheld, and incorrect information was not communicated at any time during the research.

4.4.5. Avoidance of harm, and instead, dealing with risk

According to Babbie (2016, p. 63), the need for the norms against harming the research subjects, in part, stemmed from the horrendous actions of the medical researchers. The participants were assured that they would not be exposed to any harm, or discomfort, either physical, emotional or social, during their participation in the research study. However, emotional harm cannot be predicted, as in most cases, it remains subtle. To address this issue, the researcher ensured that the participants were thoroughly debriefed, after participating in the study. In addition, the participants were instructed not answer any question, should they consider the question in violation of their rights. They were also advised to terminate the interview, or withdraw their participation in the research study, without prejudice, should they feel unable to continue. After the interviews, in the event of a need for psychosocial services, in the form of counselling, they were informed of intervention and counselling services that could be accessed from social workers within the Department of Education.

4.4.6. Debriefing

According to Babbie (2016, p. 68), debriefing the participants after the interviews, is a way of interrogating their general experience of participation in the project, which is especially important, if the possibility existed that they might have been psychologically damaged/affected in the process. When researching topics of a sensitive nature, researchers have observed that debriefing subjects, following an experiment, or data collection session, was a vital practice. In this current study, debriefing helped the participants to disclose any issues/challenges that could have emerged during the research experience, so that they could be attended to, or remedied. According to Kassin, Fein, & Markus (2017, p. 47) debriefing is a disclosure, made to participants after the research process and procedures are completed, during which the researcher explains the main purpose of the research, attempts to resolve any negative feelings, and further emphasizes the scientific contribution that might have been made by the participants' involvement.
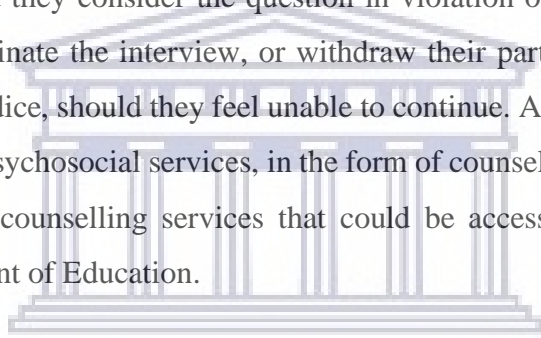
4.4.7. Deception

According to Weiten & Hassim (2016, p. 59), deception occurs when the researcher withholds information about the true (or full) intention of the study from the research participants. For example, the researcher may inform the participants that the research study is aimed at investigating the educators' perceptions, while it is more concerned with their obedience to the relevant authority. In this current study, the researcher honestly and comprehensively explained the purpose of the research study, while the participants were allowed the opportunity to seek further clarity, before they participated on the research study.

4.5. Conclusion

In this chapter, the researcher presented an overview of the research methodology, design and procedures. The data collection method and process, utilized in this current study was clearly outlined. The data analysis and the method of data verification, as well as the ethics considerations applied in relation to the study, were also discussed, while the significance of the study was emphasised. The following chapter comprises the data analysis and results.
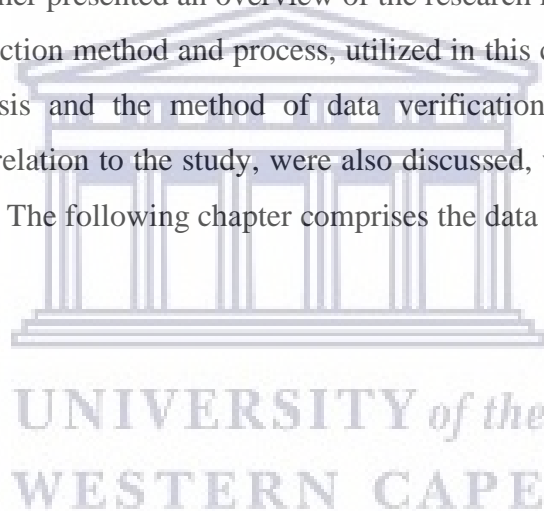
CHAPTER FIVE

DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

5.1. Introduction

In this chapter, the researcher presents the analysis, and discusses findings of the semi-structured interviews with educators. However, the demographic information of the educators, who participated in this study, is provided, firstly, followed by the thematic analysis of the themes and sub-themes that emerged.

5.2 Demographic profile

The demographic information of the educators, who participated in this current study, is displayed in Table 5.1, featuring ethnicity, level of education, years of experience, and marital status.

Table 5.1: The demographic profile of educators

Participant	Ethnicity	Level of education	Years of experience	Marital status
1	African	B.ED	2 to 5 years	Single
2	Coloured	Diploma	5 to 10 years	Divorced
3	Coloured	B.ED	2 to 5 years	Married
4	African	Diploma	2 to 5 years	Single
5	Coloured	Diploma	5 to 10 years	Divorced
6	Coloured	B.ED	5 to 10 years	Married
7	African	B.ED	5 to 10 years	Married
8	Coloured	B.ED	5 to 10 years	Married
9	Coloured	B.ED	5 to 10 years	Married
10	Coloured	Diploma	5 to 10 years	Married
11	Coloured	B.ED	5 to 10 years	Married

The researcher interviewed eight educators, who had between 5 to 10 years' working experience, as well as three educators, with working experience of between 2 to 5 years. Six of

the eight educators (with 5 to 10 years' experience) were married, while the remaining two, were divorced. Of the three educators (with between 2 to 5 years' experience), only one was married, while the remaining two were single. Five of the educators (with between 5 to 10 years' experience, and who were married), held a Bachelor of Education degree. Two educators (with between 5 to 10 years' experience, of which one was married and the other, divorced) held a Diploma in Education. One educator (with between 2 to 5 years' experience, and who was single) held a Bachelor of Education degree. One educator (with between 2 to 5 years' experience and who was married), also held a Bachelor of Education degree.

This information enabled the researcher to compare the levels of education, cultural backgrounds, as well as the educators' years of experience and knowledge of programmes and policies. The marital status component assisted the researcher to establish whether there was synergy between the educators, and the parents, when addressing bullying on social media and exposure to child pornography.

5.3. Thematic analysis

In the presentation of the themes, the student veers from the conventional ways of presenting data in terms of the qualitative approach, however, this is to provide a rapid bird's eye view, followed by a more detailed narrative.

The four main themes that emerged from the data analysis are displayed in Table 5.2. In addition, to the themes, the researcher identified sub-themes, which further clarified the four main themes, and provided more scope to organize and demonstrate the findings.

Table 5.2: Themes and sub-themes

Main themes	Sub-themes
1. Professional competence.	1.1. Educators' contribution to the research study. 1.2. Educators' experience in working with children.
2. Prevalence of bullying on social media and exposure to child pornography.	2.1. Knowledge of bullying on social media and exposure to child pornography. 2.2. Educators' opinions of bullying on social media and exposure to child pornography.
3. Management history of learners, who had experienced bullying in social media and exposure to child pornography.	3.1. Departmental programmes to help victims of bullying on social media and exposure to child pornography. 3.2. The role of educators in managing cases of cyberbullying among learners.

		3.3. Legislative framework for bullying on social media and exposure to child pornography.
		3.4. Training on legislative framework for bullying on social media and exposure to child pornography.
4. Exposure and intervention of bullying in social media and exposure to child pornography.		4.1. Educators exposure to bullying on social media and exposure to child pornography
		4.2. Process to deal with victims of bullying on social media and exposure to child pornography.
		4.3. Procedures and policies to deal with cases of bullying on social media and exposure to child pornography.
		4.4. Government's role to support victims of bullying on social media and exposure to child pornography.
		4.5. Educators' suggestions on the issue of bullying on social media and exposure to child pornography.

5.4. Discussion of the findings with extracts from recorded responses

The following section (Table 5.3) provides a more detailed narrative of these themes and sub-themes, along with extracts from the participants' recorded responses.

Table 5.3: Detailed narrative of the findings

Themes	Sub-themes	Narrative	Participants quotations
1. Professional competence	1.1. Educators' contribution to the research study.	During the semi-structured interviews, in response to question, "What do educators think they may be able to contribute?" the educators appeared to be looking forward to contributing, positively, towards the success of the study. The relevance of the question was to assist the researcher to determine whether the educators had a full understanding of the type of study, in which they were participating. This question was relevant to this current study because the researcher was able to get the participants ready to engage on the face to face interviews. Educators with two and more years' experience dealing with bullying in social media and exposure to child pornography incidence were able to share what they think they can contribute towards this study. Educators indicated that they are looking forward to being part of the study citing its relevance to their daily role in	*"Interested, because I want to see the benefit out of it, and how to move forward." (Participant 3)* *"I can help, in terms of guiding the learners, because, as the educator, I know that I'm going to help them, in terms of knowing the dangers on the social media, and the advantages, in terms of what to do on the social media." (Participant 2)* *"I think I will be able to contribute [to] how the children in the township think about cyberbullying, because I'm sure it's completely different from the children that are studying in the model C schools." (Participant 1)* *"In terms of the contribution that I will make, I would love to see a lot of workshops around cyberbullying, in terms of people being educated around that." (Participant 4)* *"I think that, as a teacher, I can share my experience I had with learners being bullied, and also how to deal with bullying. I can also contribute by sharing what I think are the bigger picture, for instance, what can be done with bullying outside school, especially, how parents can assist learners, as well as kids, who are being bullied." (Participants 6)* *"It's quite interesting to know that people over there are actually also concerned about what is taking place, in terms of cyberbullying, and things that people actually get on the internet. Maybe give advice, as to how to react as parents, as well as educators, in terms of trying save our children from cyberbullying, and their internet and other issues." (Participant 7)* *"It's interesting for me to be part of it, because I want to learn from you, and there has been few things I have been exposed to, so I'd like to share the experience and my view." (Participant 8)*

		their school setting and showed that they are serious about sharing their experience and contribute positively towards the success of the study.	*"I think I can bring the perspective of teachers, because we work with children every day, and we also see things from the child's perspective."* **(Participant 11)** *"Uhm, seeing that there is part of bullying on social media, as well as child pornography, or so forth. Probably just to educate adults and learners about the way they can handle themselves in social media; how children should react to each other, how teachers, especially, can respond to learners in certain circumstances where bullying occurred."* **(Participant 10)**
	1.2. Educators' experience in working with children	Educators were also asked, during the semi-structured interviews, to provide a brief description of themselves and their experience in working with children. This question enabled the researcher to gain more knowledge about each educator, regarding their experience of addressing bullying on social media and exposure to child pornography. Educators were able to share their working experience with the researcher which range from two and more years' experience up to 26 years of experience. Educators were free to answer all the questions posed to the by the researcher throughout the face to face interview sessions. The researcher was able to gain educators insight when dealing with issues associated with bullying in social media and exposure to child pornography. Educators were also able to share their general experience of working with children. The researcher was able to confirm educator's passion and love they have for their learners when they were sharing their passion and love for their jobs and learners. Educators were also able to point out on the challenges that they face when working with learners.	*"Eh look, I've been teaching now, this is my second year. You know I love kids. You know I'm passionate about education. I've studied psychology; I did a postgraduate certificate (PGC). I think education in South Africa is not where it's supposed to be."* **(Participant 4)** *"Uhm, I think working with children in the twenty-first century is extremely difficult, because I think we have so many absent parents, and if parents are absent, and if parents are there [and the] only thing they do is to give a child a phone. We find it extremely difficult to work with children, [as] there is no discipline at home, [and] there is no boundary at home."* **(Participant 5** *"I have been here for the past 7 years, and this is my eighth year working here. I love what I do. I'm passionate about my job that's why I'm teaching. Working with children has always been a priority to me, because it is one of the biggest ways to influence the future."* **(Participant 6)** *"Being an educator before 1994, and after 1994, maybe you may understand what I mean that, before 1994, children were much more disciplined than today. Also, there was corporal punishment, though there were children's rights, but it was not more, where the emphasis was more on their rights than responsibilities. They will understand that the school is an extension of what is happening at home."* **(Participant 7).** *"As I said, I'm having 26 years of experience, and I'm still one of those teachers, who got passion about teaching, and absolutely love what I do. We are working in a different environment nowadays, ahh, like I said, there are more things that children are exposed to, but teaching children is what I love to do."* **(Participant 8)** *"Well, at the moment, I am 28 years old, [and] I have been working with children for five years. I also work with children at the church, as a Sunday school teacher, and being a teacher, you kind [of] see children and [the] rest of what they are exposed to, at the level that I mean I didn't see, growing up."* **(Participant 9)**
2. Prevalence of bullying on social media and exposure to child pornography.	**2.1. Knowledge of bullying on social media and exposure to child pornography.**	As evidenced from the responses of the educators, there is a knowledge deficiency about bullying on social media and exposure to child pornography. The discourse of bullying has a strength when it is produced at academic, or school/ institutional level. Most importantly, the discourse that is produced at each level is very relevant to the collective understanding of what bullying is, as well as how individuals	*"Well, I know more of bullying situations, because of my limited experience in teaching."* **(Participant 3)** *"I also don't think learners know about what bullying on social media is. [I] just think they think it's only bad mouthing them and they don't see it as bullying. On child pornography, I know that it's when learners are able to access pornography while underage. I also know that sometimes learners are being exposed to it by other adults, which obviously is not supposed to be."* **(Participant 6)** *"Well, I don't know much about it. I know it's something that happens at school that is becoming a big danger."* **(Participant 5)** *"The only knowledge I had was through social experience. Luckily, none of my children has been exposed to cyberbullying in my class. For the whole school, in higher grades, there has been cases of cyberbullying on WhatsApp* **(Participant 9)**

		exist and act within it (Rawlings, 2017, p. 18).	*"Cyberbullying involves WhatsApp, involves Facebook, involves internet, basically everything revolves around internet. My knowledge of bullying involves when children are fighting, someone takes a video, and [its] shared on social media."* **(Participant 4)**
		The current research study is aimed at exploring the educators' perceptions of dealing with victims of bullying on social media and exposure to child pornography. Therefore, it was critical for the researcher to access educators with two or more years' experience in the teaching environment, who have knowledge and experience in dealing with the victims of bullying on social media and exposure to child pornography.	*"Ya, the issue of the knowledge about the bullying, you find that the learners, sometimes they send pictures, or they can send the message that are not good for other learners, and then that it affect the learners."* **(Participant 2)** *"Because of the access to technology, because its faceless, it's easy for me to bully someone without a face, nobody sees me."* **(Participant 5)** *"Well, what I know of bullying on social media; I know that it's a huge thing to the learners, because many of them, literally, love to be on social media, instead of speaking face-to-face to so many people. So, I know they are affected by this, greatly, because, according to them, hundreds of people can see what is sad about it, or about them, whether it's true or not, I know that it affects them greatly, something that came out quite often, but sometimes we are not made aware of it, because they don't know, and they are unable to come and tell us."* **(Participant 6).**
		During the semi-structured interviews, in response to the question on their knowledge of bullying in social media and exposure to child pornography, all the educators expressed their own opinions and understanding of bullying on social media and exposure to child pornography.	
		During the semi-structured interviews, in response to the question on the type of opinions about the phenomenon, a small group of educators continued to explain their opinion of bullying, in general, as well as bullying on social media and exposure to child pornography.	*"My experience or maybe my knowledge goes as far as understanding that, through social media, you meet [a] lot of people around the world. Those that are far, and those that are local, being exposed to [a] lot of materials, if I may put it in that way, you could actually learn, and be exposed to it* **(Participant 7)** *"As far as bullying is concerned, we had [an] issue of cyberbullying at high school already, where we had grade 6 girls [who] started a group chat, and were naming and shaming girls at school, and we had to deal with that."* **(Participant 8)**
2.2. Educators' opinions of bullying on social media and exposure to child pornography.		The relevance of this question was to assist the researcher to determine the educator's knowledge on the subject of bullying in social media and exposure to child pornography, as well as the school management process. During the interviews, the educators appeared to possess sufficient knowledge about bullying on social media and exposure to child pornography.	*"Cyberbullying and social media is big at the moment, and it ranges from primary school, going upward, because they got access to phones, so it takes nothing from them to just say something mean on the phone, or social media because there is no repercussions."* **(Participant 3)** *"My opinion on this topic is that I know that we love our children as parents, and we give them this gadget, and then think, we had to be very careful, in terms of controlling the phones, and the gadget that we are giving our children, because if we don't have a control on this gadget, we going to be very difficult for our children to focus on their schools, and focus on the future."* **(Participant 2)** *"It's difficult to control cyberbullying. I really don't know how to handle cyberbullying."* **(Participant 4)**
		This question was relevant to this current study in that it allowed the researcher to gain insight into educator's opinion on issues of bullying on social media and exposure to child pornography. The researcher was able to confirm that the educator's opinion on the topic being studied didn't negatively affect how educator's response to the questions posed to them by the researcher.	*"Like I said cell phones should just be disallowed at school, computers to be monitored correctly, there must be some kind of identification, so if it come out we can follow-up."* **(Participant 5)** *"I think that schools, first of all, should equip teachers with how to deal with learners, who have been bullied. I think each of the schools should have a policy according to bullying, especially, cyberbullying because that is what happens all the time. After that, I think learners should be given a chance to almost be explained, be guided to how they can deal with bullying, and also be told and made aware that there are protocols to follow, in terms of bullying. Child pornography, I'm not sure to what extent one could assist there, because, for instance, we got the no cell phone policy, that's kind of a way to curb them, to not access pornography, for instance, at school but we don't know what happens after school, or at home."* **(Participant 6)**
		The researcher was able to get the participants to feel free	

		about being part of the study and ensure that they understand the whole research process. Educators were able to share their opinions regarding bullying in social media and exposure to child pornography freely and honestly. Educators indicated that the increase on incidence of bullying on social media and exposure to child pornography are caused by learners' accessibility to electronic devices such as cell phones, gadgets and lack of knowledge on the side of educators and parents about online space.	*"My own opinion on cyberbullying, firstly, attention need to be brought up to parents, and learners, our young ones need to be expose t,o in terms of awareness." (Participant 7)* *"It's disturbing, it really [is] disturbing, and it worries me, and my opinion is that it's quite rife in today's society." (Participant 9)* *"Cyber bullying is wrong, so I think a lot of people think the solution to cyberbullying is for them not to have phones, but I also think in today's world, you can use a phone in a positive way." (Participant 11)* *"My own opinion is that children should not be exposed to mad things that are out there. When I was looking at Instagram, even with Instagram we are spoken with site. While children are on Instagram, there should be age level on where you can join these groups, or go to these sites. My own opinion is that parents need to be aware of what is out there, they need to be aware of what their children are exposed to; we need to have more workshops with parents." (Participant 8)*
3. Management history of learners, who had experienced cyberbullying and exposure to child pornography.	**3.1. Departmental programmes to help victims of bullying on social media and exposure to child pornography.**	During the semi-structured interviews, the majority of the educators admitted that they were not aware of any specific departmental programme, designed to help victims of bullying on social media and exposure to child pornography. During the face to face interview, in response to a question on departmental programs to help victims of bullying on social media and exposure to child pornography one educator mentioned the school-based support programme where learners are supported. There is no specific programme that deals with bullying on social media and exposure to child pornography, while one educator indicated that there is a programme that he forgot the name of it though he finally admitted that there is no specific programme designed to deal with bullying in social media and exposure to child pornography. In addition, three educators indicated that they are aware that there is psychologist and social workers who can be contacted to deal with incidence of bullying in social media and exposure to child pornography.	*"I'm not aware of any programmes." (Participant 3)* *"Ya, in terms of the programmes, they are there, eh, that are designed to help the children by the Department of Education. Eh, in the school we have the school-based support programme, where learners are supported, in terms of issues, where children are affected." (Participant 2)* *"Not that I know of." (Participant 4)* *"We have policy of no cell phone at school and it stop there. As I said, it only happened this year at our school. When it comes to bullying and child pornography, we don't have." (Participant 5)* *"I'm aware of the programme that deals with bullying. I'm not sure what the name is, I think it was a few years ago, but it doesn't happen very often. It's only a workshop here and there that I'm aware of, but nothing on child pornography that I ever been asked to join, or have a workshop, or programme for, so it's very little that I know that the department is offering to assist." (Participant 6)* *"I'm not aware of any, I've never been, maybe there are, but none of which I have been exposed to." (Participant 7)* *"To be very honest with you, I'm sure there are programmes out there, but we are not as aware that they are." (Participants 8)* *"We have a psychologist that is linked to our schools, because I'm not equipped to deal with emotional harm, but programmes, as with the department, no, I don't know." (Participant 11)* *"Uhm, not that I am aware off, the only people that we are in contact with, is the psychologist. I think if something like this happens, the school will go out [and] try to find people, who deal with those type of things, probably a psychologist to help the child and the victims." (Participant 10)* *"I am not aware of anything at the moment, I just know that there are schools that have guiding counsellors and social workers that deal with children that are traumatised, but I don't know anything designated to cyberbullying. I know we did have one last year, cyberbullying workshop, but I was not aware." (Participant 9)*
	3.2. The role of educators in managing cases of bullying on social media and exposure to child pornography among learners.	During the semi-structured interviews, in response to the question on the roles of educators, all the educators indicated that they believed they have a role to play for children, who are victims of bullying on social media and exposure to child pornography. One educator indicated that educators do not possess the	*"Ya, that is very much serious, and that is very much important, and educators have that role they need to make sure they play, because at school we are the parents of this children, and we are the ones that are with this children many hours, and the school, and then the educators, they need to make sure they are helping this learners, in terms of the advices, and the guidance, so that this learners may feel comfortable." (Participant 2)* *"Look, yes of course, we teachers have more contact with the learners, the more we talk about it, the more learners know about*

			skills to deal with all these issues.	*it, and the more learners know about it, the more they are aware of it." (Participant 4)*
			Educators understand that they have a role to play in managing cases of bullying in social media and exposure to child pornography because they spent most of their formidable time with learners and they are the first point of contact whenever this issues arise in school setting.	*"We have a role to play, but I think the buck stops with the parents. Policies and rules are set for parents and they should follow them." (Participant 5)*
				"Yes, I definitely think they have a role to play, because when learners leave home to come to school, we are in the place of parents." (Participant 6)
				"Absolutely, we are there, we spend more time with, if we are workshopped, if we are clued up, we can help them, but we obviously need to be equipped, and we need to be taught how to, and what way we need [to] go by." (Participant 8)
			Consequently, the researcher was able to determine the role of educators when managing cases of bullying on social media and exposure to child pornography which include parental role responsibilities. The data gathered during the face to face interviews also allow the researcher to establish if educators understand their role when dealing with issue of bullying in social media and exposure to child pornography.	*"Our role as educators, as you know these days, maybe in the earlier days, was more involved, but the least that we can do now, is actually just to refer." (Participant 7)*
				"We do have [the] responsibility to educate [the] kids." (participant 11)
				"Uhm, as educators, probably we are in the forefront of that, because and we from children's month, and we try [to] teach what is right from wrong, we are the extension of parents." (Participant 10)
				"Uhm, I think we do have a major role to play, because at our school, or with me, specifically, my children know that if there's anything they need to speak about, anything that's happened to them that maybe made them sad, angry, or scared, they know that they can come to me, and tell me anything that's going on." (Participant 9)
	3.3. Legislative framework for bullying on social media and exposure to child pornography.		All educators indicated that they were not aware of any legislation that addressed these issues. Three educators mentioned the child rights, child act, and child protection act, but could not mention a specific section in legislation that they knew of, which addressed bullying on social media and exposure to child pornography.	*"Not much, it's just the child rights." (Participant 3)*
				"Ya, in terms of the legislation, eh, eish, there are so many, and I think I didn't check them, in terms of which I can mention, but they are there, the legislation to help this learners, and to make sure the children are very protected, in terms of being bullied on social media and exposure to child pornography. They are there, but unfortunately, I cannot mention one." (Participant 2)
				"Yoh, I never heard of one." (Participant 4)
			This question was relevant to this study as it assisted the researcher to explore the educator's knowledge and understanding of legislative framework. The educators wanted to confirm if educators are aware of any legislation that they need to comply with when dealing with incidences of bullying in social media and exposure to child pornography.	*"I'm not aware of any legislation, as I said, this is very new for me personally, but know that you have come here, and you've spoken about it. I'm definitely going to look at legislative part of it. [The] child act got various parts on it, and there should be [a] part to deal with it." (Participant 5)*
				"I do not know of any. That I'm not aware of." (Participant 6)
				"Ahm, I may not be aware of that, but there must be something to give guidance." (Participant 7)
				"Isn't it the child rights charter? Mhm, the child rights, I actually don't know of legislation, specifically, because I haven't read on one, but probably, there is something out there." (Participant 8)
				"I, Mmm, I actually don't know any legislation, mhmm, film and publication act or something, I actually don't know, hey, I'm sorry, eyy, I don't know." (Participant 11)
			The data gathered during the face to face interviews allowed the researcher to confirm that educators are not familiar with relevant legislative framework and specific sections that deals with incidences of bullying in social media and exposure to child pornography.	*"Child protection act, there should be something like that, umh, I don't know the act itself, mhm, I'm sure there should be an act like that, umh, I can't quote the act, I think, there should be something like that." (Participant 10)*
				"I don't know any, I just know there's child line but that's not the legislation I just know there's ChildLine that children can call (Participant 9)

	3.4. Training on legislative framework for bullying on social media and exposure to child pornography.	During the semi-structured interviews, all the educators indicated that they believed educators should be trained on the obligations of any current legislation for these topics. Educators admitted that they are faced with difficult task when dealing with incidences of bullying in social media and exposure to child pornography at their school setting. One educator added that training will assist educators to gain more continuous knowledge on the legislative framework and they will be able to know what is required of educators when there is incidence of bullying in social media and exposure to child pornography. Educators added that this training and workshop will assist them to know what steps should be followed when dealing with these incidences. One educator further stated that the Western Cape department of Education seems to be doing quite a lot when it comes to training and workshop aimed at equipping educators to deal with these incidences. This question was relevant and assisted the researcher to understand the extent to which educators need to be provided with continuous training and workshops on legislative framework regarding bullying on social media and exposure to child pornography. In addition, the information highlighted lack of legislative framework knowledge on the side of educators when dealing with these incidences.	*"Yes, we need to be more exposed to child rights." (Participants 3)* *"Ya, that is very important, we need those training, because we really facing difficult situations, in terms of dealing with these issues, and I appeal to say, please, if possible, it need to be done very quietly, because we need those training." (Participant 2)* *"For sure, because, there is not much given to cyberbullying, there is physical bullying, physical bullying workshops, but cyberbullying, no." (Participant 4)* *"I think the Western Cape Department is doing quite a lot, and they came here yesterday, and they have workshops every year." (Participant 5)* *"Yes, I definitely think so, I think they should be trained, because if we know what the law requires of the teachers, in terms of learners being bullied, or bullies, then we know exactly what steps to follow, because we might set a protocol at school. We might set something on our code of practice that doesn't meet the requirements of the legislation, then, we may be invading people's privacy, or maybe going against what the law requires us to do." (Participant 6)* *"I think so, and then also, it also mean as to what policy. Is it going to be changed to fit into the process, because there is no use for educators to be trained? Yes, in terms of awareness, but in terms of taking action regarding that, then we are intertwined, because, I think, there are policies that hinder educators to take action. The only action you need to take is to refer the matter to the authority." (Participant 7)* *"Absolutely, absolutely, because our kids are so exposed, too. I should be trained. I should be well aware of the steps that the child can, or should follow, the steps I need to follow, and at the moment, there is nothing. I haven't been schooled, yet. I haven't been taken through the programme yet. and how can I help a child at school, when I haven't been exposed to it." (Participant 8)* *"Definitely, especially when it affects kids, we should have training." (Participant 11)* *"Absolutely, absolutely they should be trained, uhm, as I said, I don't know, but am there trying to deal with children all the time, yes, it doesn't need be all the time, but I need to know that legislation. I need to be trained in that legislation." (Participant 10)* *"Definitely, definitely, I definitely think that they do need to be educated, because it's only going to equip us more, and it's going to better equip us to help children that are dealing with it." (Participant 9)*
4. Exposure and intervention for bullying on social media and exposure to child pornography	**4.1. Educators' exposure to bullying on social media and exposure to child pornography.**	During the semi-structured interviews, the educators admitted that, somehow, they had been exposed to victims of bullying on social media and exposure to child pornography. Educators were able to share how their exposure to these children (victims and perpetrators), affected them. This question was relevant to the study because the researcher wanted to confirm if all the educators who participated in the study have	*"The only incident I had of cyberbullying was of my cousin, who have been cyberbullied, but the only thing I did was, to connect her with the director, who will then know who to connect her with." (Participant 4)* *"The exposure, in terms of this one, more especially to these children, who are affected by this bullying, you see them, by when you go to these children, you will see that this children are not free, when you try to talk to them, you will see that, no, they are very reserved." (Participant 2)* *"Bullying can actually drive someone to commit suicide. I feel it's a serious case, and it needs to be treated seriously, and I don't think we are treating it seriously, because you know what, it is one smack, the child comes and tells you, but we don't know how it affects a child, and it is a continuous thing happening. So I think more needs to be done, and whether we are doing enough, I don't think so, because, once again, there is no facilities, or social*

		been exposed to incidence of bullying in social media and exposure to child pornography and how they were able to deal with those cases. The researcher was able to confirm that all the educators who forms part of the study have been exposed to incidence of bullying in social media and exposure to child pornography. The data presented during the face to face interviews allowed the researcher to assess the participants level of exposure. Educators added that they are not only exposed to incidence of bullying in social media and exposure to child pornography at schools, but they are also exposed to them at home.	*services. The police and every other NGO that's involved, there is no connection over there." (Participant 5)* *"Some of them has been quite intense, some of them has been easy to solve. For example, I had a learner at grade 8, who just joined late in the year from another school. The learner's parent came the other day [and] just remove the child from school. When I went down to check what [was] going on, the parents just told me that the child is bullied. But we were never made aware of it, so we couldn't pick up the learner has been bullied, and the learner never informed anyone about it." (Participant 6)* *"That question is not easy to give an answer, as I said, I just held that child, give counselling, and refer the matter. I need to be very careful on how to deal with the matter that involves the child." (Participant 7)* *"We do have, eh, we've had few instances of bullying, cyberbullying, eh, and I think the principal had been good in the way he have dealt with it that he called all the proper role players." (Participant 11)* *"There have been incidents of bullying in many phones, particularly, in WhatsApp, Because cell phones are not allowed at schools, this are things reported from home to school, this falls over and becomes fights at school." (Participant 10)*
	4.2. Process to deal with victims of bullying on social media and exposure to child pornography.	The educators admitted that they were aware of the processes to deal with victims of bullying on social media and exposure to child pornography. The educators shared the procedure that they followed, when dealing with victims of bullying on social media and exposure to child pornography. This question was relevant for this study because the researcher wanted to understand if there are any existing processes to deal with victims of bullying on social media and exposure to child pornography and if those process are guided by relevant policies. The data obtained from this question allowed the researcher to understand if educators have a specific process adopted by their schools that they follow when dealing with incidences of bullying in social media and exposure to child pornography. In addition, the researcher was also able to determine if there are known alternatives should the educator being unable to deal with these incidences.	*"Ya, eh, we handle them in this way, where, as indicated above that we have a committee, who deals with children, who are affected, which is SBST (School support-based team) committee. The committee will assess those children and after assessing them that is where now they can refer them to some other institution." (Participant 2)* *"First thing is to report to the HOD, then it will be escalated to the deputy principal, and, subsequently, escalated to the principal." (Participant 4)* *"Well, if someone is bullied we have an auxiliary worker, and she will deal with it, as you know, teachers is extremely hectic, and really, really don't have a time, and I feel ashamed of saying this, because I would really need to help a child, but I don't have time." (Participant 5)* *"Many learners, who are affected, are very aware that we have a school counsellor, and the school psychologist, and most of them tend to go to them, for instance, many other learners, however, has a teacher, which we call a 'go to', who they can go and talk to." (Participant 6)* *"We never had such big cases, as I said, we refer to the office, and then [get] the parents involved, and I don't know after that what happened." (Participant 7)* *"Uhm, the incidents that we had here, parents will be called in, [and] we will interview the children." (Participants 11).* *"I don't know, when there are issues, if you're not at the senior level, you don't really know how to deal with it." (Participant 9)*
	4.3. Procedures and policies to deal with the cases of bullying on social media and exposure to child pornography.	During the semi-structured interviews, five educators indicated that there were no procedures and policies in place to deal with cases of bullying on social media and exposure to child pornography. However, four educators indicated that there *were* procedures and policies in	*"I can't speak for other educators, but as of me, I put them away of the bullies. We wouldn't handle the actually case, as such, but referred them further." (Participant 3)* *"Ya, we do have the policies, in terms of how the educators need to handle, because we also have the committee that sit down, plan, [and] come to the school." (Participant 2)*

		place to deal with cases of bullying on social media and exposure to child pornography. The relevance of this question was to assist the researcher confirm if educators knows the existing procedures and policies to deal with cases of bullying in social media and exposure to child pornography. In addition, the date gathered assisted the researcher to explore educators view on the effectiveness of the existing procedures and policies. The researcher was able to give opportunity to the educators to mention if they are aware of the procedure and policies and to clarify those reporting procedure that is used in their respective schools when dealing with incidence of bullying in social media and exposure to child pornography.	*"There is nothing, in writing, where they said, this is the procedure you followed, when someone is cyberbullied."* **(Participant 4)** *"Well, we have a very clear policy in our school, if a child has reported we have to immediately react. First thing we do, we send the letter to the parents of the abuser, as well as to the victim, and then we got both parents in. The teacher with auxiliary worker will have a meeting."* **(Participant 5)** *"Yes, we do. Firstly, if it's my case where I found out that the learner has been bullied, I should fill incidence form, and fill incidence report form, [and] then it goes to the counsellor, or school psychologist."* **(Participant 6)** *"There is a school code of conduct, and then we sit as the disciplinary committee, and their matter [is] referred. There is no document I know of that specifically deals with bullying and child pornography, not one I know off."* **(Participant 7)** *"Not at the moment, sir, I don't. We do have a policy in place, but I don't think we have policy in place regarding cyberbullying, and I think that's one thing that we as staff need to work on, and put those policies in place, as well. Maybe because our exposure is limited, we don't know what really it's out there, but I think, as a school, we need to work on those policy documents that currently we don't have."* **(Participant 8)** *"Not with regard to child pornography, there is nothing regarding to child pornography on the school code of conduct, but there is on bullying."* **(Participant 10).** *"Like I said before, the only protocol we had is first HOD, then the principal, and from the principal goes to the department."* **(Participant 9)**
	4.4. Government's role to support victims of bullying on social media and exposure to child pornography.	During the semi-structured interviews, the educators shared what they considered Government should do to support the victims of bullying on social media and exposure to child pornography. The relevance of this question was to assist the researcher to establish if educators are aware of government role to support victims of bullying in social media and exposure to child pornography. Educators explained the important role that government can play to support victims of bullying in social media and exposure to child pornography which include mentorship programmes, workshop and training. The data gathered during the face to face interviews enable the researcher to gain insight into educators understanding of current government role to support victims of bullying in social media and exposure to child pornography.	*"Building confidence in learners, mentorship."* **(Participant 3)** *"Ya, Department of Education what need to do, they need to have the workshops, they need to have the programmes that they can train the teachers, as we indicated about the issue of training, saying please teach us."* **(Participant 2)** *"Workshops, provide workshops, educate teachers about cyberbullying, focus on cyberbullying, you know, have posters everywhere."* **(Participant 4)** *"I think they will gonna revisit the child care act again, I don't think the child act is very clear on what to do with a perpetrator, especially if it's a child."* **(Participant 5)** *"I think the first thing they should do is to teach us how to be able to pick up, because that's one of the biggest concerns, because I don't know how to pick up, if the child is being bullied."* **(Participant 6).** *"As I said before, the department may have training that means we had awareness programme for us educators, so that we understand the victims of cyberbullying, but then what are we gonna do about it, because our duty is to teach."* **(Participant 7)** *"Like I said, workshop is very much important; workshopping and training people within schools to be able to deal with it."* **(Participant 8)** *"I think that, firstly there should be some part of life orientation syllabus, having the counsellor available at school, we don't have enough, not even psychologist, but counsellors to deal with these issues."* **(Participant 10).** *"I think that government should, uhm… actually, try get more workshop to equip the teachers."* **(Participant 9)**

	4.5. Educators' suggestions for the issues of bullying on social media and exposure to child pornography.	During the semi-structured interviews, all the educators offered their suggestions for the issues of bullying on social media and exposure to child pornography. Support, compulsory policies to address the issue, awareness, educate parents, workshops, and training, were among the suggestions that the educators offered. Parenting also plays a critical role. A strong parent-child attachment bond, not only provides the adolescent with support, but also with a secure base, as well as the freedom to explore. This offers them great opportunities to move confidently in the wider world, and voice their opinions, which could enhance the development of the moratorium, and appropriately identify achievement statuses. The relevance of this question was to assist the researcher to provide opportunity to the educators to provide any suggestion they might have regarding issue of bullying in social media and exposure to child pornography. Educators were able to provide meaningful suggestions regarding the issues of bullying in social media and exposure to child pornography which include the department providing continues support, policy implementation, awareness programmes and relevant training, In addition, the collected data captured the educators suggestion regarding issue of bullying on social media and exposure to child pornography.	*"Constant support it's what we need, in this school the peer educator has been here for year, which gave a boost, but then there is no consistency, so this year [we] didn't know what to do, because the peer educator left, so consistency it's what we need."* ***(Participant 3).*** *"Ya, the suggestion that I can make, in terms of dealing with this aspect, it means now, if we can say every school is compulsory to have a policy dealing with the issue of social media bullying, and the issue of being restrictive, in terms of child pornography, I think that can help."* ***(Participant 2)*** *"My suggestion is going back to make everyone aware, the teachers, the children, put it out there, incorporate in the school curriculum."* ***(Participant 4)*** *"I think we need to focus more on how to raise our children. Educate parents on how to parent children."* ***(Participant 5)*** *"Like I said, if we can be educated more on how to deal with it, the learners, the parents, and the educators. If we could [be] educated more on how to deal with it, how to identify it, and how to work through it, because it's not just [be] a process that you bullied, you're wrong, [and] you're being punished, but it should be a process of, we want to work with you; we want to help you; and see how we can assist you."* ***(Participant 6)*** *"I would suggest, maybe as the school arrange[s] or organise[s] awareness programmes, not only for the learners, but also for parents that there is such an issue that is taking place, and this are [the] repercussions that need to be taken [into account], and this are the advice that need to be given to the parents, because we may, from time to time, have programmes for the learners, in terms of making them aware that this is the situation, and should they be involved in such [activities], they should know of the action they need to take, those [who] are the affected."* ***(Participant 7).*** *"My own final suggestion will be, please train me, so I know what to do. I don't want to be faced with a situation, where I don't know what to do. I am trained as a teacher, but not a psychologist. We are not trained to be social workers, but it will be a good thing for us to be trained [in] what to do, if a child come to me now when I leave here, and say someone took a picture of me."* ***(Participant 8)*** *"So maybe already at varsity level, if studying to be a teacher, you need to do a course in child protection; you need to do a course on cyberbullying; or cyber pornography; and this should be introduced as early as possible to a future trainee, in fact, anybody who is going to work with children, need to be trained on that."* ***(Participant 10)*** *"Look, final suggestion, look its bullying, social media it's a real scary thing. My suggestion will be to have workshop with parents as well, equip parents with a knowledge on what sites to look for, equip parents how to block sites, how to make child friendly sites for children."* ***(Participant 9)***

5.3. Conclusion

In this current study, the researcher explored the perceptions of educators with experience of dealing with victims of bullying on social media and exposure to child pornography. Four themes were identified, namely, *Professional competence*, *Prevalence of bullying on social*

media and exposure to child pornography, *Management history of learners who had experienced cyberbullying and exposure to child pornography,* as well as *Exposure and intervention for bullying on social media and exposure to child pornography.* The researcher confirmed the educators' professional competence, through their qualifications and experience.

The findings of this current study revealed the perceptions of educators, when dealing with victims of bullying on social media and exposure to child pornography, which concurred with literature that bullying on social media and exposure to child pornography affected children negatively. The findings also highlighted the contributory factors that needed to be taken into consideration, when dealing with victims of bullying on social media and exposure to child pornography. However, the findings established that the educators were not aware of programmes, policies, procedures and legislation that addressed bullying on social media and exposure to child pornography. The training of educators remained unclear, since the findings of this current study could not confirm any scheduled training that educators received from the Department of Education.

According to the findings, the educators disclosed that, to date, whenever they encountered cases of bullying on social media and exposure to child pornography, they would refer those involved to the designated officials responsible. Therefore, the researcher was keen to probe into understanding their role, when dealing with cases of bullying on social media and exposure to child pornography. According to their responses, it was clear that, if they were provided with adequate support and training, *they* would be empowered to provide support to the victims of bullying on social media and exposure to child pornography.

CHAPTER SIX

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1. Introduction

In this current study, the researcher set out to answer the research question, namely, to explore and describe the perceptions of educators of learners with experiences of bullying on social media and exposure to child pornography. In addition, the researcher was interested in the role that the educators fulfilled, when dealing with victims of bullying on social media. However, firstly, the demographic profile of the educators was explored, as schools around the world increasingly appoint experts with some counselling, social work, and/or psychology qualifications, in support of students and staff (Green & Price, 2017, p. 139). The demographic profile of the educators was important, as this information enabled the researcher to compare their levels of education, years of working experience, as well as their relevant skills and training received.

Subsequently, the researcher highlights the main threads in literature, and explains how they are linked to the perceptions of educators, who deal with bullying on social media and exposure to child pornography. The main themes and sub-themes are summarised, and compared, or contrasted with literature in the review. Appropriate references are provided to substantiate the results, thereby presenting a critical synthesis of literature and the findings, with the appropriate discussion (See Table 6.1). Finally, this current research study is concluded with the limitations of the study, as well as recommendations for the roles of educators, schools and the Department of Education, when dealing with victims of bullying on social media and exposure to child pornography.

The researcher conducted individual semi-structured interviews with 11 participants, who confirmed the perceptions of educators of learners with experiences of bullying on social media and exposure to child pornography. This data collection tool assisted the researcher to meet the objectives of this current study, which were:

- To explore and describe the perceptions of educators of learners with experiences of bullying on social media and exposure to child pornography;

- To explore and describe the role of educators, when dealing with victims of bullying in social media and exposure to child pornography.

During the interviews, the participants spontaneously shared their experiences of working with children, highlighting how exciting it was, and how passionate they were about their learners. They emphasized that the primary role of educators was to teach; however, they also recognized the need to empower learners, who witness bullying on social media and exposure to child pornography, to inform a trusted adult, rather than remain silent. In addition, all interactions with learners should create a climate, in which learners feel at liberty to approach educators, when encountering bullying on social media and exposure to child pornography.

6.2. Summary of the findings: Compared, or contrasted with literature

Table 6.1: Summary of the themes and sub-themes

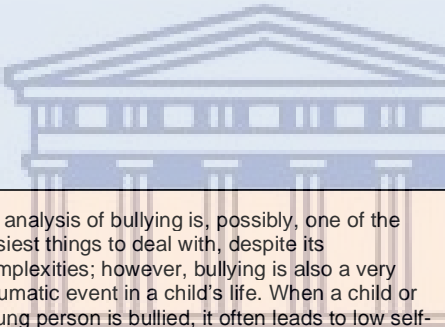| Themes	Sub-themes	Literature	Discussion
1. Professional competence	1.1. Educators contribution to the research study	The educators provided feedback on their contribution to the study. There is as strong link between the socio-economic environment and educational outcomes, even when resources are controlled. Adolescents in lower-income areas are likely to respond to their local schools, in ways that are destructive, as well as eroding of discipline, and propel teachers, schools, and pupils into a vicious cycle of inferior schooling (Louw & Louw, 2014, p. 338).	The researcher needed to establish whether the educators have anything to contribute, be it socio-economic or educational, before moving on with the study. The educators were able to reflect on what they thought they could contribute towards this current study. The attitudes of parents and teachers could influence the behaviour and self-concept of both bullies and their victims (Green & Price, 2017, p. 123).
	1.2. Educators experience in working with children	The educators shared their experience in working with children. Bullying affects children's physical and mental health, their attendance at school, their educational attainment, and their social relationships (Cowie & Myers, 2018, p. 3). Bullying has far-reaching consequences for both the victims and the perpetrators. Bullying not only infringes on the victims right to human dignity, privacy, freedom, and security, but also influences the child's physical, emotional, social, and educational well-being (Louw & Louw, 2014, p, 346). Helpers are understandably anxious about dealing with the issue of sexual abuse, because it is an emotive topic. In addition, people have strong views about it and are quick to judge, when a mistake is made (McElvaney, 2016, p. 8)	This sub-theme assisted the researcher to confirm whether the educators, who were interviewed, were relevant to this current research study. According to Brown (2017, p. 37), the digital world offers many opportunities and benefits for young people. Currently, in a single generation, technology allows them to find whatever they desire. They can interact and play games with people on the other side of the world, as well as create content, and upload it for anyone to see. In addition, they can connect with friends, family, and "other friends" (the distinction and quotes are deliberate), through social media, via PCs, laptops, and mobile devices.

| 2. Prevalence of bullying on social media and exposure to child pornography | 2.1. Knowledge of bullying on social media and exposure to child pornography. | Louw and Louw (2014, p. 339) refer to a report by the Department of Basic Education (2013), which indicates that, in the new age group 7 to 15 years, 98,8% children attended school, while in the age group 16 to 18 years (Grades 10,11, and 12), 84% attended school, or further education training (FET) colleges (enrolment after grade 9)

Research on bullying suggests that cyberbullying among children and young people is less prevalent than traditional offline bullying (Cowie & Myers, 2018, p. 119).

Significantly, research highlights that less than 10% of the victims of cyberbullying have disclosed their experiences to a teacher or another adult in the school environment, while approximately 195 of the victims of traditional bullying informed an adult at school (Patchin & Hinduja, 2016, p. 136).

Regarding child sexual abuse content, evidence exists that people, especially adolescents/ teenagers, are, increasingly, sexually active at a younger age than previously, in terms of the various acts of sexual intercourse. The contributing factors for this include maturation, peer-group pressure, evolving values, and the media (Louw & Louw, 2014, p. 315).

Children develop from stage to stage, and even their actions change from one point to another. As children grow, eventually their cell phone use start to increase, particularly on social network sites, as well as maintaining contact with peers; however, the misuse of cell phones also emerges, and escalates (Louw & Louw, 2014, p. 346).

Cowie and Myers (2018, p. 48) allude to the narrative that knowledge about children and young people, as both victims and perpetrators of sexual violence, has increased significantly over the last three decades | This theme assisted the researcher to measure the extent to which bullying on social media and exposure to child pornography affected educators at any particular time.

According to Patchin and Hinduja (2016, p. 136), teachers who talk to students about these issues are making a difference. In their study, even though 46% of the students disclosed that their teachers never talked to them about being safe on the computer, and 69% revealed that their teachers never talked to them about using a cell phone responsibly, when these conversations occur, they appear to have a positive impact (Patchin & Hinduja, 2016, p. 136).

It was essential for the researcher to establish whether the educators understood the meaning of bullying on social media and exposure to child pornography. All the educators expressed their own understanding of the concept of the topic under scrutiny.

Many children say, or do, mean things to each other; however, the majority of them do not bully; therefore, labelling all harmful behaviour as bullying, discounts the experiences of those, who are bullied (Patchin & Hinduja, 2016, p. 8).

In general, the pornography debate is a complex one, and the research about its influence on children, and adults, is equally difficult (Brown, 2017, p. 42).

According to Branscombe and Baron (2017, p. 373), in recent years, cyberbullying, which involves bullying that occurs through electronic means, for example, social media, has increased and has harmful effects on individuals, who are the targets of this form of bullying. |
| | 2.2. Educator's opinion of bullying on social media and exposure to child pornography. | Brown (2017, p. 6) states that, currently, child abuse images are strongly associated with the internet; however, it is speculative to argue that the internet is ultimately the cause of child abuse, or that images of the abuse are produced and distributed. The internet has certainly opened up pathways that did not exist, previously.

According to Cowie & Myers (2018, p. 121), risk factors for cyberbullying are predominantly social, rather than technological.

While trying to mitigate the risks, the school code of conduct, aimed at protecting and safeguarding learners, specifies that learners are not to be in possession of cell phones at school (Harber & Mncube, 2017, p. 107). | Educators were able to reflect on their own opinions of the topic under scrutiny. This enabled the researcher to probe further regarding their understanding of bullying on social media and exposure to child pornography.

Education, therefore, appears to become critical and central, in terms of providing children and young people with the basis, or foundation for safe and the appropriate online practice, as well as becoming familiar with the use of various online systems (Brown, 2017, p. 218).

According to Cowie & Myers (2018, p. 4), school bullying takes on many forms. It includes such behaviour as spreading nasty rumours on the age, race, sex, mental health, disability, sexual orientation, and religious beliefs; physically attacking someone, ridiculing, or demeaning someone; social exclusion, unwelcome sexual advances, posting embarrassing materials online, and threatening someone online, either directly, or anonymously. |

| 3. Management history of learners, who had experienced cyberbullying and exposure to child pornography. | 3.1. Departmental programmes to help victims of bullying on social media and exposure to child pornography | Dealing with incidents of bullying can be complex, considering its various forms. Therefore, it is critical to note that, while many elements, which may be applied on a whole-school approach, are mainly focused on identifying and addressing bullying incidents across the school environment, the strong need to provide support directly to individual students (and sometimes staff), who at some point had experienced bullying, should be considered (Cowie & Myers, 2018, p. 187).

Smith & Thompson (2018, p. 23) state that, in order to address these situations effectively, teachers need to possess some skill in group work techniques, to explore issues involving the emotional reaction of children, as well as the specific agenda, which needs to be communicated. | The findings clearly highlighted that educators were not aware of departmental programmes to help victims of bullying on social media and exposure to child pornography.

The participants confirmed that they did not know of specific programmes in the Department, designed to help victims of bullying on social media and exposure to child pornography.

Three of the 11 educators indicated that there were programmes designed to help victims of bullying on social media and exposure to child pornography.

One educator indicated that a psychologist, who was equipped to deal with victims of bullying on social media and exposure to child pornography, was linked to the school.

The educators' opinion confirmed the notion that bullying on social media and exposure to child pornography is a major challenge that most schools and communities face. The findings were consistent that the issue could be categorised as "very concerning".

Educators are required to deal effectively with incidents of bullying on social media and exposure to child pornography; however, they have displayed a lack of knowledge about the available programmes in the Department, which are designed to help victims of bullying on social media and exposure to child pornography.

Everyone has a role to fulfil, in terms of helping children and young people to escape and deal with online sexual abuse, while still enjoying a normal life after the incidents. In addition, everyone has a role to play in creating a safe, conducive environment, in which young people are not exposed to abuse, or become vulnerable to any form of online abuse. Ultimately, the aim is for children to be safe, as well as free to disclose any form of abuse, or related challenges associated with it, while feeling supported, following the disclosure, or discovery (Brown, 2017, p. 16). |
| | 3.2. The role of educators in managing cases of cyberbullying among learners. | As educators are of the opinion that learning could be interesting, they are seeking inspirational ways of engaging children and young people under their care. One of the most inspirational ways may involve the use of digital technologies in schools, which has an extended and varied history in the learning environment (Brown, 2017, p. 223).

Every child has the right to learn in a safe, conducive environment; therefore, at all times, schools should be safe and fun learning environments, in which learners/students are encouraged to be at their best, as well as make friends and interact with peers (Green & Price, 2017, p. 3).

Cowie and Myers (2018, p. 175) add that, often, teachers do not see all incidents of bullying; therefore, the student report is vital. In an anti-bullying policy there has to be procedure guidelines that advise students on how to report and to whom. | The findings confirmed that educators have a specific/vital role to fulfil towards victims of bullying on social media and exposure to child pornography.

Three educators shared the sentiments that they also fulfil an extended parental role towards children, while they are at school.

The Department of Education employ school social workers and psychologist, who are liable to investigate all incidents of bullying on social media and exposure to child pornography. However, all the educators also considered that they had a specific role to fulfil for the victims of bullying on social media and exposure to child pornography, as they were the first contact between the learners and anyone else, even in the event of further referrals. |

		When dealing with online practice issues, the school has the responsibility to maintain the legitimate environment, in which learning could transpire. In addition, the school has to be cognisant of the children's expectations of a certain level of privacy, while striking the balance between their legitimacy, as well as that of the school's (Patchin & Hinduja, 2016, p. 73). Primarily, the teachers' role is to teach, and through their normal duties as educators, teachers are well placed to teach, or educate children about their rights, as well as help them to recognize when their rights are being violated or infringed, and how they could respond to those incidents (McElvaney, 2016, p. 140).	Educators can enrich and equip learners with confidence in a world that is plagued with uncertainty, by encouraging and motivating learners, as well as boosting their self-esteem (Louw & Louw, 2014, p. 346). Educators fulfil a powerful role of general support in the lives of young people, who should acknowledge and highlight this role (Green & Price, 2017, p. 120). School staff have become well aware that, what happens online, often, significantly affects the current school environment, as well as the students' ability to learn. The use of social media and digital technologies among youth and young people has increased over time, and its impact cannot be ignored (Patchin & Hinduja, 2016, p. 135).
	3.3. Legislative framework for bullying on social media and exposure to child pornography.	An individual, who advocates a theory of the law (and the criminalization of any form of bullying behaviours, generally) is of the opinion that those, who are guilty of bullying others, need to be held accountable for their actions. In addition, the narrative is suggested that, if schools and parents cannot, or will not, do it, then society is well placed to take up the challenge. However, the opponents thereof may view this law as an attack on free speech, as well as freedom of expression, and vigorously challenge it, which may result in many critical elements being left unexplained, or otherwise ambiguous, and not clearly understandable. In this case, it could be argued, in their opinion (and quite rightly so) that further criminalization will not solve the underlying causes of bullying (Patchin & Hinduja, 2016, p. 58). Legal difficulties and legal implications may pose obstacles to police work and other law enforcement work, with respect to child pornography, as well as child sexual abuse materials, associated with it (Fortin & Corriveau, 2015, p. 8). McElvaney (2016, p. 7) indicates that professional helpers are well placed to help children to disclose. They have access to information and resources, and therefore, can educate themselves about sexual abuse. In addition, they have the advantage of spending time with children, outside the family home, and therefore, can be well placed to notice when something is wrong. They have a mandate to draw attention to a child, when they are distressed, or out of sorts, and, in many countries, they have a statutory obligation to report a concern about sexual abuse.	The findings revealed that the educators were not aware of any legislation that dealt with bullying on social media and exposure to child pornography. Three out of the 11 participants disclosed that there were child rights, child act and child protection act, but could not specify the exact legislation that dealt with bullying on social media and exposure to child pornography. A legislative framework its critical when dealing with bullying on social media and exposure to child pornography. In the researcher's opinion, the fact that the educators were not aware of the relevant legislation disempowers them to deal with these issues, effectively. Governments have made efforts to fight against new forms of criminality in the virtual world. This has been done through their introduction and formation of specialized units that uncover cyber-paedophiles (adults who are sexually attracted to children), as well as keep track of individuals, who use ICTs, to commit crimes of all types (Fortin & Corriveau, 2015, p. 7).
	3.4. Training on legislative framework for bullying on social media and exposure to child pornography.	Persistent bullies compromise the learning environment, and therefore, requires urgent intervention, given the educational priority to provide safe, conducive, and engaging school environments, for optimum learning, while being considerate to the wellbeing of those affected (Green & Price, 2017, p. 138). Green and Price (2017, p. 121) indicate that the relationship between teacher and bully, as well as teacher and victim, governs how teachers respond, and where they attribute blame Child pornography or child sexual abuse material content is evidence of the commission of a serious crime against a child (Leary, 2007, cited in Nevondwe & Odeku, 2014, p. 135).	The findings revealed that there was a need to provide educators with legislative framework training regarding bullying on social media and exposure to child pornography. Bullying on social media and exposure to child pornography issues have legal implications; therefore, it would be challenging for anyone without proper information on the relevant legislation, to deal with these issues. There was consensus from all educators that it was important for them to know about, and be trained on the obligations of any legislation, which deals with bullying on social media and exposure to child pornography.

			In addition, the findings further revealed that the lack of legislative framework affected the effectiveness of the management of bullying on social media and exposure to child pornography.
			Training on legislative framework may assist educators to know relevant legislations and understand the legal framework, when dealing with issues of bullying on social media and exposure to child pornography.
			Educators need to be au fait with these legislations, to know how to react when they encounter these cases, and other related cases.
			When dealing with bullying, it is important to be knowledgeable about what other countries are implementing, such as recently passed laws in some states that require educators and caregivers to take certain measures to prevent unpleasant outcomes, once behaviour is classified as bullying (Patchin & Hinduja, 2016, p. 9).
			Creation, possession, and distribution of child pornography materials are not new, despite the divergences. Countries fighting against child pornography, child exploitation, child trafficking, and child sexual abuse and others, have adopted laws forbidding the creation, production, distribution and downloading (possession) of this material (Fortin & Corriveau, 2015, p.13)
4. Exposure and intervention for bullying on social media and exposure to child pornography.	4.1. Educators' exposure to bullying on social media and exposure to child pornography.	An analysis of bullying is, possibly, one of the easiest things to deal with, despite its complexities; however, bullying is also a very traumatic event in a child's life. When a child or young person is bullied, it often leads to low self-esteem, depression, and, in serious cases, suicide (Boske & Osanloo, 2015, p. 57).	The findings clearly highlight the educators' exposure to bullying on social media and exposure to child pornography. The educators reflected that their exposure to bullying on social media, as well as child pornography, was similar to the experiences of victims.
		The issue of bullying has become complex as, increasingly, schools are being judged by the number of bullying reports received each year. However, this still might not be a true reflection of the total number of bullying incidents (Patchin & Hindija, 2017, p. 107).	It is a well-known fact that bullying affects everyone, negatively, particularly those, who are targeted by bullying-associated behaviour (Green & Price, 2017, p. 25).
		Cyberbullying reveals low self-esteem, difficulties in maintaining relationships with peers and family, decreased empathy, and the tendency to downplay bullying behaviour (Green & Price, 2017, p. 107).	Brown (2017, p. 102) asserts that there is an accumulation of evidence from controlled studies (which followed certain individuals over time and are complemented by other research), demonstrating that child sexual abuse (CSA) often affects victims, negatively, in child- and adulthood. Additionally, subsequent difficulties are not explicable, solely, as the impact of commonly co-occurring adverse experiences, such as neglect.
	4.2. Process to deal with victims of bullying on social media and exposure to child pornography.	Everyone has a role to play in the management of bullying. Families fulfil the important role in caring and nurturing young people, as well as cultivating the much-needed preparation for entry into large social environments, by reinvigorating, reinforcing and directly, or indirectly, educating members on how to socialize, and adapt to the ways in which things are done, for various purposes (Green & Price, 2017, p. 118).	The findings further highlighted ways of dealing with bullying on social media and exposure to child pornography.
		It is important that those, who are being targeted, or are victims to bullying, be encouraged to report such incidents. In addition, those, who observe it happening to others, need to be knowledgeable about the procedure to follow when they witness such incidents, so that they may be able to	One of the 11 participants indicated that he did not know of the various processes, because, unless an educator is at senior management level, s/he will not know about the processes, except to refer the learner to the relevant professional.
			It was clear that a proper documented process of dealing with bullying on social media and exposure to child pornography was crucial to ensure consistency, in terms of dealing with this phenomenon at schools.

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		preserve the evidence that support the narrative. One of the defining characteristics of cyberbullying is that evidence always exists, whether it is a text, Facebook post, Instagram picture, tweet, or video. However, if an individual is ignorant about how to preserve the evidence, it becomes difficult to deal with this phenomenon (Patchin & Hinduja, 2016, p. 159).	However, most of the educators appeared to be unaware of the specific policies that dealt with this issue. Two educators disclosed that, in their school code of conduct, a particular section referred to bullying; however, it did not outline a specific process of dealing with the issue.

The lack of specific procedures and policies denies learners the opportunity to receive a satisfactory response from educators, when reacting to incidents of bullying on social media and exposure to child pornography.

The findings revealed that educators were ignorant of any specific procedures and policies within the Department of Education that educators could rely on, to identify a child, who is the victim of bullying on social media and exposure to child pornography. Only one participant indicated that he could not single out such a programme; however, he was aware that such a programme existed.

The educators did not know, or keep track of how many learners had been victims of cyberbullying at their schools, or who had cyberbullied others. In addition, there were those, who had observed cyberbullying among their classmates, and had not reported the incidents. This prevents educators from providing the required support to the victims of bullying on social media and exposure to child pornography.

According to Louw and Louw (2014, p. 244), educational policies may have a marked effect on children's academic motivation, directly, or indirectly. On the direct level, the type of system or orientation followed could influence what children are taught (curriculum), as well as how they learn. On the indirect level, children are affected by the teacher's commitment to the understanding of, and ability to implement the specific orientation. |
| | **4.3. Procedures and policies to deal with the cases of bullying on social media and exposure to child pornography.** | Bullying is divisive phenomenon, which, currently, causes hostility in schools, as well as concern among educational policy makers, as it involves human beings (Rawlings, 2017, p. 17).

Identifying child-pornography users is challenging task, as it is virtually impossible to obtain a specific representative sample. The only known child pornography users are those, who have been arrested, prosecuted, and registered in the sexual offences register (Fortin & Corriveau, 2015, p. 66). | Three of the 11 participants indicated that no specific procedures and policies exist, to deal with cases of bullying on social media and exposure to child pornography.

Ultimately, when dealing with bullying on social media and exposure to child pornography, educators, firstly, have to know and understand the policies and procedures that exist to manage the phenomena.

Two participants admitted to being aware of specific programmes that dealt with bullying on social media and exposure to child pornography. Another two participants stated that the school's code of conduct guidelines contained a section on bullying.

Green & Price (2017, p. 139) assert that, in recent years, policies and approaches to reduce the prevalence of bullying, have been introduced through multiple educational and government initiatives, which the findings of this current study failed to reveal. Schools need to provide a safe learning environment for students. In addition, schools are required to prevent mental health issues, by reducing bullying incidents, and doing everything in their power, to implement anti-bullying |

			policies and programmes. These should be aimed at raising the awareness of bullying-related incidents, promoting online safety for children, and encouraging learners to be cyber-smart. Additionally, schools should demonstrate their commitment to address incidents associated with bullying, by setting acceptable code behaviour, which everyone could follow (Cowie & Myers, 2018, p. 170).
	4.4. Government's role to support victims of bullying on social media and exposure to child pornography.	Literature concurs that bullying on social media, in the school context, is a reality. Therefore, because of the subsequent mental health challenges for learners at school, government has an obligation to assist in eradicating the negative implications of bullying in schools (Cowie & Myers, 2018, p. 155).	The findings clearly highlighted that all educators have a specific role to play in supporting victims of bullying on social media and exposure to child pornography. In addition, when dealing with cases of bullying on social media and exposure to child pornography, the role of government is critical. Therefore, educators and learners should understand the role of government in supporting victims of bullying on social media and exposure to child pornography. The digital and social media literacy of children could help them to make meaningful choices on the digital space. However, the educational system and the experience of educators could guide children, or young people, to manage their digital footprint (Brown, 2017, p. 23). Understanding the impact of sexual abuse has several implications, especially regarding the implementation of relevant interventions, aimed primarily at preventing, or resolving associated difficulties that may emerge, following the incidence of online sexual abuse. In most cases, following the incidence of abuse, children or young people, who may appear to be stable at the time, may still require, as well as deserve, psychosocial intervention and support, to avoid problems that may emerge at a later stage in their lives (Brown, 2017, pp. 123–124)
	4.5. Educators' suggestions for the issues of bullying on social media and exposure to child pornography.	Given the extent to which a family's approach affects a child's recovery and wellbeing, family focused interventions should form part of any possible interventions for children, who had experienced online sexual abuse, as well as any action associated therewith (Brown, 2017, p. 136). In addition, educators, peers, friends and family members should be cautious about stereotyping individuals, who had experienced bullying on social media (Cowie & Myers, 2018, p. 21). McElvaney (2016, p. 8) highlights that, in the past 20 years, many countries have developed child abuse awareness campaigns, in an effort to raise awareness about the nature of sexual abuse, the extent of it, and the importance of recognizing the possibility of abuse, early in the cycle of abuse.	The findings concurred with the literature, and the participants/educators provided suggestions regarding bullying on social media and exposure to child pornography. Educators spend most of their time at school, interacting with the children; therefore, they are uniquely positioned to relate to their daily experiences. However, it is critical for educators and school officials to understand the challenges, as well as the intervention procedures, in order to deal with bullying on social media and exposure to child pornography. Parents and educators are equally responsible for what children under their care consume online, as it is a shared responsibility (Patchin & Hinduja, 2016, p.116). Cowie and Myers (2018, p. 188) concur with the findings by alluding that parents, guardians, and local communities fulfil important roles in a whole school approach, to manage bullying. In addition, successful schools seek ways of consulting and involving parents/guardians, as well as members of the local community, when responding to bullying, while remaining clear about the school's approach to the issue.

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The details provided by the educators/participants were consistent, and in line with the theoretical framework. In addition, they shared their knowledge and opinions of the victims of bullying on social media and exposure to child pornography. The educators/participants acknowledged their role in helping learners to deal with these issues; however, they were of the opinion that their role was limited, as school social workers and school psychologist were employed, and more qualified, to deal with the incidence of bullying on social media and exposure to child pornography.

The findings revealed various ecological factors that surround the exposure, as well as how children, who had experienced bullying on social media and exposure to child pornography, were treated in schools. In addition, the educators clearly disclosed their exposure, as well as how they had handled various incidents of bullying on social media and exposure to child pornography. It appeared that the lack of knowledge of reliable, specific procedures, programmes, policies, and legislative framework in the department, denied learners access to appropriate responses from educators, who were reacting to disclosed incidents of bullying on social media and exposure to child pornography.

Additionally, the findings revealed that holistic intervention would assist educators to deal with the incidence of bullying on social media and exposure to child pornography. The holistic intervention approach required educators to understand their role in managing victims of bullying in social media and exposure to child pornography, which would enable them to perform and fulfil their responsibility of helping learners, effectively. However, this should be a collective effort between educators, schools, and parents, through regular workshops, as well as effective training, and not only the school code of conduct policy. Even though the department employs school social workers and school psychologists, it is crucial that educators are knowledgeable of the appropriate procedure to follow, when incidents of bullying and exposure to child pornography are reported, as educators spent most of their time at school, interacting with the learners.

A need exists for future research, to explore other aspects of bullying, such as understanding the impact of the existing policies effectiveness, which this current study did not include. This notion was supported by the current literature on the subject. It would be beneficial to conduct longitudinal studies into bullying on social media and exposure to child pornography, charting and reporting, in-depth, on the impact of technology-assisted abuse over time, as well as the

routes to recovery, and the resilience to recover quickly from any complications that may arise (Brown, 2017, p. 117). According to Cowie and Myers (2018, p. 176), although many countries mandate that schools have an anti-bullying policy, there is, however, scant evidence on the effectiveness of these policies in preventing, or reducing bullying; therefore, future research need to fill this void through well designed, longitudinal studies, examining not only the content of the policies, but also their implementation.

To facilitate a breakthrough, through research, it is crucial that everyone involved in the management of schools, familiarise themselves with relevant, recent research into bullying on social media and exposure to child pornography, which will ensure that all staff members are equipped to deal with the phenomena. In addition, access to the latest research would allow the school management to raise awareness to the entire staff, through available communication channels at the schools, such as notice boards, information sharing sessions, staff bulletins, as well as management and parents meetings (Cowie & Myers, 2018, p. 181).

6.3. Limitations

Although this current research study achieved its intended aims and objectives, there were some unavoidable limitations. One such limitation was time constraints, as the educators/participants indicated that the semi-structured interviews should be conducted at the school settings, during free periods of their working hours. The researcher was informed that the interviews should not disrupt the normal working hours of the school. The researcher, therefore, had to reschedule the interviews according to the educators/participants' availability, and adhere to the agreed upon time allocations. The researcher ensured that the interviews that was supposed to be conducted during breaks and allocated time are rescheduled to after-hours where educators got enough free time to fully express themselves. The researcher was satisfied with all the interviews in that they were completed within the required allocated time.

6.4. Recommendations

6.4.1. For children, parents, caregivers, educators, and the community

Society has to be aware that not only children have to be educated about how to stay safe online. Parents, caregivers, as well as educators, should be encouraged to familiarise themselves with these online platforms, which their children are accessing, to ensure that

the privacy settings are correctly implemented. With the current level of social media and the internet use, the general advice would be for children to be monitored, when using these platforms. In addition, public education would fulfil a major role in curbing the problem of the cyberbullying of children.

Community outreach programmes would also be beneficial to remedying the problem of cyberbullying, which would create a platform for victims and perpetrators to talk about real life experiences. These outreach programmes should also focus on what the law states about cyberbullying, to gain a better insight into what could be done, as the victims of cyberbullying are mainly children. Their first-hand experience could assist lawmakers to formulate appropriate penalties for cyberbullying. To encourage the maximum participation of children and the community, a hashtag that displays a specific message of cyberbullying should be implemented on a quarterly basis. Ultimately, perpetrators of cyberbullying should be charged on various pieces of legislation, and a dedicated agency should be established, to which children could report any cyberbullying related activities.

Another recommendation is that the school management should develop and update prevention policies, as well as guidelines for online, internet, and cell phone use, while procedures to deal with consequences for bullying on social media should also be implemented. Learners should be encouraged to be cyber smart, to promote empathy, ethical decision-making skills, and respect for their fellow learners.

6.4.2. For the Department of Education

Firstly, it is recommended that the Department of Education employ a task team to investigate the management of *bullying on social media and exposure to child pornography*, and submit a report on a quarterly basis. Secondly, it is recommended that the Department of Education conduct regular Cyber Safety training with educators, followed by impact-assessment evaluation sessions, to determine the effectiveness of the training. In addition, the department should monitor the educators' attendance, to ensure that, at least, one educator from every school is attending the training.

Thirdly, the Department of Education should conduct legislative framework training with educators, which should focus on all legislation that they should know, regarding the management of *bullying on social media and exposure to child pornography*. This could

be achieved through collaboration with other departments (especially law and justice), and organisations that hold a mandate to protect children. The challenges of bullying require specific legislations, drafted specifically with the aim of protecting learners against all forms of cyberbullying and harassment online. This would give effect to the rule of law, as well as the assured protection to the youth through the Constitution of South Africa. However, the true challenge, regarding bullying on social media, cyberbullying, or inappropriate online practices, does not lie in the application or interpretation of the legislation, necessarily, but in the actual prevention of bullying on social media, or cyberbullying, in a school environment, family environment, or community environment. The aim would be to limit, or prohibit, the acts that could be construed as civil, or criminal action against children. Formal relationships with law enforcement agencies, as well as organisations that conduct computer and network forensic examinations, should also be established, in the event that their expertise would be required.

Fourthly, it is recommended that the Department of Education adopt an *online and cyberbullying policy* that would include subjecting off-campus behaviour to the school's discipline. The policy should be clear about cell phones and other learner-owned portable electronic devices. In addition, learners, educators, and parents should know the policy, which should outline how learners should report via an anonymous reporting system to allow students, educators, and parents to report instances of cyberbullying and exposure to child pornography, without fear of reprisal. The policy should also outline disciplinary consequences, which should be developed and publicized.

Fifthly, the Department of Education should provide debriefing sessions, regularly, to anyone who had been exposed to victims of *bullying in social media and exposure to child pornography*. According to the educators/participants, one of the reasons for their reluctance to become involved in these incidences was their fear of exposing the victims to secondary trauma. They considered that better-trained experts should be handling these cases, and therefore, recommended that the Department of Education appoint experts with counselling, social work and/or psychology qualifications, to help support students and staff, who deal with these cases.

Finally, it is recommended that the Department of Education consider incorporating Cyber Safety in the Life Orientation curriculum, to instruct learners on the acceptable use of devices, social media, and the internet, during the school year, through workshops, in-class presentations, assemblies, as well as other regular instructive programming. According to McElvaney (2016, p. 141), acknowledging abuse as abuse could be incorporated into the curriculum, with opportunities to discuss issues such as, the nature of sexual abuse and consent, which could be addressed in schools, if educators had the necessary support, both personally and professionally. Learners could be taught about safe password practices, protection of personal information, how to recognise cyberbullying and threats to their online safety, as well as how to respond to cyberbullying, in an appropriate manner, while educators would know how to recognise cyberbullying issues and intervene in appropriate ways.

The findings of this current research revealed that educators spent most of their time at schools, challenged by the pressures of a congested curriculum, as well as accountability for student achievement outcomes. This often compromised the time and priority placed on their personal development, which they needed to focus on over time. However, it could be argued that the investment in nurturing the wellbeing of students, as well as safeguarding the social/emotional capabilities of young people, would yield not only improvements in learning outcomes, but also help to address the problem of bullying on social media and exposure to child pornography in schools (Green & Price, 2017, p. 142).

6.4.3 For the social work profession
Social workers should have a closer oversight role regarding issue of bullying in social media and exposure to child pornography. Social work profession should work closely with communities, schools and NGO's to develop guidelines and intervention plans to deal with victims of bullying in social media and exposure to child pornography.

It is recommended that social work profession should implement programs to identify and provide psychosocial services to the victims of bullying in social media and exposure to child pornography in schools, communities and NGO's.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: Ethics approval letter

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Faculty of Community and Health Science

Ethics Reference Number: HS17/10/17

Project Title: Exploring the perceptions of educations of learners with experiences of bullying on social media and exposure to child pornography.

Approval Period: 29 May 2018 – 29 May 2019

I hereby certify that the Humanities and Social Science Research Ethics Committee of the University of the Western Cape approved the methodology and ethics of the above mentioned research project.

Any amendments, extension or other modifications to the protocol must be submitted to the Ethics Committee for approval.

Please remember to submit a progress report in good time for annual renewal.

The Committee must be informed of any serious adverse event and/or termination of the study.

Ms Patricia Josias
Research Ethics Committee Officer
University of the Western Cape

PROVISIONAL REC NUMBER - 130416-049

FROM HOPE TO ACTION THROUGH KNOWLEDGE.

APPENDIX B: Western Cape Education Department approval letter

Western Cape Government
Education

Directorate: Research

Audrey.wyngaard@westerncape.gov.za
tel: +27 021 467 9272
Fax: 0865902282
Private Bag x9114, Cape Town, 8000
wced.wcape.gov.za

REFERENCE: 20181011–7250
ENQUIRIES: Dr A T Wyngaard

Mr Murendeni Muridili
PO Box 304
Tshaulu
0987

Dear Mr Murendeni Muridili

RESEARCH PROPOSAL: EXPLORING THE PERCEPTIONS OF EDUCATORS OF LEARNERS WITH EXPERIENCES OF BULLYING ON SOCIAL MEDIA

Your application to conduct the above-mentioned research in schools in the Western Cape has been approved subject to the following conditions:

1. Principals, educators and learners are under no obligation to assist you in your investigation.
2. Principals, educators, learners and schools should not be identifiable in any way from the results of the investigation.
3. You make all the arrangements concerning your investigation.
4. Educators' programmes are not to be interrupted.
5. The Study is to be conducted from **21 January 2019 till 27 September 2019**
6. No research can be conducted during the fourth term as schools are preparing and finalizing syllabi for examinations (October to December).
7. Should you wish to extend the period of your survey, please contact Dr A.T Wyngaard at the contact numbers above quoting the reference number?
8. A photocopy of this letter is submitted to the principal where the intended research is to be conducted.
9. Your research will be limited to the list of schools as forwarded to the Western Cape Education Department.
10. A brief summary of the content, findings and recommendations is provided to the Director: Research Services.
11. The Department receives a copy of the completed report/dissertation/thesis addressed to:
    The Director: Research Services
    Western Cape Education Department
    Private Bag X9114
    CAPE TOWN
    8000

We wish you success in your research.

Kind regards.
Signed: Dr Audrey T Wyngaard
Directorate: Research
DATE: 11 October 2018

Lower Parliament Street, Cape Town, 8001
tel: +27 21 467 9272   fax: 0865902282
Safe Schools: 0800 45 46 47

Private Bag X9114, Cape Town, 8000
Employment and salary enquiries: 0861 92 33 22
www.westerncape.gov.za

APPENDIX C: Information Sheet (English and Afrikaans versions)

UNIVERSITY OF THE WESTERN CAPE

Private Bag X 17, Bellville 7535, South Africa
Tel: +27 21-959 3170 Fax: 27 21-7881577
E-mail: mlondt@uwc.ac.za

<mark>Revised: September 2014</mark>

INFORMATION SHEET

Project Title: Exploring the perceptions of educators of learners with experiences of bullying on social media and exposure to Child Pornography.

What is this study about?
This is a research project being conducted by Muridili Murendeni at the University of the Western Cape. We are inviting you to participate in this research project because your knowledge can contribute in assisting us to understand the perceptions of educators of learners with experiences of bullying on social media and exposure to child pornography. The purpose of this research project is to gather information that could help the victims of Social Media and Child Pornography.

What will I be asked to do if I agree to participate?
You will be interviewed privately in an office within the Department of Education facility by me. *There won't be any other person in the office which means that the discussion between you and me will be confidential. The interview will take an hour.*

As per signed agreement by the participants, the interview will be audio-taped and the interviews will be guided by set of questions. In total the duration of the interview will be 1 hour.

Would my participation in this study be kept confidential?
The researchers undertake to protect your identity and the nature of your contribution. To ensure your anonymity, the participants will be assured that all data collected will be handled with confidentiality and individuals will remain anonymous. The audio-taped information will be kept in a locked cabinet for a period of 5 years by the research supervisor, Dr.M Londt in her office. It will be kept until completion of research study. The research supervisor, Dr Londt will be the only one to have access to the information. Participants will be interviewed privately in an office within the Department of Education facility by the researcher.

If we write a report or article about this research project, your identity will be protected. In accordance with legal requirements and/or professional standards, we will disclose to the appropriate individuals and/or authority's information that comes to our attention concerning child abuse or neglect or potential harm to you or others.

In this event, we will inform you that we have to break confidentiality to fulfil our legal responsibility to report to the designated authorities.

What are the risks of this research?
There may be some risks from participating in this research study. The researcher should ensure a comfortable and safe environment to avoid any difficulty for the educator participants to disclose. Participants will be informed beforehand as to the nature of the research study to avoid complications and to enhance voluntarily participation and interaction. All the participants will give the consent to participate in the study. The participants will be notified that they will not be harmed during research study and that they have the right to withdraw from the study at anytime without any penalty. There may be some risks from participating in   this research study. Due to the nature and sensitivity of information revealed in this study it might be difficult to disclose. It may trigger emotions, leading to anger, sadness, fear, shame or embarrassment. If it occurs the researcher will make a referral for counselling and the research supervisor (Dr Londt) will be notified to provide the necessary counselling service with immediate effect.
All human interactions and talking about self or others carry some amount of risks. We will nevertheless minimise such risks and act promptly to assist you if you experience any discomfort, psychological or otherwise during the process of your participation in this study. Where necessary, an appropriate referral will be made to a suitable professional for further assistance or intervention.

What are the benefits of this research?
The benefits to you include you having access to an objective researcher, willing and capable to listen to your story without passing judgement. This research is designed to help you personal on how you can respond to these issues on your capacity as educator that teaches children that may be at risky age as well as responding to these issues on your personal capacity as a parent to your own children or children within the community.

Do I have to be in this research and may I stop participating at any time?
Your participation in this research is completely voluntary. You may choose not to take part at all. If you decide to participate in this research, you may stop participating at any time. If you decide not to participate in this study or if you stop participating at any time, you will not be penalized or lose any benefits to which you otherwise qualify

What if I have questions?
This research is being conducted by Muridili Murendeni, Employed by the Film and Publication Board and a student at the University of the Western Cape. If you have any question about the research study itself, please contact:
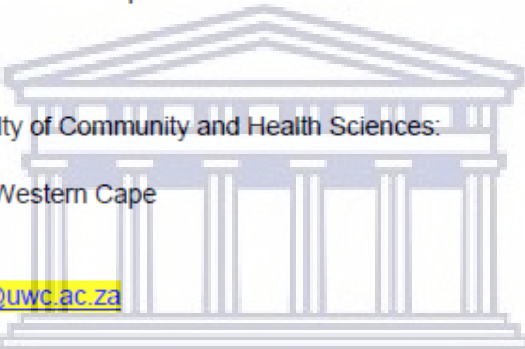Mr Muridili Murendeni
420 Witch Hazel avenue

Eco-park
Centurion
Tel: 012 003 1470
Cell: 078 3940278
Email: Murendeni.Muridili@fpb.org.za

Should you have any questions regarding this study and your rights as a research participant or if you wish to report any problems you have experienced related to the study, please contact:

Research Supervisor: Dr Marcel Londt
Cell phone: 082 490 6469
Office: 021 959 3170
Email: mlondt@uwc.ac.za
University of the Western Cape
Private bag x17
Bellville 7535

Dean of the Faculty of Community and Health Sciences:
Prof Rhoda
University of the Western Cape
Private Bag X17
Bellville 7535
chs-deansoffice@uwc.ac.za

This research has been approved by the University of the Western Cape's Senate Research Committee and Ethics Committee.

UNIVERSITY OF THE WESTERN CAPE

Private Bag X 17, Bellville 7535, South Africa
Tel: +27 21-9593170, Fax: 27 21-7881577
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CONSENT FORM

Title of Research Project: Exploring the perceptions of educators of learners with experiences of bullying on social media and exposure to Child Pornography.

The study has been described to me in language that I understand. My questions about the study have been answered. I understand what my participation will involve, and I agree to participate of my own choice and free will. I understand that my identity will not be disclosed to anyone. I understand that I may withdraw from the study at any time without giving a reason and without fear of negative consequences or loss of benefits. The interview will be audio-taped and the interviews will be guided by set of questions.

Participant's name……………………………………...

Participant's signature…………………………………..

Date………………………

Consent Form   Version Date: 15 September 2014

Interview guide: Demographic information: Educators

Topic: Exploring the perceptions of educators of learners with experiences of bullying on social media and exposure to Child Pornography.

Section A

Ethnicity

Black		Indian		White		coloured	

Level of education

Diploma		Bachelor degree		Masters degree	

Years of experience

0 to 2 years		2 to 5 years		5 to 10years	

Marital status

Single		Divorced		Married	

Section B

1. How do you feel about being part of this research study?
2. What do you think you may be able to contribute by being part of this study? Elaborate.
3. Please give a brief description about yourself and your experience in working with children as an educator.
4. What is your knowledge of bullying in Social Media and exposure to Child Pornography?
5. What are your opinions on this topic?

6. Are you aware of any programs within the Department designed to help victims of bullying in Social Media and exposure to Child pornography? Explain.

7. Do you think that educators have a specific role to play regarding children who are exposed to victim of bullying in Social Media and exposed to Child Pornography?

8. What legislation do you know of that addressed this issue?

9. Which legislations do you know that deal with Social Media and Child Pornography in South Africa? Explain

10. Do you think that educators should be trained on the obligations of any current legislation on this topic?

11. What has your exposure been to children affected by this issue?

12. How are children who are affected usually handled in your school?

13. Do you have particular procedures or policies that educators can rely on when they identify a child who was subjected to this experience?

14. What do you think government would do to help educators to be able to identify and provide support to the victims of bullying in Social Media and exposed to Child Pornography?

15. What final suggestions would you like to make in dealing with these aspects?
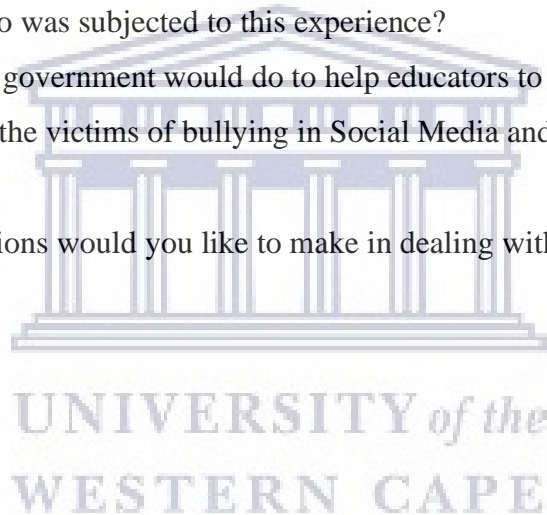
APPENDIX F: Ten suicide statistics in South Africa

APPENDIX G: Editorial Certificate

Idea Corporation t/a

AQUARIAN PUBLICATIONS

31 March 2020

To whom it may concern

Dear Sir/Madam

RE: Editorial certificate

This letter serves to prove that the thesis listed below was language edited for proper English, grammar, punctuation, spelling, as well as overall layout and style by myself, publisher/proprietor of Aquarian Publications, a native English speaking editor.

Thesis title

EXPLORING THE PERCEPTIONS OF EDUCATORS OF LEARNERS WITH EXPERIENCES OF BULLYING ON SOCIAL MEDIA AND EXPOSURE TO CHILD PORNOGRAPHY

Author

Murendeni Muridili

The research content, or the author's intentions, were not altered in any way during the editing process, and the author has the authority to accept, or reject my suggestions and changes.

Should you have any questions or concerns about this edited document, I can be contacted at the listed telephone and fax numbers or e-mail addresses.

Yours truly

E H Londt
Publisher/Proprietor

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